



## The Easter Vigil

And whilst the florists were busy creating their displays and the sacristy teams were making the church ready for the Easter worship, in the deepest reaches of a Kitelee Close kitchen men were cooking! The post Vigil Mass party is an integral part of the life of the parish and Graham Robinson's homemade scotch eggs (and Sheila Madeley's sausages amongst others...) are appointment dining! Kyle is pictured learning the

art so that is secure for another generation of H&C worshippers!.

The Vigil Mass proved to be a tremendous occasion, and with over seventy people present, the best attended ever. It began in darkness outside the church door, a fire was lit and the Easter Candle lit from it. The new light of Easter was taken into the dark church and the congregational candles were illuminated from it. The resurrection was announced and the first Alleluias of Easter were proclaimed, there were organ fanfares and bells to herald the singing of the Gloria and Baptismal Promises were



renewed before Mass was celebrated in the round – and all by candlelight.

Once again Fr Robert and Fr Robin concelebrated with Fr Gary and again the team of servers took the complicated service in their stride. There are two rehearsals during Holy Week for the serving team and their dedication really adds to the sense of order and reverence in the Holy Week worship.



And so with tables laden with goodies... up step the Churchwardens to upstage the Parish Priest! There has been a secret collection after the recent announcement of his appointment as an Honorary Canon of Bishop Matthias' Cathedral in Ho, and Fr Gary is instructed to obtain a new Canon's cassock. Such subterfuge, and he had not a single clue what had been happening until the CWs took to the platform "Oh no! I think I have been had, Tate and Hollinshead you are sacked!" he was heard to say - Well done everyone! Fr Gary was suitably shocked but very grateful.



## **Graham & Lorraine Robinson share their reflections on the weekdays of a very poignant Holy Week for them**

### **Monday STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

Graham: This service gets better every year and what made this extra special was that Lorraine could share this with me at the end. I really enjoyed the words at every station the silent reflection followed by the chant in between the journey

Lorraine: This was an amazing service, although, I was unable to walk the station of the cross, I felt included as I was able to sit on the altar platform and able to participate. I was able to visit the last station in the Chancel and felt like I was standing by the tomb, it was very moving.

### **Wednesday HEALING MASS**

Graham: This couldn't have been planned better for us as it came the evening before we got our results after Lorraine's cancer surgery. I felt that I was able to leave all my anxiety at the mass and had the best nights' sleep in weeks. The whole of the mass felt as though it was tailored for our specific circumstance although this could not possibly be the case it just felt so personal, from the laying on of hands to the anointing with oil.

Lorraine: I also really felt God's presence and love, it was very powerful and it was all in the little things, it meant so much.

### **Thursday MAUNDY SERVICE**

Graham: I love this service ever since I was the one having my feet washed in the year of my confirmation this has been special to me culminating in the Watch. Even the 15 minutes we stayed was powerful ministry

Lorraine: This was also a lovely service and was special as it gave me quiet time at the Altar of Repose to thank and be close to God.

### **Friday GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY**

Graham: Another of my favorites, the passion gospel is always gets me but this year it was truly remarkable Luke, Lucy, and Ben did a fabulous job that nearly brought the Bishop to tears. It was all the more special this year having Bishop Jonathan with us, he is a wonderful man and so compassionate.

Lorraine adds:

This is always an poignant service for me but this year it was very emotional and I think I cried all the way through from the reading of the passion gospel which Ben and Lucy and (as always) Luke, did amazingly, the veneration of the cross, to the bishop coming up to talk to Graham and he told him about me as the Bishop had asked if we had been to the Chrism Mass, he then sat by me and gently embraced me, and asked my name, he said you are going to be in my special prayers, this really touched me in a way I will never forget.



**Hanslope Churchwarden Glyn Hollinshead writes:**

Holy Week for me was a journey through emotions, the feeling of sadness during the Stations of the Cross to the joyful uplifting Chrism Mass and then to the more sombre events through Maundy Thursday & Good Friday and the Veneration of the Cross.

And finally we came out of the darkness (literally) with the beautiful image of the Church lit by nothing but candlelight in the Service of Light and the Resurrection celebrated late on Saturday night (with the ever so slight anxiety about how the Easter Fire would go, for which I am responsible, now behind me). In addition the the tower lights were at last able to be switched on and blast out the Light of Christ to the whole village and we have the Gloria back which I find so uplifting. Holy Week was a very busy time but there was just so much to gain and reflect on too.

Photography: Michael Parsons, Wendy Thomson, Prester Coleman, Yvonne Stewart, Garry Stubbs, Lorraine Robinson & Diane Gordon

## **Holy Week 2014 in Numbers**

- 3460 pages printed by the Vicarage laser printer
- 758 total number of Holy Week worshippers
- 470 new Service Booklets printed, stapled and folded
- 400 people at the Bishop's Chrism Mass
- 235 in Church for the Easter Masses
- 98 people and dogs on the Good Friday Walk
- 90 Hot Cross Buns eaten by the walkers afterwards
- 72 more Hot Cross Buns eaten after the Good Friday Liturgy
- 61 children hunting Easter Eggs
- 47 people kept watch at the Altar of Repose
- 40 readers of Scripture
- 37 floral displays in the two Parish Churches
- 36 Easter Eggs for children at the 11.00am Easter Day Mass
- 36 Easter Fairy Cakes
- 24 Acts of Worship
- 17 singers in the Benefice Choir
- 17 sidesmen welcoming people to our worship
- 14 intercessors led us in prayer
- 8 days in Holy Week
- 6 altar servers
- 6 people administering the chalice
- 5 disciples had their feet washed on Maundy Thursday
- 5 different sermons
- 3 priests
- 2 different preachers
- 1 Bishop Jonathan
- And 1 Resurrection from the Dead