

## St Paul's - Annual Parish Discussion and Get Together

We look forward to seeing you at our parish discussion on **Sunday 24th September 2017**, which will start in church after the 10am Mass, at about **11:15am**, for an hour or so. If you need encouragement to attend there will also be a chance for a relaxed get-together afterwards with a choice of sandwiches and drinks, which will be on the patio, weather permitting.

Last year's get together suggested we could review our approach to engaging with the children and youth of our parish, and discuss any realistic improvements.

### Thanks to everybody involved in parish activities

**So many activities are supported willingly by our parishioners, and not everybody is named in this review. Their work dovetails so well in delivering our parish mission. For a small parish, a high percentage of parishioners are providing support to our parish activities, so if you are not helping in some way or another we are sure that many of the teams would welcome your support.**

The weekly parish newsletter, the parish directory and the parish website are invaluable for finding out what activities are happening in and around our parish. If you are familiar with the parish activities, you will know that many of the activities just seem to happen, but this is because their leaders and organisers are dedicated and conscientious. Our thanks for their effort. If extra needs arise then the parish office is the first point of call for these leaders and organisers; and making significant changes is handled through the parish coordinating team, with the Liturgy Group coordinating activities around the sacraments, Masses and services. The pastoral care by our parish priest has been less over the last few months due to essential surgery and recuperation, but happily Fr Peter has made a good recovery and returned to be our parish priest, no doubt aided by your prayers. The parish office team has maintained our parish relationship with St Alban's parish and Shrewsbury Diocese during Fr Peter's absence. The parish team is key to managing the day to day activities of the parish. They have successfully booked our visiting priests for the Masses each Saturday and Sunday, organised baptisms, marriages and funerals and coordinated many other essential activities of the parish including key rotas. Our parish thanks are due to the many visiting priests, who travel from Cheshire, Lancashire and Greater Manchester. Their willingness to visit the parish several times a year contributes to the prayerfulness of our services, and they enjoy the welcome they receive from us.

Our Mass celebrations only work because of the dedicated work of several teams. This includes the team of Sacristans who prepare and close the church and car park, the Eucharistic Ministers who help distribute Communion, the Welcomers who ensure the congregation receives a warm reception with a missal and the weekly newsletter and a request to contribute to the retiring collections, the readers, the altar servers, the choir and musicians, the Piety stall team, the flower arrangers, the PowerPoint team, the Little Church leaders, the church cleaners and the after-Mass coffee and cake organisers. No doubt the least noticed but the most essential is cleaning and maintaining the vestments, altar linen and changing the drapes as required. The Liturgy Group meets regularly, planning the celebration of Liturgy, especially the events around Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter in the Mass. The group is always open to new ideas to celebrate the seasons in the church year. The Eucharist Ministers also take communion out to members of the parish who are unable to attend Mass; these parishioners are an important part of our wider parish community. Other activities that link to the wider parish include the popular Friendship and Bereavement Group that meets each month, and the Rambling group. These groups provide a warm welcome for all parishioners, and provide contact and companionship for those going through difficult times.

Also, connecting with our wider community is the St Vincent de Paul team that quietly ensures there is support to those in need in the parish. The parish is part of the wider Christian Community through the Churches Together in Poynton (CTiP). This group promotes the Christian message in a direct way to all Poynton residents, and is a successful collaboration between Poynton's Christian churches. For example, this group is involved in the annual Remembrance Day service and parade, the regular *page 2* in the Poynton Post, and the annual Women's World Day of Prayer. And of course not forgetting the St Paul's Brownies Pack continues to thrive under its new leaders. Many parishioners are involved in the running of the pre-school, St Paul's Primary School and All Hallows Catholic College. This is welcomed, as it links together important aspects of our Catholic parish and community, for both young and old. Our parish finances are carefully managed, and the parish has made due contributions to diocesan activities and various charitable activities. With extra help this year, the finance team has responded to the Diocese moving the parish banking to Lloyds Bank in Hazel Grove. The maintenance of the fabric of the church, presbytery, the "toy box" and the grounds is essential, and over the last year has focussed on additional refurbishment to the presbytery meeting areas and bedrooms.