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Archbishop Peter Smith. Picture
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Tributes paid to Archbishop Peter

Tributes have been paid to Archbishop Peter Smith, previously the second Catholic Bishop of East Anglia, who died peacefully on March 6, after a short illness.

■ Bishop Alan Hopes said: “Archbishop Peter Smith died peacefully just before midnight yesterday – March 6. He had received the Sacraments of the Church and his former secretary was with him when he died. His illness progressed very quickly just after his diagnosis with cancer a few weeks ago.”

Archbishop Peter, aged 76, was the second Bishop of East Anglia and served the Diocese from 1995 until 2001 when he was translated to the See of Cardiff. He became Archbishop of Southwark in

2010 until his retirement in 2019.

“I know that many of you will have fond remembrances and many stories of Archbishop Peter during his six years here which you will share with each other,” said Bishop Alan. “I have always been most grateful to him for his wise advice and encouragement both personally and at the Bishops’ Conference.

“For over 50 years, he made an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Church across three dioceses and nationally on the Bishops’ Conference. His straightforward faith, his sense of humour, honesty and humanity and his ability to cut to the chase in any debate stand out in a life which was dedicated to the Lord and his Church. May he rest in peace.”

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, said: “Archbishop Peter devoted his life entirely and unwaveringly to the service of the

Lord in His Church. Peter served as bishop in three dioceses. There are, then, many who will remember him personally and treasure those memories.”

A Diocesan Solemn Requiem Mass is due to be celebrated for Archbishop Peter in St John’s Cathedral on Friday March 27 at 11.30am. This is now to be a private Mass with no public allowed.

The Funeral for Archbishop Peter Smith will take place at St George’s Cathedral, Southwark, as follows:

Sunday 29th March:

6pm: Reception into St George’s Cathedral followed by Cathedral Mass: Archbishop John Wilson to preside.

8pm: Vigil Service, after which the Cathedral will close.

Monday 30th March:

12.30 pm: Funeral Mass: Archbishop John Wilson to preside. Burial in the Cathedral Crypt at the end of the Mass.

Public acts of worship to stop

A letter from Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, on behalf of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, was issued on March 18, stopping public acts of worship in Catholic churches until further notice.

■ Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, so many aspects of our lives must change. This includes the ways in which we publicly express our faith. It is very clear that, following official advice and in order to keep each other safe, save lives and support the NHS, at this time we must not gather for public acts of worship in our churches. This will begin from Friday evening, 20th March 2020, until further notice.

Our churches will remain open. They are not closing. They will be a focal point of prayer, where you will find solace and strength. In visiting our churches at this time, we will observe with great care the practices of hygiene and the guidance on social distancing.

However, the celebration of Mass, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, will take place without a public congregation.

Knowing that the Mass is being celebrated; joining in spiritually in that celebration; watching the live-streaming of the Mass; following its prayers at home; making an act of spiritual communion: this is how we share in the Sacrifice of Christ in these days. These are the ways in which we will sanctify Sunday, and indeed every day.

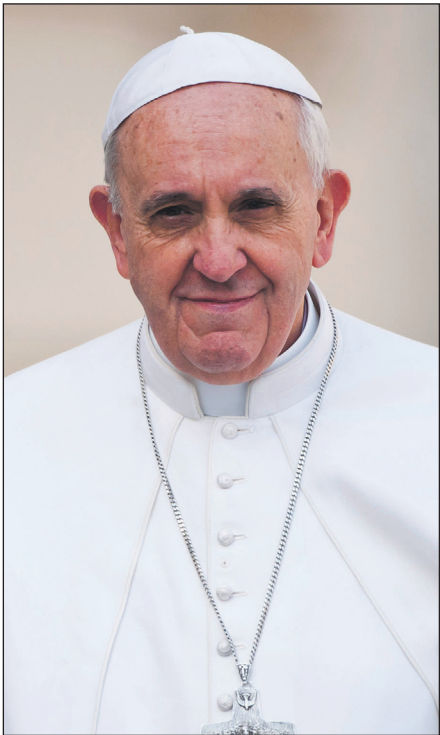
We want everyone to understand that in these emergency circumstances, and for as long as they last, the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is removed. This is, without doubt, the teaching of the Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2181). This pandemic is the ‘serious reason’ why this obligation does not apply at this time.

Your own bishop and parish priest will provide further support, encouragement and information about our way of prayer together in the coming weeks.

The second vital aspect of these challenging times is our care for each other. There are so many ways in which we are to do this: being attentive to the needs of our neighbour, especially the elderly and vulnerable; contributing to our local food banks; volunteering for charitable initiatives and organisations; simply keeping in touch by all the means open to us.

During these disturbing and threatening times, the rhythm of the prayer of the Church will continue. Please play your part in it. The effort of daily kindness and mutual support for all will continue and increase. Please play your part in this too. For your commitment to this, we thank you.

To keep up with the latest Diocese of East Anglia news, including updates on precautions and events affected by Coronavirus, please sign up for our weekly enews bulletin at rcdea.org.uk



Some positive thoughts from Pope Francis

■ Pope Francis has written some thoughts giving a more positive outlook to the current situation:

"Tonight before falling asleep think about when we will return to the street.

When we hug again, when all the shopping together will seem like a party.

Let's think about when the coffees will return to the bar, the small talk, the photos close to each other.

We think about when it will all be a memory, but normalcy will seem an unexpected and beautiful gift.

We will love everything that has so far seemed futile to us. Every second will be precious.

Swims at the sea, the sun until late, sunsets, toasts, laughter.

We will go back to laughing together.

Strength and courage,

See you soon!

Catholic East Anglia

Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

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Articles and photographs for the next edition are very welcome and should be sent to the editor, ideally via email, by the deadline of Monday April 6.

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Ash Wednesday marks start of Lent

■ On Ash Wednesday priests across the Diocese of East Anglia placed ashes on the foreheads of parishioners to mark the beginning of the season of Lent.

At St John's Cathedral in Norwich Bishop Alan Hopes was the main celebrant of the Ash Wednesday evening Mass, and led the blessing and distribution of ashes, using the words: "Repent and believe the Gospel."

"Along our journey we are called to enter into a relationship with God," he said in his homily. "Over the next six weeks the Church calls us to accompany Jesus on His journey."

"To start the ball rolling," the bishop proposed, "choose one of the Gospels and just read a short passage each day..."

There is so much joy and peace in knowing and discovering God's presence.

"If something has gone wrong in a relationship with someone, Lent is a time to seek healing and reconciliation."

Bishop Alan encouraged his listeners to "make a space for themselves" and at the same time to engage in prayer, fasting and giving. "Friday is a good day to miss a meal altogether," he suggested.

"May the Lord," he concluded, "grant us all a faithful and fruitful Lent."

Bishop Alan distributing ashes at St John's Cathedral.



Fr Sandro talks of Ethiopian mission

Our Lady of Lourdes, Sawston and St John Fisher Cambourne welcomed back Fr Sandro Barbieri, who had spent several months with the parish studying English a couple of years ago, to talk about his work as a missionary in Ethiopia. Mel Ward reports.

■ After years of parish work in Italy, Fr Sandro had felt called to serve as a missionary.

In February, he spent one evening talking at OLOL and the next sharing his experiences in Ethiopia at Cambourne. The Maranto family opened up their home to us and he talked us through the life, culture, and daily life of his community in Abol in Ethiopia.

The village is not far from war-torn Sudan and the large community of displaced people in the region causes tribal tension and fear in a land with limited resources. Now known as 'Abba' Sandro he has decorated the church with murals that preach the gospel with joy and inclusiveness. The mural of the last Supper shows people from the different ethnic groups around the table.

Abba Sandro's compound is a place of sanctuary as well as a vital source of water for those who would otherwise have to pay for it or walk many kilometres carrying very heavy containers. Digging a new well is a true sign of living water in many ways in a place where a glass of clean water is greatly prized.

There is a school within the compound made up of every faith and ethnic group, but teaching the Christian faith to all. Learning to work and play together with those who may be regarded as your

Fr Sandro Barbieri meeting and talking to parishioners at Cambourne.



'enemy' is a real and ongoing challenge and crucial in such a fragile and troubled community.

There are three local dialects and few able to speak English or Italian, but Fr Sandro's cheerfulness and joy in the gospel shines through. He admits to frustration at times and the 40 degrees heat makes physical tasks a struggle, but he is leading by example, trying to grow crops and buying sheep to try and encourage a greater sense of diversification and opportunity to people who do not even have a future tense in their language. Getting through the day sharing what you have is seen as sufficient when life is so hard.

Our parish has helped to support some of the teaching staff. The school also offers first aid, and helping to fund antibiotic creams, plasters etc is important. Sometimes of course, they have to send people to the health centre, but that has to be paid for which is beyond the means of many.

Many people come to hear the 'catechesis' at the compound and the Catholic community there is beginning to flourish as more choose to get baptised – a dangerous choice for many. As with many of our own children at times the draw of a biscuit at the end is attractive.

If you wish to support Abba Sandro's mission please contact our parish priest, Fr John Minh. A little goes a very long way – a teacher's salary is just 100 euros a month, an assistant teacher earns 70 euros a month and the cleaner 50. The first aid costs about 200 euros a month.

One of our community paid the salary of one of the three teachers for a year. This is such practical and positive evangelism and our young people were delighted to see an old friend and truly impressed by the simplicity and dedication of Fr Sandro and his co-workers. His aim is to help the compound become self-sufficient over the next few years and to serve as an example of stewardship, love, joy and hope.

Church gives warm welcome to families

Bishop Alan Hopes welcomed individuals and families from across the Diocese who are preparing to enter full communion with the Catholic Church at Easter. Eldred Willey reports.

■ Priests and sponsors from many parishes across Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire made the journey to St John's Cathedral in Norwich on Sunday March 1 with Candidates and Catechumens they are supporting.

The Rite of Election marks an important stage along their journey as they undergo the final stages of RCIA (Rite of Catholic Initiation of Adults) and prepare to be either Confirmed, or to be received into the Full Communion of the Church and receive the Eucharist for the first time, which both take place at the Easter Vigil.

Catechumens are adults who have never been baptised and seek to become members of the Catholic Church through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. After being greeted by Bishop Alan, they were invited to write their names in the Book of the Elect.

Candidates are adults who have been baptised in one of the Christian denominations and now seek to become members of the Catholic Church through the Rite of Reception, whereby they will receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

"This marks a special moment on your



Bishop Alan welcoming catechumens at St John's Cathedral.

journey of faith," said Bishop Alan in his homily. "It will define your faith journey for the rest of your lives."

Bishop Alan spoke of the challenge of entering this season leading up to Easter. "Lent becomes for us a moment of real growth and strength as the Church journeys towards her heavenly home," he said.

"You will all bring gifts with you, and you will have such an important part to play in the life and mission of the Catholic Church," continued Bishop Alan.

"Jesus is the one who has been calling you to undertake this journey, and He is the one on whom you must fix your gaze for the rest of your lives. If you are ever tempted to go off at some tangent,

remember that He is always there, full of love.

"Today is a powerfully significant moment for the life of the Church in our diocese," concluded Bishop Alan. "Discover with us new joy and life in the living Christ. May God bless you all."

news in brief

Two pilgrimages and Ignite Festival are cancelled due to Coronavirus

■ A number of high-profile events around the Diocese of East Anglia have been cancelled or postponed following the measures put in place on March 16 by the Prime Minister in an attempt to contain Coronavirus.

These include the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham (which is due to be rescheduled for later in the year), the Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham at the end of May and the Ignite Festival at Swaffham, also in May.

The Chrism Mass, on Tuesday April 7, will now not be open to the public and will instead be captured in words, pictures and video and be posted online soon afterwards. More details of this will be carried on the diocesan website www.rcdea.org.uk as soon as possible.

The first Caritas Festival, which was due to be held at St George's in Norwich on March 28, has also been cancelled.

Caritas development worker, Jacinta Goode, said: "Please pray for those who were to take part and those they serve, and especially anyone who is suffering the effects of the coronavirus in any way. Caritas is here to serve the poor and marginalised and clearly now is a time when the people of God can share His love in helping those in need."

If you are able to help coordinate support for the vulnerable through this time, please contact Jacinta: caritas@rcdea.org.uk

A day of prayer and study St Ethelreda's in Newmarket for Catholic men on April 25, being organised by Damian Wallace and John D'Mello on behalf of the Marriage and Family Life Commission of the Diocese of East Anglia.

East Anglia Masses to be live-streamed

With the decision to stop public acts of worship in Catholic churches in England and Wales following government advice on Coronavirus, two churches in the Diocese of East Anglia already live stream their Masses online and St John's Cathedral is following suit. You can also tune into a daily Mass on Cambridge-based Radio Maria.

■ This week, Cardinal Vincent Nichols mentioned the usefulness of streaming if churches need to celebrate Mass without a congregation.

Live streaming is currently available from St Laurence's in Cambridge and also from the Catholic National Shrine at Walsingham and more details are available on these links.

www.saintlaurence.org.uk/live

www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream

The possibility of introducing live streaming to St John's Cathedral is currently also

being explored and will be carried on the cathedral website

www.sjbcathedral.org.uk

Sean Martin, who helped to set up the live stream at St Laurence's, is happy to have a conversation with any other diocesan churches who may wish to explore setting this up, to help point them in the right direction.

You can contact Sean on 07775 514294 or at: seanmartin@fastmail.co.uk

■ Meanwhile, Cambridge-based station Radio Maria will continue to broadcast daily Church liturgy, the Mass, and the Holy Rosary. The station also provides teaching and catechesis covering faith and social issues, programmes focusing on human and social development, and news from across the world.

Led by Diocese of East Anglia priest Rev Dr Samuel Randall, you can find out how to listen on DAB radio in Cambridgeshire and via a smartphone app, iTunes and online everywhere else at: www.radiomariaengland.uk

Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia

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3 year contract (to be extended if targets are met)

The Diocese of East Anglia is a growing part of the Catholic Church with record ordinations of new priests, hard-working clergy and committed volunteers. We want to build on this growth to support stewardship within our 51 parishes and give everyone the opportunity to contribute their time and talents to the mission of the Church.

In this important new post, you will take the lead role in helping parishes to engage their parishioners to consider how they can support their local parish with their skills and enthusiasm and also financially. Working closely with parish finance committees and clergy, you will guide them through Stewardship Campaigns and help to encourage Parish Giving through regular donations and Gift Aid. Over three years, we expect that you will have worked with every parish in the Diocese. As the post develops, you will also have the opportunity to help develop capital appeals and help with fundraising projects and events.

If the successful candidate has limited experience in church fundraising, then initial training for the post will be provided by the Diocese of Westminster.

The role will involve travel across and occasionally outside the Diocese.

Applications are welcome from people of any background. You do not have to be Catholic but an understanding of the Church would be an advantage. This role will suit a confident, creative individual with solid communication, organisational and co-ordination skills. You may have experience with individual or community giving.



Further details and an application form at www.rcdea.org.uk/Vacancies or by emailing finance@rcdea.org.uk

Closing date: 11.59pm Monday 20th April
Presentation and Interviews: In Poringland on Thursday 30th April

For an informal discussion, please contact Matthew Fernandez-Graham on 01508 492540

NEW EVANGELISATION



Day of prayer for survivors of abuse

The Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Sexual Abuse will be marked this year on Friday April 3, a day when people are asked to think about and pray for all those impacted directly by abuse – for the victims themselves, their families, friends, and communities.

■ A prayer resource has been created by Caroline Dollard, Marriage & Family Life Adviser, Bishops' Conference, and by members of the Let's Be Honest Group (a group that includes survivors). The prayer resources are for use at home, in a family setting, or in the parish.

"Wherever we choose to respond to this call to prayer, the resources offer an opportunity to listen to the voices of survivors and reflect on the impact of abuse," said Caroline.

"The traumatic effects of sexual abuse cause a person to experience in mind, body

and spirit all sorts of long-lasting conflicts and struggles - it can be like a battlefield in the body.

"Everyone can do something towards alleviating that pain. Pope Francis says the Church must be like a field hospital in battle, ready to respond, ready to heal the wounds."

The resources offered can be used on the day itself or the surrounding days.

Resources

www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/day-of-prayer-abuse-survivors-2020/

Mass for abuse survivors

■ A special Mass for victims and survivors of abuse, their families, supporters and all those affected by abuse is set to be held by the Diocese of East Anglia on Saturday April 25.

The Mass will be held from 12 noon onwards at Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Wymondham, Norfolk, and there will be refreshments available both before and afterwards. It will be celebrated by Fr Pat Cleary from the Diocesan Safeguarding Commission.

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Enjoying the Bible in music and art

Churches Together in Ipswich gathered for an event called "Enjoy the Bible - Sensing the Sacred Through Music and Art" on Saturday March 7, as part of The God Who Speaks initiative, reports Alan Hodgson.

■ The culmination of months of work between the central churches of Ipswich, and led ably by Fr John Thackray of St Mary-at-the Elms, the day was held at the Anglican St Nicholas Centre.

Two guest speakers were invited to offer a reflection to all who attended. The morning started with Christopher Borrett, Director of Music for St Mary-le-Tower, leading us through the history of sacred music; right from the music of Solomon and King David through to chant and polyphonic music.

Christopher explained how music (and sacred music in particular) permeates every aspect of our lives often without us even realising it.

The talk was peppered with beautiful pieces of music, history and ideas to help everyone who attended to appreciate sacred music more deeply. Christopher explained that there are many parts of the Old Testament that were originally written for music and how, in later years, composers have used Scripture in the most profound and beautiful ways.

Christopher carries a wealth of experience of conducting and directing music and is an accomplished bass singer himself. He soon had everyone singing simple tunes to demonstrate some of the more complex ideas of music to help people to understand the richness and beauty of Scripture



Fleur Dorrell speaking in Ipswich. Picture by Philip King.

related music.

After all that singing, a welcome cup of tea was enjoyed and it was wonderful to see people from different denominations enjoying each other's company and swapping stories.

After the break, Fleur Dorrell from the Catholic Bishops' Conference and Bible Society, spoke to us about how artists throughout the ages have used scripture for inspiration and ideas.

Using images such as Ford Madox Brown's beautiful image of Christ washing Peter's feet to Caravaggio's portrayal of St Thomas touching Christ after the resurrection as well as images of the Annunciation, Fleur discussed the use of colour, space and lighting and what to look out for in

religious art.

The day was attended by over 60 people, mainly from the Catholic parishes of Ipswich, but also from Felixstowe and Hadleigh. As well as many representatives from other Christian churches within and around Ipswich.

There will be several further events throughout the diocese during the Year of the Word - there was plenty of room for more people to attend this most fascinating of mornings; I can only endorse this event and encourage even more people to attend these events in the future. As well as meeting new people, it is an easy and interesting way to learn about Scripture and gain a deeper understanding of God's love for us.

Romantic Valentines dinner at church

■ Thirteen couples enjoyed a romantic evening on St Valentine's Day at Our Lady Immaculate and St Etheldreda parish, Newmarket, reports Rita Harben.

While most couples came from Newmarket, there were guests welcomed from Cambourne, Mildenhall and Stowmarket.

There were couples ranging from those married 50 years to those planning it soon.

The event was prepared and hosted by a team of Newmarket parishioners who have been enjoying the marriage enrichment course, Cana Welcome. Making use of the excellent facilities at Our Lady Immaculate

and St Etheldreda, they worked together to prepare a really fine meal with thoughtful touches celebrating marriage, which is 'the most beautiful thing God has created,' according to Pope Francis.

Cana is a mission of Chemin Neuf Community: www.chemin-neuf.org.uk/en/home

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Chance to join ecumenical pilgrimage

■ There is the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of countless pilgrims and join an ecumenical pilgrimage to Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk this May.

As part of the celebrations to mark the 1000th anniversary of the founding of the Abbey of St Edmund, two walks will trace the routes taken by the first Benedictine monks who came from St Benet's in Norfolk and Ely in Cambridgeshire to found the Abbey in Bury St Edmunds.

For the more adventurous, the 80-mile walk from St Benet's on the Norfolk Broads starts on Monday May 18 at Ludham with a boat trip across the river Bure. Travelling via Norwich (stopping at the Julian shrine) and Diss (stopping at St Henry Morse Catholic church) the walkers will reach Bury St Edmunds five days later.

A second route starts at Ely Cathedral early on the morning of Thursday May 21, and makes its way to Bury St Edmunds via Mildenhall and Icklingham. This shorter route is about 30 miles but is now fully booked.

Both pilgrimages converge on the



Pilgrims on St Edmunds Way between Bures and Lamarsh.

outskirts of Bury St Edmunds and conclude with Evensong in the Abbey ruins. Accommodation, breakfast and dinner is provided and a support vehicle will be on hand for luggage. Day walkers are welcome.

"This is a joint venture between St Edmundsbury Cathedral and St Edmund's RC Church in Bury St Edmunds – both partners in the Abbey 1000 celebrations," said Sarah Friswell, PR Manager at the

Cathedral. "We hope that this will be a time of reflection and renewal for those who make the pilgrimage and those communities through which the pilgrims pass."

To find out more, please contact precentor@stedscathedral.org. Full details, prices and information on how to book can be found on www.stedscathedral.org/events/pilgrimage-2020 and the deadline is now March 25.

Record attendance at Bishop's Laity Council

A record number of parish representatives attended the Bishop's Council of the Laity Meeting on November 23 at Poringland, reports its Secretary, Maureen Costello.

■ After answering the matters raised by the parish representatives about Parish Pastoral Councils and Parish Finance Committees, Bishop Alan then provided important information for the representatives to take back to their parishes.

Bishop Alan covered a range of topics which included:

- an update about the clergy in the diocese
- the importance of the Year of The God Who Speaks
- Our new saint – John Henry Newman
- ICSA – Royal Commission: Inquiry into Sexual Abuse.

There was then a very interesting presentation from Jacinta Goode about Caritas



East Anglia in which she highlighted the importance of the involvement of the laity. Jacinta explained about the Festival taking place in three different places in Diocese and the link with the Youth Service for the Big Sleep Out event later in the year. She also gave out some handouts providing more information about Caritas.

The next Meeting of the Council of the Laity is on Saturday May 16, at the Conference Centre, Poringland. There is tea and coffee at 10.30am for the meeting

at 11am. The meeting finishes at approximately 1.15pm followed by light refreshments.

For those parishes who have not been represented, a letter is going out to the parish priest asking him to pass on the information to the appropriate person to attend the meeting in May.

Agendas and reminders will go directly to those representatives who have previously attended. We are looking forward to seeing all parishes in the diocese represented.

news in brief

Norwich link to Newman digital archives

■ A new free online digital archive of 8,000 letters written to and by Cardinal John Henry Newman has been launched online with a number of links to the Diocese of East Anglia.

The National Institute of Newman Studies launched the free online resource in early January.

Lawrence R Gregory, Archivist to the Institute, said: "There are presently just under 8000 digitised letters catalogued and uploaded to the system, with more being added each day. At this stage the collection relates solely to the recently canonised 19th Century theologian, Cardinal John Henry Newman, and comprises of letters written both by him, and to him."

"As the project develops we plan to incorporate collections from other archives, related to key individuals in 19th century English Catholicism."

Diocese of East Anglia archivist, Michael Hill, visited the archive and found a number of items with an East Anglian link: "I have just test dipped into the archive using "Norwich" (7 results), "Husenbeth" (22 results), "Norfolk" (253 results). There must be so much more to find."

digitalcollections.newmanstudies.org
www.newmanstudies.org

Parish Colombia link

■ St Laurence's church in Cambridge has chosen Hands on Colombia as its CAFOD project for 2020 and recently held an evening to find out more. Nora Darby reports.

The Hands On Colombia launch evening on Saturday January 25 saw a sell-out attendance with Jess Michelmores, Communications Officer for CAFOD South America giving a very interesting talk and slide presentation about Colombia in general and more specifically on the Magdalena Medio region which we will be supporting.

Candlemas Day party

■ A Candlemas Day party for parish volunteers was held at Our Lady of the Annunciation, King's Lynn, on Sunday February 2, reports Pauline McSherry.

A few words of welcome and gratitude from Canon Peter and our party began. Our Canon, with his assistant Priest Fr Gordon and Deacons John, Shaun and Martin ministered to their guests with the aplomb of five-star waiters.

Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia

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The Diocese of East Anglia is a growing part of the Catholic Church with record ordinations of new priests, hard-working clergy and committed volunteers. We are further strengthening our financial controls and have created this new post to assist with this process. You will work as part of the small Diocesan Finance and Resources Team to support the Diocesan Accountant in accounting for the finances of the Diocese. This will involve setting up bank payments for authorisation, posting transactions to the general ledger, inputting journals, credit control and reconciling the bank accounts.

You will assist other administrative staff to ensure that office administration is carried out efficiently and effectively.

Applications are welcome from people of any background. This role will suit a team player who is also used to working on their own in a quiet environment. You will have strong attention to detail and be well organised.

Further details and an application form can be found at www.rcdea.org.uk/Vacancies or by emailing finance@rcdea.org.uk

Closing date: 11.59pm Monday April 6
Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by

Friday April 17

For an informal discussion, please contact Paul Wilson or Matthew Fernandez-Graham on 01508 492540



obituary

Greatly loved and respected priest

Fr William Wells (29 May 1929 – 21 February 2020) had a very unusual and wide-ranging ministry. Fr Michael Rear pays tribute.

■ Born into an Australian Anglican family he became a member of the Bush Brotherhood of St Paul as soon as he was ordained deacon in 1952; a missionary community which lived under vows, and ministered to remote Aboriginal communities that couldn't be reached by road. The priests were described as a 'band of men' who could 'preach like Apostles' and 'ride like cowboys'.

It is eye-popping to imagine that rotund and jolly character we knew and loved in and around Walsingham, as an adventurous young man astride a horse. Some of them learned to fly light aircraft, but William never did, a mercy since he was lethal and nervous driving a car.

The idea of religious life took hold of him and brought him to England in 1961 to test his vocation at the Anglican Monastery of Our Lady and St Benedict, Nashdom Abbey. Although he left before final vows he never set foot in Australia again. After a short spell as Chaplain to the Sisters of the Holy Paraclete in Whitby, his missionary vocation took over once more. Like many remarkable Anglo-Catholic priests of his day he answered the call to work in deprived parts of Central America, where he spent 15 years as a parish rector and also headmaster of a Church school.

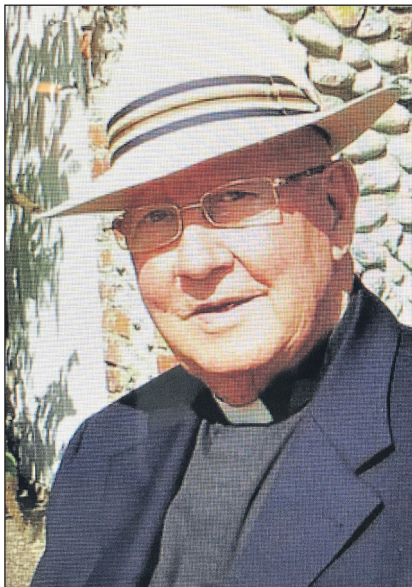
On returning to England in 1980 he worked as a prison chaplain in Rudgate and Thorpe Arch Remand Centre for young offenders, before becoming Vicar of Brambles Farm, Middlesbrough. It was a tough assignment, and the church building eventually closed due to vandalism, lack of funds and arson.

Fr William loved it and quipped that when he went there he discovered where the inmates of Thorpe Arch did their training. He stayed for seven years before retiring to the peace of Walsingham, a cheerful presence in the village.

There he was received into the Catholic Church and ordained priest at the age of 68, along with eight other elderly former Anglicans; William wasn't the oldest. They have all given the most wonderful service to the Church, well justifying Bishop Peter's trust in them. If Bishop Peter had preached the same homily today it would have probably have landed him in hot water for the ageist quips he made, like 'I won't ask you to prostrate yourselves because I don't know how we would get you up again'. And a beautiful tribute: 'Many men reaching your age would say "I've laboured long and hard in the vineyard of the Lord and I'm ready to hang up my boots". But you brethren have asked to carry on, and I salute you'.

So did the parishioners of Walsingham where he frequently celebrated Mass at the Annunciation, as well as hearing Confessions each Saturday at the Shrine. There was a lovely naivety about him. On visiting the doctor for some ailment he was told that red wine would be good for him. It wasn't long before people noticed - inevitably he collapsed. The doctor came and respectfully enquired, 'Do you drink, father?' 'Yes' he assured him, 'you told me to'. 'About how much?' 'I try to drink a bottle a day', William answered. 'I meant a glass', replied the horrified doctor. From that moment William never drank another drop.

In 2003, he moved to Blakeney where, like his predecessors over many years, he became almost priest-in-charge, greatly loved and respected. His solitary retirement years were spent studying, rather like a monk. He gained his BTh in Oxford, and then a Master of Laws in Catholic canon law. His erudite homilies became legendary, and all those who heard him thought them wonderful even if they couldn't understand everything he said.



Bishop Peter

Parishioners across the Diocese of East Anglia have sent it their memories and tributes to Archbishop Peter Smith, the former Bishop of East Anglia.

■ "A real man of the people when he was Bishop of East Anglia and no doubt beyond. He was often seen at St Georges joining in with the Divorced and Separated Group meetings then in existence and having a cigarette with fellow smokers sitting on the wall outside (this was the 1980s).

"I also got to know him quite well on a visit to Lourdes when I happened to be placed on the same table as him at the hotel we stayed at – many jokes and much fun was had by all. When it came to going home he was determined to find out how my rather unusual wheelchair came apart so that he could help load it onto the coach. He will be much missed and in our prayers."

**Anne Murrin
St George's, Norwich**

■ "Bishop Peter was one of the kindest priests it has been our pleasure and honour to know. We accompanied him on many events in the UK and Rome. He was a learned man with great knowledge and we were able to have the deepest of dialogues conducted with such grace and humour. He never missed a beat.

"He was also always available when really needed. When I found myself bereft on losing my mother, he was the one priest who took time to sit, listen, talk and pray. His intercession helped enormously. He never stopped being a man of the people, a true priest. In a busy world so many lose focus on what the mission actually is, Peter never did.

"We had so many great chats and giggles in so many fine and humble venues. His loss will be felt enormously. I hope and trust that the church will be certain to continue his mission. This will be his true legacy. Whilst he rests in eternal peace."

**Katushka Giltsoff
Sherborne, Dorset**

■ "I was always impressed and grateful to Archbishop Peter Smith for his moral guidance especially standing up for the values and protection of traditional marriage and family life. He was an excellent spokesman and ambassador for the Catholic Church of England and Wales."

**Sarah Green
St Edmunds Parish
Bury St Edmunds**

■ "We remember Bishop Peter at the celebration in the crypt of St Edmunds following the confirmation Mass of our granddaughter Lindsey McCann in May 2000.

"We also met him at the choir Jubilee Mass in September 2000 when we were both presented with Special Diocesan medals. We remember speaking to Bishop Peter immediately after a Mass in Newmarket when he came outside to have a cigarette.

"Following Bishop Alan Clarke, Bishop Peter wasn't with us very long before moving to Cardiff. He was a wonderful person."

**George & Shirley
Grimshaw
Bury St Edmunds**





memories



Archbishop Peter Smith pictured while he was Bishop of East Anglia. Above, in the garden of the Bishop's White House in Poringland, below left, at the blessing of a new building at Clare Priory and, below right, with children at St Edmunds School after the blessing of a new building. Pictures all courtesy of Archant.



Scheme is life-saver

Living in a modest semi in the Hellesdon area of Norwich, Elaine Tattersall is no less than a life-saver according to the two young refugees for whom she provides a home as part of YMCA Norfolk's vital Supported Lodgings scheme.

■ Abdu was just 14 when he left his home in Africa, where his family faced persecution. In his pocket he had as much money as the family could scrape together to pay the people traffickers who promised to get him to the UK.

He spent the next two years of his young life on the hazardous journey, first travelling thousands of miles across North Africa, and then literally taking his life in his hands to board a totally inadequate boat to cross the Mediterranean Sea.

He spent months in the notorious Jungle camp at Calais and eventually managed to hide in a lorry and get into the UK.

He was resettled to Great Yarmouth and then to stay with Elaine in Norwich through YMCA Norfolk's Supported Lodgings scheme when, eventually, his situation started to look a whole lot brighter.

Elaine, a semi-retired Tai Chi teacher, has been providing a home for dozens of young people like Abdu over the past 11 years or so, after her eldest son left home and she had a spare bedroom.

Elaine currently provides her two young lodgers with their own rooms (which they have to look after themselves) and shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.

"They are all troubled teenagers who, for one reason or another, have been made homeless," she said.

Then there are young lads like Abdu, refugees who have had to fight against the odd to even be there.

"It is about giving them their own space and allowing them to find their feet with education or a job or whatever," said Elaine. "I am here as a support, but not to do everything for them. There are always ups and downs but I do not try to mother them."

The vast majority have stayed with Elaine for at least 18 months.

"The best thing about the role is when you see people who are ready to move on, they have either healed relationships or they have



Elaine and Abdu.

grown in some way or are just in a better place," said Elaine.

"I am so happy to be here. Anytime I need help Elaine is there," said Abdu. "It feels like my real family and I call Elaine Mum, because she has taught me to cook and how to live a more healthy lifestyle."

"I wish there was a lot more people like Elaine as without people like her and the YMCA my life would be nothing," he admitted. "Family is not just about blood. Family is about who loves you and who you love back."

Do you have a heart for young people?

Why not become a Supported Lodgings or Nightstop host?

If you are willing to provide a young person in need with a room in your home and support them on their journey, we would love to hear from you.

YMCA Norfolk is looking for hosts for vulnerable young people and has both paid and volunteer opportunities, from just one night or up to two years.

You won't be alone in this, YMCA Norfolk will help by providing training and ongoing support. To find out more please contact our friendly Supported Lodgings team:

YMCA Community Housing, 29-34 Anglia Square, Norwich, NR3 1DZ
T: 01603 662455 E: community.housing@ymcanorfolk.org
www.ymcanorfolk.org



YMCA

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

SUPPORT & ADVICE

ACCOMMODATION

FAMILY WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

SCHOOLS IN FOCUS

Pupils from two schools win painting prizes

■ Pupils from two Catholic Primary schools in the Diocese, St Augustine's at Costessey, and St Mary's at Lowestoft, were presented with certificates, up to £10 prize-money and framed copies of their winning entries in the Knights of St Columba (KSC) 2019 Nativity Scene Painting competition on February 14.

Pictured (right above) at St Augustine's, Costessey, from the left, are the six winning children of KSC Norwich Council - KS1 Ewan Pickford 3rd, Vera Unazi 1st, Victoria Unazi 2nd; KS2 - 3rd Lucy Cockaday, 2nd - Grace Unazi, 1st Laurence & Amanda Palabrica. Back Row - Head-Teacher Rachel Swindell, Norwich Council Grand Knight Colin Harper, East Anglia Provincial Grand Knight Jason Wickard, Parish Priest Fr. David Ward and Past PGK Christopher Brooks.

The entries from Laurence and the Unazi sisters are being judged in the National Finals Round of the competition where £30, £20 & £15 are being offered to the best three entries in each group with £150 donation to the school or parish providing the winner.

Pictured (right below) with Head-Teacher Imelda Cooper, PGK Jason Wickard and PPGK Christopher Brooks are the six St Mary's winners of Lowestoft Council, from left: KS2 - Lola Wicks 1st,

Alyssa de Pina 2nd, Beatrix Huke-Jenner 3rd; then at KS1 - Rosie Shillings 2nd, Chloe Woolston 3rd, Grace Marie Spearman 1st. The entries from Grace-Marie. Alyssa and Lola have also gone forward for national adjudication.

Current KSC sponsored youth challenges for all schools this half term and the Summer are the Easter Scene Painting and Prayer Writing competitions whilst the 2020 Essay Writing competition is for High School students only.

Youth competitions can also be entered by Catholic children not attending a Catholic School, directly from families, Liturgy groups, Sunday School, or other youth clubs in the Parish. Full details can be obtained from Bro Christopher Brooks, PPGK, East Anglia Province 27 - Tel (01502) 563208 - Email: christopherbrooks631@gmail.com



New school is named

Bishop Alan Hopes has announced that the new Catholic primary school due to open in Peterborough in September 2022, will be called St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School after the newly canonised saint.

■ Bishop Alan explained his choice of name, saying: "Newman was hugely concerned that there should be an educated laity in the church, in order to be able to pass the Faith onto others."

"He built a university in Dublin to this end and taught the Faith himself through his own works and preaching."

"At the time he was canonised, earlier this year, our Diocese had begun negotiations for the new school in Peterborough, so it seemed very appropriate for the school to be named after him and placed under his patronage and prayers."

Since Peterborough City Council

approved the new school on February 14, the Diocesan Schools' Team has been busy working on key areas.

These include meeting with the Department for Education and city council officers on the building of the school, and identifying the skills and expertise needed for the Shadow Governing Body.

One of the first tasks of this governing body, which will stay in place until the full governing body takes over when the new school opens, is to appoint a headteacher for the new school.

They will to work with the Headteacher to ensure everything is in place to allow the

school to open in September 2022.

This will include deciding staffing structures and making appointments, setting budgets, writing policies and procedures, ordering resources, marketing the school and deciding on the school uniform... to name just a few things!

Updates on the progress of the new school will be regularly posted onto the Diocese's website, which will have a dedicated web-page for the new St John Henry Newman School.

In due course, the school will have its own website.

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office@st-marthas.norfolk.sch.uk

Be the best you can be

Everyone Welcome!

Faith Club celebrates first anniversary

■ Children from St Mary's Great Yarmouth and St Peter's Gorleston Faith Club helped celebrate its first anniversary on February 9 and 16 when Fr Alvan Ibeh celebrated Masses at both parishes.

The children did the Bible readings, bidding prayers and the offertory procession. They also led the singing with the support of the leaders and parents and Hamish MacQueen from Ignite, who garnished the singing with his guitar.

Hamish also joined both after-Mass celebrations and lead the children in a rendition of My Lighthouse. This was greatly enjoyed by the many parishioners who gathered to take a keen interest in the Club's first year and all ate cake and refreshments together.

Pictured right is the St Mary's Faith Club with parish priests, Fr Anthony Nwankwo and Fr Alvan Ibeh.



YOUTH MATTERS

A life changing year

As applications for the Ignite youth team for 2020-21 open, Jess McCall, who was on the Ignite Team last year, writes about her experiences.



■ I vaguely knew what to expect. I had been a part of the Ignite Lite Team (part-time volunteers) for some time and had been to help at several events. What I couldn't have predicted was how much joining the team would change my life.

I joined only really knowing the basics of my faith and being in the team for the year allowed me to really grow in my knowledge and my faith, really deepening my understanding of what it means to be a Catholic. I also grew as a person. My confidence at speaking in front of people massively improved as well as an understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses. There was always the opportunity to work on those weaknesses with support from the people around us and to really take advantage of our strengths.

Being a part of the team meant that I had the opportunity to be a part of some of the larger events that we do like the Ignite Festival but also the smaller things as well. I loved being able to go and see so many churches and schools and talk to so many young people about their faith. It was so amazing to see so many young people engaged in the work that we were doing.

The opportunity to live in Walsingham for a year was amazing. The quietness of Walsingham was so different to what I was used to, yet it was a great place to think, reflect and pray. Walsingham will always have a special place in my heart and I have to attribute that to being surrounded by its beauty for so long and by so many people who really live out the message of Walsingham in their lives.

Living in community meant that there was a constant support network throughout the year and that there was always someone ready to answer a question about things I didn't understand.

There was always someone to talk to

about anything.

When I joined the Ignite Team I had no idea what I was going to do when the year was over. I had continuously been changing my mind about what my career would be. I had considered a multitude of different things and none of them quite felt right. Through joining the team, working with young people and building on my relationship with God I realised that I should train to be a teacher.

I loved the time that I spent on the Ignite Team and I would definitely recommend joining the team to everyone even considering it. It's a year well spent.

Why not join the Ignite team

■ We're looking for people to join next year's Ignite team!

So if you are:

- Age 18 (by September) - 29
- in between jobs or stages of education
- leaving school or university this summer but not sure what to do next year.
- unsettled in what you are doing.
- wanting to do something 'different'
- thinking about priesthood or religious life

Then why not consider joining?

You would be working with young people in schools and parishes, developing your gifts such as in music, drama, art and tech. These are full-time positions, initially from September 2020 – July 2021. Food, accommodation and a monthly allowance are provided. Ideal as a 'gap year'. For more information see www.rcdea.org.uk/youth



Open the Book team

■ With the start of the Spring school term the "Open The Book" team in Sawtry Cambridgeshire is back in full swing reports Roy Dunn.

Members of St Benedict's Catholic Community, together with members of the local Anglican and Methodist churches, offer primary school children an opportunity to hear Bible stories from the 'Lion Storyteller Bible'.

Each Bible story is acted out in a 10-minute play with all the costumes and

props being made by the team. Performances take place fortnightly during term time at Sawtry Junior Academy and children are encouraged to take part as much as possible.

Pictured is the group after performing 'Jonah the Groaner' which is of course the story of Jonah and the Whale. Left to right are Su Merton, Joan Meiklejohn, Dorothy Dunn, Andre Bradley, Tony Stefanelli, Roy Dunn and Martin Baker.

New Norwich youth group

■ Norwich Deanery is getting a new youth group: Soul Squad which aims to bring youth together to grow their relationships with both God and each other. Soul Squad will



serve all young people in years 4-6 from parishes in Norwich, Sheringham, Cromer, Wymondham, Dereham, North Walsham, Costessey, and Poringland, as well as students from St Francis Primary School, St Augustine's Primary School, and Notre Dame Prep School. The group will meet weekly in Norwich not only for fun, food, and getting to know each other, but also for prayer, faith-filled discussions, and get-

ting to know God better.

Soul Squad's first meeting will be Thursday, April 30 from 6-8pm at Notre Dame Prep School in Norwich. Hope to see you there!

Chance to volunteer

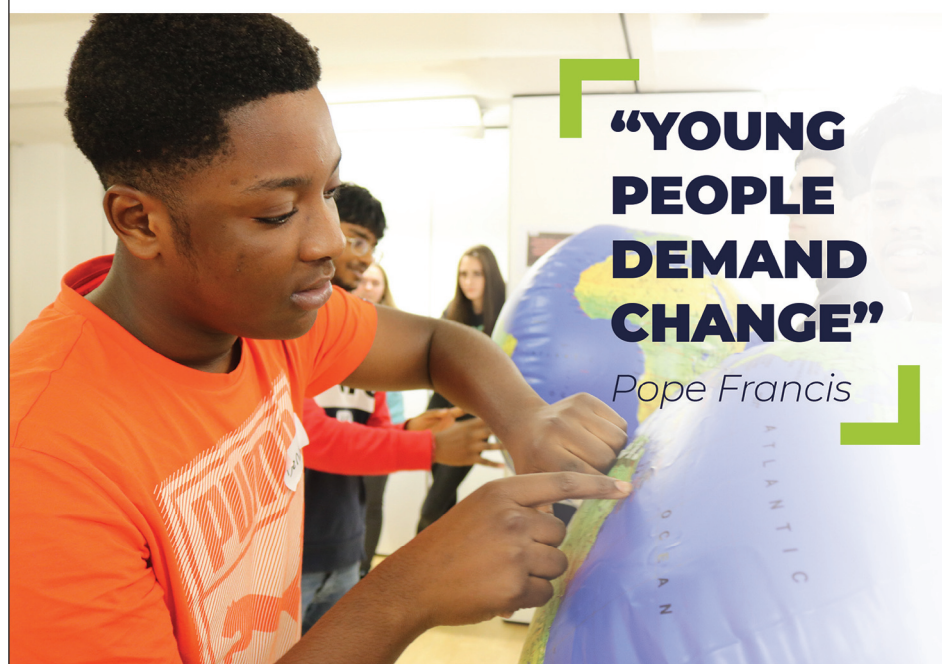
■ Soul Squad is currently seeking fun-loving, faith-filled adults to help in running weekly meetings. Anyone aged 16-116 is welcome!

A training day for interested volunteers will be held on Sunday, April 26.

Anyone interested in volunteering should email Emily Murphy at leader@soulsquad.org.uk.

Visit: www.soulsquad.org.uk

CAFOD Catholic Agency for Overseas Development



Use your free time to inspire young people to build a fairer world

CAFOD is looking for volunteers who have a passion for, and experience of, working with young people. We need people who have a commitment to CAFOD's aims and values and an interest in sharing our work in secondary schools through delivering assemblies or workshops. CAFOD will provide training and support, and expenses will be paid.

If you are interested please email youth@cafod.org.uk and we will connect you with your local CAFOD team.

Volunteering assignments will be in schools in your local diocese, and you can either work on your own or as part of a team. None of our work is possible without you, so join us and put your faith into action.

**no one
beyond reach**

Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398 Photo: CAFOD

reflection

An Easter meditation

Deacon Peter Coates from Woodbridge, asks us to pause and meditate on the death of our Lord in his monthly reflection.



■ Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

My God, why have you abandoned me?

He cried again, It is completed!

I put my arm around her shoulder and we stepped away

We watched from the rock

It was the first time in three days that any respect was shown

The gentleness, love was palpable

The soldiers fell silent

The cross was lowered to the ground, the rope that held him cut

The nails removed

The body washed of blood and filth

They gave him first to her

The Mother of God held her dead son

I knelt beside them

The rock became their throne

The others knelt

The gentleness, love was palpable

The strength was given and we carried him to the cave.

I was there when they crucified my Lord!

A 95-year-old great-grandmother from Wymondham is making hundreds of dresses for poor girls in Africa and Asia. Eldred Willey reports.

■ She works each day in her 'factory' – the front room of her bungalow – where the walls are covered with photos of children wearing her beautiful products.

"God has given me a gift," said Anna Bayles, "and I could not live without it."

Anna asks friends and fellow parishioners for second-hand pillow cases, curtains and tablecloths, which she turns into colourful, bright dresses. Nothing is wasted.

"I do every stitch with lots of love, and lots of emotion," she said. "When

the clothes go, I am so pleased, but I have to ask: why are the children without clothes in the first place?"

Anna began her childhood just north of Paris, the 16th of 18 children. When their home was bombed during the Second World War, the family evacuated to rural Picardy in Vichy France.

There was nothing to buy in the shops at the time, and people were making their own clothes. A nun called Sister Blandine taught Anna dressmaking. "Faith was very important to our family," she recalls.

At the end of the war she married a British soldier, Jack Bayles, and they moved to Wymondham. He became a Catholic and they settled in the parish. They adopted four children, including two, Monique and Jean-Pierre, who came from Africa.

One day the founders of an Attleborough-based charity, the Uganda Support Fund, showed a film in the parish, and Anna asked them if they could use some dresses. The came round to her bungalow the next day, and the factory was born.

Anna has now made hundreds of dresses for children in Uganda, Zambia and Kenya, Thailand, Jordan, Vietnam

Anna Bayles in her 'factory' in Wymondham with some of her dresses



and more. Often she will send them out with missionary priests who are living in Norfolk.

"They call me Mother Anna in Thailand," she said. "In Africa I am simply the Dress Lady."

So how many has she made altogether?

"Well, I sent just under 300 to Thailand, and 300 to Jordan...Oh, I've lost count. What's the point of counting anyway?"

Anna goes to Mass during the week when she can, and to the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on a Tuesday.

"As soon as I come home from church I get onto it," she added. "Seven days a week. I can make a dress in 45 minutes and a skirt in 20. But I don't force myself; it just comes naturally. I finish about 4pm. I belong to a couple of clubs, but I don't have time to go."

"I need my faith so much," she concluded, "and I love my church."

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Buckfast Abbey

God calls to us constantly, longing to guide those who yearn for life and desire to see good days into the way of peace. The Rule of Saint Benedict helps us to hear God's voice, in the Holy Scriptures, in the sacred liturgy and in our brothers in community. If you are a single man longing to live your Catholic faith in a way which brings great joy as it demands the best of you, consider whether God is calling you to be a Benedictine monk at Buckfast Abbey. Please reach out to us, and we will do all we can to help you.

Invitation to happiness

Wells-next-the-Sea parishioner Prisca Hastings has recently returned from the most extraordinary two weeks of her life, volunteering with the Missionaries of the Poor in Jamaica. Prisca reports.

■ Our group of six volunteers, led by Fr Michael Johnstone, travelled to Jamaica to be extra hands in a Religious Community – the Missionaries of the Poor. The missionaries work with the poor, those who are crippled, mentally and/or physically handicapped or old and frail. “The call to serve the poor is an invitation to happiness” – so says Fr Ho Lung, the founder of the Community of Missionaries of the Poor (MoPs). These words, first seen on the back of a volunteer’s T shirt, proved to be true.

Indeed, this fortnight proved to be the most extraordinary two weeks of my life. Now 75 years old, I was finally able to do what I have longed to be able to do and yet everything about the trip meant moving outside my comfort zones!

This started with the challenge of what to put in the suitcase; then the prospect of a ten-hour flight; of sleeping in bunk beds in a dormitory, and getting up at 5.30am every day, with no hot water to use, except from a kettle; plus travelling and working with strangers. No red wine for two weeks. Plus the heat!

So many unknown challenges to face, and yet it proved to be the most rewarding and peace and joy-filled time I have had to date.

On arrival, we found we were housed in a Monastery of the Brothers of the MoPs, secured behind high walls. And we discovered that each morning we were to be transported by minibus to one of five different ‘Centres’ housing the people cared for by the Community. Each of these residences, too, is secured behind high walls. For all these properties and activities are situated in ‘The Ghetto’ – the slum and ‘bandit’ area of Kingston, the Capital of Jamaica.



Back: Donal Han-
non (Dereham), Br
Deon MOP (volun-
teer co-ordinator),
Fr Michael
Johnstone, Prisca
Hastings (Wells-
next-the-Sea), Fr
Roach (USA),
Kasia Wroblewska
(St John's
Cathedral); Front:
Mariane Reilly
(Costessey),
Moira Selvage
(Gorleston).

The day started very early, with the bell ringing at about 5.30, and once up we went to the chapel in the Monastery, along with the Brothers. The Angelus was followed by Morning Prayer, then Mass and Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament until breakfast. Then it was off in the minibus, to start work at one of the Centres.

The brothers in Kingston number about 150, all at different stages of formation – a period of some ten years being the usual time before a young man commits himself for life, by Solemn or Final Vows. The five centres we visited – one now run by the Sisters of Missionaries of the Poor – are home to some 300 - 400 residents – homeless, handicapped (physically and/or mentally), amputees, HIV patients, abandoned, or traumatised individuals, and many, so many, mute! From small babies to the very elderly!

Some of our group had been in previous years, the others like me were first-timers; and we shared our volunteering with groups from the USA who, like us, varied in age. As far as I know, the youngest among us was 14 and the eldest 86. In addition, youngsters from local schools visited as part of their community service. Our work consisted simply in being additional pairs of hands, doing whatever the Brother in

charge asked – washing and moisturising faces and arms; helping with feeding at meal times; washing floors or putting dry washing away; handing out drinks or shaving men, and then simply spending time with the residents. We were there to assist and encourage the Brothers in what they do – not tell them how to do it!

It was extraordinary being part of what was going on – part of several different communities – the Brothers, the Sisters, employed workers, the other groups of volunteers, the residential communities – with the overall goal of living together peaceably and caring for one another. It is indeed “love in action”. The desperate level of poverty disability and damage weighed heavily on me, while the tenderness and joy and brightness in some residents’ eyes was really encouraging and heart-warming.

It seems to me from this visit that Mission not Maintenance is vital for the church to thrive – serving the poor has to be at the heart of all we do. I appreciate there are all sorts of poverty – physical, financial, emotional, spiritual and intellectual – and that list is not exhaustive, and we all suffer some degree of poverty. Only by serving the poor among whom we find ourselves do we stand a chance of shining with the light of Christ to a sad, unbelieving world.



Miracles mean Newman would be canonised

John Henry Newman is one of the great figures on the story of the Christian faith in England. Here is the final of a brief six-part biography of the new English saint.

■ There is an exhaustive process before anyone is declared a saint. Newman’s “cause” was opened in 1958.

After a thorough investigation of his life and work by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome, Newman was declared “Venerable” in 1991.

This meant he had shown “heroic virtue” as a Christian and could be venerated by the faithful. If any miracles could be attributed to his intercession, then he could be “beatified”.

Jack Sullivan, a student for the diaconate from Boston, Massachusetts, had severe back pain which was caused by the vertebrae in his lower back turning inwards and squeezing his spinal cord. Surgery had not helped.

Sullivan prayed through the intercession of John Henry Newman: ‘Please Cardinal Newman help me to walk so that I can return to classes and be ordained’. He was cured.

In 2010 Pope Benedict beatified Newman during his visit to the UK. Deacon Jack Sullivan read the Gospel at the Mass in Cofth Park, Birmingham.

To be declared a saint another miracle is required.

Melissa Villalobos of Chicago was pregnant, but her placenta had become detached from her uterine wall. She developed a sub chronic hematoma, which is a blood clot in the foetal membrane. She started to bleed uncontrollably. Doctors said she would likely have a miscarriage.

She collapsed in her bathroom, bleeding. She was unable to move to reach a phone.

In her own words: “Then I said, ‘Please, Cardinal Newman, make the bleeding stop.’ Those were my exact words. Just then, as soon as I finished the sentence, the bleeding stopped.” She got off the floor and verified there was no more bleeding and said, “Thank you, Cardinal Newman. Thank you.” Just then the scent of roses filled the bathroom, the strongest scent of roses I’ve ever smelled.”

“I thought to myself in that moment, ‘Oh my goodness! My baby is OK. I’m OK. My four children are OK. We’re all OK.’ And I said, ‘Thank you, Cardinal Newman.’” That afternoon Villalobos’ cure was confirmed during a weekly ultrasound. The doctor told her everything was “perfect” and there was no more hole in the placenta.

This cure was recognised as a miracle and has led to his canonisation.

St John Henry Newman – pray for us.
www.newmancanonisation.com

We must speak for the voiceless

The Third Principle of Catholic Social Teaching is the Preferential Option for the Poor writes Jacinta Goode – as demonstrated by Oscar Romero.

■ On March 24, 1980, the Archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero, gave his life for the poor of his country. He was shot and killed at the altar whilst celebrating Mass, falling at the foot of a huge crucifix. He had become the outspoken voice of the voiceless poor and oppressed and he paid the ultimate price.

Jesus tells us in Luke 6:20, “Happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God.” In his message for World Day of the Poor in 2019, Pope Francis talks about God establishing his kingdom, which he then entrusts to us. It is our responsibility, then, to care for the poor.

In Matthew’s Gospel (25:40), we hear Jesus telling us that we will be judged by our response to “the least of these”. The Bishops of England & Wales, in 1996,



spoke of this response in The Common Good. They said, “In the poor, we see the suffering face of Christ. The poor are not a burden. They are our brothers and sisters.” “The least of these,” then, are the poor and we must treat them as we would treat Christ himself.

The Bishops in America teach us of the consequences of extreme poverty. In Economic Justice for All (#88), they say, “The ‘option for the poor’ is not an adversarial slogan that pits one group or class against another. Rather it states that the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor wounds the whole community. ... These wounds will be healed only by greater solidarity with the poor.”

So, what is our response to “the least of these” to be? St Ambrose gives us a clue. It is not enough for us simply to give to the

poor. Rather, we are obligated to share everything with all of God’s children. St Ambrose says, “You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to them what is theirs... The world is given to all, and not only to the rich.” So much food for thought here! This could well be another article at another time, but I invite you to consider how we can all share God’s gift of this beautiful world with every one of His children.

And if the world doesn’t want to share? “It is our solemn duty to speak out against,” injustices in the distribution of wealth, teaches Pope Paul VI in Populorum Progressio (#53). This is precisely what St Oscar Romero did. He said, “The Word of God is like the light of the sun. It illuminates beautiful things, but also things which we would rather not see.” When our eyes are opened to the injustices of this world, God calls us to speak out. “Those who have a voice must speak for those who are voiceless.” (Oscar Romero) It may cost us our earthly life, as it did St Oscar Romero – and Jesus – but at what cost if we don’t?

News picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese



■ St John's Cathedral recently held a thank-you event for some of its many volunteers. More than 60 parishioners enjoyed lunch in the Narthex and were thanked by Canon David Paul for their great contribution to parish life.

Just some of the jobs done are cleaning the cathedral, arranging flowers, stewarding at Mass and working in the shop. More than 1 in 10 of regular Mass-goers volunteers in some way in the parish, a figure which is the envy of many other cathedrals across the country. In fact, there are so many volunteers that they could not all be accommodated and another event is being planned.

■ Acle Churches Together held its traditional annual prayer walk on Sunday March 1, stopping at significant community locations in the East Norfolk village to recognise and pray for the work done by the staff within each building.

The walk was led by Church of England rector Rev Martin Greenland, Methodist minister Rev Andrew King and Catholic Deacon Rev Peter Glanville, a retired BBC producer who conceived the original idea of the walk about 16 years ago as a useful tool to encourage a spirit of ecumenism among the villagers.

A cross-section of denominations joined together to recite appropriate prayers outside St. Edmund's church, the Police Station, the Old Rectory, the Veterinary Hospital, the Academy, the Cemetery, the Recreation Centre, the Medical Centre, the Library and finally the Methodist Church, where welcome refreshments were served in a very convivial atmosphere.

Pictured below, front left to right, Andrew King, Martin Greenland, Peter Glanville.



■ Bishop Alan, pictured above, celebrated his 76th birthday on St Patrick's Day, March 17.

Staff from the Diocesan Curia offices in Poringland put on a small buffet lunch for him followed by lemon drizzle birthday cake.



■ The Knitting Club at St Philip Howard Church, Cambridge, has had an amazingly productive 18 months reports Maureen Harper.

Since March 2018 they have delivered nine sacks of cot blankets, baby jackets and hats to the Rosie Neo-Natal Unit at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge. They have also sent 33 sacks of blankets and children's clothes to Knit for Peace, which is based in London, and which delivers knitted goods to homes for the elderly, mother and baby refuges and hospitals in the UK and Syria. Also five sacks of donated teenage jeans and shirts, and 32 large blankets, to Hope and Aid Direct, which takes goods and blankets overland to refugee camps in Lesbos and other Greek islands.

The next convoy goes at the end of October. Last Christmas they supplied the local Shoe Box Appeal with children's hats and scarves, and will do the same next Christmas. In the last two years they sent a total of 156 jumpers for children up to six years old, to the Holy Family Creche in Bethlehem, which takes in abandoned children of all faiths.

Picture by Fr Philip John.

