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The bishops who were  
commissioned at the  
Vatican in Rome,  
including Bishop Peter  
Collins. Picture by Neil  
Turner, IARCCUM.



## Pope and Archbishop commission Bp Peter

**Pope Francis and the  
Archbishop of Canterbury  
have commissioned pairs of  
Anglican and Roman Catholic  
bishops from across the  
world at the Basilica of St  
Paul's Outside the Walls in  
Rome, including Bishop Peter  
Collins. Keith Morris reports.**

■ On January 25, Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, commissioned 25 pairs of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops from across the world at Vespers (Evening Prayer) at the Basilica of St Paul's Outside the Walls in Rome. Marking the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the ecumenical congregation drawn from various

Christian traditions, prayed for the unity of the Church.

The bishop pairs were attending 'Growing Together,' a week-long programme of ecumenical dialogue and pilgrimage, taking place in Rome and Canterbury. It was organised by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), supported by the Anglican Communion Office and the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity.

Bishop Peter was commissioned alongside the Anglican Bishop of Beverley, Stephen Race, as the representatives from England and Wales.

The Pope and the Archbishop commissioned the bishops to engage in joint mission and witness and to promote reception of the agreements already reached in theological dialogues between the two traditions. The location of the commissioning is significant, as it marks the place where the apostle Paul was

buried after his martyrdom in Rome.

During the commissioning, Pope Francis addressed the bishops, saying: "Brothers and sisters, fourteen centuries ago, Pope Gregory the Great commissioned Saint Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, and his companions, to set out from Rome to preach the joy of the Gospel to the peoples of England. Today, with gratitude to God for our sharing in the Gospel, we send you forth, beloved co-workers for the kingdom of God, so that wherever you carry out your ministry, you may together bear witness to the hope that does not deceive and the unity for which our Saviour prayed."

The Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury together invoked God's blessing on the pairs of bishops, using words from St Paul's second letter to the Corinthians: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

## Enlightening, intense and fruitful, says Bishop Peter

**Bishop Peter Collins  
reflects on his experience  
at IARCCUM in both Rome  
and Canterbury in late  
January.**

■ I was recently appointed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to become a member of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM). 25 Catholic bishops and 25 Anglican bishops from across the world gathered in Rome to be commissioned jointly by Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul, the conclusion of the Octave of Prayer for the Unity of Christians.

The Catholic and Anglican bishops were paired from each nation, I being united with Bishop Stephen Race of Beverley who was representing the Church of England. We assembled in Rome on Monday January 22 and transferred the conference to Canterbury on Friday January 26, concluding our deliberations on Monday January 29.

The experience was intense, enlightening and fruitful. Each pairing was charged with sharing their national experience of ecumenical dialogue and cooperation. This sharing proved to be a most powerful experience.

We received first hand witness regarding the effects of warfare in Sudan, South Sudan and Israel/Gaza. Accounts were given of the particular challenges faced by the Christian communities in Pakistan, Myanmar and China. The devastating impact of climatic changes were also addressed through presentations from Brazil and Polynesia/Micronesia. The universal challenges of deepening secularism on every continent were discussed in some detail.

Whatever divides the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion remains less than what unites us.

■ story continued on page three.





## Concert for peace and reconciliation

■ A concert for peace and reconciliation, to celebrate 25 years of the foundation of the Little Sisters of Joy is set to take place at Magdalene College Chapel in Cambridge on Tuesday March 19.

Catholic guitarist and singer Gila Margolin will sing a selection of favourite songs from her past audiences, to include Jewish, French and Scottish music and songs of the sixties.

The concert starts at 2.30pm and will be followed by refreshments in the Benson Hall from 4-6pm. Admission is free but there will be a retiring collection for the work of the foundation.

The Little Sisters of Joy is an international charitable foundation, which espouses a vision for unity, peace and reconciliation between different faiths, ethnicities and traditions

You can contact Gila for more information at [margogila61@gmail.com](mailto:margogila61@gmail.com) [www.littlesistersofjoy.com](http://www.littlesistersofjoy.com)

## Catholic East Anglia

Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

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**Articles and photographs for the next edition are very welcome and should be sent to the editor, ideally via email, by Monday March 4.**

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## Fr Olindo's Papal blessing

■ A 96-year-old East Anglian priest marked an incredible 70 years of ministry on January 24 with a Papal Blessing and Mass. Fr Jeffrey Downie reports.

Despite a sudden move into residential care only the day before his anniversary, Peterborough priest Fr Olindo Cramaro was able to celebrate an astonishing 70 years of priesthood. With the help of staff, he was joined by friends and some of the local clergy for a simple but joyful celebration of Mass in his new home.

As well as cards, gifts and balloons, Fr Olindo also received a special Papal Blessing from Pope Francis. Cake and drinks were shared as the celebration continued. We wish Fr Olindo well with thanks and prayers for his continued long life and ministry.



stry. Ad multos annos!

A native of Italy, Fr Olindo was born in a small village near Udine on November 3, 1927. Ordained priest for the Society of St Paul on January 24, 1954, after one year

he was transferred to Northern Ireland for three years.

In 1957, Fr Olindo moved to East Anglia, eventually incardinating into what was then part of the Diocese of Northampton, serving in Norwich and Peterborough. In January 1984, he became parish priest of Southwold, enjoying 20 years of fruitful ministry there before retirement.

In retirement, Fr Olindo returned to Peterborough, settling in Yaxley close to long-time friends Bridget and Roy Day. He continued to remain very active, supporting the local Catholic community, schools and parishes, especially St Luke's, enjoying driving around in his Fiat, along with Italian food and wine.

At the age of 96, Fr Olindo takes things a little more quietly now, supporting us with his daily prayers, keeping up with the news and welcoming visits from friends.

Pictured above is Fr Olindo seated with Fr Tony Shrayne (centre) and Fr Adam Sowa at his 70 anniversary of ministry.

# Thanks to Ian for 30 years of ministry

**Parishioners gathered on the feast of St Henry Morse, February 1, to thank a deacon who has served communities across the city of Norwich for more than 30 years and is now stepping down from full activity.**

■ Ian Hatfield was born in Yorkshire in 1943 and grew up in Belfast, until the age of 24, when he moved to Norwich with his wife Meda and family. He took up employment as a civil servant with Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Living in West Earlham, the family became parishioners in Holy Apostle Parish.

In 1988, Bishop Alan Clarke accepted Ian into the Permanent Diaconate along with 17 others. Bishop Alan ordained Ian to the Permanent Diaconate on May 25, 1991. As well as his parish responsibilities he was appointed, with Dcn Bill Dimelow, to be one of the two Assistant Directors of the Permanent Diaconate. Ian held that post for 14 years, during which he retired from the Civil Service.

In April 2004, he moved to St George's Parish and lived close by next to the Convent of the Congregation of Jesus on Constitution Road and has faithfully served St George's for the past 20 years. Dcn Ian led retreats and prayer groups and gave talks in the parish. He also ministered to parishioners, prison and hospital care as well as taking part in the daily Mass, Services of the Word and



Pictured are Ian's son-in-law John Kershaw, Fr Walter Chenyika, Dcn Ian Hatfield, Fr Sean Connolly, Dcn Anthony Asomugha, and daughter Jenny Kershaw. Picture by Patrick Byrne.

Benediction.

Standing in for Bishop Peter Collins, who was unwell, was Fr Andrew Eburne, who concelebrated the Mass of Thanksgiving with the priest in charge of St George's parish Fr Walter Chenyika. Fr Andrew said Dcn Ian's approach to ministry reflected St Henry Morse whose guiding light in life was that he never lost the desire "to do good for others".

Dcn Ian said: "I am very grateful for the many friends I made and for the appreciation given to and expressed for my sermons and prayers. It was an honour and privilege to serve the parish alongside dedicated priests and lay people. Meda, my dearest wife and rock, served as a catechist for the children. She was totally committed to catechesis and the formation of children. She also trained

some of the Notre Dame teachers as catechists so that they could go to non-Catholic schools to teach the Catholic children that were studying there."

"I sadly lost my eldest daughter Judith to a premature heart attack in 2012 and my wife (and my rock) Meda, to stomach cancer in 2018. Life goes on and I am fortunate to have my two surviving daughters and their families close by. And also, many good friends in the parish, the diocese and beyond. I leave all in the loving hands of Our Lord as he continues to journey with me as his disciple always learning and bringing him and his Good News to many more."

Dcn Ian took part in the Thanksgiving Mass and later joined his daughter Jenny, her husband John and their two sons with parishioners for a celebration.





Bishop Peter Collins (right) and Bishop Stephen Race, reading from the Letter of St Gregory the Great to St Augustine of Canterbury. Picture by Neil Turner/IARCCUM.

# Anglican and Catholic summit role for Bishop

## ■ story continued from page one

The clear guiding principle of the conference and the guiding principle for all shared action is that we should undertake whatever we can together, except where there is a clear point of division that would preclude such an approach.

Every stage and element of the gatherings in Rome and Canterbury held particular significance. For only the second time in history was Anglican Choral Evensong celebrated in St Peter's Basilica. Archbishop Justin celebrated the Anglican Eucharist in the Church of St Bartolomeo all'Isola where the Sanctuary of the New Martyrs is housed. Our visit to this Sanctuary left a deep impression upon us all, for we saw displayed a stunning representation of the sacrifice of so many Catholics, Anglicans and other Christians from across the expanse of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The formal commissioning of IARCCUM members took place on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Pope Francis presided at Solemn Vespers in the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, accompanied by the Archbishop of Canterbury and in the presence of many members of the College of Cardinals and Prelates from many of the Eastern Rites and the Orthodox Churches. Each pairing of bishops were greeted and blessed by Pope and Anglican Primate. The Roman element of the conference concluded with us gathering for Morning Prayer at the Church of St Gregorio al Celio, the place where Pope St Gregory the Great commissioned St Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, to undertake the great mission to the nation of Angles in this island of ours. Bishop Stephen and I were charged with the privilege of



Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby at the commissioning in Rome. Picture by Neil Turner, IARCCUM.

reading an extract from the address delivered by Pope Gregory the Great.

Our arrival in Canterbury began with an evocative Candlelit Tour of the Cathedral. Standing on the spot where St Thomas of Canterbury was martyred obviously left a deep impression. We attended the Anglican Eucharist at the Cathedral on Sunday morning and Choral Evensong in the afternoon, the day and the conference concluding with a formal reception and dinner at the Old Palace, the official residence of the Archbishop.

The final agreed statement that was crafted at the conclusion of our deliberations outlines a clear intent for the future. I ask you all to pray for the sustenance of a shared Christian witness in the midst of an increasingly secular environment, the development of a serious and honest dialogue within the Christian family and the enhancement of cooperation between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion – internationally, nationally and locally.

Yours in Christ,  
+Peter.

## CSSA audit backs safeguarding in East Anglia

■ The Diocese of East Anglia has been awarded a judgment of Comprehensive Assurance by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in an audit of its safeguarding provision.

Chair of the Safeguarding Sub-committee of the diocesan trustees, Christine Quinn, said: "This is one of the first audits the CSSA had carried out since being established and was in fact a pilot, for which the Diocese volunteered."

"The auditors gave the Diocese an overall judgement of Comprehensive Assurance, which is the second highest possible grade they could have awarded. The report is helpful to the Diocese, both in giving assurance about what works and giving guidance on how things could be even better."

"The role of the Parish Safeguarding Reps was a major contributor to this remarkable judgement. When the auditors were feeding back to the Diocese at the end of the process they informed us that the response rate of surveys returned by PSRs (70%) was the highest they had seen. This gave them a high level of confidence in the information they gathered from them."

Bishop Peter Collins said: "As we share an executive summary of the recent audit of our safeguarding provision, I take this opportunity to express immense gratitude for the generous and extensive service of all those working within safeguarding in the diocese. This report is a testimony to the fruit of their hard work, and the open cooperation with rigorous scrutiny shows our willingness to continue improving and strengthening our work of safeguarding."

"I thank the Safeguarding Coordinator, Mick Thurley, and the Safeguarding Administrator, Rebecca Bretherton, for their exemplary work, not only in facilitating the audit itself, but in all that they do. I also thank the many Parish Safeguarding Representatives, without whom none of this would be possible. Their generous efforts to ensure a safe environment in our worshipping communities is a powerful witness to a life lived in the light of the Gospel, and inspires us all to be more credible witnesses to the kindness and healing our faith can bring."

"We of course continue to remember in prayer those who bear the wounds of abuse, and renew our commitment to ensuring that we maintain peaceful and loving Christian communities to which everybody, particularly young and vulnerable members, can safely belong."

## Prayers for the King

■ Bishop Peter Collins has added his prayers and thoughts to those of Cardinal Vincent Nichols, for King Charles III after Buckingham Palace released a statement confirming His Majesty's cancer diagnosis.

Cardinal Nichols, who is President of the Bishops' Conference, said: "I am saddened to learn that His Majesty King Charles is now facing a time of treatment for cancer. On behalf of the entire Catholic Community in England and Wales, I offer His Majesty our warmest wishes and assurance of steadfast prayers for his full and speedy recovery."



# Make a declaration of your faith today

**What does faith mean? How do I know that I have faith in God?, asks Fr Alvan Ibeh in the latest of the Voice of Hope series.**



■ Everything we do as Christians revolves around our faith in God and as the letter to the Hebrews pointed out, “without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

What does faith mean? How do I know that I have faith in God? Is it only when all is well with me? Is it only when I am healthy and

have not visited the hospital for a long time? Is it when I doing well in my business, and I have financial security? Is it when I feel God has always answered all my prayers?

The letter to the Hebrews defines faith as “being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1) It is having an absolute trust and dependence on God even when in the physical realm, nothing is happening. One thing we need to know is that, often the physical battles we fight, whether sickness, financial problems, family crisis, etc, have been fought and won in the spiritual realm. This is the reason we still believe in the goodness of God, even when things have not gone the way we wanted. We do not see to believe; we believe to see, and this is what faith is all about. If we must touch God, we must touch Him with faith.

There are a lot of stories in the Bible, of those who touched Jesus with faith and their lives never remained the same again. Their story dramatically changed, and Jesus always said to them, “Your faith has healed you or made you whole.”

One of the stories that I like so much is the account of the woman with an issue of blood,

who had the unusual name of Veronica, and may be found in the Gospel according to St Matthew (9:20-22), in St Mark's Gospel (5:25-34), and also in St Luke's Gospel (8:43-49).

Jesus turned around in the crowd and asked: Who touched my clothes? Mark 5:30.

This woman, as we are told, has not met Jesus anywhere before and has heard about him. She has taken her problem to so many doctors and other experts but all to no avail. According to Luke 8:43, this woman has “suffered for 12 years and has spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any”.

This means that everyone has given up on her and she has been asked to go and prepare for her death. With faith in the Jesus she has never met before, she said to herself, “if only I can touch the fringe of his clothes, I will be healed. It was at that moment she made that faith declaration that her healing in the spiritual realm took place and acting on that declaration brought about its physical manifestation.

Many come to church today, yet the question is, “how many of us have an absolute trust and dependence on God that no matter

what happens to us in this life, we will stand firm and say, “it is either God or God.” There is no alternative. In this year, let us work towards trusting God with every detail of our lives without doubting His power working in and for us.

With faith, the woman touched Jesus and instantly received her healing. A problem of 12 years became a history with just a touch of faith. It does not matter how long you have been in that situation you are in now. It does not matter what news you have received. Just make that faith declaration today and believe that God is able and faithful and in His own time He will come through for you. Peace be with you.

■ I have received a lot of comments following my last article and it is always encouraging when this happens, and I appreciate you all. Can I also encourage you to keep spreading this message of hope to those you think desperately need it. We have all been called to carry this message of hope to all the nations however we can and not forget that Jesus has promised to be with us till the end of time (Matthew 28:20)

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# Day to celebrate life of Religious in East Anglia

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**Over 50 religious members gathered at St John the Baptist Cathedral to mark the 28th annual ‘Day of the Religious Life’, observing the Presentation of the Lord. Fr Karol Porczak MS reports.**

■ It is a tradition for the Bishop of East Anglia to extend an invitation to all the religious of the Diocese to celebrate the universal Day of the Religious Life, on February 2, which commemorates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. This year it was the XXVIII (28th) day of that event introduced by Saint Pope John Paul II in 1997.

The liturgy gathered over 50 female and male religious presently living in the diocese. Due to the absence of Bishop Peter because of illness, the Eucharist was presided over by Fr Karol Porczak MS, the Episcopal Vicar for the Religious.

Fr Robert Verrill OP, the prior of the Blackfriars Convent in Cambridge, delivered the homily.

At the beginning, he reminded those present of the motive of that Day, quoting St John Paul II: “The Presentation of Jesus in the temple is an eloquent icon of the total offering of one's life for all those who are called to show forth in the Church and in the world, by means of the

evangelical counsels, the characteristic features of Jesus the chaste, poor and obedient one.”

He described the consecrated life as an example of faith, hope and charity; in particular, the consecrated life brings hope and a longing to be united with Christ: qualities highly needed in contemporary society.

After the homily, all the religious had a chance to renew their vows of chastity, poverty and obedience as well as “other obligations specific to their own Communities”.

At the end of the Eucharist, Fr Alan Hodgson, the dean of the cathedral, expressed his warm welcome on behalf of Bishop Peter and as the host of the celebration.



Fr Karol Porczak MS, Episcopal Vicar for the Religious, celebrates Mass at St John's Cathedral on the Day of the Religious Life.

During the lunch served in the Narthex, Fr Karol delivered a short address to all the sisters and brothers present, underlining the contribution of religious life to the pastoral care of the parishes around the diocese.

He said: “There is no need to hide the reality of the lack of vocation, but life goes on in the trust that God will provide the solution for all the needs of the Church. We experience the tremendous change of times with the challenges calling for immediate action. In ageing communities, the religious still hold to community life, prayer and sacrifice in respect to their growing limitations.”

After the lunch, Fr Karol presided over the solemn Vespers of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the cathedral.



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# Prayer vital in cancer battle

**A Norfolk Catholic family have spoken of the vital role of prayer and community support as, with amazing medical care, they nurse their four-year-old son through a tough battle against a rare form of leukaemia. Joshua Clovis reports.**

■ James Gillespie has been navigating a challenging battle since Christmas Eve 2020 when, at just one-year-old, he was rushed to hospital following a period of illness and unresolved infections. It was discovered that James has a rare form of leukaemia (MPAL) requiring immediate surgery and intense chemotherapy and a probable 3-4 years of ongoing treatment.

Following surgery on Christmas Day and intense chemotherapy on Boxing Day, James suffered a stroke, requiring more long-term care and treatment.

Throughout their journey, James's parents, David and Anne-Marie Gillespie have been steadfast in their support, balancing the demands of James's treatment with the needs of their five other children, traveling back and forth from Norfolk to Addenbrooke's Hospital.

After being diagnosed with MPAL in 2020, initial treatment plans for James faced significant problems. The chemotherapy was not yielding the desired results even after six rounds, and the situation became dire, necessitating a 100% bone marrow match donor.

Miraculously, Faith, James's older sister, proved to be a perfect match. Faith, age 15, with ongoing GCSEs, underwent a 4.5-hour operation to extract bone marrow from her lower back, demonstrating immense courage and love for her brother. Following this, James was transferred to Bristol Children's Hospital in April 2021 to receive the bone marrow transplant from Faith. The family endured a four-month separation due to post-Covid restrictions, a period that was incredibly challenging as only Anne-Marie could stay with James.

The financial and emotional toll of James's illness prompted the local community to set up fund raising events and an online page. This initiative has provided vital support, helping to cover medical expenses, travel costs, and other family needs. The fundraiser also contributed toys to the Addenbrookes Children's Ward, bringing joy to children facing similar battles.

However, the journey took another heart-wrenching turn on September 29, 2023, when after 2 years and 6 months in remission, James relapsed. The prognosis was daunting, with very limited chances of recovery. Yet, despite this, Dr Rob Wynn from Manchester Children's Hospital extended a lifeline. Dr Wynn, leading a Cord Transplant Trial with promising results, proposed an innovative approach for James – a second intensive transplant using cord blood cells and Granulocytes.

On January 11, James had the second vital cord cell transplant. Post-surgery, he is now being monitored by doctors and nurses, and will be on many medications for a while. James could be in Manchester for up to eight months while he

goes through intensive recovery.

James is the youngest of six children and his parents David, a self-employed painter and decorator, and Anne-Marie, a self-employed carer met as teenagers. Anne-Marie will be James's main carer while he recuperates in Manchester, and she has spoken of the family's journey and how important prayer has been through everything they have gone and are going through.

"James has astounded every doctor in the four hospitals we have been to and overcome mountains, especially when we were told he would not make it. This was even when he was on life-support and we were told there was nothing more they could do," she said.

"We asked everybody to pray harder than they had ever prayed before, even people who didn't know him. A few days later, James woke up from his coma, leukaemia-free, and the infection, which they said had spread to his brain and organs, had gone. There were no words to be said except thanks be to God."

The medical team was astonished at James's recovery, said Anne-Marie: "The doctors still can't believe his current condition. His latest test shows he is still disease-negative, which is unbelievable, not just to us but also to the consultants nationwide who are watching and learning from his treatment."

Fr Andrew Eburne, the Parish Priest at Our Lady of the Annunciation, Poringland, the parish of the Gillespie family, said: "It is a privilege to have James and his family in our parish. They are a great example of faith and trust in God, no matter how difficult our circumstances."

"Despite the demands of James's treatment, the family continue to be an important part of the parish, and his brother and sister are continuing with their First Holy Communion classes this year. We are praying that the family can be all together for their First Holy Communion on the feast of Corpus Christi."

"James and his family are a reminder of the teaching of St John Paul II, that those who are sick are not actually a burden but have a great value in themselves, and that they can be a great gift to the church and to the community. James is just such a gift, and the parish are united in praying for him and his family."

For more details or to make a donation, please visit [www.gofundme.com/f/james-mpal-journey](https://www.gofundme.com/f/james-mpal-journey)



Pictured left is James Gillespie and, above, with mother Anne-Marie. Pictures from the family.

## Live – in Community Worker

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## Bishop Peter's engagements

■ **Mar 1, Fri:** Bishop meeting with the Ignite Team, White House, Poringland, 6pm

■ **Mar 2, Sat:** Annual Safeguarding Event in Newmarket, training day

■ **Mar 5, Tue:** Bishop to Lenten Station Mass, St Edmunds, Bury St Edmunds, 6pm Exposition, 7pm Mass, 8pm light buffet or soup

■ **Mar 6, Wed:** Bishop to Ecumenical Pilgrimage, Walsingham

■ **Mar 7, Thur:** Bishop to hold Council of Priests, Poringland, 10.30am, 11am start

■ **Mar 7, Thur:** Lenten Station Mass, St Mary's, Great Yarmouth, Fr Anthony Nwankwo, 6pm Exposition, 7pm Mass, 8pm light buffet or soup

■ **Mar 9, Sat:** Bishop to say Listening and Prayer Mass, 12pm, Poringland

■ **Mar 12, Tue:** Bishop's Council Meeting, Poringland, 10.30am, 11am start

■ **Mar 12, Tue:** Bishop to Lenten Station Mass, St John's Cathedral, Norwich, 6pm Exposition, 7pm Mass, 8pm light buffet or soup

■ **Mar 13, Wed:** Bishop to Chapter of Canons, St John's Cathedral, 12pm Capitular Mass, Cathedral

■ **Mar 14, Thur:** Bishop to attend the Diocesan Board of Trustees Meeting, Poringland, 10am, 10.30am start

■ **Mar 14, Thur:** Bishop to Lenten Station Mass, Our Lady of the Assumption & the English Martyrs, Canon Eugene Harkness, 6pm Exposition, 7pm Mass, 8pm Light buffet or soup

■ **Mar 15, Fri:** Bishop to meet the Primary Co-ordinators for Religious Education (RE) for Schools, Poringland, 8.30am

■ **Mar 16, Sat:** Annual Meeting of the College of Deacons, Walsingham

■ **Mar 21, Thur:** Bishop to Vocations Committee Meeting, Poringland, 10.30am, 11am start

■ **Mar 23, Sat:** Bishop to attend the Diocesan Commission for Dialogue & Unity Meeting, Poringland, 10.30am, 11am start

■ **Mar 24, Sun:** Palm Sunday Solemn Procession and Pontifical Mass, St John's Cathedral, 11am

■ **Mar 25, Mon:** World Youth Day (WYD) Union Retreat with Bishop Peter, White House, overnight culminating in the Chrism Mass on Mar 26, Tue, 11.30am

■ **Mar 26, Tue:** Bishop to Chrism Mass, St John's Cathedral, 11.30am

■ **Mar 28, Thur:** Bishop to Maundy Thursday of the Lord's Supper, St John's Cathedral, Pontifical Mass with Washing of the Feet and Transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament

■ **Mar 29, Fri:** Bishop to Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord, St John's Cathedral, Tenebrae, 10am

■ **Mar 29, Fri:** Good Friday Solemn Liturgy of the Passion, Cathedral, 3pm

■ **Mar 30, Sat:** Tenebrae, St John's Cathedral, 10am

■ **Mar 30, Sat:** Solemn Vigil and First Mass of Easter (with Baptisms and Confirmations), St John's Cathedral, 8pm

■ **Mar 31, Sun:** Bishop, Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord, Solemn Pontifical Mass, St John's Cathedral, 11am

■ **Mar 31, Sun:** Easter Sunday Solemn Pontifical Vespers, Cathedral, 4.30pm

■ All future dates at: [www.rcdea.org.uk/bishop-peter-collins/bishops-diary/](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/bishop-peter-collins/bishops-diary/)

# Bishops show a united

**Over 40 Anglican and Catholic bishops convened in Norwich on January 30 and 31, in a joint meeting for services and group discussions about the ways in which the two denominations can work together more closely, as well as understanding each other better. Keith Morris reports.**

■ The 42 bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby and the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, met at St John's Cathedral for Midday Prayers on Tuesday, January 30, followed by lunch in the Cathedral Narthex.

From there they visited the St Julian Shrine on Rouen Road where they heard from Fr Richard Stanton, the Shrine's Priest Director. A fraternal walk through the streets of Norwich followed to the Anglican Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity in The Close.

The opening session of the meeting, which is only held once every two years, in the Cathedral's Weston Room was an opportunity to hear from some of those involved in the coronation of HM King Charles III. The Coronation, a service rooted in tradition and Christian symbolism, was led by Archbishop Welby, who offered a reflection on the historic event.

Cardinal Nichols, the first Catholic archbishop to have a formal role in a coronation service for 400 years, also gave a personal reflection.

Choral Evensong in the Cathedral was followed by a drinks reception and dinner at Bishop's House, hosted by the Bishop of Norwich the Rt Rev Graham Usher.

The second session looked at the Synodal journey in the Catholic Church. Short reflections were offered by three attendees who travelled to Rome for last October's Synod: Archbishop John Wilson of Southwark, National Ecumenical Officer, Fr Jan Nowotnik, and Bishop Martin Warner of Chichester, the Church of England representative.

The final session focused on the Catholic Church's newest English saint, John Henry Newman – a lecture on the Victorian educationalist was offered by theologian and renowned Newman scholar Monsignor Roderick Strange, Rector of Mater Ecclesiae College.

Bishop Peter Collins, was due to be co-hosting the meeting with Bishop Graham as the lead, but was unwell and unable to attend.

Speaking just before the meeting started, Bishop Graham said: "A lot of our visible unity is through social action, through our life of prayer, through our sense of being together."

"Archbishop Justin and Pope Francis have been together in Rome over the last few days, along with East Anglia's

Main picture, Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Justin Welby address the gathered bishops at Norwich's Anglican Cathedral and, below, all of the bishops outside the Julian Shrine in Norwich. Pictures by Neil Turner/Lambeth Palace.



Bishop Peter, commissioning bishops to be evangelists in their communities in pairs – an Anglican bishop with a Catholic one. I have a very strong working relationship with Bishop Peter on many different levels.

"To mark the 650th anniversary of Julian of Norwich's Shewings, Pope Francis wrote a reflection which looks at what Mother Julian says to our current age of war, famine, pandemic and ecological disaster. In her own age she knew three waves of the Black Death in this city and she probably saw two thirds of the population die," said Bishop Graham.

"Mother Julian said that God is Lord of the Church so that we don't have to be and that in God, all things will be well, all manner of things shall be well. I hope that as the bishops meet in this fine city that has a long history of hospitality that they will be inspired by our time of prayer, pilgrimage and study together."

"God's Holy Spirit will inspire us and out of that will come incredible new



ways of serving God's church and serving Christ in our midst and you cannot predict what that will be but God has a way of always surprising us.

St John's Cathedral Dean, Fr Alan Hodgson, said: "Since becoming a diocese we have become more closely



# front in Norwich



allied with the Anglican Cathedral in Norwich and it is always a great joy for us to meet at ecumenical events in both cathedrals. There is a great spirit of cohesion and we always work towards that. Getting the logistics right for a meeting such as this is quite complex and takes a lot of co-ordination."

This was the seventh joint meeting since 2006, with previous meetings in Birmingham, Leeds, London, Leicester and Liverpool. These meetings aim to foster spiritual communion and to identify and develop programmes of joint witness and mission in this country, both regionally and nationally.

## Initiative to tackle modern slavery

**A new initiative to help tackle modern slavery across the Diocese of East Anglia has been explored and volunteers to help tackle the problem are now being sought, Simon John reports.**

■ In January the Caritas East Anglia Commission, in the presence of Bishop Peter Collins, heard from the first members of a new group opposed to Modern Slavery in the Diocese. They intend to raise awareness of this "wound on the body of Christ" as Pope Francis has described it and are looking for volunteers to help to tackle the problem.

Cardinal Archbishop Vincent Nichols said of the victims of this abhorrent crime: "Their fate is not distant from us. Your awareness of this outrageous abuse of our fellow human beings is essential. For with awareness comes a determination to act. We can make modern slavery simply unacceptable."

The Cardinal outlined several steps... educating communities to open their eyes to the 'invisible reality of human trafficking and modern slavery in their midst.

Bishop Peter and the Commission members were told that in 2022, around East Anglia, 746 people were found enslaved and rescued. Worse still, that figure was likely the tip of the iceberg. That there are an estimated further 4,500 souls left out there in our midst. They are yet unseen by us, their brothers and sisters in Christ. They are still in bondage in our Diocese.

Bishop Peter and others heard that these vulnerable, downtrodden outcasts, society's underclass, so beloved by Jesus, were reported in local media as being found in our Diocese in many settings. They were

found in domestic servitude, forced labour, (in factories, food processing, restaurants), forced prostitution and forced shop fraud.

They were found in organ harvesting, forced marriage, as children forced to carry drugs, or babies stolen and trafficked.

They are to be found also in care homes looking after our loved ones, they are there to be found on farms including cannabis farms, waste recycling and in nail bars.

They are still there to be found in car washes, forced marriage, forced begging; forced benefit fraud. They are there to be found in these places for up to eight years before we detect and report them.

Mark Little, (former Diocesan Finance Officer, who was awarded the MBE for his campaign against modern slavery) and Simon John (retired local solicitor) are looking for young and older volunteers with a heart to help cut modern slavery in our diocese. Pope Francis wants us to "find" enslaved people.

All that means is learning, simply, to spot the signs and safely report them in UK to the Modern Slavery Helpline. Mark and Simon are looking for young and older volunteers. Contact [john\\_simong@hotmail.com](mailto:john_simong@hotmail.com)

No previous knowledge or experience required, just a wish to end slavery in our diocese. All that is needed is a desire for justice, to set the downtrodden free, to be a voice for the voiceless.

Read more about Modern Slavery and the role of Caritas East Anglia : [www.rcdea.org.uk/caritas-east-anglia/modern-slavery/](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/caritas-east-anglia/modern-slavery/)

Read about the Santa Marta Group – an alliance of police chiefs and Catholic bishops from around the world working together with civil society to eradicate human trafficking and modern-day slavery, at: [www.santamartagroup.org](http://www.santamartagroup.org)

## Chrism Mass invitation

■ An invitation to all across the Diocese of East Anglia to attend the Chrism Mass during Holy Week has been issued, alongside the opportunity to join the Diocesan choir to sing at the celebration.

Bishop Peter Collins will celebrate his second Chrism Mass in the Diocese of East Anglia on Tuesday March 26, at 11.30am and all clergy and laity are invited to join him.

The Chrism Mass is the most important annual Diocesan celebration where the bishop, clergy, religious and laity gather to celebrate the sacramental life.

Bishop Peter said: "I would ask that we gather in a spirit of solidarity to express our Diocesan identity and to reiterate our commitment to the mis-

sion of evangelisation."

The new Diocesan Director of Music, David Greal, will be leading the Diocesan Choir and the music sung will be a mix of the traditional and contemporary, the choral and congregational.

The Diocesan Choir, which sings at a small number of diocesan events throughout the year, is always looking for new members.

Any individuals or groups interested in singing in the choir or at the Chrism Mass are invited get in touch with David at the Music Office at [david.greal@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:david.greal@rcdea.org.uk)

Music will be sent out in advance, and the Diocesan Director of Music will be able to assist in leading rehearsals beforehand.



# SVP in East Anglia celebrates 90th

**International Christian voluntary network, the St Vincent de Paul Society is marking the 180th anniversary of its founding in London and 90 years of work in East Anglia. Jackie Roberts, Central Council Secretary, reports.**

■ The SVP was founded in Paris by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and a group of fellow students at the Sorbonne University in Paris in 1833. One of these students was George Wigley who wrote articles in *The Tablet* to raise awareness. In January 1844, several Catholics met at the Sabloniere Hotel in Leicester Square, London and agreed to form the first Conference in England. By the end of 1844, four Conferences had been formed in London and they quickly spread beyond the capital, with eight in total started by the end of the year.

At this time, Catholics were in the minority of England's population and so the early English SVP was cautious about introducing SVP works in a country where the established church was the Church of England. Regardless of their small numbers, during the outbreak of cholera (in both France and England) the Society decided to provide funding for nurses, medicines and even coffins.

The first conference in East Anglia was set up in 1913 in Cambridge, at the instigation of Bishop Keating of Northampton. Members were recruited from the university and town, and the first president was Baron Anatole von Hugel. A year later, the minutes recorded an attendance of 10 to 15 members. Many members did leave to serve in the war, but the conference continued its activities, adding help given to the soldiers in the camps and hospital, and assistance given to Belgian refugees.

There is still an active conference in Cambridge and now 18 conferences in East Anglia, with 155 members. They are involved in many different activities and projects, the most ambitious and success-



ful one, was the purchase, over a number of years, of three houses in North Norfolk which are used to help the homeless.

Nearly all conferences give out food parcels or vouchers to those in need and help is also given with heating bills and other needs. White goods, such as fridge freezers, and some furniture items have been bought. One conference runs a baby essential project, various baby items, such as nappies and baby food are donated or purchased and then given to any mum struggling to provide for her baby.

Visiting is a very important part of the SVP work, and visits are made by all conferences to families who are experiencing hardship and to the elderly and lonely in their own homes or in care homes and hospitals.

Outings or tea parties are organised by some conferences, and many bring their parishioners to the SVP annual pilgrimage for the sick in Walsingham. Some are involved with local food banks, soup runs, prisons and other support organisations. The SVP also has connections with conferences in third world countries, East Anglia conferences are twinned with

conferences in India, South Sudan and Grenada. Many Catholic schools in East

Anglia have their own Mini Vinnies, the future members hopefully. The beating heart of the SVP is its membership, now numbering 8,500 nationally, with volunteers working in parishes across England and Wales.

## Support for members needed

■ Supporting the members and recruiting new members is an essential aspect of the society's work and East Anglia is keen to recruit a Membership Support Officer (MSO) who would be able to do this. A part-time (two-day equivalent) MSO post in the diocese is available and applications are welcome.

If you are interested in the post, joining as a member, or would like to learn more about the SVP please contact Lance Philpott, National Head of Membership at [lancep@svp.org.uk](mailto:lancep@svp.org.uk)

Pictured left are SVP members enjoying a meal together and, below, packing items from the Giving Tree as Christmas parcels.



## Catholic care home is 'outstanding' says CQC

■ The community at Montana Residential Home, located in Great Barton near Bury St Edmunds, is celebrating as the care home has been awarded an outstanding rating by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for the second time.

During an inspection in September 2023, the CQC evaluated the home across various parameters. The home is managed by a devoted team of eight Benedictine nuns, nine lay staff, and eight volunteers and currently accommodates 16 residents.

Sr Thaya Moses, the care home manager, who has been there since 2002, expressed her joy and satisfaction with the result, stating, "We are thrilled to get outstanding a second time. We are really happy and pleased."

"Montana Care Home is outstanding because of the whole team-effort to meet person-centred, individual and responsive care to all our residents. It is a real pleasure to meet the needs of the

people who choose to come and stay at Montana. "This is our vocation. We are called to care for others."

The CQC report commended the home for its exceptional care, responsiveness, and leadership, awarding it an 'outstanding' rating in these areas. The home also received 'good' ratings for effectiveness and safety. Notably, the report highlighted the 'exceptionally well supported' residents who were treated with 'gentle kindness' and the staff's swift response to potential risks. The residents themselves voiced their appreciation for the 'unconditional' support they receive.

Reflecting on the aspects she cherishes the most about her role, Sr Moses said: "I enjoy spending time with the residents, talking to them, and getting their stories. And I support staff if they have problems."

Montana Residential Home is a part of the Grace and Compassion Benedictines





# Chance to walk the Camino

**Hamish MacQueen, Director of Youth Service shares some personal thoughts about this year's youth pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.**

■ When it was suggested that for our summer pilgrimage this year we 'walk the Camino', I was filled with a mixture of dread and excitement. We'd done it back in 2017, and it was physically challenging then, and that was six years ago. Since then I've celebrated a significant birthday and am definitely somewhat less fit than I was!

Yet, despite or maybe because of the physical challenge, there is something about going on a pilgrimage that is profoundly powerful – even life-changing. I've seen it first-hand.

The Camino de Santiago (The Way of St James) has been a pilgrimage route for over 1000 years, walking to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela where St James is buried. Last year attracted a new record of almost half a million people doing it, and for a variety of reasons.

For me, taking time out from the busyness of everyday life; the sense of community with fellow pilgrims; and being immersed in the beauty of God's creation for several hours a day, are a main part of it. I'm really looking forward to it once again.

Bishop Peter Collins is planning to lead the pilgrimage in person.

The dates are July 22-29. If you are aged 18 – 30, why not come and join us?

For more information and to book a place, please visit: [www.rcdea.org.uk/youth](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/youth)

Places are limited and bookings are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.



Picture by FelixWong.com

## UK conference first at Cambridge Institute

■ The Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology in Cambridge hosts a ground-breaking conference, in person and online, on Wednesday March 13, to explore the legacy of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain. Conference organiser, Dr Christopher Grey, reports.

Titled 'Beggars for Heaven: The Inheritance of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain,' the conference aims to inspire greater awareness of this saintly couple who are little known in England.

A convert from agnosticism, the French philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) authored over 70 books, passionately advocating the wisdom of St Thomas Aquinas. His sphere of influence was amazingly wide in his day, with theologians, politicians, popes, painters, and poets drawn to the way he simultaneously embraced contemporary culture and challenged it. But he remained somewhat under the radar – in old age describing himself as 'a secret agent of the King of Kings.'

Raïssa was a Russian-Jewish émigré who converted to Catholicism following extreme intellectual anguish. She wrote of her university professors: 'they despaired of truth, whose very name was unlovely to them.' Dramatically, she and Jacques agreed to throw themselves into the Seine unless their nihilism could be relieved – which, thankfully it was. Raïssa was a poet and contemplative, and marrying Jacques in 1904, she remained his 'muse' until her death in 1960. Illness and intense suffering

marked her life.

The Maritain home became a place of prayer, hospitality, and intellectual discovery, and their Sunday afternoon living-room meetings in Meudon drew visitors from every walk of life until the war intervened. A cause for the canonization of both Maritains began in 2011, although this has not yet been advanced.

The conference will explore the ways in which the Maritain's work and example still speaks to the cultural, political and theological spheres, the academy and the Church. Now more than ever, their voices are a clarion call to truth and wisdom, and their witness to the mission of the laity is an exemplar of lives lived for God. Keynote speakers include John G Trapani Jr, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Walsh University, and Sebastian Morello, Senior Editor and Columnist at the European Conservative.

Anyone with an interest and those wanting to discover more are welcome. The Maritains embraced all whom they encountered with generosity and charity, and the aim is to be motivated by their example. Tickets are priced to cover costs and will include a light lunch and refreshments throughout the day.

Full details of the conference are at: [www.mbit.cam.ac.uk/event/](http://www.mbit.cam.ac.uk/event/)

You can contact the conference organiser, Dr Christopher Grey at: [christopher.grey1@outlook.com](mailto:christopher.grey1@outlook.com)



Margaret Beaufort Institute  
Cambridge, UK

Conference day

**Beggars for Heaven:  
The Inheritance of  
Jacques & Raïssa Maritain**

13 March 2024 09:00 - 18:00 GMT  
Jesus Lane, Cambridge UK

You can join us in person or by zoom!

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**DISCOVERING JESUS  
THROUGH THOMAS AQUINAS**

Every Tuesday  
**23 April - 11 June 2024**  
4.30 pm - 6 pm

*In person and Online*

Jesus Lane Cambridge, UK  
Led by Sr Magdalene Eitenmiller



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Study Day

**THE EUCHARISTIC  
PRAYER**

Led by Dr Peter Coughlan

Saturday, 4th May 2024  
9.30 am - 4.00 pm  
Jesus Lane, Cambridge

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Margaret Beaufort Institute  
[info@mbit.cam.ac.uk](mailto:info@mbit.cam.ac.uk)  
01223 741039



# New series looks at religious life in diocese

## Working Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth (SOSCN)

■ Working Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth (SOSCN) – in Italian Suore Operaie di Santa Casa di Nazaret

“As Working Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth, we are called to evangelize the world of work through work-sharing, pastoral care and service to workers” (from The Rule of Life).

The Congregation was founded in 1900 by Fr Arcangelo Tadini (1846-1912), an Italian priest of the diocese of Brescia. On April 26, 2009, he was proclaimed a saint by Pope Benedict XVI. At the foundation of his Congregation is the joyful awareness of belonging to Christ and of being called to manifest a particular aspect of His life, namely: Jesus the worker in Nazareth. The sisters live the continuation of the contemporary incarnation of the “Carpenter’s Son’s” life, as most of them are normal employees in factories and other public institutions.

The sisters choose to live in working-class neighbourhoods in small communities. They are present in the various bodies of social and physical employment, deal with internal and external migration and accompany young people on their journey of maturation and work experience. They also support parish pastoral work.

Today, they are about 200 sisters, who mostly live in communities of 3-4 members, in Italy, Switzerland, England, France, Burundi, Rwanda, Congo Mali and Brazil.



From left to right: Sr Erica Perini, Sr Raffaella Falco (Superior), Sr Marialaura Gatti, Sr Giulia Bertarelli.

**In a new series about the Religious Congregations living and working in the Diocese of East Anglia, Fr Karol Porczak MS, Vicar for the Religious, introduces two communities in Peterborough – the Working Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth and the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette.**

The Congregation has only one General Government assisted by three Delegations: Europe, the Great Lakes States (USA) and Brazil.

They have been present in Peterborough since the 1960s, when they began co-working with the Congregation of the Scalabrini

Fathers who took care of the Italian Mission.

Today, four Italian sisters participate in the liturgical and pastoral life of all three Catholic parishes in the city. They take special care of the families of Italian origin who have remained connected to their all-Italian community.

One sister follows the initiatives of the Jesus Youth movement, which is active at the national level. The community organises monthly meetings of prayer and reflection on social issues open to all, and they take special care of relations with colleagues, families and workers in general, even outside of their working hours.

## The Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette (MS)

■ This Congregation came to life after the miraculous apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at La Salette village in the French Alps on September 19, 1846.

A Beautiful Lady gave a singular Message to Melanie Calvat (15) and Maximin Giraud (11) which She had told them in tears. Part of the Message was: “How long have I suffered for you! If my Son is not to abandon you, I am obliged to entreat him without ceasing. But you take no heed of that.” The Message also included two secrets, given to both children separately, and has never been any part of the legacy given to the Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette.

The event has drawn the attention of multitudes of people who have climbed to the altitude of 6,000 feet, in order to reach the scene of the apparition. In 1951, the Bishop of Grenoble, Philibert de Bruillard, took action in recognising the apparition as true and trustworthy, and requested members of his clergy to assist with the pastoral care of the sheer numbers of pilgrims visiting the place of the apparition. In 1958, Bishop Ginoulhiac accepted the religious vows of six priests from Grenoble



From left to right: Fr Waldemar Smialek MS, Fr Adam Sowa MS (Superior) and Fr Karol Porczak MS, VR.

diocese for the new Congregation dedicated to the Reconciliation in the spirit of the Message of La Salette.

The French revolution forced the religious orders of France to move abroad. One of the destinations for the La Salettes was North America, where two missionaries started their work in Hartford, Connecticut in 1892. There, vocations for four large Provinces quickly developed. Soon, England became the missionary area, and as a result of that in 1927, the La Salettes from America were welcomed by Bishop Arthur Doubleday of Brentwood. Two of them started work in East London parishes in Dagenham and Rainham serv-

ing the Catholic workers of the new Ford Motor Company.

In 1991, due to a decline of vocations in the Americans Provinces, it was agreed that the Polish Province would take over the mission in England.

Today, eight Polish Missionaries are in charge of four parishes in Brentwood Diocese and since 2014 three more missionaries work at the parish of St Peter and All Souls in Peterborough.

The Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette in the world now reaches over 900 members in eleven Provinces on all continents, the General House being in Rome.

## Faith in the Home: living our Catholic faith each day

What is your first thought when you wake up in the morning? Where am I? What day is it? What’s happening today? asks Marriage & Family Life Co-ordinator, Antonia Braithwaite, in her Faith in the Home column.

■ Good Morning, Jesus!

Once you’ve orientated yourself and entered the waking world from the world of dreams, what is your next thought? We all live busy lives and in the bustle of busyness, it can be easy for God to be set aside as we jump out of bed and get ready for the day.

However, we should try to get into the habit of making God our first conscious thought of the day, or soon after waking. This is called a Morning Offering; this is where we offer everything that we will do and that will happen to us in the day ahead, to God. By offering our day to Him first thing in the morning, we ask Him to protect us and bless our busyness and our day’s work so that it will all be more fruitful and work out better according to His will for our good.

Praying morning prayers with the children is a habit for the family to get into; it can happen over the breakfast table in the morning, or take a pause while getting dressed or just before you open the front door to go outside, gather together for a moment to consecrate your day.

Here is a simple morning prayer for children to cut out and memorize:

Dear God  
Now that I start my day  
I offer you my heart and pray  
Guide me in everything I do  
And keep me always  
Close to you  
Amen

Add to it the Guardian Angel prayer, and the Sign of the Cross with holy water to keep your children safe during the day.

A traditional Morning Offering for adults:

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart,  
in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, for the salvation of souls, the reparation for sins, the reunion of all Christians,  
and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father this month.  
Amen.



# Reflections on Vatican II – Light of the nations

In preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025, Pope Francis encouraged a return to the documents of Vatican II, refreshing awareness of the fruits of that Council. To encourage your own study of those documents, Fr Peter Wygnański here continues a short series of articles about the four major constitutions.

## Reflecting on the Constitutions of Vatican II: 2 – Lumen Gentium and The Church.

■ One way to think about the Church is considering what life was like without one, before the good news of the Gospel was shared. Along this journey, a particular milestone stands out: Alexandria, on Egypt's Mediterranean coast, in the centuries immediately before Christ.

This great city was a cultural melting pot where, for the first time, the faith of Israel came together with Greek philosophy. Great thinkers in Athens had called pagan religions into question but had deciphered the signature of one, truly divine, God. There were those in Alexandria who, in light of these ideas from their west, recognised the wisdom contained in the ancient texts from their east, the scriptures of Israel. Here was a faith that could connect the world with the divine.

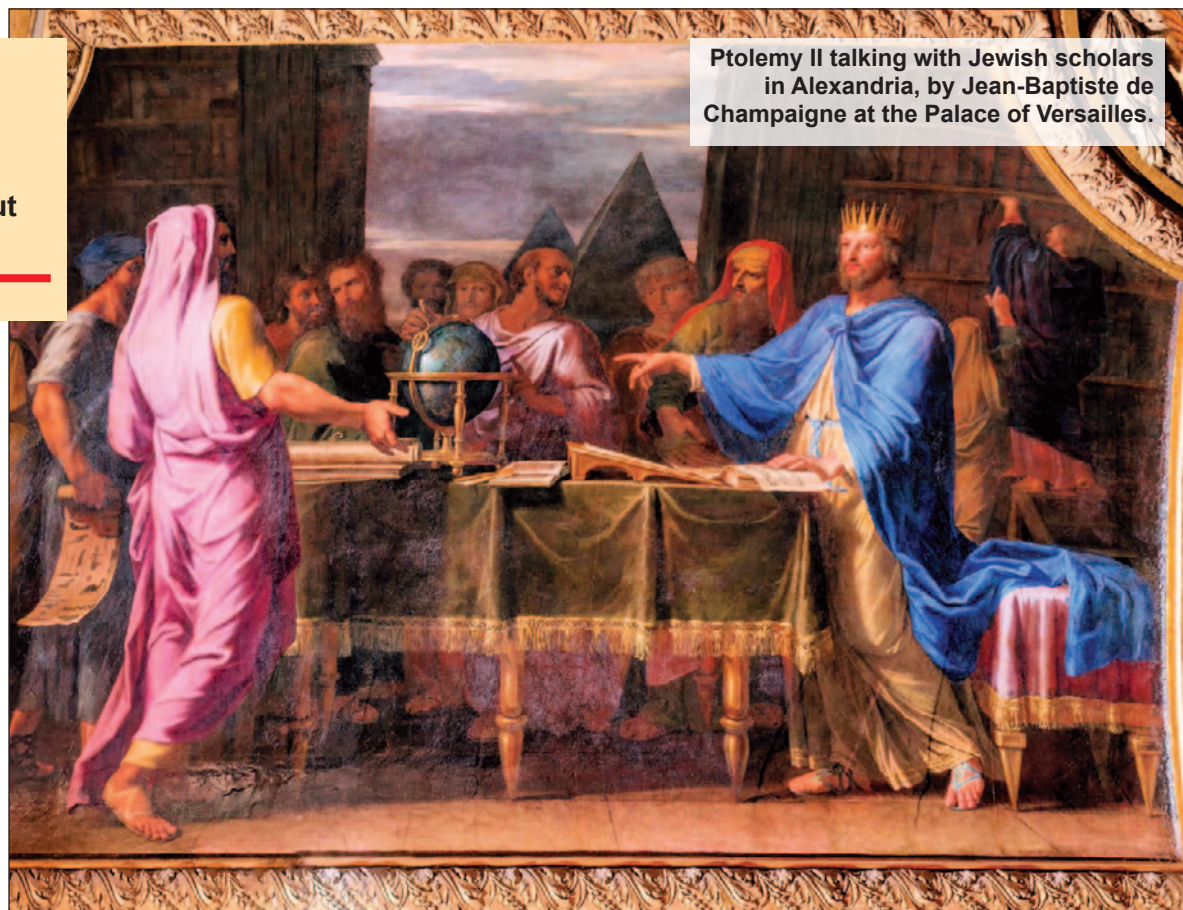
Last month's article explored the gift of a God who speaks to us, a relationship begun in the history of Israel and the testimony of the prophets. It was a faith in which the heart heard the voice of God and the head could rationally believe in. This is why, in Alexandria, there arose this community of 'God-fearers', who attached themselves to the faith of Israel as

best they could.

However, true worship was bound to the Temple of Jerusalem and being part of the Jewish community was as much a question of nationality as it was of faith. These 'God-fearers', then, lived in hope of a citizenship of God's people which did not depend on birth, on laws, or on place, but rather on belief. The stage was set for Christ's coming, when the 'light of the nations' (Lumen Gentium), shone upon the world. (§1)

Vatican II's document on the Church rests on this idea: Christ is the light of the world, and the Church is like a sacrament, a manifestation of the closeness of God to the whole of humanity which gathers to receive that light. The Church has a hierarchy, but is so much more than a hierarchy; it has laws but is so much more than an enforcer. The Roman Catholic Church is the greatest enterprise human history has ever known, but it is so much more than that.

Jesus Christ became truly man while remaining truly God, no part of divinity or humanity is lost. In the same way that Jesus took up human nature for our salvation, the Spirit of Christ gives life to the visible structure of the Church which serves God. (§8) This is why there is no contradiction in speaking about a Church that is both institutional and spiritual,



Ptolemy II talking with Jewish scholars in Alexandria, by Jean-Baptiste de Champaigne at the Palace of Versailles.

a structure and the spiritual citizenship that the 'God-fearers' of Alexandria longed for, and where we now make our home.

One way to think about the Church is in reference to God the Father, as the People of God. The Lord set up a covenant with the people of Israel as a preparation for gathering together all His children, for He does not save and make us holy as individuals but as one people on a shared pilgrimage to the Father's heavenly home. (§9) We can also think of the Church in reference to God the Son, as the Mystical Body of Christ. God pours the life of Christ into believers, uniting them in a hidden and real way to Christ the head who, sharing his spirit,

calls people from every nation together into mystical components of His own body. (§7)

This of course reminds us of the unity that comes from the Body of Christ in the Eucharist: Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. (§7)

Finally, we can think of the Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit in which all believers share a royal dignity as they are sanctified through the sacraments entrusted to the Church.

In this way, Lumen Gentium reminds us how all the faithful share the vocation to holiness of life, possessing in common one

salvation, one hope and one undivided charity. (§32)

Even if the Church were to become small in number, it will always be a lasting beacon of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race, (§9) because God's light shines through its members living like Christ in prayer and sanctity, particularly in service of the poor. (§8)

In this way the Church both prays and labours in order that the entire world may become the People of God, the Body of the Lord and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and that in Christ, the Head of all, all honour and glory may be rendered to the Creator and Father of the Universe. (§17)

## Clergy learn more about keeping parishes safe

■ Priests and deacons working in the Diocese of East Anglia have been attending Safeguarding training events this February.

Rebecca Bretherton, the Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator, said: "This year we are focussing on topics to help priests and deacons create a safe environment in their parish communities. These topics include the principles of Safer Recruitment and how to run activities with children and adults at risk of abuse. An important module explains how to provide pastoral support for victims and survivors of abuse."

The first event was held at March Parish on February 1 with 25 participants mainly from the Peterborough and West Norfolk areas.

Diocesan clergy are required to attend training about this important area of Church life every two years. Our diocesan training satisfies the national Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency's requirements for 2024/25.

**Pictured right is Safeguarding Co-ordinator Mick Thurley talking to clergy in March.**





# Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese



■ Altar servers, including those presented with Silver Medals, at the St Stephens Day Mass at St Philip Howard, Cambridge on December 26.



■ Lord and Lady Stafford visited Our Lady & St Walstan's for the morning Mass on Sunday January 28, at the end of which everyone processed to the cemetery for the blessing of the recently restored Jerningham Memorial reports Fr David Ward.

The Jerningham family lived at Costessey Hall for many centuries and kept the Catholic faith throughout the Reformation, one of the famous recusant families of Norfolk. In the 19th century, the Jerninghams married into the Stafford family. Costessey Hall closed after the First World War and was demolished over a number of years. Costessey golf course now occupies the site.

One of the last parts to be decommissioned was the cemetery and in 1953 the bodies buried there were transferred to the cemetery at Our Lady & St Walstan's. It is the memorial over their grave that has been restored and which Lord and Lady Stafford came to visit. After the blessing, Lord Stafford thanked everyone for attending and especially for looking after his ancestors.

The parish and their guests then retired to the Garden Room for refreshments and to look at a wonderful display of photographs of Costessey Hall assembled by local historian Paul Cooper.

The picture above shows those gathered around the memorial shows, L to R, Fr David Ward (parish priest), Lady Stafford, Lord Stafford, Paul Cooper, Sharon Blundell (Norfolk County Councillor) and Vivienne Bell (Costessey Town Councillor).

■ St Etheldreda's Ely SVP celebrated an International Food Festival Parish Lunch, inviting all parishioners to bring and share, a dish from their country of origin or that they have an affiliation with, reports Joan Wall.

The lunch, on Sunday November 26, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, was so well attended that we thought we would not all fit into the parish rooms. Fr David Finegan opened the meal with prayers to thank the Lord for the food we were about to share and to help us support those less fortunate, all over the world, through the work of the SVP.

It was a wonderful day with exciting dishes to try from England, Scotland, Ireland, Philippines, Poland, Italy, Spain, Nigeria, Jamaica, Ukraine, South Africa, China, Canada and India – a good cross-section from a fairly small parish. There were a lot of appreciative comments and requests for recipe exchange and general conversation between new friends.

So many people helped with all aspects of the event, setting up and clearing away. It was so popular there were many requests to repeat the occasion during the summer when we could spread out into the garden.

