

# NOREEN SAYS FAREWELL

Monday June 6<sup>th</sup> 2011



Mass was said for the *Journey in Faith* group and new Catholics, many of whom were present in the congregation. Antonin and Marie were unable to attend as they had already left for the Czech Republic, where they were to be married.

They are wished every blessing in their future lives together.

This Mass was also a celebration for Noreen Gillespie who has been part of Holy Innocents' parish for over 46 years. Having been part of many of the groups within the parish,



Noreen was particularly active within the *Journey in Faith* group.

Father Victor and parishioners wished to have the opportunity to say good bye and thank her for all she has done within the parish for so many years.

Stephen Walsh, Director of music, said that Noreen had chosen the readings and the hymns, apart from the first hymn, *Gentle Woman*, which Stephen had chosen in a tribute to Noreen, as this was how she was seen.

The evening began with Mass with visiting priests attending. These had served at Holy Innocents' in the past, namely, Fr. Alex Saba, Canon John McNamara and Fr Alan McLean.

## **Father Victor gave the homily.**

Father said the first reading and the gospel were very apt for all of us and not just new Catholics. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 4, verses 18 -22, relates the first call of Christ for disciples to join Him and He chose two sets of brothers.

**"Follow Me..."** In following inevitably something will be left behind, and their response was not prompt! In retrospect the group Jesus chose was very dysfunctional and it took Christ a long time to mould; they were uncouth Galileans and unpromising. Their growth was gradual. This is a message for all. Whether we are converts, cradle Catholics, young or old, growth goes on and on until we see God face to face.

Look at those first disciples and know there is always hope for everyone, so we must never lose this hope. This was St Paul's message to the Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 1-11.

Holy Innocents' has started to prepare for the feast of Pentecost. The Vigil has just taken place; James Wilkinson will give his testimony after all Masses on that Feast Day,

**The Christian is the recipient of two main kinds of gifts/blessings.** The first set consists of the fruits of the Spirit namely, love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

***The more we open our hearts to the promptings of the Spirit, the more we feel His fruitful presence.***

The second set of gifts/blessings that the Holy Spirit gives us is the special gifts of the Spirit. Paul describes these spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 1-11. What are the gifts of the Spirit. Here in verses 8-10, Paul gives nine examples of the Spirit's gifts namely, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, ability to distinguish between spirits, ability to speak different kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues. Each believer is given the manifestation of the Spirit; the Spirit gives them not for our own personal benefit but for the service of the others. What St Paul is saying is the Spirit is one, but the manifestation is manifold.

St Cyril of Jerusalem, the 4<sup>th</sup> century Father of the Church, in his instructions to the catechumens, uses the image of water to explain this. Water is the same, but it adapts to its recipients, as does the Spirit.

**Father Victor said his experience of Noreen** in the last three years since he came to the parish, was that the spiritual gift of wisdom had been given her. Being new to the parish and coming across awkward situations, Father had confided in Noreen and she had given him the right advice to help him move out of messy situations. This advice was always gentle and Father found it very consoling. Without this advice situations could have been very divisive. Father Victor expressed his great gratitude to Noreen.

**At the end of Mass Stephen Walsh played a violin solo:-**

*“When you walk through the storm, Hold your head up high*

*And don't be afraid of the dark. At the end of the storm*

*There's a golden sky, and the sweet silver song of the lark*

*Walk on, through the wind ..Walk on, through the rain*

*Though your dreams be tossed and blown*

*Walk on, walk on, with hope in your heart*

*And you'll never walk alone ..You'll never walk alone*

*Walk on, walk on, with hope in your heart*

*And you'll never walk alone....You'll never walk alone.”*

Carousel: Lyrics..Oscar Hammerstein 11 and Music...Richard Rodgers.



Noreen presents a gift to the parish

**Then the piece de resistance Stephen had written in honour of Noreen!!**

The Ballad of Noreen Gillespie: Lyrics: Stephen Walsh.(to the tune of ‘Blue is the colour’)

1. Noreen's down in Broadstairs,  
her leaving's such a shame.  
The Core Group's in a tizzy  
and Barbara's gone lame.  
The Folders' Group will never be  
the same  
for Noreen, Noreen is her name!

2. Noreen was a teacher,  
the best they ever had.  
She'd Siobhan as a pupil  
and never once got mad!  
Now she's not here and we're very sad  
for Noreen, Noreen is not bad!

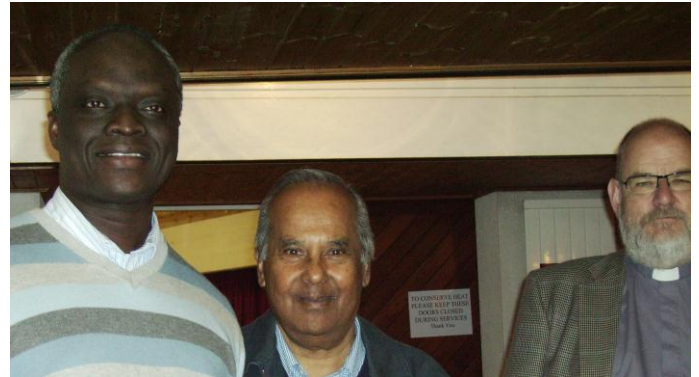
3. Noreen ran the parish,  
now Victor's in a feint.  
He's looking to the subs bench,  
but well -- Noreen they ain't!  
Somehow *she* managed it without complaint,  
for Noreen, Noreen is a saint!



4. Noreen's down in Broadstairs,  
living by the sea.  
Enjoying lots of beach walks  
and sandwiches for tea.  
She's living it up spectacu-lar-ly  
for Noreen has Sky Sports TV!



5. Noreen's not in Broadstairs,  
she hasn't gone that far.  
She's really on the King's Road,  
with Lampard and Drog-ba,  
as Chelsea's brand new manna-jar  
for Noreen, Noreen is a star!



6. We'll truly miss you Noreen,  
we're not sure how we'll cope  
in moving on without you -  
we haven't got a hope!  
Leading the church was well within your scope  
for Noreen, Noreen should be Pope!

7. *(Slowly)* It's time to say goodbye now,  
and give this song a rest.  
And so we'll sing it clearly  
with vigour and with zest:  
We'll miss you Noreen and that's no jest,  
for Noreen, Noreen you're the best!

Repeat verse 1

**This delightful rendition over, a reception was held in  
St Joseph's Hall.**



Noreen expressed her thanks and presented a bowl  
to Father Victor and the parish with praying hands  
on the inside.

Father Victor spoke of Noreen's work, especially  
with the *Journey in Faith* group and thanked her.  
In turn Noreen was presented with a gift from the  
parish.

Stephen Walsh then spoke of Noreen '*setting the  
tone*' in her work for the Church and how she was  
appreciated.

**(Noreen in turn was presented with a gift)**

**May we all emulate that highest of standards.**





Barbara recently moved away from the parish and she too received a gift in acknowledgment of her work in the parish.



Though sad that Noreen was leaving, she is so well thought of, that everyone had good words to say about her and in doing so this brought smiles to their faces. Noreen will take this love and affection with her.



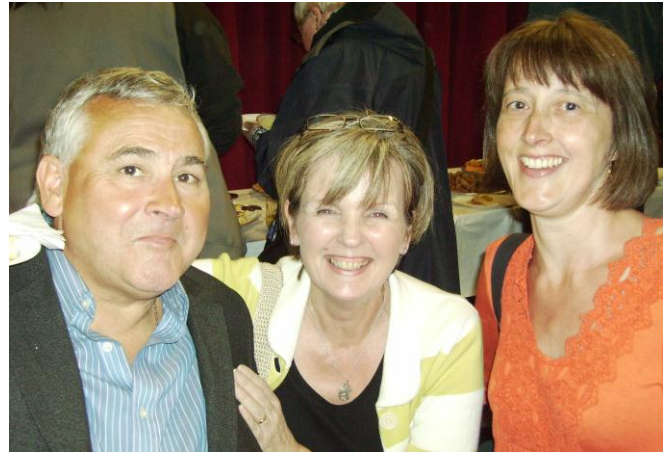
**A sumptuous buffet was provided Scrumdiddliumptious!**





Parishioners are eager to leave a smile for Noreen

Everyone wishes Noreen all the best for her move to Broadstairs



**A Message from Noreen Gillespie** "I would like to thank everyone who was involved in preparing the Mass for New Catholics. It was a truly joyous and prayerful occasion. It gave me the opportunity to say goodbye to many of my dear friends. Thank you for the lovely buffet and all the cards and gifts. I will treasure them. The Parish of Holy Innocents will always hold tons of happy memories for me. I will remember you in my prayers."

***Thank you Noreen for the beautiful dish with the 'hands prayer motif' you gave to the parish.***

***Farewell Noreen, the good Lord has led you to another parish, where your special gifts are needed. Thank you also from those unable to be present but who also wish you well.***

***May our love go with you and God's blessings be with you always.***

