

'DIOCESE OF LLANDAFF PARISH PROFILE '

FOR A TEAM VICAR

THE RECTORIAL BENEFICE OF COW BRIDGE - L 706

1. Brief description of the parish

The Rectorial Benefice is a single parish about 8 miles north to south and about 3.5 miles east to west. It comprises several former ecclesiastical parishes and Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, two Community councils (Penllyn and Llanfair) and part (Flemingston) of a third (St. Athan). It is exactly coterminous with the Cowbridge Ward of the Vale of Glamorgan council, plus Flemingston.

It is entirely rural and relatively prosperous. There are a few localized areas of need throughout the parish. The population is made up of largely professional people. House prices are among the highest in Wales, which forces some younger people out of the area. The population is around 7,000, about 5,000 of whom live in the Cowbridge-Llanblethian area.

Location of churches in relation to the above

The parish is divided into three pastorates. The Central Pastorate consists of Cowbridge and Llanblethian, with a church plant at Aberthin and Llanfrynach which used on an occasional basis. The Northern Pastorate consists of Llansannor, Penllyn and Ystradowen. The southern Pastorate consists of Flemingston, Llandough, St. Mary Church (which is the name of the village) and St. Hilary.

There are ten churches, two of which are grade 1 listed buildings, with the others being grade 2. The 'church plant' at Aberthin holds two services a month in the Village Hall (which we do not own), and is run by the Rector and a local Warden. There are three church halls at Llanblethian, Llanfair/ Llandough and Llansannor.

There has been a Parish Office since the formation of the Rectorial Benefice in 1994. Since early 2000 this has been located in a purpose built office on the first floor of the Taynton Room in the Parish Church. The Parish Administrator, except for Wednesday, works from the office.

2. Parish Staff

A full time clerical team consists of a Rector, Vicar, Assistant Curate and NSM Assistant Curate.

There is currently a Team Rector (Canon Derek Belcher), and an NSM assistant curate (Fr David Boulton). A Team Ministry is exercised by all staff throughout the various Pastoral Areas, although each have particular areas of pastoral responsibility. The Vicar shares the Rector's incumbency and is fully responsible for the various focus concerns which the team decides. The NSM assistant curate is a full member of the team.

There is a paid, full time Parish Administrator. There are twenty one Eucharistic assistants, nine of whom are licensed as Eucharistic ministers, eight accredited pastoral visitors to exercise a pastoral ministry; four Parish counsellors who work with the Deanery 'Vale Counselling Service'; ten worship leaders and preachers (lay Speakers) who are trained in the parish. We also have a group of instrumentalists situated in Holy Cross Church.

3. Principal Services

The Alternative Calendar, Lectionary, Collects and Almanac are used throughout the parish. The 1984 Book of Common Prayer and Modern Language Services are in use throughout the parish and the 1662 Communion is in occasional use.

For information of Sunday and Weekday Services'- **Refer to the Parish website- CowbridgeParish.com.**

4. Attendance

Average adult weekly attendance;

2009- 207

2010- 188

Electoral Roll

2009- 324

2010- 182 (Many have not renewed)

Easter Communicants:

2009- 480

2010- 397

5. Sunday Schools and Youth.

There are three principal Sunday Schools-at the Parish Church, Ystradowen and Aberthin. The parish operates a Catechumenate. This begins with Baptismal preparation; the 'Friends of Jesus' scheme for the admission of children to communion and confirmation from the age of 11 years. This has proved successful where it has been possible to integrate both children and adults into Eucharistic worship. There is a Sunday Evening Youth Club at Holy Cross Church.

6. Organisations

There is a Mothers' Union branch divided into three small and generally ageing groups, representing Cowbridge & Llanblethian, Llansannor & Penllyn, and Llandough.

There is a Women's Fellowship attached to the Parish Church, and a Women's Guild attached to Llanblethian.

The Parish Bellringers ring in Holy Cross, Llanblethian and St. Hilary.

The Parish inaugurated the Vale Counselling Service which is now part of the Deanery mission work.

There is one overseas link with S.A.M.S.

7. Occasional Offices

2010: Baptisms 16

Weddings 21

Funerals 37

Confirmations Nil- First Communion has affected this. The Parish Policy has now changed and we are currently implementing a Catechumenate programme.

The parish has a policy of permitting the marriage of divorced persons in church, but requires a confidential statement of the circumstances to be submitted to the Rector before permission is granted.

Funerals -

There are open churchyards at eight of the churches and a public cemetery in Cowbridge. Cremations take place mainly at Coychurch, Bridgend and it is normal for ashes to be buried afterwards.

8. Local Schools

There are strong connections with all the schools and the church buildings (particularly the Parish Church) are used regularly.

a. Llansannor Church in Wales Primary School

b. Y Bont Faen Primary School ~ the present Rector is a member of the Governors.

c. Llanfair Primary School.

d. Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg -Welsh language medium primary school with wider catchment area.

e. Cowbridge Comprehensive School, currently on two sites. -

The clerics visit a, b, and c bi-weekly and d. periodically. There is good contact with the comprehensive School e, occasional assemblies, events in Church. The Rector or the Team Vicar normally presides at school functions

associated with Christian events (Christmas, Easter, Remembrance, etc.) and are invited to all major school functions.

9. Local Hospitals Most patients are treated at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend. A few are treated at Llandough Hospital and others at a range of hospitals in the area.

There are two homes for the aged in the parish –The Manor House and Southways Home in Cowbridge, the latter is run by the local authority. There is also two sheltered accommodation units at Long Meadow Court and Geoffrey Ash Court. There are monthly Communion services in all four homes. In addition Southways also enjoys a monthly Prayer and Praise Service.

The Eucharistic Ministers take Holy Communion from the reserved Sacrament at Holy Cross for those who wish to receive Home Communion.

10. Parish Finances

The last financial year the total of restricted and un-restricted funds at the 31st December 2010 was: £462,000.

Accounts are still being adjusted so may vary a little. Direct giving was 63% of unrestricted income. The Parish Quota for 2011 is £88,527. We do not currently have a campaign to raise the individual giving, but if we wish to cover costs without fund-raising we need £12.50 per week per average attendee.

11. Expenses and conditions

The following is given as a definition of the current arrangements in this parish. All these categories are reckoned to be legitimate claims according to the Guide to the Reimbursement of Parochial Expenses of Clerics, March 2009.

Council Tax - Paid directly by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales (R.B.)

Water Rates - paid by the parish.

Telephone - 50% of telephone bills are paid by the parish.

Gas or Heating Oil - 25% of the bills are paid by the parish.

Electricity ... 25% of the bills is paid by the parish.

Car - The parish pays at the current recommended RB rate. (4,000 miles per year at 40p per mile, and additional miles at 22.5p per mile).

Public Transport and Parking (e.g. hospitals) - Reimbursed by the parish

Interior Decorating - Materials (e.g. paint, wallpaper) & repaid by the parish.

Postage & Stationery- These are provided by the Parish Office and therefore no allocation is necessary.

Office Equipment - £15 per month payable to each cleric in addition to claimed expenses. An interest free loan of £700 is available to each cleric for the purchase of equipment compatible with parish systems, the loan being repaid by deduction of £15 per month (any outstanding amount being repayable on leaving post). Consumables for parish use, such as paper, ink, cartridges, etc. should be obtained through the Parish Office and paid by the parish.

In-service Training and retreats - The parish allocates up to £200 per annum for in-service training and retreats of each cleric (up to a maximum of £150 on either item).

Stipend - The Rector is paid 105% of a standard stipend. The Team Vicar is Paid 100% of a standard stipend

The modern Vicarage is situated in Aberthin village. Downstairs has a Lounge/Dining Room - with adjoining door. Study. Toilet, Kitchen, and a Utility room (leading into a garage).

Upstairs has 4 bedrooms and Bathroom (toilet/bath/shower).

13. Special Characteristics

The Vicar has almost unparalleled opportunities for influence in the life of the community and needs to be a person of conviction who commands respect and is willing to think out and communicate his/her views in an articulate and influential community. The churchmanship tradition of the bulk of the parish has been dominated by a broad

church/ liberal catholic tradition. Holy Cross Church is a distinctive blend of traditional/ Liberal Evangelical and some charismatic for at least 20 years.

There are home study groups in the parish and ministry teams are emerging

The relationship between the wider parish and its constituent districts and churches is one which demands vigilance and care.

There is an active council of churches (including the Roman Catholic Church and the United Free church).

Building maintenance has been a major preoccupation in the past six years and continues to be in places, though a remarkable amount has been achieved through local effort. Llanblethian and Ystradowen Churches benefit considerably from a generous trust fund which means that they never need to draw on parish funds for repairs to their churches or churchyards.

A major building project has started in Holy Cross Community Parish Church. We are awaiting the response from the Chancellor regarding our internal re-ordering scheme to facilitate worship and community involvement. The Diocesan Advisory Committee has given its informal support to the scheme. A Prospectus has been prepared and a Funding Group set up.

14. Attitudes to the ordination of women to the Priesthood

There is a great deal of parish support for the priestly ministry of women

Canon Derek G Belcher
Rector