

St Francis of Assisi, Llay

PARISH NEWS

Mid-October 2025



The content in this Parish News is in addition to that in the Parish Bulletin, the Parish Website and the Diocesan newsletter, The Wrexham Clarion. If you have news or opinions of interest that you'd like to share here, would you please let our parish secretary know of them.

THE PARISH NEWS

There was a discussion at the recent Parish Advisory Council meeting about The Parish News and its inclusion of non-faith articles which was not fully understood by some. The primary purpose of the News is to provide a voice for parishioners to disseminate news and views of interest to readers which might not be included in the Parish Website or Bulletin or in the diocesan Clarion, and in doing so, to promote the community spirit in the Parish.

Inevitably some of the contributions are of non-faith subjects such as those recently about Samaritans, the TCC, Ukrainian refugees, remembering the Gresford mining disaster, local walks and Wrexham U3A, and we trust that you'll have found the inclusion of these to have been of interest and worthwhile.

In the spirit of learning about what's going on in our parish community, we welcome details of all parishioners' activities and hope that you'll find time to write in and share your experiences with us.

DAY OF PRAYER AT ST. BEUNO'S FOR LAY MINISTERS

Two St Francis of Assisi parishioners attended a "Come and See" event on 13th September 2025. This day of prayer and reflection was aimed at readers, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharistic, welcomers, parish visitors, musicians, funeral ministers, catechists, members of parish councils and finance committees, those involved with hospitality or cleaning ... and indeed any form of lay ministry.

It was a special day of prayer, reflection, sharing and growth to acknowledge and support the wonderful and varied gifts of lay people in the life of the Roman Catholic Church.

The venue was the beautiful St Beuno's Jesuit Spirituality Centre. St Beuno's was built in 1848 as a theology faculty which prepared men to be ordained as Jesuits and over two hundred Jesuit priests have been ordained in the House Chapel!

In 1926, St Beuno's ceased to be a theology faculty and became an infirmary for elderly Jesuits, but continued to train men in their final year of training for Jesuit ordination.

In the 1970s, there were great developments in spirituality work of the Jesuits and more and more retreats were given individually, including the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola. Then, St Beuno's became what it is today, a retreat house and spirituality centre.

Both parishioners found the day to be an excellent way to make space for reflection on how and why they contributed to parish life. They learnt about the Spiritual Exercises, which starts with a stilling exercise and then contemplation of scripture or other helpful writings, to draw out what they mean to each individual.

The event was over-subscribed and therefore another event is to be held on Saturday 15th November 2025 10am-4.30pm (which includes Mass in the House Chapel at the end). Places can be booked by emailing stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com or ringing 07919 986062 (Sally) or 07590 679595 (Andrew). The day is free, but donations to St Beuno's are welcome – tea/coffee/cake/biscuits were provided but you will need to take a packed lunch.

Our two parishioners joined a minibus that went from Buckley Parish – wouldn't it be great if we had enough people attending to warrant hiring a minibus!

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN HIGH SCHOOL

On Monday 6th October to Friday 10th we at St Joseph's had our Mission Week. The theme was taken from the Gospel of St John 10:10 **"I came that they may have life and have it to the full."** Mission Week has been a regular event every four years at school although the cycle was interrupted by COVID.

Mission Week is a time when we have an opportunity to pause, reflect and pray about our Christian values which form the very foundation of who we are as individuals and as a school community. This life of faith is rooted in Christ who came precisely that we might have "life to the full".

Christ taught us that a full life is one of service and sacrifice, gratitude and grace. When we look beyond ourselves and minister to those in need, we follow in Jesus' footsteps. Mission Week gives us all a chance to reflect on our gifts and how we might use them for the benefit of others.

To help us do this we invited visitors from a huge range of professions and organisations to come to school and share their faith journey with us. To inspire us to follow Jesus with greater commitment and love; these people are themselves generously and selflessly serving others.

During the week we welcomed around 40 guests to school including the BBC foreign correspondent who spoke about his life and work, a former gangster who has transformed his life through reconciliation, who spoke of redemption; people who work with charities here at home such as the SVP, BAWSO, HCPT, TCC, a volunteer chaplain at HMP Berwyn (our parishioner Brian Wareing), Nightingale House, Rise Theatre, Hope House and Papyrus to name just a few; as well as organisations who help people overseas including someone who has helped to repair schools and provide basic learning materials for children in Malawi, Amnesty International, Reaching the Unreached, Teams4U, Mary's Meals and the daughter of a Holocaust survivor who spoke so movingly of her father's life. The children took part in Taizé prayer and Prego Aid to the Church in Need who have asked for a million children to say the Rosary for peace in the world, hundreds of the children joined in saying the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary on Tuesday.

All our guests were so very generous with their time, telling their stories and sharing their faith with the pupils. We sow the seeds and we know that in time the Holy Spirit will bring to fruition the gifts and talents God has bestowed on our pupils. The pupils were delighted by the week, among some of the comments they made were that they wished they could have seen more of the guests and that it could happen every year!

PARISHIONERS' ACTIVITIES - PARAGLIDING

Our parishioner Kathy Home writes about paragliding:

Many people get confused about paragliding and hang-gliding, both of which get lift from air currents without an engine, harnesses to keep the pilot attached, and specialist training is essential to fly both of them safely. The hang-glider has a rigid delta frame for its wing and is rarely seen nowadays while the paraglider has no rigid structure to its fabric wing or canopy, looking like a modern parachute which can be folded up and packed into a rucksack, making it easier to get high up the hill to launch.



Once you have the training, the equipment, the insurance and the courage you can join a club and fly from the official sites that have been agreed with landowners. We are very lucky here in North Wales where the Clwydians and Snowdonia have many prime flying sites that are suitable for all wind directions and not too busy with powered aircraft or other airborne enthusiasts.

Flying alongside buzzards, red kites or peregrines is not something that happens every day, but is not uncommon. The frustration, of course, is the weather - the wind mustn't be too strong or too light, and definitely no rain, so many hours can be spent sitting on a hill-top waiting and hoping for conditions to improve. I expect all paraglider pilots will tell you that these frustrations are outweighed by the good times when conditions and thermals allow serious height above the ground to be achieved and, when conditions are really good, allow the pilot to go cross country.

The exhilaration of these experiences apparently is unsurpassable and even the problem of getting home again does not diminish the feeling of pure joy! On occasions when the wind has been just right, hubby has even flown home, landing in a neighbour's garden, a convenient field and the school playing field, with young grandson & friends and teachers watching while practicing for sports day. Power lines should be avoided of course and it's also best to avoid animals on landing! Taking a paraglider to South Africa and New Zealand were maybe the highlights of our flying abroad although Lanzarote was rather more accessible. The only thing that would stop my husband from flying is the inability to get up the hills, but for me, one of the many flying widows, I'm happy to keep my feet firmly on the ground!