

Marriage – a unique type of relationship

HUMAN BEINGS – CREATED FOR LOVE

In the first of the Creation stories in the Book of Genesis, the writer tells us of the high dignity of the human race. Out of the whole of the created order, only men and women are 'created in the image and likeness' of God, Himself. (Gen: 26-27) As the Psalmist puts it, we are created as 'little less than a god' (Psalm 8: 5)

But what is the nature of this God? Almost at the other end of the Bible we find an answer from the evangelist, St John. In his First Letter, he tells us that 'God is love.' (1 John 4:16). If God is love, then the human being must reflect that love. The writers of Genesis again, in both the first and second accounts of Creation allude to this truth.

In the first account, (Gen 1:1 – 2:1) when told that we are created in the image and likeness of God, we are told at the same time that we are created 'male and female'. We are not created to live in isolation, but in communion. We are created in such a way that we have need of another – our race cannot survive without this 'other'.

In the second account (Gen 2: 2-24), although the man is created 'first', he is created in such a way that 'it is not good that man should be alone'. (Gen 2: 18) He has need of another – but amongst all the other creatures given to him, not one is suitable to be his helpmate – not one is his equal. And so putting him into a deep sleep, God removes a rib from the man's side and forms the rib into a woman whom He then presents to the man.

His cry is a cry of joy as he sees the woman for the first time – here at last is a worthy helpmate – here at last is someone who can fulfil his need – someone who is his equal - 'This at last is flesh of my flesh and bone of my bones'. (Gen 2: 18-25) In the woman he meets someone whom he can love and who can love him in return.

The mark of being created in God's image and likeness then, is our fundamental need to love and to be loved. The mature human being is one who loves and allows him/herself to be loved.



'God who created mankind out of love also calls him to love – the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being.'
Catechism of the Catholic Church 1604

There are many different ways in which we can arrive at such maturity: our family relationships, our friendships, but particularly those intimate relationships in which we allow ourselves to be vulnerable in expressing our honesty and our need, and in which we conversely find security in acceptance and love and all the support and gifts that flow from that love both material and otherwise. Even the celibate ministry and witness of the priest or religious is a way of loving and being loved – of reaching out to others and receiving from others – rather than a denial of love.

Marriage, of course, is a particular way of coming to that wholeness or maturity that is God's will for us – and in which husband and wife can change and grow into a truer image and likeness of the God who created us.

Throughout human history, marriage has been a feature of human society. Although at different times and in different cultures it may have particular variations, it has always had common and permanent characteristics. At a time when 'marriage' is as current a topic as ever, it is worth looking at what those common and permanent characteristics are, and how they set it apart from other types of relationships.

A PUBLIC COMMITMENT

When a couple celebrate their wedding day, it is always an important day for them – a life-changing day. However, it is also an important day for other people.

For most parents it is a day on which their relationship with their children changes as a 'new family' is formed – a day of 'letting go', but also a day of fulfilment and of new and hopeful beginnings. Not just 'losing a son/daughter, but gaining a daughter/son'.

But a fact that is often forgotten is that marriage is important also for wider society. Marriage is never a private affair – and for centuries now wherever people choose to marry – in Church, on a beach or in a country house or castle – the public must always have access if they wish to enter and witness the ceremony. Locked doors and 'bouncers' are against the law, both civil and canonical.

Why? The answer is clearly given in the Vatican II Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World, Gaudium et Spes:

'The well-being of the individual person and of both human and Christian society is closely bound up with the healthy state of conjugal and family life'

Gaudium et Spes 47

PERMANENT & FRUITFUL

Unlike cohabitation, which is a relationship that is solely dependent upon the continuing consent of both parties, marriage is entered by a public exchange of consent, a public declaration by the parties of their intent to be married.

This public declaration is recognised and ratified by the state and/or the Church and to end such a relationship, the same civil or church authorities need to be involved. Thus marriage implies a greater degree of permanency than other forms of cohabitation.

Whilst some outside the Church would see the life-long nature of marriage as an aspiration rather than an essential element, a degree of permanence is common to both understandings.

The public nature of the consent that is given and the ratification of it by society, helps to reinforce and strengthen that sense of commitment in the parties to the marriage.

Despite the rather depressing statistic that two out of every three marriages in the United Kingdom end in divorce, marriage remains, according to Government Statistics, the most stable and enduring type of relationship. 'Cohabitation remains a relatively short term type of relationship.' (ONS Autumn 2011)

The stability of such relationships is important to societies, because in these relationships men and women are schooled in love that is both self-giving and receptive, a way of life that strengthens bonds between people and thus is a

cohesive force for society.

For Christians, the family unit is the domestic Church in which not only children, but husband and wife also can encounter love, give and receive love, and so grow into the image of Christ.

Marriage helps to overcome self-absorption, egoism and the pursuit of one's own pleasure, and to open oneself to the other, to mutual aid and self-giving'

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1609

Marriage as relationship between a man and a woman, also bears witness to the truth that humanity finds fulfilment in embracing the other, in reaching out to what is different, but equal. The complementarity of the married relationship is clear.

Each provides for what is lacking in the other; each is necessary, equal to, and valued by the other. Together husband and wife are a sign of that fruitful completeness that is achieved in love, a fruitfulness that is shown in the strengthening of the relationship between the couple themselves and the advancement of their happiness and fulfilment, and for many, but not all, in the gift of children.

By its very nature Marriage is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children.

cf Code of canon law 1983 can 1055, 1

And so we come to the openness of marriage to the good of children: not only the generation of children, but to their education and nurture. The complementarity of the married relationship between a man and woman is quite clearly geared to the procreation of the human race, and throughout history, it has been seen to be the privileged place for the education and nurturing of children.

The love that is essential for the rounded and healthy upbringing of children is witnessed in the security of a permanent relationship, and in the complementarity and respect of man and woman living together in 'an intimate communion of life and love'. (Gaudium et Spes 48,1)

It is sad that recent legislation in the United Kingdom has brought an end to the work of so many Catholic adoption agencies that have sought successfully for many years to provide such a privileged place for children who have not enjoyed that in their birth families.



None of what has been written above about marriage is exclusively Catholic or Christian. Although it may be expressed by a Catholic and in words drawn from the Catholic tradition, it is in effect an understanding of marriage that has been received and held by most societies and the people who formed those societies including our own.

Continued on the next page

An English Wedding

The richest expression of marriage

It may seem strange to link the comedy writer Johnny Speight with the Rite of Marriage, but if your memory goes back that far, you may recall two series starring Warren Mitchell and Dandy Nichols – one was called *Till Death us do Part* and the other *In Sickness and In Health*.

There was in fact a third series, which never went beyond the pilot stage – *For Richer for Poorer*, starring Harry H. Corbett as a left wing version of Alf Garnett! The penny must have dropped by now – all three titles were drawn from our marriage vows, and are, perhaps bizarrely, a testimony to the way in which those phrases have become ingrained in our language and culture.

But, it's strange to imagine, that it wasn't always like that. Early Christians, like their Jewish forebears were deemed to be married when they chose to come together as lifelong partners. The sacramental nature didn't seem to be questioned, and mediaeval 'seven sacrament fonts' abound – especially in East Anglia, with images of the sacraments depicted around the sides. Local customs prevailed and there was no involvement of church or state.

Centuries later, an optional blessing for the bride and groom – at the church door, was offered to couples. It was only when anxiety arose about clandestine (hidden or secret) marriages that the Church became involved as a witness to the promises the couple made. But at this stage the state had no part in the service, and the church was left to do its own registration.

We have evidence of texts questioning bride and groom about their intention to marry, and witnessing their

exchange of vows and giving of the ring, going back to a manuscript from Bury St Edmunds in the 12th century.

By the 14th century they were in widespread use and found in the missals of Sarum (Salisbury), York and Hereford. The priest asks couple if they wish to be married. Included in the question is the concept of a freely undertaken lifelong and faithful partnership, but there is no specific reference to children at this stage.

Do you wish to have this woman as your wife, and to love her, honour her, keep and protect her, in health and in sickness, as a husband should his wife, to keep from all other women except her, as long as your lives shall last?

A similar question to the woman includes the phrase 'obey and serve'

The vows follow. They are rather more fulsome, and in modern English they read:

I take thee N. to my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer (one ms adds 'for fairer for fouler') in sickness and in health, till death us do part, if holy Church it will ordain, and thereto I plight thee my troth.

The bride's vows make interesting reading.

I take thee N to my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to be bonny and buxom (this phrase actually means 'meek and obedient'), in bed and at board, till death us do part, if holy Church will ordain and thereto I plight thee my troth.

The Blessing of the ring follows, and then it is given by groom to bride.

With this ring I thee wed, this gold and silver I thee give, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.

There are several interesting things to note about these texts. Even in an altered rite of marriage, the key words and phrases are preserved and familiar. The contrasting phrases – better and worse, richer and poorer – would have been easy to pick up and repeat, as well as having a poetic quality.

Changing circumstances have caused certain expressions to



A church aisle decorated for an English wedding service

be omitted, and other passages to be expanded (to include the giving and receiving of two rings as well as a preliminary question about the marriage being open to the gift of children). Even in the mediaeval missals, although the prayers and blessings were, of course, in Latin, the consent, the vows and the giving of the ring were in English because this is the only language that most people would have understood or spoken.

Having said that, the missals from different parts of the country reflect different pronunciations by the way in which the words are spelt.

These words have seeped into our language – and were adopted by the churches of the Reformation, as well as by the Catholic Church across the world. But they are, and they remain England's gift to the wider Church. The writer Kenneth Stevenson in his book *Nuptial Blessing* says that the English Sarum Rite 'contains the richest expression of marriage in vernacular devotion, for it not only develops the consent and ring-giving formula, but produces that masterpiece of mediaeval vernacular liturgy, the marriage vow.'

In an age when we face changes in translation, it is important to be aware of the heritage that has been passed down to us in our own language. The words of our rite of marriage, not only contain what is the faith of the church, they also contain texts, which though modernised, are truly vernacular, and come from no Latin original. In the revised rite of marriage that will appear in due course, I hope and pray that our tradition will be respected and preserved!

Mgr Anthony Rogers



Continued from previous page

It bears witness to the unique richness of the relationship we call marriage – a relationship that cannot and ought not to be reduced to any one of its parts – it is public, not private; it celebrates the complementarity of men and women and their mutual equality, each bringing to the married relationship gifts unique to their own gender but essential to the good of the relationship; it fosters the happiness of humanity that is achieved in reaching out to give and receive from others; it is, by its nature, open to gift of children and the privileged place for their upbringing.

Such an understanding of marriage does not devalue other relationships, but should be seen as unique and should continue to be defended and protected by society.

Too late in June for a report to be included in this issue of *Our Diocesan Family*, an ever-growing number of couples, families and individuals will have gathered at St

John's Cathedral in Norwich for the Diocesan Celebration of Marriage & Family.

This joyful occasion is one opportunity in which we can bear witness to the unique and enduring contribution that marriage, as traditionally understood and lived, makes to us as families, to the Church, to wider society and to humanity as a whole.

We need to find other ways in our family and parish lives to do the same. Perhaps in a real commitment to observe wedding anniversaries – each a special milestone on the journey of life for husband and wife and for their family and friends. Perhaps in an annual parish celebration of married life.

You might also wish to support the work of the Marriage & Family Life Commission, Marriage Care, Engaged & Marriage Encounter, both financially and by offering your talents and gifts.

Fr Mark Hackeson



DIOCESAN SCHOOLS IN FOCUS

Prayer garden blessed at Lowestoft primary

St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Lowestoft have established a prayer garden that was blessed following the school Mass on Thursday 17 May by Fr Brendan Moffat who led the pupils, parents and staff from the school hall.

The garden is situated by the school entrance and will be a quiet retreat for pupils to sit and think and pray.

The Prayer Garden was funded by a legacy left by Mrs Fisher.

Veronica Short the Headteacher at the school said: "The Prayer Garden is a lovely addition to the school grounds and our children really appreciate the space to be calm and still."



The pupils at St Mary's in Lowestoft at their prayer garden, above, and Fr Brendan Moffat carrying out a blessing, right.



Students performed Shakespeare for stars

Ten students from St John Fisher Catholic High School, Peterborough, took to the professional stage to perform *Twelfth Night* at The Royal Court Theatre, London on 13 May.

The school was the headline performance at a charity gala event which was hosted by TV presenter, Sue Perkins.

Patron, Jenny Agutter was also in attendance and personally congratulated the students and was especially complimentary of the school's performance.

Last summer the school was invited to be part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival and the students performed *Twelfth Night* at the Key Theatre.

Across the country over 800 schools were involved in the festival but St John Fisher was one of only three chosen from across the country to take part in the gala event.

St John Fisher's version of *Twelfth Night* was the longest play of the evening and was followed by a version of *Macbeth* performed by Overchurch Junior School from the Wirral near Liverpool and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed by students from Talbot Special School, Sheffield.

Emily Clarke, development assistant for Shakespeare Schools Festival said: "*Twelfth Night* went down a storm!

"I really thought your students rose to the challenge of performing on a West End stage.

"They were extremely professional on the day, and met the challenge of rehearsing and teaching in such a short time with absolute maturity."

Congratulations go to the students involved: Charlotte Aitken, Stephanie Beara, Riah Davis, Zainia James, Liam Kehoe, Siobhan Kelly, Jordan Macintosh, Kirsty Macintosh, Iziah Robinson and Patryk Zakrocki.

Interactive prayer labyrinth at St Bedes

To celebrate Pray for Schools fortnight this year St Bedes Inter-Church school in Cherry Hinton near Cambridge transformed the chaplaincy centre into an interactive prayer labyrinth.

The 11 stations enabled students and staff to pray for the school, to think about the nature of prayer, to pray for their friends, teachers and families.

Those using the stations were also asked to consider how fortunate they were to be offered free education, to think about where they have come from and where they are going in life.

The stations followed a path around the room which took students on a prayer journey finishing in the sanctuary.

A cushion filled tent was placed in the centre of the room where students could relax, enjoy the quiet and enjoy feeling closer to God.

Stones left on Jewish graves

Several Year 9 and 10 students from the Sacred Heart School in Swaffham recently went to Prague where they stayed at the Convent belonging to the Daughters of Divine Charity.

Sister Anna took them on tours to cultural, religious and historical sites.

They went to the concentration camp at Terezín, 38 miles outside Prague where they saw artifacts found there and were given information about what conditions were like.

Diary extracts from eye witnesses were in the museum which was dedicated to the 15,000 children who endured Terezín.

It had the name of every single child who entered through the archway that read, 'Arbeit Macht Frei' ('Work Brings Freedom'). Every single wall in the room was covered with names. Only 132 of them survived.

The fortress was built in the late 18th century and named after the Austrian Empress Theresa. During the second half of the 19th century, it was also used as a prison.

During WW1, the fortress became a political prison camp.

In WW2 Terezín held Jews from Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, the



Students saw the graves of Jewish people and youngsters who died at the concentration camp at Terezín near Prague where 132 children survived out of 15,000 held there

Netherlands, and Denmark.

More than 150,000 Jews were sent there and about 33,000 died in the ghetto itself, mostly because of the appalling conditions.

The small fortress in Terezín was also used as a punishment prison for Allied soldiers who persisted in escape attempts.

In July 1945 the camp came under the control of the Czech ministry.

The students said: "Although it was a somber place where horrific treatment of people had occurred, it is so important to visit these sites as a memorial and to ensure future

generations understand the importance of tolerance and caring for each other.

"We left after saying a prayer in the Jewish cemetery, where we placed stones on the memorials.

"The origin of this custom is uncertain but the most common explanation is that placing stones is a symbolic act that indicates someone has come to visit and the deceased have not been forgotten.

"By placing our stones we would never forget the people that had suffered there and indeed people that are still fighting intolerance, injustice and hatred."

Year 4 at St Louis Catholic Primary school in Newmarket have been studying the Rainforest and the effects of deforestation. The pupils decided that they wanted to do something themselves to help the rainforest. Sycamore Class became a Rainforest charity for a week. They designed and made sock monkey adoption packs researching information about the species and making adoption certificates. An open morning was held for parents and the whole school on Monday 26 March, see picture right, to communicate the need to protect the rainforest. "Sycamore raised £162 through the sale of the sock monkeys, enabling them to buy three acres of rainforest," Michelle Fusi, the deputy head said.



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YOUTH MATTERS (Oh Yes We Do!)

Miracles do happen today

A personal account by Hamish MacQueen, Director of Diocesan Youth Service

As well as the spiritual significance, one of my favourite things about going to Walsingham is driving through the unbridged ford.

There have been times when I've gone round three or more times, just so I could drive through it over and over again.

Often this was accompanied by opening the window and only closing it at the last second in order to terrorise my children that they were going to get drenched!

On the diocesan pilgrimage to Walsingham last May Bank holiday, I was giving a lift to a couple of young people and thought they would enjoy my driving through the ford routine.

However, on this occasion I didn't manage to drive through it at all – the car broke down right in the middle.

I had to wade in to push it out and even worse ask my passengers to help me. Whether it was that we had recently had high rain fall, or that I haven't driven through the ford since changing my car, I don't know.

Whatever the reason my ford antics were brought to an abrupt stop!

I left the car thinking by the time we



Hamish's car being pushed out of the water but after Mass it had by a miracle recovered its power

walked into the village and back, it will have dried out, but over four hours later it still hadn't.

I called breakdown recovery and the mechanic came out. After trying it unsuccessfully, he said he didn't want to try it anymore in case of causing damage – already his assessment was that the engine had possibly sucked in water causing the cam rods to buckle.

"Could be expensive -the cheapest option will be to replace the engine" he casually said, not realizing he was giving me a financial death sentence!

Instead, he arranged for a recovery vehicle to come and take us and the car back to a garage in Norwich but this wouldn't come for an hour or so.

In that hour we had Mass. A friend I had rung (to ask him if I could borrow his car later) also decided to pray a

decade of the rosary for my car!

When the recovery vehicle came, the driver decided to give my car one more try. It started almost immediately! He then dried it out and it's run well ever since.

It could be hypothesised about more drying out time and different mechanics approaches, but as far as I'm concerned Our Lady's intercession worked a miracle that day. Yes it was a minor thing in the whole scheme of the world's problems but it was a big thing to me.

It's one of many little miracles I'm convinced Our Lady's intercession is responsible for every day, but in her humility, she doesn't to take the credit. So often she's happy to just accept the verdict of the recovery vehicle driver - "You were very lucky". I know different.



Mime artist Steve Murray will perform at the event

Weekend full of faith and fun

As a successor to 'The Big One' this year's main diocesan youth event will be the 'Ignite Youth Festival', held at the Sacred Heart Convent in Swaffham.

Planned by the Diocesan Youth Council, the weekend will involve faith based talks and workshops, Taizé prayer, live music, opportunities for sport (including football coaching), and culminating in a special Mass on the Sunday.

We are particularly pleased to welcome to Ignite the internationally acclaimed mime artist Steve Murray.

Steve has already done retreats, in many of our schools and is very popular. He can make you laugh and cry, as he shares the Gospel Message through mime, and completely blows away any idea that Christian mime is cheesy!

Ignite is a great opportunity for young people from all over the diocese to come together and celebrate their faith.

Full details through the diocesan website or on www.ignitefestival.co.uk

WYD in Rio here we come



Setting out with the statue of Our Lady from the village



Relaxing at the Chapel of Reconciliation



They might not be going for another year, but many of the group planning to go to World Youth Day in Rio in 2013 started their pilgrimage by leading the procession on the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

They were accompanied by young people who have been on previous World Youth Days and members of the Youth Council.

"WYD isn't just about the two weeks we are away. All the preparation we do leading up to it is very much part of the pilgrimage and there's no better place to start than Walsingham – such an important place of pilgrimage itself," Hamish MacQueen, Director of Diocesan Youth Service, said.

"When Pope Benedict invited young people to join him in Rio in 2013 for the next World Youth Day, I had mixed feelings.

"On the one hand it's very soon, it's going to be expensive and there are some concerns about safety.

"On the other hand, many young people from our diocese would say going on WYD has had a profound impact on their faith, and one of our recently ordained priests refers to WYD as very much part of his 'Vocation Story'.

"So with the advice of the Consultors, for this WYD we have decided to take a group limited in size and of over 18 year olds only, who are really serious about going.

"People had to apply to be offered a place, and the group we now have are fantastic! Rio here we come!"

IGNITE

Saints of the 3rd Millennium

- Internationally acclaimed Christian Mime artist: **Steve Murray**
- Catholic Football Coach: **Dominic Goymour**
- Live Music
- Inspiring Talks and Workshops
- Taizé Prayer

Live Mime
Talks
Music
Love
Hope Alive
Eucharist
Faith
Reconciliation
Inspiration
Prayer
Vocation
Sports

Age 14 to young adult
14th – 15th July 2012
Sacred Heart School
Swaffham

A Catholic festival that welcomes young people from all traditions and backgrounds.
Organised by the Diocesan Youth Service of East Anglia.

For more information and bookings go to:
www.ignitefestival.co.uk



The pilgrims were all able to get into the Chapel of Reconciliation, above, and Fr David Bagstaff crowns and blesses the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham before the procession along the Holy Mile, below



Pilgrims came to Walsingham from every part of the Diocese of East Anglia despite the weather forecast



Walsingham tribute to Mary, Mother of the Poor Pilgrims brave cold and rain

About 1,000 people with their families and parish friends braved the weather to attend the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

Luckily the rain kept away until the procession had completed its journey from the The Friday Marketplace in the village to the Chapel of Reconciliation at Houghton St Giles.

The theme of this year's pilgrimage was Mary, Mother of the Poor, but the pilgrims were also asked to give thanks for 50 years of CAFOD, the Catholic development agency working in the Third World.

Diocesan Administrator Fr David Bagstaff led the pilgrimage which began with the crowning of the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The statue was then carried by members of the Diocesan Youth Council along the Holy Mile to the Chapel of Reconciliation as pilgrims sang hymns and prayed the Mysteries of Light of the Rosary.

The pilgrims reflected on the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, the Wedding at Cana and His first miracle, The Proclamation of the Kingdom and the

active life of Jesus, His Transfiguration and the Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

The theme of Mary, Mother of the Poor, was given more perspective during the Mass when all the pilgrims were able to shelter from the rain inside the Chapel of Reconciliation.

They heard in the homily by Fr David that Mary was present at key occasions revealed in the scriptures when the poor needed direct help.

Fr David outlined the importance of the Wedding at Cana when Jesus, although it was not his time he said, turned the water into wine when it ran out.

"It would have been deeply embarrassing for the family in a small village of struggling peasants.

"Far from remaining silent Mary spoke out on behalf of the poor people."

The image of Mary at the foot of the cross with her son above her dying horrifically was an important one. Mary is at the side of all the dying people, those living in poverty and need.

"We can rightly call her Mary, Mother of the Poor."

Fr David also made reference to the Magnificat with the words of exalting the lowly, feeding the hungry and sending the rich away empty.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom



Young people saving hard to go to the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro played a prominent part

The Wedding at Cana



The statue of Our Lady arrives at the Chapel of Reconciliation, above, where Fr David Bagstaff concelebrated Mass, below



Pilgrims arriving at the Slipper Chapel after walking the Holy Mile



The diocesan choir led the main music while a group of Philippinoes from St Walstans in Costessey sang and played in their traditional style during Communion



NEWS

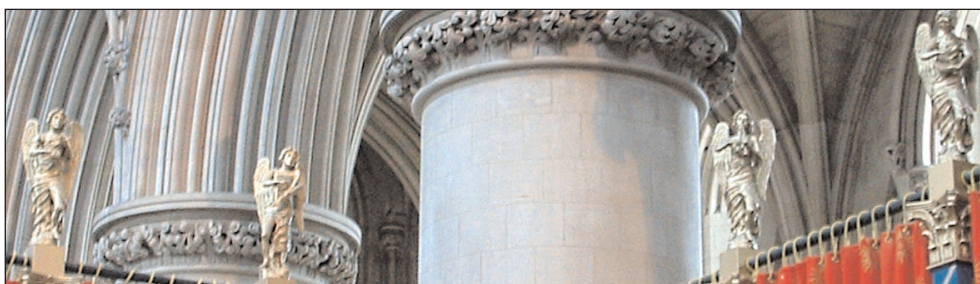
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THE
CATHEDRAL
OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Pictures from the Notre Dame Cluster of schools performing The Road to Jerusalem, a traditional passion play, before Holy Week in St John's Cathedral.



Approximately 250 pupils from St Mary's Primary in Gorleston, St Augustine's Primary and St Thomas More Catholic Junior school raised the roof in a massed choir conducted by Matthew Hardy from St Mary's and accompanied by a band of staff. The Cathedral's nave was filled with parents, grand-parents, friends and parishioners.



The angels set around the sanctuary

Guide to musical angels

Next time you visit St John the Baptist Cathedral take time out to have a look at the Angelic Orchestra which stands on their posts around the High Altar.

They are part of the design to enclose the Sanctuary area so that the focal point of the Cathedral is the High Altar.

Angles playing musical instruments were very much part of the decorative sculpture of Mediaeval Gothic architecture throughout England and Europe.

Our architect, Russell Taylor, has based 11 of our 14 angels on those already represented either inside our Cathedral or outside as part of the carved frieze with the apostles over the Great West Door.

These angels were carved by James Owens, the specialist stone mason, employed by Robert Bridgeman and Sons of Lichfield, the builders of St John's.

However, Chris Duarte, the Cathedral choirmaster, has pointed out that modern scholarship has discovered that he made some mistakes with the instruments.

Bagpipes were rarely depicted inside religious foundations as these were considered rather low class instruments because they were made from pig's bladders.

So perhaps it is not surprising that the fourth angel (counting left to right facing the High Altar) has a set of pipes which are practically unplayable.

The straight bore shawm played the by the sixth angel has the hands the wrong way round.

The three angelic musicians not already present in the Cathedral, namely the ones with the triangle, the shawm and the double pipe can be seen in other religious foundations of this period.

The inclusion of the angel with the triangle, which may also be seen in Lichfield Cathedral, is an interesting reminder that the

original builders of St John's were based in that city.

Our 'modern' angels were moulded in plaster and then cast in resin before being finished with gold leaf.

The Friends of the Cathedral, who financed these angels, invite you to become 'an angel' by joining out association and so help to make out Cathedral a place of beauty in which to worship God.

Please download a membership form from friends@sjbcathedral.co.uk or ring the Cathedral secretary on 01603 624615 or pick up a folder next time you visit our Cathedral.

by Pat Walters

Friends of the Cathedral

The orchestra of angels

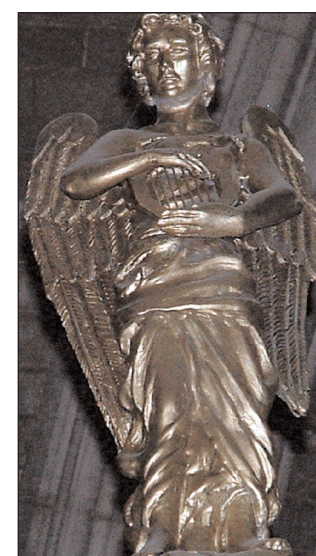
Starting from north (left-hand) side facing the Altar the angels are playing:

- 1) Seven-stringed octagonal psaltery-harp.
- 2) Portative organ.
- 3) six-stringed harp with extra length at the foot.
- 4) Bagpipes - blowpipe, chanter and drone. Interesting because the blowpipe is the wrong way round as you should blow in the narrow end of the conical pipe. The chanter is also rather elongated and the flared end is more common on the drone.
- Moving across the Sanctuary now
- 5) Tabor and beater.
- 6) Shawm (straight bore) with hands the wrong way round.
- 7) Panpipes
- 8) Rebec and bow.
- Pair of cymbals.
- 10) nine-stringed harp with straight sides.
- Continue down the south (right-hand) side towards the Nave
- 11) Double pipe.
- 12) Flat drum.
- 13) Triangle and beater.
- 14) four-stringed gittern - plucked.

I am indebted to Chris Duarte, M Mus, BA (Hons), the Cathedral choir master for detailed information about the musical instruments.



The new lamp that adorns the Walsingham Chapel at the Cathedral was blessed by Dean Fr James Walsh at a weekday Mass shortly after it was installed.



Seven-stringed harp



Angel with bagpipes



Straight bore shawm

News in brief

St John's embroiderers are holding an exhibition of vestments they have designed and stitched to mark their 10th anniversary at the Narthex on 27-28 July and it is open from 10.30am to 4.30pm and all are welcome to see their work.

An open house is being held by St John's parishioner Peter Kemp at his house 17 Colman Road on Saturday 28 July in support of Let the Children Live. A bring and buy raffle is being held to raise funds for this Walsingham-based charity that works for street children in Colombia.

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 files and do not include them inside documents.

Also give documents a descriptive name - I get too many just labelled diocesan article or news.

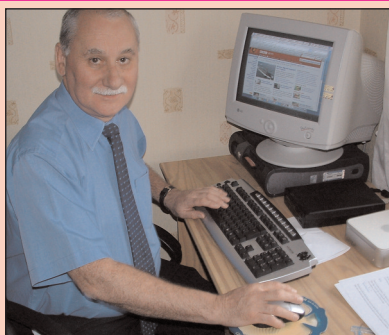
Send material to Patrick Byrne
The Editor, Our Diocesan Family,
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Tel: 01603 627409 and email:
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Deadlines: Our Diocesan Family is bi-monthly and printed early in the month before publication.

Material this time must arrive by 20 July for the SEPTEMBER 2012 issue.



BUILDING BRIDGES in the Holy Land

Pilgrimage visits are way to help Christians and for all to develop spiritually



There is much to see and enjoy in the Holy Land both as a pilgrim and a tourist

Both the Archbishop of Westminster and the Archbishop of Canterbury made appeals last summer for UK Christians to support the diminishing Christian communities in the Holy Land and an organisation run by a priest from East Anglia is helping to carry out this mission.

Their arguments are based on the loss over the past century when the Christians in Israel, Jordan and Palestine have fallen from more than 17% of the total population to less than 1.5%.

Fr Paul Maddison is now working in the Holy Land and said the 20th century was a time of much social and political turmoil for Israel and the Palestinian territories, as world leaders struggled to help Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities to live peacefully and respectfully side by side.

“The failure to reach a workable compromise has come at an enormous cost to the local people,” he said.

“The reality of daily life in the Holy Land ranges from the inconvenient to the catastrophic, as the land divisions complicate every aspect of community life including access to healthcare, education, employment, security, freedom of movement, and of course there is sadly the ever-present threat of military attacks.

“In these circumstances, it is not surprising that we have seen an exodus of Christians from the Holy Land. However, as the Archbishops have underlined, it is crucial that we take this opportunity to support the remaining Christian population. “We must not allow them to be forgotten or marginalised and must encourage and support their growth and development.” One way UK Christians can support these communities is by making a journey to the Holy Land to both experience the holy places and meet the local people.



For those who cannot travel to the Holy Land, donations for key health and education projects are invaluable in a region where a stagnant economy and oppressive political conditions prevent the local people from building the infrastructure necessary for a vibrant and thriving economy to emerge.



A welcome face of Palestine but the people are suffering
The Diocese of East Anglia has been working to strengthen links between UK Christians and the Christian population of the Middle East for over a decade. In 2010 Palestine Pilgrimage was set up as a niche not-for-profit company based in Cambridgeshire and led by Fr Paul and it organises bespoke tours to the Holy Land throughout the year, and donates all surplus income to humanitarian projects in the Holy Land.



Distinctive architecture of the churches

Palestine Pilgrimage is running several tours in 2012 and 2013, some of which are local parish groups in East Anglia and the invitation is for more to go on pilgrimage.

Costs range from £950 to £1,150 per person on a half board basis. For more information, including the itineraries and booking forms, please email: office@palestinepilgrimage.org.uk



A land of scenes that can bring spiritual inspiration

CAN YOU HELP?

Our two ‘Building Bridges’ projects this year are supporting Fr Manoj’s work to rebuild the church of St Andrew in Nikum, and restoring the parish cemetery at Kerak 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 (Nikum church)

HOLY LAND (Kerak cemetery)

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



Fr Dick White celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with 15 young people at the parish of Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury at Wymondham in Norfolk.

St Felix celebrates 100 years since church built

St Felix Catholic in Felixstowe is marking the centenary of the building of their church this year in four major ways. The parish celebrated a One-Mass Sunday and held a short retreat on the weekend of 12 and 13 May led by Sr Barbara, RJM, and Fr Norbert, OSB, a German Benedictine who came over to help. "Some 35 parishioners attended the retreat which was prayerfully creative and even included morning prayer down at the seashore," Fr David Hennessey said. The church was packed for the single parish Mass on Sunday and Fr David Bagstaff came to be chief celebrant. "The liturgy was creative and began with a small precession of candles brought to a specially prepared table on the sanctuary.

"Each candle recalled one of the eleven parish priests who have served here over the past 100 years. "Clocks were hung around the church to remind us of the passage of time and balloons were hung in profusion to emphasise the joy of the occasion.

"Sr Barbara had much input into this liturgy and even wrote a "psalm" of thanksgiving to mark the occasion and we are grateful to her for the contribution of her creative imagination which so enriched the liturgy."

In his homily, Fr David Bagstaff reminded us that a centenary is "a great milestone; a time for giving thanks and a time for stepping out into the future".

He recalled the great missionary courage of our patron, St Felix, and wisely pointed out that "The church building is important to us, but only in so far as it prepares us to live our faith in the world and for us in our turn to go and be joyful disciples sent by the Lord".

The Flower Festival is scheduled for the final weekend of June and will be co-ordinated by Giovanna Roberts and there will be major contributions from the other churches in Felixstowe in good ecumenical spirit.



Fr David Jennings, former parish priest of All Souls has been given the freedom of the City of Peterborough in recognition of his work in the city and is pictured left with the Mayor. The City Fathers wanted to recognise his role in strengthening links with other churches and speaking out on matters of social justice.

Day for remembering grandparents

The Catholic Grandparents Association invites all to come to the 10th Annual Grandparents Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

The day begins with 12 noon Mass, celebrated by Bishop John Hine. Children are encouraged to bring a prayer dedicated to their grandparents and join the afternoon activities, such as a Children's Liturgy and the decoration of the Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham with flowers, face painting, bouncy castle and more.

Bring a picnic and enjoy a great day out for all the family whilst thanking .. or remembering .. your Grandparents for all they have done.

Contact: Edwina Griffin, Marriage and Family Life Co-ordinator on 0203 0930474 for information or to register a coach party.

The 17th St George's scout troop being inspected by Fr Tony McSweeney on St George's Day at the parish in Norwich, right



Help plea for working trip to Peruvian parish

Two parishioners from St John the Baptist Cathedral parish are going on a fact finding tour to Tambogrande in Peru with whom there is a link dating to 1974 when Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur left England to establish a mission there.

Jo Anderton and Sarah Ebelewicz will go on a working visit to Tambogrande last visited in 1986.

Jo said: "We as the donor parish annually commit to raise £4200 to sponsor a teacher of agriculture and a nurse who both work in the rural schools network.

"Therefore we hope to see how our funds are being used, and give support and practical assistance to the community there."

As an experienced teacher of English Jo will be working in remote schools and Sarah will be supporting the health programme.

Mass for sick hailed a success at St Cecilia's

St Cecilia's in Dersingham celebrated its first Mass for the sick and housebound in March and were pleased to welcome about 70 visitors including a number of people from King's Lynn parish with which the parish is clustered.

More than half of the congregation received the Sacrament of the Sick and afterwards tea was served and there was an opportunity to chat and catch up with old friends.

The people in the parish who made the event possible were thanked and special praise went to those who organised the teas and transport and to Fr Michael Ryan for officiating at the Mass.

The parish hopes a Mass for the sick and housebound will become a regular fixture like the Ladies' Shared Lunch held in spring and autumn each year.

Other local congregations are invited to the ecumenical event and it is also part of an outreach programme including groups who use the church hall, other local ladies' groups and also individuals such as neighbours and readers of local newsletters.

Tambogrande, meaning the big resting place, is a rural town on the River Piura in Northern Peru.

In the Inca Empire it was a place where travellers stopped to rest and exchange goods on their way from the mountains to the sea.

The parish is known as San Andreas and is scattered over a radius of 50 miles with 120,000 inhabitants in the town of Tambogrande and 120 surrounding villages.

Jo said: "The landscape is varied with the irrigated San Lorenzo valley growing 40% of Peru's mango and lemon crop.

"In the region 75% of workers are employed in agriculture, many on a low day rate.

"On the non-irrigated side of the river is desert, a large 'dry forest' of algarroba trees which provide shade for the animals and an important source of food for the animals and income for the peasant farmers.

"In this campo area water and electricity supplies are both scarce and erratic.

"Numerous problems beset the

community. Malnutrition remains a pressing issue.

"Children suffer most with the added risk of development delays that impede learning. Parents need to be encouraged to see the importance of any education for their children.

"As the town sits directly on top of a major gold, zinc and copper deposit it is ever at threat from multinational mining companies who seek to establish opencast pits there which would ruin their farming and could destroy the community as well as endangering their health and well-being.

"We are working hard to raise our annual commitment but are also appealing for help towards our own expenses including travel, board and medical matters, Jo said.

"We shall both be taking unpaid leave and learning Spanish in order to make this visit as we feel it is important to spend time there and to apply our own skills to help where we can. It will be a tiring but worthwhile few weeks.

"On our return we shall present a report to our sponsors."



Receiving the Sacrament of the Sick at the Mass at St Cecilia's, above, and the meal being prepared, below.

There is no charge for the lunch but everyone is asked to bring some food to share.

There is often a sensible balance between savoury and sweet dishes.

Taking a light-hearted approach, some of the parish see this as evidence that the Holy Spirit's influence extending even to food!

Normally there is a raffle at the lunch to raise funds for charities such as the Alzheimer's Society, the Poppy Appeal, and the Norfolk Hospice.

