



Couples
celebrate
their
marriage

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Coming
soon
to
Bedford

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Arise,
Sir
Mike

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A
great
forgotten
talent

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Welcome for Easter

A large group of candidates, catechumens and their sponsors from parishes all over the diocese gathered at the cathedral in Northampton on February 22nd. They came for the ceremony of the 'Rite of Election', the annual gathering when those who are being received into the Church at Easter are presented to the Bishop.

During his welcoming homily the Bishop told the candidates that this year marked the 25th year that the ceremony has been held at the cathedral, and he was particularly pleased to be welcoming them on this silver jubilee anniversary.

He said that they had now been accepted as members of the Elect, and he was delighted that they would be received into the Church at Easter. He congratulated them as they began their life-long journey of faith, and he reminded them that they were joining a Church which existed in every country on earth, and that, wherever they happened to be, they would always find in the Church a friendly welcome and a peaceful sanctuary for prayer.

Story & pictures: Noel Guina



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Send news reports, photos and other material to the editor, Fr. Paul Hardy, St. Edward's, Burchard Crescent, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes, MK5 6DX: vine01@btopenworld.com We promise to print your news as soon as we can find space for it.

Material should be e-mailed whenever possible. If this cannot be done for digital pictures they should be sent to us on disc. Send photographs in jpg format as separate attachments, and not embedded in Word documents. Urgent and dated items should reach us by the first Sunday of the month before publication.

A booklet of advice on writing news reports for The Vine is available on request.

Parental permission must be sought before photographs of minors 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 address, which will be omitted by request.

The content of each issue is decided by the editor, Fr. Paul Hardy, email: vine01@btopenworld.com

Views expressed in The Vine are not necessarily those of the editors or of the Diocese. The publisher of The Vine, Bellcourt, deals with advertising. Those wishing to place advertisements should telephone 01440 730399. Difficulties with distribution should be referred to Mrs Busby.

Couple set for sainthood

Pope Francis is expected to canonize Blessed Louis and Zelig Martin, the parents of St. Therese of Lisieux, during the world Synod of Bishops on the family in October.

Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes, leading a conference Feb. 27 on the role of saints in the life of the church, announced that "thanks be to God, in October two spouses, parents of Saint Therese of Lisieux, will be canonized."

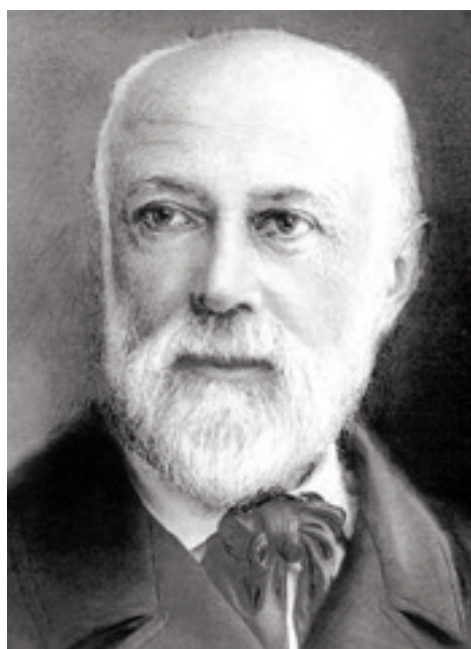
Blessed Louis and Marie Zelig Guerin Martin were married in 1858. The couple had nine children, but four of them died in infancy. The five who survived — including St. Therese — all entered religious life. Zelig Martin died of cancer in 1877, at the age of 45; her husband died when he was 70 in 1894.

The couple was beatified in 2008. They are believed to be the first parents of a saint to be beatified, highlighting the important role parents play in their children's human and spiritual upbringing.

Following normal Vatican procedures, before their canonization the pope would have to recognize a miracle that occurred after prayers for the couple's intercession before God. The decree is expected to be signed before Easter.

The next step would be for the pope to consult with the church's cardinals and hold a consistory with cardinals present in Rome to announce the decision to proceed with the ceremony during the world Synod of Bishops on the family Oct. 4-25. A Vatican official said that meeting probably would take place in June.

According to the Lisieux shrine's website, a miracle being studied for the couple's canonization involves a little girl in the Diocese of Valencia, Spain. Born prematurely and with multiple life-



threatening complications, Carmen suffered a major brain hemorrhage, which could have caused irreversible damage. Her parents prayed for the couple's intercession. The little girl survived and is healthy.

Pope Francis has a special devotion to St. Therese. The pope used to keep a photo of the 19th-century French Carmelite nun on his library shelf when he was archbishop of Buenos Aires. He has said that when he has a problem, he asks St. Therese "not to solve it, but to take

it in her hands and help me accept it." As a sign that she's heard his request, he said, "I almost always receive a white rose."

Before opening the October 2014 meeting of the extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family, Pope Francis venerated the relics of St. Therese, her parents and another couple, Blessed Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi; the relics were brought to Rome specifically for prayers during the bishops' discussions about family life.

English Catholic History Association

The English Catholic History Association will be hosting a meeting at St Augustine's Catholic Church, High Wycombe on Wednesday 15th April 2015, 10:00am – 3:30pm.

Speakers include Tony Reynolds author of ST NICHOLAS OWEN, PRIEST-HOLE MAKER and Mrs Margaret Osborne, former Northampton

Archivist – DUDLEY CHARLES CARY-ELWES, BISHOP OF NORTHAMPTON 1921 to 1932.

Other ECHA events in 2015 include visits to Stonor Park and Glastonbury.

Details: <http://echa.org.uk> or Northampton Diocesan Co-ordinator Mrs Sheila Mawhood 01844 343669

CAFOD is delighted

The aid agency CAFOD, which worked closely with Archbishop Oscar Romero, has expressed delight that one of the great Church leaders of modern history will be beatified. "Archbishop Romero was one of the most inspirational figures of the 20th Century, and we are delighted that his beatification has been confirmed," said Chris Bain, CAFOD's Director. "He was an extremely brave man, who was inspired by his faith to fight not just poverty but injustice, to give a voice to the voiceless. "The reason that CAFOD staff and supporters, like many Catholics around the world, continue to hold Romero in such high regard is obvious. He didn't simply talk about the need to love your neighbour, but courageously denounced the violence and named the injustices that plagued his country. He reminded us that Christ is found in people living in poverty, and that we cannot ignore the suffering of our brothers and sisters in need.

"His words were full of courage and hope, and they still resonate strongly with us today. 'Many,' he said, 'would like the poor to keep on saying it is God's will for them to live that way. But it is not God's will for some to have everything and others to have nothing. That cannot be of God.'" In the 1970s, CAFOD supported Romero's famous radio broadcasts, which – at a time when the press was heavily censored – were often the only means by which people in El Salvador knew the truth about the atrocities occurring in their country. When Romero's radio station was blown up, CAFOD provided funding to rebuild it. After Romero was martyred, the aid agency's staff successfully petitioned Lambeth Council to rename the Brixton street where their office was located 'Romero Close'. And when CAFOD moved to a new office in 2009, it was named 'Romero House'.

Note

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*Pictures: above: Bishop Peter greets diamond jubilee couples.
Below: Family Life Co-ordinators Eamonn and Paola McMorrow*



Corby welcomes marriage Mass

This year's Mass for the celebration of marriage looked like a set of perfectly timed coincidences. Or perhaps it was just well-planned! It took couples and families to the church of Our Lady of Walsingham, Corby, the beautifully re-furbished church on the northern edge of the diocese. It was St Valentine's day, and the weather was kind. The welcome was warm; the lunch reviving and the two cantors perfectly in tune. 'Welcome to the north', said parish priest Fr. Michael Harrison.

Mass began with a striking symbol. Diocesan Family Life Co-ordinators, Eamonn and Paola McMorrow brought to the sanctuary an image of the Holy Family. Beside it, a candle was lit to represent all Catholic organisations active in fostering and supporting marriage within the diocese.


For once, Bishop Peter didn't mind the congregation talking during his sermon. 'There are so many people here that I know', he said, 'it feels like a real family occasion. Why don't you say hello to the people you don't know'.

After his sermon Bishop Peter invited the couples to re-dedicate themselves to each other, using words which reflected the marriage vow. 'We pledge ourselves anew to love and honour each other: for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part. We pledge ourselves anew to love and support our children and to share with them all

that we value'. The whole congregation then made a pledge to model themselves on Christ. 'We pledge ourselves anew to be loyal, considerate and forgiving to all those with whom we live, that in our homes we may find Christ and in our lives others may see Him'.


The Bishop then recited a prayer of blessing. 'At your marriage you promised to love, respect and honour each other in good days and in bad, in sickness and in health until death would you part. Join hands again now, as you did then, and place your future under God's blessing. Lord and God, creator of the world, you made us male and female. We thank you that these couples and joined in marriage. Bless them. Strengthen their faith. Confirm them in hope, and let them grow in love so that they may enjoy a good marriage and give an example of Christian living. Lord, may they be bound to you in the community of your church, praise your name every day of their lives, and be your witnesses to the world. Keep them to a good old age, and after this life grant them fulfilment in your glory'.

At the end of Mass certificates were presented to couples celebrating a significant stage in their marriage. The bishop himself presented certificates to four couples celebrating sixty years of marriage. They received hearty applause from the congregation as well.



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Nations gather in Bedford

On the evening of Friday 12 December, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Church of the Holy Child and St Joseph in Bedford, celebrations were in order, beginning with the Feast Day Mass at which Bishop Peter Doyle was the principal celebrant, assisted by Pastoral Area and Diocesan priests together with priests from other Dioceses. In his introduction, Bishop Peter welcomed the invited guests who had travelled long distances to be at the Mass; these included Bertie Grogan, deputy supreme Knight (representing Charlie McCluskey the Supreme Knight who was stranded in Glasgow because of the failure of the air traffic control system) and representatives of the KSC from Liverpool, Portsmouth, East Anglia and Brentwood (places visited or about to be visited by the Miraculous Relic Image) all of whom were present to celebrate not only the Feast Day but also the formal signing of the Visit Partnership Agreement between the Guardians and The Knights. Bishop Peter also welcomed Maria Madise from SPUC International and Voice of the Family, representatives from other Pro-Life organisations, Home Shrine Guardians and the families from the Northampton Diocese and all over the UK. During the Mass, Guardians of the Home Shrine from Bedford, Corby, St Neots, Biggleswade and other parts of England renewed their promises and commitment as did the Home Shrine Families.

Several Honorary Guardians, Sharon Kennedy, Petrik Bregu, Martin Kay and Maureen Brewer (award accepted by Anne Reddin on her behalf) were presented with framed certificates as recognition of the many ways in which they helped The Guardians.

Guardians (and Honorary Guardians) have responsibility for the continuation of the Pilgrimage programme from its devotional base to visit Cathedral, parishes and institutions within the National Catholic Family of England and Wales. Each pilgrimage is supported and managed by the partnership between the Guardians and the Knights of St Columba.

Towards the end of the Mass, a presentation of a long service medal was made by Bishop Peter to Jack Doyle to commemorate 50 years of service in the Knights.

The Mass was filmed by EWTN for screening throughout Europe and possibly the USA in 2015. It was requested that Bishop Peter should be interviewed.

Once the formalities were complete, refreshments were served in the Guild Room and old acquaintances were reunited; judging by the chatter plenty of news was exchanged. There was ample time for parishioners to chat to Bishop Peter, the other clergy and fellow Guardians as well as visitors from other towns.



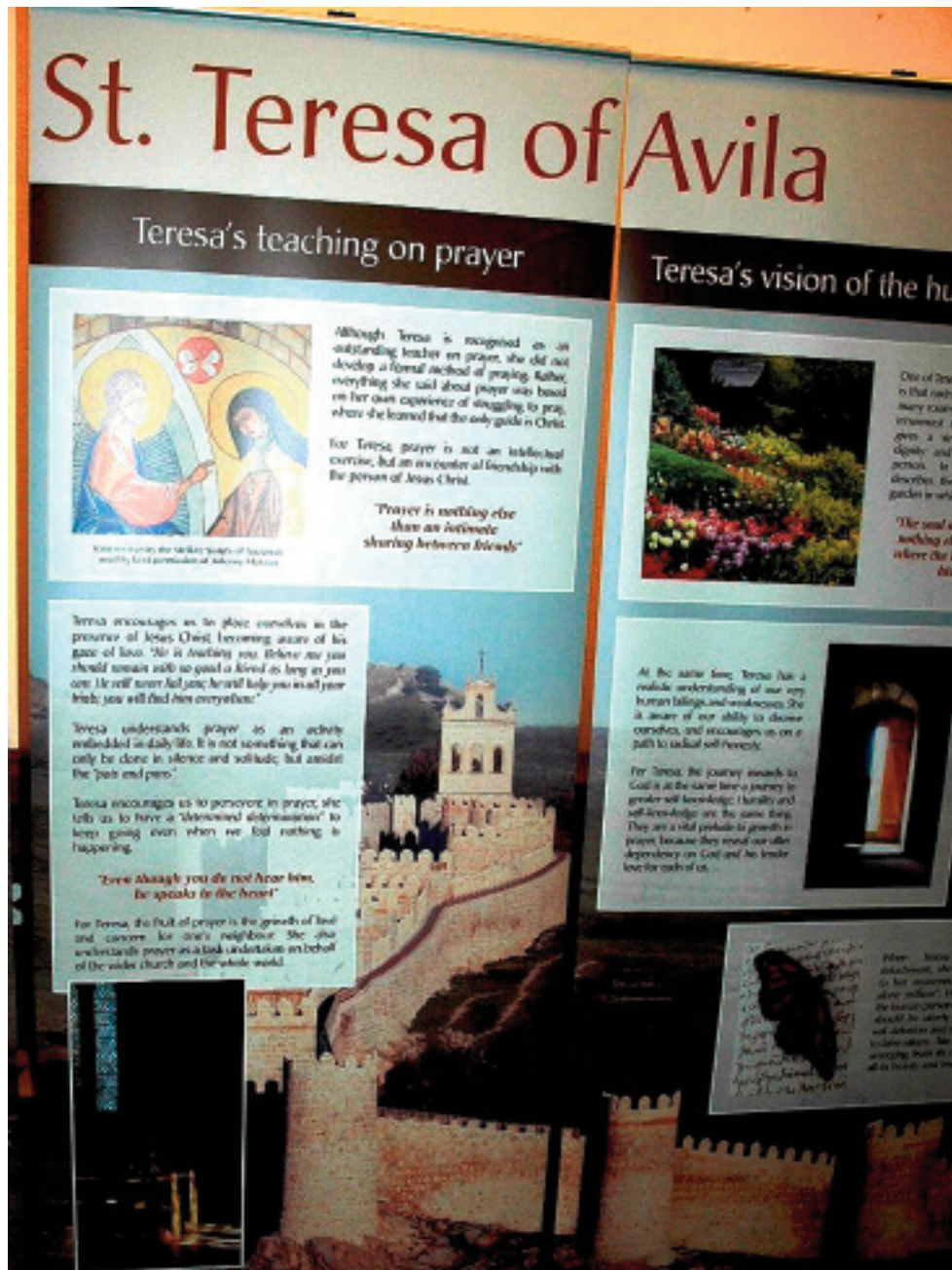
St. Teresa visits Northampton

A handsome exhibition marking the 500th birthday of St. Teresa of Avila stopped off in the cathedral in February. Inspired by the Carmelite family of priest, sisters and lay members, it shows in words and pictures Teresa's last-

ing influence in the Carmelite tradition. Born in 1515 Teresa introduced a profound reform of the 400 year old Carmelite Order. Her spirituality continues to motivate the church today, and she has provided the groundwork for

modern-day saints. She was a major inspiration for 2nd world war martyrs Edith Stein and Titus Brandsma. Earlier, she had a deep influence on Teresa of Lisieux. Height of the anniversary year will be a pilgrim-

age to Avila in September. The year will close with a Mass at Aylesford on October 17.



Exterminate!

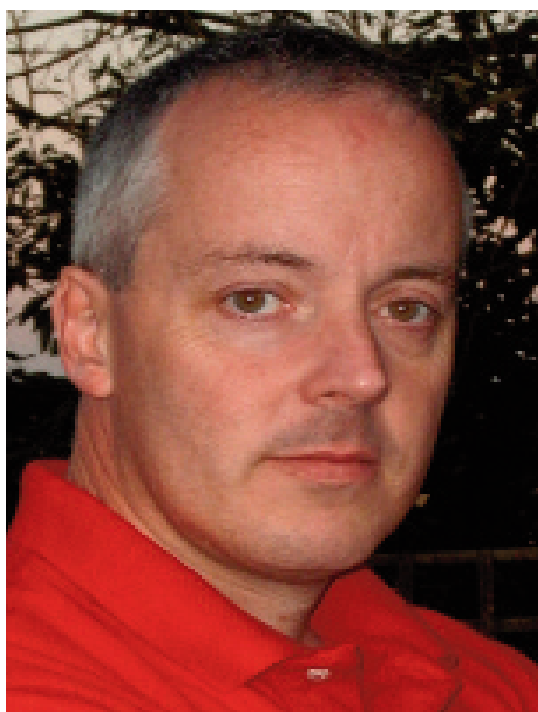
Shoppers at Bedford's Sainsbury's were recently greeted by an unexpected guest; the Daleks had arrived!

In fact, the Dalek (whose name is Genevieve!) turned out to be surprisingly friendly; she was there to publicise Bedford Foodbank's *Doctor Who* convention, which is being held on Saturday 11th April. It's a major fundraiser for the charity; once costs are covered, they will receive everything raised by the event, which is called Bedford Who Charity Con.

Bedford Foodbank is an ecumenical charity; it provides emergency food for local people in crisis.

The organiser of the convention is Simon Danes (49), Foodbank volunteer and parishioner at Holy Cross, Bedford. Simon's a keen fan on the good Doctor; he's been watching since the black-and-white days when Patrick Troughton played the part.

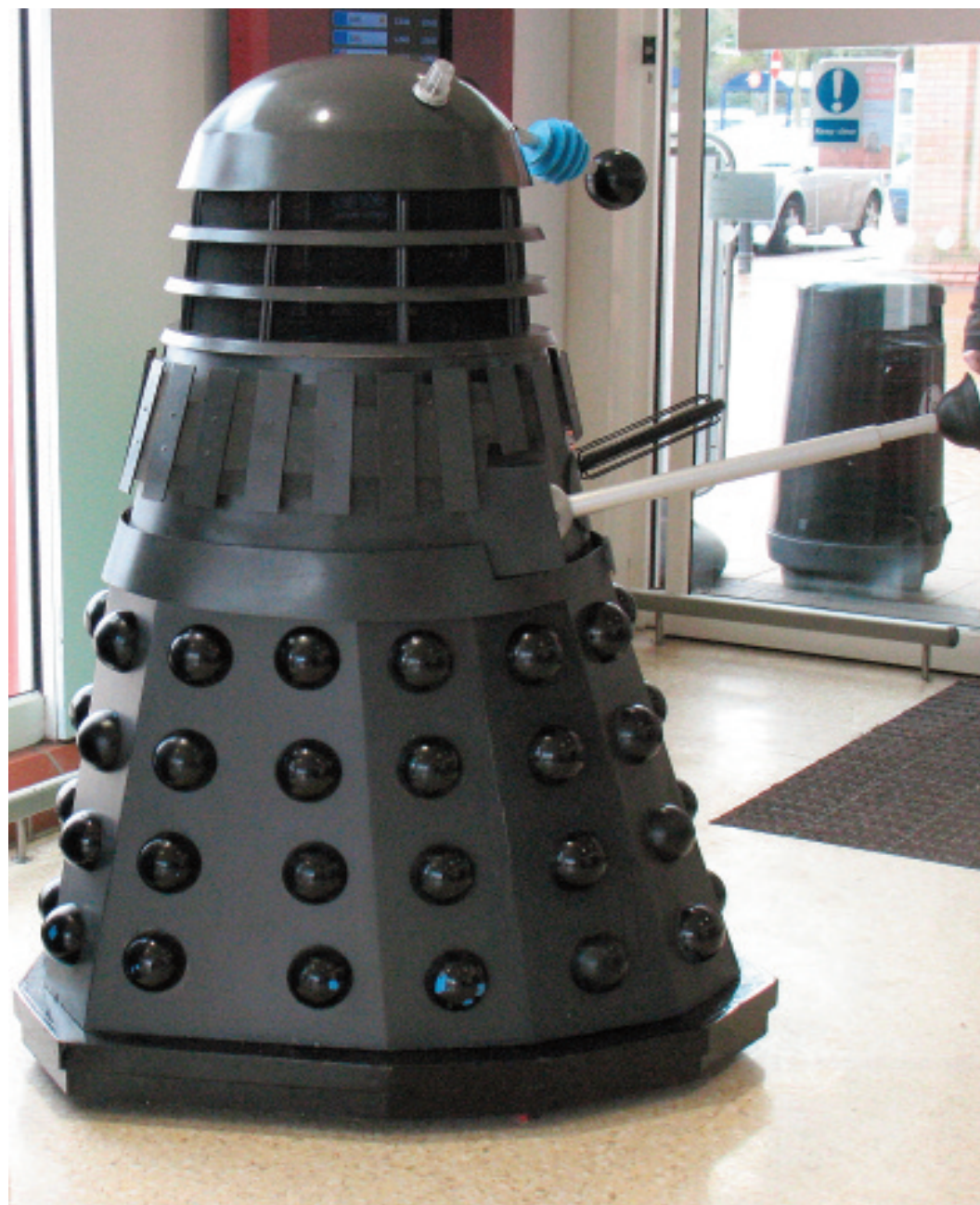
Simon commented, 'The day's going to be great fun. Three of the Doctor's companions will be joining us: Anneke Wills, Nicola Bryant and Sophie Aldred (they played Polly, Peri and Ace respectively). We also have John Lesson, who's been playing K9 since 1977, and Davros himself – actor Terry Molloy. They'll be meeting the fans, answering questions on stage, and signing autographs. Mike Tucker, who's the BAFTA award-winning special effects designer, will be doing a presentation on the programme's visual effects; this is a man who's been blowing up Daleks for a living since the 1980s. And Ailsa Berk's coming. She's the programme's choreographer, who teaches movement to the



actors playing the aliens, and she'll be leading an alien-movement workshop for everyone who wants to take part. And, of course, the Daleks will be there – in force!

If you'd like further details, including how to get tickets, please go to the event's website: www.bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk or email Simon Danes on info@bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk

And finally, a trivia question for readers: Which of the actors who played the Doctor was formerly a monk with the De la Mennais Brothers for six years?



Answer: Tom Baker



Celebrate!

Parishioners of St Bernardine's, Buckingham thanked their parish priest, Canon Dan Kiely, for his twenty years of service with a celebration lunch for fifty people in the parish room last week. Parish Council chairman Peter Gannaway invited Father Dan to cut the celebration cake and thanked him for always being on duty to serve his parish. In response Father Dan said that, while he loved being with his family in Ireland, his parish family in Buckingham was very important to him and he was very glad to be here.

Father Dan is pictured with parishioner Margaret Vince who catered for the celebration meal.

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Timeline with pizza



A group of us from Our Lady of Peace Parish, Burnham, came together every week for 8 weeks to learn more about our faith through the bible using the 'Teen Timeline', a program designed to teach teenagers more about the narrative story of the bible.

The Teen Timeline really helped me learn more about the narrative story of the bible because at school we don't tend to cover this sort of subject in great detail, so at the beginning I think we all knew we would definitely get something out of taking a deeper look into scripture. We made the end of our Friday nights, after studies, an informal occasion in which Father Andy and Father Simon would pop in and we would all have pizzas.

Our Teen Timeline was run by a member of our parish, Bob Bryant. He did a wonderful job organising everything for us each week and an even better job coping with us teenagers!

I would definitely recommend Teen Timeline to other young people because now I feel I know more about the roots of my faith and I have more information for my R.E. lessons at school. I hope the younger teenagers of our parish do take an interest in what we have learnt through our course and that they may be interested too!

Francesca Mennone
Aged:14

I am ashamed to say that since leaving school, apart from reading Bible stories with my children, my Bible has remained unopened; gathering dust, tucked away, along with a foolish misconception that, much of it, is not really relevant to our lives today. In reality that could not be further from the truth... How on earth did I ever think I could begin to know and understand God, IF, I didn't take the time to get to "know" him and understand his plan for us? Ignorance is certainly not bliss, quite the contrary; it is not until you "scratch the surface you realise how much you actually don't know."

I am delighted to say since joining our Our Lady of Peace's Bible Time Line Group, my feelings have changed. Through discussion, readings and video references we are guided through the Bible's rich tapestry of events, this careful navigation helps us to understand and follow "the story." Without it, there is a

tendency to get "lost" when taking the cover to cover approach.

Taking time out to study the Bible has given me a completely new understanding and relevance to my faith. The readings at Mass now actually mean something to me, and give me a deep joy, even an elation, at last I can begin to fit together the pieces of what is a giant jigsaw; to understand the importance of characters whose names we are so familiar, including; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, their part in God's plan and the bloodline to our Saviour. It gives us understanding of where we have come from, an insight into human nature and the opportunity to draw parallels and reflect on our behaviour today. We too are all part of God's plan, the Bible is as relevant today as it always has been; a constant reminder of Our Lord's unceasing love for us.

Christina Brackenridge



Arise, Sir Mike

The Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, organised by the Catholic Association, is a special event in the calendar. The pilgrimage is always a very successful venture thanks to the many hours of preparation and organisation put in by so many people. For over 50 years Mike Carter, a Trustee of the Catholic Association, has worked tirelessly in support of every pilgrimage.

During the 2014 pilgrimage Bishop Peter bestowed upon Mike the Pontifical Order of St Gregory the Great [KSG] in recognition of his work for the Catholic Association. Mike is a parishioner of St Augustine's in High Wycombe and has been active in that parish in financial and council matters for over 30 years.



Clergy study safeguarding

A clergy study day on February 12 offered priest and deacon new insights into safeguarding and abuse. The speaker was Canon Kieron O'Brien. Although born and brought up in High Wycombe, Canon Kieron belongs to the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. A former secretary of Cardinal

Cormac Murphy-O'Connor and then tutor at the English College, Rome, he is now a parish priest in Brighton. For almost ten years he was safeguarding Co-ordinator for the diocese, and now develops and delivers clergy workshops. In recent years there has been widespread

publicity over abuse within the Church, with a much greater emphasis on safeguarding. 'But safeguarding', said the Canon, should be there whether there has been abuse or not'. Authentic ministry demands transparency, accountability, compassion and justice. Abuse destroys a sense of being loved by God, a sense of community with others and trust in God's plan. When there is abuse, the Church gets in the way of discipleship.

Abuse causes widespread damage. There are thousands of victims world-wide. It creates financial problems in dioceses. The scandal overshadows the good work which priests and laity are doing. People leave the Church, and its moral authority is diminished. This damages the gospel mission, and is a crucial barrier to evangelisation. Safeguarding is part of our baptismal calling. We are a priestly people, called to worship. This is incompatible with abuse. We have a prophetic voice to name the evil and speak the truth. We are called to create a kingdom of truth and justice. The Church is a sacrament of healing, encounter and growth.

In applying this to priestly ministry Canon Kieron called for a balance between openness and vulnerability and appropriate safeguard. He quoted Pope Francis: 'I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and clinging to its own security'. Again quoting Pope Francis Canon Kieron reminded priests that the Church must be known to be safe. 'Fami-



lies need to know that the Church is making every effort to protect their children. They should also know that they have every right to turn to the Church with full confidence, for it is a safe and secure home. Consequently, priority must not be given to any other kind of concern, whatever its nature, such as the desire to avoid scandal, since there is absolutely no place in ministry for those who abuse minors', Canon Kieron spent some time exploring the issue of abuse and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The seal of the confessional can never be broken, yet we have a moral obligation to see offenders brought to justice.

The study day ended with questions from the clergy dealt with by Northampton Safeguarding Co-ordinator Kay Taylor-Duke, and former policeman Philip Wright, who holds the same position in Arundel & Brighton.

Pictures: left, Canon Kieron O'Brien: above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator Kay Taylor-Duke

Leap for your Life




The Life House in Northampton for young mothers and their babies and young children has now been successfully running for six months and is providing a safe, happy and supportive home for three residents. The benefits to the young women are immeasurable as they prepare for the time when they will move on and establish their independence in society. The house is continually being improved to ensure the children have an engaging and interactive play area and to allow the mothers develop skills which will help them become independent. Necessary Health and Safety requirements are also in the process of being installed and it is essential that these are financed. The Life House project receives no funding from the Local Authority but is solely reliant on the generosity of donors and fund raisers.

In order to raise funds, three members of the Life House Support Group have taken the brave decision to abseil down the Na-

tional Lift Tower, otherwise known as the Northampton Express Lift Tower, which at 400ft high is now a recognised Abseiling Centre and is the only building in the UK dedicated to abseiling. The abseil will take place on Saturday 20th June and support for this event will make a wonderful contribution to the ongoing running and development of the Life House and be very much appreciated by the young mothers and their children. The abseil volunteers are seeking sponsorship for what should be an exciting and fun event.


Please give the Life House your support by sponsoring the abseil. Sponsorship is available by going to: www.justgiving.com/Northampton-Abseil. Thank you for any support you are able to give.

The names of the three volunteers are, from left to right, Susie Leslie, Denise Johnson and Clare Bird.




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School explores happiness

On Friday 13th February, the staff and pupils of St. Edward's Catholic Primary School in Kettering supported Northamptonshire Mental Health Awareness Day with a whole day dedicated to exploring emotions and, in particular, happiness.



The day began with an assembly led by Assistant Head Teacher, Claire Perry. The assembly focused on different emotions that people feel and the importance of not 'bottling up' feelings and worries, but sharing them with others.

Back in class, every year group explored the theme of happiness in different and creative ways...

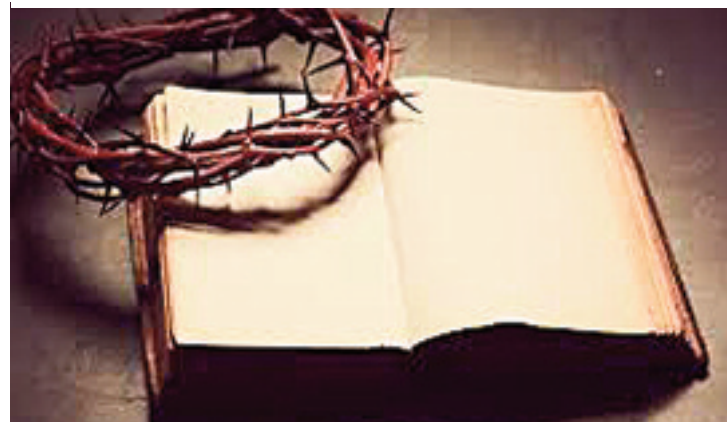


Head Teacher, Pauline Cuddihy said; "This has been an inspirational day. There have been rich learning activities going on across the school and the children and staff have had time to explore this important issue."

St. Edward's are now going to continue their work on mental health awareness and link up with the Northamptonshire TaMHS project. (Targeted Mental Health in Schools).



Word Among Us



Not forsaken or abandoned

Good Friday is a time of darkness. "When the sixth hour came, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." The physical gloom matches the spiritual darkness, as the Lord of life suffers and dies on the cross. Evil seems to have triumphed. The messenger of goodness and healing has been taken away from the earth. Life has been extinguished.

From the cross he cries out: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" The God who has been with him in his ministry—the God whom he has addressed as Abba, Father—seems now to have deserted him.

Previously he has healed the sick and reconciled enemies. He has comforted mourners and forgiven sinners. He has fed the harassed crowds with loaves and fishes, as well as with the bread of his teaching. He has shown humanity a way of living with justice and compassion.

He has even been welcomed into Jerusalem by a great throng of people waving palm branches and singing: "Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heavens!" Yet now he has been deserted by those who were once his friends.

Worst of all, he now feels abandoned by God his Father. One of the psalms expresses his anguish: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress. O my God, I call by day and you give no reply. I call by night and I find no peace."

One of his disciples has betrayed him, and he has been abandoned by the rest. He has been put on trial in front of the Roman governor, and quickly condemned to death. After cruel tortures, he has finally been nailed to a cross. The one whom we call Lord suffers the death penalty that was meted out to a rebel slave.

Last of all, when all the noise has subsided, Joseph of Arimathea takes his cold dead body and lays it to rest in a rock-hewn tomb. Then the tomb is sealed with a huge boulder. The great teacher and healer is now dead and gone. Everything is finished.

Yet that is not the end of the story. As we know, the crucified one rose again on the third day. And so at Easter we celebrate the light of the risen Christ. During the Easter

Vigil, the paschal candle is brought into the darkened church, symbolizing Christ's light which overcomes the darkness of death.

We recall the holy women going to the tomb at dawn on Easter morning and finding the tomb empty. We remember their shock that their master seemed to have been taken away. We see them running away from the tomb in fear.

But then we hear the stories of the risen Lord coming unexpectedly to meet his followers. First he meets Mary Magdalene as she comes to the tomb to mourn. Then he appears to the gathered disciples huddled in the upper room. "Peace be with you." And a story arrives from two travellers walking to Emmaus. They came to their destination and welcomed a stranger, who broke bread with them and vanished. The Lord of life had not abandoned them after all. God had not forsaken his beloved son.

The reading on Easter Monday gives us St Peter's testimony to Christ's resurrection, spoken to the Jerusalem crowds on Pentecost morning. God did not abandon his holy one to the underworld, nor did he allow his body to experience corruption. Instead: "God raised this Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses."

This consoling message means that cruelty and violence are not the conclusion of everything. Death and destruction do not have the last word. In Christ's resurrection, we see that life is ultimately more powerful than death, despite the cost paid in his crucifixion. This is not an easy victory or a cheap triumph. This is the fruit of the hard road to Calvary, but in the end our redemption is won.

As Pope John-Paul said when visiting Harlem in 1979: "Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song!" We are a people of hope, not in ourselves, but in the Lord who saves us. This is the faith to which we witness in our words and actions.

Christ's light is stronger than the darkest forces of death. Christ's love overcomes the harshest cruelties. The Easter Sequence expresses our response: "That Christ is truly risen from the dead, we know. Victorious king, thy mercy show!"

Father Jeremy Corley

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Guidelines for funerals

Dear Editor

I must say I was very surprised at the new rules for funerals. I totally agree with Michael Stothard, when it seems that lip service is being paid to laity involvement, while at the same time been dictated to from on high and nothing to do with Faith or Morals. Msg McGinnell states that the funeral liturgy is to "offer worship praise and thanksgiving to God" accepted. And "brings hope and consolation to the living". I wonder what sort of consolation is being given to the family when this type of dictate is issued and surely it should also be a celebration of the life of the deceased. As to having the PP vet the eulogy. It would be a most uncharitable act for the PP to reject this at such a sensitive time. I do however agree that if there is to be eulogy It should be kept reasonably short..

Finally, I would have thought that is more important things for the church to consider than issuing dictates such as this.

Yours sincerely

David Williams MBE JP

In reply to the Guide to Funerals...

Your correspondent, Michael Stothard, made some excellent, sensible points to the suggestions/guidelines regarding funerals and in particular his own wife's funeral. As he said who could take just three minutes to sum up someone's life in a eulogy? Isn't it enough that someone has died and a family is grieving, but to be timed with their thoughts on that person is a callous and unfeeling suggestion.

How insensitive then of the Vine to show a picture which a very unusual scene – Storm Troopers from Star Wars – accompanying a coffin, to reply to the challenge to the Guide to Funerals debate. This funeral, incidentally, was a young child's funeral and the parents were determined to celebrate their son's life and passions, 'having his body carried in a Star Wars coffin on a white horse-drawn carriage surrounded by stormtroopers'.

We are all individuals and grieve differently. Whilst totally respecting the sanctity of the Requiem Mass we still need to be given a little flexibility in how we say goodbye to our loved ones.

Yours,

Marian Colyer

New youth resource available

On the feast of St John Bosco, the Salesians re-launched CatholicYouthWork.com a resource for everyone who is involved in working with young people in the Church. It offers a place for resources, jobs, a forum to share ideas and find support as well as somewhere to keep up to date with the latest youth ministry news and events. Dermott Donnelly, Chair of CYMFed, the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation in England and Wales, said, "this is a fantastic resource that will help strengthen and support the Church's important work with young people".

"We know there are lots of people out there doing great work with young people", Chris Knowles, Editor of the site said, "they're all doing fantastic things, having amazing ideas and putting exciting plans into action, but the problem is that we're too often disconnected from one another. This site is a place we can all come together to share ideas, resources and good practice, and was designed specifically to facilitate this. So we invite you to come onto the site, join the forum and start to share ideas and resources!"

The Salesians have invested in the site since taking it on last

summer, Provincial Fr Martin Coyle thought it was important to start this new project because "it's a great way to use new technology to help those who minister to young people, there really isn't anything else like this out there. This year we celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of St John Bosco, so while he wouldn't recognise a website if he saw one, he did love new technology like the railways and the modern printing presses of his time, things that made it easier to bring people together and share the Gospel. This project is particularly appropriate way for us to continue to live out his mission today"

The site is a resource that is offered completely free of charge, anyone can register to get involved in the forum and receive our resource and ideas emails. The site is strengthened by more people getting involved because as they get involved in sharing resources and ideas, we can better resource and support people in their work. Last year we attracted between 5 and 11 thousand page views each month, and we hope this will grow as we keep the site up to date with new resources and ideas for people who work with the young in the Church.

Obituary

Rev'd Murdoch Mackenzie

Rev. Murdock Mackenzie died on February 3rd at the age of 76. A former Ecumenical Moderator of Milton Keynes, he was well known and much respected.

His life was in itself an ecumenical journey. Born in 1938 he was received into full church membership as an adult at a Congregationalist church in Birkenhead. He went on to study geography at Oxford, divinity at Edinburgh and Marxism in Paris. In 1964 he married Anne. In 1965 he became a member of the Iona Community. In 1967 he was ordained as a priest of the Church of South India in St. George's cathedral, Madras.

The Mackenzie family returned to the United Kingdom in 1978. From 1996 – 2003 Murdoch was the Ecumenical Moderator of Milton Keynes. His warm, prayerful and generous Christian faith, his passionate commitment to ecumenism, to peace and justice and to interfaith relationships left an abiding mark on the Church in the city.

He found Catholicism a challenge. He didn't understand Catholic ecclesiology, nor its careful definitions of boundaries which should not be crossed. But that did not stop his warm pastoral approach to the Catholic clergy.

Retiring from Milton Keynes he and Anne returned to Scotland, living on the west coast until his final illness forced them to move to Edinburgh.

But one of the highlights of his ministry came after his retirement. With Anne he spent 2008-2009 at Bossey, in Switzerland. Bossey was the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Institute, attached to the University of Geneva. There he was able to share his experience with a group of forty ecumenists from developing countries.



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The Mississippi Flows into the Tiber.

By John Beaumont. Fidelity Press.

Evangelising Catholics. By Scott Hahn. Our Sunday Visitor/Gracewing.

This book, sub-titled “A guide to notable American converts to the Catholic Church” (it includes Canadians) is 1000 pages. Do not be put off by its size. It is much more than a work of reference, more a manual of apologetics all of its own. Beaumont, who had already written “Roads to Rome” about English converts, has decided to include long extracts from autobiographies and biographies of these converts, which raise (and answer) all the doubts and difficulties they faced during their journey into the Church. A wise decision, it makes the book, although somewhat heavy for bedtime reading, a wonderful compendium of the Holy Spirit at work in broken or questing lives.

The arguments and debates in these pages are almost an instruction manual on how to answer the challenging questions thrown at Catholics by sceptics and secularists outside the Church: “ammunition for the fight for Catholic truth” as Fr John McCloskey III - who seems an effective converter of souls himself – writes in the foreword. In such a rich collection it is hard to single out particular converts’ accounts,

but I would especially recommend those of Catholic writer Peter Kreeft; Abby Johnson, the former abortion provider; Ernest Hemingway; Catherine Doherty, founder of Madonna House; Bella Dodd, the former Communist; Ronda Chervin, from a Jewish background and who was influenced by philosopher Dietrich von Hildebrand; and the late Cardinal Avery Dulles, from blue-blood Presbyterian stock, who reasoned his way into the Church as a Harvard undergraduate.

Several of the people in these pages were converted along with their wives; a lovely testament to married love. Others, like the poet Dunstan Thompson, were “reverts”, returning to the faith that they had discarded in their youth. Unsurprisingly, the book is full of sinners; conversion might put you on the right road but it doesn’t make you an instant saint – witness Hemingway, who married four times and who finally committed suicide. The famous Jewish psychiatrist Karl Stern came to see that the only response to the evil of the Holocaust lay in the sacrifice of Christ. And the conversion of Bernard Nathanson,

the notorious abortion doctor, demonstrates that no black sheep need be lost this side of the grave.

Scott Hahn, who appears in the pages of Beaumont’s book above, along with his wife Kimberley, was a rigorously trained Protestant minister before his conversion; his speciality was capturing unwary and ignorant Catholics. As a Catholic of many years standing, he has brought all his zeal and love for Scripture and his evangelising training to focus on how to help Catholics realise they have a duty to proclaim their faith, not just to live it in the privacy of their homes.

Divided into two parts, “The Call” and “The Response”, Hahn begins by analysing why cradle Catholics are generally so reluctant to share their faith with others: they want to blend in with their neighbours; they don’t want to sound triumphal (or too Protestant); or they are so badly catechised themselves that they simply can’t stand up and explain what they profess to believe. Quoting Saint John Paul II, “No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can



Scott Hahn

avoid this supreme duty [of evangelisation]”, Hahn then offers several suggestions as to how Catholics can be more effective as evangelisers: these include the witness of faithful married love; teaching the faith to one’s children; making one’s home a place of welcome and prayers for visitors and non-Catholic friends; becoming familiar with the Church’s teachings; and doing works of mercy. He adds that parishes need to be “spiritual homes”. The message is: we are called to witness to our faith.

Francis Phillips

Obituary

Fr. George McCann

At St Dunstan’s Church in Bourne End, a group of over 200 parishioners gathered for a Memorial Service on the evening of 9th February to remember and give thanks to God for the life and ministry of their friend, Fr George McCann, who died on 27th January.

Fr George was ordained on 26th July 1953 and served in a number of parishes in both the old and current Diocese of Northampton. But it was parishioners and friends from his last thirty years who gathered at St Dunstan’s that evening.

Fr George was the Parish Priest at St Teresa’s Church in Beaconsfield between 1983 and 1996, after which time he retired and went to live in Kettering with his sister, Mary.

When the Bon Secours hospital in Beaconsfield closed in 2000, Sr Winifred McCahill and Sr Anne Campbell moved into the presbytery in Bourne End which was vacant. During his ministry at St Teresa’s, Fr George had worked closely with the Bon Secours sisters and, in his retirement, regularly stayed with them at St Dunstan’s for a couple of weeks every few months.

Following Mary’s death in 2011, Fr George moved into residential care at Nazareth House in Northampton, but continued to take regular breaks to St Dunstan’s. During these breaks, Fr George continued his own distinctive style of ministry: celebrating weekday Mass, visiting the sick and housebound and offering his wise counsel. Priests belong to both their natural and parish families, and sometimes the two do not really know too much about each other. The parishioners of St Teresa’s and St Dunstan’s decided to put together a Book of Memories about Fr George to give to his family. It was filled with many tributes and stories of good times spent together. One family wrote “Fr George was a wonderful priest and a great friend. He would welcome you with a smile and was never in a hurry to say goodbye. His whole face



shone with love and warmth, and he always had a joke or funny story to share”. Fr Francis Higgins, the current Parish Priest, said of Fr George, “It has been a privilege both following in his footsteps and walking alongside”.

Fr Damien Walne

Fr Damien Walne died on March 7 at the age of 75. He was born in Northern Ireland to a farmer turned wartime naval officer. After the war the family moved to Norfolk, and then settled in Cambridge. He admitted that he ‘frittered away his time in secondary education on sport, representing his school at cricket and hockey’.

On leaving school Damien worked for Barclays. After three years he left to join ABC Cinema.

He studied for the priesthood at Oscott College and was ordained at the age of 30. He served in High Wycombe, Corby and Bedford. As a recently ordained priest he produced a book on the apparitions in Lourdes. The book still appears on Amazon’s list and used to be the only English book sold within the Lourdes Domain.

In 1991 he was posted to Great Billing, becoming Rector of the Diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. He was also for some years the Director of the an-



nual Lourdes pilgrimage, and patron of the Rosary Link for Vocations. Recently he was helping to look after Sacred Heart in Northampton after Fr Frank Calnan’s death. He will be fondly remembered and sadly missed.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them.

A great talent overlooked

Former Diocesan Archivist Margaret Osborne has produced new insights into the life of Charles Dudley Carey-Elwes, 5th bishop of Northampton, from 1921 to 1932. The Diocesan Directory, in its list of bishops, notes only that he began the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. In fact, he achieved far more.

He was born of the family of squires of Great Billing into a network of nobility, clergy, politicians and diplomats, and is remembered for his pastoral kindness and his musicianship. Shy and sensitive, with a tetchy temper, he was no friend of liberal

government or socialist politicians. Throughout his life he remained a country gentleman. Often on a Saturday he would be seen at the clay pigeon shooting in Great Billing. Yet, by family tradition, he was taught in boyhood to take responsibility for the spiritual and temporal needs of those in his care. As parish priest of Peterborough he was the first to provide car for the migrant harvest workers in East Anglia. He was keen to support organised charities, and raised money for them through his cello concerts. In the difficult field of ecumenism he worked as closely

with the other Churches as he could.

As bishop of Northampton he was a wise and careful administrator. During his years the Catholic population of the diocese doubled to 22,000. Although priests were in short supply, he was able to establish seven new parishes with a resident priest. Committed to evangelisation he sometimes sent a priest to a town and charged him with creating a congregation!

Having at one stage the supervision of diocesan schools he fought the government of the day on the provision of adequate buildings for Catholic education. He re-or-



ganised the Catholic chaplaincy at the University of Cambridge, and set it on a firm footing.

Carey-Elwes was also active in international affairs. He had ministered as a parish priest during the First World War. Now he was a keen supporter of the new Council for International Relations and of the League of Nations.

Through the Catholic Emigration Society he provided Catholic information for those migrating to the then colonies. He even tried to build bridges towards the Eastern Orthodox.

He established the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, and it was there that his public life ended. Influenza caught up with him. Instead of leading the blessing of the sick in Lourdes he was one of the recipients. He was last seen publicly blessing the crowd as he was loaded into an ambulance in London for his return to Northampton. He died a few months later.

Mrs Osborne's paper on Bishop Carey-Elwes is printed in Northamptonshire Past and Present, number 67, published by the Northamptonshire Record Society.

Pictures: above, Bishop Carey-Elwes. Left, Great Billing hall.



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Jemima Owusu, sixth form student at St. Pauls, Milton Keynes, is having a fantastic rugby season. She started playing for the school last term. Along with ten other players from the school she was immediately called into the Buckinghamshire U18s team. Her dedication, enthusiasm and performance so impressed officials that she was nominated to go to the South West Divisional trials.

She had a day of intense trials and assessments. They included decision making, contact skills, fitness testing with technical and tactical awareness and analysis. She was selected for this year's RFU South West Junior Academy. Her first weekend in the training camp was at Bovington army barracks in early February. The PE Department at St. Paul's is very proud of her.

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