

# **St Francis of Assisi Parish Council**



## **Annual Report**

**2014 - 2015**

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## **Spirituality, Liturgy & Faith Formation**

Fr Kieran Monaghan OSB from Ampleforth led a day of talks and prayer and Mass in the Assisi Hall.

Parish trip to Rome and Assisi October 2014. 16 parishioners enjoyed a lovely sunny, interesting week together. An opportunity to get to know each other and the cities better.

Advent Reflection in December "Painting of Adoration of the Shepherds" by Poussin led by Jacinta Campbell. The painting was used as a focus and a way to engage in a prayerful way with the Christmas story. It provided an opportunity for prayer and quiet reflection within circular seating arrangement in Blessed Sacrament chapel with a cup of hot, spiced apple juice.

Taizé service Advent December 2014. A prayerful liturgy incorporating the meditative Taizé chants which is being supported with increasing numbers.

Taizé service Lent March 2015

Music and Spirituality Day 18<sup>th</sup> April 2015. Contributions by Greg Ryan, Stephen Spooner & Chris Dingle. This was an attempt to bring together three peoples' approach to spirituality through music. It was attended by 18 parishioners and seemed to be well received.

Three parishioners (Mike & Jacinta Campbell and Lindsay Reynolds) are in their first year of studying for the CCRS. 3 modules have been completed namely, New Testament, Jesus Christ and The Church.

Rev Stephen Parker visited Lourdes in April 2015 as Chaplain accompanied by Linda and Hannah Parker and John Booth. They acted as helpers with HPCT.

Monthly house prayer group for Lectio Divina on Monday mornings continues to thrive. Numbers vary but usually between six and ten regulars. Newcomers always welcome.

### **For the Future**

- Prayer session with Bishop Ralph and Gerry Burke - 26<sup>th</sup> September at St Francis Church.

- Day retreat with Margaret Silf
- The idea of lectio can be extended to paintings as well as music and we will be trying a day next year when we will look at the word, the picture and the sound to explore this some more.

### **May be of interest**

Monastery of Our Lady of Hyning, Warton, near Carnforth, Lancashire, LA5 9SE

- Prayer, Nature and Gardening. Led by Sr Mary Stella - 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015
- Beginners Iconography Course. Led by Sr Mary Stella - 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015

## **Youth and Nurture**

The youth programme has again focussed on the sacraments this year. The Reconciliation and Holy Communion programme is run annually, and this year fourteen children are preparing to receive their first Holy Communion on the feast of Corpus Christi.

Sixteen young men and women were confirmed following a successful programme run in the Parish. This year there will be no confirmation programme running, and the Council will determine whether to run one in the following year, or wait another year.

Whilst the monthly Youth Mass has not been re-established, a good number of young men and women continue to be actively involved in the music group at the 11am mass. This year several new young musicians have been added to the team and it has been particularly encouraging to see some of the young women volunteer as cantors to lead the psalm and gospel acclamation.

Looking to the wider aspects of nurture and formation, three members of the parish have begun studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS). This is a nationally recognised qualification, accredited by the CBCEW Board of Religious Studies and run by the diocesan adult education team, which gives an introduction to Catholic theology and is particularly suitable for teachers and anyone involved in parish ministry such as readers, Eucharistic ministers and catechists.

## **Mission, Justice & Peace**

St Francis of Assisi Justice & Peace Group meets three times a year to organise and co-ordinate awareness and fund raising activities for CAFOD and other organisations working with the poor at home and abroad.

The highlight of the year is the Parish Panto which is our chief fundraiser for CAFOD and is held just prior to Advent. In 2014, we raised £1464 which was more than the previous year's £1335.

The Justice & Peace Group supported the Children's Liturgy Group who raised £250 for CAFOD's campaign for Syrian Refugees.

Looking forward to later in the year, there will probably be another event for sci-fi addicts. The theme is likely to be Dr Who and/or Star Trek - probably in the autumn. There will also be a cake sale for a charity to be decided.

The Justice & Peace Group has also supported the S2 Foodbank who provide emergency food support to families in crisis. Regular gifts of money help them to buy fresh goods and items of which they are short. Their website gives details of their current needs, and we will try to indicate these on the collection box in the narthex. See [www.s2foodbank.org.uk/](http://www.s2foodbank.org.uk/) or their Facebook page.

During Lent, the Justice & Peace Group contributed a weekly Lenten reflection which was handed out with the Franciscan.

It is very important to recognise that many individuals and groups do a lot for charitable work both at home and overseas. Many volunteer at St Wilfrid's and others give money or practical assistance to personal interest areas. Examples of this include the Dance Group who raised a staggering £2430 for the CAFOD Ebola Appeal.

The Ascent Group raised money for St Wilfrid's Residential Centre during 2014, but will collect for the Apostleship of the Sea in 2015. They were delighted with the response to the appeal around Christmas for sweaters, scarves, gloves, toiletries and sweets for seafarers visiting Immingham Docks. The Ascent Group will visit the docks for their annual retreat on 1<sup>st</sup> July, so further contributions would be welcome as they will take further supplies with them. Money is used to

buy phone cards to enable seafarers to contact their loved ones whilst they are briefly in port.

Parishioners again gave Easter eggs and Christmas presents to young people in Roundabout. Collections of tea, coffee and sugar continue for St Wilfrid's.

The book sale raised around £200 for St Wilfrid's Residential Centre.

Unfortunately the card making group, which remade greetings cards in aid of the Goodwill Children's Village in India, has had to close.

## **Pastoral Care and Community**

Hallam Churches Together have held a number of varied and interesting events in 2014 and 2015 with more to come later this year!

In November, a professional singer sang songs from the shows at St. Luke's, Lodgemoor and this was followed by a young couple, representing the charity Interserve, who spoke of their experience of fundraising in Mumbai. This was a fun, illuminating and well attended event. Several members of our parish were present.

During Advent, Hallam Churches Together held a Taizé evening at St. Francis which was very well attended and a lovely way to begin the Christmas season.

On 19<sup>th</sup> April, we were given an enlightening talk at Ranmoor Parish Centre of the plight of the poorest women in Ethiopia. The talk was given by a young volunteer working with Christian Aid and this was followed by some Ethiopian food consisting of pancakes, chicken and spicy lentils. Generally, the event was well attended but only three members of our parish were present.

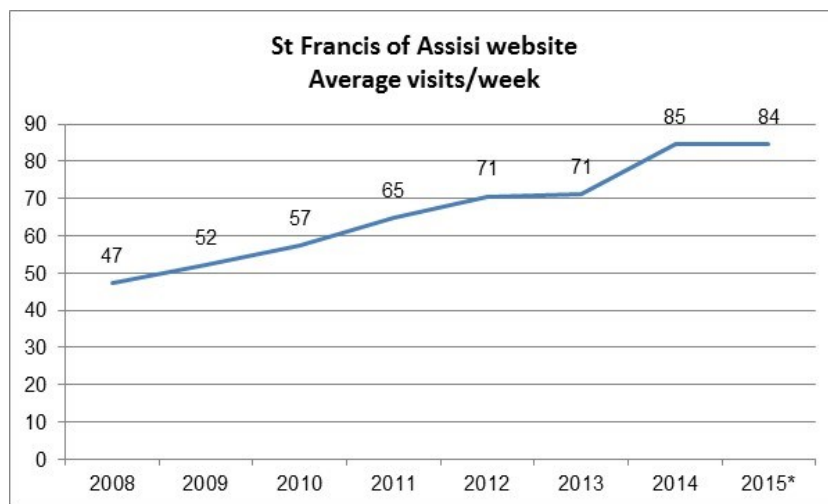
On 24<sup>th</sup> May (Pentecost), there will be a musical evening entitled "A Good Sing" at Nether Green Methodist Church starting at 6.30pm. This should be a lovely evening and, hopefully, will be well attended.

Another musical event will be held on 14th November entitled "Music around the World". Food will be included and the programme will run from 6.30pm to 9.30pm. Venue to be announced.

## Communications

The Franciscan has been produced each week (except for a short break in August) and is given out at both Sunday Masses. It is also available on the website and around 30 people download it each week.

We have continued to update the Parish website ([www.stfranciscr-sheffield.org.uk](http://www.stfranciscr-sheffield.org.uk)) regularly, adding the newsletter each week and also changing the home page to show forthcoming events or topical issues. The minutes of Parish Council meetings are now published on the website. During Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, we replaced the photo of the church on the home page with an appropriate banner to give the website a new look.



\* Jan - April only

The number of visits to the church website has increased to over 80 per week. As usual, the busiest times of the year were Christmas (191 visits during Christmas week) and Easter (153 visits during Holy week). The time around Father Tomblin's funeral was also very busy (219 visits).

The most common device for viewing the website is still a desktop computer but tablets and mobile phones are being used more (22% visit using a tablet and 19% using a mobile phone). In the coming year, we hope to make the website easier to use on these devices.

The Parish e-mail account ([parishcouncil26@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:parishcouncil26@yahoo.co.uk)) is checked at least weekly. The types of e-mails received are enquiries about Mass times, hall bookings, requests for Baptisms, weddings etc.

The Parish calendar ([www.stfrancisrc-sheffield.org.uk/calendar.htm](http://www.stfrancisrc-sheffield.org.uk/calendar.htm)) has been updated regularly.

The Parish Directory has not been updated since October 2013 so will need updating soon.

## **Maintenance**

The maintenance group met the Diocesan Property Manager in October to discuss some much needed maintenance work on the roof and internal church doors as well as improvements to the toilets, kitchen and Assisi Hall.

Quotes were requested from local companies, and the Parish Council agreed that the works should be staged so that the parish could agree and fund each part of the work without getting Diocesan approval.

The main door into the church from the narthex has been repaired, and new door stops fitted in the toilets.

All the toilets have had new efficient hand dryers fitted, the fans have been serviced, floors repaired, and lighting augmented and put under automatic control. The kitchen units have been repaired, and a dishwasher installed.

The toilets, kitchen and hall will be redecorated with the aim of making them brighter, and blinds fitted to the skylights in the hall. The kitchen floor will be replaced and the Assisi Hall floor cleaned and resealed.

The parish has replaced the copier with a later model.

A new car park sign has been ordered and should soon be erected at the entrance to the car park.

The area immediately outside the church doors will be repointed during the summer.