

## Annual Report of Fr Simon Ellis to St Margaret Mary Parish 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2017

### Overview:

I arrived into the parish on 27 August, 2016 (and was formally inducted on 25<sup>th</sup> September) and I owe this appointment to the Archbishop of Birmingham, The Rt Revd Bernard Longley and the Ordinary of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, Monsignor Keith Newton. I am grateful for this chance for the Ordinariate to be working in partnership with the Archdiocese in 'Newman's Birmingham'. I moved from Chaplaincy and teaching at Mount St Mary's College & Barlborough Hall School in Sheffield, working with the Jesuits and leading the Ordinariate group in Nottingham/Derby and this has all been a great blessing for me. I want to put on record my thanks on behalf of the family for your welcome to me and to them. I am also grateful to the Ordinariate for paying my stipend and to the prayers and work of countless Catholic priests and people from St Margaret Mary parish here who have paved the way for us to be here living the gospel life.

### Prayer, liturgy, worship and music

Daily Mass - the mass times have now settled into the pattern of Monday 7pm (9.30am at the Convent of the Blessed Virgin Mary); Tues, Wed and Friday at 9.15am. I would like to introduce adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and enable the church to be open more often in the day.

Rosary – this is every Tuesday at 9am. There is a small but dedicated group who say the rosary.

Pilgrimage - A pilgrimage to St Margaret Mary's home town of Paray le Monial is being prepared for 2018. This year, parish members will attend the pilgrimage to Walsingham on 24 June. There are also diocesan pilgrimages planned to Knock, Lourdes and to Fatima (100<sup>th</sup> anniversary pilgrimage).

A significant aim for this year is continuing to enable a prayerful atmosphere *before* mass starts. As we were reminded in Lent, noise is the enemy of prayer. We are not talking about small children here, but adults! One person's 'small conversation' may upset half a dozen people's prayer.

In music I am very grateful to all that Einir and the choir have been doing, including the new Gloria which fits the translation produced in 2011.

Our Patronal Festival of St Margaret Mary in 2016 took place on a Sunday and we had a beautiful mass, followed by a reception in the hall. In 2017 the mass will be on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm. Our preacher will be Deacon James Patrick, a Judge based in Bristol.

### Data for 2016:

This is the data from our registers. We will be able to build up a picture as we progress through the years. Many thanks to those who help count at our masses.

Year: 1st Jan- 31 Dec	Average attendance weekend masses	Baptisms	Confirmation	Receptions into church	1 <sup>st</sup> Holy Communion	Funerals	Weddings
2016	230 (from 27 August – 31 Dec	24	18	1	21	11	0
2017							

**Deaths:** We note, in particular the death of Pat Swift, Tony Mullholland, Jack Scully and Katie Widdowson this year. May they rest in the peace of Christ. + Next year Fr Simon plans to have a memorial service for the parish, for those who have died in the past year.

**Christmas** – we had 442 people attend our services at Christmas.

### **Sacraments, including Ordination**

Leonard Cox is studying in preparation for Ordination as Deacon, God –willing, on Saturday, 17 June, 2017 at St James, Spanish Place, London, by Cardinal George Pell. It is the intention of the Ordinariate leader Mgr. Keith Newton to place Leonard into this parish. We pray for Leonard at this important stage in the journey. Leonard was a pastor in the Church of England, working in St Luke, Kingstanding and in West Bromwich, until moving, with Janice, into the Catholic Church last year.

On a separate note, we are making preparations for seminarians from Oscott College to begin working here on placement and for their groups to attend worship at the weekend. The two seminarians - both in the Ordinariate - are Jonathan Creer and Thomas Mason. Please pray for Jonathan and Thomas. They will be ordained as deacons on 24 June in Oscott College.

First Holy Communion celebrations this year will comprise of two masses, on 20 May, at 9am and 11am. The Confirmation will be with Bishop Pageter on 22 June at 7pm.

### **Eucharistic Ministers**

Many thanks to Gerard Boylan, Derrick West, Anne Forrest, John Coffey and Hugh McConville for their service as Eucharistic ministers. John Kearney and Ted Ware were inaugurated, and the existing five renewed vows, at the Maundy Thursday Mass. Many thanks for all they do in mass and in taking the sacrament to the sick and housebound. There is no more privileged or humbling work.

### **Partnerships**

We are part of the partnership with Christ the King, Kingstanding and the Assumption Maryvale (which includes the Convent of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a community of Sisters who are part of the Ordinariate and were Anglican nuns in Wantage near Oxford). The partnership with all of these people, including Fr Eamonn Corduff is in its infancy, but we are helping each other covering for mass and sacramental and pastoral duties. We are looking at providing a more systematic catechetical programme across the three parishes, so that anyone who comes to us at any time of the year, wanting baptism, reception, confirmation or simply to enquire after the faith can be slotted into a programme within a few weeks. Evangelisation is prior to (and post) catechesis and so there will be energy given to both evangelisation and catechesis.

**Outreach** - Fr Simon is preparing a survey to go to parents at the school, to look at the need for adult education, baby and toddler groups, befriending, elderly care, after-school clubs, etc. and see what we could help to provide in this community. We are going to be part of the Community Festival of Fun on 9 September, 2017 from 12 – 3pm at Witton Lakes. On this day there will be e.g. donkey rides, a car boot sale, 'sea side' fun and ice cream! St Margaret Mary Church will provide some of the refreshments.

Also we have begun a quarterly magazine which will scoop up news and look ahead a few months at our activities.

**School** The Governors who attend or are connected with St Margaret Mary Church are: Mrs Anne Forrest, Mr Gerard Boylan, and Mr Adrian Walczak. Many thanks to Mr Danny Lafferty who has completed his term of office and is retiring from school governorship.

As school heads into what is always the busy summer term, we have the the start of our expansion very much in our thoughts. Work is due to begin on creating a new entrance and exit into school during Whitsun. This will coincide with the upgrade of both the car park adjacent to church and the path that runs next to the school playground.

Building work itself on the school site is due to begin late summer with the date for completion being Christmas 2017. Our school will then have a new two storey 4 classroom block: an exciting time for all of us.

One of the biggest issues we face is academisation, the move to MAC (Multi Academy). The Catholic Church had initially warmly encouraged all schools to become MAC but the Government is becoming less enthusiastic pre-Brexit/election at its own original plan! There was a presentation at Bishop Walsh school attended by Governors on 24 January, 2017, which still left St Margaret Mary governors very much unconvinced. A decision was taken on 30 March full Governing body meeting not to proceed with MAC. We do believe that the strength of the school lies in the close relationship between Head, parents, governing body, parish priest and parishioners at the local level. We feel this would be eroded if we joined a MAC and the Head of St Margaret Mary would lose the key role of making appointments and setting a budget.

In terms of academic highlights, 78% of pupils in EYFS achieved a 'good' level of development. In KS1 79% of children have an expected or higher level in maths and reading, and 67% in writing. In KS2 the combined writing and maths result is at 73% which is above the Erdington and national results.

We appointed two new teachers in Miss Frances Ward (Y4) and Miss Charlotte Finn (Y1). Both are NQTs and are doing very well. We said farewell to Emma Hayes who worked very successfully in setting up the nursery. Mr Phil Barton took over as RE coordinator from Mrs Hayes in 2017.

Finally we keep in our thoughts and prayers all the children taking their SAT tests early in the summer term.

### **Child Protection – Safeguarding**

Owing to health reasons, Robert Brough had to stand down as safeguarding officer. We are grateful for all that Robert has done in this role. A presentation was made to Robert by way of a thank you. Mrs Virginia Okeke has taken on the role of safeguarding officer and training will be accompanying that position. We also hope to appoint a deputy safeguarding officer.

### **Youth work**

We attended the Catholic Church (Cymfed - which sounds Welsh but isn't! = Catholic Youth Ministry Federation) event in the Wembley Arena, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017, 'Flame' which happens every two years. This one was subtitled 10,000 reasons to be hopeful. Not only were young people present from all three parishes, but our clergy and Archbishop. Probably with most powerful witness came from Cardinal Charles Bo from Myanmar who urged the young people to "carry the flame of hope" and spoke movingly of the persecution that Catholics had endured in Myanmar. Throughout the day a migrant boat TO6411 was lit up, from the Italian island of Lampedusa which was there to highlight

the plight of refugees and the report from the UN showing that last year 2500 people drowned at sea on crossings to Europe. #Flame2017 was a good day for our young people.

Our servers attended the St Joseph's Guild annual mass on 25<sup>th</sup> March at St Chad's Cathedral on the feast of the Annunciation. Well done to all those who attended that mass. The servers have had two outings to a local fast food establishment as a way of thanking them and their families for their sterling work. We now have 17 servers: many thanks to John Kearney for coordinating what they do, and to Derrick West, John Coffey, Anne Forrest and Gerard Boylan for their work in keeping the daily mass served and readers and the organisation of daily mass taken care of.

**Charities/Second collection/The needy** - Many thanks to all those who help with the St Chad collection. It is well supported and is a good cause. Our second collections are well supported, for example we gave £419 in our first three collections in 2017. We also raised £1000 for Palestine Christians through the sale of olive carved devotional items.

**Finance** - this will be introduced by Terry Brown in collaboration with the Finance Committee which meets regularly. Terry also reports to the Parish Pastoral Council which meets quarterly. I simply want to thank everyone for responding to the 'Talking Faith and Finance' initiative which got us talking and praying and thinking about our level of giving in the parish for the work of the parish. We established principles: regular, proportionate and generous are the three main principles. Parishes which don't attend to this end up on a continuous round of fund-raisers. You wouldn't run the RAF like that: so why would we want to run the Church of God like that! Now that people have pledged for the year, we can plan ahead and build for the future. Thank you.

**Fabric** - Our main fabric project this year has been the renewal of the roof. The theft of lead from the roof a number of years ago meant that plastic replacements for joining the roof to the walls were used. They have expanded and contracted and were deteriorating badly. We knew, with water ingress, the job was urgent. Thankfully, the job has been done very well and we are now watertight and we have cleared gutters and carried out other maintenance work whilst the scaffold was up.

Tower - we have secured the tower from pigeons and have obtained specification for the renewal of the existing bell of 1937 to be restored.

We are working with the Diocese to produce a plan for the refurbishment of an area for catechesis and meeting. The most likely option will be to use the existing space in the old gallery as there is a distinct room with great potential.

Re-Decoration - an anonymous donor will enable us to redecorate the church in the autumn, once the wedding and baptism season is out of the way.

**Pastoral Care** - It is my hope that we shall have more opportunity if we are able to improve our facilities in the gallery and elsewhere, that we will be more fit and able to offer support to people who need long term help, e.g. advice, education, support, catechesis.

**Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2017** will be reported in the next annual report in April 2018. Suffice to say that it was a good season and we will remember the talks on St Matthew's gospel, the walk of witness on Good Friday in the community with our ecumenical partners (Pentecostal and Anglican), the Washing of Feet on Maundy Thursday and the receptions, baptisms and confirmation of 5 people at the Easter vigil. We also will remember the Polish blessing of baskets, which drew 260 people to church and our visiting preacher Fr Vaughn Treco, from St Bede, Minneapolis, USA.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF ST MARGARET MARY CHURCH,  
BIRMINGHAM B23 7AB**

Tel 0121 373 0069 079 857 53391

Twitter: @b23margaretmary

[margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com](mailto:margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com)

**AGENDA**

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies
3. [Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising]
4. Annual Report of Parish Priest, Fr Simon Ellis
5. Finance Report (Terry Brown and the Finance Committee)
6. Appointment of Churchwardens and Ushers to assist at mass on the basis of a 3-year term of office, and being re-elected only once (i.e. to serve only 6 years maximum).

**ANNUAL MEETING OF ST MARGARET MARY CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM B23  
7AB**

Tel 0121 373 0069 079 857 53391

Twitter: @b23margaretmary

[margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com](mailto:margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com)

**AGENDA**

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies
3. [Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising]
4. Annual Report of Parish Priest, Fr Simon Ellis
5. Finance Report (Terry Brown and the Finance Committee)
6. Appointment of Churchwardens and Ushers to assist at mass on the basis of a 3-year term of office, and being re-elected only once (i.e. to serve only 6 years maximum)

**ANNUAL MEETING OF ST MARGARET MARY CHURCH,  
BIRMINGHAM B23 7AB**

Tel 0121 373 0069 079 857 53391

Twitter: @b23margaretmary

[margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com](mailto:margaretmaryperrycommon@gmail.com)

Appointment of Churchwardens and Ushers to assist at mass on the basis of a 3-year term of office, and being re-elected only once (i.e. to serve only 6 years maximum). All those applying need to have a proposer and seconder and be baptised. Furthermore, all those applying need to have worshipped at St Margaret Mary Church for 6 months.

I \_\_\_\_\_ wish to apply to become:

Churchwarden

Usher

***[please underline which post you are applying for]*** for the next 3 years for St Margaret Mary Church to assist in worship in particular with welcoming people to mass and with the distribution of sheets and books at mass.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Proposer \_\_\_\_\_

Seconder \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to Fr Simon Ellis, St Margaret Mary Church, 59 Perry Common Road, Birmingham B23 7AB) by Easter VI – 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2017