

Our Lady of the Valley Parish Newsletter 28th June 2020 – Saints Peter and Paul

ON RE-OPENING CHURCHES: The good news is that we can start to see a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel! The Prime Minister announced that places of worship would be able to open for services once more after 4th July. But this will not happen immediately for most churches as lots of things need to be in place, and all requirements be able to be adhered to. It is crucial to ensure that we are fully compliant in terms of social/physical distancing and to satisfy those governmental requirements which are designed to make safety paramount in public gatherings.

Bishop John wrote to the priests saying: “As I write this, we have now received the statement of Cardinal Vincent that churches may re-open for the public celebration of Mass and for other sacraments and liturgies from 4th July but we still await the directives from the Archbishops as to the practical requirements in doing so. It is important to accept immediately that not all churches will be able to open for Mass on that first day. Those not yet authorised to open for private prayer must wait until checks have been carried out.

There is no obligation for people to attend Mass at this time and the first priority for people must be safety and the avoidance of placing others at risk of contagion. Indeed, no churches will have the permitted capacity for large congregations for the time being. It would be a tragedy if, in the desire to attend Mass, we put people at risk and cause them to fall ill. The lifting of restrictions on lockdown in some other countries has not been successful and we must be patient. In all this, be encouraged to continue with prayer at home, using virtual participation at Mass where possible and strengthening that sense of “being Church” even while we cannot freely gather together. I am very grateful for people’s sensible response in these recent weeks and the energy shown in building the strength of community, personal contact and care.” Bishop John.

St. Michael and St. John’s church is now open **for quiet and private prayer.**

Since we opened our doors for an hour each day, we have seen a steady trickle of people who have called in to church, and been delighted to have been able to do so.

Our thanks to the stewards, because without their help we would not be able to open, and thanks to all who have called into church, for adhering to the new way of doing things.

Once we open for Mass we will need many more stewards!

St. Michael and St. John’s is open for quiet prayer

Monday to Friday 11am till 12 noon.

Saturday 11am till 1pm.

We use the main doors for entering the church and the side door near the pulpit as an exit. If you or any of your household present with any coronavirus symptoms then you must stay away.

I know that all of this is so different to what we have ever been used to, but needs must, and we must get this right and at the same time get used to this new way of doing things.

Over the next few weeks we will look toward opening the church for Mass first of all on weekdays, and then on Sundays, observing all the guidelines we are given and adhering to them rigidly. It is so important that we do not act too quickly and end up putting people's lives at risk.

Yes, we do want to get back to Mass, and will do, but we must get this absolutely right, so we need to remain patient, keep praying we do get this right, and stay safe.

Will all churches open?

No, it may not be possible to open all our churches several named churches, spread around the Diocese will be open. Other churches will follow if they can fulfil the conditions for Full time security, cleanliness, social distancing and several other restrictions. For some churches it may not be possible for them to open at all, but we will ensure that churches that can open are available across the diocese.

But it is so good that we are able to come into our church again for prayer

This weekend we are celebrating the Solemnity of those two great saints, Peter our leader in faith, and Paul its fearless preacher.

Peter and Paul were both very different, and from very different backgrounds, but both called to do the Lord's work. They kept the faith to the end.

We too are all so different, but it is the same Lord who empowers us to keep the faith; his faithfulness to us enables us to be faithful to him. The faithful witness of these two great saints speaks so clearly to us of the good Lord's faithfulness to each one of us.

We give thanks for the gift of our faith and the witness of Peter and Paul, and as we thank God for his faithfulness to us, we pray for the grace to always remain faithful to him.

*Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!*

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Have we become too pre-occupied with our concerns close to home to heed the needs of those far away?

This week I write about how one person can focus their compassion and make an enormous impact. She is called Samara Levy and works with Syrian refugees.

Over several years we sent knitwear to Syrian refugees in Turkey. The knitwear came from our parish knitters and a knitting group in Blackburn inspired by our action. Sending knitwear in suitcases became too expensive when Monarch ceased to allow our suitcases free passage and in 2018 we drove overland with a car crammed full.

With bedroom still piled high with blankets and baby wear we had to find somewhere else and turned to Samara.

Around Christmas 2013, Samara saw reports of Syrian refugee children in snow covered camps, wearing flip flops and summer clothes - the same clothes they had been wearing when they fled their homes in summer. Samara wanted to fill a lorry with clothes and shoes and the idea wouldn't go away. Frustrated that her dream seemed impossible she prayed asking God to show her what to do. He replied: "Start collecting."

But the difficulties of transportation remained and Samara kept praying with the question reframed in different ways. Always came the same answer: "Start collecting." So she did.

In the end she had more than enough for a lorry, raised more money than she needed, and sent the lorry off. That one lorry turned into more than 100 lorries and containers in four years.

Hundreds of people from many different communities were involved and more than 350 churches across the UK organised collections. We took two car loads to Kendal.

When the Syrian authorities stopped the lorries coming Samara raised money for other ways of helping Syrian refugees. They provide medical and humanitarian aid via partners in Syria with a particular emphasis on orphans and widows. They have also provided four small emergency field hospitals in different locations. Samara's aim is to demonstrate the unconditional love of God to people who are in desperate need.

I have spoken to Samara and she keeps me updated. Below is an extract from a recent email which struck me because it makes the same point about compassion that I made last week.

"How can I love him? I don't even know his name!" This question, from an orphan at our singing group epitomises the reason we started our outreach centre.

Some of these children have been left with relatives who don't want them, some have been abused, and all have suffered deep personal loss of at least one parent. These massive life events are deeply traumatising. The activities we run at the centre are wonderful, beautiful, challenging and fascinating, all at the same time.

The widows we work with have skills and personalities we can employ. With wages low and prices high many of the higher functioning mothers still rely on humanitarian aid to survive. By employing them we can pay a better salary - £115 per month without specialist skills - and help them while they and their children use our facilities and services. Many widows are forced to leave their children home alone while they work. Some are too young to be left alone.

We run structured weekly sessions for children including singing, music, art and crafts. Every single one was keen to do music and singing!

Our team begins each group session with a short talk about an important issue, like loving each other in spite of our differences.

As well as feeding the children we also give food parcels to the widows and guardians who are most vulnerable.

Whether a child is rich or poor, singing lifts the spirit. Music touches a part of our souls that few other things reach.

We live in a world where it is easy to hate someone you don't know. But loving someone you don't even know is a brand new, radical concept for many. If more of us could learn to love those we don't know, instead of hating and judging them, the world would be a better place.

The Syrian war has been fuelled by the incitement of hatred, judgement and violence, especially towards other communities and faiths. If the cycle of violence and hate is to be broken, it needs to start in these children. They are the future of their nation, their community and the next generation.

Find out more about Samara at <https://www.samarasaidappeal.org/>

Anthony Brown

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FROM THE ARCHIVES:

ENTERTAINMENT AT THE HALL 1911 - 1956

It is unclear as to when Shows/Pantomimes were first staged at the Hall, but what we can say for certain is that it was at least early in the 20th Century. The first advertisement found in Clitheroe Local newspapers is for RED RIDING HOOD back in 1911, which was performed by the Catholic School Children. In January 1921 the Opera IL TRAVATORE was performed and later in that year in December CINDERELLA AND THE PRINCE was staged. THE CHATELAINE was performed in 1926.

Revue seem to have begun in 1927 with A CHRISTMAS HAMPER, followed by two more Revues in 1928 and 1929.

The more modern Pantomimes seem to have started in 1932 with a production of BABES IN THE WOOD, produced by Mrs Sherliker, followed by DICK WHITTINGTON in 1933, CINDERELLA in 1934, and ROBINSON CRUSOE in 1935. In 1936 a Revue was staged, with MOTHER GOOSE in 1937 and ALADDIN IN 1938. These carried on through the war years. No programmes for any of these productions have been found.

In 1947 the production was HUMPTY DUMPTY, the first one to be produced by Edmund Cambien, who went on to be the producer whilst still remaining one of the cast, together with Mrs Sherliker until THE QUEEN OF HEARTS in 1956, which sadly was the last one staged.

The following is a poster and report from the local paper The Clitheroe Times from 1915 relating to the production of Cinderella (**CLITHEROE NEWS written in great detail** – sadly something that is lacking in 2020 (Things ain't what they used to be !!!))

THE HALL LOWERGATE

A Grand Operetta

entitled

CINDERELLA

(Words by A.J.Foxwell. Music by B.Mamsell Ramsey)

Will be given by the Younger Members of SS Michael & John's Congregation

TO=MORROW, Saturday 13th and

Monday, February 15th

Doors open each night at 7.15. to commence at 7.45

Admission: - Reserved Seats, 1/6d; Second Seats, 1/-; Third Seats, 6d

PLAN for Saturday Evening at the "TIMES' Office

PLAN for Monday Evening at MISS EMBLEY'S, Catholic Repository, Lowergate

Tickets may be had from any Member of the Operetta or from the Secretaries,

MR J SHERLIKER, 61 Woone Lane and MR J.I.RUDD, Castle Street

SUPERB PRESENTATION AT THE HALL

The story of Cinderella is old, yet ever new. Perhaps the best known of all fairy stories, it never fails to fascinate the younger generation, and many who can no longer be accounted young find in it much to charm and admire. Much of course, depends on the telling of the story and one of the most effective ways of unfolding it was adopted at the Hall. Though necessarily elaborate it is well worth the trouble as the younger members of the SS Michael and John's congregation convincingly proved last weekend.

These young players have a not insignificant reputation, and annually they make a venture which less ambitious people would hesitate to consider. There is nothing lacking in these performances, and the great enthusiasm of all concerned has much to do with the degree of excellence achieved. Also, the assured success has something to do with the enthusiasm. Scenery, dresses and players were alike—first rate in every detail.

In the first act, the scene is laid in the Market street. First there comes the proclamation by the Herald (Miss C Hardman) of the festivities in aid of the Princes's birthday. The announcement is followed by the festivities and here are introduced four national dances. Misses N.Blackburn, N.Chippendale, A.Ince and M.Bailey went through a complicated movement without faltering and Misses M Sherliker and L.Sutcliffe gave a capital Irish jig. Misses E.Ward and C.Hardman were quite at ease in a Scotch reel and Misses A Turner and E.Dewhurst demurely went through a Welsh dance. All four were loudly encored. As a climax Britannia (Miss A.Latham) was effectively introduced, following which Misses Ward and C Hardman sang a pretty patriotic song

Act II, saw the story begin properly and it was carried through its well known states to its consummation with Cinderella as the bride of the Prince, to the great surprise and chagrin of her haughty step-mother and sisters. One or two further items are deserving of the highest praise. First, the beautiful floral dance by the fairies, who executed rhythmic movements with charm. Mention should also be made of the extremely effective ballroom scene, which would have done credit to a much more pretentious show. The dresses were beautiful and had obviously been selected with great care and judgment in order to make a brightly picturesque show.

Then it should be noted that the modern Cinderella concludes with ragtime. The wedding vow was made to the music and priest and all were "swinging to and fro." The principals were all excellent Miss N Blackburn in the title role showed delightful versatility, and no fault could be found with Miss A Ince as stepmother, or with Misses L Sutcliffe and K.Dixon as daughters. The trio assumed the correct haughtiness and peevishness to perfection. To complete the family, Mr J.I Rudd as the poor baron, lived his part and his previous stage experience was valuable. Miss N.Chippendale made a correct Prince. The part became her. Miss C Hardman was a favourite as the herald, and Miss A.Jackson as fairy queen did all that was required of her without faltering. The operetta was replete with guards, pages, courtiers and citizens. All who took even a minor part did it well. All the singing was tuneful and bright. It was obvious that Misses Bennett and Chippendale and Mr R Jackson had willing and adaptable pupils and it is as certain that the trio combined initiative skill and understanding with ready sympathy. The working of the scenery was judicious and effective that's to Mr C Lockett. The other arrangements which showed considerable foresight, were a credit

to the energetic secretaries (Messrs J Sherliker and J.I.Rudd) not to mention other excellent workers.

Announced for only two nights Saturday and Monday - when there were packed houses, a third performance on Tuesday was decided upon with quite satisfactory results.

A LETTER FROM THE TOWN CLERK G.HETHERINGTON, TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE, THE CASTLE, CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE. TEL No 330 CLITHEROE

8th October 1934

Mayoral attendance at S.S.Michael & John's Church.

His Worship the Mayor (Mr Councillor R.Manley) has accepted the invitation of the Rector (the Rev.Fr.A.Kopp, S.J.) to attend divine service at S.S.Michael and John's Church on Sunday evening next the 14th instant, and trust that members and officials of the Council and its Committee will accompany him on this occasion.

The service will commence at 6.30p.m. and you are desired to attend at the Hall, Lowergate, not later than 6.10p.m.for the purpose of joining His Worship in procession to the Church.

In order that seating accommodation may be allocated it is necessary that you should inform me as early as possible whether you will be able to attend.

Yours faithfully.

G.Hetherington

Town Clerk

PLEASE: If anyone out there has anything they think would be of interest for this archive column relating to St Mary's Sabden or St Hubert's Dunsop Bridge please email to Janet on janet.clegg@dioceseofsalford.org.uk OR janegg@hotmail.co.uk

Thankyou