

May'23 Eco News

St Ninian's and St Clement's Parishes Together

"LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord".

Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and who now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. 'We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. (LS 1,2)



We first started on our eco journey in 2020 and in 2021, we received the Eco-Congregation Scotland Silver Award which was a no mean achievement during the pandemic. So, thank you all for your support and continuing efforts to 'care for our Common Home' as Pope Francis asked us in his 2015 encyclical 'Laudato Si'. Here's a flavour of what's been happening during the past year.

Spiritual

Our **Caring for our Common Home Candlelight Prayer Service** took place on October 4th, the feast of St Francis the patron saint of the environment. During the moving service we heard about the destruction caused to the earth and to many of our sisters and brothers by the incessant greed of some of the wealthiest individuals and nations on the earth. We asked for God's forgiveness for the many times we have failed to appreciate the need to protect and sustain the earth's resources and pledged to do our part to stop further decline in the health of our planet by the way we live our lives. Each week, in our **Prayers for the Faithful**, we include a prayer for creation to help fulfil that pledge. In our **Stations of the Cross: Journeying with Refugees** we prayed not to take for granted the essentials of life, such as the water, education, warmth, and safety.

Our children's liturgy continues in term time with growing numbers of children who are very enthusiastic, albeit a little shy at times. They have treated the congregation to a **Friendship Story**, an **Autumn Harvest Song**, a **Kindness Advent Calendar** and only this month, they are now practising songs for the **May Flower Procession** to the Mary Garden.

Heating and Lighting

Perhaps the biggest eco effort the parish has put in over the last year has been a total revamp of the heating and lighting systems. This is largely the work of Jim Hampton, our Parish Council Chairperson. He did a huge amount of research on the most environmentally friendly system and sourced a grant of £80,000 for it.

This has transformed our heating and energy source with state-of-the art insulation, LED lighting and a new electric air pump system ensuring the church is heated in the most economical and energy-efficient way. It won't be long until we see our energy bills reducing and as important, our carbon footprint decreasing.

Did you know you can calculate your own carbon footprint? Go online to <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/> where you can choose and track challenges to help you make small changes in your own life that add up to something bigger.

Garden Update

Following on from our initial conversion of the wild and overgrown area in front of the house, the Garden Gang are now very much at the stage of sitting back and admiring the Mary Garden. It is indeed a place of beauty and a small haven for our private thoughts and prayers. The children have their liturgy out there on warmer days.

This year we are waiting to see which perennials will be popping up in all their glory and will be filling in the gaps with annuals, mostly grown from seed. Tesco have been very generous in gifting us bedding plants that just need a little TLC before they begin to thrive.

The Cutting Flower area in the back garden is springing into life with spring bulbs, perennials are growing again after Winter and new plants will go in on once the frosts are over. These are often used as Altar flowers or as pretty posies in the cafe.

The Vegetable patch was extended last year with two fantastic, raised beds which we built by ourselves, giving a huge area to extend our growing abilities! There was an abundance of vegetables - all used in the soups served in CCs. We had strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers, chilies all happily feeding the regular cafe supporters, often with bags to "take away". A win-win situation, healthy, organic produce, and no hefty carbon footprint as we travelled to shop. Soon we will augment this bountiful supply with fruit grown in our orchard. The gardeners have planted various trees in a corner of the church garden and hopefully, and literally, we will see the fruits of their labour in the not-too-distant future.

To say the Mary Garden is a joy is an understatement. It would be wonderful if you could take the time to visit after Mass. Just come down the main stairs from church and turn right.

CC's News

Our community cafe, CCs, has been going from strength to strength this past year as people enjoy its cheerful welcome and tasty fare. The cafe has been a warm place to gather during the challenging and cold winter, with warm soups, toasties or stovies on the menu, as well as home baking, and tea and toast on a Sunday.

The monthly soup and stovies lunches were well received, using vegetables from the garden. Delicious! Now the spring weather sees the return of the popular Afternoon Teas which have generally been a sellout. Mary Berry would be proud!

The monthly cooking demonstrations, as part of a healthy eating and energy saving initiative with ingredients, supplied by Tesco, has been a success.

The donations received at CCs have allowed the cafe to support causes locally such as the school, children's liturgy, food bank etc. and internationally too as £550 was sent to the Earthquake Appeal.

Further income was made from the Good as New Sale, £500, and the items that didn't sell were given to charity. We also received a Tesco Community Award of £1000. The Lenten Almsgiving raised an amazing total for Rosily and church funds! It was such a team effort by our "Parishes Together" and the sense of community was heartwarming.

All in all, it's been a successful year in both large and small ways. We have a lovely community, and our doors are open to everyone.

