

OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY

The newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

FREE

March 2008



He was the first bishop of East Anglia

Patron Saint Felix given a new feast day in March

A new feast day has been established for St Felix (see above the icon at the rear of the sanctuary in St John's Cathedral) one of the patrons of the diocese and it is to be on 8 March which means it will be in Lent every year.

Bishop Michael has approved the revised 'Diocesan Proper' for East Anglia, with dates and prayers for saints special to the diocese.

He said: "East Anglia has long been a land of saints. There may well have been Christians in the area in Roman times, holy men and women of God who lived and proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"St Felix and St Fursey played key roles in bringing the Gospel to East Anglia, and from then onwards this part of England has been blessed by so many people who lived their faith in a courageous and inspiring way, giving their lives in different ways.

"We rely on them to make intercession for us today."

St Felix was the apostle of the East Angles and the first bishop of East Anglia.

"Today, we are called together as a diocese to continue his work, inspired by the example of all the saints proper to our counties, and especially under the patronage of Our Lady of Walsingham," Bishop Michael said.

"This new Diocesan Proper gives due recognition to our three diocesan patrons, Our Lady of Walsingham, St Felix and St Edmund.

"All three celebrations are now feasts."

For many years, St Felix has been commemorated on 13 May in East Anglia, and yet his proper feast day appears to be 8 March.

The diocesan commemoration has been transferred to that date.

Information about St Felix is rather sparse and sometimes contradictory.

We know he came from Burgundy in Gaul (France), possibly from one of the monasteries founded there by the Irish missionary, St Columbanus.

Founded school

Around 630, Felix travelled to England where he was welcomed by the saintly Honorius, the fourth Archbishop of Canterbury.

After a few months in Kent, Honorius sent Felix to evangelise the East Angles.

Felix worked at first in close collaboration with King Sigebert, a devout Christian who had been exiled in Gaul during the reign of his pagan brother and became a Christian there.

When he became King of East Anglia, he committed himself to the conversion of his kingdom which had already switched several times between Christianity and paganism.

Felix became the first Bishop of East Anglia in 630. He established his See at Domroc (probably Dunwich, a Suffolk sea-coast town which has since been swept away by the sea) and continued his ministry for 17 years until he died on 8th March 647.

Felix founded a school for boys, and abbeys at Bury St Edmunds and

Soham. Many places across East Anglia claim connections with St Felix. His relics were eventually moved to Ramsey Abbey.

Felix preached with great success in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

Bishop Michael said: 'Like myself, St Felix came to East Anglia from Kent!

"He originally came from Burgundy; I go back to Burgundy every year to the Taizé community, so the links between our two regions continue.

"Felix is the Latin word for 'Happy' or 'Joyful', and the foot of our word 'felicity'; we too are called to bring true happiness to an unhappy world by proclaiming and living together the joyful news of Christ, and we can best do that if we radiate together the joyful love of the Risen Christ to all we meet.

"Let us make 8 March an important day in our diocesan calendar each year, and in every parish, so that we are renewed in our dedication to continue his great work in East Anglia today."



The deacons Formation Week was once again held at the English College in Valladolid in November and was led by Abbot Laurence of Ramsgate Abbey. The subject was the Gospel of Matthew in preparation for their preaching this year. As Abbot Laurence had only recently come out of hospital, the deacons were thankful he was able to come.

On the Wednesday of the week, which is traditionally a free day, they had an outing to Segovia, where the abbot celebrated Mass at the tomb of St John of God. The nine deacons who attended found the week really enjoyable as well as informative. They are pictured above with the abbot at Segovia.

Planning for pilgrimage

Planning is under way for the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham on Bank Holiday Monday 5 May.

The bishop has invited all the children who will this year be making their First Holy Communion to attend with their parents as well as all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

The attendance of these will set the tone of the pilgrimage.

Fr Peter Rollings from Our Lady Immaculate and St John the Evangelist at Sudbury said music will reflect the presence of both of these groups.

"In line with the diocesan theme for the year the pilgrimage will focus on the Eucharist."

Bishop Michael wants people to focus on a thought from Pope Benedict's letter *Sacramentum Caritatis* which explores the Mass as a Sacrament of Love: "Mary of Nazareth ... the model for each of us, called to receive the gift that Jesus makes of himself in the Eucharist".

Marriage day

Couples and families are invited to a celebration Mass for Married Life with Bishop Michael at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on Saturday 28 June at 11am.

This has become an annual event with couples and families making new friends across the diocese and celebrating marriage.

More information from Lorraine Brooks on 01480 455621.



Fr David Jennings from St Peter and All Souls in Peterborough presents a Benemerenti Medal award - direct from Pope Benedict XVI - to Ursula Allen, 87, for her work in the Catholic Church. She is pictured at a flower arranging class at Moulton College.



A highlight of the year in East Anglia, and in Holy Week, is the Chrism Mass at St John's Cathedral on the Wednesday night. This year the date is 19 March and all are invited to attend when clergy, religious and laity witness the blessing of the holy oils.

NEWS FROM BISHOP MICHAEL

HAPPY LENT!

Yes – Happy Lent! This season is not meant to be a time when we make ourselves miserable, but a sacred season given to us so that – through prayer, fasting and almsgiving – we can better prepare to celebrate the joy of Christ’s Resurrection at Easter, and renew our Baptism. We are already half-way through Lent. Perhaps we can each renew our commitment to make the most of the final few weeks. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Chrism Mass at our cathedral during Holy week.

Back from Cambodia

Everything for this March edition had to be written by the end of January, and a lot has happened since then. I paid my fourth visit to Cambodia in February (my third since becoming bishop), mainly to visit all of the communities there which are linked in some way with East Anglia. There are already 12 of them! Maddy Heath from Cambridge, and a group from North Walsham and other parishes, were going to be there the same time as me. I will give a full report in May, presuming that I got there and back in one piece!

I was looking forward to seeing so many old friends, and practising my few rusty Cambodian words again. I especially wanted to see various projects that East Anglia has supported since I was there two years ago, including roofing and repairing the old church at Ta Om, and supporting the small and poor village of Nikum which was our special diocesan project in 2007. I will have come back from Cambodia with a new project for 2008.

Nurturing Nikum

You have seen quite a few photos of the village of Nikum (near Battambang City) in this newspaper over the last year. Their priest, Fr Gabby from the Philippines, has been very good at keeping us informed. During 2007, our diocese contributed a grand total of about £15,000 (\$30,000) to Nikum. As a result, they are able to build a kindergarten and provide other resources. I will give more details in the next edition, but Fr Gabby has sent some new photos taken around Christmas time.



Children’s class in traditional Cambodian dance.



Kindergarten children at Nikum singing an action song before receiving their Christmas gifts. On the left hand side, you can see Christmas cards from East Anglia hanging from the roof of the crib.



The kindergarten teacher leads an outdoor session: the kindergarten should have been built by now.

Back to Christmas

Christmas probably seems a long time ago now, especially with Lent well under way, but I really must thank so many of you for sending Christmas cards to Catholic communities in Cambodia and the Holy Land. Fr Gabby in Nikum (Cambodia) wrote: ‘Thanks for the flood of greeting cards that reached Nikum during the Christmas season. We were very happy to receive them, and the people decorated our Nativity scene with them. Of course, we remembered and prayed for all the card-senders. Thank you very much!’ And just a few days before Christmas, Fr Heri from Siem Reap wrote: ‘We have received so many Christmas cards that are decorating a special board in front of the church. So far, we have received more than 100 Christmas Greetings. How wonderful it is for us to receive all these wishes and prayers from so many of your people. We are 6,000 miles away, but we can feel the warmth of your love and friendship.’

LEARNING TOGETHER

These are the next three modules for our diocesan adult religious formation programme. Everyone is welcome.

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8th March 2008 at St Laurence’s Catholic Church,
91 Milton Road, Cambridge

‘Nourishing the Spiritual Journey’
Can the Church do more to help us in our
relationship with God? (P34)

A day exploring how to deepen our life of prayer, led by
Sister Diane Reynolds.

12th April 2008 at St Mary’s Catholic Church,
322 Woodbridge Road, Ipswich

Evangelisation: how to share
‘our faith story’ with others (P35)

Clare Ward, from the Catholic Agency for Supporting
Evangelisation, leads a day to help us better to share our
faith with others, and proclaim the Gospel to our world.

26th April 2008 at the Catholic Church,
21 Upgate, Poringland

Catholics and Buddhists in Cambodia (T35)
Bishop Michael will explore the history of the Catholic
presence in Cambodia, introduce Cambodian Buddhism,
and see how Catholics and Buddhists work together there.

You can register for each module by e-mailing:
learning.together@yahoo.co.uk
or by going to the ‘Adult Education’ pages on our diocesan
website and registering on-line,
or by writing to: **Diocesan Learning Together**
Programme, Parish Office, 14 Exeter Road, Newmarket
CB8 8LT

All modules are on Saturdays, with registration and coffee
at 10.30 and finishing at 3.00. Bring your own packed
lunch. Donations to cover costs will be welcome.

Helping Romero’s Cancer Hospital

Easter Monday, 24th March, is the 28th anniversary of the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero in San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador in Central America. A death-squad marksman assassinated him as he celebrated Mass in the chapel of the Divine Providence Cancer Hospital where he lived. He was devoted to the Carmelite Sisters, who still run the hospital today, and to the people there with cancer. The path to Romero’s beatification and canonisation has already begun, as a 20th century martyr who demanded justice for his people in the name of God.

On the 25th anniversary of his death in 2005, many of you very generously contributed to a special collection on Holy Thursday for the newly-founded Archbishop Romero Trust, of which I am a founding trustee.

I was wondering whether some of you might like to make a donation this year to support the Carmelite Sisters at Romero’s cancer hospital. It is a struggle to keep the place open, and any support would be most welcome. Some parishes may decide to hold a special collection on Holy Thursday. Many of you know that I have a special devotion to Archbishop Romero, but the whole topic of care for people with cancer is also dear to my heart. If you would like to help, please use the form below and return it to me. Very many thanks.

I am very conscious that I can seem to be asking you for money all the time! I have come to know the wonderful generosity of our diocesan family in East Anglia when a real need emerges, so please forgive me for suggesting yet another project.

I wish you every blessing and joy when Easter comes, the joy of the Risen Lord himself.

+ Michael

REMEMBERING ROMERO

I wish to contribute towards an ‘Easter offering’ to the Carmelite Sisters who run the Divine Providence Cancer Hospital in San Salvador, to help them run that hospital and care for the patients.

Cheques should be made payable to the
‘RC Diocese of East Anglia’.

Name.....

Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, etc)

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Amount enclosed.....

GIFT AID DECLARATION (if appropriate)

I wish the RC Diocese of East Anglia to reclaim tax on this donation. I have paid an amount of UK tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax claimed.

Signed.....

Date.....

Please send to:

Bishop Michael, ‘Romero Cancer Hospital’,
21 Upgate, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH

Registered charity no. 278742

THE BISHOP TEACHES

FORWARD IN THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

Thoughts from Church Fathers on receiving and welcoming Christ

Forward Together in Christ

Being truly 'traditional' is not about trying to live in the past, or to restore some aspects of the past; it is about moving forward while firmly centred on the Risen Christ himself and rooted in the life and teaching of his Church through the ages.

We do not live as Catholics today in isolation from our ancestors and their faith. They are one with us, and we have much to learn from them. Take for example two of the great 'Fathers' of the Early Church - St Cyril of Jerusalem and St John Chrysostom on the Mass.

This year's diocesan theme is 'Given for you, shed for you – receiving and being the Body of Christ'. We are focusing on Holy Communion, and especially on receiving the Body and Blood of Christ – with both prayerful reverence and joyful love.

In my Pastoral Letter for the Epiphany, I suggested that we each reflect on the way we receive Holy Communion, and also that we must allow Christ's presence to change us deeply. Receiving Holy Communion should make us a holy people, known above all for our love for God and for one another, especially those in need.

Take this, all of you, and drink from it

I very much encourage you to receive Holy Communion under both kinds at Mass when offered. Of course, you are entirely free to receive only under the form of bread, and we know that Christ, whole and entire, is received even under only one kind.

But the Mass is a sacrament, and the sacramental signs should be as full as possible. The official *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* from Rome states clearly (nn. 281-282):

'Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it is distributed under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident, and clear expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, as also the relationship between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Father's kingdom.... The faithful should be guided toward a desire to take part more intensely in a sacred rite in which the sign of the Eucharistic meal stands out more explicitly.'

That may sound all too 'theological', but it is Jesus himself who says to us: 'Take this, all of you, and drink from it'.

In their 1998 teaching document *One Bread One Body*, all the Catholic bishops of Britain and Ireland encouraged Communion under both kinds:

'Receiving from the chalice expresses powerfully the sacrificial nature of the Mass. By taking part in the Eucharist we are drawn deeper into the new and everlasting covenant which was sealed with the blood of the Lamb.

Our communion together in the blood of Christ is our communion with the sacrificial self-giving of Our Lord. As we take the cup of salvation, we say that we are ready to drink from the cup that he drank, and to give ourselves in sacrificial love as servants of salvation.' (n. 52)

Welcoming the King

Thoughts from St Cyril of Jerusalem

In my Pastoral Letter, I suggested that we should 'always receive Communion doing homage to Christ in your heart'.

The 4th century bishop St Cyril of Jerusalem has good advice for us on how we should welcome and receive Christ in Holy Communion:

'Make your left hand a throne for your right, since your right hand is about to welcome a king. Cup your palm and receive in it Christ's body, saying in response "Amen". Then consume it, taking care not to lose any of it.

After partaking of Christ's body, go to receive the chalice of his blood. ... Bow your head and say "Amen" to show your homage and reverence, and sanctify yourself by partaking also of Christ's blood.'

St. Cyril of Jerusalem also reminds us that receiving Holy Communion makes the Christian a 'Christbearer' and 'one body and one blood with him'. (*Catecheses*, 4,3).

No intinction, please

In passing, can I remind everyone that Holy Communion by intinction – in the sense of the person receiving Communion taking the host and dipping it into the chalice – is not permitted.

As indicated by St Cyril above, each person should receive the Host and consume it immediately, and then go to receive from the Chalice. This is not something special to East Anglia: it is laid down in official Roman documents (e.g. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, n. 44). Holy Communion must always be received from a minister, rather than given to oneself.



The Doxology at Mass in Cambodia

'God has no need of golden vessels but of golden hearts'

Thoughts from St John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople

John Chrysostom was one of the greatest preachers of the early Church, and is revered today as a 'Doctor of the Church'. *Chrysostomos* means 'golden-mouthed', a nickname given him for his eloquence. But he was far from popular with the rich and powerful in Constantinople, and was banished several times. He died on the journey the last time this happened. Why was he so controversial? You can see from his homily opposite (Homily 13, 1-2, on St Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians).

His words apply to us today as much as to 4th century Constantinople. They echo great justice-demanding prophets like Amos in the Old Testament, and found a powerful new echo in the social teachings of Pope Paul VI in

the last century. Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict have stressed that taking part in the Mass demands that we live the Mass afterwards in our practical love for the poor and oppressed.

So let us allow St John Chrysostom's challenging words to touch our minds and hearts and also the way we live the Mass. Receiving Holy Communion should radically change our values, attitudes and priorities.

Would you honour the body of Christ? Do not despise his nakedness; do not honour him here in church clothed in silk vestments, and then pass him by unclothed and frozen outside. Remember that he who said, 'This is my body', and made good his words, also said, 'You saw me hungry and you gave me no food', and, 'In so far as you neglected to do this to one of these, you neglected to do it to me'.

In the first sense, the body of Christ does not need clothing but worship from a pure heart. In the second sense it does need clothing, and all the care we can give it.

We must learn to be discerning Christians, and to honour Christ in the way in which he wants to be honoured. It is only right that honour given to anyone should take the form most acceptable to the recipient and not to the giver.

Peter thought that he was honouring the Lord when he tried to stop him washing his feet, but this was far from being genuine homage. So give God the honour he asks for, that is, give your money generously to the poor. God has no need of golden vessels but of golden hearts.

I am not saying you should not give golden altar vessels and so on, but I am insisting that nothing can take the place of almsgiving. The Lord will not refuse the first kind of gift but he prefers the second, and quite naturally, because in the first case only the donor benefits, in the second case the poor get the benefit...

What is the use of loading Christ's table with gold cups while he himself is starving? Feed the hungry and then, if you have any money left over, spend it on the altar table. Will you make a cup of gold and withhold a cup of water? What use is it to adorn the altar with cloth of gold hangings and deny Christ a coat for his back? What would that profit you? Tell me: if you saw someone starving and refused to give him any food, but instead spent your money on adorning the altar with gold, would he thank you? Would he not rather be outraged? ...

Consider that Christ is that tramp who comes in need of a night's lodging. You turn him away and then start laying rugs on the floor, draping the walls, hanging lamps on silver chains on the columns. Meanwhile the tramp is locked up in prison and you never give him a glance.

Well again I am not condemning munificence in these matters. Make your house beautiful by all means but also look after the poor, or rather look after the poor first. No one was ever condemned for adorning his house, but those who neglect the poor were threatened with hell fire for all eternity and a life of torment with devils. Adorn your house if you will, but do not forget your brother and sister in distress. He and she are temples of infinitely greater value.

As Lent continues and Easter draws nigh, we are called to a new kind of life, centred on the Risen Lord we receive in Holy Communion.

+ Michael

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS IN FOCUS

Sacred Heart's food accolade

Sacred Heart Primary in Peterborough has been selected to become a national leader on school meals and food education by the new Lottery-Funded Food for Life Partnership (FFLP).

It is to become one of 180 flagship schools and communities across England that will be recognised as national leaders on food quality and food education.

Taking up the challenge laid down by Jamie Oliver's school dinners campaign, the Food for Life Partnership has been funded by the National Lottery over five years from 2007 to help transform food culture in schools across the country.

The Food for Life Partnership will now help the school to put more fresh, local & organic food on the menu and get pupils – and interested parents and community groups – cooking and growing food and visiting local farms.

Sacred Heart will now receive hands-on support from FFLP staff to achieve a Food for Life GOLD Mark, which will put us at the top of the league table on food culture in school.

This will mean that the catering team will get help sourcing at least 75% fresh, 50% locally sourced and 30% organic ingredients for our school meals.

For one week we will host the FFLP Cooking Bus, which will welcome, staff, parents and community groups on board alongside pupils to teach useful cooking skills in practical hands-on sessions.

A garden education officer will help the school community further develop an organic growing area in which pupils can grow food for school meals and cooking.

The school will be able to build

stronger links with community food businesses and one or more local farms.

Pupils will be given some of the most enjoyable and memorable experiences of their school lives, cooking and growing food and linking with a local farm.

FFLP regional co-ordinator, Abigail Tierney, said: "Sacred Heart Primary has been selected as a Flagship School because of their commitment to giving food the priority it deserves as part of their commitment to the life-long welfare and skills of their pupils.

They are also willing to share their learning with other schools."

Other schools wanting to get involved should visit <http://www.foodforlife.org.uk>



Year 6 pupils from St Thomas More school in Norwich visited a valley garden near St John's Cathedral and Earlham Cemetery as part of their 'Our locality in Victorian Times' history topic.

At the Plantation Garden, pictured above, they learnt about Henry Trevor, its creator, and how exciting gardening was in Victorian times.

What was thought of as common garden annuals like petunias and chrysanthemums, or palms and pine trees were in Victorian times, new and exciting.

This was the result of increased trade and exploration of countries in South America and the Far East.

The students had two very interesting talks and time to explore the garden fully.

In the afternoon, the visit to Earlham Cemetery allowed the children to discover more about the Victorians from looking at information on gravestones.

Nearby St John's Cathedral hall was used for lunch for the students and all the parents who accompanied them.



Healthy School

St Louis students have fun ski-ing in the French Alps

Students from St Louis Middle School in Bury St Edmunds have just returned from a ski trip to the French Alps.

On 13 January a party of 47 set off for Tignes and the party included 22 children who had never skied before.

Fred Grimsey, assistant headteacher, said: "We were fortunate to be met by the best snow conditions for years, with fresh powder, beautifully pisted runs and snow that squeaked with every turn.

"It never ceases to amaze how much

progress the beginners make, from those first tentative slides down about five metres of slope on day one to careering down from the top of the mountain on day six, in an 'almost' controlled crocodile, squealing with delight and excitement!

"Apart from learning a thrilling new skill, pupils learn a great deal about themselves: how to work with others as part of a team; to look out for each other, and the importance of a quiet, encouraging word when things do not go smoothly.

"Ice skating on a frozen lake, bumboarding, town trail, a quiz and disco were all part of the week's experience. Three people had an exhilarating ride on a sleigh pulled by a pisteur after falling and injuring themselves.

"Fortunately, nobody was seriously hurt and two were able to ski again. All returned safely a week later, exhausted from so much exercise but happy with their achievements and with plenty of stories to share with each other and their families."



More parish news

The editor Patrick Byrne needs more news about activities and people in the parishes. The best way is to send a few notes and a jpg picture by email or with a photograph in the post. Please send pictures separately not encapsulated into documents as when they are extracted up to 80% of the quality can be lost.

I look forward to hearing from you.

To get in touch with Patrick. Our Diocesan Family, The White House, 21 Ugate, Poringland, Norfolk NR14 7SH. Tel/Fax: 01603 627409 and email: ptjbyrne@patrickbyrne.go-plus.net

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YOUTH MATTERS (Oh Yes We Do!)

Contacting youth service

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

Tel: (01508) 494833

Mobile: (0781) 2004934

Fax: (01508) 495358

Email: dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk

There are often times when there is nobody in the office. Please do leave a message and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Be part of it

All diocesan youth events are planned by the Diocesan Youth Council who regularly meet with Hamish MacQueen, the Director of the Diocesan Youth Service and Bishop Michael.

If you have ideas or would like to 'have a voice', why not join. You need to be confirmed and aged 16-21. Meetings are held on Sunday afternoons, five or six times a year and end with Mass followed by Pizza.

Once a year they go paintballing (or something similar) and have an overnight retreat. If you would be interested in joining, contact the Diocesan Youth Office.

The Youth Council are also involved in letter campaigns against human rights abuses. Most recently they wrote to the Minister of Justice for China about the situation of *Hu Jia*, a peaceful human rights activist who was detained without a trial or access to his lawyer. Facing torture continues to be a real possibility.

Dates for 2008

Sunday 18th May

Hobble with the Bishop
Sponsored walk through
Thetford Forest raising money
for young people in Cambodia
and the Holy Land.

Friday 30th May

Go Karting
Details to be confirmed
June 29th

The Big One
Our main Diocesan event for
young people. Including
competitive games, a
barbecue, live music and much
more.

July 5th – 23rd

World Youth Day Pilgrimage to Australia

The deadline for booking a place on the World Youth Day Pilgrimage 2008 has passed but if you would like to be placed on a waiting list, and given a place if someone cancels, please contact the Diocesan Youth Service.

August 2nd-10th

Youth Pilgrimage to Taizé
Our annual pilgrimage to Taizé.
For those 17-29.

Mission team leads retreat

The Diocesan Youth Mission Team came together again in February to run a retreat for St. Ives Parish's young people and friends at Buckden Towers.

This has now become a much looked forward to annual event.

Hamish said: "Each year we take a different theme and this time we took the theme 'Believe' which was mainly looking at the Creed.

"It's something we say every week but don't always think too deeply about what we are saying, so we thought we'd have a closer look."

Hamish introduced the theme of the retreat by referring to the film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and especially the memorable line "It's time to ask yourself what you believe."

As well as some deep thinking about the Creed, amongst other things, there was morning and evening prayer; praise and worship sessions; a question and answer session; art, dance and song writing workshops.

Those taking part went on the now

traditional walk as well as enjoying a mime concert from the internationally acclaimed mime artist Steve Murray; and plenty of fun – especially during the Saturday evening entertainment which included 'jungle challenge games' and karaoke.

Having had Mass on the Saturday evening, the retreat concluded after lunch on Sunday with a short service led by the young people.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the retreat happen. Many of the young people said how much they enjoyed it.

Hamish said "I think I speak for all the team when I say we were truly inspired by the young people. There was something very special about that weekend."

The Diocesan Mission Team is made up of people aged 18-30 who have full-time jobs or are full-time students.

Next they will be leading retreat days in St. Albans School, Ipswich and then Notre Dame School, Norwich.

If you would be interested in joining the team (even if you could only spare a few days a year) then please contact the Diocesan Youth Office.



The young people from St Ives were involved in a wide range of activities on their retreat weekend but the main focus was the Creed.



Candlelight celebration

About 50 young people from all over the diocese came together in Poringland for a candlelight Mass on the eve of the Feast of the Epiphany.

This was a special Mass for all those recently confirmed or preparing for confirmation.

The Diocesan Youth Council had been very involved in planning this special occasion and three of its members provided the musical

accompaniment to Epiphany themed carols.

During Mass, Bishop Michael invited everyone to take a candle, light it and place it on the altar to signify giving our lives to Christ.

After Mass everyone traipsed to the Bishop's garden where an enormous bonfire, pictured right, had been lit.

Hot chocolate, jacket potatoes and fillings were served by the Poringland confirmation group,

while people warmed themselves standing around the fire. The evening ended with fireworks.

Hamish MacQueen, director of the Diocesan Youth Service said. "We were thrilled so many people came – far more than we guessed!"

"Both during Mass and standing around the fire, it was such a great atmosphere.

"You got the feeling people could have stayed there all night."



Some of the members of the Diocesan Youth Council enjoying a roast dinner after their annual retreat.



An Australian themed evening was the latest fundraiser held by the young people of St. George's Parish going to World Youth Day this summer.

The hall was decorated with green and yellow balloons and panoramic views of Australian beaches.

People took part in an Australian quiz and a raffle before being served a filling meal of traditional Australian food such as meat pies and Lamingtons. Entertainment was provided by Rolf Harris (who bore a striking resemblance to Hamish in a wig) and friends.

Many thanks to everyone who supported the evening, especially the Horse and Dray Pub, Ber Street, Norwich.





Progress with Narthex Fundraising

Since the early December announcement of the £1million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the Cathedral Narthex project, more than £114,000 had been pledged or received in new grants and donations as at the beginning of February.

Naomi Perowne, Cathedral development officer reported: “Applications to charitable trusts are really bearing fruit, as we suspected - or rather hoped they would, with the announcement of the HLF grant.

“This is so encouraging and if progress continues like this, we will soon be home and dry.”

The Geoffrey Watling Trust and the Paul Bassham Charitable Trust, both Norwich-based charities have each pledged £25,000; the Theodore Trust has awarded a grant of £30,000 towards the educational element of the project; the Allchurches Trust has given £5,000; and the John Jarrold Trust has donated £1,000.

Further applications are in the pipeline and the Cathedral Preservation and Development Trust is investigating possibilities of obtaining interest-free loans or preferential interest rates on a bridging loan so that work can begin as soon as possible.

Naomi said: “If there is anyone out there with a large capital sum not doing anything much at present that they would be willing to lend for a while, please do let us know!

The *Final Furlong* campaign launched in January brought in just over £28,000 in donations and pledges in its first few weeks.

Fr James Walsh, Cathedral Dean said “We are so grateful for all the financial generosity being shown both by the parish community and the diocese at large”.

Anyone wishing to make a donation or to offer support to the Narthex project can do so by calling the Cathedral Development Office on 01603 615288 (email:development@stjohnncathedral.co.uk)

or by visiting the Cathedral website (www.stjohnncathedral.co.uk).

A copy of “The Final Furlong!” leaflet may be downloaded from the website and copies are also available in parishes.



A young Catechumen writes his name in the book of life, above, and the choir that led the music pictured below.



The Cathedral has a great number of artifacts, statues and objects of piety for the visitor to reflect on. Among these is the Pietà - a statue of Our Lady at the foot of the Cross holding the lifeless body of her son just brought down from the Cross. The Pietà is between the Walsingham altar and the Ecumenical chapel. The Cathedral also has a very vivid Stations of the Cross as shown on the left. To look forward many Churches will have an Easter Garden like this one which was set up at the Cathedral last year.



102 at Rite of Election

One hundred and two people came with their godparents, sponsors, friends and families to begin the last stage of the entry into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church at the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent.

Fifty two Catechumens and forty eight Candidates came from all over the diocese to St John’s Cathedral in Norwich to sign the Book of Life or pledge themselves to finish a journey into the Church at the Easter Vigil.

Bishop Michael welcomed

them by saying that he had been quizzed about the meaning of the Rite of Election about who was voting and who would be elected.

He was asked was it like Super Tuesday in the American Primaries and he answered it was more like Super Sunday when the Catechumens and Candidates would be welcomed into the Church at the East Vigil.

The bishop said the people that had come on the first Sunday in Lent were the elected and there was only one voter and that was Jesus Christ who had called them to be part of His Church.

Reading out the Catechumens’ and Candidates’ names Fr James Walsh also noted their parishes which were Our Lady and English Martyrs in Cambridge, St Philip Howard in Cherry Hinton, Our Lady and St Walstan at Costessey, St Etheldreda in Ely, St Mary’s at

Great Yarmouth, St Felix in Haverhill, the Annunciation in Poringland and St John the Baptist in Norwich.

People from Peterborough came from St Peter and All Souls, St Luke’s, the Sacred Heart and St Oswald.

Other parishes represented were Our Lady Immaculate and St John the Evangelist in Sudbury, St Mary’s in Thetford, St Jude the Apostle at Whittlesey, Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury in Wymondham, St Hugh of Lincoln at Buckden, St Edmund King and Martyr at Bury St Edmunds, St Peter the Apostle at Gorleston, St Mary’s at Ipswich, the Sacred Heart in North Walsham, the Sacred Heart in St Ives and the University of East Anglia Chaplaincy.

In his homily the Bishop said that the Catechumens and

Candidates became daughters and sons of God through Baptism and that included them in God’s own family, Jesus Christ wanted to share our lives.

“Like the Gospel reading when Jesus wanted to take the tired fishermen who had worked through the night without a catch out once again into deep water he will lead you deeper into the life of the Church.

“Like the fishermen you will be going out into the world to bring in people. They were worried and you may be too but Jesus will always be with you.

“May the peace and message of Christ in all its beauty be part of your lives. On Super Sunday at Easter you will all be filled with joy when you come forward to receive Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion.”



CAFOD volunteer’s Fair Trade plea

Duncan MacInnes from the Cathedral parish visited CAFOD projects in Africa to see the importance of Fair Trade dealing to farmers and businesses there.

CAFOD said consumers worldwide spent £1.1bn on Fairtrade Certified Products in 2006. This is a 42% increase on the previous year - directly benefiting over 7 million people - farmers, workers and their families in developing countries.

But the Fairtrade system delivers more to farmers and workers than sales alone. Fairtrade Standards ensure long-term commercial relationships between the producer and its buyer.

This is absolutely fundamental in order for producers to be able to plan for their future.

Too many producers however all over the world continue to suffer from unfair trade, often struggling to cover the cost of production.

Similarly, too many workers in developing countries endure low wages, poor working conditions and are often



Duncan MacInnes, a local CAFOD volunteer tries out a World Gifts bicycle

denied the freedom to join a union. Besides continuing to lobby governments to make changes on international trade rules in favour of the poorest countries, incorporating Fairtrade products in our daily shopping routine is a way to send a powerful

message to industry and eventually force companies and governments to rethink their business models and policies. Fairtrade Fortnight is 25 February to 9 March. Mark the Event by trying some products in your local supermarket! For more information call 01603 624714.



Deacon Pat Limacher and Bishop Michael.



Families, friends, Godparents and sponsors came to see the Catechumens and Candidates begin the final leg of their journey into the Church at Easter.

Year book call

Copies of the new Year Book and Ordo for 2008 are still on sale in many parishes and features on the front Caravaggio’s famous painting Supper at Emmaus to set the scene for the diocesan theme: Given for you, shed for you - receiving and being the Body of Christ. But there is much more about the diocese in the year book.

Members of various commissions and their role are described. These include Dialogue and Unity which advises the bishop on ecumenical and inter-faith issues as well as attending meetings of equivalent bodies of other denominations.

Marriage and Family Life aims to help couples or individuals facing difficulty as well as promoting a Christian way of life.

Social Concern forms part of the Church’s response and raises awareness in the parishes of social need. Justice and Peace focuses attention on the important role of care for the poor at home and across the globe.

There is a great deal of information about the workings of the diocese, its experiences during the year, focus on young people, schools and many Catholic organizations in the book.

Book examines marriage gifts

A member of the Commission for Marriage and Family Life has written a book which looks at the relationship between wife and husband.

Anita Dowsing’s second book called The Gift of Self in Marriage comes from her own perception of a widening gap between the Church’s teaching on marriage and sexual morality and the practice of many people.

“My original intention was to cover those areas of sexual morality relating to the gift of self in marriage where the teaching of the Church and the behaviour of a significant number of Catholics differed widely, that is premarital sex, contraception and second marriage after divorce.

“In order to get a complete picture of the social context in which Catholics live their marriages today, it was also necessary to consider recent developments affecting marriage in society at large.

“These include new discoveries in the fields of biotechnology and embryology and the ethics associated with their use, as well as the interaction between human reason and religious faith, where these impinge on marriage.

“Although these areas of knowledge do not affect all married couples directly at present, they are important for a full understanding of the gift of self within Catholic thinking and practice.

“I have drawn on my own experience of married life, on conversations with others and also my reflections on the teaching of the Catholic Church on the gift of self in marriage over the years.

“The book is addressed to those, both Catholics and others, who find the Church’s teaching on the sexual morality of marriage as incomprehensible, unliveable and, in many cases, irrelevant, as well as to those who would like to deepen their present understanding of church teaching.

“The book is primarily aimed at those considering marriage, lay people involved in marriage preparation and support, as well as those already married.

“It is my hope that parish clergy will also read the book as a practical aid to preparing couples and caring for them and their families afterwards.”

Archbishop Peter Smith, a former Bishop of East Anglia and very active in this field, has written a foreword in which he said: “The book is a moving ‘wake-up’ call to all of us Catholics, and especially those who are considering entering marriage, or are concerned with preparing couples for marriage, or who have a role in helping those whose marriages are suffering strains and tensions.

“Her aim is to draw us back to a fuller understanding of marriage as the committed gift of a man and woman in a lifelong covenant of unconditional love.

“She is well aware of the forces in society which have made this more difficult over the years and doesn’t sidestep difficult questions.”

Anita Dowsing, born in Denmark, has lived most of her life in the UK and holds an MA in English Language and Literature and and PhD in Old English.

She has spent most of her working life in adult religious education.

More details about the book can be obtained from Anita Dowsing on 01603 811881.

Divine Mercy date

The Divine Mercy Pilgrimage at Walsingham will be held on Sunday 30 March and will be led by Mgr Keith Bartrop. The programme begins at 1.45pm with Opening Hymn, Welcome and Introduction followed by a talk by Mgr Bartrop

A Holy Hour, prayers, Benediction and Mass will be celebrated before Rosary and Veneration of the Image of Divine Mercy and Relics of St Faustina.

More details from the pilgrimage organiser Antonia Moffatt on antoniavb@talktalk.net.

Around the Diocese

Concern for twinned parish in Kenya

The tragic and violent events in Kenya are being watched closely by Catholics at Clare Priory in Suffolk which is twinned with an Augustinian parish in Baba Dogo, one of the poorest areas of Nairobi.

"We pray constantly for the parishioners of the Sacred Heart in Baba Dogo," says the Rev David Middleton OSA, head of the Augustinian Friars in the UK.

"Recent events made our prayers more urgent for their safety and for a return to peace.

"One of our parishioners, Tony Hornby, flew out to Baba Dogo in January for his fourth visit in just under three years," Father David adds.

"He was with one of his daughters, Anna, who had arranged to work in an orphanage for two months during her

gap year, in Kitale, about 100 miles north of Kisumu.

"I was very relieved to receive an e-mail from Father Tom Sexton, parish priest in Baba Dogo. He wrote that their movements were fairly restricted, but that they had managed a bit before having to cut their visit short.

"Father Tom said that our Sacred Heart parish in Baba Dogo has not been too badly affected, but there is a lot of tension below the surface. We all hope the tension disappears soon."

The parish partnership between Clare Priory and Baba Dogo was set up in 2000 to provide friendship and financial support.

"It focussed initially on paying the primary school fees for street children and AIDS orphans," Lawrence Garside, the project coordinator, explains.

"The partnership between the two parishes has continued to grow since

then. Several members of our parish have visited Baba Dogo and we have been able to increase our financial help year by year, thanks to the generosity of parishioners, local schoolchildren and local businesses, and friends and family around the country.

"Last year we were able to send a record £24,228 which included £2528 to sponsor three students at University."

Money from Clare is allocated locally by the parish council in Baba Dogo, and it goes a very long way, says Lawrence. "Every penny is accounted for. It all goes directly to Baba Dogo residents, helping with rents, medical fees, funeral expenses, transport to hospital and so on. The money is also helping to support children at secondary schools and a number of young people on technical and vocational courses.

Catenians' gift to school

Past president of the Norwich Circle of the Catenians Philip Hoy recently handed over a cheque for £4,471.30 to the Hall Special School in the city.

The school caters for children aged from four to 19 with complex needs and was Philip's chosen charity for his year in office.

The money will go towards a new communications centre for the school which will help pupils to develop speech and language skills.

On the day Philip and his Catenian brothers visited the school year 11 and 12 students were performing the Highway Man, a bawdy tale of hard drinking and wild living which Philip said reminded him of the Norwich Circle's regular meetings.



The Ladies Guild at St George's parish in Norwich raised £1,000 during the past year and were able to make donations to 10 charities with local connections. Among those to benefit were SVP, Assist Trust, Diocesan Sick and Retired Clergy Fund, St Edmunds Fund, St George's Organ Fund, the Big C, Hallwood Animal Sanctuary and the National Society for Epilepsy. But members say that life in the Ladies Guild is not all

about fundraising. Diana Conney said: "This year members visited the Plantation Gardens near St John's Cathedral where the tea was superb and each year we hold a memorial lunch much enjoyed by members." Any members who wish to join them in their work for the church and charity as well as having fun and friendship please contact Christine Evans on 01603 417759.

Group that helps Third World now needs volunteers and finance

Just Traid in the Bury St Edmunds parish is celebrating its 10th anniversary of providing a valuable service for producers and farmers across the world, especially in poor countries, but is facing hardship itself.

The St Edmunds justice and peace group began supplying fair traded goods locally in 1998 when it was offered accommodation and storage space at a redundant Church of England school in the town's St John's Street.

A fair trade shop was judged as an ideal way for the Churches Together organization to work alongside each other.

Kathleen Fleming, a member of the

Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission and a member of the parish, said: "We started off in a very small way opening two days a week but now it has grown we are open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 4pm with about 150 volunteers who include those organizing and manning their local regular church stalls which now stand at 40 plus those who run our very popular community cafe."

Although the project achieves a turnover of about £93,000, earning profits to support training for people working in developing countries is very difficult.

"We also have to pay business tax, rent,

accountancy services, gas and electricity."

The Bury St Edmunds Ecumenical Centre Trust (BECT) was formed to run the centre as a business and has attracted support from Age Concern who run an information and advice service from the centre and from Suffolk County Council who provide courses for people with learning difficulties plus arts groups including Irish dancing.

A credit union facility has also been set up recently. The charity needs more volunteers will to commit themselves as key workers and also they need money to restore the building.

Kathleen said: "The building was faced with

closure two years ago when we had to raise £200,000 to repair dry rot in the roof.

"The community Lottery Fund have given us £25,000 to pay for architect's and planning fees and it is felt they would not have let us have this if they were not prepared eventually to have the £250,000 we applied for."

Kathleen is involved in the Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace learning day on Fair Trade on Saturday 10 May at St Louis School in Bury St Edmunds when more will be revealed about the project.

Anyone who can help Kathleen and her group can contact her on 01284 750563.



A Healing Service and Mass took place at St George's in Norwich just before Christmas with Fr Tony McSweeney, Fr John Drew, Fr Gordon Cordy and Fr Dick Wilson presiding with Deacon Ian Hatfield assisting. Many of those who wanted to receive the Sacrament of the Sick were brought to the service by friends, family, volunteers and members of the SVP. Afterwards those who stayed were treated to tea, cakes and biscuits served by the St George's parish Ladies' Guild.



St Joseph's Church Sheringham designed by Giles Gilbert Scott

Centenary history plea

St Joseph's parish in Sheringham is celebrating a centenary this year and is a long way from its foundation as a small community with a chapel built in 1908.

The present church was built by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, famous for Liverpool Cathedral, Battersea Power station amongst others and he was responsible for the nave at Downside Abbey,

It is also now a listed building made possible originally by the support of oil magnate Sir Henry Deterding's wife.

Janey Valsler who is involved in the centenary celebrations, said: "We are hoping that through the publication of a booklet we can describe the evolution of the parish through the eyes of the parishioners.

"The Bullock family, one of the oldest in the parish, are working with the support of the Centenary

Committee and we are hoping that the readers of Our Diocesan Family will be able to help us.

"Terri and I are compiling the publication, but we live in Warwickshire and Kent. We were brought up in the parish and our parents (87 and 92 yrs old) still live there and attend Mass.

"Thanks to a very supportive parish we have obtained numerous snippets of very valuable information.

"We still have some members of the parish yet to contact who we know can help us. But we would like to hear from those further afield who may know of earlier times at Sheringham.

"We'd like to know a little more about the history of the parish."

Please send information to Janey Valsler 74 The Fairways, Leamington Spa CV32 6PP Telephone 01926 315018

BUILDING BRIDGES in the Holy Land

ABOUT HOUSING PROJECT



Bishop Michael & Fr Paul Maddison giving Holy Communion at Mass in Aboud

One of the major problems affecting the Christian community in the Holy Land is emigration. In 1900 Christians made up 17% of the population; today it is less than 2%. Many factors contribute to this problem, but a major one is the lack of affordable accommodation. Three or four generations of one family can live in little more than four rooms, and the possibility to build is often hampered by financial constraints due to the economic situation. Matters are made worse by the difficulty of obtaining permission to build even when the funds can be found.

There are a number of successful housing projects where people can rent low-cost housing which has been built by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The rental income goes towards the upkeep of the properties. If residents wish to purchase the property at a later date, they have the opportunity to do so at a favourable rate.

One small village seriously affected by a housing shortage is Aboud, about 16 miles from Ramallah in the West Bank.



New pupils at Aboud's Latin Patriarchate school!
The new homes may be for some of these children

Recent land confiscations by the Israeli authorities have meant that over 35% of the village lands now lie behind the “security wall” and are inaccessible to the families who used to farm them. The economic situation is far from satisfactory, with a large number of villagers presently without work. This lack of suitable and affordable housing can lead many families to consider leaving Palestine for negative reasons.

The Latin Patriarchate has identified 5 dunums of land (a dunum is 1000 square meters) on which to build around 40 dwellings along with the infrastructure of roads and communal spaces.

Local labour would be used to construct the housing project, so the money would provide income to people in the village as well as giving them the opportunity to build something several of them may well end up owning.

An Italian Diocese has already indicated that it would like to help with this project. The first priority is to purchase the land at a cost of £25,000. The Diocese of East Anglia has adopted the purchase of the land as its project for 2008 and we have committed to raising at least half this cost, some £12,500. So this will be an English-Italian joint diocesan project!

We will be fundraising for this project throughout 2008. If you would like to help, please see the donation slip on the right-hand of this page.

INTRODUCING ABOUD

The Christian history of Aboud is said to date from when Jesus and the Holy Family passed through Aboud on the way from the Galilee to Jerusalem. Local tradition holds that Aboud's residents received the Christian faith from Jesus himself, who is said to have preached here.

Aboud has about 2,200 residents, roughly half Christian and half Muslim. The village is a model of respect among religions. Christians and Muslims have lived there peacefully together for centuries.



Aboud's Catholic school educates Christians and Muslims. There are good relations between both communities, and they regularly share in events and feasts together.

Two Israeli settlements already sit on land owned by Aboud's residents.

The first was founded in 1980 as a military base, then converted a year later by the Israeli government into a settlement for Israeli civilians.

The second settlement was established as a military base in 1982. Both now occupy hundred of acres of Aboud's land, confiscated without any compensation.

Israel's wall will cut off Aboud from an additional 440 hectares, or 1,100 acres, of village land. Aboud's residents will suffer from the wall through the loss of water and olive trees.

Since 1967, Israel has severely restricted Aboud's use of the West Bank's richest aquifer, preventing the drilling of wells to access fresh water beneath the village. Therefore, Aboud's residents must purchase their water from Israel's national water company.

The barrier is destroying acres of Aboud's olive groves, uprooting more than 10,000 olive trees and cutting residents off from many more trees.

Many of these trees are more than a thousand years old and have been in their respective families for centuries. For Palestinian families, the olive tree is a symbol of life. Generations have provided for their families from these olive groves.



The parish priest of Aboud, Fr Firas, whose notes form the basis of 'Introducing Aboud'

CAN YOU HELP?

Would you like to support our projects in Cambodia and the Holy Land? This year's Holy Land Project is buying some land for new housing in Aboud.

The Cambodia project for 2008 will be decided during the Bishop's visit in February. Cheques should be made payable to the 'RC Diocese of East Anglia'.

Name.....

Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, etc)

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Amount enclosed.....

Anything you give will be divided equally between Palestine and Cambodia, unless you indicate below by ticking one or other that all your money should go to that project:

ABOUD (Palestine)

CAMBODIA PROJECT.....

GIFT AID DECLARATION (if appropriate)
I wish the RC Diocese of East Anglia to reclaim tax on this donation. I have paid an amount of UK tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax claimed.

Signed.....

Date.....

Please send to:
Bishop Michael, 'Building Bridges', 21 Ugate,
Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH

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BISHOP MICHAEL'S ENGAGEMENTS FOR MARCH AND APRIL

MARCH				APRIL			
1 st	College of Deacons at Poringland	17 th	Day at St Mary's School, Cambridge	27 th	March – 1 st April: Christian-Muslim Forum group pilgrimage to Jerusalem	16 th	Shrine Council Mass & Meeting at Walsingham
2 nd	Diocesan Youth Council at Poringland, 3.00-7.00pm		Reconciliation Service at Cathedral at 7.30pm			17 th	Annual Synod of Parish Priests at Poringland
4 th /5 th	Committee for Christian Unity		Chrism Mass at St John's Cathedral at 7.30pm			18 th	Norfolk Church Leaders meeting at noon
5 th	Suffolk Churches Together	19 th	Mass of the Lord's Supper at St John's Cathedral at 7.30pm	3 rd	Diocesan Finance Board at Poringland		Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together at 2.30pm
7 th -9 th	Christian-Muslim Forum residential	20 th	Good Friday Liturgy at St John's Cathedral at 3.00pm	5/6 th to 10 th	Parish Visitation to St Neots	19 th	Life Service at Poringland at noon
9 th	World Youth Day Preparation Day at Newmarket	21 st	Christians Together Service at Norwich Cathedral at 6.00pm		Bishops' Conference meeting in Leeds	19/20 th	Parish Visitation to Bungay
10 th	Bishops' Conference Standing Committee at Archbishop's House, Westminster		Prayer around the Cross at St John's Cathedral at 9.00pm	12 th	Diocesan SVP Mass at St John's Cathedral at 11.00am	23 rd	Peterborough Confirmation Group
12 th	College of Consultors		Easter Vigil Mass at St John's Cathedral at 8.30pm	13 th	Diocesan Youth Council at Poringland, 3.00-7.00pm	25 th	Confirmations at St Mary's, Ipswich at 7.30pm
15 th	Lay Ministers Commissioning Day at St Ives	22 nd		14 th	Cathedral Trustees at Poringland at 2.30pm	26 th	Diocesan 'Learning Together' Study Day on Cambodia
16 th	PALM SUNDAY					27 th	St Ives Confirmation Group 4.00pm
						28/29 th	Westminster Province Bishops overnight meeting in London

CAFOD's Cambodia work

CAFOD is offering parishes, schools and organisations the chance to see another aspect of the area of Cambodia that the Diocese of East Anglia has twinned with.

Banteay Srei, one of CAFOD's partner organisations in the Diocese of Battambang, has been working in poor rural communities there for over 14 years, providing materials and training to improve income generation and food security.

The project aims to increase the skills of women to manage their own activities.

Small village committees have been set up to represent women in the communities and to help support vulnerable people and families.

Issues being addressed include access to education for children; food shortages; women's leadership building; the need for better sanitation; awareness of violence against women; education on HIV/AIDs; loss of natural resources; migration from villages, resolution of land conflicts and repair of village roads and canals.

Clodagh Byrne, CAFOD's



Some of the women that CAFOD supports in Cambodia

programme support officer for Cambodia visited Battambang and met villagers working alongside Banteay Srei to improve standards of living.

Many have benefited from income generation opportunities such as home gardens and farms.

They are also successfully reducing chemical inputs and promoting organic fertiliser.

Sipratan, a local farmer from Bangreing Village said: "The improvement to our farm has really improved our lives.

"The home garden has given us better income and more food

security. We have become less dependent on the seasons."

CAFOD said: "The solidarity offered by the links being forged between the Diocese of East Anglia and the Diocese of Battambang are vital to overcoming many of the issues facing communities in Cambodia.

"If you would like more information or to arrange for a CAFOD speaker on Cambodia, perhaps to tie in with a parish event in support of the people and Diocese of Battambang, please get in touch with John Malley on 01603 624714.

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NEWS IN BRIEF + NEWS IN BRIEF

A practical day on how to be a caring parish is to be held by the Commission for Social Concern. The day takes its theme from St Paul's letter to the Galatians "You should carry each other's troubles and fulfill the law of Christ." It is on Saturday 19 April at Newmarket Parish Centre from 11am to 3pm. The day will offer parishioners an opportunity to share examples of best practice in responding to the needs of older, housebound, sick and disabled people. Presentations will be made experts and there will be an opportunity to meet people who have set up visiting or

caring groups. Organizers hope people will come from each parish. More information from Ita Flach on 01480 473252.

A specially commissioned pastoral team at Walsingham took care of the many people from the traveller community who came to the shrine on pilgrimage around the feast of the Assumption in August. The aim was to make them welcome and to help them make the most of their pilgrimage.

The shrine had also received a request for some of the traveller children to make their first holy communion. Bishop Michael asked Fr

David Paul of Cambridge to look after this and gave him the faculty to confirm some of the older children.

A pilgrimage to Walsingham organized by Fr Mathew George from St Mary's in Thetford for the Syro-Malabar community in the diocese attracted 360 people from different parts of Britain. The pilgrims originating from Kerala in India heard Mass celebrated by Fr Mathew in their own Malayalam language. It is hoped future pilgrimages will be advertised further afield and more Syro-Malabar communities will attend.



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