

St Michaels Parish, Tetbury makes History.

Since our beloved priest Mgr William Mitchell (RIP) passed away suddenly 29th August 2009; we have undergone several changes. For the 10 months after his death we were very fortunate to continue to celebrate Mass as usual, a number of priests including some retired came up to Tetbury from Bath and Bishop Declan also celebrated Mass for us during this time. To all these and our Dean Fr David Ryan who helped to organise a rota of priests for us we shall always be very grateful. In June 2009, Bishop Declan appointed Fr Patrick Eastman as Priest-in-Charge; he brought to the parish a wonderful spiritual guidance which helped to keep the community of St Michaels together. Unfortunately, due to ill health Fr Patrick retired from his post after the Easter celebrations this year. Bishop Declan has now appointed Fr Michael Davies, Parish Priest of St Peter's Church, Cirencester to be Parish Priest of St Michaels, Tetbury as well.

On Friday 10th June 2011, Fr Michael was inducted as Parish Priest of St Michaels by our Dean, Fr David Ryan who reminded us that this was his third induction at St Michaels in ten years. First, Mgr Mitchell in 2001; then Fr Patrick as Priest in Charge in June 2009 and now Fr Michael as Parish Priest. Fr Michael's induction was a remarkable event which has made history not only here in Tetbury but we believe in the country. It is only recently that Canon Law has been changed within the Catholic Church, allowing a priest to be Parish Priest in charge of two parishes at the same time.

It is the first time in recent history that we have not had the care and spiritual direction of a resident Parish Priest. However, we could not have found a more thoughtful and kind man and a more generous sister parish in St Peter's Cirencester.

As Parish Administrator I said a few words giving a vote of thanks to those present including the religious from other denominations on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council. I surprised Fr Michael by recalling that his passion has always been music, which I can testify to as a former pupil at Cardinal Newman School, Bath where he was our music teacher. We all look forward to his continuing encouragement in St Michael's music tradition.

Fr Michael is now on holiday and we wished him a safe journey. While he is away he will be celebrating the Ruby Jubilee of his ordination; so he was thanked for his Ministry to the Diocese of Clifton.

Elaine Wright
Parish Administrator
St Michaels Catholic Church
Tetbury
14th June 2011