

# 2009

Thursday 1 January 2009

Father Barry Matthews said Mass at 1000 – not the usual Thursday 1900 – due to the Bank Holiday. Father Gordon was absent in Ireland at the blessing of the new Abbot of Glenstal. Father Barry will also say the 1000 Mass on Friday 2 January. Father Barry who resides in Newburgh, is still technically incardinated in the Archdiocese of Cape Town, and appears to be on permanent supply duty in the Liverpool Archdiocese.

Tuesday 6 January 2009

The first Meeting of Confirmations 2009 took place in the Church Meeting Room. Candidates, their Parents, the chief Catechist and Father Gordon attended. Only ten candidates have applied this year out of a possible total of 23 possibles.

Wednesday 7 January 2009

Global warming continues...?! After a week of near zero, the weather last night was the coldest night in England for seven years. Temperatures dropped to 11°F/minus 11.8°C. The national press carried pictures of stalactite type frozen water on bushes in Cobbs Lane Newburgh which had appeared on Friday.

Saturday 10 January 2009

The temperature in the Priory Utilities Room at midday was 39°F/4°C. Taking the Holy Oils from the Sacristy safe in preparation for a Baptism at 1000 Mass tomorrow it was discovered that the Oils were frozen!

Tuesday 13 January 2009

The Parish Prayer Group which had been meeting for many years at 34 Brandreth Drive (David and Pauline Barnes) has now transferred to 5 Burnside (Ann Burdekin).

Monday 19 January 2009

Snow – but not much.

Sunday 25 January 2009

For the first time in many years (at least not since Gas was installed in 2001) the Church Boiler did not operate for Sunday morning. A shortened Mass (one Reading, one minute homily) allowed the Congregation to depart by 1040.

Church Unity Service at Christ Church Parbold. About 55 present +12 clergy and musicians – OLAS was well represented.

Monday 26 January 2009

The Boiler repairman came – the boiler started in time for midday Mass and was on again in the evening.....but.....

Tuesday 27 January 2009

The Boiler failed again. Apparently the fault requires a new motor which might not be available until Saturday!

Wednesday 28 January 2009

Weekday Masses are now held in the Meeting Room with two electric heaters!

Saturday 31 January 2009

But the wrong part was sent for the Boiler. Fortunately the Technician explained how we could illegally (contrary to Health and Safety) jump-start the Boiler to operate for the weekend, although there were plans to have the weekend Masses in the School.

Saturday 31 January 2009

Ten Confirmation Candidates (nine female and one male) were presented to the Parish at the 1800 Mass.....and the Church was heated.

Sunday 1 February 2009

Fourteen children were presented at the 1000 Mass in preparation for first Confessions and first Holy Communions. Again, through jump-starting the Boiler, the Church was heated.

Monday 2 February 2009

Snow and the Arctic conditions are expected to last all week – the coldest since 1991. 50 mile tail backs on the M25, no 'buses at all in London – yet only a tiny bit of snow in Parbold – despite the temperature outside at midday being 0°C.

Tuesday 17 February 2009

Although fifteen were present at the 0915 Mass, including three Eucharistic Ministers, there were no Readers – and despite being asked by the Celebrant – no one came forward to read. Thus for the first time since Father Gordon came to Parbold in 1999 the celebrant had to do the first Reading.

Weekend 28 February + 1 March 2009

The Annual Mission Appeal was made on behalf of the Missionary Sisters by a Saint Peter Claver Sister. Sister Sheeja resided at Notre Dame Convent.

Sunday 1 March 2009

The Civic Service for Parbold Parish Council was held in Our Lady and All Saints this afternoon. Over one hundred attended, including the Chairman of West Lancashire District Council. Father Gordon preached. The last Civic Service held in our Church was in 2000.

Tuesday 3 March 2009

The first daffodil flowered – much later than in previous years due to the inclement winter! Last year the daffodils bloomed on 8 February.

Thursday 5 March 2009

Father Barry Matthews said Mass this evening and will say all Masses up to and including next Wednesday whilst Father Gordon is absent during his "Christmas" week break.

Monday 16 March 2009

95 attended the Service of First Reconciliation. Admittedly over 20 of these were School singers. Father Kenneth and Father Barry assisted Father Gordon in the one hour long Service during which about thirty-five people made use of the opportunity to obtain Absolution (fifteen of whom were making their First Confessions).

Saturday 21 March 2009

The Feast of St Benedict – and after a week of lovely spring temperatures (15°C) with some blossom beginning to appear – a cool and misty day with which to start spring.

Monday 6 April 2009

Approximately 60 attended the Holy Week Service of Reconciliation. Father Gordon was assisted by Father Kenneth Smith and Father Barry Matthews.

Friday 10 April 2009

The water Fountain in the Priory Garden (the Crescent) had been blowing all the fuses! This was found to be due to its junction box being full of (a) Damp Soil (b) brought there by existing Living Matter! A good clean and use of DW40 rectified the situation.

Sunday 12 April 2009

Easter Sunday: Attendances at Maundy Thursday (85), Good Friday (134) and the Easter Vigil (81) were on a par with last year as was the attendance at the 1000 Easter Day Mass which was attended by 294. There were two Baptisms at the 1000 Mass. The North West was fortunate in having a warm and sunny three days unlike the South and East of the country which were cold and damp.

Tuesday 15 April 2009

The Priory Flag (St George) flew at half-mast and the Church bell tolled a Funeral toll from 1506 until 1530 – 96 rings. The Archbishop had requested this for the twentieth anniversary of the 1989 Hillsborough tragedy when ninety-six Liverpool FC fans were crushed to death.

Sunday 26 April 2009

The New Vicar of Christ Church Parbold – to be inducted on Wednesday 29 April – unofficially attended the 1000 Mass this morning. He was “pleased” with the Service!

Tuesday 28 April 2009

Father Barry Matthews is saying the weekday Masses this week during Father Gordon’s absence on his annual Retreat at Ampleforth.

Monday 4 May 2009

At 1430 an intruder broke into the Priory, whilst Father Gordon was in the Study. A female being chased by a male came directly into the landing window – above the Porch – sending glass everywhere. She was a pheasant!

The Archbishop has issued a Clergy Handbook for the Archdiocese of Liverpool. This deals with the rights of Clergy – Priests and Deacons. Interestingly it lays down criteria for Deacons who should spend at least two evenings a week on Parish work. A slight problem at Parbold since for the past two years Deacon David has been absent grand-child caring in Cumbria every Monday to Friday – which has caused administrative problems in the Parish.

Weekend 9+10 May 2009

Father Barry supplied whilst Father Gordon took five adult Catechists and eleven teenagers (ten girls and one boy) to Ampleforth for their Confirmation Retreat.

Monday 18 May 2009

Workers arrived to start £40k of work on the Church and Priory. This is maintenance and repair work produced as a result of the Quinquennial Survey carried out in 2007. Items which had been tagged “must be completed within twelve months”!

Monday 18, Tuesday 19, Wednesday 20 May 2009

Deacon David presented an Easter Play *Donkeys Tales*. This production took place in Church. 76 attended on Monday night, 116 on Tuesday night and 104 on Wednesday night. Over sixty Parishioners (over twenty children from the School) were involved.

Thursday 21 May 2009

On what should have been the feast of the Ascension a party was held, after the evening Mass, on the Priory lawn for the sixty members of the Cast, Musicians and Stage helpers of *Donkey’s Tales*. Hot Pot was provided.

Saturday 23 May 2009

The French Tricolour flew from the Flag Pole. This was to honour the French Choir from La Possonnière, near Angers in France, who along with the Parbold Chamber Choir, were singing (amongst others) Faurés Requiem in Church. Le Maire of Possonnière was in attendance complete with tricolour Sash.

Also in attendance was the first Mayor of the newly constituted West Lancashire Borough Council. This was Councillor Roberts' first official engagement (and the first wearing the official Robes) since becoming Mayor.

Thursday 28 May 2009

The one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Consecration of the Church. The Parish Banner was displayed with a floral display shaped like a cake and marked 125.

Friday 29 May 2009

Summer is en route – it is over 20°C – with higher promised for the next three days.

Thursday 4 June 2009

Eleven teenagers (three from outside the Parish, but they had been educated at OLAS RC Primary School) received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Ambrose Griffiths OSB. Two "Come Holy Spirit" banners were borrowed from Our Lady and St Gerard's Lostock Hall to brighten up the Church. About 100 were present in Church. A pleasant party was held afterwards (the refreshments provided by the Candidates) in the Church Meeting Room.

Sunday 8 June 2009

Fifteen children from the Parish (thirteen from the School) made their First Holy Communion. Over 350 were present at the 1000 Mass.

Some Parishioners were missing having opted for a Parish Camping Weekend in the Lake District – despite the extremely warm weather of last weekend and the beginning of last week the weather had reverted to its usual cold June conditions (23°C down to 15°C).

Wednesday 17 June 2009

The Quondam of Our Lady and All Saints – Father Michael – arrived to supply for a week during Father Gordon's absence.

Friday 26 June 2009

The Annual Mass in honour of the Parish's martyr, Saint John Rigby, was held in the Barn of his home, Harrock Hall. Over one hundred were present from as far away as Warrington. Seven Priests concelebrated and two were in the Congregation.

Weekend 27-29 June 2009

Abbot Cuthbert arrived on Visitation – although he had officially visited only two years ago. He conducted a Baptism at the Sunday 1000 Mass and visited each Classroom in School on Monday 29 June.

Wednesday 1 July 2009

A week of very warm and sunny weather continues. 77°F in the Priory, today, 80°F (27°C) in the shade outside.

Saturday 4 July 2009

Despite mini showers (very refreshing) the Parish Garden Fête was held outside on the Car Park. Unfortunately, due to a lack of publicity, very few attended. Nevertheless the takings were up by 65% from last year.

Weekend 11 +12 July 2009

The country is currently in panic due to Swine Fever/Flu. This is now reaching pandemic levels. It originated in Mexico in the Spring.

The Archbishop has issued directives for the Liturgy to allay people's fears. Despite this Wrightington has stopped the Sign of Peace and Skelmersdale has stopped distributing the Precious Blood. Although the Archbishop has warned that Communion in the tongue can produce cross contamination at least one Parishioner at OLAS receives on the tongue. At OLAS the only change, for the time being, is that the Sign of Peace is now at the Penitential Rite at weekends, and at the Offertory on Weekdays.

Tuesday 14 July 2009

The School held its first Awards evening (Prize Giving) in Parbold Village Hall. It ran from 1830 until 2040. The Awards were presented by the former Headteacher, Mrs Claire Cropper, Father Gordon and the Chair of Governors.

Thursday 16 July 2009

The warm summer weather has disappeared – back to the usual July of 17°C. The School Leavers' Mass was held. 12 out of the 14 Leavers attended.

Sunday 19+26 July 2009

Attendances at the 1000 Masses were extremely low. A maximum of 70 on 26 July. Hopefully due to summer departures and not to Swine 'Flu.

August 2009

Weekend Mass attendances are still low – 30% lower than usual.

Wednesday 5 August 2009

From 1200 today until 1200 Thursday 6 August the Gates to Lancaster Lane are closed and padlocked. This is to ensure the privacy of the Church Grounds under the Highways Act. Father David and Father Michael used lock these for 24 hours once a year but Fr Gordon has not done this until now. Fortunately "Rights of Way" only accrue after twelve years of unrestricted access!

Friday 7 August 2009

12:34:56 seconds, today, 7/8/9, we have 123456789 – which will not be repeated until 7 August 3009!

Saturday 15 August 2009

From 1030 to 1055 each Saturday there will now be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament to pray for Vocations in this Year of the Priest. The Year of the Priest runs from the feast of the Sacred Heart 2009 until the feast of the Sacred Heart 2010.

Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 August 2009

Father Barry Matthews supplied whilst Fr Gordon was at Ampleforth for Chapter.

Friday 28 August 2009

Father Edward Mushi AJ (Apostle of Jesus) arrived. Father Edward is from Tanzania and is studying at Louvain. He will supply until Friday 25 September during Father Gordon's annual vacation which starts on Monday 31 August.

Tuesday 15 September 2009

Until 2008 the Baptismal Preparations for Parents were conducted by Deacon Brian and his wife Sylvia. This year Elaine Mulroy and Hugh McFaul have taken them over. In addition Courses are now being held in Skelmersdale for the Pastoral Area (Deanery). OLAS will continue to have three of its own courses each year. For those who cannot attend they will be able to attend one of the three per term in Skelmersdale.

Monday 21 September 2009

Father Gordon, having been hospitalised in St Louis the previous day, as a result of two collapses at St Louis Abbey, was able to celebrate his Golden Jubilee of Clothing in the Habit back at St Louis Abbey, Missouri, with his last remaining fellow Novice – Father Ralph.

Tuesday 28 September 2009

A Driveway mirror was placed (by a Parishioner, Ged Tromp) on the east side of Lancaster Lane, opposite the Church driveway, to assist with the difficult egress of the School run at 1520 – due to the bad parking of Parbold Douglas CE Parents.

Friday 9 October 2009

Year 6 from OLAS RC Primary School attended Mass – and during subsequent fortnights others years will also attend on Fridays.

Saturday 10 October 2009

The Driveway Mirror on the east side of Lancaster Lane was moved to within the Church Grounds. Firstly the east Lancaster Lane siting was on LCC property and thus illegal. Secondly it was too far away for good visibility. The present site, just by the gateway, is much improved.

Wednesday 21 October 2009

The Upholland Pastoral Area Clergy (ie Deanery) – including Father Gordon – went for a 24 hour reflective visit to Ampleforth

Sunday 1 November 2009

A new Cloth of Gold Chasuble appeared in honour of the Patronal Feast of the Parish. This vestment was given to Father Gordon in honour of his Golden Jubilee in the Habit. In 1955 when Prior Alexius celebrated his Golden Jubilee at Parbold he was presented with two stained glass windows for the Church.

Sunday 8 November 2009

The Uniformed Organisations did not attend the 1000 Mass. The new policy is that they will only attend on alternate years. This year they were at Christ Church Parbold.

Monday 9 November 2009

Frost!

Tuesday 10 November 2009

Work was completed in replacing the plastic mesh fence between the Church and Alder Lane with metal railings.

Wednesday 11 November 2009

Father Gordon conducted an Armistice Day Service in the School around the two minutes silence at 1100. Father Gordon was present in his RAF Uniform.

Friday 13 November 2009

Feast of All Saints OSB. Nine of the brethren, including two from Ormskirk, attended Lunch, prepared by Pat Bennett, at Our Lady and All Saints.

Thursday 5 November until Monday 16 November 2009

A very wet period. On Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 November over 12" of rain fell in Cumbria in twenty-four hours (but fortunately not in Parbold). This Cumbrian downpour was more than has ever been recorded in one twenty-four hours period. Extensive flooding.

Saturday 28 November 2009

Fr Barry Matthews said the Vigil Mass due to Father Gordon's absence at an RAF Dinner. Deacon David was also absent (for the weekend) at the annual Deacons' Retreat.

Sunday 29 November 2009

After 1000 Mass the Parish and School held a combined Advent Fayre in the School. Despite being a very well attended Fayre only £472 was raised – 32% less than last year's total of £620.

November 2009

November was the wettest November on record!

Tuesday 1 December 2009

Frost again – but we are in December!

Wednesday 17 + Thursday 18 December 2009

Fr Barry Matthews supplied during Father Gordon's absence at Ampleforth for Conventual Chapter.

Thursday 18 December 2009

Snow and below zero temperatures. However Parbold was in no way as badly affected as other areas of the country – such as Ampleforth (no Newspapers or Mail deliveries because of blocked roads).

Monday 21 December 2009

Our Lady and All Saints RC Primary School closed because of the weather! Not because of deep snow but because of a too icy Playground!

On their own initiative some young Parishioners (not youth or teenagers) organised a Carol sing around the Village on behalf of the SVP.

Tuesday 22 December 2009

Very bad weather conditions – thirty five minutes to drive to St Richard's Skelmersdale (instead of the usual ten to fifteen minutes). Parbold Hill was temporary closed due to a jack-knifed lorry. The "snowiest/coldest" in a decade.

Despite the weather/roads and a Catenian Christmas Dinner forty-four attended the Advent Penance Service led by Father Gordon, assisted by Monsignor Peter (SND) and Father Barry Matthews.

Thursday 24 December 2009

Certainly a white "Midnight Mass" – which as usual started with Carols at 2230 and the Candlelight Mass at 2300. 190 attended and the Mass finished at 0020. Considering the weather and state of the roads this was a very good attendance.

Friday 25 December 2009

214 attended the 1000 Mass – the largest in the past ten years. The overall Christmas attendance was the highest since 2003 (457).

The Christmas collection was down by £130 – despite larger numbers. This was either due to the Recession or due to the fact that the Collection at Midnight Mass was taken during the Offertory when people had a candle in one hand, a hymn book in the other hand and a carol sheet in the third hand – so could not get at their money. Last year, at Midnight Mass, the Collection was taken after Holy Communion.

Saturday 26 December 2009

The 1800 Mass could have been held in the Retro Choir – only 18 attended! Was yesterday's Mass attendance a really early Sunday obligation? Deacon David was absent during the weekend.

Sunday 27 December 2009

Sunday Mass attendance was as usual. Although both today and last night Parishioners were advised to leave their Cars parked in Lancaster Lane due to the extremely icy conditions of the driveway and Church Car Park. However a slight thaw did commence today.

Thursday 31 December 2009

Father Barry Matthews supplied today and will do so tomorrow and Saturday morning due to Father Gordon's absence.

December 2009

Global warming – the coldest winter – so far – in twenty-five years!

## **2009**

The average Mass attendance – despite a nose dive in attendance (especially for Saturday evening Mass) from 5 July onwards – was 193. This compares with 199 (2008), 209 (2007), 197 (2006) and 201 (2005). There are still 20.5% of known Parishioners attending Sunday Mass compared with 7% to 13% for our neighbouring Churches.