

2015

Thursday 1 January 2015

Due to Father Gordon's absence, seeing in the New Year, Parishioners attended morning Mass in the Convent. It was felt that this would be more convenient for Parishioners rather than the Thursday 1900 Mass in OLAS Church. However only six Parishioners attended, compared with 20 + 17 (one family) last year.

Saturday 10 January 2015

Gales! –A strong jet stream from the south west.

Monday 19 January 2015

The beginning of a busy week, and cold and wintry week! Tonight a Meeting of the Parish Pastoral Advisory Group.

Tuesday 20 January 2015

The annual Ecumenical Service for Church Unity held in our Church. 54 attended (up by four from last year), the majority being from Our Lady's. Christ Church Newburgh having had logistics problems! The Preacher was the Curate to Christ Church Parbold and All Saints Appley Bridge.

Thursday 22 January 2015

Bishop Vincent Malone presided at a Memorial Mass for Fr David O'Brien OSB – Parish Priest of OLAS 1973 until 1990 who had died at Ampleforth on 26 November. Today would have been Father David's ninetieth birthday. Fr David's brother and sisters were unable to attend due to the threatening winter weather conditions – nevertheless Fr Colin (Prior from Brownedge) and Fr Raphael (Brindle) and Fr Bernard (Ampleforth) concelebrated with Fr Gordon. Over 90 attended – Parishioners from Warrington and Brownedge as well as O'Brien family members from Ormskirk and Altrincham. Also present, from, Cumbria, was Miss Poulton, headteacher in Fr David's time. As it was Fr David's birthday wine and cake afterwards in the Meeting Room.

Wednesday 28 January 2015

No Morning Mass or Service in Church, Father Gordon was at Ampleforth. The Notices said there would be a 1030 Mass in the Convent – except just before Fr Gordon departed for Ampleforth yesterday the Convent phoned to say there would be no Mass on Wednesday! There was no time to arrange a Communion Service.

Thursday 29 January 2015

A winter white out – especially in the north. "The most severe day of winter". Manchester Airport closed for five hours – yet no snow in Parbold!

Sunday 1 February 2015

Eight children (out of a total of an expected total of eleven) were presented to the Parish for their Prayers as they continue the Sacramental Programme *With you always* – for their First Confessions, First Communions and Confirmations. The 1000 Mass was a "Children's Mass".

Wednesday 18 February 2015

Ash Wednesday and despite the School being on half term attendances at both Masses were the best for many years.

During Lent Peter Madden will conduct Stations of the Cross on alternate Wednesdays before the School day closes. Deacon David will conduct Stations every Friday during Lent.

Monday 23 February 2015

The Halogen Security floods outside the Priory were replaced with longer lasting LED Lights.

Friday 27 February 2015

The Daffodils arrived late – 8 February 2008 but 4 March last year.

Monday 9 March 2015

A Lenten Penance Service was held particularly for the First Confessions of the nine children (and two adults) in the Sacramental Programme. Fr Colin OSB, from Brownedge assisted. Approximately 30 were in attendance. Unfortunately a car parked on the car park went into free flow (?brake not on?) and careered through the car park – miraculously missing other cars – and ended up against a tree doing considerable damage to the car's rear end.

Thursday 12 March 2015

Father Austin Monaghan MHM, from Freshfield, returned to supply until next Wednesday in Father Gordon's absence.

Friday 20 March 2015

An 89% partial eclipse of the sun at 0930 during Mass. Not very impressive, at least in Parbold – almost like a dark stormy day!

Deacon David departed for the annual Deacons' weekend Retreat.

Monday 23 March 2015

Today and tomorrow Divine Office, Liturgy of the Word and Communion Services due to Father Gordon being at Ampleforth for Chapter. SND Convent are not keen on our Parishioners attending their Mass due to possible infections being transmitted to the elderly and infirm.

Saturday + Sunday 28 and 29 March 2015

Palm Sunday and the first time in at least sixteen years when no outdoor processions were possible due to rain at both 1800 and 1000 Masses.

Monday 30 March 2015

Holy Week Service of Reconciliation – assisted by Fr Colin OSB. Nearly 60 attended.

Tuesday 31 March 2015

The winter winds doth blow!

The School gave a production of their Lenten reflection in Church this evening. A live one week old Lamb was on the Sanctuary!

Thursday 1 April to Sunday 4 April 2015

Average attendances at Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Low attendance at the Easter Vigil – the lowest since 2011. During the OT Readings the Faithful remained in darkness, having extinguished their Candles after the Exultet. The poor Vigil attendance was made up by the largest attendance (this century) at Sunday Morning Mass – 333 – no doubt assisted by a Baptism. Despite this the third lowest Easter Collection for many years! £1.94 per person donated in 2014 (£2.02 pp in 2013), £1.51 per person donated this Easter (the same low as in 2008. Perhaps this was due to the fact there was a Second Collection – Lent Alms?

New Hymn Books were introduced – allowing the disappearance of various sheets of paper for the Music Group and the various Masses which are normally sung – seeing that these are now included in the Hymnal.

Tuesday 7 April 2015

The first real day of spring after 2½ days of fog.

Wednesday 8 April 2015

After eleven months of work the Parish Web-site was revamped. The previous Webmaster, David Walker from Our Lady and St Gerard's Lostock Hall who had originated the Parish Website in 1999, handed over the reins to a Parbold Parishioner, Phil Curran, who is the new Parish Webmaster. In May 2014 Phil had arranged with a web-designer from Serbia, Boris Bartula, to modernise the site.

Saturday 11 April 2015

Two Parishioners, mother and daughter, who were confirmed last year, made their First Holy Communion at the 1100 Mass.

Tuesday 28 April 2015

The winter winds doth blow – again! Despite temperatures in the 70s two weeks ago.

Friday 8 May 2015

A General election yesterday. The Polls had forecast a hung Parliament with only 1% difference in the votes. Nevertheless at 1235 today the Conservatives gained their overall majority. West Lancashire remained true to Labour due to the Skelmersdale votes.

Sunday 10 May 2015

The Children took over the 1000 Mass in honour of Our Lady. After Mass there was a Parish Gathering in the School, with a picnic lunch. This was to launch the Hierarchy of England Wales evangelisation project *Proclaim 15*. In School 45 adults attended with 60 children.

Monday 11 May 2015

A Parish Pastoral Advisory Group Meeting. The main topic was the future of the Parish after the departure of the present incumbent, once Father Abbot accepts his canonical resignation, due to his age.

Saturday 16 May 2015

An extra fourteen at 1100 Mass. Those to be confirmed and who will make their First Communion on Thursday were attending a three hour Retreat in Church. This Retreat used to be in the School for the First Communicants or at Ampleforth for the Confirmandi. However Parents were opposed to the "long day" involved in going to Ampleforth!

Sunday 17 May 2015

The annual Parish Fête was held after Mass and until 1600 in Parbold Hall. The PTFA were the main organisers with only five Parishioners doing their part for the Parish. Matters were not helped by it being a damp and dreich day, about 10°C, and the annual "Parish Camp" was taking place at Settle at the same time. Unfortunately the Parish Priest knew nothing of the latter until 1130 this morning!

Thursday 21 May 2015

Father Gordon conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on seven Children and one Adult, who then received their First Holy Communion at the same Mass.

This combination of the Sacraments was the first time at Our Lady's this year. Rumour control has it that next year will be the last, due to the new Archbishop not approving his predecessor's Sacramental Programme of combining Confirmation with the Eucharist. Due to Our Lady's having had an earlier age of First Communion than most Parishes in the Archdiocese there have had no first Communion for the past two years at Our Lady's until now when our children reached aged 9, the "new" age for Confirmations.

Saturday 23 May 2015

Only 35 at the 1800 Mass – of whom seven were visitors and another two who did not belong to the Parish – thus only 26 Parishioners! Fortunately 191 on Sunday (Baptism).

Saturday 30 May 2015

A TV programme made in 2013, about the 127 miles Liverpool to Leeds Canal, was shown again tonight on Channel 4. In it Sir Tony Robinson said that the existing Canal route to Wigan from Parbold, had originally been planned as a spur. The planned route would have gone through Brandreth Drive and through our Cemetery on the north side of the Church. Except that the Church and Cemetery were not in existence in 1790!

Sunday 31 May 2015

After the 1800 attendance on Saturday 23 May only 72 at this Sunday 1000 Mass, the lowest since August (summer holidays) 2013.

Saturday 20 June 2015

Father Austin Monaghan MHM, from Freshfield, returned to supply until Wednesday whilst Father Gordon had his “Easter” break.

Monday 22 June 2015

Father Abbot arrived at 2030 to host a meeting, at 2100, with the Parish Deacon, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Pastoral Advisory Group. The future of the Parish after Father Gordon’s departure was discussed.

Monday 29 June 2015

The 1215 Mass was substituted by a 1030 Mass at School – in the grounds of the School. As well as celebrating St Peter and St Paul it celebrated the conclusion of the 2014-15 *With You Always* Sacramental Programme. About 20 Parishioners attended.

Tuesday 30 June 2015

Summer – 27°C in the shade – Car thermometer 37°C in direct sunlight!

Wednesday 1 July 2015

Warmest July day in London in 160 years.

Saturday 11 July 2015

Parbold Village Fete

For the Parish a weekend dedicated to *Proclaim '15* – a Hierarchy initiative to push evangelisation. After the 1800 Mass today Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, concluded with Benediction. 30% of the 1800 Mass remained for the Vigil.

Sunday 12 July 2015

The Children did the Readings at the 1000 Mass which was followed by Exposition and Benediction until 1130. 40% remained for the Exposition – the Children being “entertained” in School.

Tuesday 21 July 2015

The School Annual Prize giving was held in Church.

Thursday 23 July 2015

The School Leavers’ Mass was held, at 1400, in School with all the School being present.

Thursday 30 July 2015

A visit from the Police. There had been burglaries committed in Parbold in March. The miscreants have since been apprehended and are currently doing "time". The miscreants claimed they had camped in our wood, by the stream, and had left their stash there! Today's inspection proved fruitless!

Sunday 2 August 2015

One of the lowest ever Sunday Mass attendances – 71. The total for the weekend was 113, last achieved on 28 August 2011 - 112.

Thursday 13 August 2015

The Parish Priest had decided to put the Parish Log on line on the Parish Web-site. A copy had been given to the Chairman of the PPAG to ensure that no one would be offended. Unfortunately in the first few years of Father Gordon's term of office spades were called spades with the result that the Chairman of the PPAG felt that some redaction would be required. Fortunately it was then discovered that the Logs for 1999 to 2004 inclusive had not been stored on File. As a result the Logs on line will commence at 2005. A comment was expressed "Father Gordon has obviously mellowed over the years"!

Sunday 16 August 2015

The lowest ever attendance at a Sunday 1000 Mass – 59 – although the Church did not look deserted because the faithful were so well spaced out.

Friday 21 August 2015

The Church Bollards and Floods have been out of action since June, due to a short circuit. However due to the bright days/nights there was no problem. The electricians came today and discovered one of the Bollards was full of soil, causing the short circuit. The soil was from an ants' nest! Despite this there must be another fault as well – not discovered today.

Saturday 22 August 2015

The Solemnity of the Queenship of Mary, patron of the Church and Parish – yet only six were present at the 1100 Mass!

Tuesday 25 August 2015

The Electricians returned and repaired not only the Bollard with the Ants' nest – but the other fault was due to 17 metres of cable (between 3 + 4 Bollards) having rotted/broken. This too was causing a trip out. Fortunately the Church Floods are able to work now, so the Village will be reminded we are still here!

Friday 28 August 2015

Father Julius Madaki, from Kaduna in Nigeria and studying Patristics in the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Rome, arrived. Father Julius will supply from Monday 31 August until Friday 18 September, during the Parish's annual holiday from their Parish Priest.

Friday 25 September 2015

Fr Julius remained an extra week. Last Sunday (20 September) his Blood Pressure was sky high and he was admitted, by Ambulance, to Wigan RAE Infirmary A+E. Surprisingly he was discharged with no Blood Pressure pills. On Monday (21 September) his Blood Pressure was still sky high so a visit to Parbold Surgery remedied the situation and a further visit on Wednesday produced a second set of Blood Pressure pills which enabled him to fly to Rome. Last night the Barnes family kindly hosted him to take him to Manchester at 0345 today!

Sunday 27 September 2015

Harvest Sunday and the Church was very well decorated by Parishioners and the School. 196 were present. The Children "took over" the Mass which was also attended by the Ormskirk Circle of the Catenians – Tony Charnock, a Parishioner, being the current President of the Circle.

Saturday 3 October 2015

Fr Austin Monaghan MHM, from Freshfield, kindly returned to supply whilst Fr Gordon was in Glasgow – speaking on Monasticism to the Fort Augustus OB Association. Fr Austin remained for the following week since Fr Gordon then went on to Ampleforth for his annual Retreat.

Saturday 10 October 2015

Bishop Tom Williams said the 1800 Mass as part of a three day Parish and School Visitation.

Sunday 11 October 2015

Unfortunately for Bishop Tom's 1000 Mass only 71 were present plus a considerable dearth of children.

Monday 12 October 2015

Bishop Tom said a 1000 Mass in Church attended by the School, where he had arrived earlier, before continuing with his visitation of the School. He concluded his visitation by Lunching with the PP, Governors and Staff,

Sunday 18 October 2015

A power cut immediately after the 1000 Mass and until 1330. "A third party" had damaged the line at Wrightington. Fortunately it did not affect the Music and the Coffee had already been prepared.

Wednesday 21 October 2015

The leaves are falling – admittedly there has been very little wind for the past few weeks.

Monday 26 October 2015

A recordyesterday's Notice Sheets had to be printed (and downloaded to the Web-site) four times, once on Friday, twice on Saturday and once today. This was due to human and gremlin (computer) errors!

Tuesday 3 November 2015

Peter Madden conducted the, what is now an annual, Bereavement Service in Church. 45 were in attendance.

Wednesday 18 November 2015

The winter winds really doth blow! The usual October winds and rains have arrived in November, this year. Storm Abigail was followed by storm Barney.

Saturday 21 November 2015

.....and the temperature dropped by 10°C to 3°C!

Monday 23 November 2015

35 Parishioners and 14 from other Churches attended a Meeting in Church organised by Deacon David concerning the current Asylum Seeker problems.

Sunday 29 November 2015

The PTFA and Parish ran an Advent Fayre in the School which was well attended. Over £650 was raised by the PTFA and over £350 for the Parish.

Tuesday 1 December 2015

The warmest November since records commenced!

Friday 4 December 2015

Kathryn Rose, Director of Finance at Ampleforth, and Julia Brooke, the Abbot's Agent for the Parishes, came on an informal visit. They spent one hour in School, with the Assistant Head (Jessica Watson) and Chairperson of the Governors (Caroline Marston). They also met Deacon David, Helen Jones (Parish Secretary and Gift Aid Organiser) and Tony Charnock (Site Manager).

Saturday 12 December 2015

It was so dark, wet and miserable today that the Church Floods and Bollards automatically switched on before 1530! Sometimes in June they do not even come on at all (programmed to go off at 2100).

Sunday 13 December 2015

Gaudete Sunday – the Children took over the 1000 Mass.

Monday 14 December 2015

Service of Reconciliation at which 16 children made their First Confessions. Fr Colin OSB from Brownedge came to assist. Seven other Parishioners were in attendance.

Tuesday 15 December 2015

In the evening the School held their Advent Reflection in Church. The Church was packed.

Monday 21 December 2015

The usual Advent Service of Reconciliation. Father Gordon was once again assisted by Father Colin OSB. A record attendance of 77.

Thursday 24 December 2015

For the first time ever (although there may have been exceptions during WWII – OLAS Weekly Notice Books only go back to 1945) there was no Mass at Midnight. This year there were Carols at 1930 followed by Mass at 2000. There had been a Mass at 2000 in 1999 (199 attended) but it was followed by a Midnight Mass at 2300 (173 attended). 196 were present, 40 more than 2300 last year. This year, at Ampleforth, "Midnight" Mass was moved to 2215.

Friday 25 December 2015

Attendance at 1000 (167) was roughly the same as in the previous three years. The total (363) was the best since 2010 – apart from 2013 (397).

Saturday 26 December 2015

?Too much religion yesterday? Only 21 attended the 1800 Mass – even the Reader departed after the Bidding Prayers! Admittedly the weather – local flooding – did not help. Newburgh was cut off and Lancaster Lane was closed – Storm Eva (23 December) after Storm Desmond (5 December). Yorkshire, Cumbria, Ribble Valley and locally Burscough and also Croston (rivers Douglas, Yarrow and Lostock meet) were badly flooded.

Sunday 27 December 2015

247 at the 1000 Mass- helped by the fact there were three Baptisms. All finished at 1103!

Wednesday 31 December 2015

Storm Frank – again much rain but not as bad as Yorkshire, and SW Scotland. Our River Douglas overflowed 7 miles north at Croston – severe flood warning = danger to life! The wettest December on record.

2015 Mass attendance average dropped from 168 (2014) to 158 (18.4% to 17%).

From 2000 until 2009 the average attendance was between 216 to 193 (22% – 20%).