THE PARISH OF RAVENSTHORPE AND THORNHILL LEES WITH SAVILE TOWN

Holy Innocents Church

St Saviour’s Church

PARISH BROCHURE AND STATEMENT OF NEEDS
2018
1 SUMMARY OF THE BROCHURE

Welcome to our parish brochure. Here you will find

- A description of the priest we would like.

- A picture of our communities.

- Information about our churches, congregations and activities and the pastoral reorganisation being introduced. The PCC of Holy Innocents, Thornhill Lees voted to close their church in 2017. The pastoral re-organisation process is taking place, which will see a new parish formed, called The Parish of Ravensthorpe and Thornhill Lees with Savile Town, though this has yet to be approved. St Saviour’s Ravensthorpe will be the parish church and Holy Innocents church will close.

- Our place in the wider church community.

- We are a group of mainly older Christians with all our strengths, weaknesses, successes and failures, who wish to see our faith flourish and our churches to be places of love, welcome and friendship.

- Although we are situated in a predominantly Asian community, we view our mission to be a visible witness to the Christian faith and a beacon of light to those who are seeking to know more about God and his church.

- It has greater challenges than in many parishes. Particular challenges are to increase the involvement of the church in the life of our communities, to help our congregations to see a future and see how to proclaim our faith in our situation and to increase devotion to prayer, the sacraments and worship.

Would you like to come and join us and lead us forward as we come to the start of a new chapter in the life of our churches?
2. THE PRIEST WE WANT

The priest we are looking for should ideally be:

- Able to lead and deliver high quality Anglo Catholic worship and be a man for whom prayer and spirituality are the foundation of his ministry.

- Willing to accept the challenges of ministry in multicultural and multi ethnic communities.

- A priest who is committed to the parish, a keen visitor of the parishioners, the schools, local institutions and who would take a particular interest in the young people in the schools and the scouts/ brownies, seeking to draw a new generation of people into the life of the church.

- A priest with energy, flair and enthusiasm, who can lead and motivate the people of the newly formed parish, to share in the mission of the church with him, developing the skills, strengths and talents of the congregations.

- A priest who will lead by example and act in a way which can teach and inspire.
3. OUR PARISHES

The United Benefice of St Saviour Ravensthorpe and Holy Innocents Thornhill Lees with Savile Town was formed in 1999.

Ravensthorpe, Thornhill Lees and Savile Town lie to the south west of Dewsbury, bordering the parishes of Dewsbury, Mirfield and Thornhill. As adjacent areas, they share similar social and economic conditions. Formerly a centre for the heavy woollen textile industry, which was the main employer, the area now has a more diverse economy and there are several industrial estates. There are a number of mosques including the largest Islamic training college in Western Europe. The only other Christian place of worship in the area is the United Reformed Church in Ravensthorpe. In the 2011 census, the total population of the three areas was 18,782. The estimate for 2016 was 19,454. The majority of the population is of the Islamic faith the average percentage for the three areas being 74%, according to the 2011 census but this will have increased in the last 7 years.

As an urban priority area our parishes have benefited greatly over the years from government and local financial initiatives. There are plans in place to build 4,000 new homes in the Dewsbury Riverside development, which includes parts of Ravensthorpe and Thornhill Lees.

We are fortunate in having good public transport links to the major towns and cities in West Yorkshire. There is also a direct service from Mirfield (1-2 miles away), 4 times a day to London Kings Cross. We are close to the M1 and M62 and the Yorkshire Dales, the Derbyshire Peak District, the South Pennines and other areas of natural beauty, including the famous Yorkshire Sculpture Park, are easily reached. The Dewsbury Country Park is being developed as a recreational area, including footpaths, cycle tracks, woodland, picnic areas and a nature reserve.
4. OUR CHURCHES

St Saviour’s Ravensthorpe

The church forms a dominant feature along the main road through Ravensthorpe. St Saviour’s was consecrated in 1864, to provide a place of worship for the large number of people who moved to the area to work in the textile mills and extended in 1901. In 2003 the extended part of the church was re roofed and other high level repairs done. This year further work has been done to the roof on the older part of the church. The quinquennial inspection is being done in 2018. There is a cinerarium for the burial of cremated remains at the front of the church. This is now almost full but there are no plans to extend it. The churchyard is looked after by a small number of church members and members of The Ravensthorpe Residents Group, most of whom are not members of the church. There are 50 members on the electoral roll. Like many churches, the congregation is mainly older, most being over 60- some being over 80 and only 2 under 18. This is something we are keen to address with the help of our new priest.

Worship

The style of worship is in the modern Catholic tradition with incense being used at all sung services. Vestments are worn and there is a team of servers. The PCC has requested extended episcopal oversight on the grounds of theological conviction and sacramental ministry is offered to us by the Bishop of Wakefield. Normally the Parish Mass at St Saviour’s is held at 9.30am (attendance 25-35) but during the interregnum only one Parish Mass is being held on Sunday, alternating between St Saviour’s and Holy Innocents, at 10am. The attendance at this joint service is usually 40-50. Mid-week said services were normally held
at St Saviour’s on Tuesday evening and Saturday morning but during the interregnum the services are held on Wednesday evening and Saturday morning. The major festivals are shared between the two churches. The music is traditional, with our organist who plays at both churches and small group who help to lead the singing. Members of the congregation read lessons, lead intercessions, administer the chalice and one person takes communion to the sick.

St Saviour’s Lady Chapel
In 1994 responsibility for the Ravensthorpe church hall (now known as Dewsbury West Community Centre) was successfully transferred to a committee formed by the leaders of the uniformed groups and over the years they have cared for and maintained the hall. In 2005 the committee was granted a 21 year lease agreement. The hall is the headquarters of the Dewsbury West (St Saviour’s) Scout Group and is also used for church events and is available for hire by other organisations. An agreement has been reached for The Salvation Army to use the hall, to provide a church/community centre for the Hungarian Christian community for 40 hours a week.

**Financial Matters**

St Saviour’s has always been able to pay the parish share in full but we have to work hard to do so. 89% of the giving is gift aided and there are ordinary envelopes for non-taxpayers. There is an annual gift day and a busy social programme of fund raising events is held including regular quiz nights, Summer Fair, Christmas Fair, coffee day, afternoon tea, raffles and homemade cakes are sold after mass on most Sundays. A 100 club is also in operation. Clergy expenses are paid in full- £1448 being paid in the last financial year. There is a fund raising committee.
Holy Innocents Church Thornhill Lees

Following the decision made by the PCC of Holy Innocents Church, to close their church, the benefice is subject to a pastoral reorganisation scheme. If this is approved, Holy Innocents Church will close and St Saviour’s will become the parish church for the new parish. Holy Innocents Church was built in 1858 overlooking the village of Thornhill Lees. Various roof work has been done over the years, including the banding of the spire, for safety reasons but the church still requires a lot of high level work. There is a very large graveyard which still has space for burials and a small space for the interment of ashes. The church is helped by people on probation doing community service, who work regularly in the graveyard. Holy Innocents also has a small church hall, used for social events. The former parish of Savile Town has been included in the parish since the closure of St Mary’s Church, Savile Town in the 1960s. There are 44 on the electoral roll. The congregation is an elderly one with only 1 person being under 18.
Worship

The style of worship is in the modern Catholic tradition with incense being used at all sung services. Vestments are worn and there is a team of servers. The PCC has requested extended episcopal oversight on the grounds of theological conviction and sacramental ministry is offered to us by the Bishop of Wakefield. Normally the Parish Mass at Holy Innocents is held at 11am (attendance 20-30) but during the interregnum only one Parish Mass is being held on Sunday, alternating between St Saviour’s and Holy Innocents, at 10am. The attendance at this joint service is usually 40-50. A mid-week service is normally held on Wednesday evening but there are no mid-week services during the interregnum at Holy Innocents. The major festivals are shared between the two churches. The music is traditional, with our organist who plays at both churches and small group who help to lead the singing. Members of the congregation read lessons, lead intercessions and administer the chalice.

Financial Matters

Unfortunately, Holy Innocents have been unable to pay their full parish share for a number of years. The gift aid scheme is in operation and there are ordinary envelopes for non-taxpayers. Various fund raising events have been held including lunches and coffee days and a garden party.

Our Lady in Holy Innocents
The Vicarage

The vicarage is a modern detached house with garden and ample parking next to St Saviour’s church. It is approximately 25 years old and planned to green guide standards. Its general construction is of stone with a slate roof and has double glazed timber windows throughout with a full security system.

The accommodation at ground floor level comprises separate entrance hall with access to the cloakroom and study, through lounge with sliding doors to the dining room. There is a fully fitted kitchen, a separate dining area and a utility room with access to the single garage. At first floor level there are three double bedrooms and one single, with a house bathroom and separate shower and toilet facilities.

The Church and the Community

Schools

There are 4 church schools in our parishes
Headfield CE (VC) Junior School https://headfieldschool.org.uk/
Ravensthorpe CE (VC) Junior School- http://www.ravensthorpejuniorschool.co.uk
Savile Town CE (VC) Infant School - http://www.savile-town.co.uk/
Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School- http://www.thornhilllees.com/

Savile Town Infants and Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery are federated schools
There are also two other state schools in our parishes- Diamond Wood Primary Academy in Ravensthorpe and Pentland Infant and Nursery School in Savile Town.

More than 90% of the children are of the Muslim faith. People of other nationalities have also moved into the area- particularly from Eastern Europe, so many do not have English as their first language. Despite this, our schools received good OFSTED reports at their last inspections. Members of the churches act as foundation governors, two also being the chair of the governing body. School visits to the appropriate church were held for some year groups by our former parish priest, assisted by members of the congregation, to aid their learning about Christianity and the community. These visits were enjoyed by the children, though hard work for those involved and we hope that a new parish priest would continue this and develop work with the schools.

Parish Organisations

Both churches are fortunate in having links to uniformed organisations. In Ravensthorpe the Dewsbury West (St Saviour’s) Scout Group comprising all age groups from 6-18, meet in the church hall (now called Dewsbury West Community Centre). Thornhill Lees has a Brownie pack. The young people are encouraged to attend church for particular events. Further encouragement is needed to attract the children and their parents/ guardians into the church family. We would hope that a new priest would be willing to build a closer relationship with the young people and their leaders.

Charitable Giving

Both churches support local and national charities. Christingle services at both churches raise money for The Childrens Society. Lent lunches are held as part of our Lenten discipline. Money raised is donated to a designated charity which varies from year to year. Tinned goods brought to church for the harvest festival, are donated to the local food bank and perishable goods are auctioned at the Harvest Supper and Quiz night. Holy Innocents Church holds a successful Macmillan coffee morning every year.
5 THE WIDER CONTEXT

- Our churches are in the Deanery of Dewsbury and the Episcopal Area of Huddersfield, within the Anglican Diocese of Leeds. Both churches have requested extended episcopal oversight on the grounds of theological conviction and sacramental ministry is offered to us by the Bishop of Wakefield.
- We are not involved in any formal clustering but we have in the past linked informally with Christ Church Staincliffe and St John Carlinghow, which are also churches in the catholic tradition.
- We used to attend Churches Together meetings with the Thornhill area, but we are no longer involved.
- Thornhill Lees have 2 representatives on the Dewsbury Deanery Synod but at St Saviour’s we need to recruit new representatives since the former synod member decided not to stand for re appointment.
- The Community and the College of the Resurrection is only a couple of miles away and in the past we have been involved in the training of ordinands.

St Saviour’s east window
The Diocese of Leeds

In this new diocese, less than three years old, we are working with three core objectives:

- **Confident Christians**: Encouraging personal spiritual renewal with the aim of producing clergy and laity who are confident in God and in the Gospel.

- **Growing Churches**: Numerically, spiritually and in their mission to the wider world.

- **Changing communities**: For the better, through our partnership with other churches and faith communities, as well as government and third sector agencies.

The Diocese came into being at Easter 2014 following the dissolution of the historic dioceses of Bradford, Ripon & Leeds and Wakefield. This followed a three-year process of debate and consultation driven by the Dioceses Commission. Background papers to the reorganisation process can be read at [www.wyadtransformation.org](http://www.wyadtransformation.org).

The Diocese comprises five Episcopal Areas, each coterminous with an Archdeaconry. This is now one of the largest dioceses in the country and its creation is unprecedented in the history of the Church of England. It covers an area of around 2,425 square miles, and a population of around 2,642,400 people.

The Diocese comprises major cities (Bradford, Leeds, Wakefield), large industrial and post-industrial towns (Halifax, Huddersfield, Dewsbury), market towns (Harrogate, Skipton, Ripon, Richmond and Wetherby), and deeply rural areas (the Dales). The whole of life is here, along with all the richness, diversity and complexities of a changing world.

The Diocese is dissected by major motorways (M1, A1M, M62) and major trunk roads (such as the A650, A59), making road communications good. Access to other forms of transport is also good, with rail links to London and many Northern towns and several airports in easy reach.

The Diocesan Bishop is assisted by five Area Bishops (Bradford, Huddersfield, Kirkstall (with responsibility for Leeds), Ripon and Wakefield) and five archdeacons (Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, Pontefract, Richmond & Craven).

Within the Diocese, there are approximately 320 stipendiary clergy, 165 self-supporting clergy and 400 clergy with PTO along with around 400 Readers, 125 lay pastoral ministers and 52 chaplains in 650 churches with 250 church schools.

The Diocese is unique in having three cathedrals, Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield, and over the past year the cathedrals have begun to work together on the key diocesan services as well as developing three strands that they will offer to the diocese – pilgrimage, civic engagement and apologetics. This new diocese, led by the bishops, is working out how best to create a diocese with more than one cathedral, and to develop the ministry and outreach of these cathedrals in a way that secures their future and recognises their distinctiveness.

The Diocese has inherited strong partnership links with the Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Southwest Virginia, Skara (Sweden) and Erfurt (Germany).