

Gift for Life Newsletter

Issue 3

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Gift for Life is now the overall title for the wide range of OUTREACH activities taking place across our three parishes.

The feature article in this edition is by Bridget Jones who introduced The Angel tree to our parishes. She has written a detailed article on how this project started and has grown over the years.

“Let us protect Christ in our lives, so that we can protect others. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about.” Pope Francis

The Gift for Life Group meet on a regular basis and anyone is welcome to join us. The next meeting is at 6.30pm on Wednesday 21st January at Immaculate Heart, Lobley Hill.

Fundraising Evening for Peace in Iraq



An evening to pray for peace in Iraq took place in St Mary's Church Hall, Whickham on Saturday 30th August. A large community from our churches of St Mary, St Philip and Immaculate Heart came together to spread Jesus' "message of peace", not only in Iraq but all over the world. The evening highlighted the crises of the Christians and other minority communities in the north of Iraq.

The evening included prayers, music, dance and celebration in which all members of the community were invited to participate in addition of course to some Iraqi food. The evening focused on the Iraqi culture, geography, history and hope. The highlights of the evening was when the community shared the sign of peace in Aramaic ("Shlama Am-Khon", which means, Peace Be With You). The support from the families, friends and the community was overwhelming. All joining together to pray, celebrate and raise fund for those displaced and in need in this troubled country. The feedback from the evening was very positive. Responses included; 'Beautiful', 'Joyful', 'Relaxing', 'Peaceful', 'Prayerful' and 'Wonderful'. It was an evening, which brought the community together as one family to support families in need, separated by thousands of miles. All were richer for the whole experience.

The fund collected (£1,803) is managed by the parishes 'Gift For Life' group, led by Fr Jeff Dodds, and will be sent via appropriate channels to ensure that it reaches the most desperate and vulnerable people.



Sr. Victoria and Sr. Joyce singing African songs at a social evening at St Mary's School in September.



Sr. Victoria and Sr. Joyce with Thomas Proctor. Thomas raises funds each year for the Little Sisters of St. Francis in Kenya when he runs in the Junior North run. This year Thomas raised £285 !