

Pastoral Area Newsletter

Welcome to the Revival of the Pastoral Area Newsletter.

Lent 2015

Editorial

I hope that you will enjoy this re-launch and feel as excited as I am about the many initiatives that are happening in the Pastoral area. There are a great many people working very hard and contributing to Parish life and it is good to share and celebrate this. The plan is that the newsletter will be produced quarterly and I would be very grateful for news, items and suggestions for inclusions. *Called and Gifted* and *Alpha* were the events that prompted me to get something back into print as these are truly Pastoral area events that are supported by parishioners from across the area and indeed our deanery. Both programmes will enable us to develop our individual faith journeys and will strengthen and enable our parishes.

Do please pass this copy onto others who may be interested and submit any forthcoming articles to tquinn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Tina Quinn

Forthcoming Events

Two wonderful opportunities to grow and develop in our faith journeys! Do pray about this and consider which of these God might be calling you to.

ALPHA



Are you wishing to re-engage with or reignite your faith? Catholic Alpha is a wonderful opportunity to look at the central message of our faith: to deepen our relationship with Jesus and to nourish our Christian community.

Do consider coming along yourself or bringing family or friends?

Alpha has been backed by Cardinals, Archbishops and priests and lay people as an introduction to Christianity and is being used by thousands of Catholic parishes in over 70 countries in the world. As well as covering the basics of Christianity it provides an introduction to the specifically Catholic way of living out our Christian faith.

Each evening consists of a meal, a talk, and a chance to discuss with others on your table what you have heard. The Alpha talks are easy to listen to and cover the following topics:

- Is there more to life than this?
- Why did Jesus die?
- Why and how should I pray?
- Who is the Holy spirit and what does he do?
- How can I make the most of the rest of my life?
- How can I resist evil?
- Does God heal today?
- Who is Jesus?
- How can we have faith?
- Why and how should I read the Bible?
- How can I receive the Holy Spirit?
- How does God guide us?
- Why and how should I tell others?
- What about the Church?

Alpha Taster Session.

Explore the meaning of life?

Listen, Learn, Discuss, Discover, Ask.

**Thursday 23 April St Georges Catholic College
7.00pm-9.00pm**

What can I expect at the Taster session?

- A hot meal provided free of charge
- An interesting introductory talk
- The opportunity to learn more about the Alpha Course starting on May 14th

**Alpha Course from 7pm – 9:30pm on
Thursdays 14th May – 30th July 2015**

**Venue St Georges Catholic College,
Swaythling, Southampton. Please email
tquinn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk to book.**

CALLED AND GIFTED



“Called and Gifted is for those who have a living relationship with Christ, who are intentional disciples and wish to discern and discover the charisms that God has given them to serve our parishes and one another.

The Called and Gifted Process has been used since 1993 by Catholics and other Christians in America and other places in the world, but it is new to Europe. Bishop Phillip read about the process and was keen to have it in his diocese, and so he asked the founder, Sherry Weddell, to come to the UK and give a workshop and train some people to run the process throughout the diocese.

There are three parts to Called and Gifted:-

- A workshop on Friday evening and Saturday
- One-on-one discussion interviews, lasting about an hour.
- On-going personal discernment, supported by three Small Group meetings in your parish

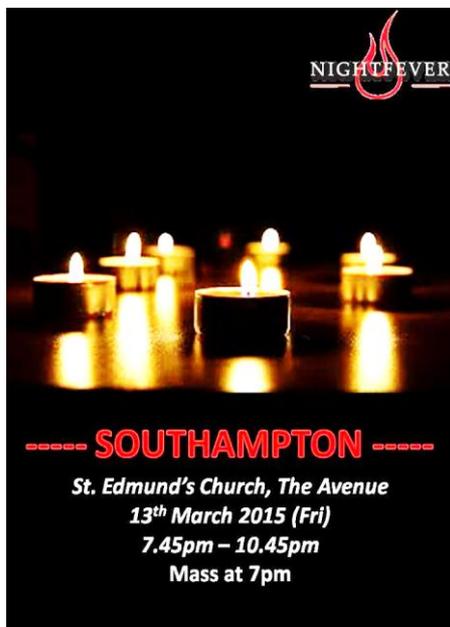
The workshop starts by looking at the role of the lay Catholic in the world and what it means to be a disciple. It then describes the gifts (or charisms) of the Holy Spirit that we have been given to help us in our own personal vocation to serve others. At the end of Friday evening you are asked to fill in a questionnaire that will begin to help you understand the particular gifts that you have been given. Some of this may feel new to some of you, but it is pure Catholic teaching that hasn't been talked about that much in the Church in the past, but Pope Francis has started talking about it all the time! Previous participants have talked about the confidence that the workshop has given them to be alive, to make the most of every day, and to hear more about the spiritual riches of the Church.

In virtue of our baptism we have all been given gifts to nurture our own faith and charisms which serve others and our church. Come along to discover those charisms that God has given you. Be prepared to be surprised, excited, and challenged!

**Workshop: 8 and 9th May 2015
St Anne's Catholic School**

**Friday 7pm- 9pm
Saturday 9am -4pm**

**Please register by emailing
tquinn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk**



Night Fever is coming back to Southampton!

Bishop Philip took part in the Gosport Nightfever event on and was very touched and excited by this initiative. Joe de Gama writes *"Against a string of successful past missions, Saturday 13th December was in many ways the most outstanding Nightfever we have experienced at St Mary's in Gosport thus far. Having our apostolic leader, Bishop Philip Egan, with us to celebrate the volunteers Mass at 6pm and then share with us much of Nightfever was undoubtedly an extraordinary blessing.*

In his Pastoral visit to St Boniface he also expressed his appreciation and affirmation that we in Southampton have been able to host this event. Night Fever commenced on **Friday March 13th** at St Edmunds and will be held alternate months with Gosport. **Dates for your diary:**

- **Saturday 18th April: St Mary's Gosport**
- **Friday 15th May: Immaculate Conception**
- **Saturday 20th June: Gosport**
- **Friday 10th July: Southampton.**

We have a small core group who plan and coordinate the Southampton events and liaise with Gosport, London and other teams across the country. This is a very exciting area of ministry which not only reaches out to those in our local community who may not have experienced church, some of whom have been away for some time. It is also a challenge to us all to re-evangelize our parish communities and to rediscover a personal encounter with Christ. We are always looking for more volunteers. There are many ways in which you can help.

Welcoming, hospitality, street mission (training is given), prayer team, preparing the church, music ministry. Please contact Adrienne or Tina if you would like to be involved or **just come along!**

PASTORAL AREA RETREAT (INCLUDES MASS) led by Father Des from 10am – 4pm Saturday 28 March at St Joseph's House of Prayer, Ashurst. Contact your Parish Office to book. Suggested donation £10. Lunch included.

Marriage Preparation

A four week course together with a blessing of marriage couples takes place 3 times a year at St Edmunds Church. This is not just a requirement for those couples marrying in the church but a vital opportunity to meet other couples and learn about and discuss key issues in relation to marriage.

The topics covered are:

Communication, Conflict, Commitment, Sexuality and Christian Marriage. The evening begins with a shared meal and discussions take place in groups of four around the table. The preparation team is led by Marjorie and Paul Dean who have been married for many years, have brought up four boys and are passionate about their relationship and their faith. The next course takes place on Tuesday evenings in St Edmunds Hall commencing 16th June 2015. Couples have come with both expectations:

"To build a firm foundation for our relationship"

"To feel more part of the Catholic Community"

And fears: *That couples might clash over each other's opinions. That there might be too many quotations from the Bible!"*

And gone away with

"As I am not a Catholic, the talks that focused on reconciling Catholicism with modern life were very good"

"I was a bit sceptical about the whole "wedding school" thing at first but it was a very pleasant surprise and I'm glad I did it. Thank you all."

"Great it has helped us to communicate more and have open communications as non-Catholic I honestly made me believe. Thank you."

"It was very valuable! And made us talk together about things we would not normally."

FROGz



For children in years 3 - 8

2nd & 4th Fridays of each month in term time

St Boniface Church Hall, Shirley SO15 3JD

6pm-7.15 p.m.

Frogz Programme:

27 th March:	Palm crosses and Easter gardens.
24 th April:	Pizza and cake decorating
8 th May:	Film night
22 nd May:	Church Birthday party
12 th June:	AOS talk by Talk by Deacon Roger Stone, Port Chaplain for the Apostle of the Sea, Southampton and making cards/gifts for seafarers
26 th June:	St James' Park games
10 th July:	Family BBQ and talent show

Opportunities for prayer.

There are a number of regular opportunities for shared, individual and reflective prayer across the pastoral area. Prayer underpins everything we are, everything we do and in order to know Christ we need to spend time with him.

Meditation in the Hut.

Lectio Divina and shared prayer on the coming Sunday gospel. Second and Fourth Friday of the month. Host, Jane Wilcox, Wilton Road, Shirley. Contact: 02380 342290

Open door retreats.

These have been held on Monday afternoons and Monday evenings in St Edmund's Hall. It is a great opportunity to experience a retreat in daily life. There are weekly meetings with the group for guidance and direction giving you the opportunity to deepen your relationship with Christ and learn how to take time out for Him. Recent comments from those who have completed an Open Door Retreat.

"I found myself on a different level of spiritual experience and I wanted to just go deeper and deeper." It opened up experiences and events and places where I had not had the courage to explore on my own and the help and support I received was invaluable. I have discovered Ignation Spirituality and I am hungry for more!

Spiritual Direction and Weeks of Accompanied Prayer.

Spiritual Direction started in the Catholic Church many centuries ago. A spiritual director is simply someone who accompanies another Christian on their faith journey. It is for anyone who wants to go deeper, learn new ways of praying and more in a confidential setting.

This can be ongoing direction every 6 – 8 weeks or on a retreat either at a retreat house or in everyday life on a Week of Accompanied Prayer (sometimes called Week of Guided Prayer) in the parish.

*For more information on any of the above and how to find a spiritual director:
Pastoral Area contact: Jane Willcox 023 8034 2290 or jane.willcox@yahoo.co.uk*

Eucharistic Adoration

There is exposition every day at St Edmunds Church from 9am to 7pm. A rota of adorers is in place and we have a very faithful team who watch and pray. There are always opportunities to offer an hour and we still have a few gaps on the rota. This is one of the best spent hours that one could ever offer. Do consider this simple yet profound way of prayer Contact the parish office on 023 8033 3589.

Confirmation in the Diocese.

Candidates are following a new programme "Transformed in Christ". Devised, written, and published by Hannah Vaughan-Spruce. This is a very comprehensive resource which grounds the young people in the proclamation of the gospel, the kerygma of their faith and the practical applications of living as a young Catholic in today's society. We have Fifty two candidates from the pastoral area who meet once a month at St Boniface for three hours on a Sunday afternoon. It has been impressive to see the commitment of these young people despite the intense pressures of academic study and the opinions of their peers. They have explored together: Creation, the dignity of the human person, prayer, who Jesus is, sin and mercy and the history of our salvation. The afternoons are varied with the use of video and u-tube clips, formal catechesis, table sharing, shared prayer in the church and individual spiritual journal writing.

The team of catechists works with these young adults with tireless enthusiasm and commitment. The programme continues throughout February, March, and April, concluding with a day's retreat at Ashurst and Confirmation at Portsmouth Cathedral on 25th May.

Bishop Philip has asked that in future the Confirmation programmes will run over two years allowing these young people to be "transformed" through formation, friendship and service.

Anchor and Adult Catechesis.

A number of programmes are running in the pastoral area to support parents of those young people who are being prepared for the sacraments. The Anchor Programme is a resource developed and produced by the Dominican sisters at Sway and is designed to form and encourage adults in their faith journey and to equip them to pass on the faith.

Anchor is currently being used across the pastoral area for the parents of children preparing for First Holy Communion. Parents sessions are also being run for Confirmation parents based on the Anchor model and it is hope that the recently produced "Anchoring you in New Life" programme will be used to support Baptism preparation.

The Sisters run a number of training days for those interested in working with these programmes which come highly recommended. For more information: Please contact www.dominicansistersofstjoseph.org.

Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Leaders and Catechists are attending quarterly meetings to share good practice, for formation and to re-visit diocesan guidelines. They will be meeting again on Monday February 2nd to look at Lent and Easter and to share ideas. Angela and Tina are part of the Formation for mission team for the diocesan framework and discussions are ongoing as to the role of those who are involved in children's liturgy. It has been assumed for some time that those who support our children in children's Liturgy are leaders rather than formal catechists (who support children through the sacramental programmes).

However their role should not be under-estimated and in "breaking open the word for our children they have a vital catechetical role. The team is looking at ongoing formation and inclusion for the teams.

The Dominican Sisters continue to run "Come Follow Me" programmes which are some lively discussion was had and further meetings are planned. The vision is that catechists will receive on going formation and support and that CLOW will encourage and prepare children for the next step on their sacramental journey to the reception of the Eucharist. Support will be offered to recruit new catechists, to clarify safeguarding requirements and to catechise the parish community.

Forthcoming Workshops for CLOW leaders.

Saturday 4th July Holy Family St Boniface Church Hall 11am-2pm

Saturday 17th October Louis Room: Holy Family Church 10am-1pm.

Poetry Share.

This group was formed following an initiative by Fr Stan Gibzinski: (one of our former priests) to gather together all who were interested in writing and sharing poetry. The group meets bi-monthly in St Joseph's Church, Bugle Street and all who have come have been encouraged, moved and inspired. Themes have been suggested by the group for each meeting, and an anthology has been produced of the work written and shared. In response to the interest in writing poetry a workshop will be running alongside the group for those who wish to explore creative writing.

Future meetings:

19 March 2015 - Beginnings and Endings

21 May 2015 - Painting the Light

23 July 2015 - Mirrors and Shadows

Fr Stan left us an anthology of poems when he left the parish and wrote

"In our journey toward the Homeland

We have spent our journey in the same carriage.

I am very grateful for this and wish to share some thoughts

Echoes of God's accompanying presence, here in Southampton"

Thank you Fr Stan for your inspiration and guidance.

Friday Group (Discovering our Identity).

This group of young adults (18-30) has continued to meet to discuss, pray and socialize. They support one another in their faith journey and welcome new members.

First Friday: Prayer and Adoration

Second Friday: Night Fever

Third Friday: Guest speaker

Fourth Friday: social event

Venue: St. Edmund's Hall, Time: 7:45pm after evening mass.

Contact: Adrienne Hendry adriennehendry@yahoo.co.uk

Book Review

Scott Hahn. Evangelising Catholics

I have to admit that I'm a fan of Dr Scott Hahn; his books are always engaging to read and his writing simply makes our Catholic Faith come to life! His recent book Evangelising Catholics is a thin, neat book that appears very unassuming but absolutely does what it says on the front cover – it's a mission manual for the New Evangelisation. Although evangelisation is the 'in' word, it remains a mystery for many Catholics. From the start Hahn asks the big question, what is the New Evangelisation?

Then, without fuss; neither being too simplistic or academic, he clearly but succinctly helps the reader to understand that the friendship that we have with Christ is one that we are called to share, 'you can't keep the faith unless you give it away.' Witnessing our faith is the everyday work of the whole Church, our common vision and something that all the faithful – that's every Catholic is called to do. He explores methods and models, from the simple acts of kindness to the need for systematic approach to teaching the Faith. This is a wonderful book - a must read book for all Catholics.

Angela Wood.

Next Edition: June 2015

If you wish to contribute or have any pastoral area events to advertise. Tina would love to hear from you. tquinn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk