

OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY



The newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

FREE

January 2012

Parishioners at Diss end wait of nearly 60 years

Work under way at a new church

Work is under way on a new church costing £1m is to be built for the people of the parish of Diss in Norfolk after almost 60 years in a temporary home originally built to last just a decade.

Parish priest Fr Simon Blakesley said the church built in 1952 for about 200 Catholics in the area had outgrown the congregations coming to Sunday Masses. The new building going up in Shelfanger Road provides the extra space now needed and facilities including a kitchen, office and meeting rooms.

It is set to be completed in summer 2012 and in the meantime the United Reformed Church is being used for Sunday Mass and other services.

The parish now boasts more than 1,000 Catholics and is still growing.

Space was restricted in the old church which became very hot during the summer and cold during the winter because of its design of asbestos roof and corrugated steel walls.

"It has been a place that has been cherished and loved

by parishioners for at least two generations, Fr Simon said.

"There is that sense that it has been the family home, but as with all family homes you outgrow it and you have to move on.

"We have had tremendous support from the wider church community in Diss, and I am delighted that our building project is finally under way.

"Like any house move, there will be some stresses, but I am confident that we will thrive when we reach our new home."

Cash has been raised from the sale of the land on which the temporary building sits and a loan has been given by the diocese.

The land was originally bought from the Wren family, bakers in Diss, and a temporary church was erected while the parish saved for a permanent building.

It has taken almost six decades for the post-war dream of a new church to come to fruition.

Fr Simon Blakesley led a "breaking of the ground" ceremony in early December and said prayers of blessing for the new site at Shelfanger Road.

The new church designed by Hollins Architects of Framlingham will seat 270 people.

"After eight years in preparation I'm so pleased that the



A special service for Bishop Michael will be held at St John the Baptist Cathedral on Saturday 21 January at 12noon after which his ashes will be placed in the floor of the Chapel of East Anglian Saints behind the High Altar and close to the icon of St Felix pictured above.

All people from across the diocese are invited to an occasion when they can pay their last respects.

Fr Tony Seely RIP 1935-2011

Fr Tony Seely, who served as a priest in the Diocese for over 46 years, died peacefully on 7th December at Nazareth House in Southend-on-Sea.

Born and brought up in Norwich, he spent the last years of his active ministry at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist where he had been baptized in 1935.

Educated at Willow Lane Catholic School and then the Norwich School, he was a Norfolk man through and through and delighted in confounding incomers with words of Norfolk dialect.

He studied for the priesthood at the Beda College before returning for his first appointment at St Pancras in Ipswich, with Canon McBride as his parish priest and Fr Sam Leeder as one of his fellow curates.

He also served at King's Lynn, Swaffham, Woodbridge, Cambridge St Laurence's and Hadleigh.

His Requiem Mass, attended by many of the clergy who worked with him over the years as well as family and friends, was on 16 December.

CWL 'be still' day

The Catholic Women's League held a 'Be still' day at Southwold in September, see picture below, led by Magdalen Houlihan from the Clare community.

Alison Love said: "We were joined by some members of the Union of Catholic Mothers and all benefited from a day of finding God in the stillness of the day. Many of us have gone on to practice a period of stillness or quiet time in our daily and often busy lives.

"At the end of October we attended our National AGM and conference in Worthing. East Anglia had been asked to lead the night prayers on the Friday. We used 'Living waters' by Bishop Michael which blended perfectly in to our theme of 'Family - Heart and Hearth'.

"It was a joy and privilege to share Bishop Michael's teaching which was very well received by the 400 delegates."

Server Kay writes winning prayer for armed forces

A 12-year-old altar server at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Lowestoft, has won a competition to compose a prayer for our armed forces in the field of combat.

Kay Costen, pictured right, won the top award in the national competition organised by the Knights of St Columba.

It was open to all young people attending secondary school and aged between 12 and 18 years.

Kay's entry, already judged as the local winner at Lowestoft, went on to be picked as the overall national winner.

Her prayer is quite short, simple and spontaneous but nevertheless reflects some heartfelt sentiments.

Dear God

*For those soldiers who are risking their lives to save ours,
please give them strength and courage to face each day and night,
bring comfort to their family and friends at home
and keep these heroes safe in your hands,
Amen.*

Parish priest and Council 518's chaplain, Fr Brendan Moffatt invited her to read her prayer to the congregation at the parish Remembrance Day Mass after which he presented her with the her winner's certificate signed by the Supreme Knight.

A further prize of a copy of one of the new Missals was presented to her at a later date.

Her prayer, along with an anthology of other entries in the competition, may be included in a collection of the prayers to be published by the Knights of St Columba next year.



WHO IS 'THE DIOCESE'? by Fr Mark Hackeson

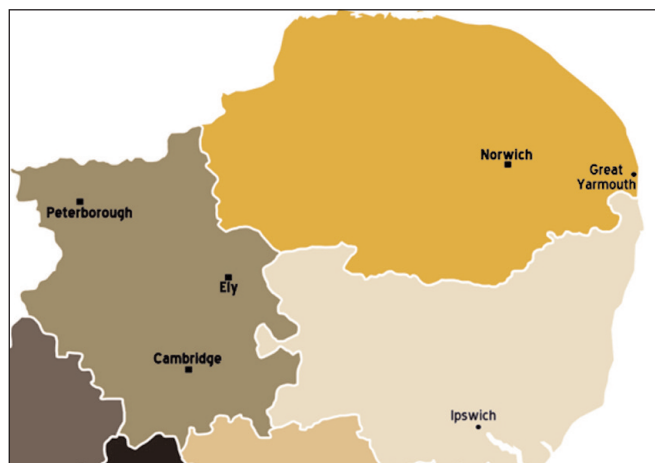
Welcome to 'the Diocese'

When I first came to live at Poringland in September 2003, the sign in front of the hedge outside the Lodge where I live, read 'Welcome to the Catholic Diocese of East Anglia.' I remember thinking that I had finally arrived – after serving as a priest in Norwich and in Great Yarmouth, finally I had come to the Diocese! Obviously both Great Yarmouth and even Norwich with the towering splendour of the Cathedral were outside the Diocese – now at last I was home! You will, I hope, detect the note of irony in what I write.



The White House in Winter

As the Diocesan Yearbook reminds us each year, 'The Diocese of East Anglia was formed on March 13th, 1976 by the decree *Quod Ecumenicum*'. Pope Paul VI formed the Diocese of East Anglia for the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire' and from 1998, when it was created, the Unitary Authority of Peterborough. So those of you who live in Norwich and Great Yarmouth need not worry – you too are in the Diocese of East Anglia!



Despite the irony in what I write above however, for many people, 'The Diocese' is a somewhat foreign and hazy concept. The parish, conversely, is known – a community to which they can put names and faces – a reality that is an everyday and concrete part of their lives as Catholics. Often when people refer to 'The Diocese' one can detect a note of suspicion, of disapprobation, even outright disapproval. Whilst the Bishop is seen as pastor and shepherd, hopefully benign and hard-working, behind him there lurks 'The Diocese' – a vast group of people in the shadows of the labyrinthine corridors of the Diocesan Offices in Poringland, working away in 'Sir Humphrey' mode to frustrate, limit and control the aspirations of both Bishop, clergy and people!

In fact, the corridors are not labyrinthine, although the number and arrangement of doors is sometimes confusing, leading to people walking into cupboards. The Diocesan Offices are in fact surprisingly small, the carpet threadbare, and they house surprisingly few staff – less in fact than some of our larger parishes. So I thought it might be good to 'introduce' the *real* people who work at the Diocesan Offices at Poringland.

Diocesan Finance Team

For most people who visit, or even telephone the Diocesan Offices, their first point of contact is with Angie Fox in the Diocesan Finance Office which is situated next to the main entrance.



Angie Fox

Angie it is who more often than not answers the telephone or the bell with her customary efficiency, humour and welcome. This office is perhaps the noisiest of all – often filled with laughter that percolates through the rest of the building. Angie is married to Bishop Peter Fox, an honorary Assistant Bishop in the Anglican Diocese of Norwich. Formerly he was the Anglican Bishop of Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea and it was there that he and Angie spent a total of ten years before returning to Norwich as Vicar of Old Lakenham and Tuckswold. They have three sons aged 19, 25 and 28. Angie is the Finance Office Assistant working on the accounts as well as looking after reception and assisting general office duties.

Pat Cox is the Finance Officer and looks after Gift Aid, insurance, payroll and accounting matters. Formerly an employee of HSBC, Pat has many years of experience in things financial. Known in the office as having shoes for every occasion (a couple of pairs of which are always to be found under her desk), Pat lives in Poringland with her husband, Roger, and with the move of their married daughter and son-in-law to the village, has become a doting granny to Phoebe. She also has a son, who also lives 'in the Diocese'.



Pat Cox



John Pitt – Financial Administrator

The day-to-day running of the Finance Office and the financial affairs of the Diocese is the responsibility of Lt. Col. John Pitt, the Diocesan Financial Administrator. John joined the team in April 2007. John monitors the investments of the Diocese, the financial structures at both diocesan and parish level, and is always willing to assist parish priests, parish treasurers and finance committees with any queries and difficulties. John brings a touch of military precision to the Diocese, having served in the Royal Artillery and as Naval & Military Attache in Warsaw, and immediately prior to coming to the Diocese, as Secretary of the Special Forces Club. If you enter his office for the first time, the photographs of military parades, and a canon pointing out ominously in your direction can belie his good humour and easy wit.

John is married to 'Mrs. Pitt', who despite always being referred to rather formally by her husband, is great fun and the mother of 2 sons and grandmother of 4 grandchildren. The family dog, Bobby, a Cairn Terrier reflecting John's origins north of the border, is a regular presence in his office.

Diocesan Schools Service Commission

On the other side of the hall, is the office of the Diocesan Schools Service Commission. The team comprises Julie O'Connor (*Director of Schools Service*), Paul Rossi (*Deputy Director*), Helen Bates (*Assistant Director*) and Jane Austin (*Secretary*).

Often the only person you will find in there is Jane Austin. Most days the rest of the team are out on the road, visiting, supporting and developing the network of Catholic schools of which we as a Diocese can be so proud.



The DSSC Team (left to right) Paul Rossi, Jane Austin, Julie O'Connor & Helen Bates

Jane is a keen sportswoman and her lunchtime supplies are an inspiring lesson in healthy eating for all who root around in the fridge. Jane is the constant presence that keeps the Schools Office ticking over and provides a first response to anyone who phones or calls. Jane's involvement with the schools began when she lived in Brandon and supported those priests charged with overseeing RE in our schools. When, in 2003, Bishop Michael decided to combine both the RE support services and the Schools Commission, and base it at Poringland, Jane took up her present post and works hard to ensure that everyone has the support they need. She is often the last to leave in the evening and used occasionally to be 'chased' out of the office by Bishop Michael.

In the offices it is normally Jane who co-ordinates the staff Christmas Party and other celebrations. It is also Jane who remembers those special celebrations and anniversaries in schools and sends out the flowers to those to whom we wish to show appreciation or assure of our thoughts and prayers. Jane now lives near Norwich and has two grown-up sons who are policeman – so treat her well.

Julie O'Connor lives in Wymondham parish and became the Diocesan Director of Schools in 2003. Her role and that of the team as a whole is to represent the Diocese and the Bishop in all matters educational, both locally and nationally. Julie and her Deputy, Paul Rossi, seek to support our schools in a wide variety of ways, including governance, pastoral considerations, religious education and matters related to sustaining and developing the Catholic ethos. They also liaise with the county councils and local authorities. Julie is the wife of Tom and they are parents of two grown-up children.

Paul Rossi, joined the team on a part-time basis in 2009, following his retirement after 21 years as Head of St. Benedict's Upper School in Bury St. Edmunds. Although Paul's duties extend to the whole of the Diocese, he tends to concentrate on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough areas and on succession planning. Paul is married and has four children.

Helen Bates is the most recent addition to the team and her particular area of responsibility as Assistant Director lies with the buildings and capital, the good management of which is essential to our schools as they continue to grow and develop to meet changing needs and demographics. Helen joined the team in 2011, coming to us from Norfolk County Council. She is also married with two young children.

Diocesan Tribunal

A little separate from the other offices, down a long corridor lies the Tribunal Office, staffed by Rose Mingay and Fr. Simon Blakesley.



Fr Simon Blakesley and Rose Mingay

Rose is the Tribunal Administrator and has been in post for almost 21 years, the longest serving of the office staff. With years of hands-on experience and knowledge she is an invaluable first port-of-call for those seeking the help of the Tribunal. Her gentle tact and informed advice is much appreciated by people who often find themselves in difficult circumstances, revisiting painful experiences. Rose keeps things moving, ensuring that statements and evidence is collected, collated and presented to the Tribunal to be dealt with. Rose lives with husband, Pete and has a grown-up son and daughter, and one baby grand-daughter.

As Vicar Judicial, Fr Simon Blakesley deals with all manner of canonical matters in the Bishop's name and on his behalf. He has fulfilled this role for almost 21 years, just five months short of Rose! His canonical expertise is called for in all sorts of situations, not just cases of marital breakdown. Having worked with Fr Simon in the Tribunal some years ago, I can testify to his meticulous but pastoral manner when dealing with people in all sorts of situations. Many people have him and Rose to thank for clarifying their situations and enabling them to live fully within the sacramental life of the Church.

Fr Simon is also parish priest of Diss Parish where a new, larger church is being built. A lover of real ale, with his own personal tankard in the Crown at Burston, he is often to be seen with Nero, his black Labrador in the back of his car.

Diocesan Youth Office

Next to the Tribunal Office is the Diocesan Youth Worker's Office. Normally it is a mass of electrical sound and light equipment, flags, games, and all sorts of other things I cannot begin to identify. It is here that, occasionally, Hamish MacQueen appears to answer post, load and unload gear into his car and then disappear again!



Hamish MacQueen

Hamish is a central part of our Diocesan life, seeking to organise, co-ordinate and animate ministry to youth and the ministry of youth throughout the Diocese. Like Julie O'Connor, much time is spent behind the wheel as he tries to support the youth workers in parishes and schools, delivering advice, resources and leading retreats. He liaises with other youth services, both locally and nationally and at the moment is keen to promote the 'Flame' event at Wembley Arena next year. (*For further details see the Youth Matters page*). The Diocesan Youth Council which he and Bishop Michael established, continues to be an active forum for discussion and consultation with young people in the Diocese, as well as key to the ideas, planning and support of youth events both within the Diocese and outside such as the annual Taizé pilgrimage and our participation in World Youth Day. A proud father of three young daughters, and husband of April – Hamish still retains the joy and energy of youth!

Hospitality

Those who attend meetings at Poringland will probably have experienced the hospitality offered by Frances McCarthy, Jeanette Ray (pictured below) and their various helpers.



Frances and Jeanette labour, in a somewhat limited kitchen, not only to provide tea and coffee to welcome visitors but also to produce meals for between 40 and 50 people at large Diocesan meetings. The results of their labours are always appreciated as is the wine, especially by the clergy who, despite popular opinion, rarely have a 'Mrs. Doyle' to cook for them! What is often amazing to me, is the way they can produce more food, when ten people who haven't booked turn up, hungry and expecting to be fed!

Frances is married to Stuart and they have daughter, Louisa, whom we are fortunate to have as a cantor at Poringland parish. Jeanette, who makes the 'roasties' so beloved of Bishop Michael, is married to Frank and has two children and two grandchildren.

The White House

The home of our bishops rejoices in the name of The White House. Like its more illustrious namesake it is a building of some age, (parts of it certainly predating the namesake!) There however, the similarity stops. Certainly the number of staff concerned with the daily running of the house is somewhat more limited – to the Housekeeper, Jo Sykes.



It is Jo's job to keep the White House clean and welcoming not only for the bishop but for those who come to visit him there. Although not many everyday visitors would see Jo during the five mornings of the week that she works there, all of those who enter the house will enjoy the effect of her presence. It is amazing how a woman's touch can so often make a house into a home – and Jo has certainly done that. What she can't do with white vinegar isn't worth knowing! Jo is another of our 'glamorous grannies' with four children of her own and three grandchildren.



And finally, but not least, we have Mervyn. Like Jo, many visitors never see him, except perhaps as a distant figure on a lawn-mower or pushing a wheel-barrow. Mervyn has the unenviable task of keeping the gardens at the White House in order. He is the longest serving member of staff at present, having been Gardener for over 25 years. Under Bishop Clark, he sorted out a garden that had become overgrown and choked with briars, and produced gardens that today host youth camps, school activity days, retreats, fetes, garden parties and which are a hunting ground for the various dogs that belong to the staff here at Poringland: Bobby, Nero and my own two dachshunds, Frankie and Otto. We can all enjoy the results of his hard work – but please don't park or drive on the grass! A loyal supporter of Norwich City and a true Norfolkman, Mervyn is married to Jean, 'the wife', and they have an adult son, Mark, 'the boy'.

That just leaves the Bishop's Secretary and no-one really knows what he does!

Fr Mark Hackeson

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS IN FOCUS



Julia Donaldson, author of The Gruffalo, the current Children's Laureate visited the Children's Library at the Forum in Norwich and one of the groups she met was the one pictured here, the Year 2 children from St John the Baptist Catholic Infant School.

The children spent nearly an hour with the author and performed two of her poems while she played her guitar and helped them to act out the stories - The Gruffalo and A Squash and a Squeeze.

The children were thrilled to meet and work with a favourite author and were delighted to each receive a signed copy of her book.

Children's laureate opens St Mary's

Award winning author and second Children's Laureate, Anne Fine, officially opened St Mary's new Junior School building on Chaucer Road.

She spent the day running workshops with the girls.

She said: "It's always a pleasure to see the cheerful side of education: keen and excited children, splendid new buildings, and happy, willing staff."

"The girls do so much reading during their school lives. I shall enjoy talking to them about my own profession – writing the books they study in school as well as read at home for pleasure."

Deirdre O'Sullivan, headmistress, said: "All our girls were so excited to meet Anne Fine and work with her for the day."

"We are all thrilled with our new home on Chaucer Road and are honoured that Anne agreed to join us to officially mark the opening of this special



Anne Fine spent the day at the school with the pupils after the official opening and the speeches building."

The Victorian building on Chaucer Road has dedicated subject classrooms and outdoor space.

Work is also now underway on the new pre-prep building, next to the main junior school, which is anticipated to open in the Summer term 2012.

St Albans spreading message of Cafod

Children, parents and staff at St Albans in Cambridge raised more than £760 for Cafod during 2011 and have learned a lot about the agency in the past three years.

Ruby and Maria, both Year 6, said: "Their journey began with the children not really knowing much about Cafod which was also reflected by the parents' limited understanding of its work."

"In the past three years we have done many things and are very proud of our achievements."

"Recently we created a Cafod Club, pictured right, with the help of Mary Watkins, the agency's rep, where we have been making puppets and raising greater awareness in our school community."

"In the club we talk about the events we are going to do in the coming term and do

activities such as plays, pretending to travel around the world visiting other countries where help is needed."

"In early 2010 we raised £225.54 which we were very impressed with but then later in that year we raised a further £531.68 by sending out the small envelopes and in 2011, £260.00 was collected during Lent."

"Recently for Cafod Fast Day we raised almost £500 by children giving up a snack and parents giving the cost of a meal. Some children spent all day at home selling cakes and biscuits or by displaying a little box in their dad's veterinary surgery."

"We raise money through special events like the Summer Fair and Bee Happy days etc. The Summer Fair in 2009 was an exceptional fund raising event."

"The PFA agreed to give the total amount of money raised to Cafod which was usually about £1000. However, we raised a staggering £2000."



"All parents in the school certainly knew more about the works of Cafod as it was seen as a very generous contribution to make. But everyone was happy with the idea."

"Now we put posters around the school so

visitors can see what we have done. We also have certificates for the money we have raised."

"We can confidently say that we all know more about Cafod and are very proud to have this as our chosen charity."

In Sarajevo to see nuns' beatification

Three girls and staff from the Sacred Heart School in Swaffham went to Sarajevo in Bosnia for the beatification of five nuns who had devoted themselves to caring for the sick and poor during the Second World War.

The group included head girl Emily Hill, deputy head Rachel Mumford and from Year 10, Hannah Hodges with RE teacher Marie Mansfield, and Divine Charity nuns Sr Linda and Sr Thomas More.

They were aware of the story of how extremist soldiers had broken into the Convent, looted it then burnt it down and taken the sisters against their will making them walk in freezing cold snowy weather without proper winter clothing.

One night they were locked in a room and while being subjected to ill treatment from the soldiers they each escaped and jumped out of the window.

They were badly injured so the soldiers decided to kill them with their



knives and then throw their bodies into the River Drina.

"The beatification took place at the Olympic Stadium and was attended by 20,000 inside and even more outside watching on the screens."

The girls, Mrs Mansfield, Sr Linda and Sr Thomas More had been asked to sing on Stage as you can imagine they were just amazed at the size and number of people there and were quite nervous.

Their trip took them to many sites, including the cathedral. They made many friends and were very sad to leave.



The group visited the graves where the nuns were buried, top left, and some sang during the beatification, above

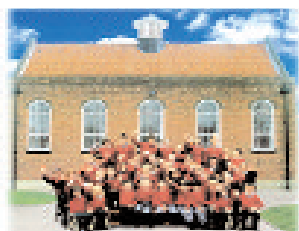
The group all agreed the whole experience was indescribable, unforgettable and life changing. One of the girls has decided that she would like to become a Catholic as a result of her experience.

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INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR BOYS & GIRLS

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

YOUTH MATTERS (Oh Yes We Do!)

Pope inspires new group in Peterborough

A new youth group has started in Peterborough by some of the young people who went to World Youth Day and they are acting on what they heard in Madrid.

"The group has grown out of our young people wanting to respond to the challenge given by Pope Benedict at World Youth Day.

He said: "Christ wants you to be the apostles of the 21st century and the messengers of his joy – do not let him down."

The group which meets once a month and has around 20 people in it have catechesis and prayer as well as social events.

If you are interested in coming along, contact the Diocesan Youth Service for more information.

Come to Flame is call

The Flame Congress is on 24 March 2012 and is an exciting national event for Catholic young people held at Wembley Arena.

It is inspired by the events September 2010 and what is to come in 2012. 2010 saw the historic visit of Pope Benedict XVI with powerful, memorable scenes in the Piazza at Westminster Cathedral, the Big Assembly and Hyde Park.

Thousands of young people joyfully celebrating faith and being affirmed in their voice and role in a vibrant Church.

2012 is Olympic year and Pope John Paul II – a keen sportsman – promoted the relationship between sport and faith.

Thousands of young people are invited

to participate in an event offering the very best of Catholic Youth Ministry.

Speakers – local and international – will bring messages of hope, faith, challenge, justice, and leadership in adversity.

All in all, Flame Congress will be an event to ignite young hearts and souls afresh with the joy of the Gospel message. Don't miss it!

Flame is for ALL young people year 10 and above (along with adult leaders) and the first fifty tickets bought through the diocesan website will be heavily subsidized.

There is also subsidised transport from Norwich, Cambridge, Ipswich and Peterborough.



CYMFED
Flame
NATIONAL YOUTH CONGRESS 2012
2 Timothy 1:6-8

The first event of its kind...

The very best of Catholic Youth Ministry in England and Wales.

Building on the legacy from the Papal Visit...

Inspiring witness from Olympians, Paralympians and International speakers...

Wembley Arena

Saturday 24th March, 2012

Year 10 to Young Adult

CYMFED
CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY FEDERATION

cymfed.org/flame2012



Dates to remember

7th January

New Year Epiphany Candlelight Mass

8th January

World Youth Day reunion

February Half-Term

Ice skating in Norwich and Peterborough
(Dates to be finalised)

7th May

Pilgrimage Walk to Walsingham

7th - 8th July

Youth Festival

11th - 20th August

Pilgrimage to Taizé

For more information go to the Diocesan Youth Service website - 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 Saturday 7th January 2012
at The White House, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH

Please bring a wrapped gift up to the value of £5 to go into a lucky dip



Riccardo Monni and Alice Moriarty, from the UEA Catholic Society, and chaplain Marion Houssart, above. Altar server Anthony Asomugha, studying economics and politics, with Fr Mark Hackeson, left, and the congregation at Mass, below.



Chaplaincy at university serves growing number of students

As the University of East Anglia in Norwich is growing so is the need for student support services.

Because many more young people are coming from parts of the world where religious observance is more common than in Britain the work of the chaplains is growing too.

Since it was founded in the 1960s the university has had an ecumenical chaplaincy based in the heart of the campus under the umbrella of the Dean of Students.

It is staffed by the participating faith groups and open to all students and staff of UEA.

In recent years the Catholic Society has achieved the required number of members to become recognised by the university Students Union.

Alice Moriarty, the CathSoc president, is a third year student reading molecular biology, said the boost in numbers was helped by students from Asia and Africa coming to the university.

Riccardo Monni, the society secretary from Norwich, is a final year student reading film and English and said part of his role in helping to organise special events and one of the most interesting recently was a visit to Quidenham.

Students have also visited the Claretians at Buckden Towers, the Augustinians at Clare, the Sisters at

Swaffham and Walsingham on several occasions.

Marion Houssart is the Catholic chaplain working alongside Anglicans, Methodists, Quakers, the Free Churches, Jewish rabbis, Moslems, Buddhists, Sikhs, and now, the latest addition, Hindus.

First and foremost her job is providing for the Catholic faithful organising prayer services, preparation for sacraments - Mass, confessions, sometimes baptism and confirmation- and pilgrimages or visits.

She is delighted also that students from the university are studying for the priesthood and other students have joined the Church.

The work is also about “building community, teaching the faith, facilitating maturing faith, providing days of reflection and arranging pilgrimages”, Marion said.

Some of the work is hidden and confidential but “being there for all students, listening and observing” is often very important.

Marion said the new medical school has brought a lot of international students who belong to a number of different faiths.

About 20% of the students at the university come from abroad but in CathSoc the number is nearer 50%, Marion said.

One of the most important events put on for medical students was a discussion of theology as it affects the decisions they make when caring for people’s health.

Catholics at the university also have strong links to the local community taking part in Christmas collections for

the homeless and helping in other ways.

They also take an interest in Cafod, SVP, the work of lay missionaries across the world and other pursuits.

Bishop Michael was a regular visitor to the campus where Fr Mark Hackeson celebrates Masses on Sundays and during the week.

Fr John Warrington, who took on the role of diocesan vocation director when Fr David Bagstaff became the Diocesan Administrator after Bishop Michael’s death, has also visited.

For many students the chaplaincy, its common room, quiet and ecumenical rooms are a home from home where they can meet and talk with like-minded people and attend services or prayer meetings.

Later in the year an interfaith event is going to be held and its theme will be care for the environment.

A lecturer from the university’s internationally famous School of Environment Science and Climate Change will take a leading part, Marion said.

She said many of the students from abroad come for three or four-year courses and during that time never go home so they can get very homesick.

These problems and the issues that occur as the young students grow in maturity are among the problems brought to the chaplains whatever their faith.

Because the Catholic Chaplaincy is available five and a half days per week and others are just part time much of this burden falls on their shoulders and that proves their value.

Charity music gig in Our Lady’s church nave for charity

Young people rocked in the nave of Our Lady’s church in Poringland which became a venue for a Christmas Charity Gig to raise money for two organisations.

Caitlin Bainbridge, one of four young people confirmed by Bishop Michael the Sunday before his collapse, was the organiser.

Assisted by her friends and supported by the parish events team, Caitlin was raising money for North Breckland Youth for Christ and Nelson’s Journey.

The Youth for Christ has been important for Caitlin’s personal journey of faith - in particular the ecumenical youth project of Poringland and Framingham Earl Churches Together.

“It is important to support the new project in North

Breckland as they do not have enough resources,” she said.

“Nelson’s Journey is also a charity concerned with helping young people – especially those who have suffered a close bereavement.”

Fr Mark Hackeson, the parish priest, said: “It is marvellous to see our young people reaching out to help other young people like themselves.

“Pete Tyson, our NYFC youth worker, is doing great work with young people, supporting and encouraging them when other youth work is suffering as a result of cuts in local government spending.”

The gig, which featured the well-known local band Brokenfor as well as Amy Collins, Danny Ellero and



Charity gig raised money for two organisations Special FX, was well-supported by people from the local villages and as far away as Acle.

Inquiry looks at support for new Catholics

An inquiry is under way into how supportive people coming into the Church is East Anglia found the RCIA Programme, also known as Journey in Faith, and ABC – About Being Catholic.

These are part of the framework used by the Church to support adults interested in discovering more about the Faith.

Some of them subsequently decide to join the Church as full members.

Fr David Jennings who is taking a sabbatical year is taking on the inquiry project.

He said: “The programme has been used by dioceses and parishes throughout the world for many years.

“I have been asked to undertake a crucial project as part of the diocesan role in evangelisation and explore its varied uses in East Anglia.

“I will be consulting with fellow priests, deacons and religious, and members of the faithful who have participated in the programme.

“I am particularly interested in those people who have joined the Church in the last 10 years and am

enquiring about how supportive they found the programme to be at that time and also how they have made their way in the Church since joining.

“If you have joined the Church in the last 10 years, I would love to hear from you.

“A copy of a questionnaire for ‘New Members to the Church’ is printed below.

“Please complete it and return it to me at St George’s RC Church, 223 Sprowston Road, Norwich, Norfolk. NR3 4HZ.

“Sadly however, there are some people who having joined the Church, decide that it is not for them and leave their parish communities.

“I would dearly like to explore with them too the factors that contributed to their change of heart, and ask ‘How could we have made you become more a part of the Catholic Church?’

“Their views are integral to this very important aspect of the Church’s work of evangelisation.

“Please contact me; at the address above; by telephone 01603 426971 ext 5; Mobile 07710 281528; or by email at

RCIA Survey of Parishes – New Members Questionnaire

Questions related to those who have joined the Church (1 - 10 years)

| Gender | Male | Female | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| Age | 18 - 24 | 25 - 35 | 35 - 44 | 45 - 54 | 55 - 70 | 71+ |

| | |
|---|---|
| Faith Profile | √ |
| Other Christian tradition: I came into the Catholic Church from another Christian tradition; e.g. Church of England, Baptist, Methodist | |
| Other Faith community: I came into the Catholic Church from another faith tradition; e.g. Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh, etc. | |
| No Faith background: I came into the Catholic Church without previous faith background | |
| Other: please explain | |

Evidence suggests that there are three key influences that bring people into the Catholic Church. Which influence best applies to you?

| | |
|---|---|
| Influences that drew you to the Catholic Church | √ |
| Intermarriage - married to a Catholic, or about to be married to a Catholic, who feels concerned for the marriage, or are influenced by their spouses and relatives | |
| Family life - married to a Catholic but more concerned about their children’s spiritual education and want to give a unified approach to family life | |
| Seeker - came into the Church seeking a spiritual meaning to life without the influence of the above, i.e. family, spouse, etc. | |
| If other - please specify | |

| |
|--|
| Faith background |
| What was your previous religious affiliation, if any? |
| If none - can you describe any religious influence others might have had on you? |

| | |
|--|---|
| Influences on your Faith Journey - (tick those that apply) | √ |
| Family member/s, including children | |
| Friend/s | |
| Authority figure, (e.g. teacher, priest, doctor, etc.) | |
| Work colleague | |
| Dissatisfaction with former religious/Church community (if applicable) | |

“All responses of the project are confidential to me.

“Early in the Summer when the research is complete, I will present a report of findings to the Diocese.

“I will also include recommendations for the future implementation of the RCIA programme based on best practice within our Diocese and also draw on experience from other dioceses where similar research is being undertaken.

“A review of the report will also be published in our Diocesan newspaper.”

Fr David Jennings, right, hopes new people coming into the Church can help. A welcome at the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent each year, below



| | |
|---|---|
| Personal research and enquiry | √ |
| Particular life experience, e.g. visit to a ‘Holy’ Place/place of pilgrimage, illness, death of a close friend/relative, – (Please specify) | |
| Inspirational figure, e.g. Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II, Oscar Romero | |
| Other, please specify | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Factors that sustain and nourish you in the Catholic Church | √ |
| Strong attachment to the parish community - “ I belong” | |
| Supportive family - spouse, children, parents, | |
| Share in the mission of the parish - involved in some activity: i.e. St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women’s League, Justice and Peace, Scripture group, Catechetical support, etc. – (please specify) | |
| Good relationship with priest/deacon/religious | |
| Church teaching has meaning in my life | |
| Promotes my sacramental and spiritual life | |
| Other - (please specify) | |

| |
|--|
| What did you find useful/difficult about the RCIA Programme (also known as Journey in Faith, and ABC (About Being Catholic)? |
|--|

| |
|---|
| Please add any further comments related to your reasons for joining the Catholic Church |
|---|

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Should you wish to be contacted in relation to the Questionnaire or anything else raised by the questionnaire please give contact details below. All contact will remain confidential. | |
| Name: | Telephone/Mobile: |
| Email: | |

NEWS

from

THE
CATHEDRAL
OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Religious items and charity efforts were rewarded



The knitted Christmas tree, above, and raising money for the library, below



International flavour to the St Nicholas Fair

Parish groups raised money and visitors bought bargains at the Christmas Market at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich on 6 December.

The St Nicholas Fair in the Narthex, held on the feast day of the patron of children, seafarers, young women seeking marriage partners and pawnbrokers, attracted a suitable wide array of stalls.

The fair had an international flavour including food and entertainment provided by St John's Indian, Filipino and Polish communities, as well as offerings of jams, jewellery, plants, toys, sweets, crafts, Christmas decorations and gifts.

"It seemed that the whole world had come to the Narthex of St John's Cathedral!" said Fr James Walsh.

"St Nicholas Fairs are held in many European cities around Christmas time, and it was a wonderful opportunity to get-together and to find some unique and affordable Christmas presents."

The refectory at the Narthex was open to serve mulled wine, seasonal food and a wide range of refreshments.

Among the parish organisations and groups



Jams and jewellery for Christmas present buyers

represented were the SVP, the new library, Cafod and Tambogrande.

Dora Cowton was there selling her book of pictures with accompanying verses from the psalms called *He Brought Them to His Holy Land*.

The proceeds from these sales go to Bishop Michael's fund for Cambodia and the Holy Land.

The cathedral was adorned with a giant knitted Christmas tree which was part of a fundraising project in support of John Groom's Court in Norwich.

Many people had contributed woollen Father Christmases, snowmen, angels, bells, baubles, crackers, stars and snowflakes to create the effect.

Sight-impaired Bernie helped by millionaire

A parishioner at Our Lady, Mother of God, in Norwich who suffered from a hereditary condition that would have brought blindness but lost her sight after an operation went wrong, has won national television recognition.

Bernie Reddington overcame her blindness to bring up three children and look after husband Marcus who also has the hereditary condition.

Secret millionaire Edward Douglas-Miller came to Norwich looking for people he could make donations to who had suffered trauma like his own.

The businessman had made his money from recycling plastic to make pencils and was struck by the work Bernie was doing for Action for Blind People.

He had lost a child and had never quite overcome his grief but had dealt with the trauma to build a successful business.

He was impressed enough to donate money to Action for Blind People so that the lottery-funded organisation could continue after their grant money has been used up.

Bernie was training a new guide dog as she discussed her work in bringing technology to sight impaired people so their isolation could be reduced.

She teaches them to use computers to magnify the pictures so they can see them more clearly or to use software that turns words on screen into speech.

This enables many of the blind people to communicate and develop socially.

"These computers are not a luxury to these people they are a basic communication aid," Bernie said.

"When they get online they become less isolated. They can go online to shop, network, find and take part in leisure activities.

"My job is to show them the kit including the software.

"There are about 20,000 sight impaired people in Norfolk and Suffolk. Nationally there are about 1m people registered as sight impaired and it is estimated another 1m could be.

"We can give them impartial advice about the equipment available."

The secret millionaire pretended he was changing his profession from being an estate agent to a television documentary journalist and it was quite a shock for Bernie to learn the truth.

But the money has allowed the sight-impaired working mother to have her contract extended so that she can help even more people.



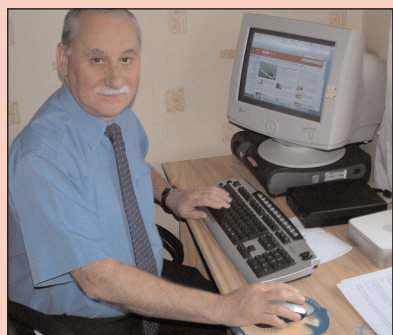
Bernie with her new guide dog

Writing course to begin

A Creative Writing course is to begin at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist Narthex on Thursday 12 January 2012 at 2.00 - 4.00pm and then fortnightly. The cost is £30.00 per term, payable on enrollment, but booking essential. Bring a pencil/pen and paper.

Details and booking: Hilary Mellon, Norwich 630346. The group will suit all abilities, offering opportunities for the lighter side and more serious work in poetry/prose.

Easy ways to contact the editor with news



Thanks to everyone who sends in material most of which is used but please send pictures as jpgs at 72 ppi and no bigger than 1mb.

Please also give documents a descriptive name - I get too many just labeled diocesan article.

You can also send photographs by post but please do not embed pictures in Word or other documents as quality is impaired by up to 60% when extracted.

Please send material to Patrick Byrne
The Editor, Our Diocesan Family,
The White House, 21 Ugate, Poringland, Norfolk
NR14 7SH.

Tel: 01603 627409 and NEW email:
patrick.byrne5@virginmedia.com
Deadlines: Our Diocesan Family is bi-monthly and printed early in the month before publication. Material must arrive by 25 January for the MARCH 2012 issue.



Norwich Catenian Circle's vice president John McLean with Esther a post graduate student at the now traditional annual Mass and evening entertainment at the University of East Anglia

BUILDING BRIDGES in Cambodia

Links remaining alive and active

Our Diocesan links with Cambodia are very much alive and active. While many of our existing projects and initiatives are ongoing, Bishop Kike is considering what is the greatest need in the many communities he cares for to provide a new project for us.

At the time of writing, towards the end of November, it seems that the October floods in Cambodia have subsided. They were not as bad as in neighbouring Thailand, but flood water and muddy roads do make life more difficult in the rural areas.

Several groups from East Anglia are planning visits early in the New Year. January and February are the best months to visit as it is the dry season and not too hot, not much above 32C!

A group of 12 people is going from North Walsham to visit their twin parish in Sisophon. Part of this visit includes touring round to see the many projects taking place in the parish, hospitals, and learning centres.

They will also look at new agricultural land that has been purchased for some of the local families.

Visits will be made to two schools near Sisophon that are twinned with schools in Norfolk: Pongro with St Michael's at Aylsham and Kbal Spean with St John's Catholic school in Norwich.

Then the group will travel south to visit Fr Franco at Kompong Chhnang to see the latest on the school and the centre for disabled children, both of which have been part of the Building Bridges work from our Diocese and have been completed in the last year.



Children gathered for a meal in Svray Sisophon

Simon Davies and Ben Grist, two of our seminarians, will be doing a pastoral placement for a few weeks, experiencing the Church in very different circumstances to our own.

There is a group of 14 people going from Ely to visit Prek Toal, their twin community. This is a floating village quite a long way from Siem Reap, the large city in the north. The people from Ely will visit other communities as well during their stay, including Battambang and Kompong Thom.

A small group from St Mary's Ipswich will be travelling out in early March and Fr Mark Hackeson is going with them for his first visit.

Fr Philip Shryane is going in January to help the priest in Siem Reap, which is twinned with Bury St Edmunds, so that he can take a short break. Fr Philip will be saying the weekday English Masses.

Kompong Thom is the first place that Bishop Michael was linked with in Cambodia through his parish in Tunbridge Wells, that link still continues, but Sr Soklin, who has visited East Anglia twice also lives there and so some groups go to visit the convent and parish there.

They have a craft centre where they make many different items, including beautiful handmade hand bags. They cut, sew and turn out bags that are very desirable here in the UK. Their main problem is that there are not many tourists in Kompong Thom and they have difficulty finding a market.



A baptism at Easter in Svray Sisophon

On previous visits our pilgrims have snapped up the bags, even bringing them home for friends. We are doing our best to find them a profitable outlet for their lovely work.

In a tiny isolated village named Ta Om, part of the Siem Reap communities there is an old French colonial Church that our Diocese has helped to re-roof as well as providing help towards a brand new learning centre.



Women making handbags in Kompong Thom



Last January the foundations of this were laid, now it is in full use. It is a centre with two classrooms, a large covered space for use during the rainy season, and upstairs it has some accommodation for students, for use for retreats with the young people and for the priest Fr Panus, and for Thon, the catechist, when they visit.

This is a great resource in a village with no running water or electricity as the Church has a generator, so the building can be used at night and has once again become the centre of the village.

The on going strength of our links with Cambodia is shown by a total of almost 40 people from the Diocese visiting to see the wonderful work being done there, to extend the hand of friendship and to bring our greetings to the small Catholic communities with whom our parishes are twinned.

CAN YOU HELP?

Our two 'Building Bridges' projects this year are supporting Fr Franco's work for the children of Kompong Chhnang, and providing a catechism room at Al-Wahadneh in Jordan.

Would you like to support these projects? Cheques should be made payable to the 'RC Diocese of East Anglia'.

First Name.....

Surname.....

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

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode..... Amount enclosed.....

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

CAMBODIA (Kompong Chhnang)

HOLY LAND (Al-Wahadneh)

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:
'Building Bridges', 21 Uppate, Poringland,
Norwich, NR14 7SH
Registered charity no. 278742



The Diocesan Safeguarding Commission expressed its thanks to the outgoing Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Barbara Warwick with a presentation and flowers. She had been working for the commission since its inception in 1996.

Pictured are new safeguarding co-ordinator Mick Thurley, Commission chairman Denis White and Barbara Warwick.



Norwich North MP Chloe Smith, second from the right, came to St George's in Norwich recently to publicise ways in which people can get help to stay warm this winter.



Fr David Jennings (formerly All Souls) returned to Peterborough recently to receive an Award from Cambridgeshire Constabulary "in recognition of his support to Cambridgeshire Constabulary and dedicated service in developing and maintaining cohesion within the diverse communities of Peterborough from September 2003 to the present".

Making the presentation to Fr David is Chief Superintendent Andy Hebb, Northern Divisional Commander for Cambridgeshire Constabulary.



An Advent Fair at St George's in Norwich raised more than £3,000 for parish funds.

Fr Tony McSweeney is pictured above with Philip Walters at a stall offering religious Christmas cards, traditional cribs, candles and other religious items. Other stalls raised money through raffles, sales of Christmas goods and activities

OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY

Church hall at St Ives goes green

After two years of planning, design and installation the Sacred Heart Church in St Ives has a new "green" heating system.

Solar slates have been fitted to the church hall roof as part of a project initiated by Bishop Michael.

The diocesan theme for 2009 was 'Caring for God's Creation' when Bishop Michael requested that all parishes consider developing environmental strategies to help reduce carbon emissions to 'protect our precious planet'.

St Ives parish was already heavily committed to recycling and using energy saving devices so decided to explore the potential for using renewable energy to generate electricity.

A feasibility study was conducted, partially funded with a grant from the Community Sustainable Energy Programme and it confirmed that a solar photovoltaic installation to the south facing aspect of the hall roof was a viable proposal.

A first planning application was unsuccessful as planners said the installation would "detract from the architectural interests of this listed building, its setting and the wider character & appearance of the conservation area".

Alternative products were investigated and a revised planning application was approved.

Planning consent included permission to fell a sycamore covered by a Tree Preservation Order. New trees have been planted and the project was completed in October.

Memoir of India's boy and girl towns

Miles O'Smiles is the memoir of Joe Homan, the founder of a group of Boys Towns homes for boys in India, a project which began in the 1960s and has continued to this day through the Peterborough-based charity.

Margaret Cianni, from All Souls parish, said:

"It should be viewed as a memoir but what makes it truly extraordinary is not just the amazing and tireless work the author has put into founding and running his Boys and Girls Towns (narrated in detail in the book) but the dramatic controversy that entangles the stages of the story.

"It comes in the form of a softback book, produced in India to a high standard.

"The very good aspect is the illustrations. Instead of photos, which would be the more usual way of illustrating a book of this kind, the author has used line drawings.

"It hasn't yet been published. It is due out in September 2012) in the formal sense.

It is privately printed, and currently has no ISBN.

All proceeds from the book will go directly to Joe's charity.

More information from Margaret Cianni, 45 Foxcovert Road, PETERBOROUGH PE6 7HF Length: 432 pp. (incl. approx. 80 line drawings) Cost of current book £10.00 plus £2.75 P & P.



The new panels installed on the church hall roof, above. Fr Edward Tredota and Fr Marek Pabis plant new trees to replace the sycamore that had to be felled as part of the project, below



Sr Gabriella, above left, and Bishop John celebrating, right

Gabriella makes final vows

The feast of Our Lady of Walsingham brought a double celebration for the community named in her honour.

On 24 September, the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham joined parishioners and pilgrims for the concluding Mass of the 950th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the original shrine at Walsingham.

During the service, presided over by the newly ordained Bishop John Sherrington from the Diocese of Westminster, Sr Gabriella Gasz took her final vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

"A highlight of the ceremony was when Sr Gabriella lay prostrate before the altar as a sign of the offering of her life to God," Sr Camilla from the community said.

"As the Litany of Saints resounded through the Chapel of Reconciliation, Sr Gabriella was supported by the prayers of all those present."

Sr Gabriella said afterwards: "I was overjoyed at being able to surrender my life totally to God whilst surrounded by all the people who had accompanied me in my vocational journey."

Taking her final vows on Our Lady of Walsingham's feast day and at her shrine was very special, she said

