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St. David's Dalkeith

Parish Magazine

Spring 2016



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*Parish Priest :
Monsignor Allan Chambers*

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Mgr. Allan.

Well, here I am again, offering a few random thoughts to the latest edition of our parish magazine. Again I extend my thanks to the editorial team who work so hard at this production. I thank also our sponsors who support us and ask, if possible, you support them. Thanks.

I always feel in parish life that, as we come to the celebration of First Holy Communion Sunday, which we did on Sunday 29th May in St. Luke & St. Anne's and then in St. David's on Sunday 12th June, the pace of parish life slows as the holidays beckon.

There is a cycle to the life of the parish as there is in most things. The summer coming, hopefully a warm and good one with a chance to get a break either away or here, then comes September and the school year begins again and ironically if, as in past years, the weather is good, we begin that cycle all over again. September soon leads us to autumn and then winter, hopefully kind, then Advent, then Christmas.

After Christmas we turn our thoughts to spring and the summer.....and off we go again renewing this cycle of our lives.



However let's hope we don't just renew it. Let's hope, and indeed make sure, we live it, all of it. The danger sometimes might be in always looking too far ahead, and that would be unfortunate. Years ago, when younger and on holiday with my parents, my dad asked me to join him in a game of crazy golf which I did, as my mum did what mums the world

over do, watched patiently on! However, less than half way round the course I spied a fun fair and all the usual attractions and could not wait to go there! I battered round the crazy golf as fast as I could ! I will always remember my dad saying, 'Al, what's the rush? Why not just enjoy this now and then we can do the fun fair?' He was not given much to philosophy in general but that day he was, and he was right. We need to enjoy each moment of every day and not just hanker after what might be next.

So as the holidays beckon and even if you are not getting away, enjoy the day and celebrate the difference, especially if it's a break from work and that routine.

Whether you are going away or staying local, enjoy what is to come and savour the joy of each new day.

Fr. Allan.

Mgr. Allan moving to Bathgate in September came to our attention whilst preparing this magazine.

The editorial team thanks Mgr. Allan for his time and efforts here in Dalkeith and wish him a long, happy and holy time at Bathgate.

Mgr. Allan has given a lot to this parish during his 10 plus years here and it is appreciated, especially by the magazine editorial team, for without his support you would not have been reading these parish magazines over that time.

Patricia, Winifred, Brian & Julian.

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Peter's Ramblings.

Snow is forecast and there is an icy blast down my neck as I put back one of the plastic panels on my greenhouse, which had blown out in the wind. Sunday, three days hence, will be the first of May.

Already I'm looking back through my rose coloured glasses (actually they're a smoky grey) but that's not the literary flourish I needed, so we'll ignore the facts and bash on.

Those balmy days, at the beginning of March, were when I decided that, as part of my Lenten journey for the year of Mercy 2016, I was going to kick off 2016 with another pilgrimage.

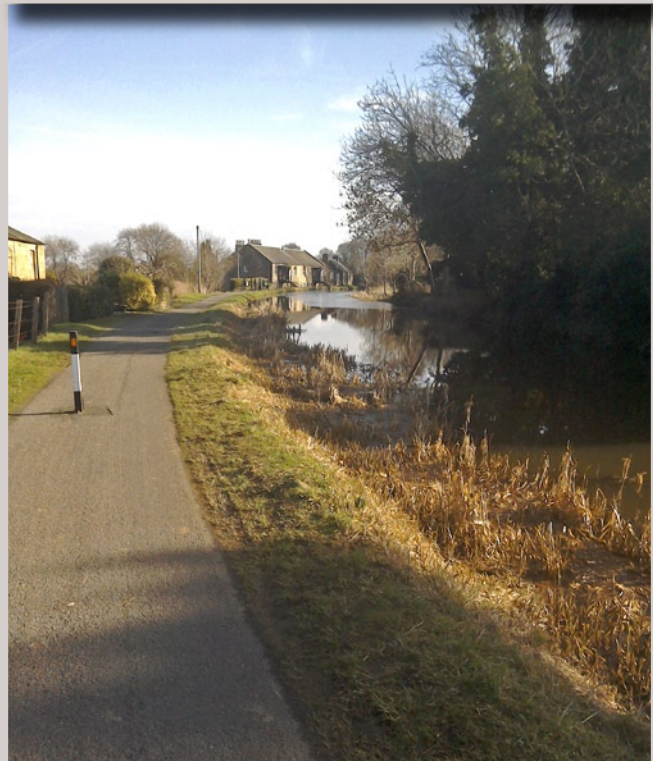
My last appeal for volunteers in the magazine obviously fell on deaf ears and so I decided that, with the publication of the Doors of Mercy in each diocese, I would go from St. Andrew's Cathedral in Glasgow to St. Mary's in Edinburgh.

Since the borders railway opened last year, the station at Newtongrange has been my gateway to the west. I am now on one of the national safeguarding commissions which meets regularly in Glasgow so I regularly hop on the train at Newtongrange and through-ticket it to Charing Cross in Glasgow. It's so much more relaxing than having to drive and park!!

Having spent a bit of time planning, I had worked out that it was about 115 kilometres (77 miles) door to door by my intended route. I tend to calculate distance in kilometres now, as my average walking pace is about 6 km per hour. It's useful to know that, as a basic ready reckoner, I walk 1 km every 10 minutes (it's the navigator in me, I've been doing time/speed/ distance calculations in my head for most of my life!!)

I had decided that a wee walk along the canal system which links Edinburgh to Glasgow might be safer than the very much shorter, but infinitely more dangerous, M8 hard shoulder! Not that you can walk the motorway, but even the A8, the old Edinburgh/Glasgow road, wouldn't have been much safer.

The two canals which make up the route couldn't be more different. The Forth and Clyde Canal has a series of locks which allow the boats to negotiate differences in height as the ground rises or falls, while the Union Canal (on our side of Falkirk) follows the contour lines on the map. That way, the elevation is the same all the way into Edinburgh. It makes for a much longer walk, but it does give you some breathtaking views from the viaducts, as they carry the water, in what is essentially a big iron trough, across the various gorges and river crossings at the Avon, Almond and various other points en route.



Stage one, then, saw me off the train at Queen Street and a wee walk down through the merchant city to St. Andrew's Cathedral where I was in time to catch the tail end of the Saturday morning Mass, before I left via the Door of Mercy into a fine, spring morning.

It was then north through Glasgow and over the M8. I had planned to go over at Cowcaddens and then up to Lambhill Stables, but almost immediately I was off on the wrong footpath and it wasn't until I was almost in Springburn that I realised I was off track. I could have continued to Bishopbriggs and picked up the canal from there but I decided to back track and, although I added a few extra km's to the walk, it was nice to leave the city at Lambhill Stables and drop down onto the canal.

Immediately the city was gone! No cars, no traffic noise, only a few dog walkers and some whispering cyclists to contend with, as well as the ducks and swans, as I turned east and headed for Falkirk.

The weather was very mild and kind, perfect for walking. I was reminded of the old Gaelic prayer with "the wind always at my back" as I headed east and I really didn't see a soul until I passed under the main road at Bishopbriggs and then the dog walkers became a bit more prevalent. It was onto Kirkintilloch where I watched a couple of swans knock lumps and feathers off each other (apparently they're quite territorial and pretty vicious, often fighting to the death for their particular patch of water). It was then on past Bonnybridge and then, almost 9 hours after having started, I made it to the Falkirk Wheel.

Those last 4 km seemed the longest of the day and I kept thinking, it's just round this bend and then, it's just round this bend and then there it was, the Wheel itself. It's quite an engineering masterpiece, but I was more interested in the bus which was sitting at the terminus because it boldly declared "Falkirk High Street" and it was my ticket home!

The following weekend it was back on the trail and it was back to Falkirk for the second session. As I mentioned, this part is a contour canal and so it meanders through the countryside, The walk to Linlithgow is only about 2 and a half hours from Falkirk and the weather was glorious. As I arrived at Linlithgow pool, I took a seat by the canal path and watched the narrowboat men cleaning their boats, it was a very pretty and well illuminated scene in the bright sunlight. This was actually well under half way, but it was too good just to sit back and relax and watch the world flow by.

Having stopped at the 14.5 km mark I still had another 22 km to go, so it was back on the path and off I went. The famous West Lothian shale bings were seen from a totally different perspective. Rather than when seen from the motorway, they look less “red” close up and you can still get a whiff of kerosene from the spoil that washes down onto the path (it’s the reason they were mined in the first place) and then it was onto the Philipstoun, Avon and Almond aqueducts which are the real highlights of this part of the walk.

I dare say that in the summer the path will be a lot busier, but it was so quiet that the only real hazard, if you could call it that, was the speed with which cyclists creep up on you, especially from behind! On the last 6 km of the stage I was acting as pace boy for one of the rowing clubs which use the canal as a training facility and it was a joy to watch the one and two man sculls as they glided effortlessly (well it looked like it) as they chased me along the towpath. They beat me several times as they sped back and forth along the final stretch and it was with some relief that I made it to the Bridge Inn at Ratho, where I was forced to watch the tail end of the Scotland v Italy game with a pint as I waited for the bus back into Edinburgh Park and my train back to Newtongrange.

Having waxed lyrical about the first two stages, my wife Margaret agreed to join me on the stage from Ratho to the Lochrin Basin and so we made our way out to Ratho for the final stage. This was without doubt the busiest of the sections, no doubt because the canal is an amenity in Edinburgh rather than a working waterway. The towpath was meticulously maintained which was in stark contrast with the previous 60 km.

To give the canal people their due, they were resurfacing much of the intermediate stages from the outskirts of Glasgow to the outskirts of Edinburgh and the signage was there, if not exactly a great deal of activity. I had thought about doing it in trainers, thinking it was all metalled towpath, but I was so glad that I went with the walking boots option, as much of the surface was of a “temporary” packed hardcore which was pretty hard going!

By the time we got into the Lochrin Basin, Margaret had skinned her ankle so we called it a day with a cup of coffee at the cafe in the Basin and then got the bus back out to Ratho to pick up the car. This was the only section which was awkward to get to and from by public transport, not impossible but awkward and I was left to do the last 4 km on my own, all the way from Lochrin Place to our own Cathedral on the morning of the Tuesday of Holy Week.

I have to say that this was a very enjoyable walk and one which chunks up easily into sections. There are lots of public transport options and it can actually be done in 6 easier sections than the ones which I chose to undertake.

For my next one, before the year ends, I think I’ll stay a bit more local and maybe even do one by bike, maybe Dunfermline to say now where did I put that map with Nunraw on it?

Peter.



News from the Schools.

St. David's High School.



Weekly Chaplaincy Events.

We have had a very busy session, full of different liturgical events and have felt really supported throughout by our Chaplain Fr. Basil and his assistant, Deacon Gordon. Both Fr. Basil and Deacon Gordon have made a commitment to come into school every Wednesday to celebrate Mass/Eucharistic service in our chapel followed by lunch and a chance to chat to our pupils in the Chaplaincy.

In addition, they have supported us with the variety of other liturgical events on the calendar. There has been a consistent, small group of pupils who have participated in this weekly Mass, participating in the weekly readings, singing and leading the bidding prayers. These pupils have grown in confidence and leadership skills and have found the experience to be very prayerful. One of our seniors has also volunteered to complete a power point display for tutor time, displaying our Chaplaincy notices each week to alert the whole school of all liturgical events taking place.

We have a new team of enthusiastic S5/6 "Chaps" who have come together this term and supported the Chaplaincy through their leadership. They have helped so far in the following ways on a regular basis and have offered their support in any way they can.

- Leading services and assemblies in school (prayers, readings, music).
- Creating a Fair Trade group and hosting Fair Trade coffee mornings.
- Preparing to lead a service for S1 presentation of Bibles from the Gideons Society.
- Accompanying the S1 Carfin Trip in October

- Assisting in supporting the ASG transition Mass in February.
- Supporting charities in school.

The Chaplaincy is open daily at break and lunchtime – a large group have been in attendance this term. Seniors support this by coming along and spending time with the younger pupils.

Celebration of the Eucharist for Primary 7 pupils –ASG Transition Mass.

The chaplaincy team at SDHS invited the associated schools group Primary 7 pupils to visit on Friday 5th February to take part in a Transition Mass celebrated with our chaplain Fr. Basil.

The order of the Mass was discussed with Fr. Basil in advance and it was decided that it should follow the theme of the day. Each Primary School was issued a copy of the liturgy and a power point was created for display. The SDHS Chaplaincy team shared hymns/readings and the P7s rehearsed these in their schools. Each of the Primary Schools chose one of their pupils to read at this Mass.

First Reading:	Loretto PS
Bidding Prayer 1:	Sacred Heart PS
Bidding Prayer 2:	St. Margaret's PS
Bidding Prayer 3:	St. Matthew's PS
Bidding Prayer 4:	St. Andrew's PS
Bidding Prayer 5:	St. Luke's PS
Bidding Prayer 6:	St. David's PS
Bidding prayer 7:	St. Mary's PS

SDHS pupils volunteered to come along to the Mass to assist in any way they could. A group of about 25 pupils led the singing and we received very positive feedback from the Primaries after the event. The singing was beautiful and all of the pupils participated prayerfully and respectfully throughout. The music was led by Mr. Brown from our music department. This was one of his last chances to participate with us and lead the music as he has now left SDHS. It was a sad occasion for us as he has supported school liturgies for many years here at SDHS and he will be missed by all of us. All schools were greeted by senior pupils of SDHS and escorted to their seats in the main hall. After the Mass the pupils had their snack and mixed a little with our senior pupils.

This was a wonderful opportunity for our ASG P7 pupils to visit SDHS and they reported after the event that they felt very welcomed. Fr. Basil spoke very positively about the great opportunities for learning and personal growth to be found in SDHS, should they decide to join us in August. This event was an uplifting experience for all and there was a very strong sense of community and belonging.

St. David's High School Caritas Award.

This year, at SDHS, taking part in the Caritas Award has been a very exciting and rewarding experience.

SDHS has decided to enrol this group of 26 volunteers for the Caritas Award, the Saltire Award and the new SQA Award- "Religion, Belief and Values Award" Level 5. These three awards are complementary to each other and completing the work for Caritas will also fulfil the requirements for the others.

The awards are created so that pupils have to take on the majority of the responsibilities when it comes to organising their volunteer work, in school and out of school. This helps to develop the four capacities that underpin the Curriculum for Excellence,

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors.

The students build up their confidence in the voluntary work they complete in this course and they also contribute in a very practical way to society as a whole.

During class time, they are introduced to the 4 Gathering points and the Papal Encyclical, Deus Caritas Est. The teacher in charge, Ms. Barbini, provides support in the form of explanation and direction, but all reflections and written tasks are done by the students.

The hardest part, especially for those pupils who are not Catholic, is to find and organise the volunteering in and out of school.

The Catholic candidates normally find it easier to arrange this as, in school, they can become part of the very active Chaplaincy group or SVP group; and out of school, they are normally already active in their respective parishes, or organisations such as the soup kitchen run by St. Catherine's Convent. There has been a substantial group this year working closely with Fr. Basil in his parish, which has further created a sense of community and belonging and has reinforced the parish-school connection.



The candidates who are not Catholic will often use their school volunteering time to help the Saltersgate pupils or our pupils with difficulties in different subjects, so that they too can achieve their best. Out of school, they are directed to volunteering centres in Midlothian, where they can look for opportunities that will benefit the communities, like charity shops, nursing homes, residential homes, etc.

Seasons for Growth Group.

This year we have a small group of pupils taking part in a SfG group held in the chaplaincy, which aims to assist young people in coming to terms with significant losses or changes in their lives through bereavement, separation or divorce. AM Macnamara PTC RE and Nuala Keegan, teacher of Geography, both school lay chaplains, lead and assist this group. Through an 8 week programme, the group meets and explores ways in which a young person can learn to cope when difficult changes happen in his/her life. This group has been a great success so far and the pupils have been very positive about it.

House Masses.

This year we have had 3 House Masses celebrating our House Saints, namely Andrew, Columba and Kentigern.

The themes of these Masses have been in honour of the particular patron saint. Special readings, prayers, hymns and special Bidding prayers have been used at these services. Both S1 and S6 students have attended and led in the readings, music and the Bidding prayers. These Masses have taken place in our school chapel, creating a prayerful atmosphere and an intimate setting. The Masses have been uplifting and have helped to create a sense of community and belonging for all who attended. Fr. Basil has celebrated each Mass, accompanied by Deacon Gordon. Fr. Basil's sermons have been inspiring and enlightened the pupils on their place in the History of Scotland and informed them of important details of their personal journeys of faith.

AM Macnamara, PTC- RE/ Chaplaincy Team
SDHS.



St. David's Primary School.

- Mundum Pro Christo Vincamus.

Enrolling your child at St. David's Primary School.

Enrolment for children in their pre-school year at Nursery takes place from November 2016 for those children starting school in August 2017.

Please contact the school on 0131 271 4675 to discuss your child's enrolment further. The school operates an open door policy and parents/carers are welcome to the school at any point.

The school may also have places for children in P1-7 for families moving into the area during the school year. Once again, please contact the school in the first instance to arrange a tour from our House Captains and to spend some time discussing your child's learning and next steps with the Head Teacher.

There are a number of ways you can contact us:

In person:

2c Lauder Road, Kippielaw, Dalkeith EH22 2PU

Telephone: 0131 271 4675

Email: stdavids.ps@midlothian.gov.uk

Website: <http://stdavidsps.mgfl.net>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stdavidsprimary>

Our New Library.



Over the Easter holidays our school library was transformed into an exciting, relaxing and focused work space, which children and staff frequently use to support and enhance learning in literacy.



Throughout this term children will continue to design and create different things to help make literacy come alive! So far Primary 1 have made a giant Caterpillar from the story *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

The enthusiasm and excitement of this new learning space is apparent throughout the school, with children being heard saying

"YEAH WE GET TO WORK IN THE LIBRARY, I LOVE THIS PLACE!"

as they walk along the corridor.

We have also enrolled two junior librarians, who have taken on the job of collecting and sorting returned books during the week. We will continue to develop this role throughout this term building on our pupil leadership within the school.

Master Chef.

We are currently running our third after school Master Chef session which the children are thoroughly enjoying! Each week we have focused on different areas of the food wheel to ensure the importance of a healthy diet.

Our recipes have included fish cakes, blueberry muffins, omelettes and banana bread which the children have been very enthusiastic about! We encourage the children to try new ingredients and give them the opportunity to taste all of the individual ingredients whilst they are following the recipes.

Master Chef has allowed the children to develop many essential skills such as team work and communication, as well as giving them the chance to use a wide range of different materials and appliances to create our recipes. We hope the children have enjoyed making the delicious recipes as much as the staff!



The 'field' activities included exploring the working farm, seeing Highland cows, 250 and 500-year-old trees, examining wildlife and looking at the different produce that is grown on the farm.

The 'fork' activities included learning about vegetables and making a huge pot of vegetable soup and soda bread from scratch. We got to eat the soup for lunch and it tasted FANTASTIC!!!

The class had an incredible day and were complimented on their behaviour and their enthusiastic level of interest in all that we did during our visit.

Thank you to Sally at the Hirsell for providing all of us with an excellent, fact-packed day out.



Primary 3 'Field to Fork' Trip.

Last term Primary 3 studied Food and Farming and on the 8th February visited The Hirsell Estate to take part in the 'Field to Fork' learning experience.

The aim of this visit was for pupils to learn about the crops that are grown on the farm, where their food comes from and how to cook and eat healthily.

When we arrived at the Hirsell, we were welcomed by Sally Fleming, the Field to Fork co-ordinator. We were taken into the learning classroom and were shown a PowerPoint presentation about the 'Field to Fork' process.

We were then split into two groups; one group took part in the 'farm' activities, whilst the other group took part in the 'food' activities.

In the afternoon the groups swapped.



Fairtrade.

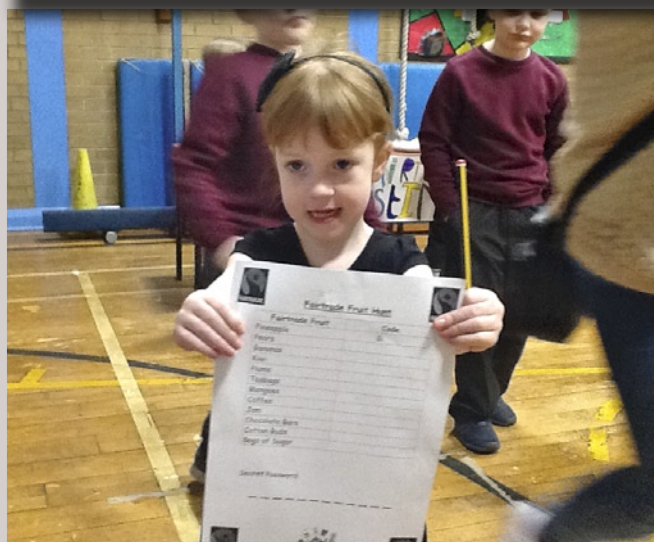


Back in March, Primary 4 organised a Fairtrade Breakfast to celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight.

We had lots of fun games going on in the hall such as a Fairtrade Treasure Hunt and Fairtrade Fruit Tasting, as well as a delicious Fairtrade breakfast to enjoy.

All the classes were involved in the activities that we had organised for Fairtrade Fortnight and the hall was decorated with art work everyone had helped to design and create.

The reason that we decided to hold this event was because we had been learning all about Fairtrade and developed our enterprise skills when creating our own Fairtrade Tuck-shop. We wanted to promote Fairtrade and encourage all the children in the school to come and buy a healthy snack from our Tuck-shop, 'The Fairtrade Shack'.



P6/7 Football Club.

Miss Nisbet has started a football club for boys and girls in P6 and P7. This takes place every Thursday after school and we are hoping to take part in some friendly matches and tournaments with other schools in the near future. We encourage both children who do and do not play for a football team to become involved. Summer is here and we are looking forward to playing outdoors and being competitive.

P7 Camp.

Many of Primary 7 have not long returned from camp!

It was an exciting adventure that involved pushing our limits on the zip wire, being resilient to the wet weather on the lake during our paddle boarding, and forming new friendships during survival skills not to mention the odd late night chat!



Our new found friends from the other primary schools within our cluster will be joining most of us at St David's High School.

Camp was a great opportunity for us to begin our new friendships, and thankfully it is making our transition into High School that little bit easier! We're very much looking forward to meeting up with our new friends in the up-coming transition days in June!



Visible Learning.



Primary 7 have been leading a whole school initiative to bring Visible Learning to St. David's! We originally started by investigating our elastic, fantastic brains and realising they are just like muscles – they need exercise and training every day! After we had become proper Brainiacs we then started to look at our mindsets. We realised that to get the most from our Learning Journeys we need to be positive, optimistic and to have high expectations of ourselves; instead of saying “I can't do this” we say “I can't do this YET!” We call it a ‘Growth Mindset’. And obviously that means if we make a mistake we have to be positive about that too! We understand that making mistakes can sometimes be beautiful and more importantly that making mistakes is okay – it's an opportunity to learn! Even though we had learned about how our mindset can influence our learning, we still felt that sometimes it can feel disheartening when we make mistakes. We realised that sometimes making mistakes is tough, and it can be hard to stay positive, so we created our very own Learning Pits that help us to recognise the different emotions we feel as we go through our Learning Journeys – right from annoyed and confused, all the way through to that Eureka moment! Now we know that if we're finding things tough it's a good sign, because it's all part of the journey! Even better than that, we have been learning all the different strategies that we can use to help us with our journey out of the Learning Pit!

We decided that these different strategies had underlying powers and that these powers, which are oh-so-powerful, needed to be celebrated!

P7 organised for the whole school to elect 4 different Learning Powers: Resilience, Reflection, Resourcefulness and using Relationships! We organised elections and competitions across the whole school to come up with mascots, names and slogans! We use all these aspects of Visible Learning everyday to help us achieve and we are now using these new found skills, and especially the Learning Powers, to help us become Assessment Capable Learners! Go us!!!

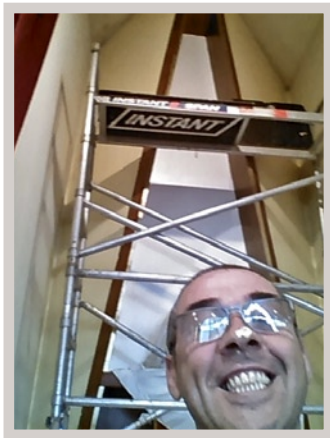
Mrs. Kerry Young, Head Teacher, and the St. David's Primary School staff team.



Parish Groups and News.

A Deacon's Progress.

It only seems like a very short time ago, that our editor in chief (Julian) asked me for my very first article for the magazine back in the summer of 2012. At that time I had just finished my life's second career (the first being the Royal Navy and the second the Police) and was preparing for another about which I had very little knowledge but a lot of faith.



This was the beginning of my propaedeutic year, a year in which I would look at the Church and the Church would look at me. I had then embarked on a 4 year programme of academic study, which has brought me to the stage, today, where I will soon receive a diploma in the summer of this year and a degree in Divinity by this time next year! Where has the time gone!! My wife, Margaret and the girls have all been very supportive throughout this particular journey which I've undertaken and their ceaseless encouragement, forbearance and stoic fortitude makes me immensely grateful and proud of them all.

The academic side of my studies in these last 4 years has been a real eye opener! Who would have thought that I would actually like reading Classical Philosophy, learning Latin and Greek or even Moral Theology? Who would have thought that I would find a love of singing! It's not something I'd ever done before, but singing the liturgy has been an

unexpected joy for me and, as St. Augustine rightly said, "He who sings praise to God prays twice". I might not be all that good but I can do LOUD!!!

The academic dimension, whilst important in providing me with the necessary knowledge for my future ministry, has only ever been part of the equation. The most important part of my formation has taken place here, with all of you, in our Parish communities of St. Luke & St. Anne's and St. David's where I have become involved in the practical side of what will soon become my own ministry of service. Your words of encouragement and support have meant a great deal to me in the years both past, present and I hope in the future.

All of my assignments for this academic year are now in, and what remains between now and the end of year exam on the 25th of June is a bit of Church painting (St. Luke's & St. Anne's is my wee pet project, as assistant to the Jannie) and some revision and preparation for my ordination and my degree year which will be 2017.

In all of my formation, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Mgr. Allan. Without his agreement to take on the practical formation side of my training, I would not be the person I am today and preparing for my ordination in September. Without his trust and his willingness to extend his personal confidence to me and to give of his own experience and faith, then I think it is true to say that I probably wouldn't be here today. I've already told him that I'm "borrowing" some major themes from a number of his homilies (theft is such an over used and harsh word) but I have learned an immense amount from him and, for his kindness and friendship in my own journey of faith, I am immensely grateful.

Over the last few years I have written up "observations" on the rites of baptism, funerals

and weddings, I have become involved in baptismal preparation and catechesis and I've even conducted a service at the crematorium, but in a very short time the "observing" will be over and the "doing" will become the norm. We are already planning baptisms into the month of July. From September I won't need to confirm dates with Father Allan's diary, I'll be confirming them in mine!!



Preparation, then, has always featured large, as my formation for the permanent diaconate draws to a close. With the turn of the year, the whole process has accelerated at a frightening pace towards the big day. Five years ago, ordination was something ephemeral, far off, a long way away in the dim and distant future. The 8th of September 2016 is only a few short months away and now everything is becoming very “real”. The candidates’ Mass in the chapel at Gillis, at the beginning of April this year, really brought it home. A very simple and brief rite but it was the last hurdle to be cleared before my actual ordination which will take place here in St. David’s.

I can’t help but think on the reading from the letter of St. Paul which is read to catechumens at the enrolment Mass in Lent when their names, very literally, are “written in the book”. It tells us that the race for me is almost run and I am now heading ever more swiftly towards the finishing line. What is true is that, for all of us, the race is never really over until we are called home by God and that all that we must do is to answer his call and place ourselves in his hands.

Well I’m going to sign off now, but remember to put the 8th of September 2016 into your diaries and I hope to see you all at my ordination here in St. David’s.

God Bless,
Peter.

Coffee & chat with Netta and Cathy.

On Sunday 17th April, Netta Bonnar and Cathy McGauley and I met for a coffee and a chat about themselves and their work in the Church Hall.

Netta Bonnar has been in St. David’s Parish for 19 years. She has a big family, 4 children, 10 grand children and 1 great grandson, Aiden. Netta is a retired nurse from a huge nursing family, the “Nursing Dynasty”. Tony, Netta’s husband, was a pass keeper in the church for 8 years; sadly, Netta lost Tony after 47 years of marriage.

Cathy McGauley has 2 sons, George and Steven, both married and 1 granddaughter, Beth. Cathy is still working as a book keeper and has been married to George for 52 years. George helped with the wiring of the outside lights for the church hall when it was built.

Peter and Ian Allan introduced them, as Cathy wanted to play golf and Netta became her golf companion. They have even been in Marbella together twice playing golf.



Netta and Cathy are both part of the Hall Committee who help and organise functions in the church hall. They are in the hall the 1st and 2nd Sunday of the month after Mass. The 1st Sunday they are serving bacon rolls to raise funds for Lourdes. The 2nd Sunday is for a named charity. Netta’s named charity is the St. Patrick’s Mission, while Cathy helps raise funds towards the 200 Club. Cathy has helped John Kilday with the 200 Club, whilst Netta has been organising the hiring out of the church hall for the past 17 years.

On the last Thursday of every month, Netta is at the hall for the CRUSE Bereavement drop-in sessions. The CRUSE Bereavement works as a support group. Everybody in the group has experienced loss and understands each other’s stage of grieving. Anybody and everybody are welcome. Drop in any time to St. David’s Church Hall on the last Thursday of every month between 10 a.m. - 12 Noon. Father Allan provides the hall free of charge and tea and biscuits!

Netta speaks very fondly of Cathy saying that Cathy goes to see anyone who is sick and she really is a Good Samaritan!

Netta and Cathy are great fun to be with on the golf course, or anywhere! They are a great team who work and laugh together while helping and supporting others in need. It was so good to meet some of the hard working hall committee who do so much good work for the Church and wider community, with the simple hope and goal of helping others.

Patricia Barclay.



Philippines.

Upon embarking on my journey to the Philippines, I had mentally prepared myself for many things.

I understood the levels of poverty were like none that I had ever witnessed in my life, but no amount of mental preparation could have prepared me for what I actually, physically encountered.

It took no longer than 10 minutes from departing Manila airport for me to realise exactly what kind of level of poverty this country faced. Countless families pitched up on the side of extremely busy highway roads, using the highway bridges as a shelter from the blistering sun. Children roamed these highways freely, weaving in and out of traffic in search of any money, or food, or anything they could get. I could not fathom just how dangerous this life could be.

On arriving at the St. Madeleine Sophie Foundation (SMSF) I was greeted by all of the teachers and groundsmen.

It was late at night so I was unable to get a good look around, however I had the day following my arrival off, as it was a Saturday, so I was able to acclimatise and get used to my new surroundings. My first encounter with the older children came the day after, when I was lucky enough to be there for the Youths annual trip around Manila. It was an early start, as I was up around 4 in the morning to start to prepare the children's lunches for the day ahead.

We visited museums and national parks, and after chatting to a few of the kids it saddened me to know that this was the first opportunity they had ever had to do such things.

My first encounter

with the smaller children came the day after, and never before have I ever encountered such happy little bundles of joy. The early morning class was the nursery class, the youngest of the children in the school. After being introduced to them all and saying their daily "Hellos!", the children spend around an hour and a half developing basic skills. Colouring, cutting, jigsaws, basic sums for the more mentally developed, and basic shape work are all worked on, and it felt extremely rewarding seeing the children progress and learn things, even if they were extremely basic. Following the hour and a half of "work", I would then help serve the kids their daily meal. This wouldn't be much, but I knew it made a huge impact on getting the kids through the day. Following the meal, the kids were all instructed to brush their teeth, and then following that it was play time. This is when things went a bit crazy, as for the following half an hour I was used as a human climbing frame. The kids loved getting picked up and swung around, and they were that impatient I was having to pick up 2 with 2 hands!! It was great fun though and gave me a good daily work out!

Following the nursery kids leaving, we ate lunch and had a couple hours break before the afternoon class arrived. At the time of my trip, the kids were preparing their end of term presentations to their parents. This involved singing and dancing different songs, and for the duration of my time there I helped create and choreograph the dances. I am no pro, but with the help of the teachers we created something pretty impressive, however I was unfortunate, as the big presentation was the day after I had left to come home. I did see videos on Facebook though and it looked great.

Overall, the two main things that stuck with me the most from my time away were,

- a) just how bad the poverty was in the country
- b) just how positive and happy the children were.

It saddened me to see the environment in which they lived in, yet not once did I hear any of them complain about anything. Not once. Having seen with my own eyes the conditions they face and, comparing it with the culture and attitudes we have to life here in Scotland, it confuses me. We have sufficient food, shelter and unlimited drinking water source, yet seem to find anything we can to moan or grumble about, yet they do not even have the same essentials but make the most of life in the most positive way possible.

Mark.



My name is Hamish Robertson and last year I completed my sixth year at Selkirk High School in the Scottish Borders. Anne-Theresa Lawrie is a friend and colleague of my mother and she told me about the very rewarding time she had whilst teaching in a school in the Philippines. I was inspired to spend time in the school in the Philippines and approached Mrs. Iris Lawrie to recommend me as a volunteer in the SMSF School.

I have just recently returned from 3 months of volunteering in the SMSF School and it has made a real impact on me in terms of realising just how important education is to making a real difference to the life chances of people. The level of poverty in the Philippines is extreme but despite this the children and families associated with the school are very happy and welcomed me into their community.

Whilst working in the school I had a range of diverse jobs: helping with the pre-school children by reading stories, playing games and preparing their meals. I was also teaching English and Maths to a class of Grade 5 and 6 pupils and also helping tutor some High school and College students from the area.

I have always been very passionate about sport and this is why I decided to take three rugby balls to the school, in order to teach the children the basics of passing and catching. The children were really excited about learning to play rugby which was a new sport to them. Rugby is an integral part of Borders life. The children were very interested to learn about the rules and dynamics of this game with such a funny shaped ball! Who knows, we may have a future rugby team from the Philippines.

During the Christmas and

New Year period I spent time with a few other volunteers making repairs to buildings which had been damaged by a typhoon. This work was much appreciated by the local people. The weather is very unpredictable and has a devastating impact on the everyday lives of people.

While working in the school I was able to witness first-hand what a huge difference the donations sent by St. Luke's and St. David's churches make to the lives of the students - everything from books, pencils, papers, to a tub of hot chocolate as a treat for the teachers, all hugely appreciated. The tee-shirts, flip flops and other clothes are distributed to all children and they look very smart in their new clothes. Your contributions are vital for enhancing the quality of the learning experience delivered to the young people. The 'Sponsor a Teacher' scheme ensures that the children receive a good quality of education from qualified practitioners.

The experiences I had in this small school were truly life changing and I feel all of the kindness from the Church is helping to improve the quality of life for children in the Philippines.

Hamish.



India.

In June, I am travelling to Southern India for a fortnight, with a group of 14 other pupils from St. David's High School, through a company called World Challenge. They organise expeditions for students to help them to develop their confidence and independence at the same time as experiencing a new culture and helping in a disadvantaged community. It has been over a year since we first heard that the school had planned to run an expedition, and I knew instantly that this was something I really wanted to be involved in. I've always wanted to travel and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to see the world, make a change somewhere and to create some amazing memories with my friends who were also keen to sign up. A few weeks later after the initial presentation and a parents' meeting, I had paid my deposit and was signed up for the trip. We began to have team meetings to share fundraising ideas and to research more about where we are going and what we will be doing.

A small fishing town called Fort Kochi is where we will spend our first day meeting our in-country guides, before embarking on a four day trek through tea and cardamom plantations and hopefully seeing some wild elephants on the way. We will then travel to our project phase, where we will spend four days helping to refurbish sanitation systems in a community destroyed by a monsoon, as well as working with the local school children to teach them English and assist with improving their vegetable garden. Then we have a couple of days of rest and relaxation where we can experience the culture of Southern India and relax after the busy week and a half and before we know it, we will be heading back to the airport once more.

The total cost is £2,420 excluding visas, vaccinations and all our kit, so the fundraising began almost immediately. In addition to saving money, I have helped to organise raffles, a bag pack and a ceilidh, as well as hosting a beetle drive, coffee morning and most recently a Quiz Night (see photos) in the church hall, where I raised an amazing £750 towards my target through the generosity of the parishioners. This helped me to pay the final installment to the company and to pay for the vaccinations too.

As departure day draws closer, I am getting excited now that I have all my kit and we have met our expedition leader. I think I will enjoy the trip more since I have managed to raise all the money myself

and I hope that I can improve my independence and leadership skills in the time that we are out there. I am so thankful to everyone who has helped with my fundraising and events, especially the quiz, and I'll let you know all about it when I get back. Thanks again!

Emma McLeod.



Deputy Head Interview.

Q. What is your favourite food?

Anything which I haven't had to cook myself! I do like a nice curry or a Sunday roast with all the trimmings.

Q. Where is your favourite holiday destination?

Anywhere sunny and warm...though probably the best place I have even been was honeymoon in Kenya – the beach and the safari were truly fantastic.

Q. What is your favourite Church season and why?

I think it would have to be Christmas because of all the happy memories of Christmases past with all the family.

Q. What were your girlhood ambitions?

To travel the world and visit lots of places....I have to be honest, though, when it comes to jobs, I had always wanted to be a teacher!

Q. What is your favourite book?

One I have great memories of reading is 'Across the Barricades' by Joan Lingard when I was in second year at high school. I loved it so much at the time that I got the other 4 books in the series from the library and read them all in the space of a week!!

Q. What are your current ambitions?

I don't really know to be honest. To get through a whole week without the girls arguing.

Q. Do you have a favourite sport?

I used to love playing hockey and golf but have to admit that I don't do much any more...and I know I really should.

Q. What's been the biggest influence on your life?

Probably family and friends – especially my gran and great aunt – they never had a cross word to say about anyone and were so kind to everyone and were always there with a cup of tea and a hug just when you needed it.

Q. Do you have a favourite Saint?

Saint Antony. My mum is convinced that I wouldn't have survived being born if it hadn't been for Saint Antony and I know that we have said many prayers to him for Rebecca's throat problems.

Q. What is the hardest part of your job in education?

It's really frustrating trying to teach pupils who don't want to learn or don't see the necessity of education, especially if they are bright and capable of doing well. Often they don't have any self-confidence and mask it with bravado or misbehaviour.

Q. What makes you laugh?

My family....some of the things Rebecca and Jennifer say. I wish I had a notebook to write them all down.

Q. Best time of day?

First cup of tea in the morning or sitting down at night, when homework is all done, girls have gone to bed, tea is prepared for the next day and school work is all done for the night....or a beautiful sunset.

Q. Highlights of teaching career so far?

Going to Holyrood Palace with the first group of pupils I helped achieve their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award; getting particular pupils through exams; introducing A-level and GCSE Polish qualifications to the school... or organising an inflatable obstacle course as a reward for pupils with excellent attendance!

Q. What music do you like?

Depends what kind of mood I am in. I do quite like songs which you can sing along to, but for Sunday dinner it has to be classical or Scottish folk music. I also have to admit to having a liking for "cheesy" songs with even "cheesier" dance moves!!!

Q. What is your favourite television programme.

I used to be mad about Neighbours and Home and Away. I quite liked crime programmes for a while but I also like cookery programmes. Anything easy watching!

Q. Where would you like to go in the world to visit?

The great barrier reef or another safari in Kenya.

Q. Do you enjoy flying?

In a word "no" but I will do it to go on holiday – I prefer the "going" to the "coming home" mind you. My mum is currently trying to get me to go on one of the fear of flying courses to see if that might help.

Q. If not teaching what could you have been doing?

Interpreting or translating.

Q. Where were you born, brought up, Primary, High School, University?

Born in Simpsons Maternity and brought up in Edinburgh. Buckstone Primary for P1 and then Comiston Primary. I then went to George Heriot's for Secondary and then went to the University of St. Andrews.

Q. What was your very first job?

Delivering eggs on my bike to all the neighbours!

Q. Can't live without?

Cup of tea and caramel in any form.

Q. Favourite city and why?

It would have to be Paris because of all the fantastic monuments and sights, not to mention the French food and wine.

Q. What makes you upset?

People being cruel to each other or a sad film or story.

Q. Best thing about your life?

My family.

Our sincere thanks to Mrs. Lesley-Ann Baird for taking the time to answer the questions.

Brian.



Burns Night.

As you can see,
a very good time was had by all!



Aria Belle Rao Baptism.



Fund Raising!

A grandmother from Dalkeith recently jumped out of a plane at 10,000 feet in Australia to raise over £1,045 for Motor Neurone Disease Scotland and Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland.



Remembrance Sunday.



Irene Raine said: "It was brilliant. It took my breath away. The fact that I was doing it for charity was the adrenalin that kept me going."

Irene's sister has been diagnosed with motor neurone and heart and stroke is in the family.

"I want to thank everybody that has supported me. All my family and friends.

"I did it in Australia as my daughter lives there, and I thought if I am ever going to do this then it's best to do it where the weather is better!"

Stations Mass.



Looking Forward.

July :-

- Fri 1st School Holiday starts.
- Sun. 3rd Good Cause Teas & Coffees available to book through to end of August.
- Fri 8th Lourdes trip departs.
- Fri 12th Lourdes trip returns.

August :-

- Sundays available to book Good Cause T&Cs.

September :-

- Sat. 3rd Mgr. Allan leaves for Bathgate.
- Sun. 4th We welcome Fr. Andrew Garden.
- Thu. 8th Peter's Ordination in St. David's.

This is our 20th Parish Magazine and we hope you have enjoyed it.

All our Parish Magazines can be read on our website <http://www.stdavidsdalkeith.co.uk/>

If you have any ideas for the Magazine, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please pass your feedback and ideas for the next edition, to Patricia, Winifred, Brian or Julian.

If you are interested in being a Sponsor for our next Parish Magazine, please contact Brian on 0131-663-0556.

Children's Page.
2015 Nativity photos...

