



The Vine

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February 2020
Issue No. 368

Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

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long standing
members of
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Homeless - not
just for
Christmas
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WELCOME BISHOP ELECT DAVID OAKLEY

On Wednesday 8th January 2020, The Holy Father appointed Canon David Oakley, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and currently rector of St. Mary's College, Oscott, to be the thirteenth Bishop of Northampton.

Bishop Peter Doyle rejoiced in this good news. The Bishop has worked closely with Bishop Elect David during his seven years as rector of the seminary at Oscott, and knows him to be a man of faith and prayer, and a pastoral priest and wise teacher. Bishop Peter joins the priests and deacons, the religious and people of the Diocese of Northampton in giving thanks to God and welcoming Bishop Elect David and praying for him as he prepares for his ordination as Bishop.

In his address to our Diocese Bishop Elect David urged us all to keep each other in prayer over the coming weeks:

"Let us pray that all of us together will be able to continue that great mission we have been entrusted with of building God's kingdom in this part of His vineyard".

DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON
THE YOUTH MINISTRY CONFERENCE

2020

YOUTH MINISTRY CONFERENCE
SATURDAY 7TH MARCH 2020
RE CENTRE, LUTON, LU48JD
WWW.NYMO.ORG/CONFERENCE



Jackie McCarthy, centre with her colleagues at NORES



Tim Redding has been financial secretary for our diocese for 17 years

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

Our Diocese is to say goodbye to two of its longest serving members of staff. From our Diocesan Education Service, Jackie McCarthy, the team administrator has retired and is looking forward to spending more time with her family. Jackie has been in post for 24 years. Mgr Kevin McGinnell, the Episcopal Vicar for Education said "We will all miss Jackie, she knows everyone and understands how we work together". Jackie is one of the surviving members who moved with the team in 2009 from their base in Milton Keynes to their new offices in Luton.

Also leaving is our Diocesan Financial Secretary, Tim Redding. Tim has worked for our Diocese for 17 years and moves to be closer to his family in Sussex. He has not enjoyed the two hours commute he has had to make for the last few years! Tim is leaving to take up a role for the Anglican Diocese of Chichester. During his time with our Diocese, Tim has seen vast changes to the way people can give, with the latest introduction of contactless giving in our Cathedral.

Bishop Peter has assured them of his prayers and wishes them both well as they take the next steps of their journey – of course, he knows only too well what facing a change is like!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEBRUARY 2020

31st - 2nd	Lux Weekend, 11-18 year olds email fiona@nymo.org
15th	Catholic Basics 2nd Module email admin@nores.org.uk
14-16th	Faith Group leader Weekend email avril@northamptondiocese.com
29th	Mandated Ministry - Come and See! email avril@northamptondiocese.com
29th	Young Adults Brunch - Holy Ghost, Luton email fiona@nymo.org

MARCH 2020

7th	Youth Ministry Conference email fiona@nymo.org
19th	Episcopal Ordination of Canon David Oakley Northampton Cathedral (TICKET ONLY)
22nd	Bishop Peter leaving Mass (All Welcome)
28th	Northampton Cathedral Young Adults Brunch - Holy Ghost, Luton email fiona@nymo.org

Monsieur Claude's Great French Adventure By Julia Beacroft



Format: Paperback
Pages: 38 pages
Category:
Modern & contemporary
fiction (post c 1945)
ISBN: 9781528905862
£10.99

**Available online at Amazon, Book Depository
And Austin Macauley Publishers - £10.99p**

Monsieur Claude, the 'Beanie Baby' crab, is upset and worried. His family lives in France and he would dearly love to visit them because his mum hasn't been well. His owner, Jamie, is going on holiday to Paris but only two of Jamie's 'Beanie Babies' can go with him. And Monsieur Claude isn't chosen to be one of them... However, the rest of his 'Beanie Baby' friends devise a cunning plan to smuggle Monsieur Claude into Jamie's backpack! But disaster strikes at the airport when Monsieur Claude falls from the bag! Will he be rescued? Will he ever see his owner again? The little crab has a thrilling series of adventures along the way, but will he ever be re-united with his mum?
Age 6-8 years

Getting into print

Send news reports, photos and other material to the Diocesan Communications Manager and editor Neil Roseman email - communications@northamptondiocese.com. We promise to print your news as soon as we can find space for it. Material should be emailed whenever possible. Send photographs in jpg format, as separate attachments, and not embedded in Word documents. All items should reach us by the first Sunday of the month before publication.

Parental permission must be sought before photographs of children are sent for publication. While we accept unsolicited feature articles, we reserve the right to edit the text or not to publish. Letters for publication must include a name and email address, which will be omitted on request.

The content of each issue is decided by the editor.

Views expressed in The Vine are not necessarily those of the editor or of the diocese. The publisher of The Vine deals with all advertising. To place an advert ring 01440-730399. For difficulties with distribution contact the editor.

Publisher: Bellcourt Ltd, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN
Telephone: 0207 112 6710

HELPING ALL YEAR ROUND



After the sudden unexpected death of his best friend, Pete D'Souza (aged 49), Phil Hawkes started a project to support the homeless people of Northampton town.

Phil is a year 5 teacher at Our Lady's primary school in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire.



Although Pete was not homeless, he was a good man who sadly passed away suddenly after a stroke. Phil wanted to do something in his memory so decided to buy one homeless man a hot drink after work on a Friday evening. Taking a walk around the centre of Northampton, he began to see many Homeless folk in various states of need.

Phil writes...



On one evening, I met `George` a very well-known Homeless chap in Northampton. We started to chat, and he asked for porridge and then noodles from the nearby noodle bar. The cost of this made me think if I could provide the same for more people but for less money - and the project was born!

After a bit of basic research, I found it was possible to provide a Homeless person with a pot noodle, a pot porridge, a hand-warmer, a few chocolates and a spoon for under a pound. However, I was going to need more help.

In January 2019, during a staff meeting, I asked our staff if they would like to help in any way. As a result of this, we now have a small team of teachers, teaching assistants, parents and children who along with the parish have provided hot food, drinks (hot and cold, depending on the time of year) and basic clothing to the Homeless.

In school, I have led several whole school assemblies to explain the progress of the project and I am fortunate to have a merry band of `Homeless Helpers`.

My class write to companies as part of their `Persuasive Writing` unit to ask for support and we have been helped by several companies including Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsburys, B&M, IBIS Hotel, Starbucks, Café Nero and Booker - in fact Café Nero are in the process of organising an instore fundraising event to specifically raise money for waterproof suits for the 40 Homeless folk we see.

We are going to have a `Silly Socks` MUFTI event in 2020 and the Chess Club are having a summer Tournament with the proceeds supporting the Homeless in Northampton.

We now meet on a Saturday morning from 10-12noon. The reason we love this project is that it is putting our faith into action. Our school Mission Statement says: `Jesus said, Love one another as I have loved you` and with the support of the class, school, Parish and local businesses, we are doing exactly that.



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Free copy of Lent calendar and activity sheet included inside

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Follow the dove to Easter

Celebrate Lent is a magazine for Catholic kids full of cool activities and fun quizzes. Perfect for 7-12 year olds it will encourage them to think about and grow in their faith while they have loads of fun!

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A YOUTHFUL CHURCH IN BEDFORD!



In September, parishioners across the Catholic Community of Holy Cross Church and Saints Philip and James Church have welcomed their new Youth Minister. There was a day of celebration and welcome on the Feast of the Holy Cross. Since then lots of exciting new initiatives have taken place. The parishes held an All Saints party, where young children were encouraged to dress as their favourite Saint. There were games, food and fireworks to cele-



brate the saints of our Church. The congregation were also encouraged to carve Christian pumpkins and we had some lovely contributions.

Over the past months we celebrated National Youth Sunday on the Feast of Christ The King. The young people led the Mass and afterwards shared in fellowship with pizza! Following on from National Youth Sunday we launched a joint youth group, open to all young Catholics in Bedford. This group gives our young people a chance to meet others who share in their faith and encounter Jesus outside of the Mass and share His Love with others.

As the season of Christmas approached, the community came together for Christingle, a candle-lit festive service to celebrate Jesus Christ the Light of the World. It was a great time to bring together our First Holy Communion families and the communities of our Parishes.

As this New Year begins in Bedford, we are looking forward to all the new ventures coming our way and particularly walking alongside our young people in their journey with Christ.



CLERGY NEWS

Congratulations to Father Benny Joseph MSSP, priest in charge at St. Patrick's, Duston, Northamptonshire, who has been appointed Provincial of his Congregation in England.

Congratulations to Father Gregory Marchwinski who has been incardinated into the Diocese of Northampton and is now Parish Priest of St. Edward's, Kettering.

Father Nathaniel Onwuekwe (Nnewi Diocese) on his return from holiday in Nigeria, will be moving from the Milton Keynes Cluster to be the Assistant Priest at the Cathedral.

Father Stanley George, who is completing a doctorate at Freiburg University, Germany, will be on loan from the same Diocese of Nnewi for four years and will join the Milton Keynes Cluster.

CATHEDRAL CENTRE CAMPAIGN



You can now find Northampton Cathedral Development Campaign on The Giving Machine, a great fundraising site that lets you raise donations for Northampton Cathedral Development Campaign whenever you shop online. It's easy to use and doesn't cost you (or us) a penny!

The Giving Machine is a fundraising charity setup to help other charitable causes raise money online. By signing up and shopping online via The Giving Machine you will generate a free cash donation for us. With over 2,200 of your favourite retailers, including Amazon, Ebay, M&S, NEXT, Tui, Sainsbury, John Lewis & Partners and Waitrose & Partners, you are bound to find what you need and generate a donation.

To start raising free donations go to www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/northampton-cathedral-development-campaign and enter the signup code 265642 and join - it's that easy.

NOW IS OUR OPPORTUNITY TO END THE SUFFERING CAUSED BY LEPROSY

WORLD
LEPROSY DAY
26 JANUARY 2020



Let's create a leprosy-free world

For thousands of years leprosy has been the scourge of poverty-stricken communities across the world. The disease frequently leads to severe, life-changing disabilities and those who suffer from it are often excluded by their community, and struggle to fend for themselves.



124 years dedicated to the relief of suffering

St Francis Leprosy Guild has been dedicated to the relief of suffering caused by leprosy for more than a century, during which time many religious sisters, brothers and priests have made it their life's vocation to care for those with the disease. Today we are determined to build on their legacy and seize our opportunity to help eradicate leprosy once and for all.

A leprosy-free world is now within sight

Just a few decades ago, more than five million people were being diagnosed with leprosy every year, their lives destroyed physically, emotionally and socially by the disease. Today, this number has reduced significantly but remains stubbornly at over 200,000 new cases annually, worldwide. St Francis Leprosy Guild is committed to achieving a leprosy-free world and we genuinely believe

it is possible, if only people like you are prepared to help.

Early detection can stop leprosy in its tracks

By supporting early detection and treatment - before the disease takes hold - you can help to prevent untold suffering. **If you are able to send a donation of just £30 today**, you will help us support ongoing health initiatives, such as the hospital ship that serves patients in the Amazon

region. This initiative has already helped to train 600 local healthcare assistants, and the ship visits remote communities along the river where leprosy is still rife, monitoring people for early symptoms and providing prompt medication.



Winning the battle against leprosy

- 1980s - some 5.2 million cases of leprosy reported annually.
- 1995 – World Health Organisation extends free access to leprosy treatments.
 - 16 million people cured of leprosy in past 20 years.
 - Today, over 200,000 new cases diagnosed annually, worldwide.
 - Early diagnosis and treatment are key to total eradication.

Help to beat leprosy for good

The hospital ship is just one of around 60 inspirational partner organisations supported by St Francis Leprosy Guild, which are working with remote and marginalised communities in countries such as India and Brazil.

Please send £30 today to help this essential work continue. Together, let's seize the opportunity to create a leprosy-free world and help put an end to people's suffering at last.

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Bishop Elect David Oakley



On speaking to the College Consulters, the Cathedral Chapter and Bishop Elect David acknowledged that he had big shoes to fill and had been asking God to give him the courage he needs

HABEMUS WE HAVE A



THE DAY OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT

On Wednesday 8th January 2020, The Holy Father appointed Canon David Oakley, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and currently rector of St. Mary's College, Oscott, to be the thirteenth Bishop of Northampton.

Bishop Peter Doyle rejoiced in this good news. The Bishop has worked closely with Bishop Elect David during his seven years as rector of the seminary at Oscott and knows him to be a man of faith and prayer, and a pastoral priest and wise teacher. Bishop Peter joins the priests and deacons, and the religious and people of the Diocese of Northampton in giving thanks to God and welcoming Bishop Elect David and praying for him as he prepares for his ordination as Bishop.

On speaking to the College Consulters, the Cathedral Chapter and Diocesan staff, Bishop Elect David acknowledged that he had big shoes to fill and that he had been asking God to give him the courage he needs.

The Bishop Elect had been called to Wimbledon, the home of the Papal Nuncio, the Pope's representative to Great

Britain before Christmas. He has expressed his surprise at the calling saying, "I did have a game plan for my life but as always, God laughs at our plans!"

With the appointment of Bishop Elect David Oakley, Bishop Peter becomes the Emeritus Bishop of Northampton, but Pope Francis has appointed him as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese until the new Bishop takes possession of the Diocese when he is ordained Bishop on 19th March.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols will celebrate the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Elect David in Northampton Cathedral at 11:00 am on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, 19th March 2020. Cardinal Nichols said "I assure Bishop Elect David Oakley of my most sincere prayers and total support as he prepares to take up his appointment as Bishop of Northampton, in succession to Bishop Peter Doyle. Bishop Peter will be much missed; Bishop David will be warmly welcomed".

As news of his appointment spread, congratulations began to arrive. On social media, Bishop Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham tweeted 'De-

lighted that my good friend is to be the next Bishop of Northampton. Please do join me in keeping him in your prayers.' This joined an outpouring of prayers and congratulations across the internet from other Catholic Diocese, our Anglican neighbours and parishes from both the Dioceses of Northampton and Birmingham.

On the day of his appointment, Bishop Elect David arrived at Bishop's House at 10.00am. He spent some time with Bishop Peter before meeting with our Vicar General, Mgr Sean Healy. At 11.00am Bishop Peter made the announcement through the live streaming service from our Cathedral, with Bishop Elect David sat next to him. Following the announcement Bishop Elect David addressed the priests and people for the first time. At 11.30 am Bishop Elect David took tea with the clergy present and listened as they spoke of our Diocesan priorities. Lunch was then served in the dining room at Bishop's House after which Bishop Elect David held further meetings and was introduced to the staff at Bishop's House.



and diocesan staff,
and that he had

“At a time like this I am incredibly aware of my own limitations, my weaknesses and my sins. I look forward to working with you all and continuing the great work that Bishop Peter has done over the last 14 years. I look forward to working with the priests and the people. It is not easy to be a person of faith in our society, we must ever be focussed on God,s grace because we don,t have to do it in our own effort we do it by the Lord’s grace.”

PONTIFICEM! A NEW BISHOP!



“I know him to be a considered man of prayer, with a pastoral heart and as a good and wise teacher”

Bishop Peter Doyle makes the announcement



Bishop Elect David was greeted on his arrival to the Cathedral by the Dean, Canon Mark Floody. Canon Mark has been our Diocesan Vocations Director for 11 years until Christmas and thus knows Bishop Elect David as Rector of Oscott Seminary. The Dean of the Cathedral and the Bishop work closely together and live next door to each other.



Bishop Elect David was in the same class at seminary as Canon Seamus Keenan, pictured centre. Here they are joined by Canon Michael Harrison from Corby, enjoying a relaxed moment



Bishop Elect David spent time with the Cathedral Canons, the College of Consultors and the Chair of the Council of Priests. He listened to them as they shared the knowlege of our diocese. From Left to right; Fr Tony Brennan, Canon Bennie Noonan, Canoon Michael Harrison, Canon Seamus Keenan, Bishop Elect David Oakley, Mgr Sean Healy, Canon John Koenig, Canon Brendan Killeen, Mgr Kevin McGinnell.



After the meeting, Bishop Elect David, joined Bishop Peter in Bishop’s House for lunch joined by the clergy.

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Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

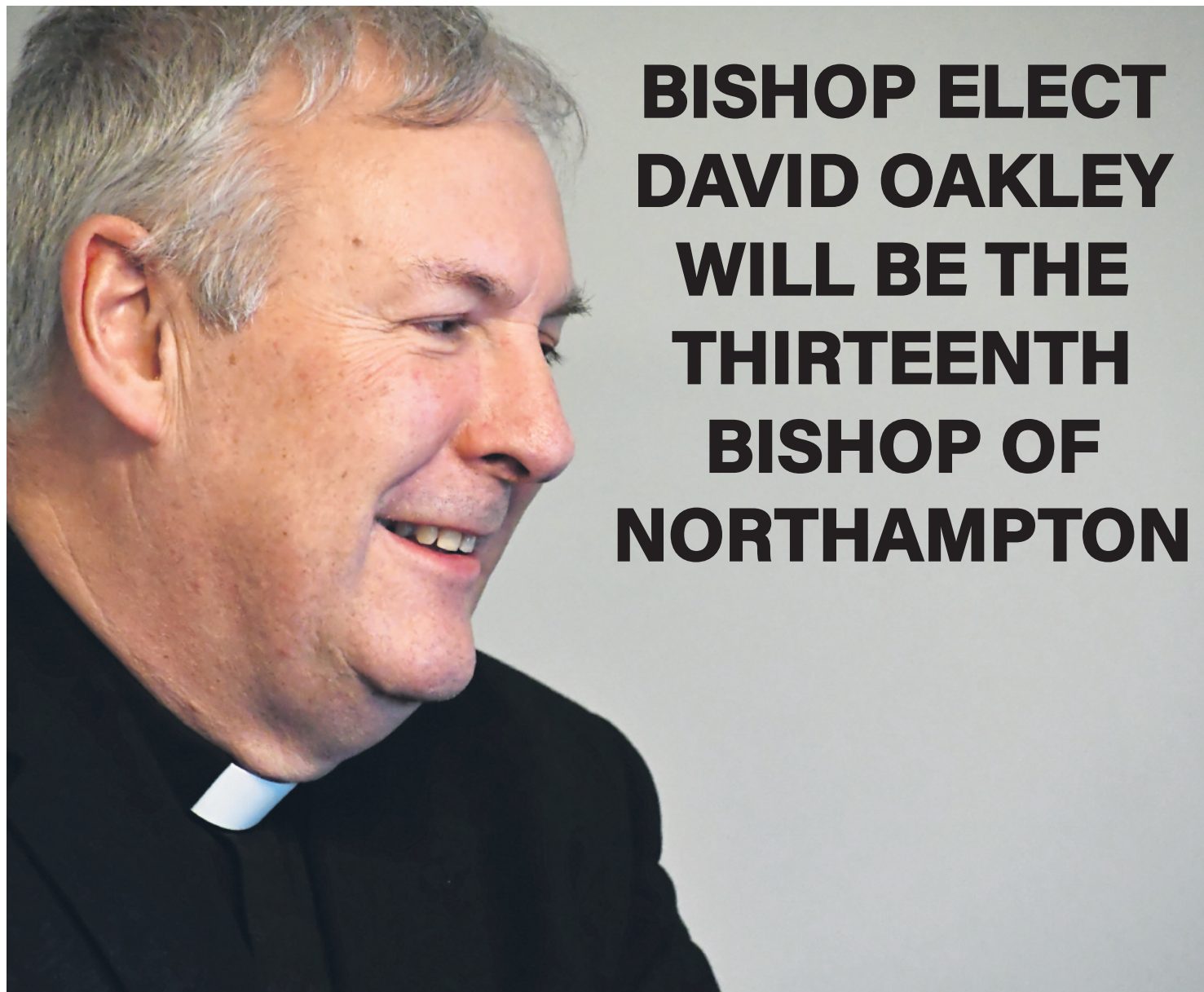


You are invited to a Rosary gathering/procession to honour the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to pray for the sick Tuesday 11th February 2020 at the Angelus time of 6pm.

Meeting outside Christ the Cornerstone church 300 Saxon Gate West Central Milton Keynes MK9 2ES

note: these devotions will not be cancelled due to bad weather. Praying in the wind, cold and rain is penance and reparation (wind and rain bless The Lord. To Him be highest glory and praise forever).

For more information please phone Monica on 07401 366 330



BISHOP ELECT DAVID OAKLEY WILL BE THE THIRTEENTH BISHOP OF NORTHAMPTON

David James Oakley was born on 28th November, 1955 in Stourbridge. He is the eldest of five children to Joyce and Fred Oakley. The family moved to Birmingham when David was 7 years old. After school, he worked in a well-known department store and entered Oscott in September 1974. Fr David was ordained on 5th July 1980 and has served in several parishes within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. He has always suggested that the parish is his natural habitat. Fr David studied catechetics at the Maryvale Institute and was awarded a MEd degree. He was appointed Pastoral Director and Procurator at Oscott in 1994. During this time he researched a PhD thesis in Pastoral Theology, which was later published. As Parish Priest at Maryvale, Birmingham, Fr David directed the diocesan Department for Parish and Family Catechesis, developing resources in collaboration with CaFE. At the same time, he undertook licentiate studies in the Pontifical University of St Patrick's, Maynooth, County Kildare, and was awarded the STL degree. Since February 2013, he has been the twenty-third Rector of Oscott.

ADVENT GENEROSITY

The fundraising efforts of students, staff and the wider community of St Paul's Catholic School have resulted in a donation of shoeboxes filled with gifts and essential items, as well as financial and food donations to two local charities, Winter Night Shelter Milton Keynes and MK Food Bank.

Last term, students in Years 7 – 13 were challenged to bring in items to fill shoe boxes for a homeless person in Milton Keynes. The items included toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, socks, hats, gloves, sweets and crisps. Each of the 75 shoeboxes included a handwritten card and all were filled and wrapped by the school's Sixth Form students. A further four bags of hats and gloves and some food donations were also given to the Winter Night Shelter.

This year Sixth Form students also decided to split money and donations from fundraising activities including their tuckshop between CAFOD, who received £550, and the two local charities—Winter Night Shelter MK received £400 to purchase essential supplies, and the MK Food Bank received 576 food items.

Karen Cobbett from Winter Night Shelter MK said: "We really do appreciate your personal effort to co-ordinate the Christmas shoe box appeal and the generous donation of £400. Both the shoe boxes and the monetary donation will help us to help make the homeless in Milton Keynes more comfortable and help us to continue doing what we are doing."

Jo-Anne Hoarty, Headteacher at St Paul's, said: "Once again our students, staff and community have risen to the fundraising challenge and generously supported two local charities and CAFOD. We are very grateful to everyone, especially to our students who embody our school motto to 'Love, Serve and Do the Best that is Possible' through their fundraising efforts."



A LIFE WELL SPENT...



Anne Holt died shortly before Christmas at the age of 93 after a long and busy life, spent almost entirely in and around Aylesbury, though her interests and activities ranged far beyond.

Music was central to her life but I need not say much about how she used this talent in the service of the church, important as this was to her. To her fellow parishioners she will have been a familiar figure at the organ here for almost 40 years and worked with the Society of St Gregory in promoting music in the liturgy.

Anne was born in 1926 in Prestwood, near Great Missenden, the only child of Gwladys Jones and Jack Walters, a solicitor who had come to Bucks three years earlier to join the local firm of Parrott & Coales, where he was senior partner for many years until his sudden early death in 1954 and where Anne's cousin, Owen, and husband, John, were later to become partners.

Both Anne's parents were from North Wales, her father from Conway and her mother, from Amlwch on the far corner of Anglesey, where her large family had strong local roots. Though not brought up to speak Welsh like her cousins, Anne spent many long and happy holidays in the company of her Amlwch relations and cherished the memory of its rocky, wind-blown coastline throughout her life.

The family moved to Aylesbury in

1928 and a few years later Anne was one of the first pupils at Prebendal House, next to the Anglican parish church of St Mary's, where she formed one special friendship that would last throughout her life. Later she was sent to board at St Swithun's in Winchester, where her love of music and Christian faith were further nurtured.

Anne was 13 when war broke out and 19 when it ended. Her teenage years would have been tinged with anxiety for relations and friends facing danger and captivity and she was devastated when her adored elder cousin, Edwin, was killed fighting with the commandos on D-Day.

Soon after returning to Aylesbury she met her future husband, John. Two years later, in April 1949, they became engaged and on 8th September that year were married at St Teresa's, Princes Risborough, when she was still only 23.

1949 was also the year in which Anne, who had been brought up as an Anglican, became a Catholic. John was from a Catholic family with an elder brother in the Jesuits and there were those in the town who offered her sympathy for having to 'turn' in this way to facilitate her marriage. In truth, the seeds had been sown much earlier and even at school when attending services in the medieval surrounds of Winchester Cathedral she had begun to question whether she was, as she put it, 'in the right department' or whether for her the holy catholic church in the creed meant something different. Thereafter, her new faith was the main inspiration in her life and she was hugely proud when Thomas entered the Benedictines at Douai.

Following her conversion, Anne immersed herself in parish life, first at St Joseph's in the High Street, later at St Clare's in Elmhurst and finally, after moving

to Butler's Cross on John's retirement in 1974, here at St Anne's. She was a founder member of the Aylesbury section of the Catholic Women's League in the 1950s and held office at both local and diocesan levels. Coming from an Anglican family and with a mother raised in Welsh methodism, she became an early and enthusiastic supporter of ecumenism.

Through the CWL she also became involved in the National Council of Women, at one point combing regularly through Hansard as its Parliamentary Reporter. One wonders how she managed to fit it all in.

Anne's teaching career had ended in 1949, the year of her marriage, but she remained active in local education, serving as a governor of Aylesbury High School and several local primary schools. Child welfare was later central to her role as a magistrate on the Aylesbury Bench, to which she was appointed, very much to her surprise, in 1969. She served there for 20 years, only standing down in 1989 as she approached the age when, as she put it, she would be 'disqualified by antiquity' from sitting in the juvenile court.

Anne retained a deep love of classical music and following the refurbishment of St Mary's in Aylesbury in the 1970s was a driving force in the establishment and organization of its weekly 'Music at Lunchtime' concerts.

In 1979 Anne was awarded the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice medal by the Vatican for her services to the Church and in 2017 was presented by the Mayor of Aylesbury with a Certificate of Appreciation for her years of service to the Friends of St Mary's and the local community. She never sought praise and was genuinely surprised when it came. She was, however, indefatigable in defending and promoting what she saw as important and never shrank from confrontation where required.

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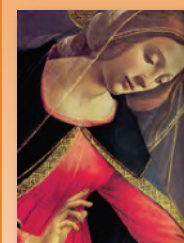
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THE GUILD GROWS

Holy Ghost Luton Servers admitted to the Guild of St Stephen

It is always a great moment on the day after Christmas when those confirmed in the previous May ask to be admitted to the Archconfraternity of St Stephen, receive the medal they wear on the altar, and sign the enrolment register. Witnessed by families and people from parish, it makes something very special of our Boxing Day mass. All the servers renew their promises together and form a close knit group who are generous in their service of the liturgy. This year saw six new servers enrolled, who join a band of over twenty servers, ranging from 14 years to mature age. It is good to recognise their worth as we do for so many others engaged in the Church's worship.



Our Lady Of Guadalupe Feast Day Celebrations



Bishop Peter is joined by
Archbishop Kevin McDonald
our former Bishop

"When Deacon Kevin Ryan said, 'Go in the peace and love of Christ', I actually felt the peace and love of Christ!" said Shrine Coordinator Donna Gardner after the Feast Day Mass of our Lady of Guadalupe, which took place at the Shrine in Bedford on 12th December.

As always on this occasion, there was a full church for the Mass. The principal celebrant and preacher was the Most Reverend Kevin McDonald, Archbishop Emeritus of Southwark and former Bishop of Northampton. He reminded us in his homily that we are called to 'accompany' people in life and to share their journeys on many levels.

It was also lovely to have our own Bishop Peter present to concelebrate. The Anglican Bishop of Bedford, Rev Richard Atkinson was also with us, as were the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire and her husband, senior Knights of St

Columba, other distinguished guests and many people who travelled from far and near to be present.

The Knights of St Columba looked after the parking and the guests and the altar servers were directed by Fr Gerard Byrne, the Diocesan MC. The flowers by the Relic Image were stunning, thanks to Maureen Brewer and the flower arrangers; the music provided by Clare Moubarak and the AMDG music group added an extra dimension to the liturgy. Kieron Rentle was our photographer for the first time, and Mary Frost and the catering team organised the reception where we were able to socialise over plentiful and delicious food.

Altogether it was a happy and memorable evening. May the peace and love of Christ and the blessings received from Our Lady of Guadalupe remain with us always.

VOLUNTEERS PREPARE FOR LUX

Young adult volunteers from across our Diocese gathered together for training as they prepare to welcome the many young people who will be attending the LUX residential weekend at the beginning of February.

With a mix of theology and youth ministry training there is always a huge amount that takes place as the young adults bring their own unorthodox approach to the theme. This year the theme is 'VOX' meaning voice. Based on the year of the word and listening to God's voice the weekend aims to empower young people to pray with scripture daily and gently rest in the silence to allow our loving Father to speak into their hearts.



NORTHAMPTON CLERGY NIGHT



Front Row, left to right: Fr. Nicolas Aldridd, Mgr. John Broadhurst, Odran Steed, Provincial President Eddie Gibbons, Bishop Peter Doyle, Circle President Mark Wilson, Canon John Koenig, Canon Michael Harrison, Fr. Gregory Marchwinski,
Back Row, left to right: Deacon Mick O'Leary, Gareth Davies, Deacon Michael Flemming, Seminarian Jithu James, Fr. James Cassidy.

The President and Brothers of Northampton Circle of the Catenian Association were delighted to welcome the Bishop of Northampton, the Rt. Rev. Peter Doyle and 10 members of the Clergy and Religious to their Annual Clergy Night with the ladies. Some 66 guests were in attendance. Hosted by Circle President Mark and Kryisa Wilson, the principal Catenian guests were Province 8 Provincial President, Eddie and Eithne Gibbons, along with Past Province 8 Director, Odran and Margaret Steed. President Mark proposed a toast "to our Clergy and our ladies", thanking them for their support and attendance. Provincial President Eddie responded on behalf of the guests. He referred to the great success of the Association's Rosary Leaflet, being distributed across parishes, schools and even into prisons. He spoke of the important work the Catenians carried out in many areas within the parishes supporting the Clergy. In his reflections, Bishop Peter referred to the uncertainty of the present and quoting from St. Francis said "Catholics cannot sit on the balcony and watch". Looking ahead to 2020 the Bishop highlighted the re-dedication of England as the Dowry of Mary and The Year of the Word as important events in which one can engage. In thanking Northampton Circle for their hospitality Bishop Peter said "as this would be his last Clergy Night he was pleased to have the opportunity to thank Northampton Catenians for their hospitality, kindness and love during his time as Bishop." A tombola raised £415 towards Circle Charities.

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THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

A PERSONAL REFLECTION ON THE LIFE GIVING POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

By Charles Whitehead KSG.

In 1977 I became very aware that I did not really know the Bible - I heard the Word of God proclaimed in the liturgy but I hardly ever actually read anything in the Bible itself. I felt God was challenging me in this whole area, and I decided to do something about it.

So I took my copy of The Jerusalem Bible down from the bookshelf and began to read it every morning. There are many different ways to do this, from simply reading it through from the beginning, to following specific themes or subjects, or linking our reading to the topics addressed in the Church's liturgy but going further than the prescribed texts. There is no set method - we should choose whatever suits us personally. It may well be that one of the many available books of daily scripture reflections with a commentary will be both appealing and challenging,

causing us to think in new ways about our lives. I, in fact, decided to start by reading from cover to cover, Genesis to Revelation, linking my reading with St. Jerome's study guide to help my understanding. This required a very disciplined mind-set, because quite frankly there were mornings when I just did not feel like doing it. But I persevered, and within a few weeks I found I was really enjoying it and looking forward to it every morning.

There is of course something unique about the Word of God - unsurprisingly it carries a special and powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit, which touches us deeply, speaking to the very depths of our being. This was certainly my experience and I read my Jerusalem Bible from cover to cover in 1977 and then again in 1978. I felt comfortable

writing notes, thoughts and comments on the text itself, often underlining it for future reference. Amusingly, when I once showed my Bible to an evangelical friend who was a well-known preacher, his only comment was - "The verses you need to read now are those you haven't underlined!"

I've continued to read the Word of God every morning since those early days, now more than forty years ago, and a part of my reading will always be from the liturgy of the day, but I will do more than this. It has transformed my spiritual life, and in this special year devoted to The God Who Speaks through His Word, I would warmly encourage everyone to set some time aside to read the scriptures daily. In my experience it will be the best investment of time we ever make.



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