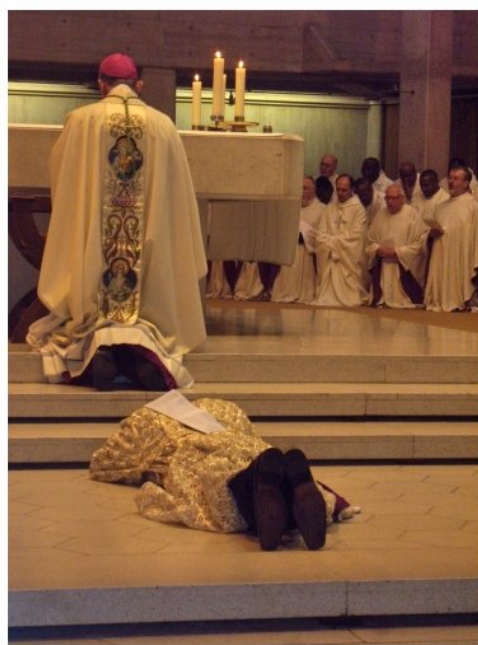


Gloucester Catholic Deanery News

March 2011

Isidore Ordained A new priest for our Diocese

Isidore Obi was ordained to the priesthood on 26 February by Bishop Declan. During the special Mass celebrated in the Cathedral with a congregation from throughout the world Isidore's journey to the priesthood was completed. Our pictures from today's ordination come from Taunton parishioner Doug Lowe. You can see more photos in the image gallery on Clifton Diocese website. Isidore spent around two year living in Taunton where he gained practical pastoral experience. Isidore will celebrated his first Mass as a priest in his home parish of St Nicholas of Tolentino in Easton, Bristol on 27 February.



News from Our Lady's Churchdown



Fr. Kevin Hennessey celebrated his 50th birthday last weekend with a parish party. Over 200 parishioners from 4 months in age to over 90 years young, gathered at Churchdown community centre to wish their parish priest a very happy birthday. Father Kevin was presented with a scrapbook the children had put together of drawings, memories and photos. Guests on the day left comments and birthday wishes. Guests were entertained by local musicians Peter Hayward and the Hooley's

The cake was homemade by a parishioner and showed the Swindon football team with Fr. Kevin as a substitute player!



The Lenten Meditations start on a Friday 11th after the 9.30 Mass and on Tuesday 19th after the 7.0pm Mass. These will continue during Lent running alternative weeks. There will be Stations of the Cross every Friday before the morning 9.30 Mass.

The Wednesday Afternoon Club have launch their Lent fund raising events in aid of CAFOD. Each member has been given £1 and with this they are tasked to raise funds during five weeks in Lent for CAFOD. From Saturday 12th there will be a Saturday coffee morning, a raffle, sale six small cakes after each Mass, film show, recipe book in the making, and a sale of knitted Easter chickens . The events will close on Sunday 9th April.

The walkers in both cluster churches St. Nicholas's Winchcombe and Tewkesbury continue to meet once a fortnight for a walk. These have been excellent days and the weather has been good although some walks have been pretty muddy. It gives the walkers a chance to meet each other and then enjoy a pub lunch.

The final arrangements are being put together for the Parish Pilgrimage to Walsingham which departs on the 14th June. This year there will be twenty parishioners going in two mini buses. The parish has been making the pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine at Walsingham since 1997 we have only missed a couple of years during that time.

There are plans to decorate and refurbish the church. This will will be the final stage of making good and repairing the church. In recent years we have had the Narthex built with kitchen and toilet. The parish office was refitted and completed as well as the sacristy so the only part left to be made good is internal part of the church.

Our Lady's Churchdown

(Continued from page 1)

A huge thank you

I always feel very blessed to be in such a generous, caring and supportive parish and my 50th birthday and the kindness and affirmation I received from this community has been wonderful and humbling for me, and very touching. Thank you so much for all the prayers, greetings, cards and gifts I received, and may I say a special heartfelt thank you to all those who organised and helped at the party at Churchdown Community Centre, for those who came and those would like to have. It was an unforgettable afternoon, and one I enjoyed very much as I am sure did everyone who came.

God bless you all. I can't thank you enough.

Fr Kevin





LIFE IN THE SPIRIT:

75 people from all over the area came to Our Lady of Lourdes for the first session of the 7 week LIFE IN THE SPIRIT Seminar. They heard a wonderful talk from Rev Canon Matthew Jones from Cardiff on the subject of the Love of God...an amazing revelation to those who have lost hope and may have given up on God. They then divided into 8 groups to discuss what they had heard. The general consensus was that it was a most inspiring and encouraging evening.

The course develops the theme of how God wants to call us into his love and provides the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who ask. Later on, there will be individual prayer for Baptism in the Holy Spirit. And of course there is "Homework"with a booklet to aid us in spending 5 to 15 minutes every day....listening to God and pondering: "What if it is true!" If there are others who would like to join us for the rest of the course I am sure we can fit them in.

LET THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK

In January we were present at Gloucester Cathedral when Bishop Declan and the local Christian leaders announced a Lent course of Bible Study called "Let the Scriptures Speak". We have taken this on and offered it to local Christians, some of whom will be joining us for the course which begins on Ash Wednesday but continues on the Tuesday evenings of Lent leading up to Holy Week.

ALPHA

We will be running the ALPHA course after Easter....in fact beginning on the Thursday of Easter Week. No other Catholic Parish in this area has taken on this evangelising project....probably in the mistaken belief that it is "Not-Catholic" (It is accepted by Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops all round the world) or that it is too difficult to run. If you are interested, come and join us....and see how easy it is....how enjoyable....and how it can change your life.



It does not pretend to present the Fullness of the Faith (whatever that means). It is an amazing evangelising tool that teaches the very FIRST steps on the journey to God. We have discovered that many life-long Catholics have never really examined those first steps! In ALPHA, there is something for everybody. Come and See !

News from the Forest

The Presbytery is up for sale in Cinderford, We plan to use the proceeds to repair Our Lady of Victories. At the moment there is a connecting corridor to the Church, so if there are any interested Catholics out there, you could tumble out of bed on a Sunday into Mass!

As you will have heard the forest is not for sale. A fair number of our people were involved with the campaign. A rally was held on the New Year Bank holiday in the snow and it was good to see our people were actively present. This issue has a voice but what will happen to the other cutbacks where perhaps weaker groups don't have the same voice.

The David Payne evening in February was very good. Very good also that a number of our Parishioners were present to be encouraged by his message. Now how are we going to be able to inject a little of his enthusiasm into our benches? As David said it's about 'waking the Dead'.

For me the day for laity at Cheltenham on the new Translation of the Mass was also a highlight. The Director for Liturgy in Clifton, Fr. Michael Fountaine was in fact speaking to me when he said, "Look, you don't have a problem with the new Mass, you may have a problem with the way the Church does things".