

St Clements, Ewell



1937 - 2007

A Historical Record
of
St Clement's Parish, Ewell

Part I - 1937 to 1987

Part II - 1988 to 2007

Foreword

Father Graham Bamford, Parish Priest

I HAVE ALWAYS, since a boy, had a fascination for history. I loved the subject at school and in the seminary. Although I never took it up as a career, it has been my hobby. So it has been a great pleasure to continue the history of our parish of St Clement for a further 20 years. The first history was written in 1987, to mark the anniversary of the opening of our first Mass centre — now the hall — in 1937, and the 25 years of the present church, opened in 1962.

Each parish has its own story to tell and I have pleasure in reading those stories when I come across them. So I hope you find pleasure in reading our history up to the present times. We are grateful to the late Father Colum Murray and his team for putting together the majority of the history in 1987. I am grateful to Pauline Groves (from the original team) and to Tony Northeast for their hard work in assisting me to up-date this history.

In December 2007 we passed the 70th anniversary of the hall. In the last 15 years we have developed the hall, our parish primary school and our church building. Our mission and maintenance programme is on-going — we will soon be back to looking at the hall which, would be, as Father Colum said in 1987 at the end of his letter, ‘one of a number of challenges for our parish, but I have no doubt that it will be met successfully’.

Enjoy reading the story of your Parish Community and Family and be proud of all that has gone before us and what we face in the future.

With every blessing and good wish,

Father Graham Bamford

Part I

1937 — 1987

THE WHOLE OF THIS PART of the history is reproduced as it was published at the time of the celebration, in 1987, of 50 years of Mass in Ewell and Stoneleigh and of 25 years since the building of the church.

There is one small correction in that on pages 26,27 the details of the stained glass-windows should be reversed so that 'Lady Altar side' reads 'Sacred Heart (now Crucifix) side' and vice/versa.

The first part of this history was published as part of celebrations of 50 years of St Clement's parish on the Kingston Road site. There was a special Mass of thanksgiving and a pageant of our history.

12th December 2007 marked 70 years since Mass was first said in the parish hall.



INTRODUCTION

Chairman of the Parish Council

ONE COULD SAY that all years are eventful. Incidents occur in all of them. These can be disasters, festive occasions, joyous happenings and so on. To a Catholic living in the Ewell area, the year 1937 must have appeared an exceptionally eventful year. In May of that year a new king, King George VI, was crowned following the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII. The Borough of Epsom and Ewell was given its charter that year and then on 4 December St. Clement's Catholic Hall was opened.

The way to the building and the opening of the Church Hall was not easy and straightforward. Obstacles had to be overcome and much effort had to be applied before bricks could be laid. But success was achieved and at the end of the year Mass was celebrated in the new Church Hall.

This account does not set out to be a "History of St. Clement's Parish". That would be too grand a title to describe what follows. Rather it is a record of various people's memories of the early days plus accounts of societies and fraternities which exist in the Parish today.

It also reflects the way in which the area and our social ways have changed and the great developments in the Church during the last fifty years. The number of people still in the area who helped to found the Parish fifty years ago are becoming fewer. We have taken advantage of some of those who can remember the early days and they have kindly agreed to translate their memories into print.

We present a record of activities over the years and, hopefully, it may help to create a picture of community life, especially for children

growing up and for newcomers to the parish, a picture of difficulties that had to be faced, successes that were achieved. And perhaps in a small way it may help those who may be interested in the occasion of later Parish Jubilees or anniversaries to appreciate what building up our parish, is all about. It may help to form a basis for comparing Catholic life in their day with earlier times.



In the Beginning

An early Parishioner remembers

“MY STORY STARTS IN 1935. During that period there were no buses at all on Sundays before 12 noon, so you either had to get a train or walk to Worcester Park. Father Smoker was Parish Priest there and arranged for Mass to be said in the School in Sparrow Farm Road. I think it was only one Mass at 8.30am. Eventually the Church hall was built at Tolworth, to where it was possible to walk, but there again there were no buses in that time. Some time during 1936, a Miss Boulton offered Archbishop Amigo, who was Archbishop of Southwark, £1,000 if the Diocese would add another £1,000 to buy the ground on which the Church Hall, Church and Presbytery now stand.

When permission was requested from the Borough Council for the building of the Hall there were several objections. A Public Inquiry was held at Epsom Town Hall by one of the Ministers from London. Many Catholics attended and the Minister discovered that the majority of objectors were living on the outskirts of the Church grounds and their objections, on the grounds of noise coming from the Hall, were negligible. He decided to visit the site for himself and about a week later gave permission for the go ahead.

The Church Hall was built mainly by Irish labour and was eventually opened on 4 December 1937, Father Smoker blessed the Hall. At that time there were only about 50 chairs which had to be spread out to make it look something for morning Mass. At first there was only one Mass but with two curates at Worcester Park, eventually two Masses were said, and as the Congregation increased we had three at 8.00, 9.30 and 11.00 a.m. In those days there was no evening Mass but there was an

Evening Service at 6.00 p.m.

In the early days before there was a Parish Priest, Mrs Griffin, who lived in Mavis Avenue, held the key so she could open the church for Sunday or weekly Masses when they started. She was also the Sacristan until Mr. Alborna took over. The maintenance of the Church linen, the cleaning etc. was done by members of the Guild of the Sacred Heart, some of whom are still doing it.

There was not much disruption during the war years except on one occasion when a string of bombs fell around the Stoneleigh area. One almost demolished a bungalow quite near the Church hall, another fell outside the Queen Adelaide and another outside the footpath which was the entrance to the Church hall. Great care had to be used moving around the bomb crater because it was suspected to be an unexploded bomb. Fortunately no injuries occurred. Miss Alborna used to collect funds for the upkeep of St. John's Seminary and Mrs. Carter organised the collection of funds for the Propagation of the Faith.

The Parishioners were very sociable and the very first social was held at Ewell Court House. On one occasion we had the refreshment counter, a small room, in which there was a whist drive and the larger room in which there was a dance. In time, a screen was built across the Hall to provide a small section in which whist drives were held, some 8 tables. The first Christmas bazaar was held in this section. Eventually the screen was removed and a new one erected in front of the stage, in the present Hall.

In the beginning the Church hall was used purely as a Church, the present kitchen was the Confessional and the Office was the Sacristy. There were several societies. The Children of Mary, the Guild of St.

Stephen, the Guild of the Blessed Sacrament (very strong in numbers), and also the Guild of the Sacred Heart which was eventually named the Women's Guild of the Blessed Sacrament. There was also the Legion of Mary who assisted the Parish Priest in visiting sick and needy people and in February 1965, some of this work was taken over by a branch of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

The Bazaar developed year by year, mainly by the Guild of the Blessed Sacrament and the Guild of the Sacred Heart. It grew to such dimensions that at one time it was necessary to have a marquee erected in front of the Hall, where, not only did they have the normal stalls, but also fruit, nuts and vegetables. Sacks of potatoes were sold at 10 shillings (50p) a sack and delivered to houses by Messrs. Fry, Pocock, Ridgers, Pawley and other parishioners who are no longer with us. Weekly whist drives grew to 15 tables and a Football Pool was started for raising money for the building of the Church.

When it was agreed that the Church should be built, plans were made for selling bricks outside the Church Hall at half-a-crown each (12 and a half new pence). People who bought a brick signed their names in indelible pencil and had their brick included in the Church building”.

The public enquiry mentioned earlier was described in the Parish Newsletter, 21st Anniversary Edition (December 1958) from which the following is taken:

“Sir Malcolm Trustrum-Eve, K.C. (who represented the Catholics) then pointed to the map produced by the opposition. On this map the houses of those who had voted against the Catholics were marked in red and the houses of the Catholics were marked in

blue. Once again he asked if the opposition still maintained that the view of the majority should prevail and again the opposition agreed. Sir Malcolm then drew a circle round the proposed site with a scale radius of a quarter of a mile and showed that within this radius there were only 15 red squares marking the houses of objectors while there were 70 blue squares marking the houses of those who wanted the hall. He then said that since in the area in which the alleged nuisance would occur there was a majority that wanted the hall, and since the opposition themselves had agreed that the majority vote should prevail, then the Catholics should be allowed their hall.”

And so the parish was named

“FATHER SMOKER, now Parish Priest of Leatherhead, told us how St. Clement’s got its name. On the 22nd November, Father Smoker went to see Archbishop Amigo about naming the new school at Cheam. Father Smoker wanted to call it St. Theresa’s. The Archbishop replied, “No”. He then looked at the calendar on his desk and said the school would be named after the saint of the day, St. Cecilia and that he might as well name the new hall at Stoneleigh after the saint of the following day, November 23rd. This was found to be St. Clement of Rome and so our Parish Church got its name.”

Another early parishioner tells a story

“WHEN ONCE WE HAD THE SANCTION and the builders put the work in hand it took three months to complete the building of our present Church Hall. As the time approached for the opening in December, 1937

willing helpers got together to make the final preparations. Father Smoker obtained the Altar from Croydon.

Mrs. McLaughlin (Mrs. Carter's mother) visited local clergy and obtained gifts of a Monstrance, Candlesticks a carpet for the Sanctuary and various other altar requisites. My eldest daughter presented a chalice. The chairs were paid for by individual members of the congregation, each chair costing, with kneeler, 10 shillings (50p) and without kneeler, 7 shillings and sixpence (37 and a half pence); in this way the full bill was met.

As Christmas followed very quickly on top of the opening date I was asked to prepare a Crib at very short notice; and also for Christmas a Choir of a few members was formed to sing at Midnight Mass. Mrs Carter was the organist. Everyone was delighted to know that, at last, we had a Parish of our own and that no long journeys in the future to other parishes would have to be made.



The New Parish Grows

A few interesting dates

12.12.37

First Mass celebrated by Father Smoker (Parish Priest of Worcester Park) in St. Clement's Hall.

January 1938

Altar Society formed.

10.1.38

School opened at St. Cecilia's, North Cheam. (Hot school dinners cost 6d. (two and a half new pence)

13.3.38

Permission given for second Mass at St. Clement's.

23.11.38

Party at Ewell Court House to celebrate 1st Anniversary of St. Clement's.

8.1.39

300 attended Mass at St. Clement's. By December it was 397. (Note, present attendance 600 to 700.)

23.4.39

"We have discovered a Persian Carpet (for the Sanctuary) of

the required size for the sum of £15. Perhaps there are 30 people who would be good enough to give 10/- each.” (Extract from Parish Notices)

1939

The Guilds of the Blessed Sacrament (separate for men and women) were formed. Their duties were to:

1. To say devoutly once every week the Our Father and Hail Mary five times in commemoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
2. To receive Holy Communion as a Guild at least once a month.
3. To attend as far as possible the monthly meetings of the Guild.
4. To assist in processions of the Blessed Sacrament, take turns at watching during Exposition and to discharge any other duties in connection with the Guild.

One Such task was:

“to erect an altar outside the Hall (and later outside the Presbytery) for Benediction to be held after we all processed around the grounds with the First Holy Communicants strewing rose petals in front of the Blessed Sacrament. This event took place on the Sunday nearest to the Feast of Corpus Christi - the weather was never inclement for that occasion.”

26.11.39

Appeal for shoes for poor children

11.8.40

St. Clement's has its first Priest in charge.

8.9.40

From the Parish Notices. “Should the Take Cover siren be

sounded during any service, the Service will be carried on until the end, and if the All Clear has not been given, the Church can be used as a shelter. Needless to say, anyone who wishes can make for the nearest shelter. Should the Take Cover warning be given before the service, e.g. whilst people are on the way to Church, they should take cover at the nearest shelter and the Service will commence a quarter of an hour after the All Clear has sounded.”

30.11.41

Fr. Crommellin moves to 50, Courtlands Drive, purchased as St. Clement’s Presbytery.

1.12.41

The Conference of the Children of Mary was founded in the Parish with 20 members, “for the purpose of encouraging and propagating devotion to Mary and honouring her in a special way by the individual consecration of members and taking part in devotional practices such as keeping a weekly mass Rota, weekly Communion, daily recitation of the Rosary and holding a monthly social”

(Extract from 21st Anniversary Newsletter.)

2.12.41

First Baptism at St. Clement’s.

June 1942 saw the first Bishop’s visitation and confirmation in St. Clement’s Parish and at that time the Choir was founded.

“The Choir from 1942 to 1954 consisted of boys from the Scout Troop, girls and adults. Miss Celsina Albomo was accompanist. The whole Proper of the Mass was generally sung, and a wide range of Masses from the Kyriale (including ad libitum chants) and

a judicious admixture of Polyphonic and harmonised music. Sung Mass was then at 11 00 am. A special Mass of Thanksgiving after the war was sung in September 1945. Congregational singing at Mass in those days was unknown. Our problem was to overcome the poor acoustics to the Church Hall.”

Music has featured continually in our Liturgy since then and is now provided by two choirs.

1943

Around this time another organisation, still strong in the Parish today, was formed.

“By request of Father Peter Cromellin, Parish Priest, the Scout Troop was inaugurated on 1st. November 1943 with nine members. During the war years there was a complete change of membership because of evacuation, parents moving because of changing workplaces, and so on.

During the flying bomb year, the Scouts had a blessed relief by camping for nearly three weeks during August 1944 by the River Isis at Faringdon in hot sunny weather. No bombs disturbed the night there. A fortnight’s Summer Camp has been held every year from 1943 to date.

Father Basil Harvey, R.I.P., gave the Troop a great deal of help and support during its early years. Lord Ventry visited the Troop in 1945. We had to manage the Troop meetings in a very small part of the Hall. We built the brick Scout Hut in 1946 and added the large wooden hut in 1967. The latter hut is used for smaller meetings particularly at weekends.

Father Christopher Spender ran the Cub Pack for several years before being appointed as Assistant Priest at Godalming in 1947. On 1st March 1944 the Parish clergy moved to 24 Fairfield Way (behind the present Presbytery) and in November of that year an annual “Founders of St. Clement’s” Mass for donors of £10 or more was established.

1946

14th February 1946 saw the first marriage at St. Clement’s.

St Clement’s Players

St. Clement’s Players, still a lively organisation, started in 1946. “Father Christopher Spender, the curate, certain parishioners and the then Parish Priest, collected together a miscellaneous, but enthusiastic, body of parishioners. Together they undertook a creditable performance of “Night Must Fall”, by Emlyn Williams, for their first production. At that time the Hall was the Parish Church. The Players’ first few productions therefore, were given at Glyn School or at the old Ebbisham Hall. Subsequently it was decided to bring the productions home and a sectional stage was built which needed to be constructed in the Hall for each production. The altar and the first few rows of benches were partitioned off for the purposes of the daily Masses during the weeks of the shows. A hard-working body of the Players saw to the erection of the stage and the scenery each time and between productions, all items were stored in the Parish Priest’s garage.

These hectic activities to provide suitable accommodation for the cast and for the comfort of the audience put a heavy strain on the

members of the Company. Nevertheless, worthwhile plays were produced and met with general acclaim from Parishioners and critics.

When the new Church was built and opened in 1962, it coincided with the Silver Jubilee of the Parish and to celebrate that occasion the Players performed the play “On Monday Next”, which initiated a long succession of plays on the newly constructed stage in the old Church which had by now become the Parish Hall.



St Clements Players

Two plays have been produced annually since then and it was a cause of great satisfaction to the present members of the Players that in presenting William Douglas Home’s “The Iron Duchess” in October 1986 - the 40th birthday production - they were able to welcome the founder, Father Spender, to their celebrations. We are indebted to our present Parish Priest and President, Father Colum Murray, for arranging and making this possible. Others of the original founder members were also present, together with a small

number of former actor and actress members. Over the years our membership has seen many changes.

We are particularly proud to say that two former members are now successful professional actresses, another has moved to America and is now a professional Director, whilst, more recently, a young member of our back-stage staff has joined the professional theatre on the Stage Management side.

The Players take pride in those few words and wishing “Ad multos Annos” to our Parish, we hope to continue to do our best to see that it is achieved.

28.12.47

Extract from Parish notice book:

“Next Sunday we start a new kind of collection, not for money, but for clothing coupons. We are asking everyone to contribute ONE coupon to enable us to buy materials needed for the Church furnishings.” (130 were needed)

20th May, 1951

The first edition of the Parish Newsletter was published on and it has appeared every week since - up to the present time.

Mid-1950's

The Legion of Mary was started in the Parish in the mid-1950's with Father Young as Spiritual Director and Mrs. Fry as President. There was also a flourishing Junior Praesidium. “The work of the Legion was visiting the sick, bringing people back to the Faith, cleaning the altar silver, running the catechism class and various other tasks. A strong body of auxiliaries was formed, who, by their prayers, helped in the good work.

August 1952

A Football Pool was started to help raise money for our Parish payments to the Diocesan Development Fund. (This had been set at £800 p.a. in April 1952 but reduced to £650 just over a year later.)

1st May 1954

Fundraising began for the New Church.

1955

A parishioner remembers "Happy Times":

"Very many happy memories remain about my years in St Clement's Parish. I married in September 1955 and bought a three-bedroomed house in Stoneleigh for £2,800. Father Young was Parish Priest. The Guild of the Blessed Sacrament was very active and I was pleased to join a hardworking and likeable band of men. I remember thinking at the time that I had joined a very happy group of people. There was no church, just a hall, which had a partition to change the hall into a Church.

1959

Finances

Father O' Driscoll arrived in 1959 and the church fund stood at £3,000. Many fund-raising activities were started - Eddie Fry selling bricks at 2/6 (12.5p) each outside the hall on a cold and frosty morning. A lucky number weekly pool - £10 a week in prizes. The Annual Bazaar in the hall on a bleak November day with a Marquee in the grounds. The G.B.S. running a fruit and veg stall. The following week, delivering sacks of potatoes round the Parish.

1961

By the end of 1961, the Parish had collected nearly £15,000 towards the £30,000 needed for a new church. Weekly collections were about £100 at the time, not enough to cover the running costs of a new church. A thriving football pool bringing in some £3,500 a year was the main source of income.

Planned Giving seemed the only answer and a professional firm was called in to guide us. Everyone in the Parish was contacted and asked to pledge a certain amount each week into the collecting plate. For three months some 40 to 50 parishioners were working seven evenings a week - every family was contacted and the offertory envelope scheme was started”.

Early 1950s

The Association for the Propagation of the Faith, (A.P.F.) was founded early in the 1950's.

“Until June, 1957, when Father Traynor of Mill Hill came to preach about the Missions, there was a very small group of people in this Parish who supported this worthy cause; the amount sent up at the end of October, 1956 being just under £16. After Father Traynor had spoken so eloquently of the wonderful work of the Missionaries and their helpers and their very real need for financial support, some 90 more people joined the Society.

The result of this considerable increase in membership for the second half of 1957 was a total of £74, 4 shillings and sixpence. The driving force behind the A.P.F. in the Parish for 30 or more years (we do not know precisely when it started) was the late Mrs. Ethel Carter, who was rewarded for her services by a Papal

decoration. She continued to act as Secretary right up to the time of her death about 5 years ago at the age of 83".



A wedding in the Hall, which was also the church until 1962

1958

In December 1958 the Parish was "21" and the Newsletter editor reflected,

"At 21 we are regarded as being adults and full grown and our friends and relatives join in congratulating us. On December 12th this Parish was 21 and it is right that we should celebrate the occasion. However, we can rightly say that we have been grown up for some time. We grew very rapidly. From very small beginnings, as a new Mass centre attached to another Parish, we soon became independent with a life of our own. Very soon St. Clement's had its own resident Priest - and now it has two.

All the signs of a mature Parish are present now - the regular and frequent services, and all the various and flourishing organisations. All parishioners can congratulate themselves on this but all will

agree that, under God, it has been due mainly to the devoted Rectors and priests-in-charge sent here by the Bishop.

We are thinking now, especially of our present Rector, Father Young. In the years that he has been here, the Parish has made great progress under his leadership. He has devoted himself to working for his people and his recent illness and ill-health is a result, to a large extent, of his constant work on our behalf. While we thank him for what he has done, let us not forget to pray that God may restore him to full health and vigour. We want this for his own sake and also, frankly, for our sakes, that he may lead us to still greater things. For there is still one more thing to be done. The present St. Clement's Church is now too small and inadequate for this Parish and a new church must be built.

That is the great desire of us all - Rector and people. Let us take this opportunity of renewing our resolution to see that this is done - and done soon. We look forward to the day when the new St Clement's will rise, a building that we can use for the greater glory of God and one suitable for the needs of this Parish.

In the meantime, we are celebrating our coming of age. Today, instead of the usual Sunday evening service and Benediction; there will be a sung Mass. Father Smoker, who began the work here 21 years ago, will, most fittingly, be present and he has very generously promised to bring with him his Boys' Choir. This is no ordinary Boys' Choir. They have sung at the Edinburgh Festival and before the President of the French Republic in Paris. They are on the B.B.C. list of choirs. In order to add solemnity to this

occasion they will sing Mass on Sunday evening at 6.30 to thank God for what He has done for us in the past and ask Him to help with our future efforts.”

THE NEW CHURCH

13 December 1959

Permission given by the Archbishop to draw up plans for the Church.

6 March 1960

The Artist's impression of the Church was considered sufficiently good to be submitted to the Royal Academy.

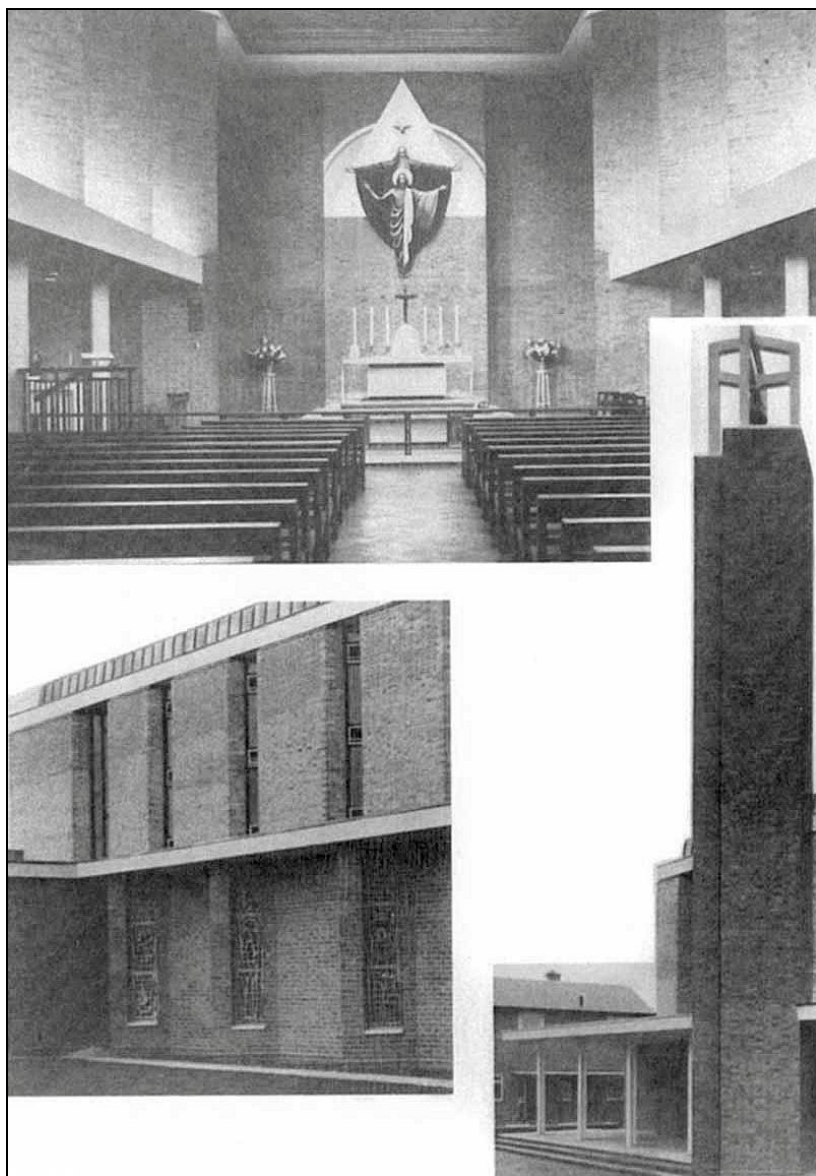
20 March 1960

The plans for the Church approved by the Archbishop.

In February 1961 the tender of H. Bacon and Sons of £30,355 was accepted (it eventually cost £33,844.15s7d) and on 18 June of the same year Archbishop Cyril Cowderoy laid the Foundation Stone.

June 1962

Parishioners were asked not to walk round the construction work but to “save it all for one big surprise”. This came on 5th September 1962 when the Archbishop opened the Church and at the first Sunday Mass four days later (ladies were asked not to wear stiletto heels!). By this time Sunday Mass attendance was 900.



The church in its original layout

About Our Church

The Stations of the Cross were designed for the Church and were carved in Beer stone by Joseph Cribb at Ditchling in Sussex. The set was donated by parishioners in memory of the late Father Francis Young, Parish Priest until his death in 1958 and was erected on 3 April 1963.

The Fresco of the Trinity is carried on a free standing panel and is interesting in that, quite apart from the medieval technique employed, the figure of Our Lord is shown as the Risen Christ and not, as is more usual, being embraced by God the Father. The Holy Ghost is portrayed traditionally in the form of a Dove. It was executed by the late Father A. Buckley O.P. and was painted while the plaster was wet. The colour is applied with a brush and, as both paint and plaster dry together, a chemical reaction takes place which seals in the pigment. Father Buckley was also responsible for the Fresco in the Baptistery and the Triptych at the Lady altar.

The electrically-operated bell weighs about two and a half hundredweights, is tuned to the note “G” and was cast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry which dates from the sixteenth century and where “Big Ben was made”.

In the aisles the coloured windows are of thick, stained glass, set in concrete, and were designed especially for the Church by Pierre Fourmaitreaux at the Whitefriars Glass Studio. They depict the Eight Beatitudes and are set out thus:

Lady Altar side

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice for they shall have their fill.

Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted

Blessed are the meek for they shall possess the land.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Sacred Heart Altar side

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the Children of God.

Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God.

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

November 1962

Father Hadshar preached at Solemn High Mass to celebrate the Silver jubilee of the Parish.

The 1960's saw the burgeoning of parish organisations..

“St. Clement’s Nursery School was started by Mrs. Helen O’Neil in 1960. It provided the children with a mild form of discipline, simple “3R’s”, nursery rhymes, singing and movement. All of these proved very popular with mothers and youngsters.

The big event in the Nursery Calendar was, and still is, the Nativity Play and Christmas Party. Every year for about 27 years a large and appreciative audience has come to see the children’s presentation of the Birth of the Baby Jesus. Many a mother and grandmother has shed a tear at the sight of angels, shepherds and sheep.

Needless to say a great deal of hard work has gone into making the Nursery School what it is. The women who gave up their time are too numerous to mention but are not forgotten.

23rd. May 1962

St. Clement's Brownies was opened by Paula Friend as Brown Owl and Mrs Gill as helper.

"When Paula Friend had to give up after many years the Pack was taken over by two nuns from St Michael's Convent. After this the Pack changed hands a few times and in 1974 I became Brown Owl.

Over the past thirteen years we have involved ourselves in many activities and events. As long-standing members of the Catholic Guide Guild we can join in all the outings and parades etc. with the Catholic Packs and Companies of Arundel and Brighton Diocese.

The aim of the Brownies has been to provide a social gathering for girls seven to ten years of age, where they can achieve new skills and ventures. This is our 25th anniversary. Let us hope there are many young women and girls who remember happy times in St. Clement's Brownies."

The Guide Company followed a few weeks later. They were to be an open pack and company to allow girls who were not members of the Parish to join, even those of different denominations with the approval of the Parish Priest.

"The Brownie Pack and Guide Company started with great enthusiasm and fun. Both took part in all the activities organised by the District and Division - swimming galas, campcraft competitions etc. We also took part in the pantomime "Babes in the Wood" presented in St. Clement's Hall and in pageants at Sandown Park. On the theme of transport through the ages, our company was designated the role of elephants with their keepers

and attendants, which meant making papier maché heads and trunks, grey flannel legs and army blankets for the bodies.

Another pageant called for costume throughout the ages. St. Clements was allocated the reign of Elizabeth the First and this led to research on costumes and the cheapest way to make them.

We took part in the London Zoo Quiz - two of our patrols won joint first prize so we were guests of honour for the day at the Zoo, including lunch, a film show and the Guides were given nature books.

Brownies took part in Brownie revels and the Guides went to many camps which provided a lot of fun together with training in self-sufficiency and self-discipline.





Corpus Christi processions

The Guides assisted at Parish bazaars, fetes and helped the Parish by providing a creche for babies and toddlers in the Hall during 10.00 a.m. Mass. They also visited St. Michael's, Worcester Park to help the old ladies with letter writing, reading to them and providing company, especially at holidays and feast days.

Some of the Guides preferred to help in a children's home and one, as an adult, became a full-time house mother. "I hope that both the Pack and the Company will go on for many years."

Then in 1964:

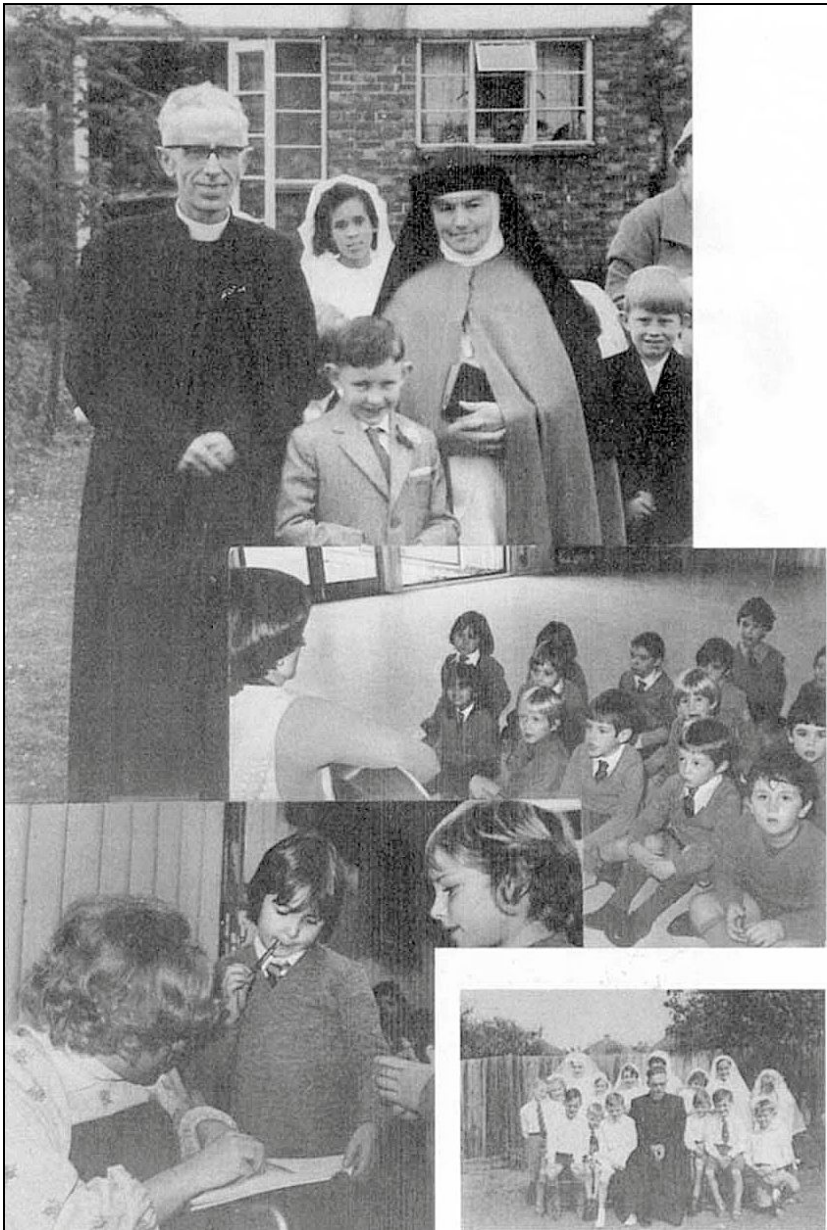
Knights of St. Columba, Council No. 678, Epsom and Ewell.

In the early days of the sixties not everyone was concentrating on the Beatles, contrary to what the media seem to think. For our parish the more important questions of building a church and finding the means to fund the cost were uppermost in our minds. A short time after most of these problems had been settled some of the members of the Knights in the parish grouped together to form a Council (the name for a local branch of Knights) in Ewell under

the direction of the Worcester Park Council. The Leatherhead Knights at the same time were working for the same aim in Epsom. It was obvious that the sensible action was to join the two groups together and after some heated debates the Epsom and Ewell K.S.C. Co. No. 578 was set up in April 1964. One of the first actions taken by the Ewell and Worcester Park Knights was to donate the altar in the Lady Chapel of St. Clements.

The Church (that's you and me) is deeply worried by the lack of vocations. We have suffered at St Clements from this very shortage and so in recent years the Knights have organised two Vocation Exhibitions at Tolworth. Whether they have had any success or not in helping to stem the fall in vocations we do not know but they do offer young people a chance to see and talk to the many religious orders at the exhibition."





Father Timothy O' Driscoll and a Sister from the Franciscan Medical Missionaries Community in Worcester Park, with First Holy Communicants, two pictures of children at St Clement's School, and a first Holy Communion group with Father Francis Young.

St. Vincent de Paul Society:

“The Society was founded in Paris by students at the Sorbonne University in 1833 and gradually spread until today it is an international organisation.

The Unit or Conference at St. Clement’s was set up in February 1965. Aided at the beginning by Brothers from Epsom and Tolworth Conferences a small number of Ewell men came together to form the new St. Clement’s Conference.

Out of an initial complement of four Brothers, three came with previous experience of S.V.P. work and thus the setting-up of the new Conference was accomplished with relative ease.

The work of the Society encompasses works of charity and these are myriad. Much family visiting is done, also hospital visiting. There are, however, many other charitable activities undertaken by S.V.P. Brothers, particularly latterly, forming twinnage schemes with S.V.P. Conferences in the State of Kerala, South India. In the Parish of St. Clement much work has been done in visiting and helping families and visiting patients in one of the wards of Long Grove Hospital.

The Society, as a whole, saw a change in its role and its work following the introduction of the Welfare State. The need, particularly in the major area of family visiting, for financial help decreased but the need for visiting families to give advice and counselling grew. We have now reached the stage where once again financial help is required more and more, this principally because of the increase in unemployment.

Here in Ewell we have not so far had very much distress to deal with following unemployment. But, nevertheless, the Brothers and Sisters of the Conference find a variety of charitable works to undertake.”

1966

St. Clement's Songsters

“In 1966 a member of the Social Committee of the Parish Development Committee made the suggestion that all parish Organisations should combine to hold an Old Time Music Hall.



The Songsters

The suggestion had an encouraging response and auditions were held in St. Clement's Hall for the first Old Time Evening. Talent was in abundance, the cast was immense and the audience had a most enjoyable evening, albeit a long one - it finished about 11.45 p.m. The evening was enhanced by having tables set with candles and a snack of cheese, french bread and butter washed down with beer, cider or shandy. This has become a tradition although wine has taken over from cider and very little beer is drunk.

As the Old Time Evening proved so popular another was presented the following year and subsequently several of those

who performed met and agreed to continue the good work and to produce a musical evening twice a year - in the Spring and late Autumn.

Our most exciting engagement was in 1979 when we were asked to appear in one of Jimmy Savile's shows for the mentally handicapped at The Old Vic Theatre. All the other acts were well known professionals who gave their services free - we all needed a larger size in hats for a week or two!

Our saddest but possibly most rewarding Outside Show was a request recently by a local hospital for a half-hour entertainment for one of their geriatric wards. When we arrived we saw with dismay that the audience appeared senile and unaware of our presence. However, we went ahead and about ten minutes into the show we noticed that heads were raised and eyes were brightening and one or two reedy voices joined in the well known old time choruses.



The New Parish Grows

A few new developments

SOME OF THE INITIATIVES for new organisations came first from the Development Committee of which the following is an account.

“The formation of this new Parish Committee was an essential part of the planned giving campaign which started in 1964. The twelve individual members had been invited by Father O’Driscoll to the first meeting on 1st November 1964. At the end of 1964 the bank loan incurred to building our Church stood at £20,750 and as well as repaying this, the parish had also to find its substantial contribution (estimated at £33,500) to the building costs of the badly needed primary school. It was considered essential, therefore, that the impetus of the Planned Giving campaign was not lost and this became the main concern of the Development Committee.

Its terms of reference were :-

1. Conduct of matters relating to planned giving.
2. Maintaining the Parish Index.
3. Publicity of parish activities.
- 4 Coordination of Social functions
5. To act in a consultative capacity on Parish finances and any other matters proposed by the Parish Priest

Normally meetings were held monthly and the member's efforts resulted in the enthusiasm and commitment of parishioners being maintained to such an extent that the bank loan was repaid well within the three years and social events flourished.

The Old-Time Music Hall gave birth to the St. Clement's Songsters. Parish Picnics (with cricket and net-ball matches) were held and the committee also organised Race-Nights, the St. Patrick's Day Dance and, of course, the Annual Review Buffet Supper, invariably attended by at least 200 parishioners". Later out of this came the Parish Council whose first Chairman writes of the early days:

"The Development Committee had the onerous task of raising money for the building of the church, presbytery and the alteration of the hall. This commission they accomplished in about 4 to 5 years, about half the time expected. In time, problems not connected with funding were passed to them and, in effect, they gradually found themselves acting in much the same way as a parish council. This type of organisation, was coming into being in the Church at about that time."

Parish council

"The Parish Council met for the first time in November, 1972, in the Secretary's house with a full agenda. One item of interest was the reported suggestion that there was a leak in the church roof. The Building Sub-committee which had been formed was asked to inspect and report back. During the five years that this report covers there were further reports of leaks which were successfully treated. There were three flat roofs and all were eventually replaced. But we are not alone in this. The roofs of even more prestigious buildings have suffered a

similar fate. Flat roofs were not a success story of the 60's."

(More of this later and of Liturgy and Ecumenism, both of which concerned the Parish Council greatly.)

Education was not generally of concern to us but finding the funds for a school provided a headache. The Development Committee had left a surplus of some £4,000 but the Parish had to pay for the frequent calls for our share for the second stage of St. Clement's School and for the expansion programmes at Epsom and Leatherhead. The surplus soon went.

The Offertory Collection had amounted to £180 a week during the Planned Giving for the Building Fund. (The equivalent today of £180 would be £1,150.) The collection had then dropped to £100 a week and continued dropping.

The Covenant Scheme had started and the Council, with the co-operation of the Covenant Organiser and his assistant, agreed to publicise the scheme. So that year, with a group of volunteers, forms were handed out at every Mass. The Organiser and his assistant spoke at every Mass on the Covenant Scheme. All Covenanters and anyone expressing interest were visited. The work paid off. Not only was the covenant figure greatly increased but the Offertory Collection also showed a satisfactory improvement.

In this resumé I have only mentioned a few items of the business of the Council for the five years that I cover. No reference has been made to the attempts to find a suitable site for the Scouts and Guides, the couple of attempts to start a Youth Club for the over 16s, the light-hearted cricket matches with St. Joseph's, the plans to enlarge the hall. Some of these problems still, unfortunately, await a solution.

Reading back I realise it does not give a full coverage of the Parish activities which are encountered in the deliberations of the Council. There were many problems, financial, liturgical, rotas for all sorts of events, and trying to accommodate divergent interests, few of which were easy to settle, but with some good will and a generous helping of compromise some measure of agreement was reached.”

Lourdes

It was in 1972 that Pilgrimages to Lourdes became a feature of Parish Life.

“During the past 15 years a number of pilgrimages to Lourdes and other shrines of France have left from St. Clement’s. The majority of these have been organised by Mrs. Dorothy Tivey - 5 pilgrimages to Lourdes by Jumbulance with severely handicapped people, 13 to Lourdes staying at Hosanna House with handicapped people and 4 tours of the shrines by coach - in all totalling nearly 700 people.

There have also been 3 pilgrimages to Lourdes organised by Father Wilkins, who also acted as Chaplain in some of the Hosanna House groups. Father O’ Driscoll joined one Jumbulance pilgrimage and one to Hosanna House. Quite a number of St. Clement’s parishioners have participated on these pilgrimages either as helpers or as handicapped, together with a number from other parts of the country. Father Wilkins’ pilgrimages were mainly for St. Clement’s parishioners. The pilgrimages are normally of one week’s duration and have, at least one priest to say Mass daily.

When handicapped people are taken the group includes at least 2

qualified nurses and for the last 3 years the Hosanna House pilgrimage has had the benefit of a retired doctor in attendance. All the members of the groups - priests, nurses, helpers and handicapped people - have to pay their own way but in some cases, through the generosity of certain parishioners, assistance has been provided for those unable to find the full fare.

On the pilgrimages to Hosanna House - and indeed the earlier ones by Jumbulance - supplies of tea, coffee and biscuits have had to be taken and a lot of these have been supplied by St. Clement's parishioners either in kind or by cash. Without the support of the Parish the pilgrimages would not have achieved the success they did."

Our School Opens

In 1972 the Parish opened its long awaited First School. The story is as follows:

"When plans were made for the building of our Church in the sixties, a plan for a school was included in the development programme. It was to be for 280 children between the ages of 5 and 11.

Unfortunately several things happened that were to have an adverse effect on the development of the proposed school. The first was the formation of the G.L.C., the second was the decision of Surrey County Council to reorganise primary education on a First and Middle school basis, and the third was the splitting of the then Southwark Diocese and the formation of Arundel and Brighton. This meant that the plans for our school were shelved and the possibility of building receded into the dim and distant future.

However, in 1967 the matter was considered by the Parish Development

Committee and a Parents' Association was set up whose sole aim was to obtain a school for St. Clement's. We had one great advantage, we already had the land. It had been bought a few years previously by Southwark Diocese and Surrey County Council. The great disadvantage was that we were no longer on the planning list for either the Diocese or the County. So started the first of many representations that had to be made to the County Education Committee, our Schools' Commissions and of course, the D.E.S. Statistics were gathered, proposals formulated and support enlisted wherever it could be found, including our local M.P.

The Diocese agreed to support us in principle but said they were unable to obtain any priority for us. In February 1969 several alternative proposals were made to the County and D.E.S. with Diocesan support. The result of all this pressure was the convening of a meeting with the architect representing the D.E.S. The outcome of this meeting was an agreement to build the school in two stages, both on programme and with an 85% grant.

Great jubilation - but now we needed to find an architect. Six were interviewed, including the County Architect and examples of their work were inspected. Eventually we chose the County Architect as we liked his proposal for a M.A.C.E. design school. This was felt to give the greatest flexibility of use. Stage 1 was put in the 1970 design to start construction after April 1971 - estimated cost £46,775. A briefing document was prepared and a managing body constituted which met for the first time in 1970. In November 1970 the D.E.S. produced an instrument of management which gave it legal standing. Plans were finalised and tenders prepared. By June 1971 five tenders had been

received, the lowest being £89,000, was above estimate.

By altering plans and making modifications this was reduced to £71,000, which sum was eventually accepted by all authorities. By October 1971 formal contracts were completed and plans made for the appointment of a Head. This appointment was made in November 1971. The building of the school had now commenced and it was hoped for a complex by Easter 1972. This was not to be and the first children were admitted on May 8th 1972 into the almost completed building.” The School was officially opened and blessed by Bishop Michael Bowen on Thursday, October 12th. 1972, after nearly six long years of endeavour.

A lady who once lived in a house on the site visited the school in 1974 and later sent the Headteacher this interesting piece of history:

“In the early nineteen twenties I was working as Secretary to a London surveyor and in 1922 I accompanied him on a survey at Ewell Park. We travelled by steam train from London to Ewell West Station and walked through Chessington Road to the village of Ewell. Chessington Road was then only a lane with no houses and agricultural land on either side. Large notices were erected announcing that the land on both sides of the lane was being offered for sale - without restrictions.

The houses that now stand in Chessington Road were built by him, also one in Old Schools Lane, and subsequently my parents lived in the house in Old Schools Lane. The first bungalow as you leave the Station going towards Ewell was known as “Heathcote” and with it went the back land which was used as a poultry farm, with 300 head of chickens. Times changed and at the rear of “Heathcote” a large bungalow known as

“Knapton” was built now demolished, in order to build the St. Clement’s R.C. First School and the back land was planted with 250 fruit trees.

At this time there was a 15ft. private roadway leading to “Knapton” and the back land. which is now widened and known as Fennels Mead. There was also another exit/entrance to the back land from Old Schools Lane which, I think, still exists. My parents lived at “Knapton” and ran a fruit and poultry farm until 1933. They erected a greenhouse, 80ft x 20ft. which was removed brick by brick from what was then known as “Garbrand Hall”, now the Library and the Health Centre. Later the land was divided into two properties, one entered from Chessington Road and known as Knapton and another entered from Old Schools Lane. A small bungalow was built there and was known as “Jona”.

The School now has about 160 pupils aged 5-8 years and including the Headteacher, eight teachers. In a happy, relaxed atmosphere and pleasant surroundings the children begin their Christian education. There is a strong Parents’ Association which provided the school with a heated, indoor swimming pool, officially opened on St. Clement’s feast day, 23rd November, 1977.

The Association runs social activities for parents and the school provides the Parish and the wider Community with a useful centre for many other events throughout the year. Located near one of the Parish boundaries, it also serves as a Mass Centre for those living nearby. At the present time the anticipated Sunday Mass on Saturday evening is celebrated in the school hall.

Premises Committee

A feature of the Parish through the years has been a skilled and loyal Premises Committee who have saved the Parish a great deal of money by their efforts. They tell these two contrasting stories of the 1960's.

“A squirrel decided the warmest place to nest was above the false ceiling in the Hall and adjoining rooms. After thorough checks we located the places he got in and gradually closed them off around the building. We had many a laugh over this beast, he nibbled holes in the ceiling of the Committee Room and often poked his head through and had a look around.

Every morning Bert Weeden used to bring Win down to school and the squirrel would wait till Bert was on his own. Then it would run out in front of Bert and the chase was on. Bert armed with a broom or stick would give chase, the squirrel would judge his speed to climb a tree at the end of the Hall, wait till Bert got to the bottom of the tree and then would give a terrific jump through a hole in the eaves and back into the false ceiling again. Bert vowed he would catch it one day but he never did. We cut down the tree and filled the hole in. I am sure that squirrel runs about still but has found somewhere else to sleep.”

Church benches

“1962. One Saturday morning, when Father O’ Driscoll was hearing confessions, a large lorry arrived outside the new, but unfurnished church. The lorry was carrying a large load of wooden benches and the driver was on his own. Frank Pawley (who happened to be going to confession at the time!) saw all this and informed Father O’ Driscoll. The outcome was that Father O’ Driscoll, Frank Pawley and the lorry

driver took off their coats, rolled up their sleeves and proceeded to take all the benches into the Church - quite an undertaking.

Heating system

“At the beginning of 1983, Father O’ Driscoll discussed with the maintenance committee (Reg Ridgers, Jack Hooper and Frank Pawley) the possibility of changing the heating system in the Church which was underfloor, electric, very expensive and not very practical. The advice given was that gas central heating would be more economical and more efficient.

The Committee set to work, ordered the necessary materials and got on with the major job of installing a gas central heating system in the Church. After completion a senior member of the Gas Board came to inspect the work, passed it with “flying colours” and then sent a Certificate of Complete Satisfaction to the Presbytery.

This major work was carried out for only the cost of the material, thereby effecting a large saving of money for the Parish. Unfortunately, Father O’ Driscoll did not live to enjoy the benefit of a warm church. More recently, since Father Murray came to be Parish Priest, the whole system has been put on to a “remote control system” - that work, too, being done by the maintenance committee.

Not so long ago, the pulpit and altar rails were removed, the removal having been requested under the new Liturgical Rite. The last major work being done to the Church was the repair of the roof.

The maintenance team had done several temporary repairs but from January 1986, Mass was often accompanied by the drop of rain water into various receptacles placed around the Church. In May/June 1987 at

a final price of £12,662 the roof was recovered with the same material as that which covers the Birmingham Exhibition Centre. We hope it will last a long time. The money for the roof was raised in a few months by much hard work.

Perhaps St. Clement's most outstanding fund raising effort in recent years has been to raise £2,900 at the first Summer Fair one beautiful June day in 1985. The proceeds went to famine relief in Ethiopia.

From the Past into the Future

St. Clement's Parish is part of a wider society and of the whole Church. Our history reflects this and we have participated in the changes in the Church, especially following the Second Vatican Council. We have not rushed to adopt every change but have sought to blend old and new. Indeed, one of the older Church organisations came to the Parish quite recently.

The Union of Catholic Mothers

"The National Union of Catholic Mothers was founded in 1913 to band together Catholic women who aim to follow the full Christian ideals of family life. Our own small parish group was formed in January 1983. Membership is open to all Catholic Ladies in the Parish (married, single, divorced, including non-catholic partners and including one-parent mothers).

Our main aim is to provide an opportunity for an evening out once a month in a happy and relaxed atmosphere. At the same time we like to participate with the different aspects and functions in the Parish e.g. the Retired Parishioners' Monthly Mass and Christmas Lunch,

refreshments for various events, including the First Holy Communion, Annual Fetes and Bazaars.”

Increased focus on the special needs of the young in society and in the Church has led to the re-formation during 1985 of a Youth Club and more participation in Diocesan Youth Activities. The participation of the laity has always been a strong feature of the Parish as this story shows.

Since April 1985 the effects of reduced vocations has meant only one priest to the parish. Inevitably Parishioners have had to answer that vocation so clearly signalled by Vatican II: to take on roles seen for many centuries as belonging to only the ordained priest. For fifteen years people have prepared candidates for Confirmation and since 1985 First Communicants have been prepared by lay catechists in the Parish through the Brusselmans Programme. The commitment of the parish to its young members and theirs to the parish is being strengthened.

Lay men and women have read the lessons at Mass since the mid-sixties and on 17th March 1985 the first Special Ministers of the Eucharist were commissioned by Monsignor Westlake for the Parish. The privilege of Holy Communion under both kinds is now available at all weekday Masses and at one Mass each Sunday. In the early 1980's a small Committee of lay people was formed to assist the clergy in preparing the Liturgy. Reconciliation services now take place every Advent and Lent and the Sacrament of Penance can now be received face to face.

Alterations to the Confessional to make this easy are planned. The psychological barriers between priest and congregation of pulpit and the Communion rails were removed in June 1986 and January 1987

respectively. Since May 1984 retired Parishioners have a special Mass with transport being provided and refreshments afterwards. In March 1987 the Church public address system was improved to help the hard of hearing.

Our latest spiritual projects are Children's Liturgy of the Word, organised by Parents at the 10 a.m. Mass and future participation in the "Renew" scheme to be launched in the Diocese in September 1988. Nor has all our spiritual and social development been inward-looking. We have moved, in common with Christians throughout the world, closer to each other.

"When I came to live in Ewell in 1963, "Ecumenism" was a rarely-mentioned subject and there was very little contact between Christians of different denominations - indeed. Catholics were expected to seek permission from their Priest before attending a service in other churches. It is difficult to remember exactly when certain significant events took place, but in the mid 1970's - perhaps a little earlier, a Ewell Council of Churches was formed and later disbanded due to lack of interest. St Clement's Church was not represented on that first council.

In 1979 I was asked by Father O'Driscoll to attend a meeting at St. Mary's Church, Ewell and told that it was to be on the subject of "Christian Aid", the charitable organisation of the British Council of Churches, whose annual collection I had been helping to organize locally since 1973. To my surprise, the meeting had, in fact, been called in order that discussion could take place about the possibility of the formation of a new Ewell Council of Churches, and, since I was the only member of St. Clement's Church present, I became our representative on the Council's Committee.

Over the years we have seen some pulpit exchanges, regular fraternal meetings between the Clergy of different denominations, Lenten discussion groups, a Procession of Witness on Good Friday, Women's World Day of Prayer, Christian Aid Week collections, an ecumenical Christmas card and a "Feed the Mind" book fair. The most major effort was to start, in May 1985, the "Care Scheme" in Stoneleigh. Six members of St. Clement's congregation are among the team of helpers who staff this exciting ecumenical project.

I have found my involvement with my fellow Christians to be a most enriching and rewarding experience and I always feel very happy in their company. Looking back over the past 24 years I feel that we have come a long way on the road to Christian Unity and for that we must thank and praise God."

It was therefore, very pleasing to welcome several local, non-Roman Catholic clergy, some with their wives, to a Mass of Thanksgiving for Fifty Years of the Parish on Friday 27th September 1987, attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Epsom. Nearly twenty priests, some of whom served the Parish in the past, concelebrated Mass with Bishop Cormac who presided over this joyful occasion.

Perhaps it is fitting to finish with a list of the priests who have served St Clement's during the last 50 years, to pray for those who have died and to thank God for all that has been achieved under their leadership.

Year	Parish Priest	Curate
1941	Fr. P Crommellin	
1943	“	Fr C Spender
1947	“	Fr Donovan
1952	Fr. F Young	“
1958	“	Fr G Dove
1959	Fr. T. O'Driscoll	“
1960	“	Fr Bickerton
1962	“	Fr C Clarke
1967	“	Fr J M Maguire
1973	“	Fr M McGlade
1974	“	Fr D Lewis (now Mgr)
1977	“	Fr P Wilkins
1983	Fr. C Murray	
1983	“	Fr M Aust
1984	“	Fr B Conway
1985	“	

Between 1951 and 1961 Father Hadshar frequently came to say Mass at St Clement's Hall on Sundays. Other priests who have assisted either at week-ends or holiday times are: Monsignor Curtin, Father Enright S.J., Father Bidone S.D.P., Father Caffrey. Canon Arbuthnot, Father Stirnimann and Father Van Uden (R.I.I.P.)



Our Present Parish Priest Writes an Epilogue

OUR DOUBLE CELEBRATIONS - Gold and Silver -mark a significant step in the life of St. Clement's community and I think it is reasonable to take stock at this time. In my four years here in Ewell I have been impressed by the healthy state of the Parish and clearly the seed sown fifty years ago has taken root successfully. I hope you would agree that the accounts from the various Parish societies endorse this view of an active community - one ready to face the next fifty years with confidence.

In the period from 1937 there have been many changes in parish life; changes in the liturgy, particularly in the latter years; the decline of some societies and the rise of others.

Important additions to the Parish were the building of St. Clement's Church in 1962 and St. Clement's School in 1972, both thanks to Parishioners, and now functioning most successfully.

Young people are active in all aspects of parish life.

There has been a slow but, I believe, steady increase in interest by parishioners in ecumenism and, please God, this will continue in the coming years.

There is much to be done and I would point particularly to the Church Hall which is in need of major development. This will be one of a number of challenges for the Parish but I have no doubt that it will be met successfully.

Father Colum Murray CSSp

Part II

1988 — 2007

Our priests

Father Colum Murray died in April 1990 and in that September Canon John Sullivan was appointed parish priest. In July 1993 he moved back to his native Ireland, where he died in November 1996.

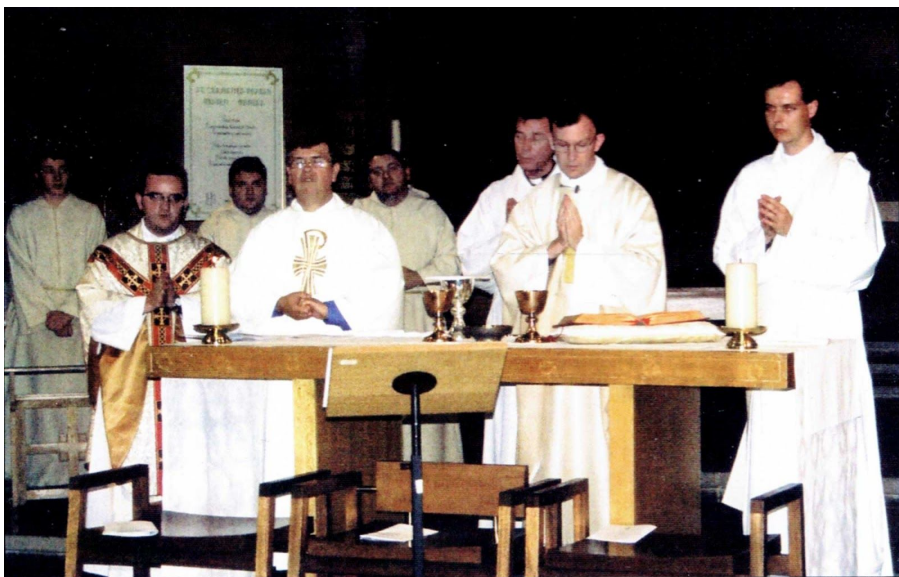
In 1993, Father Graham Bamford became parish priest and remains so at the present time. He was inducted on 19 November 1993, the first time such a service had taken place in St Clement's. There has been no assistant priest in that time, although Father Michael Aust returns to help out from time to time.

Former priests

Monsignor David Lewis (July 2000), Father Michael Quinlan (September 2004), Father Christopher Spender (April 2000), and Father Paul Wilkins (April 2003), Father Mick McGlade (December 2006), have all died on the dates shown.

New priests

In July 2003 one of our parishioners, Simon Hall, was ordained to the priesthood. Many years earlier Father Paul Hayward became a priest with Opus Dei. At the time of writing Simon Dray, another parishioner, is studying for the priesthood at St John's Seminary, Wonersh. During 2007 a former parishioner, Brother Anthony Brockman was professed as a Benedictine monk at Worth Abbey in Sussex.



Father Simon Hall says his first Mass in the parish on 17th July 2003. Pictured left to right are server John Hannan, Father Nicholas Schofield (Westminster Diocese), Simon Dray (Assistant Master of Ceremonies), Father Graham Bamford (Parish Priest), Brian Dray (Master of Ceremonies), Deacon Kevin O'Brien, Father Simon and Deacon Peter Vellacott (now a priest in Nottingham Diocese).

Spiritual life

The prayer board, as a way of asking parishioners to pray for personal intentions, was first established in 1990 and is still extensively used.

The difficulties of finding supply priests led to the first lay-led celebration of the Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion in March 1990 and such Services now take place as needed.

Holy Hour takes place once a month, with a special emphasis on being a time of reflection for Special Ministers of Holy Communion. As well as assisting in the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass, Special Ministers take Holy Communion to the sick and housebound.

Lay people regularly lead prayer groups, scripture groups and other services. Much encouragement for this came from the programme of RENEW, which took place across the diocese in between 1988 and 1990. Another spin off from RENEW was the formation of a rota of parishioners for the preparation of the Prayers of the Faithful for Sunday Masses. The public recitation of Morning Prayer of the Church before or during weekday Mass began in November 1993.



Bishop (then Cardinal) Cormac Murphy saying Mass in January 1995, during which he baptised Kirstie Barresi.

March 1994 saw the first parish celebration of the Passover meal, which illustrates so graphically the setting of Christ's institution of the Eucharist. More recently Passover celebrations have been incorporated into the First Holy Communion and Confirmation preparation programmes, the former led by a Jewish Rabbi.

In 1996, 1997 and 1998 Parish Days were held, when the whole parish

gathered at an outside venue to celebrate together. These were spiritual, informative and social in their content.

In 2002 the evangelising Alpha programme was run. Then later several other courses, on video; 'Exploring Church' by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Papal Preacher and another by Monsignor Mark Coleridge, a Vatican scholar on Scripture and now Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn in Australia. These courses and talks gave to the parishioners taking part a better understanding of aspects of our Faith and were sometimes done in the context of a meal and social.

Worship

Public worship remains central to the life of the parish, with Mass and Morning Prayer of the Church on weekdays. There are four Sunday Masses, one being anticipated on Saturday evening. Many Sunday Masses involve some special aspect of parish life, for example Sacramental preparation, St Clement's School, Scouts and Guides. There is some music at all Masses, with two regular music groups, one of which is augmented for certain occasions by a number of young instrumentalists. Children's Liturgy of the Word has been celebrated at 10.30 am Mass for many years.

Sacramental Preparation and Catechesis

Learning and growing in Faith

The late eighties saw the introduction to the parish of renewed forms of Catechesis which, in the way of the early Church, takes the form of a process of gradual integration into the parish community, leading to public reception of the Sacraments of Initiation.

In the autumn of 1985, preparation for children's First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion became a joint parent and parish responsibility, with preparation taking place over some months. In more recent years, the children have attended a Reconciliation service, prior to receiving the Sacrament. First Holy Communions now take place in small groups within the community at the child's ordinary Mass. Confirmation is conferred in Deanery groups, with preparation over some months in the parish community.

Parents prepare in groups for their children's Baptism. A 'Rite of Welcome' takes place at one of the Sunday Masses and, if the parents wish, the Baptism is also incorporated into a Mass. Others are baptised in groups.

September 1991 saw the beginning of adult 'Rite of Christian Initiation', (RCIA) with new Catholics usually being received into the Church at the Easter Vigil.

A St Clement's parish 'special' is the Growing Towards Jesus programme, started in 1997 and designed to help children, in the year before they prepare for First Holy Communion, to join in the Mass a little more. The 'Look' children's weekly worksheets first came to the parish in September 1991. Another help for children is the Children's Liturgy Group, which has run during 10.30am Mass for many years and enables young children to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word in a simpler way. Another special children's event has been the Advent services which have taken place since at least 1989 and which more recently have been changed to be a celebration after Christmas.

All these activities mean a far greater involvement of lay parishioners, people in leadership roles, working in collaboration with the parish priest.

Church re-ordering

In 1976 the late Father Timothy O'Driscoll (1959 - 83) drew up suggestions with the help of Father Maurice Couve de Murville RIP, (later Archbishop of Birmingham) who was a friend and a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission. Unfortunately, these were shelved because of a lack of support from the parish council. Father O' Driscoll's successors, the late Father Colum Murray, the late Canon John Sullivan and Father Graham Bamford have continued to stress the importance of updating the church and the sanctuary and getting them consecrated. Eventually in the year 2000, under the leadership of Father Graham things began to move.



A view of the reordered church.

A parish meeting was held where a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission explained the principles of the arrangement of worship space and agreement was reached to proceed. A working group was formed and three different experiments took place over several months. Soon after the meeting Father Graham, the parish priest, leading a pilgrimage to Turkey, met David and Miriam Howitt, architects, who were part of the pilgrimage. Father Graham invited them to study St Clement's building and draw up plans. After a lot of thought, prayer and study Miriam and David (now deceased) came to the final and present excellent arrangement.

A previously oblong church is now more circular. With three focal points — the altar, the lectern and the baptismal font, the sanctuary area is rounded. The seating is in a circular style, some of the benches having been altered to be curved. The lighting has been hugely improved and includes a modern circular 'crown' over the altar, with tubular light bulbs (64 in all), which point both heavenward and down to earth.

A state of the art public address system, installed by Mario Roque (who has, sadly, since died) and Martin Pope includes a new loop system for the hard of hearing. The whole church is disabled accessible and a fully equipped toilet is included in the extension to the porch area. Within that area there is also a separate meeting room, dedicated to the late Frank Tivey, a long-time parishioner of St Clement's, whose timely legacy made the extension possible. The total cost of re-ordering was around £600,000, compared with £33,844.15s for the initial building in 1962.

Forty-one years after the church of St Clement's in Ewell was built, it was finally dedicated by Bishop Kieran in February 2004. The programme of major re-ordering, culminated in an evening of great joy in the parish.



Bishop Kieran Conry anoints the altar during the dedication ceremony on 19th February 2004.

The ceremony is full of rich symbolism, an intrinsic part being the anointing of the altar, with Chrism, the oil of dedication, which is used in several sacraments. The walls of the church were also anointed in 12 places to symbolise the 12 apostles on whom the Church of Christ is founded. This intermingling of the idea of the church as being both the building and the people who use it was brought out strongly in Bishop Kieran's homily.

Both altar and people were sprinkled with newly blessed holy water 'a sign of our repentance and a reminder of our Baptism'. The prayers of the saints were invoked in the Litany before the relic of St Clement and part of the previous reliquary were placed in the altar. There followed the prayer of dedication, as part of which the Bishop prayed 'Send your Spirit from

heaven to make this church an ever-holy place, and this altar a ready table for the sacrifice of Christ'. The anointings followed and then the further symbolism of incense as 'our prayer ascending to God's sight'.

After the altar was incensed, so was the Bishop, as chief celebrant, the walls of the church and the people. The altar was prepared for Mass and, symbolically, the Bishop handed the light for the candles to the deacon. Now that our 'new' church was opened, the Blessed Sacrament could be carried in procession to the tabernacle.

We had much to thank God for as well as thanks to many people. In the best tradition of our parish we then had a great feast in the hall, which for the last few months, as in the early part of the parish's history, had served as our church.

Organisations and activities

Many of the organisations mentioned in the earlier part of this history are still thriving. Scouts and Guides continue and in response to demand from younger children, Beaver Scouts began in September 1989 and Rainbow Guides in April 1990.

In April 1991, the Knights of St Columba brought their 'Fraternal Cross' to the parish. The Society of St Vincent de Paul still flourishes and provides much support to the parish priest in caring and pastoral work.

The Songsters continue to provide musical shows of a very high standard. More recent organisations include a 'Mother and Toddlers' group founded in late 1993 to offer little ones and their carers a couple of hours of social life once a week. After several efforts to provide a way of keeping children who have made their First Holy Communion in touch with Church, the "After 8's" came into being and runs an exciting programme. Youth clubs

have taken various forms over the years and currently meets once a month on a Sunday evening.

Social Life

Many social activities which originated during the early years of the parish continue to flourish. The Songsters still produce a number of shows each year, either specifically for the parish or for other groups. They make generous contributions to various charities from their takings. There are barn dances and social evenings of all sorts, including Burn's night suppers and St Patrick nights. Badminton at the Territorial Hall featured for a number of years. There have been parish walks, picnics, fashion shows and, in 1990, a visit from the 'Holy Road Show'.



Many, many events in the life of the parish have been celebrated over the years and one consistent feature of all of them has been the preparation and sharing of the most delicious food.

A few special people

Many people have helped the parish over the years. Just a very few are mentioned here. A full list would run to many pages. Sadly several have died in recent years.

Jim Olivier (July 2001) kept the parish accounts and, among other things, was a leading light in the Songsters. His wife, Joy, a leading parish musician (Christmas Day 2005) George Glynn (April 2002) was an organist and parish handyman. Alf Farmer (May 1998), first parish chairman and worker in many ways. Frank Pawley (November 2000), who in May 1990, jointly with his wife Maureen, was awarded the Papal Bene Merenti medal for years of work of all sorts for the parish.

Frank Tivey (March 2003), who, with his wife Dorothy used to run pilgrimages to Lourdes; he raised large amounts of money for the Association for the Propagation of the Faith and left a legacy to the parish generous enough for the narthex plans to be included in the church re-ordering. Michael Christmas (Easter Sunday 1994) Master of Ceremonies and Don Weeks (Good Friday 2004), server, sacristan and a quiet loyal supporter of the parish. In 1992/1993 a parishioner, Mike Staples, was Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Canon Sullivan was his chaplain and his mayoral service was at a Sunday Mass, at which Mike normally participated as a musician. Eleven years later, our parish priest, Father Graham Bamford was mayoral chaplain, this time to Councillor Jonathon Reed, who although not a Catholic, asked to have his inaugural service, in the form of a Mass at St Clement's.

Two weeks after that service Father Simon Hall, the first priest from the parish for many years was ordained to serve the diocese of Arundel and Brighton

Schools

St Clement's parish continues an active involvement in education, providing Education from two and a half years to 18 years.

In 1996 Bridget Smith applied for the Nursery School, founded in 1960 as a play school, to be given formal Nursery School status and this was granted. In 1997 Bridget retired and Joy Olivier took over as supervisor. After a great deal of study Joy attained qualifications late in life, and brought the Nursery School up to the new status. Joy retired in December 2003 and handed the reins over to Annie Roque, her deputy. Annie has continued the progress with excellent staff.

The School is very over-subscribed - it is private and run by the parish to serve the parish and the wider community. In recent years the government has placed great emphasis on good nursery education - the parish of St Clement's is certainly fulfilling that aim.

The parish primary school was started in 1972 as a 'First School'. In the 1990's as a result of primary school re-organisation by the County and the Diocese, the governors decided to make St Clement's First School into a Primary school (4-11 years). This involved the school expanding by 90 children to 210 pupils. The parish paid 15% of the cost of the building work - required to be paid by the governors in Voluntary Aided school projects.

In September 1997 a new head teacher, Mrs Elizabeth Walsh, with the new governing body, brought the school into line with new government directives and the change of status to a primary school. January 2005 saw the appointment of new head Mrs Helen Taylor, the successor to Mrs Walsh, who moved to be head of St Joseph's Primary School, Redhill.

The senior school for our parish is St Andrew's Catholic Secondary School, Leatherhead. This is the secondary school for Epsom Deanery (nine parishes, including St Clement's). St Andrew's was formed in 1970 from St Andrew's Convent School into a co-educational Catholic High School in line with diocesan and government policy. St Andrew's has served the deanery well providing a secondary school with an excellent Catholic ethos. There has been a strong tradition of St Andrew's 6th formers helping the sick and handicapped on the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage. The head teacher today, Mrs Kim Burke, and her senior management team give good Catholic leadership. After many years of negotiation and preparation, work on building a new school commenced in July 2007.

Ecumenism

The decree on Ecumenism at the Second Vatican Council (1962 - 1965) called for all Catholics to be actively involved in seeking unity with our fellow non-Catholic Christians. Responding to this inspiration from the Holy Spirit and the Church, our parish has been actively involved in the area of ecumenism since the 1970's. St Clement's is an active member of the local Churches Together in Ewell and Stoneleigh.

In 1989, just prior to his illness, Father Colum Murray was elected chairman of the Churches Together. In 2000 the chairmanship again came to St Clement's, when Father Graham Bamford was elected, but he asked for the appointment of two co-chairpersons, one from the Anglican Church and one from the Non-Conformist Churches. The co-chairs meet regularly informally over lunch to discuss agenda and policy. Father Graham suggested that there should be contact and partnership with the

civil authorities. As a result, there are now regular meetings with the Member of Parliament for Epsom and Ewell, Chris Grayling a committed Christian, and local authority representatives.

‘The Churches Together has an executive with an appointed representative from each member Church plus the clergy. The representatives from St Clement’s over the last 20 years have been the late Don Weeks, Sylvia Fitzgerald, Estelle Ryder and Maria Orme. The local Churches Together is made up of fourteen Churches and is responsible for organising Lent Courses, United Services and debates. Every month the clergy of all the Churches meet for an informal lunch - the second Wednesday of the month. In this time there is theological and pastoral discussion, socialising and prayer. St Clement’s takes its turn in hosting these fraternal meetings.





*Pilgrims in the Holy Land pray in the River Jordan
in October/November, 1998.*

Pilgrimages

Pages 38/39 of this history describe the pilgrimages to Hosanna House in Lourdes in the past. More recently parishioners have taken part in the diocesan pilgrimages to Lourdes and continue to do so. Pilgrimage days to Walsingham and Aylesford took place. Subsequently a five day pilgrimage to Walsingham took place. 1998 saw the first - to the Holy Land - of a number of more adventurous pilgrimages, on which people from various other parishes joined St Clement's parishioners.

In 2000 Turkey was visited and in 2001 Turkey and Northern Cyprus,

following in the footsteps of St Paul and visiting Old Testament sites. Egypt followed in 2002, for more Old Testament sites and in 2004 the steps of St Paul were traced again, this time in Greece. 2005 saw Rome and other Italian shrines and 2006 the Holy Land again. The latest venue was to the Orthodox world in Russia.



*Pilgrims in Walsingham carrying the statue of Our Lady
in procession in June 2004.*

Outreach

A significant and growing aspect of parish activity in recent years has been the increasing awareness of the needs of others, both at home and abroad, and of action to help them. The Society of St Vincent de Paul

founded in the parish in 1965 continues to flourish to this day. Their quiet work includes visiting sick, elderly and lonely people and they are still twinned with and support work in four villages in Kerala, India.

On Father Colum Murray's death in 1990 the first major parish venture in helping the developing world was started. In a very short time £3,000 was raised to buy fast-growing maize for Angola. This was the parish's memorial to Father Colum, who had previously been a missionary in Africa.

The 'red boxes' of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith are held in many homes in the parish and in 1992, we were noted as the 4th highest parish in the diocese, having contributed £2,238. 10p in the year.

CAFOD 'mite boxes' are also to be found all around the parish and Family Fast Days are observed twice a year, producing substantial sums of money. The parish has responded to many appeals from CAFOD over the years, some raising large sums, the latest being £3,400 — raised in only six weeks - as a Christmas gift to the developing world and more modestly by such things as knitting jumpers for children in Bosnia. There have been other specific projects over the years and from these alone nearly £18,000 has been raised since the year 2000.

Being concerned that workers in the developing world should be fairly treated led St Clement's to becoming a Fairtrade parish and in addition Traidcraft goods are sold in substantial numbers after all the Sunday Masses.

Politically, parishioners have attended Justice and Peace demonstrations on such matters as debt relief for the poor countries of the world, going to Munich and Glasgow, for example.

Father Graham Bamford and (now Deacon) Mark Woods, Regional organiser CAFOD South, sign the parish Covenant with the Poor in March 2000.



Communications

A weekly newsletter has been produced since 1951, in recent years on the reverse of Redemptorist reflection sheets. A special Christmas magazine had also been produced for many years and this developed in 1997 into an 'occasional' magazine: The Ewell Log. Electronic communications came to St Clement's in 1999 in the form of a website. An updated site appeared in 2007, which now includes the weekly newsletter.

Our Vision Statement

AS A PARISH COMMUNITY we aim to obey, with all our fellow Christians, the Lord's command to love our Creator and all people. Inspired by this love, and through prayer and the sacraments, we aim to grow in our understanding of our Christian responsibilities in our daily lives.

We commit ourselves, working together, to build a welcoming Community in which everyone's worth will be recognized and to which all will contribute, according to their call from God, in whatever way they are able.

We will strive to be sensitive and respond to the needs of all. We pray that all our liturgy will be a celebration of our witness to Jesus Christ as Lord, Light of the World.

Our Vision Prayer

GOD, OUR CREATOR, lead us nearer to you, teach us at St Clement's to grow together as a Parish Community, help us to recognise you in one another and to respond in love. We offer you all that we do, in praise and thanksgiving, through Christ Our Lord. Amen

