

The Link

- Y Ddolen -

October 2015
Issue No. 144

Newsletter of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wrexham – serving the parishes of North and Mid Wales

Bishop Peter's Column

September, when news reports concentrated on migration and refugees, was a month which focussed European leaders, governments and people on a single issue and its effects. The words that keep returning to my mind are those from the Book of Deuteronomy, *'The Lord your God executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him and cleave to him, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and terrible things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven for multitude.'* (10:18-22)

We should reflect that over the last one hundred and fifty years the Catholic community in England and Wales has been made up of many sojourners and their descendants whether economic migrants, guest workers or refugees from Europe, Africa and Asia. That fact alone should make us at least sensitive and responsive to these twenty-first century sojourners whom we find on our shores and in our midst. The experience of the Vietnamese Boat people of the 1970s and the policy of dispersion of asylum seekers throughout our countries fifteen years ago would suggest few will come to our own towns and parishes even where hospitality has been offered. That does not mean we can abrogate any responsibility. Immediately, of course we can pray for these people and offer our support and financial assistance to the Church in those dioceses where material help is urgently required. This is going to be a long term issue to which we must be committed and to have moral imagination in order to sustain our efforts. We can all be attentive to all those who are vulnerable and newly arrived in our local communities and parishes. A warm welcome can be the most simple yet effective of gifts we can all offer. Please look at www.catholicnews.org.uk for additional information from the Bishops of England and Wales

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

Hear my voice when I beg You to install into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice, and the joy of fellowship.

Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.

Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.

O God, hear my voice and grant unto the world Your everlasting peace. Amen.

Prayer from Pope Saint John Paul II

We are all a displaced people heading for a sanctuary of mercy and peace, and making a pilgrimage is a simple means of making ourselves as vulnerable as the sojourner, to remind us of this fact. Please join me in a pilgrimage this year, perhaps beginning with the St Richard Gwyn celebrations in the Cathedral.

With every good wish and continued prayers,

† Peter

Outstanding Success for 'The Link'

Hyperbole, perhaps, but because of The Link, a grateful owner has been reunited with his(?) Breviary .

"The Link" reaches the parts, which others cannot!!

Fr John Toole RIP

The funeral took place on 24th September of Fr John Toole.

Born in Birkenhead in 1935, Fr Toole attended St Mary's school, Rhyl, and went to Seminary aged 18. He was ordained in 1960 at St Mary's, Rhyl. He served in Holywell, Mold and Wrexham as curate, and Llandudno Junction, Connah's Quay, Welshpool and Old Colwyn as Parish priest. He retired in 2011, and died at the Convent of Mercy Nursing Home on the 9th September. May he rest in peace.

Saint Richard Gwyn Pilgrimage -

Sunday 18th October

The Annual Mass in honour of St Richard Gwyn will be celebrated at 3 o'clock in the Cathedral. Following the Mass there will be blessing with and opportunity for veneration of the relic.

Medical Mass - Friday 23rd October

If you are involved in healthcare in any way – nurse, therapist, doctor, healthcare professional, porter, surgeon, hospital manager or trust board member, chaplaincy volunteer, LHB member, home carer – Bishop Peter invites you to the celebration of Mass in the Cathedral at 7.00pm. Following the Mass there will be a reception in the Cathedral Hall.

Farewell to the Ursulines in Shotton

As detailed in earlier editions of The Link, the Ursuline sisters in Shotton, Sr Vianney and Sr Gwyn will leave, and the convent will close. Their service to the Diocese, to Justice and Peace, and to TCC has been outstanding, and we wish them a happy 'retirement' in London.

Tour of Britain Cycle Race

Stage 1 of the Tour of Britain, from Beaumaris to Wrexham, via Denbigh, Ruthin, Mold and Buckley, travelled across the Diocese! However, to read about our own active cyclists in the Diocese, just turn to page 3!!

What is more, a massive £17,500 has been raised.

Clergy Conference 27th/28th October

Please remember in prayer your priests and deacons as they attend the Diocesan Clergy Conference, a time of personal and ministerial on-going formation at which this year they will be focusing on the Year of Mercy, Evangelisation and Mission.

Visit the Diocesan website: www.wrexhamdiocese.org.uk

Who is my neighbour?

Most of us are probably quietly content to have been born in Britain. As in any democracy, one agrees with some things and disagrees with others, but that is part of living under the British system and we accept it. Recently, we may have been questioning ourselves as to how Britain should respond to the issue of the hundreds of thousands of migrants. Are we doing enough? Is Britain doing enough? Am I doing enough?

Recent events, reports by the media, have disturbed us all deeply. The sight of refugee families fleeing from oppression, from nightly bombing, snipers on the streets, cruelty, torture, deprivation of the most acute sort, are haunting. The final desperate solution for most of these families was to leave the family home, leave their beloved native land and flee for their lives. Some walked hundreds of miles to the coast. Many of them were exploited and paid dearly for a sea crossing – even though they knew they couldn't swim. Thousands have been drowned. *Thousands*. (Think what happens when even one person goes missing off the North Wales coast.)

On seeing these images on TV: the emaciated survivors, children parted from parents, old people completely traumatised, the immediate reaction is compassion. 'What can I do? How can we help?'

We all know how Britain makes an immediate response to physical disasters - the tsunami, earthquakes in Haiti and Nepal, and during the ebola epidemic – sending both funds and teams of skilled response workers. In this present enormous disaster, Britain has been generous with funding – but what should our response be on the ground? Individuals, parishes, dioceses, organisations of many kinds are now being prompted to act spontaneously and generously. Should our instinctive human response of compassion from us as communities, as a country, offer more?

At the moment it seems that it is Germany which has been trying to be as practically generous and open as possible. Many older Germans were once refugees themselves in World War II, fleeing westwards. For hundreds of years before that, most countries on the war-torn landmass of Europe have had refugees criss-crossing their borders, fleeing from some vengeful army or other. They know what it's like. Britain as an island nation has found itself immune from such mass movement for centuries. Thank God we have no experience of abandoning our homes, fleeing for our lives, clutching our children or carrying aged relatives.

The ramifications of this disaster – two million displaced refugees - will alter the course of European history for ever. But as Christians we remember Jesus being asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' The example he offered was the Good Samaritan giving immediate compassionate first aid, without consideration of race or religion. In our case, it's as though the Good Samaritan had said to the innkeeper, 'Look, there's a badly wounded man up the road. He's completely traumatised. Here's some money, see to it, will you? I've got better things to do.'

How should we be responding to Pope Francis' call to support the migrants? He has taken a Syrian family into his home. What should we be asking the British people, our Government, the European governments, the United Nations, to do? Our prayer, our financial contributions may help, but when should prayer turn in to action?

Salutations and Valedictions

We welcome the return of Fr Roberto Ciardo, SDV, to Holywell replacing Father Anil Akkara, SDV who goes to one of the Vocationists discernment and formation houses in Indonesia; and also Father Frederick, MSP who is in Pwllheli replacing Father Francis Eyo, MSP who has moved to Nunhead, South London.

Hawarden bade its own 'Farewell' to Fr Anil who acted as Parish Priest while in the Diocese. A Mass was followed by a farewell party.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations - Father Damian Grimes

Father Damian Grimes' Diamond Jubilee was celebrated with a special Mass in Llanrwst's Church of the Good Shepherd. Concelebrating were Bishop Peter Fr Damian, Fr Liam (Regional Superior of Mill Hill Missionaries), Mgr Fealey, and Frs John, Augustine, Gerrard, and Morrin. Parishioners, former students and the clergy from Churches Together in Llanrwst attended. The Bishop presented Fr Damian with a Papal Blessing. Later this year, a similar honour will be celebrated in Coventry and Uganda by Fr Damian's former pupils.

Ordained July 10th 1955, Father Damian spent forty-four years in Uganda, where he was headmaster at the Namasagali College from 1967 until 2000. The College was a prestigious middle and high school, sought after by the best students in Uganda, and where Father Damian was described as a 'remarkable educator' by many of his successful students.

Fr Damian MHM, MBE, has cared for the Catholic parish of the Upper Conwy Valley since 2003.

Advent Family Day Goes On The Road

This year, to enable more people to attend, the popular Advent Family Day will be held in Wrexham. All are welcome and especially, grandparents and their grandchildren, in view of the first ever Welsh Grandparents' Pilgrimage.

The day will take place on, 29th November, the First Sunday in Advent, in the Cathedral Hall. The event starts at 12.30pm and will end at 4.30pm and will include lots of crafts and activities to help families to mark Advent and prepare for Christmas. Activities will include making an Advent Wreath, making a crib and lots more. This year Bishop Peter will end the day with a Family Advent service (not Mass) in the hall, followed by hot dogs and mince pies before the journey home.

There is no charge for this event. Tea, coffee and squash will be provided: please bring your own packed lunch.

To help with your planning, please note that Mass is available in the Cathedral at 10.30am.

For more information please contact Margaret Hinton, Marriage and Family Life Coordinator on margaretmfl@hotmail.co.uk or 07842 596 878.

Open Minds, Burning Hearts ... is the title

Journeying through Luke's Gospel is the topic. A Scripture conference at Sedgley Park, Manchester on 10th-12th November marks the 50th Anniversary of *Dei Verbum* the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation of Vatican II. Dr. Ian Boxall of the Catholic University of America is the main speaker; Cardinal Vincent Nichols will lead the opening reflection with workshops and seminars from Sr. Catherine Darby and Bernadette Farrell. Open Minds, Burning Hearts will inspire all who wish to engage more deeply with the Scriptures, especially those involved in pastoral ministry, education, social justice and evangelisation. The conference is an event offered in partnership of the Dept of Evangelisation & Catechesis and the Bible Society. For more information: www.thewordofthelord.co.uk

Traidcraft and Fairtrade -

Have you wondered how they differ? Did you know they are not the same thing? Traidcraft is an independent trading company, with a linked development charity. It does not benefit from the sales of Fairtrade products in supermarkets. Traidcraft supports the most vulnerable farmers and artisans (who could not cope with the scale required by big business or the supermarkets). It aims to bring new commodities into the Fairtrade arena. Their linked development charity runs projects developing peoples' potential to trade their own way out of poverty in their own countries; and they lobby big business and government for fundamental changes to the way trade works so that it benefits the poor, believing this to be the 'best of fair trade.' Perhaps in the light of Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Laudato si'* this is an opportune moment to renew the Diocesan commitment and parishes too to at least using Fairtrade goods, products and beverages etc. at parish events and better still of using Traidcraft. For further information: www.traidcraft.co.uk

The Link

Our next issue will be the November edition, distributed to parishes on 31st October / 1st November. Copy to the Editor by no later than Sunday, 18th October, please.

Future Editions: Distribution

5th / 6th December

9th / 10th January, 2016

Copy deadline

Sunday, 22nd November

Sunday, 20th December

Pilgrim Bike Ride Raises £11,000!

Pwllheli parish is as proud as Punch! The day before the start of the Tour of Britain, almost 40 riders cycled 27 miles from Clynnog Fawr to Bardsey.

The Pilgrim Bike Ride would follow the ancient pilgrim way from Clynnog Fawr via the pilgrim churches of Llanaelhaearn, Pistyll, Nefyn, Llangwnadl to Aberdaron, where pilgrims used to rest before crossing to Bardsey Island – the island of 20,000 saints. Three pilgrimages to Bardsey equalled one to Rome!

Fr Francis Eyo, parish priest, Fr Walter Bance, and Deacon David Ives were among the cyclists from Abersoch, Morfa Nefyn and Pwllheli. Sponsorship was sought and the numerous visitors to the area were very generous.

All the pilgrim cyclists, young and old - the youngest was eight years old and the oldest nearly eighty - finished the course, whether from the start at Clynnog Fawr or the 7 who joined at Nefyn. The aptly named Chris Ryder, who organised the ride, completed it, with his wife Pat, on a tandem.

A real highlight was that Mass was celebrated at St Hywyn's Aberdaron to end the Pilgrim Bike Ride. Aberdaron had not seen anything like it, for this was the first time Mass has been celebrated since the Reformation. A full church was welcomed by Canon Andrew Jones, Archdeacon of Meirionnydd, and Fr Francis celebrated the Mass. St Joseph's Schola sang and the congregation was in full voice. Members of St Hywyn's have asked that we come back next year! At the end of the Mass a cheque was presented to Air Ambulance Wales which shared the fund raising with the parish.

A magnificent achievement.

Land's End to John O'Groats

A real Tour of Britain was taken by Alan Morris of Mold parish who chose to celebrate a significant birthday by cycling from one end to the other! Raising over £6,000 for L'Arche Flintshire, Alan's odyssey covered 1200 miles in 12 days. Surprisingly, saddle soreness was not the problem, (and only one puncture), but rather a Sat Nav which suggested a direct path over high mountains! By the way, the hardest part is in Cornwall, if you choose to 'come down the map'!!!

Well done to all our Diocesan cyclists!

Anglesey

Two Parishes celebrate 50 years.

St. David's, Cemaes Bay and Our Lady of Lourdes, Benllech both celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Church in September.

The former held a celebration lunch in Amlwch and the latter has the original booklet from that day in 1965 on view in church for all to see, with a new commemorative booklet available to look back over the last 50 years. After a special Mass there was a party in the Benllech Village hall.

Young people of Amlwch, Benllech and Cemaes parishes, Storm, Juliette, Sorcha, Ebha, Joe and Niamh gave an excellent presentation describing their experiences in Zimbabwe, Taizé and Snowdonia. It was a message of hope for the future. A special thank you to all who came along to support them, it was a great afternoon.

The LANDING faith journey the group attended a Retreat Day together at the Noddfa Spirituality Centre The island welcomes Nicola who became a full member of the Church at Noddfa.

Acting Headteachers:

Rachel Acton has been appointed Acting Head at St Mary's Primary School, Wrexham from the start of this term. We offer her best wishes in this role.

Meanwhile, James Wilkinson, Acting Headteacher at St Joseph's Colwyn Bay has told us: *'Six teachers from the school have completed their CCRS course with Hope University. They have been studying for 2 years to complete 8 modules with written assignments. This has meant a significant time commitment each week on top of their, already heavy, teacher workload. A further two members of staff should complete this year.'* Congratulations!

Grandparents Week

18th-25th October 2015

All three Dioceses within the Welsh province have designated 18th – 25th October as Grandparents week. This is to encourage our parishes and schools to raise the profile of grandparents and to support them in their role.

Full details were included in the September edition of The Link. A copy of that edition is on the Diocesan website.

The Family Life Commission would welcome any news or photos of your events and would be delighted to assist if you wanted any further help or support.

For more information see the flier in your parish or contact -

Margaret Hinton Marriage and Family Life Coordinator,
margaretmfl@hotmail.co.uk 07842596878

St Winefride's Well Development Project

In 1416, King Henry V (*Once more unto the breach dear friends...*) walked from Shrewsbury to Holywell to give thanks for his victory at Agincourt. To mark 600 years, the communities of Shrewsbury and Holywell are making plans for a walk to commemorate that pilgrimage. It will arrive in Holywell for the National Pilgrimage 26th June. For 2016, the plans for the Well will give particular emphasis to how the programme can link in with the intentions of Pope Francis in the forthcoming Year of Mercy.

2015 has been a busy summer at the Well, welcoming visitors from many parts of the world as individuals, groups and participants in major pilgrimages.

Detailed consideration is now being given by the St. Winefride's Well Committee and the Diocesan Trustees on how best to develop proposals for the strategic development of the St. Winefride's Well site and taking account of feedback from volunteers and parish representatives. .

Further information will follow in future editions, including details about wider consultation on proposals for the future display of interpretative material, museum items and visitor facilities.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the project or contribute ideas at this stage is welcome to contact the Project Director, Kerry Feather on 0777 089 1971 or e.mail to well@wrexhamdiocese.org.uk.

Internationalism at Colwyn Bay

One of the most delightful features of our parish is our ever-increasing internationality. Recently a group of about 20 Indians from Kerala celebrated their harvest festival with us. Ladies looked beautiful, in white saris and children prepared arrangements of fruits and flowers. Our altar servers are Polish, Filipino, Nigerian, Indian and Welsh! They are trained by Chris, from Nigeria. For the Adult Faith group a 'Song Cafe', was led by Wynne Roberts, Chaplain at Ysbyty Bangor, with spiritual input and gospel songs. This new form of outreach was attended by parishioners, non-believers and our Baptist friends.

Into The Future

Last month Bishop Peter promulgated his consultation paper concerning the parishes of the Diocese and the future provision of Mass. The paper is readily available in the parishes via the parish priest. The Bishop provides a principled basis for the particular actions that will inevitably follow in future months and years. At this stage, the paper does not lay out any schedule of closures, amalgamations or rationalisation within the Diocese.

Synod on The Family

Please pray for the Synod Fathers as they will have started their deliberations at The Synod on the Family in Rome when you read this and will continue until 25th October. The delegation at the Synod from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales are Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bishop Peter Doyle of Northampton.

Catholic Youth – Flame

- A personal experience

Bridie McGough from Denbigh spoke to the Wrexham Group of the Catenian Association which was involved with the Flame2 Catholic Youth event at Wembley Arena.

Bridie explained

“This was a fantastic Catholic youth event. We thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the day, from the uplifting, modern style music, to the inspiring and rather humorous key note speakers, and to meeting new people from all over the UK. A dramatic interpretation of John’s gospel used lights, colours and imagery to interpret our hectic lifestyles. This imagery really appeals to young people and helps evoke our emotions, as it approaches everyday life.

The opening prayer asked for courage to be open and discover new truths about ourselves - a perfect prayer to start as the feeling in the room suddenly felt relaxed and optimistic of what was to come.

Cardinal Tagel from Manila was a particular favourite as he was very engaging and knew how to grab the attention of the young people. He was very popular due to his passion, wisdom and joy which was so vibrantly clear when he spoke about his life’s vocation. He was very humorous, constantly making the crowd of thousands laugh at his well thought out jokes, cleverly relevant to his topic. He spoke of his role as an Archbishop, as well as his experiences during the tragic 2013 Typhoon Haiyan and what he has done to support the victims, and especially his advice on how to live an exciting, fun yet spiritually filled life.

Father Timothy Radcliffe spoke about his fascinating life stories and shared his wisdom and knowledge of everywhere he had been and everything he has done as a priest and an author. He spoke with such warmth and happiness that he automatically caught the attention of the arena, to such an extent, I felt as though the room was empty and I hung on every word he said desperate to get the most out of the advice he so wanted to share.

Matt Redman and his band were the highlight as they took traditional hymns and the meaning of worship and gave it a completely modern and exciting edge. His songs filled the room with joy, bringing everyone to their feet, jumping around and singing their praise to the Lord. During his music, we were part of a community of young people experiencing the same overwhelming feeling of the Holy Spirit.

The event finished with Adoration led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, giving complete serenity and inner peace throughout the crowd. Personally, I felt the strongest connection with the Holy Spirit and the catholic community that I have ever experienced. Events like this inspire young people to explore and live their faith. I know two young people who have just embarked upon a year’s youth ministry work as a result of events such as Flame and many other Catholic Youth Events.

Youth News

EMBRACE – LIVERPOOL – Age 14+ - Saturday 21st November.

A day for young people, run by young people in Liverpool Cathedral. Workshops, key speakers, reconciliation, adoration and the day ends with Mass at 4 pm

The event is free and we will be running a coach from the Diocese at a cost of £10. Forms and more information can be obtained from chrisshumphreys@hotmail.com or speak to your Parish Priest.

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS SLEEPOVER – Age 10 – 14, - 31st October – 1st November Llandudno

You don’t have to be a saint to attend this weekend at Loreto. An opportunity to spend a weekend with your friends, looking at the lives of some of our more colourful saints!

The cost of the weekend is £45.

Come along with your friends for Faith, Fun and Fantastic Food! For more information and relevant forms either email chrisshumphreys@hotmail.com or speak to your Parish Priest.

Jubilee of Mercy

The Official Hymn of the Jubilee of Mercy was composed by Paul Inwood the British liturgist and composer. The score which can be downloaded from the Jubilee website: www.im.va

Bishop Peter will inaugurate the Jubilee in the Diocese and ‘opening’ the Holy Door with a celebration of Mass in the Cathedral in the evening of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8th December.

Bishop Peter’s Engagements

October

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| 3-4 | Pastoral Visitation of Holyhead Parish |
| 6 | Bishops’ Conference Scripture Group meeting, London |
| 7 | 10.30am Diocesan Education Commission meeting, Buckley Parish Centre
2.00pm St Beuno’s |
| 9 | Pastoral Visitation of Our Lady’s Primary School, Bangor |
| 10-11 | Pastoral Visitation of Bangor Parish |
| 13-14 | Provincial Bishops’ meeting, Swansea |
| 15 | 11.00am Ruby Anniversary celebration Mass at Poor Clare Monastery, Hawarden |
| 16 | 2.00pm Mass at St Richard Gwyn High School, Flint |
| 17 | 1.00pm at Blessed Sacrament Church, Connah’s Quay, Thanksgiving Mass marking the departure of the Ursuline Sisters from Shotton |
| 18 | St Richard Gwyn Procession and Mass, 3.00pm at the Cathedral |
| 20 | 3.00pm Holywell, Vocations Commission meeting |
| 21 | 10.30am Mass at St Joseph’s Catholic and Anglican High School, Wrexham |
| 22 | 12.30 for 1.30pm Clergy Finance Information Day at Buckley Parish Centre
6.00pm Ongoing Formation of Clergy Commission meeting at Bishop’s House |
| 23 | 2.30pm at Bishop’s House, meeting with members of St Beuno’s Outreach Team
7.00pm at the Cathedral, Mass for Healthcare Workers |
| 24-25 | Pastoral Visitation of Porthmadog Parish |
| 26 | Priests’ Council meeting, 6.00pm at Loreto |
| 27-28 | Diocesan Clergy Conference at Loreto |
| 29 | am, Graduation Ceremony at Glyndŵr University, Wrexham
Fellows’ Dinner at Glyndŵr University, Wrexham |
| 31/1 Nov | Pastoral Visitation of Caernarfon Parish |

Mental Health First Aid Course

Saturdays 31st October and 7nd November at Our Lady of the Rosary, Buckley from 10am – 5pm. (Attendance on both days is necessary as this is a 12 hour course). The course is delivered by a trainer from MIND Vale of Clwyd. The cost is £50 for the course and includes the course materials and a certificate of completion. Refreshments are provided, but please bring your own lunch.

Anyone with an interest is welcome, especially parish visitors, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and SVP members. To book a place or for information please contact Margaret Hinton, Marriage and Family Life Coordinator at margaretmfl@hotmail.co.uk, 07842 596 878 or by post via Bishops House.

Dates to Note:

October

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| Sunday 11th | Day of Prayer for Prisoners and their Dependents |
| Sunday 18th | World Mission Day
S. Richard Gwyn Pilgrimage, Wrexham |
| Friday 23rd | Health Carers’ Mass |

November

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| Sunday 1st | Solemnity of All Saints |
| Monday 2nd | Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed – All Souls |
| Tuesday 3rd | Mass for Foundation Masses Donors and their Intentions
12 noon Cathedral |
| Saturday 7th | Feast of the Dedication of the Cathedral
CAFOD Memorial Mass 12 noon |
| Sunday 8th | Remembrance Sunday |