

Welcome To Our New Look Bulletin!

Welcome to the autumn Bulletin from the Central Bedfordshire Pastoral Area Council (or PAC for short). We've adopted a new style and tone for this newsletter. We hope you like it! We're aiming not only to spread news about what the PAC has been doing, but also share some highlights from our own individual Parishes across our Pastoral Area.

On the 11th October the Pastoral Area Council for Central Bedfordshire met with Bishop Peter. This meeting was held to discuss the progress that has been made over the past 12 months to take forward and implement some of the priorities identified by the Pastoral Area groundplan. You can read about these initiatives in this bulletin, for instance the Readers Day, and will have hopefully already heard of some of this work through your own Parish newsletters. Bishop Peter's continued and very visible commitment to the (now not so) new Pastoral Areas is an inspiration to us all.

We also welcome Fr Eamon Murray to our Pastoral Area, previously of St. Margaret of Scotland, Luton. Following some changes in the Clergy within the Diocese, Fr Eamon has now replaced Canon Michael Griffiths at St Peter's in Biggleswade, who has gone to Our Lady of Walsingham, Corby. Please remember both in your prayers as they take up their new assignments. Finally, congratulations to Fr John Danford of Sacred Heart in Leighton Buzzard who celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination in June!

New Translation of the Missal

Everyone will now be well aware of the new changes which are designed to offer a more faithful interpretation of the Lord's word. The changes began on the 4th September with the introduction of the Order of Mass. The full introduction of the Missal will take place on the first Sunday in Advent.

Readers Day!

Our first Pastoral Area wide Day for Readers, took place on 8th October at St Mary's in Dunstable. Since the Pastoral Area was formed two years ago, the Council has been preparing a programme of formation for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers. The feedback from this first day was extremely positive with almost 70 Readers from all our Parishes coming together. This was a day with a difference, sessions focused on the importance of the ministry of readers proclaiming the Word of God. After time on the importance of preparation and reflection, our readers had input from a professional actor and voice coach, which created great interest. This first Pastoral Area Day for Ministry is something that we intend to repeat annually, with next year the sessions designed for Eucharistic Ministers.



Forthcoming Events

November

Saturday 26th 10am – 1pm: Christmas Bazar:
St Francis, Shefford - Methodist Hall.

December

Saturday 3rd 11am: Christmas Bazar:
St Peter's, Biggleswade.

Tuesday 13th 8pm: Union of Catholic Mothers Ecumenical Advent Candle Service,
St Francis, Shefford (mince pies afterwards – everyone invited).

The next edition of the Pastoral Area Bulletin will be coming out in Spring 2012. Please let your Parish Pastoral Area Council Member know if you wish to publicise an event from your Parish across Central Bedfordshire in this newsletter.

Central Bedfordshire Pastoral Area Council Members: Canon Bennie Noonan (Shefford), Tony Falcon (Leighton Buzzard), Neil Taylor (Shefford), Liz Carey-Sheill (Biggleswade), Canon Dennis McSweeney (Flitwick), Canon Michael Griffiths (until Sept 2011) (Biggleswade), Fr John Danford (Leighton Buzzard), Fr Kieran Magovern (Dunstable), Fr Chacko Panathara (Dunstable), Fr Jimmy Shiel (Dunstable), Fr. Eammon Murray (Biggleswade), Rev Philip Pugh (Dunstable), Rev Peter Hyde (Shefford), Cecilia Brand (Dunstable), Don Perrett (Flitwick), Nicky Wiseman (Justice & Peace).

Justice and Peace

In the Central Bedfordshire Pastoral Area we now have an established Justice and Peace (J&P) team. This is made up of representatives from each of the Parishes in Central Beds. The first meeting of the group was held in March of this year and there have been two meetings since. The team is made up of representatives from each Parish. One of their initiatives is for individual Parishes to consider joining the CAFOD project Connect2 which links a parish with a community in the developing world. Sacred Heart Parish in Leighton Buzzard have launched this initiative and are now connected with a community in Bangladesh.

If you would like to hear more about Justice and Peace in our Pastoral Area, please contact your Clergy or Parish representative.

Have you ever felt that “there must be more than this?”

...more we can do?...more I can do?

– The Micah Conversation

Part of the solution lies in being able to talk with others, sharing feelings, thoughts and ideas about how we can be a “community” and how our lives can feel *and be* more fulfilled. Over the summer months you may have seen, read or heard about **The Micah Conversation**. When Bishop Peter launched his vision for the Diocese he explained that he had chosen the words of the prophet Micah as the “motto” for his episcopate...

“...to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God”.

In so doing, our Bishop urged every community to start to engage in more conversation, hence the link between the prophet’s words and the opportunity to meet and converse. St Francis (Shefford) and Scared Heart (Flitwick) agreed to work together to join **The Micah Conversation** in our Pastoral Area. Recently people from both Parishes gathered for the Opening Day and will be meeting again for the Day of Discernment on the 12th November. Three group gatherings are also taking place in between.

Together In Faith

Those Parishes who have so far been involved with this initiative have seen tremendous results. The Together In Faith campaign is designed to improve the financial standing of the Diocese and in particular support a number of the challenges we face in the future, including valuable provisions made for sick or retiring Clergy. Each Parish has its own success story to tell, but as a couple of examples, St Peter’s in Biggleswade were hugely successful, raising £184,688 against their initial £50,000 target (369% of target and second in the table on this measure!). After having been set a target of £40,000, at St Francis in Shefford, an amazing £121,500 has been pledged. This is one of the highest levels of Parishioner participation in the Diocese at 56%. Well done to all concerned!

Happy Anniversary!

A very significant event that occurred in June was Fr John Danford’s 25th Anniversary of his Ordination. The Parish put on a splendid “do” for him, which was preceded by a concelebrated Mass, Fr John being the principal celebrant – with various other priest friends in attendance, as was Bishop Peter (presiding). The following week, on June 30th, at the Cathedral, the Bishop celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving for his 2 “Jubililarion” priests, unfortunately, one couldn’t attend, but Fr John did. It was again a splendid event, followed by lunch in the Bishop’s garden.

Around The Parishes

St Francis – Shefford

Translation of the Mass – A whole day was spent on a Saturday in September looking at the new translation. This has had an unbelievable effect on the Sunday Masses, especially involvement in singing parts of the Mass we had not regularly attempted before. Building and restoration work: complete replacement of the Drainage System has taken place, with further restoration of the interior of the Church ongoing.

Sacred Heart – Flitwick

The Parish based Micah conversation programme has started, as have understanding the new Missal sessions.

Scared Heart – Leighton Buzzard

The Parish is looking at its own building project. A building committee has been formed to advise Fr John and to oversee the building of a new Parish Hall and refurbishment of the Church.

St Peter’s – Biggleswade

The Parish has just said goodbye to Canon Michael Griffiths who took up his new post as Parish Priest at Our Lady of Walsingham, Corby at the end of August. While awaiting the arrival of Fr. Eamon Murray, Fr. Keith Sawyer supplied for a short period and Fr. Mirek Misuiria has also looked after the Parish. Two major building projects have recently been completed at St Peter’s. The first was the installation of disabled toilets, the second was repairs to the Church roof.

St Mary’s – Dunstable

This year the Parish has held a briefing for new Eucharistic Ministers and a follow up session focused on serving the sick and housebound. A further meeting was scheduled to offer a period of reflection on the privilege and responsibilities of serving in this ministry.

