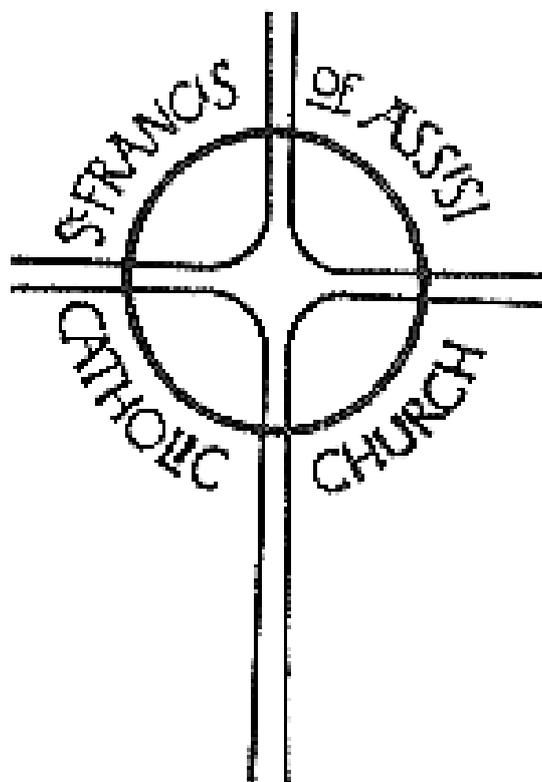


**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF**  
**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH**



**2011 – 2012**

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## **Report from Chairman of Parish Council**

Firstly our thanks go to Chris Dingle for stepping into the breach as Chairman in the early part of the year and for the work he did during his tenure.

### **New Parishioner's Welcoming Team.**

David Kaye, who has coordinated this ministry for some time, wishes to hand over the reins. Margaret Neale has volunteered to take over the duties and, on behalf of the Parish, my thanks go to her and we wish her success in continuing this important role. My thanks also to Jacinta Campbell for her support in this respect.

### **Marriage Preparation Support.**

Mr. & Mrs. Baron have undertaken this ministry for many years and thanks go to them. However, they would like to pass this role on and volunteers would be very much appreciated.

Finally, on behalf of all Parishioners, I would like to thank all those who have given of their time on the Parish Council and for the continuing good work done on our behalf. For those remaining for a further period I wish them well and good luck to those who have served their term.

Philip Ash

## **Liturgy and Spirituality**

Since the last AGM, there has been:

- An Advent service.
- Participation by some parishioners in the Deanery training day for the introduction of the new Missal translation.
- A five-day Ignatian approach retreat by the Aspire spiritual movement conducted on an individual basis with 22 participants.
- Participation by some parishioners in the Deanery quiet day at Spinkhill.
- Participation by some parishioners in the Deanery day on 'Communion for the sick'.
- Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation in September 2012.

There will be planned events of:

- An Advent and Lenten service.
- A one-day retreat by a contemplative nun (Bernardine) from Hynning Hall on "praying with icons".
- Celebration of the Year of Faith to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of Vatican II.
- Journey of Faith programme for those who wish to learn more or become a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

Jacinta Campbell  
Stephen Parker

## **Pastoral Care and Community**

The main focus of the Pastoral Care and Community group this year has been to try to establish a parish visiting group. An initial needs assessment survey was carried out by Eucharistic ministers asking people who received communion in their own homes if they would welcome regular visits from parishioners. The response to this was positive and the majority of people asked said that they would welcome such visits. The next step was to make an appeal in the Franciscan for anyone willing to become members of a visiting group to get in touch with Ana or Gill. The appeal was in the newsletter for three consecutive weeks but sadly no volunteers came forward. After discussions with the Parish Council and Father Kevin, it has been decided that visiting sick or housebound parishioners in hospital or their own homes would remain on an ad-hoc basis. Father is made aware of parishioners needing visits and will contact the people he knows are prepared to undertake such visits. It needs to be stressed that many parishioners already visit the sick and housebound on an informal basis and it is hoped that this situation will continue. It became apparent during efforts to establish a formal visiting group that this has been attempted many times over the past years. The formal and legal issues associated with such a venture are obviously off-putting to people but it is hoped that the pastoral care already generously offered by many parishioners will continue and strengthen our parish ministry.

Ana Kingston  
Gill Foster

## **Youth and Nurture**

This year this section has presented a new style Holy Communion programme led by Marysia Placzek. This programme was put together using power point presentations prepared by Marysia. After each session the candidates prepared a poster to let parishioners know what they had learnt that week. There were also two parents' sessions led by Rose Krzyz. Feedback for both children's and parents' session was very encouraging, and Marysia and Rose will act on suggestions put forward for future programmes.

The Confirmation programme took place this year with 27 candidates in the group. The programme followed was 'I am confirmed' by the Middlesbrough Diocesan Trust and was delivered by Stephen Parker, Claire Russell, John Booth, Clare Morgan, and Rose Krzyz. Due to the large number of candidates it is hoped that future confirmation programmes will be held more frequently, for example, every other year.

Both programmes were overseen by Fr. Kevin who contributed throughout all the sessions and provided continuity.

This Lent the parish hosted the presentation 'Born for This' in the Hallam diocese. The presentation took place on Palm Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. Young people from the parish contributed to the event, which was very well attended. Members of the congregation found the liturgy very moving.

Attempts to nurture community have not been as successful. There was a very poor response to starting different activity groups within the parish (e.g. photography, walking etc.). The one success was establishing a sewing group with the first aim to produce kneelers for the altar servers. It is hoped that the Arts and Craft show that will follow the Parish Council's AGM on the Parish day will be the first of many such events, and will serve to further nurture the community spirit within the parish.

This section of the Parish Council would like to thank all who helped out with the various activities throughout the year, and would like to encourage others to take an active part in the life of the parish.

Rose Krzyz  
Pat Fairbrother

## **Justice and 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 the season of Advent. Last year we raised around £1400. This year rehearsals commence on 2 November with performances on 30 November and 1 December, but we need a new director for the 2013 Panto and new ideas for fund raising.

The Doctor Who Night (£267) and the Cake Sale (£158.36) were other fundraisers for CAFOD.

The Book Sale raised money for Sister Helen's projects in Rwanda whilst card making raised money for the Goodwill Village in India.

Moving on to activities in the UK, parishioners gave Easter Eggs and Christmas Presents to young people in Roundabout.

This year we updated the Parish Covenant with the Poor which was approved by the Parish Council and signed by many parishioners on 4<sup>th</sup> March. As part of this the Parish Council agreed to add funds to the CAFOD Family Fast Day and to the collection for Poorer Parishes.

Church Action on Poverty is raising awareness of the increasing imbalance of wealth between the very highest paid and the poor of this country. Annual pilgrimages to the poorer parts of this city have been held, and this year we are visiting Heeley and Gleadless on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October.

John Green  
Markus Neckenig

## **Ecumenical Activities**

Although St Francis belongs to Churches Together in South Yorkshire, all the activity this year has been with the Crosspool Ecumenical Group, consisting of St Columba's, the Beacon at Stephen Hill, Tapton Congregational and St Francis, which meets about three times a year to plan joint activities.

The Churches have been active in the Crosspool Festival where there is a short closing service and this year they co-operated in having a Well Dressing and a stall to promote the churches of the district.

Lenten activities are organised and some years a reflective service has been held on Good Friday.

Gareth Hewitt, the singer, will be at St Columba's on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November and his visit will be our joint activity for One World Week.

Carols are sung in Crosspool one Saturday before Christmas. This year it will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> December may precede an Angel Festival at St Columba's.

The next meeting will be held at 1 Barnfield Road at 2.00pm on Tuesday 8 January 2013.

John Green is retiring as Ecumenical Representative having served since 1989, and he hopes that someone else will take his place.

John Green

## **Maintenance and Finance**

Not an enormous amount to report. The gardeners employed last year appear to be doing a good job and all other maintenance seems in order. Under the guidance of the Diocesan of Hallam Property team a nominated contractor, namely Peter Shaw, has been instructed in respect of the roofs, guttering and drain pipes.

As a current project we are currently arranging visits from 'joiners' to discuss and quote for erecting a hand rail in the Church and also in the side Chapel.

Under the system agreed last year the Parish has made additional payments to Cafod, the Diocesan Poor Parishes Fund and the Priests Training Fund.

Philip Ash  
Jim Conway

## Communications

This year the communication section has:

- Updated the Parish Website as required throughout the year. The website continues to be well used with an average of almost 70 visits per week. The most viewed pages are the home page and the newsletter page.
- Checked the Parish e-mail account at least weekly and forwarded messages as appropriate. E-mails received are generally about hall bookings, requests for Baptisms, weddings etc. and enquiries about parish activities.
- Updated the Parish calendar regularly.
- Updated the Parish Directory to incorporate the latest information on activities within the Parish. Where possible e-mail addresses for contacts have been added to the directory (in addition to the phone numbers) to allow people to make contact more easily.
- The Franciscan newsletter continues to be produced weekly and given out at Sunday Mass. It can also be downloaded from the website and an average of 15 people download it each week.
- The audio equipment purchased last year has been used throughout the year for various activities.

Jayne Middlemas  
Alex Krzyz