



THE GOOD SHEPHERD CENTRE

Providing Support to newly arrived families, refugees and asylum seekers. "I was a stranger and you made me welcome"

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The Good Shepherd Centre

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FROM OUR TRUST CHAIRMAN SEAN GILLIGAN

A very warm welcome to all of you who have signed up to be "**Good Shepherds**" - the fellowship of Friends of The Good Shepherd Centre - and we have great news for you. After many months of struggling to provide support and services in a limited space in the Keighley Catholic Centre, the Leeds Diocese offered us a short term lease on the buildings of The Guard House, which was the former Presbytery and former Church of Our Lady of Victories in West Lane. Whilst this means moving away from our former location next to St. Anne's School, we will be right next to Our Lady of Victories School at Guard House, and with lots of space to expand our activities.

The lease with the Diocese was signed only last week and trustees and volunteers spent a day moving 5 van-loads of furniture from the former Retreat Centre at Myddleton Grange in Ilkley under the supervision of Diocesan Property Administrator Kevin Anderson. Then on Saturday 13th May over 40 volunteers from The Good Shepherd Centre worked throughout the day to clean thoroughly the Guard House buildings and equip with the donated furniture. At the same time, other volunteers got to work on the extensive gardens which are now looking neat and trim. There was a great spirit of joy and happiness amongst all the volunteers and warm thanks for the support of the Diocese.

As The Good Shepherd Centre embarks on a new phase in our journey welcoming new families to our Community we ask all our friends to join us in asking God to be with us. Our Trustees are very conscious of trying to provide support as new families find themselves in new and sometimes confusing situations. Our experience confirms that our new families have much to teach us as we move forward together. We are increasingly aware that this is very much a 'two way process. With God's help the possibilities are boundless.

Letter of support from our principle funder - Tudor Trust

Dear Sean

Thank you very much for both your emails and for your kind words. I have enjoyed the clips and the photos very much.

It's great to see the centre strengthening and people gaining confidence and connection through it. Congratulations to Dorota and to all of you for much hard work and perseverance!

*With best wishes
Joanna De Haviland
(Tudor Trust)*

Different Nationalities being supported and welcomed by our centre:

1. Slovak
2. Polish
3. Czech
4. Romanian
5. British
6. Afghan
7. Bangladesh
8. Italian
9. Lithuanian
10. Ukrainian
11. Philippino
12. South African
13. Indian

For more information or if you would like to share your ideas and offer your support please let us know. "PLEASE PASS THIS ON"

Welcome, Witamy, Vitajte, Bienvenue, **FAILTE**, Benvenuto, Laukiamas, Croeso, Bine ati venit, SELAMAT DATANG, soo dhaweyn

Sometimes we serve our Lord in unexpected ways.

Only a few days ago, Dorota Plata, our Centre Manager received a telephone call from the Bradford Coroner's Office.

A 34-year old Romanian man had died and the Coroner had no information in order to make contact with his family.

Working together, Dorota and Elena, a Romanian Volunteer at TGSC, managed to locate the family and reach the man's sister Michaela by telephone and explain the sad news of what had happened. Michaela was understandably very upset and not understanding the procedures did not know what to do.

Elena, with her language skills, was able to make the necessary links between the family. The Coroner's Office, police and the Romanian Embassy were also involved that all necessary support could be given to the grieving family. Michaela was very grateful for the help and kindness which TGSC had been able to provide.

It is a sad story but the good thing is that many people were very ready and willing to help. It is very important to understand that we find Jesus, not only in our prayers and in Church, but also in other people. We should always be ready to offer our support and friendship to anyone we meet but especially to the stranger at our door.

Testimonials

Since attending the group I have felt included and have not been ashamed of my Roma identity. The group has made me feel welcome, comfortable and proud of my Roma heritage. I have not experienced this in my home country.

AS YOU GROW OLDER YOU WILL DISCOVER THAT YOU HAVE TWO HANDS: ONE FOR HELPING YOURSELF, THE OTHER FOR HELPING OTHERS

— Audrey Hepburn

I suffered the loss of one of my babies that I delivered in the UK. I was traumatised, felt isolated and felt that I had to grieve the loss of my child alone. The group gave me purpose, friendship and a reason to carry on. I am grateful for the kindness and I am now an active member of the group and enjoy giving back to the group through volunteering at The Good Shepherd Centre.

I am one of the oldest members of the group. I lost my son 2 years ago and you can imagine the devastation I felt. The group has shown me a reason to carry on, the mixture of ages and a cultural backgrounds makes the sessions fun, happy, caring and gives me a reason to get up each morning and to look forward to meet with other members of our community. People call me 'Dobre Ranko' and welcome me each morning with the smile at the door. It is lovely and really nice .



The feeling of community spirit and caring is felt throughout the group. everyone comes together to support through offers of practical, financial and emotional help. We do not feel isolated as there is always someone to come to for advice and guidance and we work well together like one big family. The group accepts you unconditionally. (Community Members)

When he heard that we were moving to the Gusrd House, our friend Lt. Ben Cottrell at the Keighley Salvation Army said that he was absolutely delighted and wish us all success in our new venture.

"It is only through shadows that one comes to know the light"
St Catherine of Sienna.

Friends of The Good Shepherd Centre

The Good Shepherd Centre is seeking volunteers from our Community who would be willing to help with welcoming and working towards the integration of our new arrivals. **'When we give to others – of our time, our energy, our commitment, our talents – we are blessed and receive grace, not only in this life, but in the life to come.'**

For more information or if you are able to offer any kind of support please contact Dorota on 07756409246



Picture Gallery

Moving to new premises



Parent & Toddler



Morning Prayer



English conversation classes

Saying our prayers to Our Lady

This is the story I shared with some of the adults who regularly attend The Good Shepherd Centre. For me it describes perfectly the relationship being fostered with our newly arriving families. Our experience leads us to realise that this involvement is most certainly a two way street. We are sometimes able to ring the bell for them but they very often ring the bell for us. Sean

Two Horses

Just up the road from my home is a field, with two horses in it. From a distance, each horse looks like any other horse. But if you stop your car, or are walking by you will notice something quite amazing Looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has made a good home for him. This alone is amazing. If you stand nearby and listen, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the smaller horse in the field. Attached to the horse's halter is a small bell. It lets the blind friend know where the other horse is, so he can follow.

As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see that the horse with the bell is always checking on the blind horse, and that the blind horse will listen for the bell and then slowly walk to where the other horse is, trusting that he will not be led astray. When the horse with the bell returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, it stops occasionally and looks back, making sure that the blind friends isn't too far behind to hear the bell.

Like the owners of these two horses, God does not throw us away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges. He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Sometimes we are the blind horse, being guided by the little ringing bell of those in our lives. Other times we are the guide horse, helping others to find their way Good friends are like that . . . You may not always see them, but you may trust that they are always there. Please listen for my bell and I will listen for yours. Be kinder than necessary . . . Most everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle. Live simply, Love generously, Care deeply, Speak kindly . . . And leave the rest to God! May God's face always ring a bell!



HISTORY OF THE GUARD HOUSE

The property into which The Good Shepherd Centre has just moved has since 1939 been the Church & Presbytery of Our Lady of Victories, but the buildings themselves are very much older, being the “ancestral home” of the Brigg Family who were immensely important in the economic, religious and civic life of Keighley.

The earliest reference to the family is in 1488, being one John Brigg living at “Calversyke Hill above Keighley”. At that time everyone living in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland would have been Catholic. John Brigg was a ‘Yeoman Farmer’ meaning that he was not a tenant but that he held and cultivated a small estate in his own right. It is possible that the farm was approximately where the bare stone walls are, to the left of the present building. Keighley Historian Ian Dewhurst suggests that the name “Guard House” may have come from the presence of a small Parliamentary Garrison of soldiers overlooking Keighley during the English Civil War (1642-1651), and the name was certainly in use by the Briggs from then onwards with 2 family branches, known as the Briggs of Calversyke and the Briggs of Guard House. Thomas Brigg of Calversyke (1633-1707) became a member of The Society of Friends (the Quakers) and donated land lower down the hill for a Quaker burial ground after the Anglican Rector of St Andrew’s Parish Church allegedly said, “You may refuse to attend my church when you are living, but you will have to be buried here when you are dead.” This small cemetery, known locally as “The Sepulchre” still exists between North Dean Road and Lustre Street.



The two branches of the family re-united by marriage in the 1780s, becoming prominent members of the Congregational Church and known as the Briggs of Guard House Farm. Like most West Riding farmers they supplemented their income with spinning and weaving, probably in the barn and in the cottages of their workers. During the 19th Century they expanded, owning water-powered and later steam-powered mills and employing hundreds of textile workers. The Briggs were important at all levels of civic life in Keighley. Benjamin

Septimus Brigg became the first Mayor of the new Keighley Borough in 1888. John Brigg was MP for Keighley from 1895 to 1910. Brothers John Jeremy Brigg and William Anderton Brigg jointly bought East Riddlesden Hall in 1934 to rescue it from demolition and redevelopment, and then presented it to the National Trust.

The Briggs sold part of their Guard House estate to Keighley Borough Council in 1927 for the construction of the first 136 Council houses in Keighley. These well-spaced houses with gardens gave new hope and new opportunities to Irish Immigrant families of St. Anne’s Parish who were re-located from the appalling Town Centre slums of Damside, Westgate and Pinfold to the green hillside of Guard House.

With many Catholics now living in the area, Canon Joseph Russell of St. Anne’s greatly desired to purchase The Guard House for a Mass Centre but initially the Briggs, as strict non-conformists, were not keen to sell to the Catholic Church. Indeed in 1938 John Jeremy Brigg offered the House to the Victoria Hospital for overspill accommodation. Not to be outdone, whilst on holiday in Paris Canon Russell made a novena in the church of Our Lady of Victories and on his return the Briggs agreed to sell the House. By skilful planning the coach house and granary were transformed into a chapel at which Mass was said for the first time on 29 October 1939 and Our Lady of Victories became a full parish in 1945.

The 6” Ordnance Survey Map of 1853 (pictured) shows The Guard House as an L-shape with the house to the right and attached farm buildings to the left. Today’s remaining farm building is in rough-hewn stone with a large barn door and dove cote above and carries a date stone of 1791. The house to the right has much neater stone and is Georgian in style, much resembling a “miniature Bronte Parsonage”. It contains a round-headed staircase window and a good mid-Georgian staircase with panelled doors and cupboards.



Keighley owes a great deal to the Briggs of Guard House for their philanthropic work through many generations and Catholics owe a great deal to the determination and drive of Canon, later Monsignor, Joseph Russell in establishing Our Lady of Victories Church. The Trustees of The Good Shepherd Centre, its Manager and many volunteers will strive to follow the teachings of Pope Francis and carry forward the work of the Church by offering new opportunities for the Immigrant Community of our time at The Guard House.