



Review of the Church's Year 2015-2016

The last 12 months at
St Augustine's Parish, High Wycombe.

This is a digest of what has been particular to this year. Much work – communion to the housebound, cleaning the church and Upper Room, collecting and counting the collection, polishing the brass, accounts and administration, serving, arranging flowers, singing in the choir, Toddlers group, Prayer Group, Children's Liturgy – happens week in, week out. The parish owes a debt of gratitude to all those who give their time to the community like this.

Christmas Bazaar 2015 The Christmas Bazaar ran on familiar lines, with Father Christmas bringing much joy to young and old. It was the last one organized by David Sole. The Bazaar raised £3,504.

Year of Mercy A group of parishioners travelled to the Cathedral in parish transport to see the opening of the Year of Mercy and the Holy Door on 8 Dec, one way of testifying to the large family of the diocese.

Christmas 2015 The flower arrangers told Fr Paul that their arrangements would be in purple and gold in 2015, so that he could co-ordinate the colours on the Christmas tree. When it went up, the tree was decorated with just purple balls and it looked magnificent for Advent. After the Children's Nativity on Christmas Eve, gold balls were added for Christmas, making a stunning addition for Midnight Mass. All three Masses were overflowing, and over a thousand people were at Mass.

Seminarians In January we welcomed Liam Castle to spend a month with us on a pastoral placement from Oscott College in Birmingham. Liam was in his first year, and is a cousin to Daniel Rooke who was with us last year. Daniel was instituted as an Acolyte at Oscott on 20 November 2016. Chris Nicholls from this parish left Oscott during the year and is now pursuing another path. Kevin Ryan is now in his fourth year at Oscott, and currently on an extended pastoral placement in Luton.

Knights of St Columba (KSC) Christmas Party for the over-65s A great crowd turned out or were brought for the KSC Christmas party on 9 January 2016 at Our Lady of Grace, Booker. The people make a wonderful sight with party hats and crackers. If you know of someone over 65 who no longer comes to Mass because of age or infirmity, this can be a way for them to re-engage.

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) This meets 3 times a year and looks at the ways that the parish can reach out and spread the Gospel and nurture the faith of parishioners. Looking after the needs of the elderly, it ran an Afternoon Tea on 18 July 2016. The Finance Committee has now been formed anew as part of the PPC.

Cardinal Hume Centre On 17 January 2016, Stephen Currid talked to people at the Sunday morning Masses about the work of the Cardinal Hume Centre and thanked them for the parish's monthly contributions. A coachload of parishioners went to visit the Centre on 26 July 2016 and came back bubbling about the work of the place.

24 hours for the Lord 4-5 March The Holy Father proposed this initiative and we followed through on it this year, with the broad spectrum of the prayer life of the parish being celebrated in the church, priests from the Pastoral Area taking it in turns to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during the night. At 3am there were 8 people still in church. Many commented afterwards on what a moving experience it was.

Jimmy Mitchell 18 March A young, Catholic, American evangelist, Jimmy spent the day with students and staff at St Michael's School and the evening with the parish in a moving testimony in the Upper Room. His presence was a shot in the arm during Lent.

Fr Alessandro Renò Fr Alessandro came to St Augustine's on 17 March 2016. He is Italian, and was working in an Ecuador parish before health concerns suggested his return to Europe. Bishop Peter asked him to look after the Parish of St Columba's, Chesham, after the Parish Priest there had a fall. He

was at Chesham at the weekends and High Wycombe during the week until he moved full-time to Chesham in September. He introduced music to the weekday Masses and proved a great hit among the people who came to know him.

The Pop-up Café The café has continued to pop-up, arranged by Marian Dunsire and assistants. The cakes really are a highlight.

Chrism Mass The Parish laid on a minibus to take parishioners from here and BJHN Parish to the Chrism Mass in Northampton on Holy Thursday, where the Bishop blesses the sacramental oils we use through the year, and where the priests of the Diocese renew their priestly promises. Afterwards, lunch was provided by the Diocese for everyone.

Easter Liturgies The high point of the Church's year was celebrated with the intensive programme of the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Children's Stations, the Veneration of the Cross, the wonderful evening Vigil and 2 packed Sunday morning Masses. Water in the spotlights short-circuited the organ and microphones as all the church lights were switched on in the Easter Vigil!

May Fayre 2 May 2016 The Bank Holiday weather threatened us this year, but the rain held off for most of the day until the last hour of the May Fayre. Good numbers came through, enjoying the stalls, the games and the entertainments. The Mayor and the local MP joined us as the actor Peter Egan (Shrimpie, the Marquess of Flintshire, in *Downton Abbey*) opened the Fayre. The gross takings were £22,427 of which £15,912 was profit and £12,963 came to St Augustine's.

James Donovan 1926-2016 After 6 months of rapidly deteriorating health and well-being, Fr Paul's father died on 16 June. Many parishioners kindly expressed their sympathies, and the choir turned out in large numbers to sing at his funeral in Farnham Royal.

Fr Tom Feighan 1925-2016 Fr Tom died in Wexham Park Hospital on 15 July 2016, a much beloved priest in this parish for 30 years. His funeral at St Augustine's on 25 July was one of those occasions to lift the spirits and to proclaim the Gospel of the Resurrection. His body was brought into the church the night before and his coffin draped in a white funeral pall, a reminder of the baptismal garment he wore at his baptism, and on it was placed

the Book of the Gospels open at the Gospel for Easter Night. The Bishop was away so the Vicar General, Mgr Sean Healy, presided at the funeral and Fr Willie Strain preached. The music which resonated in the completely-full church was led by the Choir which turned out in force. His burial at Wycombe Cemetery brought its own large crowd, and one can see that people continue to visit his grave.

Queen's 90th birthday The Choir put on a concert on 25 June to mark the Queen's 90th birthday, with songs of a patriotic nature. Making their first public appearance was the St Augustine's Male Voices (SAMVOX). Her Majesty was duly celebrated.

World Youth Day, Krakow 25-31 July 2016

8 people from High Wycombe joined the Northampton Youth Ministry Office (NYMO) at Krakow. There were about 3 million people at the event, making it an experience like no other for those that went.

Northampton Youth Ministry Office (NYMO)

Summer Camp Three of our younger parishioners joined others from the Diocese for the Summer Camp at Alton Castle. The Parish subsidised them as a way of investing in their formation in the faith.

Anointing Mass The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) arranged the Mass of the Anointing of the Sick at Our Lady of Grace on 22 October 2015, organising the necessary lifts for those without family or friends to transport them. People do find this a moving Mass, and many draw strength from it.

Parish Finance The Accounts for 2015-16 were presented on 20 November 2016. It headlined a drop in the collection income of £11,000, though the numbers attending Mass are now greater than this time last year. The Parish Finance Committee was re-constituted and they will address this next year. At the moment, those who contribute by Standing Order do so to the Parish's local bank account. This means that we, the parish, have to record these contributions and their dates, and at the end of the year work out the calculations for the claim for Gift Aid. As most parishes have their Standing Orders paid into their section of the Diocesan Account, where everything is recorded automatically and the Gift Aid claim made on their behalf by the Diocese, we are moving to that. Over the next few months individuals are being invited to sign Standing Orders to the new bank account and to cancel their Standing Orders to the local bank account.

The Reverend Michael Bates Michael was ordained Deacon on 25 June 2016 at Oscott. He is with us at St Augustine's for pastoral experience before his ordination to the priesthood at Daventry on 15 July 2017. He has shown himself to be a very confident and multi-talented addition to the community.

St Michael's Catholic School The building programme at St Michael's continues, giving them new facilities (e.g. a gym three times the size of the previous one). The integration of the Primary and Secondary phases is also continuing, for example with a single Reception Office outside peak times. At the end of the summer term, the Head of the Primary Phase, Dr Sarah Leonard, announced that she would be leaving to take up new work in Tertiary Education. Dr Leonard was a regular at the 9am Sunday Mass and held in great affection by the pupils at St Michael's.

Future High Wycombe During the year, a sifting group looked at the variety of suggestions for what the future of the Catholic presence in High Wycombe might look like, prioritised the suggestions by giving them a numerical weighting, and produced three options to look at in greater depth: 1, 2 and 3-church configurations. These were in addition to looking at the Status Quo. Those three, which were given to the parish on 20 March 2016 were:

Status Quo	2 parishes, 3 existing churches
Option 1	1 parish, 3 existing churches
Option 2	1 or 2 parishes, 2 churches St Augustine's & Our Lady of Grace
Option 3	A new-build church in a suitable location. If not feasible, a 1-church option of St Augustine's will be considered.

At the moment we have engaged a Planning Consultant to look at how the restrictions on use of 2 of the 3 churches will affect property prices before we consider the feasibility and desirability of the options.

Mission Planning The two High Wycombe Parishes are hosting a Mission 6-21 May 2017. Isabel Cameron from the Sion Community talked at the end of Mass in all the churches about what would be involved, and solicited volunteers. The 2 parishes are now working closely on all the significant preparatory work.

Sunday Mass changes The changes introduced last year (dropping Saturday evening Mass, bringing forward Sunday evening Mass) have bedded in. Most noticeable has been how the Sunday evening Mass has become much more popular. In 2014 when it was at

7pm, the average participation was 113; in 2015 at 6pm it was 159; in 2016 it was 165 but sometimes tops 200.

Children's Liturgy A decision was made in October 2016 to keep the Children's Liturgy at the 11am Mass during term time, but not to keep it in holiday time, which always makes for difficulty in ensuring that there are enough helpers. It also means that the Liturgy of the Word is not unfamiliar to the children.

Ecumenism At the moment the Parish provides the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary of the local Churches Together committee. Parishioners are supportive of the town-centre Walk of Witness on Good Friday and of the Wycombe Homeless Connection. Deacon Brin has become a trustee of the Wycombe Refugee Partnership, and the parish responded generously to their appeal.

Goodbye We said goodbye to John & Doreen Hall, who have moved to Scotland. John was in the KSC and served at weekday Mass twice a week and Sunday morning at 9am. John was awarded the Guild of St Stephen Silver Medal in recognition of his serving at St Augustine's. We lost David & Margaret Sole, who have moved to Oxfordshire. David is KSC Provincial Grand Knight, served at 11am, a lynchpin of the parish and Margaret someone whose default position was to give help wherever it was needed. Laura Cullen, a NYMO youth-worker lived in the parish and became a regular at the 6pm Mass, doing great work with young adults in the area. She decided to return to Ireland and left at the end of October. All will be a blessing to their new parishes and a loss to ours.

Mass count At the October 2016 Mass count, the average Sunday Mass participation was:

9am	192
11am	289
6pm	165
Total	646

The 2015 figure was 617, so up almost 5%.

Welcomed into our community

In this Church year, the following 39 have been baptized:

Isabella Paul	Ifeanyi Nwankwo	Sean Mc Carthy
Jayden Ruoko	Sophia Burathoki	Isabella Bradley-Holden
Tiana Ruoko	Isabella-Rose McMahan	Ethan Talarczyk-Brown
Kara Dobbs	Charlie Mc Enteggart	Bella Vrena-Sharp
Sofia Balmes	Isaac Rogers	Edith Fowler
Szgmom Cielinski	Miley Griffin	Emily Edmands
Lily Cotton	Edison Mc Auliffe	Giorgos Korpis
Elizabeth Wiltshire	Theodore Mc Auliffe	Nathally Bitemcpourt-Consonni
Lehal Mitrui	Hendrix Siteri-Edwards	James Papa
Miah Martinez-Iorno	Sophia Olivia	Emily Jolic
Alicia Taplin	Kaitlyn Lising	Mila Harrison
Adam Dicks	Kai Jennings	Alfred Ridley
James da Silva	Aveesh Malnoidalage	Magdalena Cielinska

And I was received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church:

Adele Hadfield

First Communion

27 were prepared at St Michael's Catholic School and made their First Communion on 8 May 2016:

Fifa Aicanbi-Gilbert	Liam Goggin	Charlene Soares-Obiorah
Samuel Anderzejaczek	Luke Harris	Tilly Steptoe
Harvey Basa	Kris Jinobin	Olivia Tyrrell
Julia Buono	Tallulah Lenharth	Charlotte Van't Hof Auja
Laya Chapman	Thomas McDonnell	Kian White
Ciara Edwards	Zuzanna Nytko	Rhys Wilcox
Johnkemilton Eruthayanathan	Leighne Antoniete Osa	Iaka Wlodarczyk
Matthew Evenden	Jayden Ruoko	
Mariza Fernandes	Braydon Selleck	
Isaac Gibbs	Aurora Silva-Donayre	

And the 17 prepared within the Parish made their First Communion on 26 June 2016:

Mia Bunce	July Hillsley	Jacob Snaith
Adam Farrell	Sofia Iaciovano	Esha Srikantha
Amara Hartwig	Bethany Kajtar	Theresa Stokes
Cian Hadfield	Cadie Mallari	Remi Szatkowski
Axelle Gaju	Caná Medina	Larissa Vinothraj
Helena Hayden	Gabrielle Sarl	

And these 3 prepared within the Parish made their First Communion on 23 July 2016:

Bridget Ryan	Rodger Ryan	Beyoncé Sheridan
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Confirmations - Mgr Paul Donovan Confirmed these 4 on 26 March 2016:

Lehal Mitrui	Andrew Nicholls
Adele Hadfield	Stephen Webb

And these 3 on 11 April 2016:

Maria Semedo	Miguel Rita	Fabio Rita
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Marriage

These 5 couples committed themselves to each other:

Mario Cristinziano & Sarah Penny	Eurick Gumbs & Tracy Gould
Christopher Bull & Rachel Ingleton	David Hedley & Lindsey Owen
Anthony Stokes & Julia Stokes	

Commended to God

Since the First Sunday of Advent 2015, we have commended to God the following 33 in the parish.

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Angela Carimando	Christopher Hawkins	Elizabeth Benlembarek
Peter Unwin	Anthony De Battista	Paul Crawford
Geoffrey Nash	Julian Moffat	Peter Cusick
Louise Brown	Margaret Lynch	Stuart Newman
Lynda Hartless	Michael Horne	Fr Thomas Feighan
Renato Parmegiani	Dolores Fawkes	Ann Linnane
Dorothy Majewski	Winifred Moloney	Peter Sheridan
Timothy Fitzgerald	Eileen Collins	Emily Glynn
Leonard Airs	Matthew Mc Gee	Patrick Colborne
Ingeborg Airs	Helen MacInnes	Peter Martin
Kevin Duffy	Margaret Gillett	Nora Jessop