



Time lord defeats evil

Key stage two at Sacred Heart School in Peterborough, pictured above, staged a production of The Time Lord, a play with 120 children involved and telling the story of Lord Emit who embarks on a mission to save the world from the evil Dinopods.

Key stage one, foundation stage pupils and parents filled the school hall for the three performances.

Isaac in year three commented about the play said the play was "like a West End Show".

Horror of war was remembered

St Felix primary school in Haverhill celebrated Remembrance Day with a Shoes on the Danube event.

This was introduced through the artwork at Budapest of a line of iron shoes along the river which serves as a memorial to the 15,000 people asked to remove their shoes before being shot.



World cultures win award

St Albans primary school in Cambridge has won an equalities award for enriching the classroom experience by including different world cultures, see picture right.

Nearly 30 languages are spoken at the school and its diversity has been recognised nationally. Children speak Tagalog from the Philippines, Tamil from India and Sri Lanka and Yoruba a West African language.

Mother tongue languages also include Portuguese, Chinese, Russian and Lithuanian at a school where nearly half of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Rachel Swindell, the inclusion coordinator, said: "This enriches the curriculum and it makes our



children feel like global citizens.

"The award is acknowledging all the excellent activity happening in our school to celebrate having a diverse school."

Most children speak English when they begin at the school but help is available if there are difficulties.



Fancy dress charity fun run

Students at St Mary's School, Cambridge ran across Coe Fen to raise charity funds in the annual Fun Run wearing fancy dress costumes inspired by the Legends and Heroes theme.

Headmistress Charlotte Avery said: "We encourage each student to gain sponsorship of £20 to raise an impressive sum for charity." Funds will go to Sr Christopher and the CJ Community in Zimbabwe, LAN UK, MENCAP, Arthur Rank Hospice, Educaid (Sierra Leone) and Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust.

St Benedict's at Grade 1

St Benedict's School in Bury St Edmunds has been awarded a Grade 1 for their 2014 results.

"We were very pleased when we got the ALPS report," said headteacher Hugh O'Neill.

"It meant we were in the top 1% of all schools nationally for A levels.

"When our ALPS advisor visited he explained that Grade 1 is only awarded to a school that equals or exceeds the results of the top performing school of the previous year - and for that reason, there are sometimes no Grade 1 schools at all!"

"This has been the most extraordinary couple of months in the school's long history. We have gone from the joy of seeing our students gaining wonderful GCSE and A level results to the shock of the Ofsted no-notice inspection and its now-withdrawn report," he said.

"It must be very difficult for parents and the wider public to know what to make of it all. We hope that this independent ALPS report sets the record straight."



Sleep to change lives

Twenty six students, some pictured above, from St Bede's school in Cambridge took part in a sponsored sleep out on 12 September to raise money for a school in Nakuru, Kenya.

The students undertook a challenge to sleep for one night in a cardboard box under the stars with only a sleeping bag and their cardboard home for shelter.

They hoped to raise awareness of the plight of millions of children around the world who have no choice but to sleep rough and in dangerous conditions.

A classroom for the school in Nakuru would mean 40 boys and girls would receive an education.

With the support of the Nakuru Children's Project (run by St Bede's staff member, Rebecca Siddall) many would be able to get away from a life "on the streets".

RE task was natural labyrinth

As part of the St Benedict's Religion is Everywhere week art and RE classes from Year 8 and 11 combined forces to build a labyrinth out of natural products.

Students thoroughly enjoyed using intuition, creativity and imagery to build their circuitous single path that led to the centre and out again!



Second wall mural at St Edmunds

To mark St Edmund's Week at St Edmunds Primary in Bury St Edmunds the 300 pupils created a second mural and every child had the opportunity to paint a small piece.

Last year we gained permission from the artist, Brian Whelan to use his "King Edmund Saint and Martyr" picture and this year he has allowed us to replicate (as near as possible) his picture called "Silver Night" depicting a city where all faiths are welcome and live in harmony, side by side.

Brian said his Holy City was like Santiago de Compostela, Fatima, Guadeloupe or even Bury St Edmunds where a welcome can be found.

Parish priest Fr Mark Hackeson was so impressed he had the painting displayed in the church for the Sunday Masses.





Plans to attend huge youth event

Flame2 is one of the largest National Catholic Youth events of 2015, taking place in Wembley Arena on Saturday 7 March 2015. The Arena will be filled with 10,000 young people from across the country, receiving faith-filled inspiration from world class speakers. Confirmed speakers include Cardinal Luis Tagle from Manila, Philippines; Baroness Sheila Hollins; and David Wells.

Throughout the day speakers will give bursts of input, interspersed with world

class music and drama, in an atmosphere full of joy.

Music will be provided by double grammy award winning Matt Redman and his band. The day ends with a time of Adoration led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

Flame2 is open to anyone in school year 10 and above, up to young adult. We are taking a group from East Anglia! More details at www.catholiceastanglia.org/youth

Call to join Ignite Team

Hamish MacQueen (Director of Youth Ministry) considers the benefits of having a full-time diocesan youth mission team, planned to launch next September.

“You could say the first ‘mission team’ was the 12 disciples, so it’s a model as old as the Church itself!,” he said.

“Many dioceses now have youth mission teams - they have become the preferred model of youth ministry in the UK and beyond, proving more effective than lone youth workers.”

This is for the following reasons:

- A team of people each bringing their own unique gifts and approach offers many different ways to share the Gospel Message. These might include music, drama, dance and IT.
- A team made up of people age under 30 are likely to be more in touch with current youth culture. Young people may relate to people closer to their own age.
- The presence of a team of young people who have chosen to join a mission team is in itself a witness.
- Spending time on a mission team

gives team members an opportunity to step back from normal life to discern their own future.

- The team can support each other as a community.

“For our new East Anglia Mission Team (called the Ignite Team), we are looking for three young people age 18 -29, initially for a year, starting in September 2015. We’re not looking for people who are perfect, but like the disciples, people willing to have a go!,” Hamish said.

The team will share a house together with all accommodation, food and living costs provided. Also team members will receive a generous monthly allowance. Much of the team’s work in schools will involve music, drama and IT, to communicate the Gospel Message in a way young people can relate to.

It is particularly suited to anyone who wants to develop skills in these areas. or experience working with young people. But anyone is welcome to apply.

Could this be you, or do you know someone who should apply?

For more information see www.catholiceastanglia.org/uk



Dates for diaries

January 4
Epiphany Candlelight Mass, Poringland, Norfolk

February 1
Regional Youth Mass in Peterborough

March 7
Flame II (National Event), Wembley

May 2 - 4
Ignite Diocesan Youth Festival, Swaffham and Walk to Walsingham

May 30/31
Celebrate Family Conference, Bury St Edmunds

June 14
Regional Youth Mass in Cambridgeshire

June 28 Regional Youth Mass in Suffolk

For more details
www.catholiceastanglia.org

We are looking for people to join the first IGNITE TEAM

The brand new full time Diocesan Youth Mission Team

Sharing the Gospel Message with Young People

- **Develop your skills in music, drama and tech**
- Gain valuable experience working with children and young people
- **Gain a recognised youth work qualification**
- Accommodation food and all living expenses provided plus a monthly allowance
- **For those age 18 (by September 2015) - 29**
- From September 2015 – July 2016
- **Ideal as a Gap year (can be extended)**
- For more information see www.catholiceastanglia.org/youth

New Year Epiphany Candlelight Mass

Followed by refreshments, a bonfire and fireworks

For all young people across the diocese

6pm – 8pm Sunday 4th January 2015

at The White House, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH.

Please arrive in good time to ensure a parking space and seat

Organised by East Anglia Diocesan Youth Service. Tel: 01508 492202 Email: dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk

Contact details

Diocesan Youth Office,
The White House,
21 Uppgate, Poringland,
Norwich, Norfolk
NR14 7SH

Tel: (01508) 492202
Mobile: (0781) 2004934
Email: dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk
Leave a message if no answer.

NEWS

from

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Friends look for new committee officers

The Friends of the Cathedral are looking for a new chairman and secretary after Brian Lewis and Pat Walter resigned at the annual general meeting.

Brian said he had been in the role for 12 years and Pat much longer.

Brian told the meeting: “We both thought it was time for a change and this was a good opportunity with a new bishop and a new dean to lead the friends forward to a stimulating future.”

He invited members to think about filling these positions and discuss it with him later.

Brian Dowler was willing to continue as treasurer and as all the other committee members agreed to serve for a further term and they were duly elected.

Brian said the proposed new streamlined constitution had been circulated with the AGM notice. It would enable the organisation to become “more fit for purpose” in a new century, he said.

No written comments or objections had been received and there were none from the floor.

It was proposed by Ellen Pitt and seconded by Michael Harben that it should be adopted and agreed unanimously.

A motion to increase the subscription for a waged adult to £20 and concessionary subscriptions be raised “pro rata” was also carried unanimously.

Dean Fr David Paul said that St John’s was not only a real gem because of its architecture which made it a tourist “must” but also a liturgical wonder – a place built for the worship of God.

The “cathedra”, the Bishop’s chair and the associated furniture were now the outstanding items needed to complete the re-ordering of the Sanctuary initiated by Bishop Michael and faithfully carried out by Fr James, the previous Dean.

He suggested that this might be the next project to be considered by the Friends.

Catenian celebration



Diocesan clergy with members of Norwich Catenian Association pictured at the Park Farm, Hethersett. The widows of deceased Catenians are also invited to this event hosted by the circle president who this year is Philip Hoy pictured surrounded by the clergy.

Tribute to ‘charity man’ Derek

Derek Mahoney was described at his funeral as one of the most charitable men in the diocese but in many ways this appeared an understatement.

He joined the church when he married Romana, his wife pictured with him right, and went on to take a very active part in its life.

Among many achievements as a committed Catholic he helped found a youth club at St John the Baptist and worked tirelessly to ensure its success.

But his greatest achievements came during the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s.

While taking out aid to Bosnia he made friends with an American nun Sr Muriel in Medjugorje and became her lifeline for help for local people in villages ravaged by war.

Sr Muriel looked after many Christian and Muslim people, mainly the elderly who lived alone and were isolated.

Derek collected aid and money for a number of years and helped bring comfort to them.

When Sr Muriel needed a car because her own had come to the end of its useful life, Derek brought her a Volvo estate.

He collected end of season seeds from the horticultural producers and took them out to Bosnia so families could grow vegetables in the spring and survive.

At his funeral at St John the



Baptist Cathedral a letter of gratitude and tribute to Derek was read out.

At home in Norwich his charitable works continued. He will be missed by many people in the parish and further afield.

For many years Derek would collect house-bound parishioners and bring them to daily Mass and a natter with friends at the Cathedral.

This was part of the life of a great charitable man.

At the time of writing Romana was seriously ill and now lives in a care home.

Day of perpetual Rosary



The Cathedral of St John the Baptist held a day of perpetual Holy Rosary on the last day of October the month is traditionally dedicated to the prayer and the Cathedral, like so many other parishes throughout the diocese, the prayer was recited each day.

“To mark the end of the month of the Holy Rosary many families signed up to a rota which meant it was prayed constantly throughout the day at the Altar of Our Lady of Walsingham,” Fr Michael Collis said.

“The day ended with the procession around the Cathedral (pictured above) carrying the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham and then Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given.

“Confident in Our Lady’s prayers we know this day brought many graces to the parish and to the diocese,” he said.

Advertisements

Thanks to everyone who sends in material but please give documents a descriptive name.

The newspaper is now on the web and can be accessed from the diocesan site. But please remember when sending photographs of children to make parents aware they may be used in the newspaper and on the website.

If you would like us to identify a child by name, written parental permission must be obtained for this.

Send material to:
Patrick Byrne
The Editor,
Catholic East Anglia,
The White House, 21 Upgate, Poringland,
Norfolk NR14 7SH.
Tel: 01603 627409 and email:
patrick.byrne5@virginmedia.com
Deadlines: Catholic East Anglia is bi-monthly and printed early in the month.
Material must arrive by 25 January for the MARCH 2015 issue.





News from communities and parishes around the Diocese

New seafarers' chaplaincy

Bishop Alan has opened a new seafarers' centre at King's Lynn port initiated by seafarer charity Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) and largely funded by the Merchant Navy Welfare Board.

The facility offers visiting seafarers a dedicated space to relax and communicate with their families back home.

Sr Marian Davey, AoS Port Chaplain at King's Lynn, said: "This is a big first. Up till now, crew had to go into town to buy top-up cards to be able to contact home. They have free use of Wi-Fi and internet at the centre funded by AoS."

The centre will be a place where seafarers can chat with

the port chaplain and volunteers as well communicate with friends and families after months at sea.

Bob Jones, chairman of the MNWB said: "With ships usually docking for no more than 24 hours, crews are often unable to leave the port. This facility will provide much needed respite and act as a base for AoS teams."

It will also help sailors attend church services and pray.

Alastair McFarlane, Port Manager East Anglia, said: "Seafarers spend a lot of time on board their ships and with this service we can offer them a home away from home."



Sr Marian is the new chaplain at King's Lynn port

Mass for deceased brothers



Mass was celebrated by Bishop Alan for the deceased brothers of the Order of Knights of St Columba province 27.

CWL in Peterborough mark 60th

The Peterborough Section of the Catholic Women's League recently celebrated its Diamond Jubilee with a Thanksgiving Mass at St Peter and All Souls Church.

It was co-celebrated by Fr Waldi Smialek and Fr Damian Karmarz who paid tribute to the work which section members undertake within the parish and the community.

Guests included branch president Teresa Wiseman, Alison Love - previous branch president and section members from Cambridge, Lowestoft and Wymondham.



North Walsham mark Cambodian feast

The Cambodian feast of Pchum Ben or the celebration of ancestors was marked by the North Walsham parish on 26 September.

"Fr Mark Hackeson, pictured right, presided at the parish Mass and demonstrated his impressive command of the Khmer language as people from across the diocese gathered in remembrance of those who have died but are still very much with us in the peace of Christ," Katie Maidment said.



Couples learn of richer life

Two couples from the Diocese East Anglia headed to London last month to take part in SmartLoving, a worldwide marriage enrichment programme offered by the Diocese of Westminster.

Run by couples for couples, the seminar covered issues such as expectations, forgiveness, communication and sexuality, in an accessible and positive way.

The two couples, one from Norwich and the other from Ipswich, said it was a very worthwhile experience.

Juliet Belderbos from Norwich attended with her husband Stephen and said it was grounded in Catholic teaching, the talks were illustrated by personal anecdotes offering funny and courageously honest examples of the ups and downs of real marriages.

"It did not feel as though saints were lecturing on impossibly high ideals, rather that these were regular people trying to live - and help others to live - authentic love and the joy of true Christian marriage.

"Plenty of time was given for couples to work through the material together

in private.

"It was this opportunity for dedicated time out of busy lives which was most appreciated."

The seminar had offered couples "the chance to work through issues which cause recurring problems in relationships".

Three priests were available for confession on Saturday evening, after which a vigil Mass was celebrated by Bishop Nicholas Hudson, who spoke words of great encouragement and warmth.

Both couples agreed that choosing to attend the weekend was a big commitment, not least for those who need to arrange childcare.

But it is a worthwhile investment, offering formation, guidance and, above all, the opportunity for couples to devote time to nurturing their marriage.

SmartLoving is run by the Diocese of Westminster's Office of Marriage and Family Life. More information on www.smartloving.org and by emailing edmundadamus@rcdow.org.uk

Sikh boy who became priest

Fr John Doman, former parish priest at St Charles Borromeo in Wisbech 2005-2011 died in September at Ratcliffe in Leicestershire.

Sean Finlay from the parish paid tribute and said: "The Irish missionary priests in Tanzania, were not exactly thrilled when a young boy scout, from a devout Sikh family, declared that he wished to become a Christian and a Catholic priest.

"The fathers feared a backlash from his religious community. Harjit Singh, at his baptism he took the names John, Mary, Joseph Doman, displaying the characteristic can do attitude."

He was sent to England to one of the Rosminian houses (Institute of Charity) to test his call. The local Archbishop Cyril Cowderoy told him to go away and think carefully about what he was asking but he was not to be deterred and eventually began studying at Derryswood near Guildford.

"Multitasking was no bother to John, so in addition to study he undertook to renovate the plumbing in the community house and replaced many of the large steel windows," Sean said.

John was ordained in 1982 and following a spell as assistant priest at St Peter's parish in Cardiff and a short time at the headquarters of the Institute in Rome, he was dispatched to Southern India where he helped to setup a thriving outpost of the Rosminians.

"A protégés, Fr Binu, chaplain at Loughborough University lovingly looked after him during his final illness," Sean said.

He will be remembered for seeing the needs of the most marginalised, both local and the newly arrived migrants from Eastern Europe and even took a homeless man into his presbytery.

"With the assistance of the then East of England Development Agency he secured funding to set up the Rosmini Centre which has become a busy thriving social hub and yet another concrete reminder of this self-effacing man's energy and enthusiasm," he said.

He contracted cancer and despite a short remission he died surrounded by three members of his Sikh family, three of his community and three friends from his Wisbech parish.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam dilis. (May his dear soul rest on the right hand of God. - Sean Finlay



News from communities and parishes around the Diocese

Diocese in lead part in St Teresa celebrations

Celebrations are under way to mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of St Teresa of Avila and the Diocese of East Anglia is playing a leading part.

The diocese has a major Carmelite Monastery at Quidenham in Norfolk. Bishop Alan will celebrate Mass there at 11.30am on 28 March, the birthday of St Teresa, followed by a buffet lunch. For more details please contact srshelagh@quidenhamcarmel.org.uk

An exhibition to mark the 500th anniversary is coming to St John the Baptist Cathedral from 7-22 March before it goes to the monastery on 27 March until 7 April.

Later in the year it is also going to Walsingham where there will also be a Carmelite Family Pilgrimage on 11 July.

At the request of the Spanish Ambassador, Cardinal Vincent Nichols will celebrate Mass in honour of St Teresa in Westminster Cathedral on 9 May.

Jointly hosted by the sisters of the Quidenham Monastery and the local Discalced Secular (OCDS) groups the first of three afternoons of talks and reflections on different aspects of Saint Teresa will be held on 16 May.

The focus of this afternoon is her influence on the lives of the sisters and group members. The afternoon will include refreshments and time for discussion, and will end with Sung Vespers. To register for this free event please email Sr Shelagh.



Pilgrim walkers taking a well-earned break by the sea on their journey across the combined parishes

Walk marks joint anniversary

To mark the sixth anniversary of the merging of the parishes of Sheringham and Cromer Bishop Alan celebrated on the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham at St Joseph's.

A small group of parishioners (and three parish dogs!), joined Deacon Andrew Neate to walk from Cromer to Sheringham.

Starting from Our Lady of Refuge in Cromer the group walked on the cliff path down onto the Cromer promenade then along the beach to West Runton for lunch.

The final stage went again onto the cliff path and then to climb Beeston Bump where the party could enjoy a fine view of the whole of the parish area of Cromer and Sheringham.

Deacon Andrew led a short prayer for the parish community and its priest.

The group finally walked down into Sheringham to enjoy a well earned cup of tea at St Joseph's.

Those that took part enjoyed the experience and felt this was a good sign of Parish sharing.



Violet's biker thrill

When Violet Butcher, pictured left, of St George's in Norwich, gave up her moped in her 80s she missed the thrill and had always wanted to ride pillion on a Honda Goldwing.

For her 90th birthday the parish Leisure Group arranged it for her.

Despite one trip being rained off she was taken to Goldwing Owners Club of GB "Wing Ding" rally at Banham Zoo where she was given a number of rides round their circuit.

Doctor in slavery plea

Rev Dr Inderjit Bhogal recently addressed a meeting of the Wisbech Interfaith Forum.

The meeting at Trinity Methodist Church in Wisbech was attended by 25 people.

In his address "Our peace, our world" Dr Bhogal said he had long wanted to visit Wisbech because of the work of Thomas Clarkson to the abolition of slavery.

Earlier in the evening he had gone to view the Clarkson memorial and paid his respects to the man whom he described as a giant in breaking the chains of slavery.

Dr Bhogal said slavery was still very much alive in our society as sex and people trafficking.

"It is a scourge and a blight on our society and we need a present day Clarkson to shatter the chains again."

Sean Finlay, from the Wisbech parish' said it was a very interesting meeting.

LIFE TO BE ADMIRED: Leonard Cheshire

Model Christian who lived and died in the Diocese of East Anglia

“Leonard Cheshire!” At the end of World War Two – and right up until his death - his name evoked an immediate response. It was a household name: a name that meant courage, duty, service, compassion, and Love. With passing time it has receded into soft focus. It is time to sharpen that focus, and remind ourselves why Leonard Cheshire – name and person - was so recognisable.

In the 1930s the 18-year old Leonard went to Oxford with the vague idea of becoming a lawyer. Rather than studies, however, his time revolved around enjoying life in a frivolous and undisciplined way. This included learning to fly - for fun not for service - for he foresaw “a great and glorious career in which adventure and wealth were to be the principal ingredients”.

Almost immediately after Finals in 1939, war was declared, and Leonard was called up into RAF Bomber Command. Within months a new man was born: a man of foresight, leadership, determination and courage.



As a young man he was feted as an RAF hero
By 1943 he was Squadron Leader of the renowned “Dambuster” Squadron 617. With great skill he developed the technique of low-level flying to mark targets for accurate bombing. He won the DFC, and then three DSOs - and 1944 the Victoria Cross, not for a single act of bravery but for completing 100 sorties with great personal courage. He was the most decorated airman in the RAF. Unsurprisingly, he was selected as the British witness when the Atom Bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

It was said of him that there “was an almost mystical air about him without affectation or pretension”. But with the cessation of hostilities what was he to do? He himself said “The only thing I am trained for is to kill”.

Hitherto, Leonard had been only a nominal Christian, with an unformed view of the Almighty. A chance discussion in a Nightclub convinced him of an intimate God who influences each human being by living in him. The Holy Spirit began working in Leonard to spiritualise the natural strengths he had developed in wartime. His energy immediately turned to exploring Christianity, trying to find a Church in which Truth, Unity and Authority were dominant.



His work was so valued it has continued today

Simultaneously he began developing schemes to help ex-servicemen, housing them on estates where they worked on the land. To this end he acquired *Le Court*, a 25 bedroomed property in Hampshire, and just as the scheme seemed about to collapse, an ex-soldier dying of cancer, landed almost literally in Leonard’s arms. Without a second thought he took in Arthur Dykes, caring for him, washing, cleaning and feeding him.

It happened that Arthur was a Catholic. Fortuitously, as he neared death, Leonard was told that a priest should be called. He was deeply moved by the simplicity and prayerfulness of the administration of the Sacraments. This experience of the Catholic Church in action inspired him, and, finding in her the Authority he sought, he entered the Church on Christmas Eve 1948. From that moment his life was lived with Jesus his focus, the Sacraments his strength, prayer his constant companion: his motivation always to ‘Love God and love his Neighbour’.

Arthur Dykes was followed by more ex-soldiers, and others for whom the incipient NHS had no place. Leonard turned away no-one, looking after all, feeding and nursing them when there were no other helpers. His restless energy led him impetuously to establish more homes - in England first, and then abroad. In very few years there were 80 in the UK and over 250 worldwide.

But unremitting work led to Leonard’s first cross: he contracted TB himself, being hospitalised for two years. Enforced idleness increased his intense spirituality through hours of silent prayer, focusing on the image of Jesus’ Holy Face, as seen on the Holy Shroud of Turin. Soon after recovering he married Sue Ryder, herself the founder of a Charitable Foundation, arising out of her work for refugees during and after the war. Consequently, with the birth of two children, he had a family of his own.

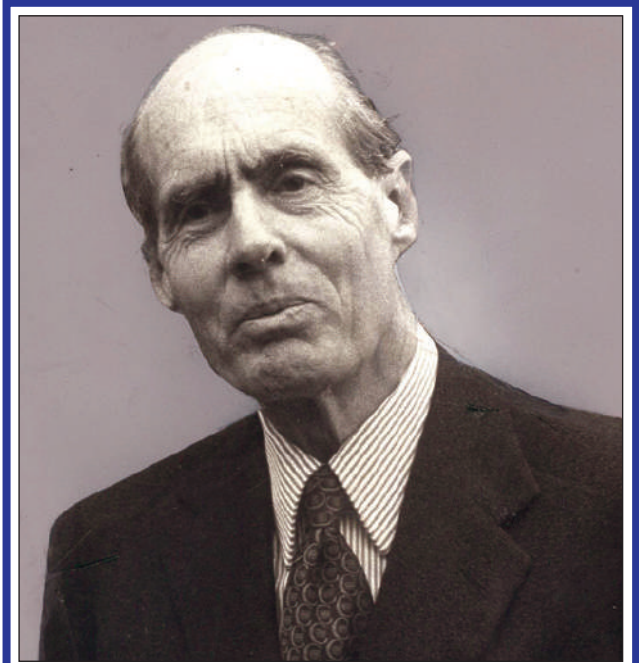
He cared deeply about people and their lives



another cross awaited him: he developed Motor Neurone Disease. Becoming increasingly immobile, he retired from administration, and devoted his time to deepening his relationship with Christ. Finding it hard to pray, he focused his spirit on each of the 300+ Cheshire Homes in turn, offering his intentions and suffering in union with the disabilities borne by those homes’ residents. His life as it neared its end, increasingly showed how grace building on nature leads to holiness.

He died on July 31st 1992 and was buried where he had lived, at Cavendish in Suffolk. Leonard Cheshire once said that “A man of prayer is the man whose work becomes his prayer”. Was he perhaps speaking of himself?

His name, his Christian charity, his holiness, must not be forgotten.
Leonard Cheshire, pray for us!
FR MICHAEL JOHNSTONE



Leonard Cheshire

O God our loving Father, we commend to You your faithful son **Leonard Cheshire**.

In time of conflict and danger
he provided forthright leadership
to those under his command,
graciously showing compassion
to the weak and fearful.

In time of peace gave himself wholly
to those in need of respect and service

Father and lover of all, grant that through
his prayers Your desire for all
to be united in your Son may be fulfilled;
and that all Christians may follow
Leonard Cheshire’s example
in loving service to their neighbour.

We make this prayer through
our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Leonard Cheshire, pray for me!
May your prayers grant me the grace of

..... Amen
Please acknowledge any favours received to:
“Leonard Cheshire”, c/o The White House, 21
Upgate, Poringland, Norfolk NR14 7SH

BUILDING BRIDGES Please help Tunes for Peace

Your support is needed to continue the popular Tunes for Peace project, Fr Paul Maddison says, and he explains why.

Music is a unique language that has the ability to unite people from different cultures and tongues, bringing them together to create an environment where all peoples from different nationalities, beliefs, and ethnic backgrounds work together in harmony.

Thus, music can be a tool to build bridges between people and create rapprochement, not only among people from different nationalities, but also people within the same nationality from different religions or cultural practices.

In the Palestinian context, building a musical group in a local town where Christians and Muslims live together, creates a great opportunity for them form a single unit, where they share their skills and experiences, all of which enriches the local spirit. It is this idea that supports our goal of building local bridges between the Palestinian people and the international community as well.

Moreover, this musical experience allows students to release their emotions and express themselves creatively. Through campaigns that compose strong music and dynamic lyrics, they also relate to and unite people in the common goals of peace and justice.

Such is the project “Tunes for Peace” organised by the Palestinian Society for Rapprochement based in Beit Sahour, the Shepherd’s Fields. Here over 70 young people learn and play together in a spirit of mutual respect and hope, underpinned by the language of music and performance.

Given the power of music to further these initiatives, Tunes for Peace aims to serve the community generating harmony in both music and cultural relations. It is a fact that there are many young Palestinians in Beit Sahour who wish to learn music and have the skills, but cannot afford to pay for the proper equipment nor the expensive fees to attend a music school.



Bishop Alan welcomed by the musicians during his visit

Music is not generally offered as a subject in the state school system. Therefore, this project serves as a great support centre for those students, and will also complement the goals of the Rapprochement Centre to give Palestinian students an opportunity to develop their musical knowledge and skill.

The situation in Palestine is very unstable on social, economic and political levels, which negatively impacts on the Palestinian people, and particularly the youth, who shape the future. They will directly affect and participate in the building of their society, currently fragmented by the ongoing occupation.

In 2013-2014, a UK-based Charity, Pilgrimage People made a significant contribution to the project which helped Tunes for Peace project to introduce more instruments to the students which allowed us to serve more beneficiaries.

Pilgrimage People traces its roots to May 2000 and a pilgrimage to the Holy Land organised by Fr Paul Maddison, a Catholic Priest from the Diocese of East Anglia. Bishop Alan visited the project during his

2014 tour of the Holy Land and was entertained to a concert by a number of the students.

While it is true that music alone will not solve the problems of the Palestinian people, it will at least serve communities in need, giving some students a chance to express themselves artistically, and positively affect how they view their role in society. Furthermore, music study here can inspire and provide the foundation for future musical careers.

In addition the Rapprochement Centre has been able to form its own musical group which acts as an ambassador for peace, performing in different regions of the world, reaching a wider audience to make the voice of peace heard in a new and unique way.

The programmes which the Rapprochement Centre provides will create new means of expression for Palestinian youth, lead children upward from violent experiences, and establish the potential for positive change in an evolving society.

If you can help support this wonderful project; any donation, however small, can be sent to Pilgrimage People, Stapleford Granary, Bury Road, Stapleford, Cambridge CB22 5BP.

Thank you for giving these young people such a wonderful opportunity.

FR PAUL MADDISON



Tunes for Peace inspires Palastinian musicians to play their own music



The readings were sung in Latin by those acting as deacons



The altar servers, above and below. Special kneeling rails were set out for receiving Holy Communion



Before the Pontifical Mass in the Extraordinary form began Bishop Alan and the clergy taking part processed to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel for a period of reflection. At the beginning of the Mass those taking part stood before the altar to pray, above. Pictured left are the congregation and the view they had of the liturgy.

Historic celebration for St John the Baptist Cathedral Pontifical Mass for All Saints

A Pontifical High Mass celebrated for the Solemnity of All Saints in the Extraordinary Form in St John the Baptist Cathedral was hailed as an historic event.

It was the first time for several decades a bishop in England had celebrated such a Mass in his cathedral.

Bishop Alan was assisted by priests of the diocese as ministers: Dean Fr David Paul and Fr Denys Lloyd assisted as deacons at the throne, Frs Michael Collis and Henry Whisenant acted as deacon and subdeacon at the altar, and Fr Michael Johnstone was the subdeacon of the cross.

The bishop was aided by his secretary, Fr Pdraig Hawkins, and members of the Institute of Christ the King, including Canon Gilles Guitard who was MC, and Canon Pierre Poullain who was assistant priest.

The Second MC was Richard Hawker. The music, which included Victoria's polyphonic Mass setting O Quam Gloriosum, was performed by singers conducted by Christopher Hodkinson and accompanied by Nigel Kerry on

the organ. The majority of the servers came from Cambridge.

In the choir were clergy both from the diocese and further afield, including the Right Reverend Dom Cuthbert Brogan and the community of Farnborough Abbey, as well as Norbertines from St Philip's Priory in Chelmsford.

The Mass was attended by a congregation of more than 300, some with experience of this form of the Mass and others who came to discover it.

"Many remarked on the beauty of the liturgy and the sense of prayer," Fr Henry Whisenant said.

"Those who came for the first time discovered that some aspects in this form of the Mass differ from the Ordinary Form.

"For example, the bishop does not face the people during the Eucharistic Prayer, but the same way as them, to show that he leads them in offering the sacrifice of the Son to God the Father:

"The use of Latin emphasises the historicity of our faith – that Christ was revealed and

preached during the Roman Empire – but also the universality of our faith: as one Body with one Spirit, the worshippers use a common liturgical language.

"The elaborate ritual and vestments show the heavenly joy that we anticipate in the liturgy – indeed, in heaven we will participate in the great perichoresis, the elaborate and solemn "dance" of the Holy Trinity, in the company of all the saints!

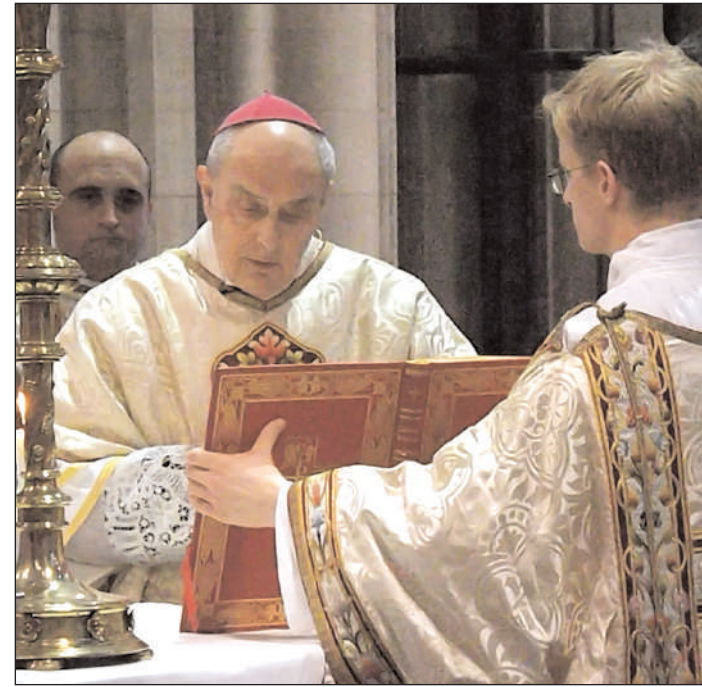
"Joyful could well be used as the word to describe the atmosphere of this Mass that Bishop Alan so graciously celebrated," Fr Henry said.

In his homily Bishop Alan said the Mass was a celebration of a great feast and the fellowship of faith.

"Today we celebrate all those who died in the faith of the Holy Spirit inspiring us and pointing the way to one true faith.

"All are called by their baptism to be saints, called by Baptism into the fellowship of the saints."

By Fr Henry Whisenant and Patrick Byrne



New ways of understanding power of Christmas by Mgr Tony Rogers

I once heard Christmas carols being played in a large hospital in the middle of October, and while that's pretty exceptional, it is true that many of us are 'carolled out' by the time Christmas comes around.

The same is often true of "The Christmas story" – the readings we hear at Christingles, carol services and Nativity plays.

But that doesn't mean that the readings assigned

in the Lectionary at Christmas are any the less fresh or new, because God speaks to us in the here and now, not just in past memories.

It's not a matter of saying to ourselves 'I've heard it all before'.

The Word of God is not like a person telling us the same story over and over again.

Each time we listen, each time we read, it's as if we come across something we've never

encountered before.

The gospels themselves bear witness to the richness of the message. The events surrounding Jesus' birth are only found in Matthew and Luke's account.

Mark sets the beginning of his gospel against the prophecy of Isaiah about the voice of the messenger crying in the wilderness to prepare a way for the Lord.

John's account, written later than the three other gospels (known as the Synoptics) has a totally different presentation of Jesus coming into the world as 'the Word made flesh.'

The stress of Matthew and Luke is on the human origins of Jesus (the genealogies), while John stresses his divinity. The beginning of his gospel makes it clear that God took on human flesh.

God became incarnate in Jesus.

But there is another wonderful way of proclaiming this.

A text in the Roman Missal, taken from the Roman Martyrology, and based on the scriptures, can be sung at the beginning of Midnight Mass.

And a beautiful, but little known sequence for Christmas (The Laetabundus) has these power-filled words: "And the Word of God Most High self-imprisoned doth lie in our body."

The Rosary: Pondering with Mary

by Fr Henry Whisenant

In the Gospels, Mary doesn't say much.

A few words to the angel Gabriel, a hymn of God's praise to Elisabeth, a question to the boy Christ in the Temple, a petition to the grown Christ at a wedding, a pithy command to the servants standing by. But we always have a sense that with Mary there is much more going on under the surface.

When the angel Gabriel announces her divine motherhood, we are told that Mary "considers in her mind what this greeting could mean".

Her intellect is alert and active, and trying to get a hold on the mystery of the angel's message.

Again, after the finding of Jesus in the Temple, and his surprising explanation of his actions, saying that he must be "about his Father's business", the Gospel tells us that "Mary pondered all these things in her heart".

In both of these descriptions, we see that Mary is a woman of deep interiority, considering in her mind and pondering in her heart the mysteries that surround and show forth the life of her Son. In the prayer of the Rosary, we too do the same.

In our Lady's presence, like thoughtful children at her feet, we caste about in our mind to understand the mysteries of Christ's life and his mother's: Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious.

In her company, we ponder these events in our hearts and interiorise them.

The repetition of the "Hail Mary" in the Rosary is not the vain repetition of the pagans that St Paul criticises, it is the repetition of one who knocks at a door, seeking understanding.

Some will ask: how do I pray the Rosary properly?

In the words of the great apologist Peter Kreeft, the best way to learn how to pray is to pray.

The best way to learn how to pray the Rosary is... to pray the Rosary! We need not give up because we get distracted, or because we don't feel we pray it well.

A mother prefers a child who addresses her distractedly to a child who never addresses her at all.

Perhaps if we are not used to praying the Rosary regularly, even a decade or two could be a good way to start.

But if we are regular about it, then even if we are distracted, the considering in our minds and pondering in our hearts with Mary will slowly but surely orient us towards a treasure that the world cannot take away.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

Christmas
2014

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- page 9**



**RAF hero who
became social
reformer
- on page 11**

Cathedral fayre story and picture to come

Invested in Order of Holy Sepulchre

Bishop Alan and Mgr Peter Leeming, parish priest of OLEM in Cambridge, were each installed knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem on 22 November.

They were invested with the robes and insignia of the order by His Excellency Dr David L G Smith, Lieutenant of the Order in England and Wales and His Excellency Bishop Kevin McDonald, Grand Prior in England and Wales.

Ten knights and dames were installed at a Mass of investiture in St Georges Cathedral, Southwark. The Mass was attended by 200 existing knights and dames from all sections of England and Wales, including eight knights and dames from the Diocese of East Anglia.

The priests in the order each had a mozetta, a short cape covering their shoulders, and emblazoned with a large red Jerusalem cross.

During the Mass, the Chancellor of the Order read the Brief received from the Cardinal Grand Master in Rome. As Bishop Alan, and separately Mgr Peter, stepped forward, they knelt at the altar before the Grand Prior who invested him with the mozetta and placed the cross around his neck.

Bishop Alan had attended a day seminar in London, along with 11 other investees. Mgr Peter had attended a similar event earlier that year, followed by a Vigil Service at St Georges Cathedral.

This prepared them for entry into the order and is reminiscent of the crusaders in the 12th and 13th centuries from whom the order originated.

After the Investiture, Bishop Alan and Mgr Peter attended a grand lunch of the knights and dames at the Great Hall in Lincoln's Inn in London.



Mgr Peter Leeming, Mgr Eugene Harkness, His Excellency Dr David L G Smith, Lieutenant of the Order in England and Wales and Bishop Alan after the investiture, above and with Bishop Kevin McDonald and guest below



Christmas message from Bishop Alan

The celebration of the birth of Our Lord is an occasion marked by awe and wonder at the beautiful reality that 2,000 years ago, in the poverty of a stable, God became man and shared our human condition.

It is also marked by great joy, both because of the mystery we celebrate and also by the fact this season often brings families and friends together to spend time with one another and to enjoy together the celebrations traditionally attached to this celebration.

It is absolutely right and proper that we mark Christmas and the whole Christmas season with great festivity and celebration - not just to remember what God has done for us in Christ but also because we are brought in to a

closer relationship with one another.

It is here that we do not simply remember Christ, but we find him alive and living amongst us today.

This is why we cannot forget those who live in poverty, hunger, homelessness and loneliness.

Christ identified himself with these our brothers and sisters. As we seek to serve them with practical love we identify ourselves with them too and in this discover Christ himself alive and living amongst us today.

S John will remind us in his Gospel that at Christmas The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:4).

In the Incarnation, Christ experienced for himself the fullness of human life. Through the Incarnation, He has made

all human experiences an opportunity for us to grow in closer union with Him.

Our daily lives, with all that they include, our work, our relationships, our leisure time, the good we do for others, everything that goes to make up our day, are ways for us to meet Jesus Christ afresh and also an opportunity to help others to meet him.

For whatever we are doing, whatever we are experiencing, Christ has already been there before us and he has made it holy, he has made it a path to God.

So let us celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ with great thanksgiving and joy. As we contemplate the beauty of the Christmas Crib, let us be drawn into a deeper relationship with Christ and with our families and

friends. Let us be challenged by the Incarnate Christ as we discover Him in the needy of our world.

And let us remember that the God who became man in Jesus Christ, continues to walk beside us here wherever our path through life leads us, loving us and encouraging us, drawing us to himself.

May the Christ Child bring you peace and joy and may the prayers of Mary and Joseph bring God's blessing on your families.

**A very Happy and Blessed
Christmas to you all!**

**+ Alan S Hopes
Bishop of East Anglia**



Cribs for sale at St Francis' fayre

Many parishes, schools, groups and individuals are now preparing for Christmas festivities. The picture shows an event at St Francis of Assisi School in Norwich where Mary Rossington was selling cribs and other Christmas items. Also pictured are Veronica Byrne and Michelle York.

Maggie's gift

Margaret Stobo, known to many as Maggie, a parishioner for many years at the Sacred Heart in Nayland, has bequeathed the residue of her estate to the Diocese of East Anglia.

Maggie died in 2011 and through her enormous generosity left a gift of £1m to Woldingham School.

The legacy to the diocese amounts to £2.3m, a very large amount by any standards, finance manager John Pitt said.

"This money will be used to underwrite suitable projects in the coming decades for the benefit of the whole diocese," he said. Please remember Maggie in your prayers.



Advertisement

A Happy and Holy Christmas



News from communities and parishes around the Diocese



Fr David Bagstaff with Bishop Alan



Parishioners celebrating, above, and Deanery clergy with Bishop Alan, below



Fr David inducted at Diss

On his first visit to the parish of St Henry Morse at Diss Bishop Alan presided over the induction of Fr David Bagstaff.

Parishioners from Father David's previous parish of North Walsham, representatives of other churches in the town and members of Father David's family joined the congregation.

One of the guests was Fr Simon Blakesley, now parish priest of Newmarket, who built the new church.

In his homily Bishop Alan said there were four essential foundations to being a priest.

"A priest was called to be a man of prayer: prayer should be at the heart of his daily life and that of each member of the parish community.

"He was called to be a man of the Eucharist, that, through the daily offering of Mass, he would grow in God's likeness.

"He should be a priest of reconciliation, becoming in reality an agent of God's

merciful and healing love. When we experience God's forgiveness, the Bishop said, we too can become conduits of His love.

"Finally the priest must be a man of study: he never preaches himself: always Jesus Christ, always His gospel," Bishop Alan said.

With Father David's help, said the Bishop, the parish community would be an effective sign of the New Evangelisation, and of God's love and mercy.

Growing in holiness had to be at the heart of the parish vision.

Fr David then renewed the promises made at his ordination, and the congregation was invited to offer him their support and encouragement. He was given the key to the church as a symbol of his care for the building and its community.

A celebration supper for all followed the Mass in the church community room.



Parishioners enjoying the celebration at St Luke's

St Luke's Silver Jubilee

After a long time of preparation and prayer, the communities of St Luke's Parish celebrated their Silver Jubilee in style on 20 September.

A brief history book was produced with contributions from priests serve at the Peterborough parish, the religious sisters, the parishioners, new and old.

John Fisher School and various groups in the parish provided music and entertainment as a prelude on the evening before the main event.

A cake with the picture of St Luke's Church on top was cut, see the picture.



The guest at the main celebration was Bishop Alan who celebrated Mass at a packed church with deanery clergy and former priests of the parish including Mgr Paul Hypher, Fr Henry McCarthy, Fr John Warrington, and Fr Luke Goymour.

Fr Luke is a member of the parish ordained to the priesthood four years ago.

Parish priest Fr John Minh said: "Mass on the Sunday was presided by Mgr Hypher who built St Luke's church. He was so pleased the communities he saw 25 years ago have grown to become cosmopolitan."

Fr John's presentation

After 13 years at East Dereham, a special presentation was made to Fr John Barnes at Aldiss Park, home to Dereham Town football club.

More than 130 people attended to see Fr John receive a cheque as a gift from all the parishioners and a scrap book with many mementos, photos, and letters of appreciation.

Fr John was met by Deacon Martin Sanderson, Donal Hannon - chairman of the parish council and Rex Baker - head of the finance committee.

Donal gave the speech, and the cheque was presented by Catherine Perkins, outgoing head of finance committee.

Antonia staying in touch

Antonia Moffat, staying in touch with the Christian communities in the war zones of Syria and Iraq, recently sent two large images of the Divine Mercy which she had blessed in Vilnius, Lithuania in front of the original painted under the direction of St Faustina.

"The first one arrived in mid August and was for Archbishop Samir and his Cathedral in Damascus and for all Syria," Antonia said.

"The Image now stands at the entrance of the Archbishop's Cathedral near St Anthony's Statue.

"The second one is for Patriarch Sako of Baghdad for Iraq but we had thought it lost but it arrived later.

"I sent both Images to Lebanon. Now we have to pray that somehow this other Image may be taken to Iraq."

Salette priests now at All Souls

Bishop Alan presided over the Induction Mass of the three new priests at St Peter and All Souls in Peterborough.

Parish priest is Fr Adam Sowa who is accompanied by Fr Waldimar Smialek and Fr Damian Kramarz.

All three are from Poland and belong to the Our Lady of La Salette Missionary Order which has its origins from France but has spread throughout the world.

The order was inspired by an apparition of Our Lady to two children, Maximin Giraud and Melanie Calvat in 1846.

They were looking after cattle when Our Lady appeared to them and gave them a message of repentance and devotion to her son.

The order set up at Salette founded a missionary school after finding it difficult to recruit followers from the secular clergy.



The three priests from Poland are among many of the order who are serving parish communities throughout the world but especially in North America.

They were welcomed at their induction by Bishop and Alan and the parish deacons Claudio

Chiappinelli and John Bedford.

Pictured here are Bishop Alan with The Provincial of La Salette Order Fr Andrew with Frs Adam Waldimar and Damian Fr John Mihn (Dean) with Deacons John Bedford and Claudio Chiappinelli.



Tributes to Chancellor 'Fr Brown'

Fr Peter Brown retired as Chancellor of the Diocese of East Anglia in September after 43 years service to the church.

Born and brought up near Haverhill, he trained for the priesthood at Osterley and Oscott and was ordained in 1971.

After assisting in parishes in Slough, Corby and King's Lynn, he was parish priest in Downham Market, Wymondham (14 years) and Cromer (11 years). He also served as Chancellor for nearly 20 years.

Former Wymondham parishioner Pam Phillips paid tribute to Fr Peter and said: "During his time with us, the interior of the Church was completely renewed - heating, flooring, lighting and the like.

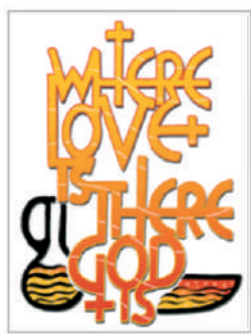
"The new Church Hall was built and paid for, with a state-of-the-art kitchen, of which he and the CWL are still proud.

"The parish was enormous, with five Mass centres (including Quidenham and Attleborough, where the parish priest was assisted by the Carmelite Chaplain).

"The annual Parish Picnic often attracted 150 parishioners and friends to Eccles Hall - to see who could be the one to push Fr Peter into the Pool!"

Fr Peter retired from active parish life in 2008 to his cottage in Wells, where he still says a weekly Mass.

"THANK YOU for all you've been and done for so many of us," Pam said, echoing the feelings of many.



The Joy of the Gospel Learning Together

24 January: Fr. Adrian Grafty will explore the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels.

Parish Pastoral Centre, Newmarket CB8 8LT

7 March: Maurice Lynch will explore the Passion Narratives in the Gospels.

The Parish Hall, Wymondham NR18 0QE

Completely Free - bring a packed lunch 11am to 3pm - why not share a car so more people can join us?

Preparing for the New Evangelisation

NEW EVANGELISATION

Hospital removes barriers: People want to talk and pray

Meg Jackson is the fourth evangelist in the series of interviews with women bringing the Good News to others. Rebecca Bretherton talks to her about her work as part of the chaplaincy team at Addenbrooke's University Hospital in Cambridge.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am the youngest of seven children from a huge Irish Catholic family in the North West. I now live in Cambridge and have two lovely daughters. I have never really planned the way my life has turned out, God seems to have given me opportunities at just the right time.

You worked as a teacher?

One of the things I loved most about my time teaching at St Mary's School in Cambridge was organising the school's fundraising for Lourdes and for projects in Zimbabwe: fancy dress runs and lots of cake stalls. One girl called our activities FUN-raising rather than fundraising, which they certainly were!

This work naturally led me to visit Lourdes. At first, the town put me off as you have to walk past all the gift shops but when I reached the grotto it was different. There is something really special about the place. Watching my students grow in understanding and empathy as they cared for the sick pilgrims with us was very special.

And now you look after the spiritual needs of the sick at Addenbrookes.

The NHS recognises the importance of looking after the whole person and supports our work. The chaplaincy is a multi-faith community and we have a fantastic relationship with our Anglican and Muslim colleagues.

However, there are just so many Catholics at Addenbrooke's that we have to concentrate on supporting them: patients, their families and hospital staff.

The hospital chapel is a lovely haven for prayer. We are lucky as it is in a prominent place. Staff and patients come to Mass which is celebrated every Monday at noon. When I go into hospital I stop in the chapel to pray that I will help someone today. Sometimes my help is obvious but at other times I just have to hope that what I said or did made a difference to someone's life.

Tell us what it's like visiting the wards.

Well, we don't do "cold calls" as such: either the patient or a relative has asked for us. When people are in hospital they have plenty of time to think about their lives and their fears. Often they are facing death. Hospital removes barriers: people want to talk and pray.

I will talk about anything the patient wants to discuss, from God to nail varnish! People rarely want to talk about pain, although often this is something they are coping with.

Usually they need time to put their own thoughts in order and are concerned about their families. I always have a prayer book with me and somehow, even when I open it at random, the prayers seem to fit with the patient's thoughts.

So how are you evangelising?

Some people have been away from church for many years and for various reasons. The hospital visitor maybe the first contact with the Church for a long time. I may be the one they can talk to honestly about their situation.

God must be at work because even when the patient list seems endless we get to see everyone and give them the time they need. We can help people realise that God is loving, God is forgiving. There is still time for them to get back on track with their relationship with Him.

We take holy communion to those who want to receive the Eucharist.



Hospital chaplain at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge Meg Jackson

We arrange baptisms for young children. We have wonderful priests who come to hear confessions and anoint the sick. Some people are scared by the idea of anointing: they still think of it as the 'last rites'. I explain that it is a sacrament of healing, to give strength and support. It is not a sign that the doctors think you are about to die.

Isn't encountering so much frailty and illness difficult?

Despite the fact that we are often with people near the end of their

lives, it is not miserable in hospital. It is a real privilege to share this time with patients and families. I have learnt so much from the faith of people I have met here.

The Data Protection Act means that even if you tell the hospital that you are Catholic, they cannot pass on your details.

If you, or someone you know, is in hospital and would like a visit you need to ask for the chaplaincy team to be informed.



Fr Patrick Cleary

Two vocations directors help 'discernment'

When Fr Patrick Cleary applied to the Diocese of Northampton to be a priest in 1970, it simply involved an interview with the bishop and gathering one or two testimonials.

Today the procedure is more involved with health checks, psychological tests, selection interview, references, retreat, etc.

He said: "When Bishop Alan asked Fr Michael and I to take on the work which Fr John Warrington had been doing for the past few years I realised we needed to get up to speed quickly. The diocese has four seminarians and several applicants.

"Luckily, the annual conference for vocations directors took place one month after our appointment.

"It was quite inspirational to be with a team of priests so dedicated to the work of helping others with the process of discernment.

"A priest psychiatrist, spoke of the necessity for each of us, directors and candidates, to have an inner life where we try to respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Without this our work may be professional enough but hollow and unworthy of such a great calling."

Fr Michael said: "The role of vocations director is described as

the "best job in the diocese" and I am beginning to see why.

"When an individual comes forward and says that they are interested in finding out more about the priesthood and about vocation it is the beautiful privilege of the director to walk with them to help them see more clearly what the will of God might be.

"It is quite a daunting role because it shares the responsibility of discerning whether a particular man is called to serve as a priest.

"The individual is bravely and generously seeking to offer their life in service."



Fr Michael Collis