

WORTH ABBEY PARISH REPORT 2017 – AGM to be held 22/04/18

Introduction

This annual report on the Parish is designed to give an overview of the key events and activities in the Parish during 2017, in anticipation of the Parish AGM. The AGM this year will feature a talk and discussion about maintaining and improving our Parish's health in the face of the general decline in the numbers of church-goers, as well as allowing time for questions and discussion about this report and about any other Parish matters that are raised.

We thank all those who contribute to the work of the Parish so generously in so many different ways (including those that may not feature in this report) and encourage all parishioners to become involved with some of the activities that are undertaken. As well making a contribution to life of the Parish or the wider community, it can be a very personally rewarding experience and a good way of making friends.

George Fitzsimons

Worth Irundu Friendship

General

Monsignor Stephen Mudoola remains the parish priest of Irundu as well as overseeing the running of the Health Centre and doing two days per week in Jinja with the Bishop as he is Vicar General for the Diocese. He is assisted by two curates, Fr Raymond and Fr Matthew. We were disappointed that his visa application was turned down in 2017 for reasons which we believe were unjustified, but are hopeful that a new application will be successful this year.

Projects

Health Centre: The health centre continues to be busy with an average monthly attendance of 1523 patients and 95 deliveries. To maintain the great work the centre does for Irundu we need to supplement the funds the centre receives from the government, and we are grateful to parishioners who support the Health Centre through regular donations.

Jenny's Sale/Medical Fund: This is a really valuable medical fund enabling many people to have life changing treatment so thank you to everyone who supported Jenny's sale of Jams and Chutneys before Christmas which raised a stunning total of £1485. Since 2012 jenny has raised £4772.90 – a really amazing amount. Thank you so much Jenny for all your hard work for Irundu.

Tins/Benches: Paul and Helle have very kindly continued to organise the 'Change for Irundu' collecting tins. This has certainly provided change for many Irundu children. Our total collected to date is nearly £11,000, resulting in 360 school benches. Thanks to everyone who has turned their small change into such a big change for approximately 2000 school children in Irundu.

Vocational School: many congratulations as the academic side of this school was voted best in the district. The tailoring department has 10 students but hairdressing and carpentry are low on numbers.

Car Mechanics Workshop: Thanks to funds raised by Worth School Junior House and the Parish the car mechanics workshop has now started with 5 students having driving lessons and vehicle tuition.

Fund Raising

Seed Appeal: In March 2017 we learned that the people of Irundu were suffering from hunger. A severe drought had ended and the urgent need was to plant seeds to ensure food for the future. But poor rains mean poor crops, and there was no money to buy seeds for planting. We responded swiftly and raised money for seeds that went to the whole community, not just the Irundu parishioners. Seeds were planted and the rains came and we now know that a good crop has been a huge benefit to Irundu.

Concerts: We are very grateful to Michael Oakley and the Worth Choir whose concerts helped us raise over £2,400 for Irundu.

Events

Irundu Mass: A successful Mass and Reception were held on Saturday 28th October. The Uganda Martyrs Choir provided music in the Abbey Church and afterwards at the reception in Compass House

Worth Irundu Friendship Committee:

Fr Paul, Paul Ambridge, Ali Ambridge, Cynthia Haynes, Kir Bennett Horner, Joe O'Dwyer, Robin Williamson.

We would very much like to hear from any parishioner who would be interested in joining the committee - please get in touch with Father Paul.

Robin Williamson (Chairman)

Worth Stitchers

The group was founded in 2013 to help repair vestments and other items for the Abbey Church and for the monastic community. We meet monthly and enjoy chatting while we work. Stitchers are rewarded with plenty of tea and coffee and home-made cake! We welcome new members. If you are interested in joining us please contact Christina Fitzsimons on cfitzs3287@aol.com.

Christina Fitzsimons

First Holy Communion

The First Holy Communion (FHC) programme at Worth Abbey Parish is offered to children who are rising 8 and older. The Parish will complete its second year of the newly designed FHC programme in May 2018.

This new initiative involves Parents and children attending the classes together. The children receive worksheets which they complete with the help of their parents, who are given a Parent's Guide to the lesson.

The first part of the programme prepares the children to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In the second part, the children prepare to receive their First Communion. Classes meet on a Saturday morning during school term time.

The overall feeling is that the new FHC programme has been well received.

Rachel Davies

Junior Church

Junior church is a children's liturgy provided during the 9:30 Sunday Morning Mass. There are two classes- one for pre-school aged children and the other for school aged children.

We sing songs, have a simple Liturgy of the Word, and encourage discussions round the Gospel Reading and a fun activity. There is a Team of 5 people who take it in turns to teach the classes in creative and instructive ways. The classes are held during the school term and break for the holidays.

Rachel Davies

Traidcraft

Traidcraft has been part of our Parish community life since the 1990s. The stall opens each Sunday after the 9:30 Mass and after the 5pm Children's Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Through our trading we continue to promote Traidcraft's pioneering work in transforming the lives of small-scale artisans, farmers and their communities across the developing world.

We would like to thank our team of loyal volunteers who have helped us greatly during the year. We are always pleased to welcome new helpers. Over the past year several of our volunteers have had to retire from their duties and we would welcome the support of new volunteers. Here is an opportunity for new members of the parish to become more involved and feel part of our active parish.

Special thanks must go to the Worth Stitchers who have made many unique shopping bags for us from spare pieces of material. These have been much appreciated by our customers and have helped to eliminate the use of plastic bags.

Our sales of Christmas Cards and Easter Eggs continue to grow and we have a regular steady trade throughout the year.

We would also like to thank all those parishioners who have so generously supported us during the year and also the Parish Office and the Tea & Coffee ladies who purchase their goods from us.

Do please come to the stall after Mass on a Sunday and have a look at the Traidcraft Catalogue. Apart from selling chocolate and foods, Traidcraft have a wide range of goods including clothes, garden accessories, homeware and gifts. We are always happy to accept individual orders.

As has been customary in previous years, any profit made by our stall during the trading period is given to a charity chosen by the Parish.

Beryl McNulty

Confirmation

Our Confirmation programme, for the Parish, runs every other year and our next group will be coming together in September 2018. This year we will be joining with Worth School; led by the Forerunners. We will be starting with a period of discernment through the 'Youth Alpha' programme over the autumn term. Full details will be advertised on the Parish website and via 'In Touch' nearer the time

Theresa Hobson-Frohock

New Evangelisation

A group of 15-20 Parishioners have been working through the 'Re-Lit programme since Sept 17. Its eighteen sessions aim to support the 're-evangelisation of the baptized'. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with the 3 groups building close connections and a sense of calling to do more to support our Parish.

The group also came together on Shrove Tuesday to share ideas for building a strong welcome and sense of mission for all who come to Worth. This culminated in a reflective Reconciliation Service just before Holy Week. The group is meeting again the day before the AGM to consider Divine Renovation (by Fr James Mallon) as a potential tool to support our Parish move from Maintenance to Mission. This will be followed by an Autumn Retreat and a series of new small discussion groups.

Theresa Hobson-Frohock

Altar Serving

The Altar Serving team at Worth Abbey is a branch of the Archconfraternity of St Stephen. Our main responsibility is to serve at the Sunday Community Mass at 9.30am. We also serve the Saturday evening Parish mass at 5pm and the Sunday mass at West Hoathly.

Worth School has its own team of servers for Thursday worship. Some school servers are also members of our Parish team, serving on Sundays as well. Our full team serve the Christmas Midnight Mass and all the ceremonies of Holy Week and our senior servers assist our Bishop at Arundel Cathedral for major liturgies such as the Chrism Mass and the Corpus Christi Procession.

We welcome young people who are at least eight years old and have received their First Holy Communion to come and join our Abbey Servers Team.

Michael Weston-Burt

AGM Refugees Welcome

I feel very privileged to have been part of this great celebration. I had not been in contact with the Syrian families for a year and it was touching and very hopeful to see and hear so many stand and address the audience in English. It was clear that they had grown in confidence and have begun to find a place here. They each spoke about the various projects they have been involved in supported by the volunteers from Refugees welcome.

These projects extend from gardening at St Benedict's, where a plot was created and maintained throughout last year, and unfamiliar vegetables (much reference was made of potatoes!) were sown and harvested. They look forward to the process beginning again as we enter spring.

A young mother who had been a teacher in Syria spoke about her work at Worth school where she and a small group are teaching spoken and written Arabic to pupils.

These are only two of the many projects that were celebrated that night which give taste of the innovative work of the volunteers who have created a range of opportunities for families to extend spoken English, learn something of the local community, restore confidence, dignity and most importantly offer a sense of community.

No celebration is complete without a feast and we all enjoyed coming together to share the wonderful home-made food that had been brought along. We were also blessed to be accompanied by an extraordinary musician who played the oud and sang traditional songs from Syria. The beautiful music touched us all with its sense of homeland. This is part of another project: *Music with Refugees*.

Another Syrian family will be coming to the Crawley area this year, a house has been made available for them. The house is in need of decorating and we are asked to consider forming a small group to come and decorate a room.

(Please contact Father Paul/refugees welcome to find out more)

Marian Killick

Finance Overview

The finance committee has undergone a number of changes in composition over the year. Sadly, John Cooper, our acting chairman, passed away unexpectedly in 2017. Other members of the committee are Fr Paul, Jim Brophy, John Fitzpatrick and Robert Record. In addition Maria Emmerton has taken over the role of bookkeeper from Paddy Hall and Maria Stribbling is the parish secretary. We are also continually grateful to those who count the weekly collections and other income and arrange their being banked; we do need more volunteers in this area – it only involves at most half a day once a month - so please let me know if you would be willing to help.

The summary income and expenditure statement for the year 2017 are appended. The bottom line shows a deficit of £12,112 which is in line with our forecast at the start of the year. This can be explained by the investment which was made in the website. The finance committee expects expenditure next year to be dramatically less with no extraordinary items known for 2018. The annual income was 2.83% down year-on-year which reflects a downward trend in Mass attendance and offertory collections. The good news was that our tax rebate increased 46.5% which reflects the additional gift aid we've been able to claim on our donations.

We have still a healthy accumulated surplus but we need to be vigilant on costs as it will be difficult to increase our income in 2018.

Robert Record

WORTH ABBEY PARISH
Income and Expenditure 1 Jan 2017 to 31 December 2017

	2017 Actual	2017 Budget	2017 Variance	2016 Actual
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources				
Offertory & Collections	80,101	75,300	4,801	78,754
Donations	1,828	5,300	(3,472)	4,482
Tax rebates	21,018	14,750	6,268	13,371
Events and sacramental donations	3,174	300	2,874	3,660
Bank Interest & Investment income	184	100	84	268
Electricity Refund	4,740		4,740	
Traidcraft	4,158	0	4,158	3,119
Incoming resources Grand Totals	115,203	95,750	19,453	103,654
Resources used				
Salaries	42,710	42,180	(530)	41,941
Travel costs	2,831	2,600	(231)	1,128
Office costs	16,275	7,900	(8,375)	8,897
Establishment	20,938	20,800	(138)	21,351
Domestic	1,817	0	(1,817)	0
Bank charges	131	0	(131)	0
Traidcraft costs	3,678	0	(3,678)	3,188
Property repairs & Maintenance	1,446	0	(1,446)	0
Events, fundraising and sacramental costs	5,884	1,050	(4,834)	3,456
Liturgy & Pastoral	8,603	6,530	(2,073)	7,211
Schools	1,058	300	(758)	0
Diocesan Levies	15,807	18,500	2,693	21,029
Resources used Grand Totals	121,178	99,860	(21,318)	108,201
Surplus/ (deficit) before Tithing and Mission Support	(5,975)	(4,110)	(1,865)	(4,547)
Net Tithing & Mission Support	(6,137)	(8,000)	1,863	12,234
Net Gains/Losses	(12,112)	(12,110)	(2)	7,687