

The Parish of Holy Innocents, Hornsey

Parish Priest's Report to the 2010 APCM

Since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Holy Innocents has continued to offer the Church's daily worship to Almighty God and there are many reasons to give thanks to God for his blessings to us here.

Children and Young People

The work of HI Kids has continued impressively throughout the past year and I am particularly pleased to notice how happy and at ease our children are here in Church. I pay tribute to Tilly, Angie and Dot for their work as leaders and thank all who help. Throughout the year the children have taken part in Children's Masses and have enjoyed learning about their faith Sunday by Sunday. Parents and members of the congregation enjoy hearing what the children have done at the end of the Sunday Mass. The work that the children did before Remembrance Sunday last year was particularly outstanding and was hugely appreciated by all who saw the presentation at Mass that weekend. There is always more that can be done and we do need to do more for our teenagers and we need also to train some more servers.

It has been a pleasure to welcome to Holy Innocents class visits from some of our local schools, including St Mary's Infant School, St Aidan's School, Rokesly School and Hornsey School for Girls. In addition, the parish clergy regularly visit local schools to conduct assemblies and take part in RE classes.

All our work with children and young people is carried out in accordance with the PCC's child protection policy. This is reviewed annually by the PCC and is in accordance with the guidelines required by the Diocese of London.

Parish Life

Our parish life has continued to be rich and varied. The purpose of a Church is to worship God and I am grateful to everyone who enables that to happen beautifully, regularly and properly. Sally Quashie, our sacristan, is here every day to make sure the Church is open and the Mass prepared. I simply don't know what I would do without her in the sacristy. I would like to thank everyone who gives of their time and energy to make Holy Innocents the wonderful parish it is: the servers, readers and musicians and particularly to our organist, Gilbert Reines, whose energy and commitment to offering fitting worship to God is an inspiration.

All who clean and decorate the Church deserve our thanks. They work incredibly generously and people often comment of the way the Church looks so well cared for. I am grateful too for all who welcome people to Church as sidespersons. As the first people that newcomers meet at Holy Innocents, the sidespeople have a particularly important ministry of welcome.

I am constantly grateful to Angie and Cicely, who have served as our Church Wardens, for their support and encouragement, often quietly and discreetly given behind the scenes. They have been exemplary in their support of the clergy and their work for the parish has been untiring.

During the past year members of Holy Innocents have taken part in worship and activities with other local churches. These have included the Women's World Day of Prayer and The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The preacher was glad to have so many friendly faces in the crowd at the Pilgrimage for the Sick and Handicapped at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham last August. Our closest ecumenical partners are the clergy and people of St Peter in Chains. We join them for a vigil service in Advent and for Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings in Lent.

Our social life together has been good with the regular round of Holy Innocents parties, lunches and trips. I particularly enjoyed going to the parish trip to the Epsom Races, on which I personally made a very agreeable profit! Fr Patrick and Irena led a wonderful holiday-cum-pilgrimage to Fatima and Santiago de Compostella which was very much appreciated by all our parishioners who went on it. The trip is a very good example of the extremely positive and enriching partnership we enjoy with our brothers and sisters at Holy Trinity, Stroud Green. So much of what we do is better because we do it together with Holy Trinity and I commend the people of Holy Trinity to everyone's prayers.

Looking outwards

Our life is not just about ourselves though and over the past years we have looked outwards towards people in need, not least by supporting the work of Hillcrest, our main charitable partners in South Africa. We had a marvellous evening in Moors Bar, thanks to the generous initiative of Andy and Cathrina and raised over £1200 for Hillcrest and had a fantastic evening into the bargain. We have also supported charities working with children and young people in St Petersburg by having a vodka party and coffee mornings. And I am grateful for the generous way in which parishioners contributed to the work of Christian Aid in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake.

During Advent, as well as our normal Church services we were asked to host two new carol services which particularly gladdened me. One was for the Hornsey based charity Action for Kids and the other was for the Haringey Metropolitan Police. Both were quite well attended and the parishioners of Holy Innocents were great at welcoming people to the Church. It's really good that outside bodies like Action for Kids and the Police see the Church as a place they want to come to and after their visits both were very grateful and impressed by the welcome they had received. We hope to build on those happy successes in the coming year too.

The Fair Trade Stall at Holy Innocents goes from strength to strength. I would like to pay tribute to Jenny Harding for her generous hard work in making the stall happen. I'm sure she would be grateful for offers of help to set up and help put away the stall on Sundays. I would like to thank all who buy produce from the Fair Trade Stall. The

Fair Trade movement is gaining momentum and popularity, not least among the Local Authorities here in London, many of whom are trying to become 'Fair Trade Boroughs' and it is interesting to note that those boroughs which have been given this status have invariably acknowledged the impetus and contribution of local Church groups. For us as Christians, the existence of such flagrant material inequality between the rich and poor in the world is a source of horror and shame. It is often not clear what we can do as individuals to challenge this injustice, but using Fair Trade Produce is one little way we can make a difference.

Supporting Vocations to the Priesthood

Holy Innocents continues to be recognised by others in the wider Church as a good place to send young men who are considering or training for ordination to the Priesthood. Since the last APCM we have had two students on placement with us, a seminary student from St Stephen's House Theological College in Oxford and an undergraduate from Trinity College Cambridge who hopes to be a priest later in life I would particularly like to thank parishioners who have encouraged these people in their vocation, especially those who have invited the students to visit them in their homes. Each student has spoken warmly of the encouragement they have received here and of the friendly parish life we enjoy.

It is my hope that we will be able to expand our work with potential ordinands and that will be made possible by the fact the Brenda Barwick has offered to put the upper floors of her home in Elder Avenue at the disposal of the parish for this purpose. We will have to raise a fairly considerable sum of money to do this, but I feel confident that we will be able to do that and I look forward to it very much. This project will be one of our major works in the coming year.

Thanks

Finally I would like to pay tribute to my clergy colleagues, Fr Philip and Fr Patrick. They are invariably hard working and totally committed to Holy Innocents. They are wonderful and wise people to work with and their contribution to our parish life and their kindness and support for me personally is impossible to underestimate. We have lots of fun together and really enjoy being brother priests in this parish. I am tremendously grateful to them for all that they do and I know that this gratitude is shared by all the members of the congregation.

All that we do and all that we are here at Holy Innocents, Hornsey, is directed to two goals: the worship of Almighty God and the building up of His Church. For all that has been accomplished by his grace we give thanks. For all that is to be done in the future, let us commit ourselves to respond with generosity and faith.

Father Tim Pike
Vicar of Holy Innocents, Hornsey
April 2010