

St Anne's Confirmation Retreat 04-06 March, The Briars, Crich

The Confirmation Group have just enjoyed our weekend retreat at the Briars. As usual, our candidates had a great time and enjoyed exploring their faith with other young people from the diocese.

With Eleanor as the retreat leader for the weekend, the theme was: "We Are Your Church". Joining us for the weekend were a couple of other youth groups from around the diocese, CTU from Mickleover and Agape from Belper. Two boys also joined us on Saturday for the day from Our Lady and St Joseph's parish in Matlock. So we were a very mixed bunch!

On Friday evening, the groups looked at the role of young people in our church with games and role plays that all the young people, youth leaders, catechists and even Father David got involved with. We were all split into groups and each group was given roles of Parish Groups (children's liturgy, counters, readers, music group, altar servers, deacons, and even the parish council). There was then a selection of different games that involved all the groups in a competition, including one which involved taking part in a catwalk show wearing bin bags! The aim of the evening was to show that all groups within a Parish are important. They deliberately left out young people as a group but this was discussed separately. This set the tone for the weekend, and through games, activities, liturgy and prayer, the theme developed through the next couple of days.

Saturday began with Morning Prayer of the Church in the Chapel. The day was based around The Jubilee of Mercy and looked at the faces of Mercy, producing a lovely painted cloth that was used on the altar on Saturday evening. The work of CAFOD was discussed as a couple of the Briars team have just returned from Peru and Zimbabwe. The theme of the CAFOD session focused around climate change which is linked to recently in popular culture by Leonardo Di Caprio during his acceptance speech for his OSCAR. He took the opportunity to share his own thoughts about taking action on climate change in the speech.

We had a very lively Mass on Saturday evening with lots of music, singing and role plays based on the Faces of Mercy by the different groups of young people. The young people then enjoyed an evening of disco games and dancing.

Sunday morning began with a meditation and period of quiet prayer, this was followed by a session and morning prayer based on 'God is Love'. The weekend finished with a very inspiring final liturgy on 'Affirmations' where each one of the young people received an OSCAR, full of positive affirmations written by the rest of their group.

What a wonderful weekend! Our Confirmation candidates really enjoyed themselves. It was an opportunity for them to express themselves freely (catechists don't attend all the sessions!), to reflect on their own faith and their place within our church. The sessions were led by a team of truly inspiring young people (Jason, Bea, Hannah, Ruth, Theo, Jack and Lewis and of course, Eleanor) who are definitely excellent role models for our young people.

