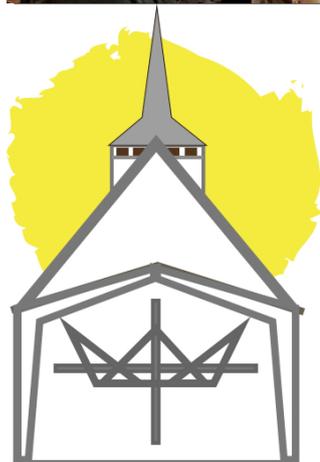


# St Mary with St Richard, Northolt

*Becoming a Living and Loving Example of Jesus Christ in our Community*



## Annual Report 2017



# Contents

<b>About our Parish</b>	<b>2</b>
including the presentation of our Electoral Roll	
<b>Our PCC</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Rector's Report</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Reports relating to the business of the PCC</b>	<b>4</b>
including the following statutory reports	
Summary of the PCC	4
Churchwardens	5
including a report on the fabric of the parish	7
Treasurer	8
Deanery Synod	9
Safeguarding	10
<b>Reports relating to the activities of the parish</b>	<b>15</b>

# About our Parish

## Aims

In law, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is required to co-operate with the incumbent, The Rev'd Chris Hill, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Specifically, as a parish we aim to become a living and loving example of Jesus Christ in our community.

We are responsible for St Mary's Church building and churchyard, St Richard's Church building and land and by letting agreement the Northolt Village Memorial Hall and memorial trust land.

## Organisation

Members of the PCC are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year, the PCC met 5 times.

The minutes of all meetings (except those deemed by the council to be confidential) are available on request from the Chair or Secretary by those whose names are on the parish Electoral Roll.

A summary of each meeting is published and available in the churches within a few weeks of the meeting.

## Presentation of the Electoral Roll

The revision of the Electoral Roll of the parish of St Mary with St. Richard took place during February/March 2017.

During the year 4 people applied to be added to the roll, in addition to 8 applications at the time of the revision.

The names of 3 people have been removed from the roll - one deceased, and two who are not resident in the parish and no longer fulfil the criteria to remain on roll.

At present, the number on roll is St Mary 86, St. Richard 11, giving a total of 97. Our Parish Electoral Roll officer is Pauline Byles.

## Administrative information

*St Mary's Church* is located on Ealing Road, Northolt UB5 6AA

*St Richard's Church* is located on Sussex Crescent, Northolt, UB4 6DR

*Northolt Village Memorial Hall* is located on Ealing Road, Northolt UB5 6AA

*Correspondence* should be sent to the Rector:

St Mary's Rectory, Ealing Road, Northolt, UB5 6AA

# Our PCC

The PCC of St Mary's with St Richard's Northolt are 'An elected team of parish representatives, who work well together, with the Rector, to make decisions in areas of worship, community and mission.

We enable our Church to become a living and loving example of Jesus Christ in our community'

## Ex officio members

Members who are on our PCC by virtue of their office.

Incumbent	The Rev'd Chris Hill
Churchwardens	Rosemary Conner Linda Laryea
Deanery Synod Representatives	Jacqueline Shalloe Sandra Russell

## Elected Members

We are entitled to have 9 elected members on our Parochial Church Council. Members of the PCC are elected for a term of three years. Each year a third of the PCC members stand down, and a third are elected.

This year we have had 9 elected lay representatives, and no vacancies:

<b>3rd Year</b>	<b>2nd Year</b>	<b>1st Year</b>
Pamela Badhan	Stan Conner	Lynne Birch
Christian Badhan	Frances Johns	Nick Reeve
Helen Dimmock	Pauline Byles	Matthew Johns

## Co-opted members

Each PCC can co-opt to its membership a limited number of people to become members for the rest of the PCC year.

We have had no co-opted members this year.

# Rector's Report

I am the kind of person who enjoys picking up other churches news sheets and looking at their websites to see what they get up to. It gives me a real sense of joy and excitement to see how people express their faith in the settings and communities they find themselves.

It is with that same sense of joy and excitement that I have been writing this, my report, looking back at the last 12 months and also reading what others have written. Everything that you will read in this report will tell a story of what we have been getting up to in the parish, and that in turn tells a story of how God has been working in and amongst us. It is my hope and prayer that as you read on, you will be encouraged and excited.

Last year I said that over the year ahead we would be focusing on prayer. We have been doing that in a variety of ways - some big and corporate and other small and individual. One highlight of this was joining in with the Archbishop's initiative to join with churches throughout the country and indeed the world with the 'Thy Kingdom Come' week leading up to Pentecost. We used material offered to create a prayerful space on Pentecost Sunday, and also in the days leading up to this. Some of us gathered for quiet prayer at St Richard's during the week and others gathered at St Paul's for a celebration of all that God is doing in the London Diocese. We have created a space for prayer in St Mary's, bringing together the chance to light candles with the opportunity to write a prayer and be prayed for in the services on a Sunday. It has been a privilege to pray for those who have come in and left requests on the prayer tree. As a whole church focus on prayer we followed the Prayer course in our Sunday morning services and also in our weekly small group, the Wednesday evening 'pudding club'. I know from conversations with a number of people that this was a great help to our individual prayer lives. It was good to spend a number of weeks learning about a specific topic, so we will look to do the same and cover a different topic in the year to come.

The PCC and its various committees have been working hard over the year - you can read a lot of these things in the reports which follow, but I would like to highlight a few significant items and events. Pauline Byles, our Treasurer, has been working hard to understand her new role and get to grips with the parish finances., and we spent some time in the autumn thinking about generosity and giving. Thank you to those who have started to give regularly since then. Another highlight has been the renewal of the St Mary's vestry - I have to say it feels luxurious every time I come into St Mary's, compared to

the experience of not having one since I started as your Rector. We have had two wonderful fairs at Summer and Christmas, and was a wonderful opportunity to meet with our local community and to have some fun too. Many thanks to Father Christmas who always manages to fit us into his diary!

Most of the PCC got together for an 'away day' this year, and we hope to repeat this annually. We used material available to us to focus on what we are about as a PCC and as a church, and we look forward to hosting an evening in the next year to which all will be invited. We will be able to discuss things we value and continue to think more about the future of our parish, building on our great heritage.

Another great highlight in the life of the parish was our 'Celebration of Faith' service at which our Bishop, +Pete, baptised and confirmed members of our church family. This was a great celebration and thanks to all those who were involved, especially to those who contributed to the endless supply of food.

Personally, it has been wonderful to note a growth in our community feel. It is wonderful to have a chance to speak to one another over a cup of tea or coffee after the service at St Mary's, but also to see community and relationships being built in other ways. This is clear at 'pudding club', ladies meeting together monthly, the mens pilgrimage and cleaning and maintenance days, to name a few. There is a continuing feel that we are 'for one another' and this is great to be part of. There has also been some growth numerically as well as spiritually in our congregations, and it has been wonderful to witness the beginnings of another church community on a Saturday morning with our younger children and families at Brunch Church. I look forward to seeing this develop over the next year.

Finally, these last few months have not been the best for me as I experienced ill health and missed being with you all over advent and Christmas. I want to thank everyone who helped over that time to ensure things continued to go smoothly, especially to clergy from other parishes who came to help us rather than being with their own churches. It is hard to give individual thanks in reports like this as there are so many people who do things and bring so much to the church, so please know I value each of you and thank you for who you are and what you do.

Enjoy reading the following reports, and may you be filled with *JOY* as you read the story of what we have been getting up to with God over the last year.

Rev'd Chris Hill

# Reports relating to the business of the PCC

## **Summary of the Parochial Church Council (2016/17)**

We have had five meetings in the past year, with sub committees (Property, Social and Standing Committee) actively working between these meetings, then reporting back to the PCC. The Standing Committee was formally elected this year, to cover and decide on agenda items prior to the PCC meeting. The committee may also be called for small ad hoc occasions when an urgent decision is required, or the PCC has given the Standing Committee their authority to act on a particular matter. Terms of Reference for each of the committees have been set up and will be reviewed regularly. It was agreed by the PCC that a summary report of all PCC meetings should be produced after every meeting, and these can be viewed at both St. Mary's and St. Richard's.

Much of the PCC business and discussions over the last year is reported in committee reports, so this report concentrates on key items that may not be covered elsewhere. The Property team in particular have a long "to do" list but have also completed a lot of maintenance work – from noticeable work (the vestry roof at St. Mary's for example) to much smaller tasks like painting and replacing items.

Derek Coombes stood down as Treasurer last year, and Pauline Byles kindly agreed to take on this task. She has worked tirelessly on our accounts and set up new procedures for documenting income and expenditure. We had a visit from Kevin Ogilvie, the Willesden Area Finance Advisor, who provided information and advice to help with financial controls. Following this, a stewardship campaign has taken place and we also now have an account with a parish giving scheme - do ask Pauline for more information about this.

Although there have been numerous items of expenditure over the year, one essential item was a new photocopier which has hugely reduced time and money spent on producing parish items such as the weekly bulletin.

Kim Day-Haynes became our Church Safeguarding Officer and has worked hard on safeguarding procedures. She has attended safeguarding training and reported back to the PCC recently about requirements and procedures in place.

Our new website ([northolt.org](http://northolt.org)) was set up and went live in May, and is now regularly updated. We also have an active presence on Facebook ([fb.me/stmarystrichard](https://www.facebook.com/stmarystrichard)) where we post events and other items relating to church life. The majority of PCC members attended an 'Away Day' in October, spending time to reflect on what the PCC is for, our mission for the future and spiritual

growth. We are planning on setting up a mission team, plus a finance team to assist the treasurer.

The PCC continues to pray for and discuss God's will for our church, and we ask for His guidance as we continue to grow as a parish.

On a personal note, this has been my first year as PCC Secretary, a role I have enjoyed taking on, and would like to thank all members of the PCC for their support during this time. I look forward to continuing the role.

Frances Johns, PCC Secretary

## **Churchwardens Report**

We are now having regular meetings with Fr. Chris to help us fulfil our role as Churchwardens.

### **ST MARY'S**

St Mary's is open on Wednesday and Saturday mornings for prayer and 10am Eucharist respectively. If you would like to attend either of these Fr. Chris and Jacque will be pleased to see you.

The change in the method for receiving communion has been well received and refreshments after the service on Sunday is proving very successful and popular. Our thanks go to Sylvia for organising the coffee etc every Sunday morning. It is very much appreciated. If you would like to help in any way, please speak to Sylvia – help with clearing up afterwards is always needed. Donations of cake and biscuits (or funds) are always welcome. A big thank you to those who already help and/or donate.

We are pleased to see a small increase in the congregation over the past year – it is nice to welcome new people into our Church Family. Long may it continue.

Despite a few setbacks our temporary Vestry has been completed and is now in use. The long term Vestry plans are still on hold as we do not have enough funds as yet. As you are all aware, fund raising is of utmost importance and we look for innovative suggestions for doing this.

Ann Rae still continues to voluntarily clean St Mary's church on a fortnightly basis which is greatly appreciated. If you would like to help Ann please speak to her, or one of us.

There will be Easter cleaning the week before Easter, Saturday 8 April, starting at 10.30. Please come and "do your bit" – many hands make light

work and the Church looked splendid after our great effort last year. Can we please have a repeat performance.

The Churchyard continues to be a problem with litter and rubbish dropped. The pathway has still to be repaired – as you can see. The proposed Memorial Garden needs further consideration before it can be implemented. The use of artificial flowers is not allowed and we need to find a way of dealing with this. In the meantime, can we ask if you see any unnecessary litter (is any of it necessary) can you dispose of it in the dustbins. Thank you.

#### ST RICHARD'S

St Richard's offers a 9am service and there has been a slight increase in attendance from time to time.

Thanks to Tracey who has been cleaning the linen and for Pamela who has been hoovering the chapel.

On the last Saturday of each month Fr. Chris and Rachel run a Brunch Church for parents, and toddlers under school age. Please contact them if you are interested and/or can help out.

Unfortunately someone has damaged the fence – this is under review for repair. The grass is still being cut on a regular basis.

#### HALL LETTINGS

Hall lettings at St Richard's continue at a steady rate – we are fairly well booked for children's parties.

There are two regular lets at the Memorial Hall but the Scouts are leaving at the end of July so we will be looking for a replacement – the Image Theatre Group continues apace. Please think about our halls should you need a hall for an event or function.

#### FOOD BANK

We have re-commenced the Food Bank in both churches – please remember them when you are shopping – and thank you to everyone who contributes. They are very grateful for everything they receive. Please see the monthly "shopping list" for items to buy and bring. Our thanks go to all of you for your continuing support during the year.

Rosemary & Linda

## **Property Team** (a report on the fabric of the parish)

### ST MARY'S

Our vestry has been re-roofed, the walls and floor fixed and it has now been returned to service.

The organ loft has been cleared of all the items that had been moved there while the vestry was out of action. There is now space again for the choir to sit for weddings, or for congregation overflow during busy services.

The carpet in the sanctuary has been removed, with the permission of both the architect and archdeacon, leaving the memorials in the floor open to viewing. Upon removal, the carpet was revealed to be rather mouldy underneath. The chairs in the sanctuary have had felt pads fitted to their feet to prevent them from scratching the floor.

We are now looking at longer-term options for the vestry, taking into account the local history of Northolt, and investigating local groups that might have uses for the vestry and other historic buildings around the area. This will take some time to get the right local stakeholders together to discuss the requirements that the community might have for both a new vestry and the memorial hall, to then come up with a plan, and to then raise the required funds to complete the project.

The path leading to St Mary's is becoming dangerously uneven, so this needs to be investigated by the property team urgently. Our architect is looking into the cost of materials, and whether we can widen the path as part of this process to make it more accessible to all.

Holes have appeared in some of the wooden tiles on the steeple, believed to be caused by woodpeckers. While we have confirmed that no animals have infested the steeple, these need to be repaired using wooden screens and a stainless-steel mesh to ensure this stays that way. Additionally, the old, wooden ladder leading to the bell tower needs to be replaced as it is unsafe and has missing rungs.

### MEMORIAL HALL

The office now has a photocopier and desk, as well as a monitor, mouse and keyboard to connect a laptop. We still need to organise a working party to redecorate the small, back room (adjacent to the main hall) as well as the large wooden partition between the main hall and back room.

The new cupboards have been installed, and most of the belongings that had been stored in the back room of the hall have now been moved. Many thanks must be given to Fr. Chris, Frances and Rosemary for sorting through it all and ensuring it is safely tucked away for when we need it.

## ST RICHARD'S

Now that the urgent repairs to the vestry have been completed, the works identified by the quinquennial inspection need to be completed. These include removing the asbestos in the cupboard in Teapots, replacing the front doors, fire doors and the door to the hall, and installing new fire and smoke alarms. In addition, we would like to organise a working party for 2017 to clear and redecorate the Teapots room to make it more attractive to lessees. In addition to this, the rail around the front lawn has been damaged in two places, so will need repairing.

Matthew Johns, Chair

## Treasurer's Report

I would like to express my thanks to Derek who has continued to support me throughout the handover of the church's finances. Also to Father David Green who has voluntarily given his time to record the income and expenditure in order to produce the accounts.

There has been a mixture of negative and very positive moments since taking on the task of treasurer.

Thank you to all who gave in any way in 2016. The average regular monthly giving was approximately £1,500. The total giving for 2016 was £21,057.61, but given that our Common Fund contribution alone cost £37,049.00 without taking into account the running costs of the church there is clearly a huge discrepancy between the income and expenditure, which means that we have relied on the Munt Legacy to have the cash flow to keep up with the payment of bills. This will be looked into over the coming year, and anything that should not have been paid from this legacy money will need to be paid back. Thank you also to those who gave of their time and talents to keep our running costs as low as possible.

St. Richard's Hall continues to be used by the Nursery and the 'Oil of Joy Ministry', which provides a regular income to cover the cost of maintaining the building and meeting the cost of the bills. The Memorial Hall continues to have a regular let in the Scouts and the Silom Full Gospel Church, as well as casual lets to support the cost of maintenance.

The Stewardship Campaign 'Living Generously, Giving Generously' in September/ October 2016 has proven to be a very beneficial event. Thank you to all those who have committed to giving regularly or increasing their giving. 10 people are now using the Parish Giving Scheme providing a total of £720 each month with an additional £180 tax rebate. 9 people are giving by monthly standing order with a monthly total of £436. A further 18 are using the 'Free Will Offering' envelopes with an approximate monthly total of £658 if they are given in regularly. A few donate their money periodically. The

monthly giving for 2017 at this stage is approximately £1800. An increase, but as with everything, our costs are continuing to rise. The Common Fund contribution alone for this year is £39,150.00.

Thank you to the Social Committee who organise fundraising events in an effort to 'top up' our income and help to meet running costs.

We have been blessed with benefactors. The completion of the sale of Claire Gaeth's flat meant that in December we received £141,114.80. The standing committee are tasked with ensuring that this and the Munt legacy is transferred into an appropriate savings account and to begin discussions as to the way these moneys will be used.

Please continue to pray for God's guidance when we are considering all financial matters.

Pauline Byles

### ***A note on the parish accounts:***

*The parish accounts are currently being finalised and audited. When they are back with us they will be approved by the PCC, and published. We hope this will happen before the APCM, so they can be presented at this meeting.*

### **Deanery Synod Representatives Report**

It has been a privilege for us to represent our parish and also have an opportunity to meet so many of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Also to be involved in so many of the decisions made for our deanery.

We thank God for all the parishes and the wonderful churches who have taken on hosting the meetings, and hoping that one day St. Mary's and St Richards will be able to do the same.

We were moved by the healing ministry, by how many people can be helped in Jesus' name and the help that is available. We did put some leaflets in church - hopefully most of you had a chance to read them. On that very night we had a chance to be prayed for and also anointed with oil - it was a moving moment.

We were thrilled once again to be given £1,000 from the mission fund for Messy Church and Brunch Church, which has not only helped in buying the equipment but to provide the food. We thank the Deanery and the 'pathway' charity for this generosity to our parish.

We would like to remind everyone that the congregation are able to attend the synod and be part of what goes on.

We hope that you will take the opportunity and attend at least once. This is the timetable for this year's upcoming Meetings

**A Special Meeting to discuss the appointment of a new Bishop of London**

**at St John's Church, Mattock Lane, Ealing**

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> 2017 March at 7.30pm**

**The Archdeacon's Visitation Service and celebration of Capital Vision**

**at St Stephen's Ealing, St Stephen's Road, Ealing W13 8HB**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 May at 7.30pm**

**Applicants to the Deanery Mission Fund will present their projects and we will make decisions about which ones to support.**

**at The Church of the Ascension, Beaufort Road, W5 3EB**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 July at 7.30pm**

**Education Matters**

**at William Perkin School, Oldfield Lane North, Greenford UB6 8PR**

**17th October 2017 at 7.30pm**

We hope that out of the four synod meetings at least each member will take the opportunity to join with the Synod and experience what goes on. Our thanks go to Revd. Steve Newbold, Area Dean of Ealing, for his support and hard work. We pray that God will continue to bless our Deanery synod and all that it represents.

Jacqueline Shalloe and Sandra Russell

## **Safeguarding**

I took on the Safeguarding Officer role last summer, after which Fr. Chris and I met on several occasions to determine an action plan for the role. In addition, we completed a Diocese of London Parish Safeguarding Self Audit. This was an immensely useful evaluation tool, as it afforded the opportunity to determine the areas of practice that were clearly in place, those that were only partially met and, finally, those criteria which had not been met at all.

In October I attended Diocesan New to the Role of Church Safeguarding Officer Training. This was a helpful initial guide to the role and, through conversations with fellow newly-appointed officers, was pleased to discover we were not so far behind many other churches, albeit we still have much to put in place.

The training highlighted the importance of maintaining DBS records and I extend my thanks to Helen Dimmock for her role as DBS Checker. The recommendation is that DBS checks are renewed every five years, whilst Diocesan Safeguarding training of all PCC members and those involved with Children's Church should be completed every three years. This is one of the key priorities for this year.

The training and key action points were shared with the PCC at their meeting in November.

A Parish Safeguarding Information poster will be displayed at both St. Richard's and St. Mary's and this provides contact numbers for the Safeguarding Officer and Children's Champion. As recommended at the training session, this is a mobile phone that will be used for this purpose only.

Other recommendations to be initiated include a detailed register of children attending Children's Church. Best practice would involve a registration form, upon which the following information would be entered: full name of the child and the parents' names, address, mobile phone numbers and allergy information. Furthermore, it is suggested that a weekly register is kept of those attending.

The Safeguarding Policy Statement needs to be heard at a full PCC meeting and ratified after discussion. Further agreement is needed over the job descriptions for volunteer roles within our church communities.

Whilst there are still procedures to be implemented and training to be accredited, we are most certainly a caring community, with safeguarding at the heart of all that we do.

Kim Day-Haynes

## **Social Committee**

The social committee have organised both the Summer fair and Christmas fair. Both were well attended and raised approximately £1,250 and £850 respectively. It is always a lot of work organising these events, especially as it is just the two of us on the social committee now, but our huge thanks go to everyone who came along and helped set up, ran stalls, baked cakes and clearing up afterwards! It was much appreciated! If you are interested in helping to organise these in the future, please do speak to one of us as any help is always much appreciated!

We also organised a Christmas meal which was attended by 40 people. This was purely a social event - enjoyed by everyone and was a chance to get to

know one another a bit more. This was the second year we have held this, and we had double the numbers this time!  
We will be organising it for Christmas this year but may have to limit numbers (or change venue) as The Crown struggled to seat everyone!

We have weekly refreshments after the Sunday service at St. Mary's – Sylvia kindly organises this every week so we thank her for this, and this is another chance for everyone to have a chat and meet new people.

We are hoping to organise some fundraising events in the future, but the first one is our Summer fair which is booked for Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017. This will be a joint event with the Northolt Village Residents' Association who are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> year.

Many thanks again to everyone who has supported us with events.

Frances & Rosemary

## **Ordinand's Report**

I would like to thank everyone for your continued support as I train at St Mellitus college to be ordained. The books that you have bought me throughout my training so far have been a great blessing and have allowed me to hand in my assignments on time and not ask for extension. These books are going to carry me all through my life ministry.

My training started when you paid for me all those years ago to go to Moorlands college, and then St. Mellitus to do the access course. Every little bit of this is forming me into the leader God wants me to be. I have appreciated your support and the change you have brought into my life and ministry. Fr. Chris started training me from last year as a deacon and it was a privilege to serve beside Bishop Pete. It would be a lie if said that my work as a Dispenser, doing theology and loving my family is not hard, but your prayers have given me strength.

At college, I have had more chances than some - leading worship and leading from the Book of Common Prayer. This was a new and great experience for me. St. Mellitus is like being home from home and I am very comfortable in this college. I have been allowed to represent my college and take part in the farewell service at St. Paul's Cathedral - that was a great moment.

In the parish I have continued to visit those who want to be visited with Fr. Chris, preaching, have led a few services in St. Richards and one at St Mary's Sunday morning, a crib service last year and the pudding club.

Jacqueline Shalloe

# Reports relating to the activities of the Parish

## **Pudding Club (Wednesday Evenings Small Group)**

Our weekly group, led by Fr. Chris and Jacque, started primarily for those within the church community seeking to be confirmed in their faith or those wishing to explore their faith further. All are welcome.

We undertook the “START! God, Jesus and the journey of life in six sessions” by Robin Gamble in May 2016. This was a down-to-earth interactive course involving video clips, activities and prayer.

Our sessions take place at St Richards’s Church on a Wednesday evening, starting at 7.30pm with puddings and then commencing our course at 8pm, finishing for 9.30pm.

Our next course “The Prayer Course” by Pete Greig complimented the Sunday services given by Fr. Chris over the Summer months in helping us on our journey through the Lord’s Prayer. It involved six weekly video and discussion sessions helping us to enjoy God’s presence in prayer and worship...to grow in our relationship with God. Although intensive, it covered areas such as adoration, petition, perseverance and listening.

We progressed to “The Alpha Course” based on “Questions of life” by Nicky Gumble. This was based on 15 weekly sessions covering questions such as: “Why did Jesus die?”, “How can we have faith?”, “Why and how should we read the Bible?”, “How does God guide us” and “How can I make the most of the rest of my life?”

We ended the year with a Christmas meal at the Harvester organised by Jacque. This was a wonderful opportunity to relax and reflect in a more social setting (Santa’s grotto) on how much we had learnt from our weekly sessions and from each other.

At the beginning of this year our group had decided to read “The Bible in One Year” with audio daily commentary from Nicky Gumble. Our readings include passages from the Old and New Testament and either a Psalms or Proverbs reading.

The weekly meetings always involve a bible reading, a prayer, a moment of reflection and meditation, and the opportunity to discuss in more detail the complexities of our Christian faith.

As we approached Easter Jacque organised a screening, on Shrove Tuesday, of the award-winning film “The Theory of Everything” about Stephen Hawking. It was lovely to see so many of our church community attend to share in the experience and enjoy the pancake feast.

The screening of the film was a prelude to the start of our Lent course “The Mystery of Everything” by Hilary Brand. It explores the mysteries of the universe with our everyday lives and how faith operates in our world where there are things that we do not always understand or can explain. The course runs for 5 weeks and covers sessions on wonder, weakness, complexity of relationships, encounter with frailty and the hope beyond brokenness.

Thank you Fr. Chris and Jacque for sharing your wisdom, faith and experiences with us as we continue on our amazing journey.

Sylvia Geraghty

### **Men’s Pilgrimage to Walsingham (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> February)**

A group of men from our parish joined the men of the parish of St Martin’s in Ruislip to journey to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk, “England’s Jerusalem” in February. A destination for pilgrimages for centuries, Walsingham is a holy place to Catholics and Anglicans alike. It was a great opportunity for some of the men of our parish to get to know each other better, and also to reconnect with Father David Green, who had kindly looked after St. Mary’s and St Richard’s during our interregnum period of 2014-2015.

We all enjoyed the social aspect of the trip, but also the chance to spend some time in individual and collective worship. A variety of different services were offered to us all, including a walk around the Stations of the Cross within the Shrine grounds, accompanied by readings and hymns, and a healing service where we were able to ask the priests and nuns of the Shrine to pray with us for our personal causes, with an option to make confession after.

Hymns and beer on Friday night was a favourite amongst the men from both parishes, where Father Simon from St Martin’s accompanied us on a piano in a common room in the Shrine, while we all picked our favourite hymns and sung them together at the tops of our voices, ensuring that both our souls and parched throats were refreshed with the welcome addition of beer. The traditional pilgrimage to Walsingham usually culminates in a barefoot walk of one mile from the Slipper Chapel to the Shrine (so called because this was where pilgrims would remove their slippers, or shoes, before progressing barefoot for the remainder). We enjoyed the walk to the Slipper

Chapel and back through some wonderful countryside, and gave us the opportunity to enjoy the historic chapel.

On Sunday morning, we joined with other pilgrims and the residents of Walsingham at the village church of St Mary's. A beautiful building that had been gutted by fire decades before, it has been restored lovingly with a vast, open and bright space for worship. The pilgrims vastly outnumbered the local parishioners, and were made to feel most welcome.

We all took away different, but very positive, things from the pilgrimage and the overall consensus was that we enjoyed the time to reflect, to pray and to participate in the different types of worship that were offered. All the men agreed wholeheartedly that they would be returning in 2018, and we hope to be joined by more of our parishioners.

Going forward, the men of the parish plan to meet once a month on a Saturday for breakfast in the local area, so if you would like to join us, please speak to Fr. Chris or one of the other men listed below.

Stan, Nick, Ninus, Robin, Fr. Chris, Matthew

### **Ladies Night (Last Friday of every month)**

After the Men's weekend away in Walsingham in 2016, some of us decided that there should be something for the female members of St. Mary's and St Richard's too!

A few of us put our heads together and agreed to meet up on a Friday evening in November for tea/coffee and cake. We spent the evening talking, eating and drinking, and at the end of the evening we all felt we had got to know each other more.

We met again in February and have now agreed to make this a regular event on the last Friday of each month. So far we have had 10 of us meeting up, but we would love more to join! All are welcome!

Rachel Hill

### **Brunch Church (Last Saturday of every month)**

It is wonderful to have a good number of young children at our churches, so the idea came about to do something especially for them and their parents/carers, and also for those in the surrounding areas who do not attend on Sundays.

We meet at St Richard's Church on the last Saturday of each month in the morning. We have fresh fair-trade coffee and tea, juice, bacon rolls (or veggie

sausages), and toast. The grown-ups can enjoy chatting whilst the little ones run around the spacious hall, playing with the toys.

Towards the end, we tidy the toys away all together and sing some fun and interactive christian songs (accompanied by a variety of noisy instruments), a Bible story and a prayer.

We don't have an age limit, but we think children from birth up until around age 6 would enjoy this. If you or anyone you know has young children, we would love to see you!

Rachel Hill

## **Children's Church**

Children's church meets in the Memorial Hall in conjunction with the 10 o'clock service at St Mary's. Currently we have approximately 15 children, ranging in age from 3 to 10 years, who attend regularly, although the number of children present fluctuates from week to week, with an average of 6 to 8 children attending each session.

At present we are working from "The Complete Children's Liturgy Book", using the same Sunday Readings as the Church Service, with additional crafts and activities for the children to enjoy. We are looking at alternative lesson plans and our hope is to introduce a discussion group with our older children in the future.

We would like to thank Frances and Andrew for their help in leading Children's Church and inspiring our young people. If anyone else feels called to Children's Ministry we would welcome all additional support.

Pauline and Sandra

## **Music at St Mary's**

A small but very dedicated choir have supported the services with a high standard of singing, from short chorals to the more lengthy modern songs. The Organ has been tuned and kept in good order by Shepherds, as always, and the music has been much enhanced by the piano playing of Matthew and Rachel, and the excellent Guitar playing of Benito.

The music evenings have attracted a regular and enthusiastic group of performers and audience, and has given an opportunity to perform to many musicians, young and old.

Norman Higgins

## **Northolt Vanguard**

After about 18 years of production under the current editor, a proposal to conclude production of the magazine was agreed in late 2015. Accordingly, with no prospect of continuing production, the final issue was produced in June 2016 and outstanding subscription credits refunded. A final financial account can be seen below. Production costs were underwritten throughout these 18 years with only two of the years (recently) showing revenue above expenditure; this caused an overall total underwritten loss of £772.13.

I remain grateful to all who supported and encouraged production over the years including those who provided practical support in the form of articles or distribution including: John Caird, Margaret Brown, Gladys Dewey, Joan Sewell, Wally Maloney, Helen Watson, Mary Hunt, Christian Badhan, Revd Pamela Walker, Fr Greville Thomas, Fr Chris Hill (and probably others whose names now escape me – for which I apologise), those who provided personal profiles, and those who agreed to be photographed; also to those who have contributed financial and/or verbal support and encouragement. A few advertisers also provided revenue which was gratefully received; two such regulars were Richard Simmons and Steve Pound MP.

And now it is with some sadness that I make this final report to the APCM, in the hope that appropriate methods of communicating the Christian faith to the community of Northolt can be resourced in the future.

Vanguard accounts are available from Pauline Byles, Parish Treasurer, all credit has been transferred to the parish general account.

Stephen Haymer

## **St Mary's is Open**

St Mary's is open on a Wednesday and Saturday morning (in addition to Sundays) for you to enjoy some quiet space in a beautiful setting.

Visitors to the church, sometimes one person and other times up to 30 over the course of a morning, are welcomed into the building and offered a safe space to pray, explore the history, contemplate their lives, have a conversation with Jacque or Fr Chris and have a cup of fair trade tea or freshly brewed coffee.

One way of engaging with people is the introduction of our prayer area. People often stop to light a candle or write a prayer, and are touched when they find out the church will pray for them weekly.

Having St Mary's open is an important part of our mission to our local community, and we need to see it this way. We are no longer surprised by those passing by coming in and exclaiming 'what a beautiful building! We thought it was closed'.

We also have worship on a Wednesday and a Saturday in the form of communion and morning prayer. All are welcome.



Rector: Rev'd Chris Hill  
St Mary's Rectory, Ealing Road,  
Northolt UB5 6AA

020 8841 5691  
stmarys@northolt.org

northolt.org  
fb.me/stmarystrichard

