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## Year of Mercy begins in Norwich and Walsingham

# Holy Door opening starts Year of Mercy

The Year of Mercy began in the Diocese of East Anglia on Sunday December 13 with Bishop Alan opening the Holy Door at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich and inviting the 500-strong congregation, which included representatives from every parish in the Diocese, to walk through it with him.

A second Holy Door was also opened at the Slipper Chapel at the National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham by Shrine Rector, Mgr John Armitage.

Pope Francis began the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which will end on November 20, 2016, by opening a Holy Door at St Peter's Basilica on December 8.

The opening of Holy Doors is an ancient tradition in the Catholic Church. For centuries it has marked the start of a Jubilee Year. During Emperor Constantine's time in the fourth century, Christians could claim 'sanctuary' and immunity from punishment if they crossed the threshold of the main doorway into the Lateran Basilica in Rome.

Speaking in a Catholic Bishops' Conference Advent podcast, Bishop Alan said: "The Year of Mercy is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the whole idea of mercy both in the scriptures and in the liturgy of the church. And particularly the way in which compassion, love and mercy should be part of the church's pastoral care of the people of God and those on the margins.

"The main Holy Door within the Diocese at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich will be open all year for people to make pilgrimage and walk through it.

"Going through the Holy Door is such an important thing. It is the opening into the very heart of God's mercy really. People will be encouraged to make the pilgrimage through the door, make their confession (there will be priests in the Cathedral to



Opening of the Holy Doors in Norwich, top, and at Walsingham, above.

hear them), and think about some of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that they can carry out in their own lives."

Bishop Alan also revealed that during the year he will be visiting each of the 11 prisons across the Diocese to celebrate Mass and the

Sacrament of Reconciliation with the prisoners.

"One of the most beautiful things that Pope Francis said was that prisoners, who are obviously not able to make a pilgrimage to a Holy Door, could  
**Continued on page 2**

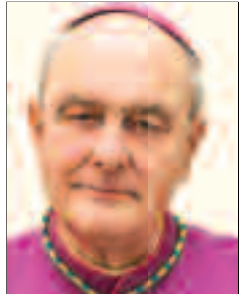
## Bishop Alan's Christmas message

During the Advent Season, the Church's liturgy is filled with references of the longing of the prophet, Isaiah: *Drop down you heavens from above, and let the skies pour down the Just One.*

This longing is fulfilled for us at Christmas by the One who is Justice itself, God-made-man, Jesus Christ.

At this moment, our hearts especially long for justice. We are living in a situation in which terrorism, war and poverty are constantly in our minds and before our eyes. In the midst of it all, our prayer surely mirrors that of the prophet: Lord, give to the world the gift of justice.

And so our eyes turn to the poor stable in Bethlehem. In the midst of poverty and social instability, in a land which continues today to be torn apart by warfare and injustice, God enters into the scene of human history and is born as one of us, made flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



Jesus Christ came and lived among us, experiencing himself the messiness of human life in order to offer us, through that, a way to find mercy and peace. As we continue to journey together through this Jubilee Year of Mercy, let us look to the Christ Child and so come to know that despite our human frailties and mistakes, God is here with us. Walking by our side, and offering us constantly the opportunity to turn away from darkness and embrace the gift of mercy and peace which he wants to share with all of his creation.

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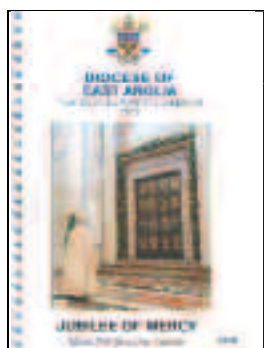
**news in brief**

**2016 Year Book**

The 2016 edition of the Diocese of East Anglia Year Book & Liturgical Calendar is now available, packed with useful information and new features.

Bishop Alan said: "I commend the publication of the Diocesan 2016 Year Book and ask that you actively promote it in your respective communities.

"This year there are a number of relevant articles: Pope Francis reflecting on the meaning of the Jubilee Year of Mercy; The New Evangelization; 40th Anniversary of the Diocese; Walsingham and its role in the Year of Mercy; The Cause for Leonard Cheshire



"The Organisations' section of the Year Book has been thoroughly updated together with a more integrated colour section covering a wide range of events, people and future activities.

"I am grateful to all who have been involved in helping to produce this year's publication, for producing something that we can be proud of as a Diocese," said Bishop Alan.

The new Year Book is available, priced £4, from all parish churches across the Diocese and the Cathedral in Norwich.

**We want your views**

We want to hear your views on the Catholic East Anglia newspaper, on its content, frequency and distribution. Please return the enclosed survey postcard or, if you prefer, you can go online and fill out the quick survey at [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk)



Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

**EDITOR:** Keith Morris  
tel: 01508 488137 or 07712 787762  
Pear Tree Farmhouse,  
Wymondham Road,  
Wreningham, Norwich,  
NR16 1AT  
email: [comms@east-anglia-diocese.org.uk](mailto:comms@east-anglia-diocese.org.uk)



Articles and photographs for the next edition are very welcome and should be sent to the editor, ideally via email, by the deadline of January 28.

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**BBC set to broadcast service**

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire recorded its Christmas service at St Peter and All Souls Catholic church in Peterborough on December 12.

The service featured singing from the Polish Mission Choir and the parish's Children's Choir, under the expert direction of choirmaster Andrew Reid, who helped to organise the service content along with Fr Adam Sowa who gave the homily.

Also included were a number of different

language contributions including Polish, English and Filipino plus Fr Adam's multi-lingual blessing. BBC Cambs faith presenter Pam Mungroo also did a reading.

The service is due to be broadcast on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire at 6pm on Christmas Eve and at 9am on Christmas Day. The programme will also include a piece by Bishop Alan and features about some of the community work that takes place across the parish.

**Holy Doors open**

Continued from page 1  
treat the door of their cell as the door of mercy," said Bishop Alan.

"I hope that we Catholics will invite those who have not been to church for a very long time, and those who don't believe, to come and explore this whole area of mercy and see what we are doing and, who knows, they may encounter the Lord Jesus Christ in a new and exciting way in their own lives."

The year is also being marked in Walsingham according to Julian Foord, pilgrimage coordinator: "A spiritual pathway of devotions has been established including the Stations of Mercy. Special prayer cards have been produced for each of the seven elements of the pathway and there are display boards in the shrine grounds to aid devotion. It is anticipated that the Year of Mercy will attract a large number of pilgrims."

You can read Bishop Alan's homily at [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk) and Mgr Armitage's at [www.walsingham.org.uk](http://www.walsingham.org.uk).

**Judith completes 200-mile Paris climate change walk**

A Diss parishioner and mum of four completed a 200-mile walk to Paris in late November to ask world leaders to take action against climate change.

Judith Tooth, 49, a volunteer for Catholic charity CAFOD, walked with 40 people from across the UK from London to Paris on a pilgrimage. The parishioner, from St Henry Morse Catholic Church in Diss, was taking part in the pilgrimage to call for a fair and ambitious deal from world leaders on tackling climate change at a major UN meeting.

Walkers from CAFOD, Tearfund, the Church of England and Christian Aid, left St Martin-in-the-Fields in London to join tens of thousands of people marching for climate action.

Earlier this year, Pope Francis urged everyone to take better care of the world we live in, recognising the devastating impact climate change has on the planet's most vulnerable people. Judith felt inspired by the Pope's words to take more positive action.

Judith said: "We need to put aside short-term gain and take long-term decisions to protect our earth in all its beauty and richness. Some of the world's poorest people are most vulnerable to the impact of a changing climate and they stand to lose the most. It's just a complete injustice if temperatures are



Judith Tooth on her London to Paris climate change walk.

allowed to rise.

"I knew I wanted to put my faith into action by actually being in Paris during the climate summit. The journey itself was inspiring as I met new people and together we can make a difference and I look forward to sharing the journey and ideas for what we can all do once I'm back home."

Judith joined Catholics from around the world in handing a petition with over

840,000 signatures calling for a fair and binding climate change deal.

In early December Judith headed back to Paris as part of a CAFOD delegation to share ideas with CAFOD's European partners in CIDSE, which translates as International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity, and to hear at first hand the decisions made at COP21.

Judith will report back further in the next edition of Catholic East Anglia





# NEW EVANGELISATION



Above, workshop delegates in discussion and, right, the Ignite team add some drama to the day.



## How to become a welcoming parish

**Becoming a Welcoming Parish was the theme of a New Evangelisation day workshop at the Newmarket parish centre on October 31, attended by around 50 delegates from parishes all over the Diocese of East Anglia. Keith Morris reports.**

Organiser, Rebecca Bretherton, from the Department for the New Evangelisation, opened the workshop by speaking about creating welcoming churches and gave examples from St Lucia to East Anglia.

"Welcoming is really difficult," she said. "We need to think about who is coming to church, who we are welcoming. There is a difference between inviting people to church and then making them welcome when they turn up."

Fr Sean Connolly, Episcopal Vicar for the New Evangelisation, spoke about the theology of welcoming, drawing on his previous experience of working in McDonalds, which has a welcoming culture.

"But our welcoming needs to be deeper than a sales pitch," said Fr Sean. "It needs to be thought through and engaging."

"We should welcome as Christ welcomes us (Romans 15v7). The warmth of our welcome show the weight of God's presence, or glory, in our parish community."

"Welcoming is the responsibility of everyone in the parish, not just the welcomers or the priest," said Fr Sean.

After a buffet lunch, the Diocesan Ignite Youth Mission Team, led by Matt Rennie, spoke about the value and place of personal testimony in evangelisation. They also gave a dramatic representation of the right and wrong way to go about doing this.

Matt said: "We all have a story to tell and a role to play in spreading the good news and are all called to share our faith in some way."

"Consider that you may possibly be the only Jesus that some people will ever meet."

Team member, Judith Turner, spoke about preparing your own short personal testimony for when the occasion arises to tell it: "Let your life be your story and your experience of God be your testimony," she said.

Fellow team member Clare Storey, said that we are all called to evangelise but offered

a word of caution: "People will not listen to what you say unless you show that you care about them."

Afterwards, Rebecca said: "We make sure that we root everything we do in prayer. This is really important, for all sorts of reasons. We pray for the Holy Spirit to give us courage, inspiration and sometimes patience. Prayer helps us remember that our work is not about us. That's why we always have a Mass and lots of prayer intervals at these events to show people they need to build it into their parish planning."

Immediate feedback from the event was also encouraging said Rebecca and comments included:

"The ignite team are truly inspirational"

"I've started to think how I can share my faith - bring Jesus - to the people I meet in my daily life."

"Sharing my faith isn't always easy. The day has given me lots of practical ideas to use and to discuss in my Parish"

The event was the third in a New Evangelisation series and throughout the day delegates had the opportunity to talk in small groups about the experience in their own parishes and also share their own personal story with another person.

### reflection

## Making the most of the Year of Mercy

As you will know by now, our Holy Father has announced a Year of Mercy, to run from the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8) until the Feast of Christ the King (November 20) next year. In his letter *Misericordiae Vultus* to inaugurate the year, Pope Francis says that by turning an attentive gaze towards God's mercy, we will in turn become "a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives", and so manifest God's mercy to the wider world.

How much this year affects us is, however, up to us. Twelve months isn't such a long time! The themes that the Church proposes for our consideration year by year come thick and fast, and if we are honest (I speak for myself at any rate) we can get to the end of a particular year without having engaged much with the subject in question beyond half hearing about it in intercessions and church announcements. What do we remember doing as individuals to mark the Year of the Eucharist, or the Year of St Paul, or the Year of the Priest, or the Year of Consecrated Life?

Well a new year, a renewed resolution! What can we do to make the most of this Year of Mercy, so that it doesn't pass us by? Here are five things for starters:

#### 1. Go to Confession.

Confession is a wonderful opportunity for us to have a definitive and personal encounter with Christ's mercy, and to feel the joy and peace of being forgiven for all the sins that we carry when the priest says, "I absolve you". Pope Francis himself goes to Confession on a regular basis, so we should follow his lead! If you haven't been for a while, don't worry, the priest is happy to help you... As a penitent himself, he knows what it's like.

#### 2. Make a pilgrimage to a Door of Mercy

Every diocese will have at least one church with a designated Door of Mercy, for pilgrims to visit and experience there the mercy of God in this year. In our diocese, we are fortunate to have two: one at the Cathedral, and one at the Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham. Whether it means putting on your walking boots or picking up your car keys, take the time to make the trip during this year.

#### 3. Gain an indulgence.

Some people will be surprised to hear that the Church still believes in indulgences. Aren't they a medieval anachronism? In fact, recent popes and the current Catechism of the Church teach that they are a laudable part of our Catholic belief and practice, and an example of the way in which our faith can bring about God's mercy for others, just as in the Gospel the faith of the men who carried the paralytic to Jesus resulted in that man being healed.

Obtaining an indulgence for someone who has died is a wonderful way to show mercy to them and to stay connected to them through the supernatural bonds of Christian charity. Pope Francis says in his letter that the conditions for receiving an indulgence in this year will be made known, so keep an eye out for more details.

#### 4. Practice the Works of Mercy

Mercy is an easy thing to talk about but not always an easy thing to live. Our Holy Father presents for our consideration in this year the traditional Works of Mercy, and encourages us to practice them. There are seven physical works of mercy: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, healing the sick, visiting the imprisoned and burying the dead. There are also seven spiritual works of mercy: counselling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing the sinner, comforting the afflicted, forgiving offences, bearing patiently those who wrong us and praying for the living and the dead. How many of these acts do we already practice in some form or other?

#### 5. Pray

In order to give mercy, we first have to receive it, and this happens primarily through our prayer - that is, in the Liturgy, in our personal prayer, and in the reading of the Scriptures, where God's mercy to men and women throughout history is manifest. Pope Francis says: "In order to be capable of mercy, therefore, we must first of all dispose ourselves to listen to the Word of God and rediscover the value of silence". "In this way", he continues, "it will be possible to contemplate God's mercy and adopt it in our lifestyle."

Here the Pope reminds us that mercy is not first and foremost what we do, but what God does. Our mercy is only ever a response to his. This year is a chance for us to rediscover that.

Fr Henry Whisenant







**KEY EVENTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN 2016**

**January 3**  
**Epiphany Candlelight Mass & Fireworks**  
 For all young people and their families

**April 9 & 10**  
**Celebrate Conference**  
 A weekend for all ages

**April 30 – May 2**  
**Ignite Youth Festival**  
 Year 9 upwards

**May 2**  
**Pilgrimage Walk to Walsingham**  
 All ages welcome

**July 20 – August 1**  
**World Youth Day**  
 Young people aged 16+

**August 1 - 6**  
**New Dawn Conference**  
 A national family conference held in Walsingham

**August 20 - 26**  
**Pilgrimage to Lourdes**  
 Young People aged 17+

**August 25 -29**  
**Youth 2000 Prayer Festival**  
 Young people aged 16+

**August 26 -29**  
**Diocesan Summer Camp**  
 Young people aged 8 – 14

For more details see: [www.rcdea.uk/youth](http://www.rcdea.uk/youth)



'Left, the Ignite Team using puppets and below Matt Rennie and Judith Turner, two of the team members, unwrap the real meaning of Christmas.

# Tour ignites the Christmas spirit

**The Ignite Team kicked off their Advent / Christmas Tour at the end of November visiting over 20 schools – nearly every Catholic primary school in East Anglia.**

Matt Rennie, Team Leader, opened the first show with a rousing rendition of “I wish it could be Christmas everyday”, complete with bubbles and a snow machine. He then posed the question “What is Christmas all about?”

“Presents, large presents,” said Charlie, one of the puppets “Food,” said Gerome, another one of the puppets

Finally, Zac, a very literate puppet, pointed out that the first part of the word “Christmas” is “Christ” - presents and food help us celebrate, but primarily Christmas is about Christ.

The now infamous (from primary school retreat days) Scruffy the Dog wanted to tell everyone about the gifts the Wise Men had brought and how God’s gift to the world was His only son Jesus.

Two of the team members, Judith and Ben acted out a sketch in which one of them is given a toy piano as a gift and

taught to play a descending scale. Once played in the correct rhythm, the scale is recognisable as the tune to “Joy to the World, the Lord has come”, one of many songs the audience were invited to join in with.

After a talk by Matt, summing up the true meaning of Christmas, Clare closed with a special Advent prayer.

Energetic applause from both children and staff suggested that – like Christmas itself – it

had been a lot of fun, but with a profound message.

■ *As well as working with primary aged children in schools and with First Communion groups, the Ignite Team also work with teenagers running school retreat days and working with Confirmation groups (with a very different programme for each age group).*

*Do get in touch if you'd be interested in the Ignite Team visiting your school or parish.*



**New Year Epiphany Candlelight Mass**  
 Followed by hotdogs, a bonfire and fireworks  
 For all young people across the diocese  
 5pm – 7pm Sunday 3rd January 2016  
 at The White House, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH.

Organised by East Anglia Diocesan Youth Service. Tel: 01508 486236. Email: [dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk](mailto:dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk)

**youth contacts**

Tel: 01508 486236  
 Email: [igniteeam@east-angliadiocese.org.uk](mailto:igniteeam@east-angliadiocese.org.uk) (Ignite Team enquiries)  
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# Youth focus on King of Hearts

The last Sunday in November was 'National Youth Sunday' - a special Sunday to celebrate the gift of young people to the church, to welcome, involve and empower them.

Throughout the diocese, different parishes celebrated Youth Sunday in different ways – some using ideas from the nationally produced resources which explore a particular theme each year. This year the theme was 'Jesus King of Hearts'.

Most popular of the resources were playing cards aimed to provoke thought, conversation and prayer around the sub-themes 'Heart of Welcome', 'Heart to Heart' and particularly relevant to the forthcoming Year of Mercy 'Heart of Mercy'.

The resources were not just for Youth Sunday but are



available all year round. See [www.nationalyouth-sunday.org.uk](http://www.nationalyouth-sunday.org.uk) for more information.

National Youth Sunday was held on the Feast of Christ the King, and Diocese Youth Director, Hamish

MacQueen, explained why this was an appropriate time to focus on youth: "The Feast of Christ the King was established in the 1930s, while the dictator Mussolini was demanding a great deal of loyalty and allegiance from the Italian people.

"The church was concerned that people's primary loyalty and obedience should be given to our faith, and not to a political ruler. So the church established the Feast of Christ the King to remind Catholics in Italy that the ultimate King of their life was Christ and not a political leader.

"Having National Youth Sunday on the Feast of Christ the King reminds us all, but especially young people, to ask the question - who or what do I give my allegiance to and who is the king of my life?" said Hamish.

## All Saints fancy dress party

The Cathedral of St John the Baptist youth group had an All Saints Day fancy dress dance and party on November 1, when some young people had come in their favourite saints costumes.

Cathedral youth coordinator, Mbongiseni Dominic Nyathi, said: "For the newly-formed youth group, it was a fun and sociable moment for the young people as they



came together to celebrate through dance and good food, our saints who are an inspiration to us in our everyday lives.

"We ask the good Lord

that He may bless these young people to continue to be inspired by our saints and to grow in the Catholic faith in Christ's love.

"The cathedral wishes to thank Joanne Graham who is in charge of the cathedral youth group affairs and events, for organising such a colourful and enjoyable event for the cathedral youths."



## Pupils join remembrance

Pupils, past and present from both St Louis (pictured above) and St Benedict's (pictured below) schools joined a service of reflection and remembrance at St Edmund King and Martyr, Bury St Edmunds, on the evening of Wednesday November 11, for those who gave their lives in time of war. The service, which was well attended by people from the town including the Mayor and Lady Mayoress, started with the Last Post performed by Noah Blythe from St Benedict's Catholic School.

Readings, music and songs recalled events of the two world wars. Contributions ranged from poems by Wilfred Owen, the diary of schoolgirl Anne Frank, as well as music from the early 1940s and more modern pieces which included a short dramatization of the Christmas Truce of 1914 and songs, which were performed by the writer, bringing to mind the ultimate acts of sacrifice.



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**CATHOLIC WORLD****Family is foundation of society**

**Giving her thoughts on the recent Synod on the Family is Kerry Urdzik, Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Co-ordinator.**



If you read the Catholic press, you will no doubt be aware of the recent Synod on the Family. Called by Pope Francis in 2013, the assembly of bishops was asked to reflect on the 'Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization'.

In one of the first moves of its kind, a questionnaire was sent from Rome to all of the Bishops' Conferences, to be circulated as widely as possible and the answers sent forward in support of the Extraordinary Synod held in October 2014. These, together with the responses to the later reflection document 'The Call, the Journey and the Mission' contributed to both the working document and the speeches given by the UK delegates – Cardinal Nichols and Bishop Doyle – at the Ordinary Synod in Rome in October.

At the end of the process, the Synod Fathers produced a report – the Relatio Finalis – which will be considered by Pope Francis as he prepares the anticipated Apostolic Exhortation.

The Fathers show they are acutely



Pope Francis leads the Synod on the Family in Rome.  
Picture © Mazur/catholicnews.org.uk

aware of the complexity of the times in which we live and the brokenness of many families. Concern is expressed over the fear of commitment to marriage and the declining birth rate, and of the suffering endured by elderly, widowed, people with special needs, refugees and the persecuted. But it remains true that the family is the foundation of society and 'one of the most serious and pressing of tasks for the Christian family is to safeguard the bond between the generations in the transmission of the faith and of the fundamental values of life'.

While we often feel powerless to influence events on the world stage, we can take small but important steps in our own lives. We need to nurture our own relationships, both within our own families and with those around us, making use especially of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, and grounded in an atmosphere of

daily prayer.

The grace of the Holy Spirit, acting within marriage, is a reflection of the bond of Christ with his Church, and provides many graces – fruitfulness, witness, healing and forgiveness. While sadly so many couples do not experience joy in their marriage, often choosing to divorce, it remains true that the grace of the sacrament is there.

The challenge is for the Church to accompany people through their times of hardship. We must start with the basics of supporting families in their faith, providing thorough marriage preparation to couples, and supporting young families in the initial years of marriage when trials may make them doubt their decision. We should encourage each other to make use of these graces, and look to Christ as we journey on the quest for eternal communion with God, who is Love.

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**Norwich view on Pope's Africa trip**

**At the end of November Pope Francis visited Africa, the fastest-growing part of the Catholic world, for the first time, taking a message of hope to the terrorism and war-torn countries of Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic.**



It is the first time that a Pope has visited an active war zone and he used the trip to address issues of inter-faith dialogue, poverty and concern for the environment.

Seminarian Mbongiseni (Dominic) Nyathi (pictured above) from Zimbabwe, and a parishioner of the Cathedral, spoke to Radio Norfolk about the historic trip.

The visit of the Pope is very important for the continent, Dominic told presenter Anthony Isaacs.

"Africa is a very rich country in terms of faith and belief but it also has its own challenges such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, corruption and terrorism. But Pope Francis carries with him a message of hope to the victims of these social ills," said Dominic.

"What stands out for me is that he has criticised corruption very much. He has emphasised the impact of corruption on young people and he has gone there to encourage them in their faith and not to give up on it because of the challenges they face.

"The young have been very excited

about the arrival of the Pope and came out in huge numbers to greet him."

Dominic also spoke about the Pope's concern for the environment: "The young people of Africa have taken up the Pope's call to respect and cherish nature and have been planting trees," he said.

"The Pope recognises Africa's richness in terms of mineral resources and sees it as God's gift to Africa and he has urged African leaders to use those gifts to better the lives of the poor and to create opportunities for young people.

"Pope Francis is a living Gospel of humility. He is a very humble servant of God and this is how he inspires me."

Dominic also told listeners about his own personal faith journey: "I was born into a Catholic family and as a young boy I used to serve at the altar and I fell in love with the altar and felt the calling to the priesthood. I prayed about it and felt that this is where I belong to."





# Ablaze mass marks second birthday



The Ablaze Mass at St Laurence's Church, Cambridge marked its second anniversary in October.

It is a Mass run mainly by the young, for the benefit of everyone and boasts a drummer, keyboard player, two guitarists, clarinetist, recorder, a number of egg shakers and a number of very good singers. There are readers, eucharistic ministers and those who bring gifts to the altar.

On January 10 is a special Mass which concentrates on leaving last year and all its brokenness behind.

On February 7, Fr Simon Bishop, SJ, the Director of Spirituality, will talk

about Discernment.

Starting on Sunday February 28 at 5.30pm, and running for six weeks, is The Gift, a Life in the Spirit Seminar on DVD, which has the support of Pope Francis who imparted his Apostolic Blessing upon it. It concentrates on bringing the Holy Spirit more fully into our lives

Organiser, Sandy Hobson, said: "What is happening here in St Laurence Parish is just awesome. It shows what God can achieve through our little seeds of faith, and override our imperfections. All are assured of a warm welcome."

## news in brief

### Scouts makeover for hall

The Church Hall at St George's on Sprowston Road in Norwich has been given a makeover thanks to the 17th Norwich Scouts group, which meets at the hall

The scouts took on the challenge to revamp the church hall where they, the Beavers, Cubs and Explorers meet, over the October half-term week.

It was a big challenge, which the Scouts, Explorers, Leaders and their parents stepped up and completed ready for the big reveal, on Sunday November 1 after the 11.15am mass, by Parish Priest Fr Sean Connolly. The hall, which hasn't seen a paint brush for at least 20 years, saw holes filled, staples from countless posters removed and a complete face lift applied to the hall, kitchen and entrance lobby.

Scout Leader Paul Warden, who led the revamp, said: "We have seen a marvellous input by young people in decorating the hall.

"We have also had help from parents and businesses in this long overdue project. Ace Surfaces re-surfaced the old wood panelling, and Mill Electrical replaced broken lighting. A new colour scheme gives the hall a light, clean and airy feel."

Fr Sean said: "I and the parish are very grateful to our resident Scout Group in this DIY project. It means that, not only will it benefit the Scout Group, but other hall users who also meet here.

"The hall is also available to hire and the facelift will hopefully see new bookings for receptions, meetings and other groups looking for a fresh venue."

# Jude celebrates acolyte ministry

Diocese of East Anglia Seminarian Alfonso-Jude Belnas, from St Philip Howard Parish, was made an Acolyte on November 24 at St Mary's College, Oscott.

This is a universal ministry where he is entrusted by the Church to help the clergy in the distribution of Holy Communion as well as taking the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound.

Unlike Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who are commissioned for their own parish only, and for the period of one year, the Ministry of Acolytate is for life and for the whole of the Universal Church.

The Rt Revd Patrick McKinny, Bishop of Nottingham presided at the Mass. Jude (pictured right) was joined for the celebration by Fr Patrick Cleary, one of the Diocese of East Anglia Vocations Directors, Fr Pádraig Hawkins, the Bishop's Private Secretary, Fr Claro Conde, a Filipino priest from the Diocese of Portsmouth, Fr Andrew Martinez and Bro Nelson Dalagan from the Vocationist Order who have a house in Birmingham, as well as Mgr Eugène Harkness, his Parish Priest.



Above, Bishop Alan, on pilgrimage with the some of the younger Diocesan clergy, venerates the birthplace of our Saviour in the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

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## news in brief

### Little Sisters of Joy build bridges between faiths

The Little Sisters of Joy have been building bridges between Jews, Christians and Muslims since it was founded in 1999, thanks to the energy of co-founder Gila Margolin, a member at St Laurence's in Cambridge, who's own journey demonstrates reconciliation between faiths.

Gila was born into an Orthodox Jewish family in 1951 in London with grandparents from Scotland, Sweden and Russia. She first encountered Christian influences at Glasgow University in the 1960s and in 1982 moved to Cambridge where she studied Hebrew at Lucy Cavendish College at the university.

Gila became a Catholic in 1989 and in 1999 co-founded the Little Sisters of Joy, initially as a new community of prayer, peace and reconciliation with the Catholic church.

In 2004, The Little Sisters evolved into an ecumenical Foundation and Gila's journey took her across Europe and Canada to spread the work of building bridges of peace. Music, fellowship and encounter are key elements of the work, which now continues in Cambridge where Gila and her fellow musicians have given a series of concerts for peace and reconciliation in Cambridge college chapels and elsewhere.

Last year, Gila published the second part of her autobiography, *Where the Woods meet the Water* (the meaning of the name Toronto in a native Canadian language) and this September the book received its Canadian launch at the George Ignatieff Theatre in Toronto.

The Foundation now has over 700 Friends in 24 countries, who support it in friendship and prayer. [www.ourchurch.com/member/s/sistersofjoy](http://www.ourchurch.com/member/s/sistersofjoy)



### An audience of over 100 Christians, Jews and Muslims attended an historic inter-religion symposium at St John's Cathedral Narthex centre in Norwich on Sunday November 1. Keith Morris reports.

Pictured below are, from the left, Dr Musharraf Hussain, Archbishop Kevin McDonald, Dr Jonathan Gorsky and Bishop Alan at the Norwich symposium.

The main purpose of the event was to celebrate the 50th anniversary on October 28 of the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* by Pope Paul VI, the Second Vatican Council's declaration on the relations between the Catholic Church and non-Christian religions.

Brian Keegan, the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia's Co-ordinator for Inter Religious Dialogue, said: "The *Nostra Aetate* declaration represented a fundamental shift in Catholic teaching about relations with other religions and an emphasis was placed on building relationships and engaging in dialogue.

"It is particularly relevant in East Anglia in areas such as Peterborough and Cambridge where there are many people of other religions, and also amongst the many university students in the Diocese."

Introducing the symposium, Bishop Alan, said: "The *Nostra Aetate* declaration is a very short

document but its implications are enormous for the relationships between the Catholic Church and the Jewish and Islamic religions.

"The declaration has helped to build bridges of understanding and mutual respect between the different faiths and to foster a desire to work together for the common good."

Archbishop Kevin McDonald, chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference committee for relations with other faiths, said: "There had been a long and tormented history of poor Jewish Christian relations, a sorry tale which included exclusion, prejudice and persecution of Jews by Catholics. In 1965, the time was ripe for something to be said.

"The declaration talks about what connects us, what we have in common rather than what divides us. The important thing is an attitude of mind, one of openness and receptivity, but it does not mean sacrificing your principles.

"For all of us, the future of society depends very significantly on our ability to relate to each other. It is not easy, as religion tends to be something that gives you a sense of identity and separateness and difference.

"Being able to inhabit that at the same time as reaching out beyond, requires an active imagination and moral courage. I think it is vital for the future, ultimately to

resolve the problems we have in the world, for people to talk, relate and think positively and creatively and generously about each other."

Dr Jonathan Gorsky, of Heythrop College of Philosophy and Religion at the University of London, offered a very personal perspective on the issue, and referred back to the 40th anniversary of the declaration, when he himself gave a lecture on *Nostra Aetate* in the Gregorian University in Rome. It reminded him that many Jews were sheltered by Catholics in such places during the second world war.

"The *Nostra Aetate* initiative created something entirely new and precious," he said. "Anyone who has studied the long history of Jewish/Catholic relations cannot but be moved by what has happened.

"For me the declaration is one of the most inspiring moments of the twentieth century. *Nostra Aetate* is a document, but it is much more than that, it is a process. It has been one of the great inspirations of my life."

Dr Musharraf Hussain, chief Imam at the Karimia Institute, explained that all the Abrahamic religions are about the same thing, the bond between the Creator and his servants – humanity.

"We now have a greater appreciation and understanding of our common ground. We have differences but the differences are small and our commonality and what we share is much greater. *Nostra Aetate* has brought about a paradigm shift in attitudes towards other faiths."



### Peter's medal award

Many congratulations to Peter Dyson (pictured above) for being awarded the Bene Merenti medal in recognition of his service to the church in a number of parishes over the past 80 years.

Fr Philip Shryane presented the award during the 5pm Mass in Acle on Saturday, September 12. He expressed the church's thanks and appreciation for all Peter and Mary's hard work.

Fellow parishioners joined Peter after Mass for light refreshments and a celebratory glass of bubbly provided by his proud family.

## First-ever inter-religious W



The Inter-Religious Pilgrimage at the Walsingham Shrine. Centre is Mgr John Armitage, Rector of the Shrine, with Cynthia Capey and Fr Michael Rear on each side of him.

**A first Inter-Religious Pilgrimage to Walsingham in celebration of *Nostra Aetate* took place on Saturday October 17 with 30 pilgrims from different religions.**



# Nostra Aetate declaration 10th symposium



Pictured above, from the left, are Dr Musharraf Hussain, Archbishop Kevin McDonald and Dr Jonathan Gorsky at the Norwich symposium, which was introduced by Bishop Alan, below.



# Walsingham pilgrimage

Moslems and Catholic frequently visit Our Lady's House in Ephesus, and huge numbers of Moslems are drawn to the Shrine of Our Lady in the village that bears the name of Mohammed's daughter, Fatima.

Pope Saint John Paul II spoke of this phenomenon: "Worthy of special attention on the part of pastoral care is the fact that numerous Christian shrines are goals of pilgrimages of believers of other religions..."

This solicits the pastoral action of the Church to respond with initiatives of hospitality, dialogue, assistance and genuine fraternity."

Thousands of Hindus join their Catholic relatives on the

Tamil Pilgrimage to Walsingham, but on Saturday October 17 the first organised Inter-Religious Pilgrimage to our National Shrine took place. It was arranged by Cynthia Capey of the Ipswich Inter-Faith Forum and led by Fr Michael Rear.

Thirty pilgrims of different religions from the Inter-Faith Forums of Ipswich, Norwich and Wisbech attended the Pilgrim Mass at the Catholic Shrine, where they were warmly welcomed by the Rector, Mgr John Armitage.

After a shared lunch, Fr Michael spoke about the history and spirituality of Walsingham and people discussed the

meaning of pilgrimage in their various traditions. Water is significant in most religions, and the group then went to drink water from the Holy Well in the Anglican Shrine, and to be blessed and sprinkled.

Prayer beads, again a common devotion, were also blessed, before the pilgrims returned to pray in silence in the Slipper Chapel before the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel of Reconciliation.

Fr Michael said: "The day was appreciated by everyone and the hope was expressed that it may become an annual event, including students of different faiths brought by chaplains from the universities in our Diocese."

# Catholic East Anglia Reader Survey

Please use the postcard inside the newspaper to reply to the survey. If you do not have the postcard please use this form below but you will need to provide a stamp and send it to the address at the bottom.

Dear Reader,

As the new editor of Catholic East Anglia, I would value your views on the paper, its content, frequency and distribution. Please have your say by filling in this short survey and returning it to me by **January 6**.

**Keith Morris, editor**

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## New cadet unit's act of remembrance

St John Fisher Catholic High School in Peterborough has a newly-established Cadet Unit with 35 cadets and, on November 11, had its first opportunity to mark Remembrance Day in school.

The morning began with a service of remembrance during which cadets' read poems and other poignant messages to mark the act of remembrance.

The service was attended by local Catholic primary school pupils as well parents and friends of the schools. The contingent then performed a march-past which was led by Senior Cadet Speechley. The contingent, which is affiliated to the Royal Logistics Corps, were also supported on the day by Major C Thompson, the training major from 158 Regiment RLC.

Addressing parents, Major Thompson said: "The school should be very proud of the cadets' achievements in such a short space of time."

Contingent Commander, Second Lieutenant Laurence Davis, said: "The act of remembrance is such an important part of young people's lives. In schools we must honour the values attached to remembering those who have given the ultimate sacrifice."



## Attention Catholic Schools!

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Students at St Alban's with some of the items collected for refugees.

# Students take refugee action

**Students at St Alban's Catholic High School have responded to Pope Francis' letter and organized a collection of clothes, bedding and other items for refugees, reports house captain Summer Valentine.**

Over the summer everyone was able to see the extent of the migrant crisis as it was widely reported in the news. It showed a lot of people suffering and in need of aid, however there were very few suggestions of how to help.

When we came back to school we knew as a community we needed to do something to help. As it becomes a lot colder, illness is going to become more frequent and the refugees are going to struggle to keep warm, therefore we

thought a clothes collection would be the most beneficial way to help. We wanted the collection to be student-led in order for all the students to get as involved as possible, and to collect as many clothes as possible.

I think, as a Catholic community, it is important to work together and help as we are more fortunate and have so many more opportunities. I believe this is why it was so successful as people realize the scale of the disaster and how thankful we should be for what we have.

After informing each year group of the crisis and what we would like to do we had an overwhelming response, collecting over 320 bags full of clothes, shoes and toiletries.

We never expected the generosity to be so large and to be so well supported by the other students and teachers. Once we had collected the bags and counted them we were able to realize how these clothes are going to benefit people.

## Bishop blesses new building

A new school building at St Edmunds RC Primary School in Bury St Edmunds was blessed by Bishop Alan on October 8 after Mass in the Parish Church.

The building was completed in the summer term in preparation for the first year 5 pupils in September and then the first year 6 pupils from 2016 as the school continues to expand to become a full primary school.

Headteacher, Maria Kemble, said: "The celebration was such a special day for the school community and the children were amazing throughout the whole morning, demonstrating what it

means to be part of our school. Their singing was beautiful in church and was commented upon by numerous people who were invited to join us. The school choir sang outside the new building before the blessing and demonstrated just what talented children we have.

"It was a pleasure to be able to welcome those who helped in the design and construction of the building. They enjoyed being able to see it in use by the children and know their hard work was appreciated. It was certainly a day for us all to remember and to feel very proud of all of the children in our school."





Mary and Joseph took centre stage outside Moyses Hall at the Bury St Edmund's Christmas Lights Switch On event on November 19 as the shops stayed open late and the fun fair marked the celebration of the beginning of the Christmas season.

Complete with a 10-year-old Grumpy Innkeeper, a 12-year-old Brightest Star, the 40 plus pupils involved in St Louis Middle School's Liturgy Group presented the real story of Christmas through music, song and dance to the crowds that gathered in the town's main shopping area.

Pupils themselves formed the live band whilst singers across the full age range took solo parts on stage with confidence and conviction.

Parents and shoppers cheered as the story unfolded and the final song summarised the nativity picture that is integral to the life of the school.

### news in brief



## Library re-opens

St Mary's Primary in Ipswich celebrated book week by opening its beautifully refurbished library on November 12 with Fr John on hand to bless the library and author Ruth Fitzgerald (pictured above) cutting the personalised ribbon.

Book week was on the theme of 'The Good, The Bad and the Cuddly' and staff and children got the opportunity to dress up as their favourite character and in pyjamas to enjoy story-time with parents.

Joining the celebrations were Nikki Edwards, Assistant Director for Education and Learning at Suffolk County Council, and Sister Margaret Pole, school headteacher when it opened in 1958.

"The library is a focal point in the school for many creative and exciting activities," said headteacher Jill Sandvig. "This project embodies the community spirit which is alive in our school and parish."

## Musicians honoured

St Mary's School, Cambridge was honoured to receive a visit from Sarah MacDonald, the first female to hold a Director of Music post in any Oxbridge chapel (Selwyn College, Cambridge) to judge the school's two annual music competitions.

Young Pianist of the Year on November 5 saw 12 students aged 11 to 17 perform to very high standards. The Young Musician of the Year competition on November 6 saw 14 advanced instrumentalists perform for the judges.

The school's Director of Music, Mrs Fisher, said: "The music department prides itself on the girls' commitment to music making and high levels of musicianship. Participants in the competition were well prepared and had clearly dedicated hours of their time to practising for this prestigious showcase. It was great that Sarah was able to witness the remarkable talent displayed at our school."

## Prayers for peace

October at St Louis Middle School was celebrated prayerfully as many children accepted an invitation to meditate on the "Joyful Mysteries" of the Rosary. A prayer courtyard became a regular meeting place, artists drew images of Mary and enjoyed making a stained glass window in recognition of her total trust in God. Pupils also joined one million children worldwide on October 18, all praying the Rosary simultaneously, for unity and peace in our world.

# School celebrates

An international food and cultural festival, and a blessing and the laying of a foundation stone by Bishop Alan marked the beginning of an exciting £2.7million expansion of St Martha's Catholic Primary School in King's Lynn.

Construction company Morgan Sindall plc has been appointed to carry out the work, which will provide the school with a new teaching block comprising eight extra classrooms, an extended kitchen facility, a new school hall and a multi-use games area.

The day of celebration, on July 16, began with Holy Mass, celebrated by Bishop Alan who explained about his mitre (bishop's hat) and crozier (his pastoral staff). He also explained that a bishop is an Apostle, a Shepherd and a Teacher.

He also explained the various roles of a bishop as a teacher, a father and a shepherd. The children were quite amused when he explained that the crooked top of a crozier symbolizes the bishop's role

as one who should draw in souls to the ways of God like a shepherd would do to his sheep.

Following the Mass, Bishop Alan laid the foundation stone for the new building extension of St Martha's school. The auspicious occasion was also used to bless the recently purchased school minibus.

The food and cultural events started in the afternoon. The programme began with a flag parade of all St Martha's children representing so many nations in the school. This was followed by cultural displays, including a pole dance by the English children, a traditional semi-classical dance from Indian children and a traditional Philippine-music from Filipino children and parents.

Parents and children were dressed up in traditional clothes of their country of origin and this turned St Martha's school ground into a mini world. Parents arranged food stalls from different countries.

Students will remain on site

throughout the school construction process, which is due to be completed in time for the 2016 academic year. Temporary classrooms were put in place in 2014 as pupil numbers started to increase, but these will be removed once the new buildings are up and running.

Helen Bates, Assistant Director at the Diocese, said: "This is a shared project between the Diocese and Norfolk County Council, which will not only increase the number of primary school places in this part of King's Lynn, but will also help to meet a growing demand for Catholic school places. The school will eventually increase in size from 210 places to 420, although it will not reach its full capacity until 2021."

Aidan McGovern, headteacher at St Martha's Primary School, said: "This is a very exciting development for the school and will allow us to welcome more pupils and cater to the growing demand driven by the rising number of families in the local area."



Bishop Alan cuts the turf for the cornerstone of the new buildings, whose design is pictured above.



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Fr Patrick Cleary and Fr Bob Eccles OP from St Laurence's in Cambridge meet Pope Francis after the Wednesday audience in Rome on October 7. Fr Patrick was in Rome visiting the four Diocesan Rome-based seminarians in his role as one of two Vocations Directors for the Diocese.

# Church marks special 125th anniversary

**The Church of Our Lady & the English Martyrs in Cambridge celebrated its 125th anniversary in October. Richard Peroni reports.**

Consecrated on October 8, 1890, this city-centre church continues to offer a place of rest, beauty and grandeur at the heart of a busy, diverse parish. Much of the anniversary programme was crafted to show how English Martyrs will always be a treasure to be valued.

A series of very special events were planned, with music centre-stage in the celebrations. The festivities began on August 15, Patronal Feast Day, with a Parish Party. Highlights in September included an Anniversary Lecture, Catholics Under The Cross, given by Dr Richard Rex, Reader in Reformation History at Queen's College, Cambridge.

The Dedication Festival commenced on Saturday October 3 with a Festival Concert, showcasing sacred works by Byrd and others, concluding with Tallis's great motet Spem In Alium. This concert officially launched the church's new Choral and Organ Music Trust.

There were several guest preachers at Solemn Mass, many of which were enhanced by wonderful choral works by Palestrina, Stanford and Elgar, amongst others. Lunchtime concerts included performances by Veronica Henderson (Cello), the Choristers of St John's Chapel, and musicians from St Mary's School, Cambridge.

Thursday October 8 saw the Pontifical Solemn Mass, the highlight of the Festival, when Bishop Alan concelebrated with clergy of the parish, diocese and former Rectors. Music included the first performance of a specially-commissioned work You Are The Temple of God by Philip Stopford.



A wide range of social events included a Parish Quiz, presided over by Mgr Tony Rogers, which was very well supported, plus plenty of occasions to meet and share – even Afternoon Tea in the Parish Centre on one weekend.

The final event of the Festival, on December 19, is the 125th Anniversary Dinner, to be held in the magnificent candlelit 16th century hall of Magdalene College, Cambridge. This follows the First Choral Vespers of the fourth Sunday of Advent to be celebrated by Bishop Alan, and sung by the Choir of Our Lady & the English Martyrs.

An exhibition – a Timeline of the most significant events and most important people in the colourful 125-year history of English Martyrs - accompanied these festivities for three weeks in October.

## news in brief

### Clergy dinner

The Norwich Circle of the Catenian Association held its traditional annual Clergy Dinner at which a cross-section of Roman Catholic priests from Norfolk were entertained to dinner on November 12 at Park Farm, Hethersett.

The event proceeded under the direction of Circle President Michael Prior with Fr Mathew George, Thetford, Fr Walter Chenyika, Great Yarmouth, Fr Brendan Moffat, Dereham, Mike Prior, Fr Stephen Blair, Quidenham, Fr David Bagstaff, Diss and Fr Philip Shryane, Great Yarmouth.

### Ecumenical service

An ecumenical Remembrance Day service was held at Eye in Suffolk on November 15. Taking part were the Mayor of Eye, Maria Forde, a parishioner of St Henry Morse Church, Diss, Parish Priest Fr David Bagstaff, who gave the address and Rev Dr Guy Sumpter, Rector of Eye, who led the service.

A short act of remembrance took place at Eye War Memorial followed by a parade to the Parish Church of Ss Peter and Paul, Eye for a service of remembrance. The church was packed with all ages represented.

### Story of life journey

The highlight of the October meeting of the Norwich Circle of the Catenian Association, held on October 30 at The Norfolk Club, Upper King Street in Norwich, was a very lucid after dinner speech by Father Timothy Bugby.

Fr Bugby is priest in residence in the parish of Sheringham and Cromer and spoke on the subject of the 'Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham' which included the course of his personal journey from Church of England to Catholic ministry.





## Nobel prize winner

The East Timorese community of Peterborough celebrated their National Youth Day on November 12 with a special Mass at St Peter and All Souls, presided by Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo. Bishop Belo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 for his work towards a just and peaceful solution to the conflict in East Timor. Over 300 East Timorese from London, Oxford, Lincoln and Great Yarmouth joined in the celebration which was followed by a reception at the Town Hall with representatives from the City Council, Police, Red Cross and other organisations which support local ethnic groups in Peterborough.



# Safeguarding event hears of key issues

The annual Diocesan Safeguarding Conference in Newmarket on November 7 learnt about the issues of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation and heard of tremendous work going on in parishes across East Anglia.



David Kerr is presented with his Diocesan Medal by his parish priest Fr Karol Porczak.

Held at the parish centre of Our Lady Immaculate and St Elthedreda, Newmarket, the conference was led by Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator Mick Thurley, with more than 50 delegates from most of the parishes across the diocese, comprising mainly of Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Volunteers, together.

The day began with a warm welcome from Mick and his Administrator Rebecca Bretherton, and reflected on the significant work carried out by the Safeguarding Office and the Parishes in the previous 12 months.

Mick Thurley said: "It's been a very good day, listening to guest speakers who are experts in their field, asking them questions and learning from their experience. But what I think is hugely significant is the tremendous work carried out in the parishes; the communication between clergy, parish representatives and volunteers, which results in

safeguarding concerns being rightly flagged up and brought to my attention.

"This courage to do the right thing has meant a better outcome for many vulnerable people across the diocese. It is significant that people with concerns will often share them with someone in church because they feel safe."

The first guest speaker of the day was Chris Ansell from the Independent Anti-Slavery Commission, who gave an informative presentation on the joint Catholic Church/Police/Home Office initiative to tackle Human Trafficking.

Bishop Alan also spoke passionately about the church's response; and he rightly emphasised that this issue is real and is happening across the Diocese.

Bishop Alan then celebrated Mass with the delegates in Our Lady

Immaculate and St Elthedreda church, after which, in a moving speech, he recognised the significant contribution to safeguarding that David Kerr has made for over a decade, both as Parish Safeguarding Representative for St Ives, but also as the former Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator and Clerk to the Safeguarding Commission.

Upon receipt of the Diocesan medal David said: "I am honoured to have my work appreciated by the Bishop, but would like to record that I was only doing my job for the Diocese and would not have achieved anything without the efforts of volunteers in parishes, particularly the Parish Safeguarding Representatives, who should share this honour."

David was inundated by the many parish reps present who had benefitted from his

kindness, guidance and support throughout the years, in countless visits he made to parishes – meeting reps or presenting locally arranged safeguarding seminars.

Everyone wished him well for the future

After a wonderful lunch, the conference listened intently to a hard-hitting presentation on Child Sexual Exploitation from Detective Inspector Ivon Beer from Scotland Yard's Child Abuse Investigation Command. DI Beer spoke about the police response to this form of organised abuse, following the Rochdale enquiry, and the police initiative to disrupt criminals who are intent on exploiting vulnerable young people in this way. He informed the conference about Operation Makesafe, a project being rolled out across the country to identify victims at an early stage, and to educate businesses most likely to come into contact with these victims such as licenced premises, taxis and hotels.

Further details about this and any other aspect of the conference can be obtained from Mick Thurley. All in all it was an informative and at times challenging day.

Afterwards, Mick said: "I just want to thank everyone for making the day a success, the delegates, many of who travelled great distances to be there; to Bishop Alan for his commitment to safeguarding; to our guest speakers who have given their services free of charge and to Rebecca, Steve and Rita who have helped with the smooth running of the event."

Mick is already planning next year's event which will be held on Saturday October 8.

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## Accolade for new Diocese website

The new Diocese website [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk) has received an accolade within a couple of months of its launch.

The website was named as a finalist in the first-ever Norfolk Christian Digital Media Awards, staged by the [www.networknorfolk.co.uk](http://www.networknorfolk.co.uk) ecumenical Christian news website.

The man behind the Diocese website, digital media specialist Gavin Dvelys, attended the awards evening on November 11 in Norwich when the Bishop of Norwich handed out the trophies.

Gavin said: "The aim of the new website is to make better use of all the available tools, to reach out and connect to each county within the Diocese. Also to keep everyone updated with the latest news and events, and to offer ease of access to information for any of the departments or ministries which make up the foundation of the Diocese.

"The website is one of the most important outreach tools we have today, people are literally connected online 24/7. It offers countless opportunities for prayer, meditation and sharing the Gospel. We need to make our Christian websites engaging, particularly as social media becomes more significant to our everyday lives it is important to integrate these platforms into our websites.

"As digital technology grows, so will our Diocesan site. It is my role to make sure we are at the cutting edge of the latest digital trends."

■ If you would like to receive a regular email news bulletin please send your name and email address to [comms@east-angliadiocese.org.uk](mailto:comms@east-angliadiocese.org.uk) or sign up at [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk)



## Mgr Hoey celebrates his 100th birthday

Mgr Augustine Hoey celebrates his 100th birthday this month. Mgr Hoey, a priest of the Westminster Diocese, has lived and prayed in Walsingham for the last two years.

Each day he walks between the various ecclesial communities of the village praying for the unity of the Church. We wish him our congratulations and very best wishes!

## Editor's medal award

Retiring editor of Catholic East Anglia, Patrick Byrne, has been presented with a Diocesan Medal in recognition of 23 years' service producing the newspaper.

He was officially presented with the medal at the church of Our Lady Mother of God in Thorpe, Norwich on Saturday November 14.

Bishop Alan paid tribute to Patrick, saying: "I am delighted that Patrick has been presented with the Diocesan Medal in recognition of the work he has carried out over the past 23 years as editor of the Diocesan newspaper. He has shown real commitment in gathering together the good news stories of the Diocese during these years and has used his expertise in photography in order to make our newspaper both interesting and challenging. I would like to express the gratitude of the Diocese and wish him well in his retirement."

Patrick said: "Producing the newspaper for the Diocese for more than 23 years was a privilege and to receive the recognition of the Diocesan Medal a delight.

"But it was very much a team effort over the years. Many of the parishes, and there are well over 50 across the Diocese, have people willing to take pictures and write about the events in their community and send them in.

"I want to thank them, the staff at the Catholic schools in the diocese, members of the many organisations and others who also contribute.

"Without them there would not have been a newspaper and I am sure they will give just as much commitment to Keith Morris who has taken over as editor."



Patrick Byrne with his Diocesan Medal.

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**Thank you to all the East Anglia Schools that have supported the paper throughout 2015**

### CALLING ALL HEADTEACHERS

If you are planning an open day in the New Year or have any staff vacancies please remember to advertise these in the paper.

Advert rates are very reasonable and all that is needed to book is an email to [alicej@cathcom.org](mailto:alicej@cathcom.org) or a phone call to 01440 730399

As the paper is reliant on advertising to fund this free publication and only ever promotes adverts from Catholic Schools, it does heavily rely on support from schools in the diocese.

Purchasing a support advert for £35 in the 'Celebrating our Schools' Section is also a great way of supporting the paper.

Please do contact Alice if you require more information.



# BUILDING BRIDGES



The basketball project in Bethlehem.

## Basketball for peace project

One of the greatest obstacles to peace in the Holy Land is the boredom and lack of opportunities experienced by large numbers of young people.

Without the chance to focus their energies on worthwhile activities, the likelihood of taking a path towards the destructive cycle of violence becomes more tempting.

A new project in the Bethlehem area is trying to address this issue and to encourage cross-cultural encounter by using basketball as a means to channel the teenage energy of both Christians and Muslims.

Basketball is one of the most popular sports in the West Bank and there are many privately owned courts in the area; however access is limited as admission and training fees are beyond the means of most young people.

This project, run by The Palestine Centre for Rapprochement, aims to invest in the energy young people have and direct it towards learning skills that can benefit them in the future using basketball and associated life skills training enabling them to be more active community members.

Activities will include two training sessions in basketball every week combined with a weekly social activity or workshop. Quarterly trips to marginalized areas to engage in voluntary activities, especially basketball matches with other teams or groups. There will also be regular discussions on topics of interest to learn how to use peaceful means of argument and dispu-

**A new project in Bethlehem is using basketball as a means to channel the teenage energy of both Christians and Muslims. Fr Paul Maddison reports.**

tation along with occasional recreational trips. Participants will be asked to contribute a weekly subscription, but this will be a token amount as many of the target groups are from financially challenged families. The remaining annual funding of £14,000 is being sought from benefactors and charitable organizations.

While the participants will be learning

basketball, they will also be introduced to social values, identity and citizenship issue to empower them to be more active in their community and have more appreciation of their culture and history; and to encourage them to have a better understanding of their heritage and presence in this part of the world.

The activities will broaden their scope of thinking and get them more involved in the community, encouraging them away from the streets which will help protect them from falling into violence and drug addiction.

If you, your parish or school would like to support this unique initiative then you can forward donations to the Diocesan Finance Office where we will be collecting for the worthwhile cause throughout 2016.



## Visit marks 12-year link

Bishop Kike, Apostolic Prefect of the Diocese of Battambang, spent 24 hours in the Sacred Heart Parish, North Walsham, during his recent visit to East Anglia.

He concelebrated Mass with Parish Priest Father James Walsh (both pictured right), meeting members of all three parish communities and shared a meal with some of the many local people who have visited Cambodia.

In his homily, Bishop Kike reminded us all that the twinning link is rooted firmly in friendship and prayer: raising money, though greatly appreciated, is not the primary consideration.

There are Masses offered several times a year; news from Svay Sisophon is posted regularly on the parish website and in the 'Cambodia Corners'.

St Francis Xavier Parish and their priest



Father Greg, are regularly included in the Intercessions and many people now wear the 'kroma' (scarf).

The opportunity to make a practical contribution is also there: through an independent charity, Support Cambodia [Charity no.1160483] which helps many disadvantaged communities in NW Cambodia, including Svay Sisophon.

Support Cambodia Trustees, all resident in the parish, will visit Cambodia for the tenth year in a row from January 11.

The twinning link between Sacred Heart Parish, North Walsham (includes Aylsham and Hoveton) and St Francis Xavier Parish, Svay Sisophon in 2004 and is very much alive and well.

Katie Maidment

## Can you help build bridges?

The two current Diocese of East Anglia Building Bridges projects are renovating the Taybeh Old People's Centre in the Holy Land and a new formation centre for children, youth groups and adults at Battambang in Cambodia

If you would you like to support these projects, cheques should be made payable to the "RC Diocese of East Anglia".

First Name..... Surname.....

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Please send to: Building Bridges, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH Registered charity no 278742



# A former president

## obituary

The Brothers of the Norwich Catenians Circle were saddened to learn of the death of their former president, Siro Valori, on Tuesday September 29.

Siro was born in Norwich on October 30, 1922, one of three brothers, Siro, Amletto and Ego who was also a member of Norwich Circle. Siro's parents came from Le Grazie, a mountain village near the city of Pistoia in the Tuscany region of Italy. Siro's wife Neva, who was also from the same close knit community came to the UK in 1946, staying for a year with the Valori family. Siro and Neva were married in Le Grazie on May 4, 1949.

All three brothers began attending the Norwich High School for boys in Gilesgate in September 1933. Their father, Amando, had negotiated a special deal of three pupils for the price of two, at 21 guineas for the year! Subsequently they all went on to Langley Senior School in Norwich.

At the outbreak of World War II, Siro, then underage at 17, tried to volunteer but subsequently volunteered a year later. He served in the 11th Armoured Division with 159 Brigade as a signaller. He was part of the Normandy Landings and reached Juno beach after four days at sea, due to terrible weather. He was finally demobbed whilst serving in Palestine in 1946.



Siro's father Armando had three fish shops in Norwich (both wet fish and fish and chips) so the three brothers naturally joined the family business. They enrolled at the local technical college and gained their HNDs in Hotel & Catering. The family opened an additional restaurant and shop eventually employing 30 people. Siro opened a 'Superette' next to the fish and chip shop in Timberhill, specialising in a deli and a wet fish counter. The business grew rapidly, supplying large hotels etc. with dressed crabs, filleted fish and peeled prawns. This

entailed Siro and Neva working 12-hour days until the closure of the business with their retirement in 1984.

A devoted family man (in the Italian tradition), Siro has two children, Alex and Elizabeth and seven grandchildren. He and Neva also regularly visited the family home in Le Grazie. He was a keen sportsman enjoying squash, football and golf and a regular member of many clubs, including the Italian Society, the Normandy Veterans Association, Icenians, the Norfolk and Norwich Philatelic Society and an enthusiastic radio ham.

Siro became a Eucharistic Minister and was always a faithful parishioner of St John's Cathedral. He joined the Norwich Circle of the Catenians on February 25, 1972, becoming President in 1979; and he was proud to receive his certificate commemorating 40 years membership in 2012. He was a strong supporter of Catenian events and an enthusiastic visitor to other circles, and well known to many circles in Province 2.

Siro was a man who typified the Catenian virtues of 'commitment to their faith, to their families and to each other'.

The affection and regard with which Siro was held in the city of Norwich and the region was evident in the large congregation at his Requiem Mass at St John's RC Cathedral in Norwich on October 26.

By John Moseley



## obituary

### John was artist and friend

Great Yarmouth artist, John Dashwood, a friend of a number of parishioners of St Peter's at Gorleston including the former Parish Priest, Fr Henry MacCarthy, died on August 31 and will be sadly missed.

John created many large colourful murals around the town and a number of paintings in the Minster Church including a large set of Stations of the Cross (one is pictured above). He gladly gave permission for his Stations to be used in Gorleston St Peter's in Lent a few years ago, where they were projected on to one of the nave walls.

John's interpretation of the familiar scenes brought them into our own town with backgrounds of local landmarks, and a devotional commentary had been written by the then Rector of St Nicholas Church.

John was able to be present with us on that special occasion and said he was honoured that his Stations were being used in the marvellous church designed by Eric Gill, an artist he greatly respected.

By Bill Howell

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