

### A New Prayer for Partnerships

The journey through *Forward Together in Hope* and the launching of our Partnerships has been accompanied throughout by prayer. Alongside the many personal prayers, Masses and other forms of prayer, we have used two prayers as a way of uniting us as we considered the future of our Diocese.

A year on from the launch of the Partnerships, it was felt that the time was right for something that takes us on from these beginnings and guides us as we work together to further the kingdom of God.

And so, at Pentecost, a new prayer was published. It takes our Risen Lord at his word, and asks him to send forth his Spirit upon us – knowing that he promises us his grace and that this will be enough for us.

We look back to some of those who established faith in our part of the world and see ourselves in that long line of people who have nurtured Christianity and handed it on to subsequent generations.

Finally, we acknowledge that this task is actually beyond us! At least – beyond us in our own strength. Again, we take God at his word and stand before him in confidence and trust that all that he has promised he will do. In some of Bishop Séamus' favourite words from Scripture, we profess our belief that, if we but trust and place our hope in God, he and we can do more than anyone could ask or imagine.



Risen Christ,  
from your abundant grace,  
pour out afresh your Holy Spirit upon our Diocese.

As we build on the deep foundations of faith  
laid by the countless saints of these Northern lands,  
by Aidan and Cuthbert, Hilda and Bede,  
may our Partnerships continue the mission  
of building your Kingdom on the earth:  
to give living witness to your love,  
and to your compassion and hope for our world.

We pray in trustful confidence  
that your power working in us  
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Through the same Christ our Lord,  
Amen

### One Year On – A Time for Reflection

Pentecost saw the first anniversary of the establishment of the 18 partnerships in our Diocese and this was acknowledged by Bishop Séamus in his recent Pastoral Letter. *'I think it is timely to pause and reflect upon the journey that we have travelled so far. I want to thank each one of you for the contribution that you are making to ensure that your own partnership is built on really strong foundations.'*

As part of this reflection, all partnerships have been provided with a short document to assist them to review what has happened over the year, celebrate what has been achieved and identify what additional support would be useful. As well as being a valuable review process for the partnership itself, receiving information from all partnerships in the same way will provide Episcopal Vicars with a consistent picture and highlight ideas that can be shared widely across the Diocese. Bishop Séamus also re-iterated the significance of partnerships saying:



*'I firmly believe that parishes co-operating and working ever more closely together in partnerships is the right direction for our Diocese.'*

He concluded his Pentecost letter with the words:

*'May the Holy Spirit continue to guide, inspire and enlighten us all as we seek to continue the mission Jesus entrusted to us.'*

# Sharing Across the Diocese

One of the main suggestions made in our recent *Partnership Matters* questionnaire was to include more information from the different partnerships. In response, this double page feature has been included in this edition. You can find these and items from other partnerships on the Partnership Sharing page at: [www.rcdhn.org.uk/partnerships/ptnpsharing.php](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk/partnerships/ptnpsharing.php) on the Diocesan website.

## Benedict



The Benedict Partnership launched the first edition of their newsletter in April. It includes an introduction from Fr. Jim O'Keefe on why there are partnerships and a list of all the parishes and churches within the partnership. There is a definition of a Partnership

Development Group (PDG) and a list of the members of the PDG and a few words from the Lay Chair, Michael Davison.

Every journey begins with the first step and included is a prayer called 'A Prayer for the Way Ahead' based on Thomas Merton, 'Thoughts in Solitude'.

The next edition will highlight the challenges for the future and how each church and parish fits into the Benedict Partnership.

## St Mary the Virgin

St Mary the Virgin Partnership linked with local schools to design and produce a partnership logo and prayer. The partnership mission statement and prayer - which involved every school - have been incorporated into a partnership leaflet that has been widely circulated.



## Hogarth

### Living Up To Expectations

It was a case of 'Great Expectations' fulfilled as the Hogarth Partnership Players took their performance of Jo Clifford's adaptation of the Charles Dickens' novel to each of the partnership parishes, with eight performances over a period of just 11 days. The play entertained more than three hundred people, with audiences giving the cast a standing ovation at several venues.

During the interval, and after the show, the actors were encouraged to mingle with the audience members, which gave people from different parishes the chance to meet and chat together – one of the aims of the initiative. Tickets bought were valid for a performance at any of the venues, enabling a substantial number of people to watch the play away from their usual parish, and make new links.

The cross-parish initiative was the brainchild of director Brian Coady, who invited people from all parishes to take part in the production. The 18-strong cast was assisted by a dedicated support team who organised an ingenious rotating set which gave a clear sense of scene, yet could be cleared and loaded into the van within 30 minutes of the production ending.

The production was also performed on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May, at Crown Street Library, as part of the Darlington Arts Festival.



# TICKET



## Heavenfield

### Pilgrimage Masses

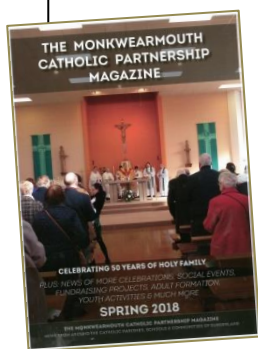
The Heavenfield Partnership journeyed together as one throughout Lent by hosting a series of Lenten Stational Masses. Inspired by the ancient Roman tradition of journeying through Lent by making a series of pilgrimages to different churches, the partnership family marked the Wednesdays of Lent by celebrating Mass in each of the churches within the partnership, although the planned visit to Haydon Bridge was prevented by snow.



The final Mass, held at St. Mary's in Hexham, also saw the debut of *The Heavenfield Mass*, a Latin/English arrangement of the Ordinary of Mass set to Northumbrian tunes. This was arranged by Paul Berry, Director of Music at St. Mary's, and was well received by all who attended. The Mass is currently in the process of approval for use outside the parish, and will hopefully be available in the coming months.

For further details contact the Diocesan Church Music association, or Paul Berry at St Mary's Hexham on 01434 603 119

## Monkwearmouth



One of the tangible outcomes from the PDG meetings has been the publication of the Monkwearmouth Quarterly Magazine. Its intention is to strengthen communication links between the church communities along with the creation of a website and establishing a presence on social media.

The Christmas and Spring editions were well received. They included Mass times for upcoming celebrations and news and events from across the Partnership.

The Partnership has recently seen the closure of Holy Family Grindon, which has amalgamated with St Anne's, Pennywell, to form the new parish of St Anne's and Holy Family. The Partnership came together in support of the parishioners of Holy Family, who were warmly welcomed into new parishes. The closing Mass at Holy Family was attended by people from all across Monkwearmouth, and was a wonderful celebration of the 50 years that the community had been there.

Other events from across the Partnership have included:

- A St Patrick's Day Partnership Ceilidh.
- The Coastal Rosary Walk, which saw about 400 people praying the Rosary along Sunderland's coastline.
- The Good Friday Walk of Witness led by students from the University of Sunderland Catholic Chaplaincy. It included a passion play acted out on the top of Tunstall Hill to a crowd of over a thousand people from all over the City.

## Escomb

Since the partnerships were announced last year Escomb Partnership has been producing a weekly 'Escomb Partnership Note.' Each Note includes words of reflection from the Bible, Pope Francis and many others as well as some history about the different communities within the partnership. Recent editions have included reflections for Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi. There will also be a CAFOD partnership walk on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm from St Wilfrid's Church, Bishop Auckland.



## Blackfriars



In a recent letter Fr Shaun O'Neil invited everyone in the partnership to participate in the partnership initiatives for 2018 and gave an update on progress made so far.

The various activities happening in the partnership included: Coordination of confirmation across the partnership, events for altar servers and working with sixth formers for the Pope John Paul II awards. Currently in development is a Partnership Handbook on Administration, liturgy for joint celebrations and a new website. Also planned are two spirituality events: "**Space for Grace**" on Thursday June 28<sup>th</sup> at St John Vianney and Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup> at St Charles. There has also been a focus on young adults and a "*taster event*" for this will be on held on Saturday June 16<sup>th</sup>.



## Diocesan Festival



Summer is almost here and so is the Diocesan Festival. As always, it will be a celebration of inspiring speakers, uplifting worship and fun for all the family. This year, it will explore the theme of encounter - how God is calling us to meet and respond to others in love. This is something Pope Francis has

highlighted again and again, calling on us to respond with open hearts. The Festival is at the Emmaus Youth Village on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June and bookings are via the diocesan website or seek out a form at the back of your church.

## Unconference Update

On the 26th April 2018 Partnerships participated in the first ever diocesan 'Unconference', a name selected because it aimed to take the best bits out of a conference. It was a relaxed, networking evening with good food and great company where partnerships were able to talk to other partnerships. It featured specific inputs from Blackfriars, Benedict and Monkwearmouth partnerships who each shared the achievements and challenges of walking through the partnership journey over the last year. The event attracted 140 people from Partnership Development Groups meeting each other, sharing their progress and swapping ideas.



This initial gathering precedes a more formal Partnership Conference which will take place on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and will once again be open to all involved in partnership development.

To book your partnership on this event please contact Amy McDonagh

[adult.formation@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:adult.formation@diocesehn.org.uk)

## St Hilda's Diocesan Resource Centre

If your partnership or parish requires a meeting space, St Hilda's is an ideal venue for any gathering, meeting or sharing together. There are rooms of different sizes, including a small conference room. Free parking and tea and coffee are available also.



You can find St Hilda's Diocesan Resource opposite St Cuthbert's House on West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7PY.

For further information contact Pat Kennedy

[pat.kennedy@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:pat.kennedy@diocesehn.org.uk) or

T: 0191 243 3316

## Partnership Matters Questionnaire – The Results!

The 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire has now been closed. Thank you to everyone for providing your views and comments on *Partnership Matters*. The majority of responses indicated the publication was either 'useful' or 'very useful' and most respondents like to hear about ideas from other partnerships and events around the Diocese.



Thank you for all your positive comments. All of your ideas will be taken into consideration in future editions. As you have asked for more information sharing across partnerships we hope you find the *Sharing Across the Diocese* item informative. We would like to offer this as a regular feature so please let us know what is going on in your partnership.

To provide contributions for future editions or feedback, please contact

Nancy Gash or Tony Sacco on:

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