



# The Lion and The Dragon

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's, Basford and St Margaret's, Wolstanton

[www.stmarksbasford.co.uk](http://www.stmarksbasford.co.uk) and [www.stmargaretswolstanton.org](http://www.stmargaretswolstanton.org)

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## So what happens on a Retreat?

*Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God.*  
*Luke 6:12*

Beloved, A retreat is when you go away for a quiet period of time to pray, read, study, and in the life of the church to take some time out of the normal diary to especially work on continued spiritual formation (and as a former Spiritual Director used to tell me, it is good to catch up on sleep too!) Jesus himself went off to pray and so it is good practice for all of us to have this in some form of a pattern in our Christian lives.

So I have just stayed for a few days at the Bishop's Palace alongside the Bishop of Llandaff. I worshipped the offices (morning and evening prayer) and the Mass each day at the Cathedral alongside the cathedral Chapter (staff at the cathedral). I spent most of my time in silence and rather than TV, I went for walks (including up and down the many Dean's steps to the cathedral!) and met with my spiritual director each day for guidance and input. The meals were certainly not basic, but neither were they overly lavish! I prayed hard and pondered my role here - thank you for your prayers.

I read a fabulous book called "Love is the Way: Holding onto hope in troubling times" by Bishop Michael Curry, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church (United States), who you may

remember as the Preacher at the wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle in 2018.

This was quite an interesting 'God-incidence' as I also read "Spare", Prince Harry's own book (it's not all about God and the Bible - it can be good to read novels or what you enjoy reading also).

During my retreat, I went to the "thin places" as the Celts would say - places where heaven and earth meet. An encounter of the divine, an experience of God. In his book, Bishop Curry spoke of how we can all plant seeds, yet we often don't see their fruit and are often not lucky enough to later sit in their shade. But we can't go back, we can't start the past again - so for us, the best time to start (*or restart*) is today!

A retreat is a chance to gain refreshment, but not relax - except with the challenges and wrestling with God. Relaxing comes with a holiday, which is why as you read this I will probably be in Africa, relaxing on holiday - I look (*slowly!*) forward to returning 'relaxed' to go with my 'refreshed'. - I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. *1 Corinthians 3:6*

*Blessings, In Christ*

*Your Shepherd, Fr Tommy*

Reader Janet has also just been on a retreat, she writes:

My retreat was held at St Beuno's, a Jesuit house which specialises in Ignatian spirituality (read Gerard Hughes God of Surprises and you will

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learn all about it). The greatest gift St Beuno's gives to me is the silence where you can be still and listen to the Lord without the distractions of daily living. St Beuno's is In North Wales about seven miles south of Prestatyn set in the Clywdian hills so you can imagine that the scenery is amazing with the most wonderful views if you've got the puff to climb the hills round there. The grounds too, have much to offer.

Everyday you see your spiritual guide for the week to discuss, initially, where you are at, what you hope will come from the retreat. You are then set certain biblical passages to meditate on. The next day you go back to your guide and reflect on what you gained (or didn't!) and further passages are given or chewed over even more. At times it can be a very surprising journey.

There is a daily Mass as well. The only time you can talk is with your daily sessions with your guide. Not to break the silence is stressed. I understand that this type of retreat may not be for everyone as some find silence difficult. But every time I've been to St Beuno's I've known the love of the Lord and my understanding of his love for me has deepened so, hopefully, as I journey on my love for my fellow travellers will also deepen.

*Blessings, Janet*

### Worship Services during October

*(St Mark's, Basford (B), St Margaret's, Wolstanton (W))*

1 <sup>st</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
4 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
8 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
11 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
15 <sup>th</sup>	Harvest	9.30am	Family Worship with HC (B)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (W)
		1.00pm	Baptism (W)
18 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
22 <sup>nd</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	10.00am	Joint Worship with Holy Communion, (W)
		1.00pm	Baptism (W)
25 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
29 <sup>th</sup>	Last after Trinity	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
		1.00pm	Baptism (W)

### Diary Dates for October

15 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	9.30am Harvest Festival (B)
16 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	7.30pm Deanery Synod
18 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	7.00pm Baptism Prep (B)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday	7.30pm Autumnal Evening of Music (B)

### Early November Dates

6 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am Ministry meeting (B)
18 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	10.00am Christmas coffee morning (B)
20 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	7.00pm PCC in the vicarage (W)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Tuesday	7.00pm PCC (B)



### Harvest Festival

*Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October at St Mark's  
Donations to Open Door.*

**Open Door, Stoke-on-Trent:** Is a local charity that Fr Tommy is Chaplain to. They run houses supporting local homeless people which are staffed with support workers. They run various drop-in centres where homeless people can receive a hot cooked meal and a food parcel. They also give food parcels to people in crisis.

They always need any food donations - but especially the following:

Instant Coffee, Tea, UHT Milk, Sugar.

Packets of Biscuits or chocolate bars, crisps

Tinned meat - e.g corned beef.

Tinned meals - e.g chicken casserole in a tin

Baked Beans, Tinned Tomatoes, Tuna

Tinned Vegetables, Pasta, jars of pasta sauces

Toiletries are always useful too.

### Autumnal Evening of Music:

Come and join us for a lovely evening of music with the Coombs Trio of Strings while enjoying cheeses and wine at St Marks church. It will take place on **21<sup>st</sup> October at 7.30pm** in the church.

### Deanery Synod meeting:

The next Deanery Synod meeting will be held on **16<sup>th</sup> October, St Marys, Knutton at 7.30pm**. This is an open meeting to all covering the topic of youth. The guest speaker will be Dr. Ruth Fish who will be talking about Children's Ministry.