

ParishQuarterly

Our Lady & All Saints Catholic Church, Otley

www.olasotley.org

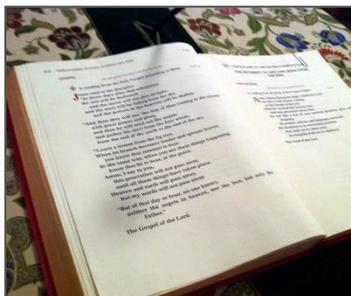
OCTOBER 2019



I am the vine
you are the branches

Serving God through Lay Ministries

Our Lady and All Saints, like any other Parish, relies on members of the congregation to support the work of Father Lawrie in a whole number of different ways. From Eucharistic Ministers, helping to distribute Holy Communion, taking the Eucharist to those who are sick and housebound, to those who ensure the altar linen is always pristine : from flower arrangers who dedicate their time to carefully enhancing the look of the Sanctuary, to the team of catechists preparing our children for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation. Over the coming months we will look at some of those ministries and the people who carry them out so willingly, without seeking any personal gain or recognition. To begin this series, we feature Yvette Cowell, one of our Readers, who writes:



I started reading the liturgy when I came to the UK from the Philippines in 2007. Once settled, the first place I went to was the Church. In all the changes in my life and the travels that I have made,

the church is the one thing that remains constant. I remember one Sunday morning going into Leeds Cathedral and coming out feeling slightly confused because I couldn't understand the scriptures, which were read with a thick Yorkshire accent! I approached the then Dean of the Cathedral, Father McCreadie, who suggested I do the reading, and that was how my ministry started.

“When Sacred Scripture is read in Church, God Himself speaks to His people and Christ, present in the Word, proclaims the Gospel”

I have been a Reader in Our Lady and All Saints since 2016.

In the Liturgy of the Word, it is overwhelming to think that it is God Himself who is speaking, and that He is using us - clergy and lay readers (like me) – to have a dialogue with his people. In my mind, I paint a picture of God in the Church, me standing at the lectern reading passages from the Bible, and the people listening to what God has done and still intends to do for us. There is a huge pressure to get it right, when one of the congregation is no less than God himself.

So, what does ‘getting it right’ mean?

To me, it’s about giving the best of my ability to serve, spiritually and physically. I do this by making sure I read the chapters before and after the reading to consider what the writer is trying to say, to understand the meaning and to see it in the larger context. I then practise, practise and practise again!

I try my best to help people to hear the living Word of God. I feel I am not only responsible for simply reading the Word, but also assisting the people to hear the Word, which might mean the impact of His message will depend on how clearly I read, my diction, and my conviction in delivering the message. It is very humbling to know that if I read it correctly, there is a chance that someone in the congregation will learn more about the love of God, his infinite mercy, and our role as Christians to spread his love around the world. This is the ultimate reward of my ministry, and why I do it with gladness.

I also pray a lot, during my time of preparation, before reading the scriptures and after reading the scriptures. I ask God to help me understand the reading, to be an effective proclaimer of His Word and to help others live the Word.

Yvette Cowell

Biblical Reflections on Water

When I was asked to contribute to this edition of Parish Quarterly I noticed that the main story was to be about bringing clean water to villagers in Ghana. The biblical use of water in imagery and story is so powerful that I felt led to use it as the basis of the following series of reflections which I hope readers will find helpful.

The Bible emerged from the area which we now call the Middle East, much of which is desert country where lack of water and thirst can be part of daily life just as in Ghana and many areas of Africa.

My scripture reflections begin with the heartfelt cry of the Psalmist in Psalm 62. "O God you are my God, for you I long. For you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water." Our longing for God is a spiritual need, likened to the cry of a thirsty villager, and God can quench that spiritual thirst through prayer and trust in Him.

I turn next to the New Testament and Jesus. He gives an invitation, (John 7.37) "Anyone who is thirsty should come to

me and drink" and a promise (John 4.13-14) "Whoever drinks the water that I give will never thirst again. The water that I give will be an inner spring that wells up for eternal life."

The invitation was given to the crowd (at the Temple) and the promise to the Samaritan woman at the well, an open invitation to many and a personal promise to one person. She put down her water jar at once and went to evangelise her village so successfully that they came to see the man she had called "the Christ".

The early part of John's Gospel is full of references to water. The opening week of Jesus public ministry takes place against the background of John the Baptist at the River Jordan. Chapter two describes the first miracle at Cana, the changing of water into wine.

Chapter three relates the meeting with Nicodemus where Jesus makes the link between water and the Spirit. It seems to me that whenever the word 'water' comes to mind during prayer or reflection

it should invoke the Spirit. I am sure that the Ghanaian villagers who receive the gift of a well will be filled with a spirit of joy and gratitude.

In chapter five of John's Gospel again the setting for a miracle is in the context of water. This is by a pool where the first person to enter after "the angel of the Lord" has moved the waters is healed. A man, who has been waiting for thirty eight years to get there first, is healed by Jesus. This illustrates the value of perseverance and I am sure that many of the villagers in Ghana have been waiting longer than this for a supply of clean water.

I could go on but I leave it to the reader to pursue the Biblical links between water, need, invitation and promise, but I finish with this thought. The start of Genesis before creation has the Spirit hovering over the water. The fulfilment is at the end of the Book of Revelation Ch. 22:17, "let all those who are thirsty come. All who want may have the water of life and have it free. Amen. Come Lord Jesus".

Frank Bowe

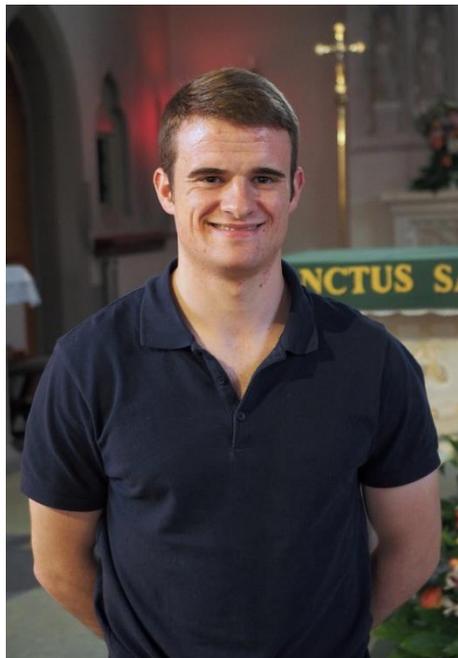
Matthew joins our community as Youth Ministry Co-ordinator

I want to start by expressing my gratitude at the opportunity to serve the community of Our Lady and All Saints and its young people, in the hope of helping them to grow in this community. My name is Matthew Steen, I am 24 years old and originate from Fleetwood in Lancashire. I grew up Catholic and attended a local Catholic primary and secondary school there, before going to Newcastle University to study biomedical sciences. During my time at Newcastle I was heavily involved with the University Catholic Society and even stood as a committee member. Immediately following University, I spent six months in Dodoma, Tanzania teaching in a Jesuit Primary school. One thing that impressed me most about Tanzanian culture was the incredible sense of community. When I returned, I found myself back in the North East having been given the opportunity to serve in Hexham and Newcastle's Youth Ministry Team. My year in ministry was a blessed time, full of learning and growth.

My personal vision in this parish is to bring young people into the life of the Church. I hope to do this by working on the

foundations and initiatives that already exist in the community, as well as developing new strategies. I am very open to sharing and receiving new ideas.

A bit more about me: I have five siblings (including two identical brothers). I am a keen fitness enthusiast, mainly calisthenics, running and Jiu-Jitsu.



Personally, I would identify my spirituality with Ignatian (Jesuit) spirituality. I admire the idea of *magis*: Doing more, or the most, for Christ, as well as the official motto of the Society: Ad Mariam Dei Gloriam. For the greater Glory of God. Both of these I find are directly applicable to ministry. When we are seeking to bring young people into a relationship with Christ, we must be willing to give it our all. We should also clearly remember to ensure that God is at the centre of our lives.

I would like to finish by asking for your prayers for me and for our young people, both in our Parish and in our Schools.

Matthew Steen

Supporting our young people is so important - not simply because they're the future of our Parish. Life can be very challenging for them today, and at times they need lots of encouragement. Please help Matthew in any way you can in his Youth Ministry. The success of his work really is so vital. Our prayers are with you, Matthew.

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Help for 2,000 villagers of Yipielgu, Ghana

Stepping down (from my last flight of a 24hr journey) into the soupy, dusk, heat; I take a deep breath...Ghana! Excitement and trepidation bubbles through my veins. Adventure awaits!

I'm Natalie, I'm 21 and I recently ventured to Northern Ghana to lead a team in providing a borehole for the rural village of Yipielgu. The Borehole brings filtered underground water to the surface to allow villagers clean drinking water all year round.

After volunteering with International Citizen Service for 3 months of 2017, in northern Ghana, Yasmin, another volunteer, and I made connections with a village suffering from their source of drinking water drying up during the dry season. The dry season of north Ghana is from October-April and characterized by temperatures up to 45C with large dust clouds. During this period, women and children of Yipielgu walked to the next village (named Tolon) 3 times a day to collect water for the families (In traditional villages it is the job of the women to provide cooking, childcare, fetching water and sometimes also engage in trading of produce or food at markets to provide financial income ... superwomen!).

Yasmin and I decided the people of Ghana had left such a footprint on our hearts, we couldn't leave knowing these same kind, open hearted people were suffering when we could help. After contacting organizations such as WaterAid and the governmental body CWSA (Community Water Sanitation Agency) in Ghana about the newly elected government's policy of 'One village, One Dam' we discovered this problem is widespread throughout Africa. No help or support from these organizations physically or financially could be offered but some helpful information and contacts were provided. This led to the birth of our own charity Ghana Water Development Fund.



We were two 18-year olds ready to take on the world! Ghana water development fund has recently been renamed and registered in Ghana as Rural Africa Water Initiative (RAWI).

After 2 years back and forth, the final plan was nearing completion. My mission was to lead the team of Ghanaians and liaise with the village to ensure we were on the same page (being the first white people they had seen EVER back in 2017, came with lots of stereotypes and expectations). And I must say, venturing to the most arid part of Ghana, infamous amongst Ghana's geologists for its few and far between discernable aquifers (large pockets of underground water suitable for sustainable boreholes) and attempting to supply around 2,000 villagers with drinking water came with its challenges. Not to mention huge social, cultural and language differences. I sometimes wondered: 'Am I completely bonkers to attempt such a mission alone?' and that was when everyone who has supported us back home became far more important than just the financial contributions. Danny, Anne and John Cooney, Beth Street, Rita and Andrew Branford-White, Moira Wallace, Mum and Dad (Sue and Ged O'Shea), your hard work fundraising has helped the project be completed massively but knowing such an army of love and support was behind me was invaluable. And not forgetting everyone who donated or attended fundraising events, to Otley Lions Club for their generous donation:

A wholehearted, thank you from me, enskinned in the community as Chief Maligunaa T'paaya (meaning Malagunaa: chief of community development and T'paaya: a name traditional to the Dagomba region and Dagbani language of Northern Ghana meaning 'we thank you' or 'God thanks you') and from the 2,000 villagers of Yipielgu who benefit from your kindness.

Otley Parish, I couldn't have done it without you!

Natalie O'Shea

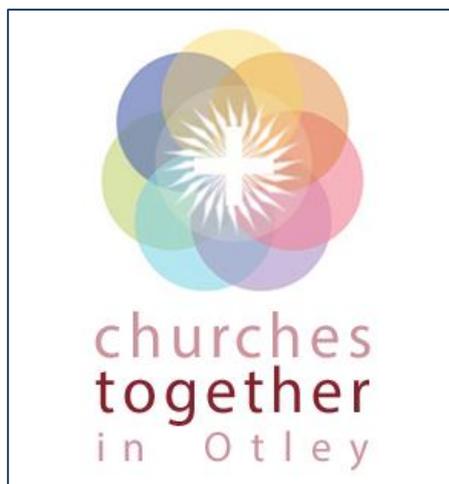


Churches Together: Unity and fellowship

Christians, from different traditions or denominations, have much more that unites us than that which divides. While being active members of our own church communities we can also pray and work together to bring the good news of Jesus to others.

Churches Together in Otley has been an active group for more than 20 years. Everyone from any church is welcome to 'come together to worship and to do God's work'. This 'coming together' happens in many different ways. There is a **Prayer Breakfast** which happens on the first Saturday of every month from 8:00 – 9:15 am. Each church takes it in turn to host, to provide a simple breakfast and to lead a short time of prayer for all of the people of Otley. There is always a lively and welcoming atmosphere at the prayer breakfasts and it is a wonderful way to get to know other people in Otley and to pray together for our town.

There is also an **Otley Prayer Network** which meets every couple of months to continue praying for the town and which organises days of prayer and '**Thy Kingdom Come**' which is a national initiative of prayer from Ascension to Pentecost. In Otley, people have been invited to go to the upper room in Casa Vitae coffee shop to pray and then to gather in the market square on Pentecost Sunday for an ecumenical service.



Churches Together organises the erection and lowering of the Chevin Cross, with an Easter Sunday service being held there each year, and it also organises the Christian Aid collection in May.

In recent years Churches Together has been involved in setting up and running the Otley Food Bank and has also been part of the group that welcomes refugees and asylum seekers to our town. In 2020 we will be hosting a group of refugees and asylum seekers from 2nd – 16th March.

At present Churches Together is developing a plan to turn the Salvation Army building on New Market into Otley Youth and Community Centre.

Information about the various gatherings, plans and projects of Churches Together can be found on the website below. There is an open invitation to everyone to come along to pray and to do God's work.

Linda Pennington

Next Prayer Breakfast: Methodist Church, Otley. **5th October 8 am.** A friendly gathering and simple prayer service led by The Methodists.

Well done, Eliza.

Our young parishioner, Eliza Street, was recently selected from hundreds of nominations as a finalist for the national Cardinal Basil Hume Awards for "Living out the Preferential Option for the Poor", presented by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

Her nomination described her as "an enthusiastic Catholic (altar server, reader at Mass, active and influential SVP "Mini-Vinnies" member at school) and a fundraiser for her mother's charity "Angels for Children".

"She helps her Mother run the Charity including visiting the Philippines with her, engaging with the children in the school there that the Charity helped rebuild after Typhoon Haiyan, preparing and distributing food and teaching deaf pupils to "sign".

Her nominator said: "**She is a role model for her peer group, constantly giving her time and ideas to the causes she cares passionately about. She is devoted to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. It makes her the person she is.**"



Eliza says: " Being shortlisted for the Million Minutes Awards was a wonderful experience and I'm delighted to have received the Highly Commended award. I thoroughly enjoyed the entire event. It was a humbling and a brilliant experience and I am very grateful to those who helped me and for all the parishioners' continued support."

Eliza, we are proud of you.

Baptisms

Rhodie - May Margaret Price
Leo Andrew Ball
Lee Branko Cafferty
Sam William Cafferty
Louie Ellis Wain
Ava May Hart
Ava Jean Ormsby
Sophie Violet Shilton
Alfie Harry Hartley-Downard
Zara Charlotte Elizabeth Hartley-Downard
George Jacob Conlon
Jude Francis Barnett

Recently Deceased

Dorothy Jackson
Mary Watterson
Irene Stevens
Tim Agar
Patricia Ashley
Edna Hart
Christine Dudley
Mary O'Connell

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace.

Amen