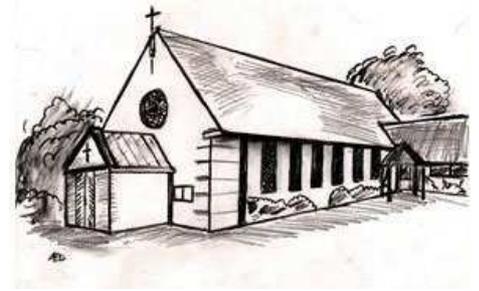


The Pilgrim

St Laurence's Parish Magazine, September Edition 2020



For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them."

Matthew 18:20

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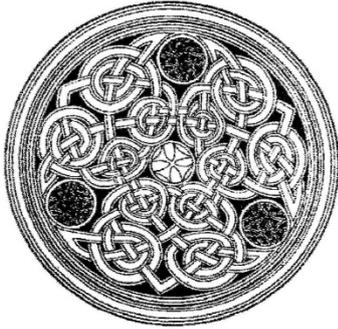
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PEACEMAKING



DAY BY DAY
Daily Readings

Pax Christi USA published a very useful, and user friendly booklet for daily reflection on peace.

The 160 page booklet has a short entry for each day of the year with reflections from people such as Thomas Merton, Gandhi, Oscar Romero (Aug 18), Pope Paul VI (Jul 30), Dom Helder Camara, Martin Luther King (Jul 28), Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day (Feb 23).

It is a great resource to use on a daily basis or, if you prefer to open and read it occasionally. This publication is available in the UK from Pax Christi England & Wales, St Joseph's Watford Way, London NW4 4TY, their website www.paxchristi.org.uk



Anyway

People are often unreasonable and self-centred.
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you.
Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.
Give your best anyway.

For you see, in the end it is between you and God.
It never was between you and them anyway.

Mother Teresa

What's New

Meet the new Parish Secretary – Reece King

Sarah Sykes

In *Pilgrim* tradition we bring you a short introduction to our new Parish Secretary.



Reece has been working in the Parish Office since early August and as we know from Fr Simon's brief introduction in the newsletter, Reece has come to us from a job in which he worked in student IT support. However, he first came to Cambridge

from March about 10 years ago to study Philosophy at Anglia Ruskin University. On graduation he got a job working for a company which develops and sells computer software for disabled students. He spent five years in various admin roles in the company before taking a break to do a Master's degree in Sociology. He returned to the same firm, working in a variety of roles, until two years ago when his grandmother became ill and he became her main carer. At the end of his caring duties he was looking for a new direction in life and having been inspired by his Catholic grandmother's faith, which had solidified and strengthened as she grew closer to death, he wondered whether becoming a Franciscan Friar was a vocation he was being called to. While contemplating this he applied for various admin jobs including the role of Parish Secretary at St Laurence's and, fusing his admin skills with his Catholic faith, this seemed like a good fit!

Living in the Stourbridge Common area of Cambridge he has attended Our Lady and English Martyrs church but is also of an ecumenical spirit.

From his various admin roles he brings skills of project management, customer service and training as well as a good understanding of computers; all useful attributes for working in the Parish office. He will be at his desk five days a week from 10am to 1.30pm and "Always happy to help!"

We welcome Reece to the office at St Laurence's and to the Parish in general.

Live Streaming at St Laurence's

Sean Martin

We started live streaming from St Laurence's in Cambridge in March 2019, after initial testing and feedback from a very helpful pilot group of parishioners, and it is interesting to reflect on our experiences to date.

We started with the objective of allowing the housebound of the parish to continue to participate at Mass – little did we realise then that would apply to all of us in this recent period of lockdown.

We considered options and focused on a 'keep it simple' approach, as reliable and sustainable as possible, and we also sought to minimise regular activities, such as might require a rota, or to keep a schedule up to date. These have all turned out to be the case – the approach we use requires only a camera with streaming software, and network wiring to connect it to broadband. There is no need for an additional PC or laptop, and we are alerted if streaming has stopped.

Since we started we have had no issues with the camera, and any failures have been caused by broadband or electricity supply interruptions. It has been sufficiently reliable that one almost forgets that Mass is being streamed – it does not detract from the experience of the congregation, or the celebrant.

Of course, lockdown caused changes. But, fortunately, our priests Fr Simon and Fr Bob could continue to say Mass in a largely similar manner as before, but with an empty church. However, we now prepare a CD that can be played during Sunday Mass with readings, singing and music, and this is, of course, streamed as would normally happen.

A sheet with the hymns and sung responses, a link to the day's readings, and the Spiritual Communion Prayer of St Alphonsus is included on the parish website (in common PDF format), and announced via CD at the beginning of Mass. We have also learned that it can be helpful for the celebrant or reader to look occasionally to the camera, for example, for the sign of peace or when using the thurible with incense.

Around the start of lockdown the Diocese of Leeds helpfully published their reflections on live streaming, where some pertinent points included:

- The Holy See encouraged live and not recorded streaming.
- The streaming should be as authentic as possible: it should not try to imitate a TV

broadcast, as it is not an entertainment programme. It should emphasise ‘sacrifice’ not ‘spectacle’.

- The camera is placed for the best ‘congregant’s eye view’ of Mass, and the view is framed to the Sanctuary, avoiding viewing empty pews, and the view is static.

We found we were reading a written explanation of what, perhaps, we had accidentally sought to do, as that largely describes the approach we took for our live streaming.

Not long after lockdown began the Anglican Provost of Sunderland Minster, Ven. Stuart Bain, tweeted “*To my fellow broadcasters: God loves good audio more than good video.*” That resonated, as we had sought really hard to stream good audio, and had many positive comments as a result.

Our SVP group are in touch with those who would be housebound in normal times, and we asked parishioners to donate any laptops that were no longer in regular use. We reconditioned these and have made them available through the SVP for the housebound so they could view streamed Mass.

Given that such a person is likely to have limited experience of using a laptop, we tried to make these as easy to use as possible. After switching on, it starts at the web page ready to start streaming, so as to minimise what needs to be done. Even so, this was with mixed success. This is why we are now exploring making recordings that can be taken on a USB device by an SVP member to the housebound, and then played so that they can “see Mass”, in a similar way to how audio recordings from Mass used previously to be taken to the housebound.

Our camera streams continuously to YouTube, except for rare occasions, such as a concert. We are familiar with the copyright issues, and have obtained two licences, which we considered necessary for streaming.

The camera allows one to define “rectangles” within the overall field of view as seen by the camera. This is how we crop down the view to the Sanctuary so that only is streamed. This regular Sanctuary view is for Masses, Weddings and Funerals. However, as this view does not include the font, we have a separate stream that includes the font for Baptisms.

Since Easter we have a close-up view of the altar, which was helpful for the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, and is now used for regular periods of Exposition. We also have a silent meditative stream for private prayer focused on the Crucifix and Tabernacle. We thus allow the congregant to choose the stream

best suited for their current purpose, from a choice of four streams on the Parish website. Hence we do not need to change any settings on a regular basis, and as streaming is continuous, we do not need to maintain a schedule of when it is live.

The camera does allow us to easily change the view of a running live stream. We have conducted trials with zoom-in views, and perhaps surprisingly, received quite a lukewarm response. However, there could be a simple explanation – people are used to sitting in the same seat throughout Mass, except for Communion, and thus a static view is what congregants normally have, and thus expect. Indeed, too many changes, and especially rapid changes, of view were considered distracting. Hence the use of multiple views, such as close-ups, should be used only sparingly.

We considered three such opportunities during Mass: the Consecration through to the sign of peace, the readings and the homily. However, the latter two are largely aural experiences, and indeed could be fully experienced with closed eyes; hence a close-up view seems unnecessary. Hence we intend to explore switching to a close-up view of the altar during the Consecration. This can be achieved by two button clicks or view changes during a Mass from within the church or from home. However, given this was deemed to be of marginal benefit, if this is adopted, it is likely to be on an ad-hoc manner without a rota.

The camera we have used can work in small through to very large churches, since a telephoto lens can be fitted to the camera, so that there is still good coverage of the Sanctuary even from a distance. With the relaxation of lockdown restrictions we are now installing the same system in a nearby church. The average cost is around £1,300 – a telephoto lens would be additional. The only recurrent monthly cost has been for broadband, which in both cases had already been installed.

To conclude, here is some appreciative feedback we have received: “*I have just ‘attended’ your live streamed Mass, which I came across while searching for a Vigil Mass this evening. I felt I must write and thank you as I was so moved by the service. I have watched services every week since the lockdown began but, until tonight, I felt very much an observer. Tonight, with the singing, sign of peace, readings (I assume) by parishioners I was actually moved to tears. I felt as if I were actually celebrating Mass with others for the first time. Thank you all so much for the experience. I will be joining you again next week. Sue from Somerset.*”

Article originally published online on RCDEA news webpage.

Ordinations

Sarah Sykes & Nora Darby

Congratulations to parishioner Mike Smith who was recently ordained as Deacon in Rome in June this year.

Due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID19 pandemic the ordination took place in Rome rather than in Norwich. The Mass was celebrated by American Cardinal James Michael Harvey, Archbishop of the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. It was a quiet ceremony which took place in the Beda College Chapel, although normally it would have been held in the nearby Basilica with many guests.

Bishop Alan said, "I am delighted at the ordination and I am only sorry that because of the present Covid-19 problems, no-one from the Diocese was allowed to travel to support him."



"I felt the profound significance of the ordination Rite and I feel very blessed and aware of the responsibility that the Lord has given me," said Mike.



He will return to Rome in October to start his fourth and final year. After that he will return for good to the UK where he hopes to be ordained a priest in the Diocese of East Anglia sometime in the summer of 2021.

Also, congratulations to former parishioner Peter Wygnański who had luckily returned to the UK before the lockdown and was able to be ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Alan Hopes at the cathedral in Norwich in July. The socially distanced occasion took place in the presence of 100 guests and around 30 priests.



He had been based at St Edmunds in Bury St Edmunds on his return but will go back to Rome again at the start of the new academic year to complete a pontifical postgraduate degree, specialising in Fundamental Theology before returning to the Diocese next year.



"As I reach the end of my own seminary journey, I know now that it is absolutely true that seminarians only persevere thanks to the immense support, encouragement, and prayer of countless people along the way."

Images of the Ordination of Mike to the Diaconate from Flickr stream of the Beda College Rome:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/137459279@N08/sets/72157714764150493/with/50018578426/>

Images of the Ordination of Peter to the Priesthood from Flickr stream of RCDEA:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dioceseofeastanglia/albums/72157715232495881/with/5015152181/>

Source: RCDEA web news pages

Features and Opinions

Apocalypse Now

John Conlon

If you enjoy reading tales about dragons, serpents, beasts, locusts with human hair, talking animals and end-of-the-world battles between God and Satan, I have a recommendation for you. I am not talking about *His Dark Materials*, *The Lord of the Rings* or the *Narnia* chronicles. I am referring to the Book of Revelation (also known as Apocalypse), often mistakenly called the Book of Revelations. It is so weird that I must admit that when I first read it I wondered whether the author had been on LSD or some other mind-bending drugs!

Revelation (Rev) is tagged on to the end of the New Testament (NT) but does not feature strongly in our liturgy as Catholics. This could be because opinion has been divided over authorship ever since it was written in the first century CE. Some believe the writer was St John the apostle, but just as many have their doubts. The author calls himself John, which was a common name among NT Christians. He is believed to have been Aramaic or Hebrew. As of 2015, Rev remains the only NT book not read in the divine liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church, though Catholic and Protestant liturgies include it.

I am interested to understand what Rev meant to first-century Christians (many of them Jewish) and whether it has any significance for us Catholics today.

Rev is a Christian work by a prophet and belongs to a class of literature dealing with eschatological subjects and much in vogue among the Jews of the first century before, and after, Christ. Apocalyptic imagery was known to Jews from Old Testament (OT) writings, in particular Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah and Daniel. These texts pointed to an end to evil times and persecution and a joyful afterlife for loyal God-fearing people. The Rev author reuses some OT imagery but Rev has lots of original content.

The current view is that Rev was composed in the context of a conflict within the Christian community of Asia Minor over whether to engage with, or withdraw from, the far larger non-Christian community: Rev chastises those Christians who wanted to reach an accommodation with the Roman cult of empire.

The book spans three literary genres: the epistolary, the apocalyptic, and the prophetic. It begins with John, on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, addressing a letter to the 'Seven Churches of Asia'. He describes a series of prophetic visions, some of which have

become embedded in modern cultural thought, such is the power of the text.

Rev has given us some unforgettable and powerful imagery. Even British horror films, such as *The Devil Rides Out* in 1968, got in on the act, featuring Rev's four horsemen of the Apocalypse, one on a white steed representing conquest, one on a red horse (strife); another on a black horse (famine); and a fourth on a pale green animal (pestilence).

Then there is the description of a pregnant woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars. She is a symbol of Israel (pregnant with a Messiah) and her 12 tribes. A great dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads drags a third of the stars of heaven with his tail, and throws them to the Earth. The dragon waits for the birth of the child so he can devour it. However, after the child is born, he is taken up to God's throne while the woman flees. War breaks out in heaven between Michael, the archangel, and the dragon, identified as the old serpent, the devil, or Satan. After a great fight, the dragon and his angels are cast out of heaven for good.

In other visions the sea and all fresh water turn to blood; the sun scorches the Earth with intense heat; the dragon is imprisoned in a 'Bottomless Pit' for 1,000 years; a 'new heaven' and 'new earth' replace the old heaven and old earth. There is no more suffering or death; God comes to dwell with humanity in the 'New Jerusalem'; the 'River of Life' and the 'Tree of Life' appear for the healing of the nations and peoples. The curse of sin is ended, which the author views as Christ's reassurance that his coming is imminent.

And, perhaps most famously, there is the Beast and its number of 666 (remember *The Omen* film in 1976?). In Greek, where letters can serve as numerals, 666 refers to the Roman emperor, Nero. Also Rev introduces us to Armageddon: scene of the final battle between good and evil.

Out of Rev grew a following for millennialism, a belief in a 1,000-year reign at the end of time by Christ and his believers, before the Last Judgement. The Roman Catholic Church has condemned millennialism. In the United States, 19th century millennialist groups spread: Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses.

So, as 21st century Catholics, what can we take from a reading of Rev? Well, firstly, despite what some cranks may tell us, Rev does not predict when the world will end and you will search in vain for coded references to Stalin, Hitler, the atomic bomb, or the fall and rise of communism!

I think Rev contains the same message for us that it did for the first Christians, particularly Jewish Christians whose ancestors suffered long periods of persecution: never give up hope in dark times, for good will eventually defeat evil and Christ will prevail for those who keep the faith.

Sources: Catholic Encyclopaedia and An Introduction to the New Testament, by Raymond E Brown

The Shortage of Priests – And what can we do about it? (2)

Dick Wilson

This article makes some further suggestions for dealing with the assertions and questions in my article in the last *Pilgrim* of June 2020.

In discussing the number of priests in our Parish and the Diocese we must remember that St Laurence's is in Cambridge so sometimes offers a place to stay for priests from abroad or other dioceses in Britain. They may be gaining further experience and or studying at the University. They help by celebrating some Masses. All the same, St Laurence's has only one permanent priest for Masses on Sunday, together with Masses during the week. There will sometimes be a Mass for funerals or weddings, perhaps requiring the time of the daily Mass to be altered.

The first and most obvious thing is to remove the embargo on marriage. There must be men who feel called to the priesthood, yet know that they cannot and should not accept the call if it comes on a condition of a life without marriage. If they were free to marry, before or after ordination, they would still be priests in the real sense.

The traditional route to the priesthood has been through a seminary, that is, a training college for priests, with a six-year course for young adults aimed at intellectual and spiritual formation. An older man with a vocation is ordained priest following a four-year training course, these include some who have converted from the Church of England.

We need five new priests a year in our Diocese to keep numbers level.

For many years, the Catholic Church in Ireland used to send many young priests to serve in Britain. This no longer happens as there is now a shortage of priests in Ireland.

A forward-looking parish should continue to welcome priests who seek further experience, but the total

number will be small. In this Diocese it is becoming clear that we have a generation of older priests, and soon those retiring will outnumber incoming priests. Recently we celebrated the 80th birthday of Fr Bob Eccles, assistant priest at St Laurence's however he is a Dominican from Blackfriars, not a diocesan priest and the situation cannot go on for ever!

I myself was an ordained priest in the Church of England before converting to Catholicism. I came across a Papal Bull issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1896 which said that Anglican orders were 'null and void', but I don't think Catholic theologians agree these days, but anyway it is not something that concerns me, and rising 85 next birthday I'm not asking!

There is another way in which priests are helped by lay members of the congregation taking on some responsibilities that are usually those of the parish priest, such as maintaining the church buildings, and making sure church activities take place when and where necessary. They are carrying out the role of an 'Elder' as in the New Testament, and as in many Protestant churches. If it is not possible for a priest to be found from the regular priests, as ordinary Diocesan priests are often called, one or two such 'Elders' could be ordained to help just one parish, or a group of neighbouring parishes, to ensure there is a Mass.

I am aware that the 'Elder' in such an arrangement would not be able to take the Full Oath and there would have to be agreement on the range of his duties and payment, I think almost any parish or chaplaincy would have people in it who could conduct a Mass and know how and what to preach after a lifetime of service as a member of the Catholic Church. A briefing over a few months, not four years, would be sufficient to allow the parish priest to have some assistance with the weekend Masses.

The Women Saints of Europe

Fr Bob Eccles

At the turn of the century, Dominicans of nine nations set up our own international centre for European studies and encounters in the European quarter of Brussels, close to the Commission and the Parliament. About that time Pope John Paul II declared three women co-patronesses of Europe: Bridget of Sweden, the Dominican Catherine of Siena, and the Carmelite Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. Three great saints, two in the heart of the Middle Ages and one in the last century – the philosopher Edith Stein (her name before she became a nun) was deported and perished at Auschwitz-Birkenau. As patron saints of Europe they

belong with St Benedict and Saints Cyril and Methodius. Clearly in adding these women to the other co-patrons on the eve of the great Jubilee, the great Pope wanted to redress the balance, honouring the contribution of women to European thought and culture, sometimes in periods too where the leadership of women was not so welcome and the relationship of the sexes unequal. In his *motu proprio* naming these three the Pope saw them as in some way representative of women in the Church, the women martyrs who faced their torments with fortitude, the women who made a radical commitment to the ascetic life, the thinkers and teachers, the women dedicated to the 'domestic church' of their family.

Let me introduce just one of them, Bridget of Sweden. Perhaps she is not well enough known in England. Her feast falls on 23rd July. Bridget was born to an aristocratic family in 1303 and is known above all as a mystic and the foundress of the Order of the Most Holy Saviour. But in the first part of her life she was a lay woman and a Franciscan tertiary who was happily married to a devout Christian man to whom she bore eight children. She and Ulf founded a small hospital together and attended the sick. They were people of prayer and studied the Scriptures. She was appreciated too for her gifts as a teacher, and when she was called to attend the royal court, people found in her a wise counsellor too. She and Ulf went on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. When he died, Bridget sensed that the Lord was preparing her for a new mission and guiding her step by step with a series of extraordinary mystical graces. She founded then her monastery, for 60 nuns and 25 monks; the nuns are with us yet, the monks not so.

In 1349, at the approach to a jubilee year, and with a view to seeking papal approval for her Order, Bridget went to Rome. Her daughter Catherine followed, also a widow, now a nun and also to be recognised as a saint. In this last part of her life she became a constant pilgrim, visiting the shrines of the saints and finally the Holy Land. It was a critical period in the Church's history. Bridget, just like Catherine of Siena, had a profound sense of the mystery of Christ and the Church. She spoke with the voice of prophecy, calling for reform of the Christian people and especially of the clergy. A ceaseless critic then and profoundly influential, she was canonised within 20 years of her death. Many of her themes were taken up by Catherine of Siena; the return of the popes to Rome, the reconciliation of city states and princes, the renewal of godly life.

Pope John Paul in naming Bridget co-patron of Europe said he valued her also as the representative of a nation that had separated from the Holy See at the time of the Reformation. The great saints of Europe are often

those who have worked at the fracture lines of their particular time and place, witnessing to Christ through devastating wars, persecutions and upheaval. Patron of Europe, that's no empty title. In seeing the spiritual need of the peoples of today's social and political reality the popes have made their own gesture towards the new Europe that has risen from the ashes of total war. Ours after all is the Christian and Catholic tradition of statesmen like Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide De Gasperi.

The European idea and the facts of Church life both demand that we live in the real, not in the ideal. It is the actual papacy of Francis that claims our love and our loyalty, just as it's the imperfect institutions of Europe that are the only instruments available for change and reform, it's compellingly obvious. The language of 'taking back control' ignores the reality of the mutual engagements that were freely made.

Abroad the European project labours under many challenges, at home an unreal jingoism creeps in to national life, the famous English exceptionalism. Even your carrots come in an absurd packet decorated with the Union Jack! Cultural illiteracy is the new normal. There is a struggle for minds and hearts. The spiritual life of the Catholic is fed by so many hidden streams, the art, the music, the thoughts of the scholars and saints of Europe... Are we still partners in the construction of Europe? I'm a Dominican, I think we know our own calling, and it goes back a long way, to the time of Dominic himself. The early friars depended in everything on the good counsel of the popes of their day, who sent them out to become missionaries to all the peoples of Europe, laying the path for the contemplative teachers and preachers that we have been ever since. What other homeland calls us?

The Face of Love

Michael Allan

Arising somewhere in Asia, travelling the Silk Road to the Middle East, crossing the Mediterranean sea routes, it eventually reached Europe in 1347. Then, possibly first coming ashore in Weymouth, Dorset, the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* finally arrived in England in June 1348, bringing with it the bubonic plague pandemic later known as the Black Death.

About 25 million people are estimated to have died in Europe from the Black Death between 1347 and 1351, perhaps many more. Estimates of the death toll in England range from 20% to a staggering 60%. Death, fear, and despair were everywhere. God's love was also everywhere.

Five years before, the woman now known as Julian of Norwich had been born. She would become one of England's greatest theologians.

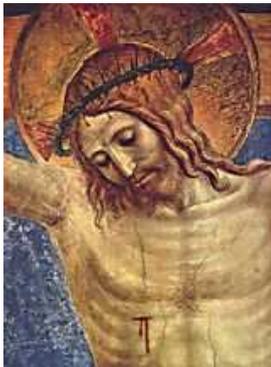
Norwich, then England's second city, was badly hit by the plague. It is estimated that 7,000 of the 12,000 inhabitants died. The plague returned in several waves throughout Julian's lifetime, killing many more, especially children. She may have known some of them, possibly close family.

Where was God in all this? Did God care? Why didn't God stop it? Did God want it? Was all this death and disease God's doing? God's anger? The punishment for sin?

'These pestilences were for pure sin.' (William Langland, 14th-century writer)

Julian of Norwich, however, saw no anger in God. For her, God shines like the sun, radiating love, compassion, and pity:

"I saw truly that our Lord was never angry, nor ever shall be, for he is God: he is good, he is truth, he is love, he is peace; and his power, his wisdom, his charity, and his unity do not permit him to be angry."



Detail from *Saint Dominic Adoring the Crucifixion* by Blessed Fra Angelico

Julian's belief in God's overflowing love came not by ignoring death and suffering, but rather by looking it full on in the face, in the face of the crucified Christ.

At the age of 30 Julian became very ill. As she lay apparently dying she had a series of 'revelations' of God's love. These started with a vision of the face of Jesus as he was dying on the Cross. These revelations showed God's love embodied in the crucified Jesus. Jesus tells Julian of his joy and bliss at having suffered and died for her and all humankind – "Look how I loved you," he says – and if he could have suffered more he would have suffered more, out of endless love.

Julian recovered, and spent the rest of her life meditating on these revelations, and writing a profound theology of the God of love. (For a woman to write theology then was extremely rare and indeed dangerous.) Her writing is distinctive for its sparkling joyfulness, but also for its unflinching view of sin, evil, and suffering. It is in the very face of these that she sees God's love powerfully at work.

And we are part of that love. God is our Mother and our Father in whom we are born, in whom we grow, and within whom we are enclosed and kept safe:

'He is our clothing that enwraps us and enfolds us, embraces us and wholly encloses us, surrounding us out of tender love, so that he can never leave us.'

God is the mystery who dwells in us and in whom we dwell. Christ is seated within us, at rest and at peace:

'For in us is the home most familiar to him and the dwelling most pleasing.'

This is all very well, but we don't feel it, and often struggle to believe it. Where is God? Where is God in suffering, disease, and death? Julian believes Jesus is right here with us, within us, bearing all our suffering. But we are blind and deaf to his presence. Yet if we hold fast to him in joy and in woe, in health and in sickness, we will finally be brought to bliss with him:

'You shall suddenly be taken from all your suffering, from all your distress and from all your unhappiness. And you shall come up above, and you shall have me for your reward, and you shall be filled full of joy and bliss.'

Jesus suffering and dying on the Cross is the ultimate revelation of God's vulnerable, reckless love. This is the answer. This is where God is. This is the throne of God. This is heaven. When Julian felt she was dying it was the crucified Jesus that she looked to in order to keep her safe. His presence was heaven.

Julian rejoiced that she had 'chosen Jesus for my heaven in all this time of suffering and of sorrow. And that has been a lesson to me that I should do so for evermore and choose only Jesus for my heaven in both happiness and sorrow.'

Jesus on the Cross keeps us safe. We and those we love will sin, will suffer, will die, will know darkness, great sadness, and pain, but in the end we shall not be overcome:

'And these words, "You shall not be overcome", were said very distinctly and very powerfully for assurance and comfort against all the tribulations that may come.

He did not say, “You shall not be perturbed, you shall not be troubled, you shall not be distressed”, but he said, “You shall not be overcome.”

But why is there suffering at all? Yes, our sin and evil cause great suffering, and that is our responsibility. But disease and natural disasters cause endless, often terrible, innocent suffering. Why does God allow it? Is this God’s ‘good’ Creation (according to Genesis) or not? No human words or explanations can ever satisfy us on this.

Only Jesus can. He suffered and died with us, and we, Julian believed, in our suffering are now dying on his Cross with him. If we stay there, willingly and patiently, with his help and his grace, until the last moment, he will then say to us, ‘Today you will be with me in paradise’.

In the midst of death and disease God – our passionate lover – is at work, suffering with us and for us, making all things well. Jesus from the Cross promises Julian:

‘All shall be well, and all shall be well,
and all manner of thing shall be well.’

Cardinal Points – Effort and Evil

Ronald Haynes

Freddie Ayer (AJ Ayer, 1910-89), the celebrated Oxford philosopher of the last century, famously held strong atheist beliefs and rejected any source of objective evil. When challenged in a radio interview, he did admit that he thought that torturing children was always evil, but indicated that he did not know where he got that idea (or how he reached that conclusion). Evil, especially what we call moral evil, and the suffering which accompanies it, seems a constant companion and one which is a common feature in human life.

Although moral evil does not seem to be the source of all suffering, as some suffering is a consequence of our chosen actions (for example, difficult self-sacrifice to help others threatened with harm), all evil would seem to impart harm and evoke suffering. Evil, and its partner suffering, regularly challenge us to find some purpose or meaning to their presence in our lives. In his best-selling book *Man’s Search for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl, the Viennese psychiatrist and holocaust survivor, and founder of logotherapy (‘healing through meaning’), tells us, ‘If there is a meaning in life at all, then there must be a meaning in suffering. Suffering is an ineradicable part of life, even as fate and death. Without suffering and death human life cannot be complete.’

When searching for meaning in suffering and evil, we find difficulty in trying to focus on (or factor out) ourselves and/or other people as willing sources. We know that we create many of our own difficulties, and cause harm, to ourselves and others (and vice versa). Beyond more evidently moral evil, and while many challenging and unpleasant events are naturally occurring, it is difficult to eliminate how much influence we have introduced into the cycles and systems of nature, and so are really down to our responsibilities.

We can quickly list the human sources of the climate crisis, toxic and other waste mismanagement, building homes on flood plains. More generally, we cannot readily fathom or rule out the far-reaching impact of the so-called ‘butterfly effect’, in which a very subtle action in one part of the world can have a substantial and disproportionate reaction in another part of the world. In the famous example, it is not thought to be impossible that a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world could affect weather patterns in another part, such that the result could be a hurricane or tornado on another continent. Whatever effects are true for butterflies, the amount of suffering (and relief) possible due to humans is substantially greater (by many orders of magnitude) in what some call our Anthropocene.

The poet WH Auden tells us that ‘Evil is unspectacular and always human.’ The Franciscan guide Richard Rohr shares a related insight, one worth contemplating often: ‘God calls us to take the path of the inner truth – and that means taking responsibility for *everything* that’s in you: for what pleases you and for what you’re ashamed of. ... In the spiritual life, nothing goes away. There is no heavenly garbage dump... Everything belongs.’

Summertime...when the weather is easy... and you can read a good book

Sue Price

Now is the time of year when various newspapers start suggesting possible summer reading. I would like to tempt you with the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology Brochure detailing the courses and events that we are running next year.

Click on the link: <https://wke.lt/w/s/ISYSKY> sit in a comfy chair with a refreshing drink and enjoy browsing through.

There is lots on offer, from our traditional Thursday afternoon Catholic Theology and Practice Modules, a learning space for Catholic women (let me know if you spotted the recent Twitter typo!) to a wonderful range of seminars being offered by our Research Associates, as well as the MA courses on offer. Look out for the early bird booking offers too.

Do follow us on Twitter @MBITheology and on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MargaretBeaufortInstitute>

Parish Organisations and Activities

Scam awareness

Christine Knight, SVP

Cambridgeshire County Council reported in June that 24% of people in East Anglia have been targeted by scammers since the start of lockdown.

Many scams are easy to spot. ‘You have inherited a vast sum from an unknown aunt; send me £100 now and I’ll send you £1m’ – but some are very sophisticated.

This article isn’t aiming to point out the obvious but to remind you to talk about scams with your family and friends so that others become aware of what types of scams are out there. Unfortunately, it is true that older people are more likely to be targets of scams but anyone and everyone can fall victim. Last year a police chief went public when he fell victim to a scam in order to highlight to us all that even those used to investigating crime can be sucked in.

Recent scams have included:

- Offering to collect shopping (and scarpering with the money instead)
- Selling virus testing kits (you can get tested for free if you have symptoms)
- Selling home cleaning services (never a good idea to respond to cold calls)
- Pretending to be from the track/trace service (you will never have to send them money)
- Sending an email purporting to be from someone you know, asking for financial help
- Masquerading as someone you deal with, giving new bank details for making a payment

There are simple things you can do to protect yourself.

For example, if you receive an unexpected phone call from your bank get basic information from them, then hang up and wait five minutes. Follow-up with a test phone call – e.g. to someone you know – to check your phone is not being held by a scammer. You can then phone the bank back but do not rely on a number given to you from the caller; instead use a number from a bank statement or check online. If the original call was genuine, the bank will understand that you wish to take these precautionary steps.

Take your time. Criminals will try to rush you; a genuine caller will respect your safety and will be patient.

If you receive an email, again, take your time to read it properly. Check the ‘from’ address – not just the header of the email but the actual email – is it the right address for the person you know?

Even if it is the correct email address, be suspicious if you are taking new bank instructions by email for someone you are going to pay. Hackers can break into an email trail, adopt the language of the person you normally correspond with, and be very convincing. If you are asked to change bank details, phone the person you know and confirm verbally. Do not rely on emails for such confirmation.

Taking these steps, and sharing tips with others, will help to reduce the likelihood of you and your friends getting caught out.

SVP update

Catharine Warren

Your Parish SVP is still active, keeping in touch by phone and meeting people in a socially distanced way, when possible. Do contact us if you or someone you know needs help with any difficulty or would like a chat. You can call me on 07421 253100 or email: svp@saintlaurence.org.uk

Thank you for your generous response to recent SVP appeals both for goods and for money. A large quantity of children’s clothes and toys has been donated and given out to several delighted families. Also the SVP Maundy Thursday collection, which we extended for 2 months due to the lockdown, raised £ 532.50 (including Gift Aid). This has been shared between two projects: the SVP Sudan and South Sudan appeal, and the SVP’s new house ‘St Vincent’s’ in Sheringham, for people who are temporarily homeless.

We rely on your donations to support people with practical assistance, both here and overseas. If you would like to make a donation to the SVP here are the account details for bank transfer:

Acc. no. 46077618, Sort code 60-60-04, Acc. Name: E060102 ST LAURENCE

The Parish Tech Group has been busy working to help us assist people unable to get to church so that they can participate in Sunday Mass via live-streaming. How much we have needed that this year! A few donated laptops are now in use and there are currently 4 donated laptops available. If you have the internet at home but need a laptop for live-streaming, or perhaps need an extra laptop so it is easier for your children to do school work at home, please contact SVP and we

will co-ordinate with the Tech Group who will aim to set up a laptop for you.

During the lockdown SVP members continue to come together in a fortnightly meeting on Zoom. The National SVP has taken the opportunity to develop training modules for members so that they can attend at home on Zoom and members are also taking training sessions on Safeguarding and other best practice topics.

Though not currently meeting people indoors, members are still able to offer ongoing support and respond to new requests. Recent activity includes:

- keeping in telephone contact with people, particularly people we would normally visit;
- assisting three families who were moving house to obtain some furniture, white goods or household items;
- issuing Foodbank vouchers. Two SVP members are now registered with the Cambridge City Foodbank to issue 'code only vouchers' by telephone when a face to face meeting is not advisable. During the Covid19 shutdown people can receive up to six vouchers in a six-month period, whereas previously the restriction was three vouchers in a six-month period;
- helping a person with fencing to provide some privacy;
- delivering a large number of donated items to several families.
- delivering *The Pilgrim* to about 20 parishioners who wanted a paper copy.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for the work of the SVP.

CAFOD update

Serga Collet

CAFOD and Coronavirus

Coronavirus and its far-reaching consequences are in every mouth all over the world. Fortunately, we live in a welfare state that supports most our needs. The wearing of facemasks has become mandatory in many places, shops, churches etc and hand sanitiser is available in most places we go. We are able to protect ourselves against this dreadful virus as best we can.

Imagine living in a country where there is a limited health care system; imagine being so poor that you don't have enough money to feed yourself, let alone buy facemasks, soap, washing powder – in short hygiene products that you and I take for granted. Add to that the fact that many people are forced to live in close proximity to each other and you have the perfect conditions for Covid19 to flourish.

And this is why it is our spiritual duty to 'stand together', to survive this crisis, to rebuild and to enhance living conditions for ALL!

CAFOD is helping the immediate needs of people faced with this crisis but also continues to help communities to rebuild and survive the effects of coronavirus in the long-term. CAFOD is adapting its long-term development work to ensure that people are able to continue to earn a living, and that children can continue their education in a safe environment.

Lebanon

We have all heard the terrible news from Beirut. Thousands of families have slept in shattered homes after the explosions in Beirut, while also facing the deadly threat of coronavirus. Fortunately, CAFOD already has emergency outreach workers and volunteers on the ground there and is happy to be able to report that they are safe. Please do all you can to help by donating to the appeal to provide medical kits, emergency food, hygiene packs, help to find shelter there. Please go to the website and donate whatever you can: <https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Beirut-Emergency-Appeal>

At least 300,000 homes have been damaged, and many are no longer habitable, said the Beirut governor, Marwan Abboud. The UN has estimated that the total damages could reach three – five billion USD.

Christine Allen, CAFOD's Director, said "CAFOD expresses its deepest sympathies and prayers to the families of the victims, as well as to the people of Lebanon, following the horrific explosions in Beirut. Local Lebanese organisations, that CAFOD works alongside, have told us of the widespread destruction that has swept the city. And, how their volunteers are already on the frontlines, assisting in hospitals and helping the injured. This disaster has happened at a challenging time for Lebanon, as they deal with the coronavirus pandemic and the country's economic turmoil. This explosion threatens to push many who were already suffering further into poverty and hunger. CAFOD remains committed to supporting Lebanon at this difficult time."

Please join us in praying for all those affected by these horrific explosions.

Prayer for the people of Beirut

Light of new hope
God of refuge,
hear our prayer
as we hold the people of Beirut
in our hearts at this time
Fill us with compassion
and move us to reach out in love.
In your mercy,
bring comfort to those who mourn,
healing to those who are injured,
shelter to those who are homeless
sustenance to those who hunger.
Give strength to those who are working
to rebuild shattered lives,
and protect those who are vulnerable
especially in a time of coronavirus.
Lead us in your ways
so that together we may bring
the light of new hope
wherever there is destruction and despair.
We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Summary of Parishioners' Open Meeting

11th August 2020 conducted via Zoom
19 participants at start of meeting
Including Fr Simon, Fr Bob, Deacon Geoff, Stephen
Warde (Chair), Sarah Sykes (Minutes)

The meeting was opened with a prayer, followed by a brief reminder of how to join the conversation for those who hadn't attended an online POM before.

Introducing the new Parish Secretary

Fr Simon gave a brief introduction to the new Parish secretary, Reece King, who has been in post for about a week. Reece said that he was happy to be working at St Laurence's. He is available in the office from 10-1.30pm.

The Chair welcomed Reece to the Parish and thanked him for joining us at the meeting.

Latest on Mass arrangements – discussion

Fr Simon started the discussion by saying that the arrangements seemed to be holding up well. We haven't needed to turn anyone away so far, although we have come close at 11am. Various individual topics were then discussed as they arose from general discussion.

Cleaning: Fr Simon wondered whether the stewards' instructions could be amended slightly to omit the

cleaning of kneelers in general except for where families with young children have been sitting, as this is not an area that is likely to be touched by people.

Mary Jane O'Sullivan pointed out that it is more important that the top of the bench which borders the aisle (including the closed benches) should be cleaned as people sometimes use these to lean on as they go to their seat.

Stewards: Nora Darby asked whether the number of stewards could be reduced at some Masses. The Chair thanked Nora (and Jo Wager) for the work they are doing on the steward rotas. Christine Knight said that she had stewarded the Friday lunchtime Mass twice on her own and found it perfectly manageable. People who come regularly to Mass do know what to do.

Track and Trace slips: Rob Beckwith asked if we could avoid the bottle neck in the porch created by people filling out the forms, Richard Birkett suggested that we could use a QR code which people could scan and fill in a form online and encourage people to fill in forms at home and bring with them, or fill in in the benches.

Exiting after Mass: Joan Brierley asked that stewards encourage people to exit the building as quickly as possible. People get to the door and start chatting and the exit is blocked.

Children's Liturgy: Miriam Santos Friere asked about when children's liturgy sessions will return to church as there are concerns that some people might not be returning because there is no children's liturgy. Fr Simon said there were huge safeguarding and social distancing issues and that he would need a lot of reassurance that it can be done safely. He couldn't see it restarting in the current situation but it might be an idea to consult with those who run these sessions.

As someone who has run sessions in the past, Mary-Jane O'Sullivan said that with between 20-30 children in the Parish room it would be impossible to social distance. In addition, children cannot manage this unsupervised and many parents who should be accompanying their children do not do so, so often the leader is managing large numbers with a small amount of help.

We need to find a different way to serve this area. Some suggestions were:

Perhaps a family-centred Mass could be put on and perhaps places booked in advance;
Additional page in the newsletter, explaining the gospel and providing a link to resources;

A separate activity sheet for children to use in church – they would need to bring own crayons/pencils;
Zoom session for children with catechists leading it;
Radio Maria England broadcast a children/s liturgy session on Sunday's at 9.15am and 2.30pm using CAFOD children's liturgy resources.

Liturgy: Fr Simon asked whether, despite the request to keep the liturgy as short as possible, we could start to prepare to recover the richer texture of Mass both musically and ritually starting by encouraging altar servers to come back.

Facemasks: on the whole people have been wearing masks and if they have forgotten to bring them have been asking for masks to be supplied. We can remind people of the legal requirement to wear a mask but not be heavy handed in enforcing this as not all disabilities are visible.

Work in the Parish garden

Fr Simon has been looking into developing the garden area with the installation of a patio about 6 x 12m . He has received a quote for the work of £25-£30,000, included in this quote is the removal of 10 tonnes of earth at the charge of £1,000 per tonne.

He is waiting for a further quote from Christian company, Zion Landscaping.
Reece also suggested getting a quote from a flat mate of his who is a professional gardener.

James Dore said that our Diocesan 5-yearly survey of buildings had recently taken place and a list of works which should/could be done has been produced. He will prepare a presentation on this for the next meeting. He also added that the Parish's financial position, taking lockdown into consideration, is not as bad as feared and we do have some reserves built up over the years.

CAFOD update – Serga Collett

CAFOD are concerned that its usual fundraising – through Family Fast Days – will not raise the normal amounts of support as fewer people are able to attend Mass at the moment.

Serga is planning fundraising events:
31st August: Historic churches bike ride
20th September: Cambridge churches walk – from St Laurence's to Blackfriars, to OLEM to Philip Howard.

She would also like to get together a group of parishioners who could sew reusable masks to sell to raise money for CAFOD.

If people would like to donate to CAFOD, which has also joined the Disaster Emergency Committee in connection to the Beirut explosion, they can do so online and there is a [Parish donation link](#) on the website (currently under the [COVID19 updates tab](#)), which could be adapted to accept CAFOD donations. Standing orders can also be completed for those who would like to make regular donation.

Richard confirmed that there is a Parish CAFOD email address and anything addressed to cafod@saintlaurence.org.uk will reach Serga.

AOB

Sunday Zoom coffee & chat: There was a plea to make sure that the link to the Zoom meeting (along with the invite and password) is included in the newsletter. However, it was pointed out that the link is very long which makes it cumbersome to include. In addition, links in the newsletter are not currently clickable – it would need to be manually copied and pasted. This is something Richard hopes he can resolve in the future. However, it should be possible to join the meeting on the Zoom website by clicking 'Join a Meeting' at the top of the webpage and entering the Meeting ID and password in the appropriate text boxes which then appear.

Parish Library: Miriam Santos Friere, who looks after the Parish library, will be unable to do so for some time and would like someone to stand in for her. She has developed an electronic file record of the books in the Library which she will pass on. Reece volunteered to take on this role.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

A meeting will take place in September but at the time of this meeting a date had not yet been set.

However, following the Parish Meeting the Facilitation group met and decided on the following dates for the next two month's meetings.

Tuesday 15th September 2020
Tuesday 20th October 2020

The meetings will both start at 7.30pm and are likely to be held via Zoom.

Full details of this Meeting and also those of the June and July Meetings can be found on the Parish webiste.

Children's Liturgy during lockdown

Leonie Isaacson

During the Covid-19 lockdown, we regret we are not currently able to provide any Children's Liturgy for our children face to face. We are looking into how we can manage this in an enjoyable way whilst maintaining social distancing requirements.

In the meantime, *in the next couple of weeks*, we will be making available colouring/activity sheets for the relevant Sunday's Gospel which will be available at the Church entrance. Please note, that we are not currently able to provide crayons or colouring pencils so you will need to bring your own.

Additionally, there are a variety of websites and Facebook pages that offer valuable resources and activities for children's liturgy for every Sunday of the year. You may have already identified some. Here are a few that we have identified:

1. CAFOD – weekly online children's liturgy of the word

Parents and children are encouraged to join CAFOD online **every Sunday at 10am** for prayers and reflection on the Sunday Gospel. The liturgy is led by catechists who would usually be leading children's liturgy in their parish and is based on CAFOD children's liturgy resources. Sessions last approximately 15 – 20 minutes and it takes less than a minute to register. You will also find downloadable activity sheets to keep your little ones busy.

Please use the link to register:
<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy>

2. Colour and Shape – weekly children's liturgy online

In the current climate people are responding to the challenges of not being able to come together for Sunday Mass. A lady from the Celebrate community has created '*Colour and Shape*' on Facebook as a way for families to gather in prayer and share God's Word together. **Videos are posted on Saturday evenings**, ready for use on Sundays.

Please note that these have stopped over August and will resume in September.

<https://www.facebook.com/colourandshapeonline>

3. Lectiotube.com – Catholic videos, podcasts and resources

Lectiotube.com offers curated Catholic videos, podcasts and resources from across the world for Catholics of all ages. The children's resources include weekly videos from a variety of Children's Liturgy Online Worship (CLOW) leaders across the world. Many are from the US but also from Singapore and across the UK. In particular, you might like to view: Emily Pearson – primary school teacher and Children's Liturgy catechist from St Helen's Church, Langside who also hosts a Facebook page: 'Children's Liturgy during lockdown'. And, St Marie's Cathedral, Sheffield which offers illustrated bible readings for each Sunday.

4. Teen Liturgy

Lifeteen

[Lifeteen](#) is a US site that reaches out to teenagers and helps them understand the Church in their own terms. Check out 'Don't Waste Your Quarantine' by Faith Noah, who explains that 'quarantine' comes from the Italian *quarantina*, meaning 'forty days.' Hello! A quarantine is a form of Lent! Noah encourages teens how to use the quarantine to create order in one's life. 'Order will change your life. Make a schedule. Map out every hour if you need to. Eat your meals at the dinner table, and not on the couch. This structure will be a game-changer.' And there's a blog, 'Holy Hobbies,' advising teens on how to give spirituality to things teens enjoy doing.

Parentlife

[Parentlife](#) is an associated website that educates parents on teen culture so that they can be empowered to guide their teenagers through the modern world. It has content to help guide you through the very challenging and blessed years of raising teenagers.

One Hope Project

[One Hope Project](#) started out as a group of friends who enjoy meeting up, being creative and worshipping God, the God of love. It has grown into a much larger outreach.

Their vision is to be a part of a generation of believers who personally worship Jesus and publicly declare his praise and work to build his kingdom. They aim to worship God in all they do, be creative, build unity, make an impact and encourage others in Christ.

One Hope Project has a [YouTube channel](#) and webpage: <https://www.onehopeproject.co.uk/>

Personal Stories and Experiences

Seven Churches Walk – A Roman Tradition

Mike Smith

Among the Holy Week traditions in Rome, one which is embraced by members of the Beda College (a seminary for older English-speaking students) is the Seven Churches Walk. A group of Beda students normally undertakes this pilgrimage on the Wednesday before Easter. The custom originated with St Philip Neri in the 16th Century who, along with a group of friends, would visit each of seven particular churches on the same day – a day which also included a picnic! This year, of course, many events and activities were cancelled due to the pandemic. However, with the help of a few photos, I would like to invite you to join me on a ‘virtual’ Seven Churches Walk starting at the Beda College in South Central Rome and finishing in St Peter’s Square at the Vatican, 15 miles later!

Across the Road from the Beda is one of the four Great Basilicas of the City: St Paul-Outside-the-Walls. We can see this beautiful building from the windows of our college, resplendent above the trees.



View of St Paul-Outside-the-Walls from the Beda College

St Paul’s is the second largest church in Rome. More importantly, it is where the tomb of St Paul is located, underneath the high altar. Above the tomb can be seen part of a metal chain used to bind St Paul when he was held prisoner before his martyrdom. At each church we pray two of the 14 Stations of the Cross then, after a short time of prayer, reflection and a look around inside, it’s time to move on to the next destination. So now let’s walk to the second church on our pilgrimage.



Church of St Sebastian

The Church of St Sebastian is situated near the Catacombs of St Callixtus, about two miles as the crow flies, east of St Paul’s.

As we arrive and enter we might notice in the first chapel on the left a statue of St Sebastian by

Giuseppe Giorgetti. According to tradition Sebastian was martyred towards the end of the third century during a persecution by the Emperor Diocletian.

In addition to St Sebastian another martyr is honoured here: Pope Fabian, in whose memory the Albani Chapel was constructed. Fabian was Bishop of Rome in the first half of the third century during the persecution by the Emperor Decius. Both saints share the same feast day: 20th January.



Inside the Church of St Sebastian

We now have quite a long walk from St Sebastian northwards towards the city centre. Our third church is the Lateran Basilica of St John. Our route takes us through a pleasant park before encountering the bustling city traffic later on.

Park leading to the Catacombs of St Callixtus



Within the park is the entrance to the Catacombs of St Callixtus – well worth a visit on another day – and a location strongly connected with the early history of the Church, including the place where St Cecilia was buried.



St John Lateran – The Cathedral of Rome

Finally we arrive at St John’s. This is the Cathedral of Rome and for this reason is known as the ‘Mother and Head of All Churches on Earth’. The nave is punctuated on either side by colossal statues of the Apostles. The Pope who approved the establishment of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders, Pope Innocent III, is buried here.

On another occasion we could spend much longer in this place in prayer and reflection. There is also much of historical interest here. We must, however, continue on our pilgrimage. Many churches in Rome close at lunchtime and don't open again until later in the afternoon. Our next destination is about 10 minutes walk along the road from St John's and we need to get there before it closes for *siesta*. This is the Church of the Holy Cross: Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Italian. A number of relics are on display inside including fragments of the Holy Cross believed to have been brought back to Rome by St Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine.



Santa Croce in Gerusalemme

After looking round inside it's now time to eat. A park nearby provides a welcome space for a few minutes of rest, reflection, and the enjoyment of our packed lunches provided by the Beda kitchen staff. Anyone for a sausage roll?

Our next church, number five, is dedicated to Saint Laurence, our very own patron saint! Laurence, as we know, was a deacon of

the Church of Rome and was martyred on a gridiron over a fire during the Persecution by the Emperor Valerian in the third century. The present Church is known in Italian as San Lorenzo fuori le Mura. Like our first Church, St Paul's, St Laurence's is located outside the ancient walls of the city. There has been a church on this site since the time of Constantine who built the first one here over the place where Laurence was buried.



St Laurence-Outside-the-Walls

We are currently north-east of the city centre and now have to head back in, going past the main railway station, Roma Termini, en route to a church dedicated to Our Lady. The Basilica of Saint Mary Major, located on the Esquiline Hill, is the oldest church in

the West dedicated to Mary. Under the main altar is a relic of the manger of Bethlehem and provides a place where it is always appropriate to sing a Christmas Carol - whatever the time of year! As we look up to the ceiling we admire the work of renaissance artist Giuliano da Sangallo which glitters with the gold brought back from the Americas by Christopher Columbus. Also of note is a painting of the Blessed Mother known as the *Salus Populi Romani*, traditionally attributed to St Luke.



Basilica of St Mary Major

Once again we find ourselves where we could happily spend more time in prayer and wonder, but we must now walk westwards, crossing the Tiber into the Vatican. How are your feet by the way? No blisters I hope? If, like me, you are starting to feel tired take courage, we are nearing the grand finale of our day. A welcome coffee, or something stronger, awaits us!



St Peter's Square

Here we are at last in this famous square surrounded on our left and right by the two 'arms' topped with statues of the saints, the Bellini Colonnades. In front of us rises the great dome of St Peter's Basilica built over the tomb of another saint, the Apostle Peter himself.

I hope you've enjoyed the day! Time now for a final prayer, a visit to a nearby café in the late afternoon sunshine, then the number 23 bus home! Arrivederci!

An unexpected pilgrimage

Mary Watkins

One thing I had not expected during the lockdown was to go on a journey to Lindisfarne or Holy Island in Northumberland.



It all began when CAFOD invited Catholics across the country to undertake virtual pilgrimages as part of their ‘Summer of Hope’. I discovered that since the sixth century, pilgrims have made their way – by boat, train and land – to Lindisfarne. There, they complete the ‘Pilgrim’s Way’ walk to Holy Island – the site of the famous monastery of Saints Aidan and Cuthbert, and the cradle of Christianity in the North of England. For the first time in nearly 1,500 years,

this pilgrimage tradition was threatened due to the coronavirus pandemic. However North Hexham and Northumberland CAFOD branch had decided not to cancel their popular annual Pilgrimage, but to make it a virtual journey.

Bishop Robert Byrne, the Catholic Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, said “This opportunity we have in our pilgrimage – perhaps a very different type of pilgrimage this year, but very real nonetheless – is an opportunity for us to journey on our way to the Lord and be closer to him. A pilgrimage is a time when we remember our journey through life. And we are encouraged by our pilgrimage to try and travel light, to bring our needs to the Lord, and to remind ourselves of the real values of life – of the values that bring us closer to God.” I am very fond of this part of the world having enjoyed a number of walking holidays in the area I have visited Holy Island but never managed to go there on pilgrimage, so this was my chance!

Intrigued (but also wary as I have not enjoyed using Zoom!), I signed up to find out more. I received a warm welcome from the organisers and learned that they had been taken aback by the response. As well as their usual pilgrims some came from as far away as Australia! Apparently nearly 600 took part! My fears proved to be unfounded as they had devised a simple but effective method of sending their daily blog by email. The pilgrimage took 11 days and each day pilgrims received three postings. These varied but mostly fell into three categories. One comprised lively

histories of the places we were visiting together with accounts of the famous people associated with them. In this way I learned a great deal about the well-known figures such as Aidan, Cuthbert, Hilda and Bede, their journeys, and the Synod of Whitby, as well as the founding and demise of numerous religious houses. The second postings were in the nature of encouraging reflection, sometimes including suggestions for the daily lockdown walks many of us were undertaking at the time. Often people recalled past pilgrimages they had made and remarked how the virtual journey was helping them to recover the importance of prayer and how solitude can assist. The third postings were often reminiscences of past pilgrimages to Lindisfarne and elsewhere. Some were humorous accounts like getting stuck in the notorious sticky bits of the causeway mud, others thoughtful accounts of learning about themselves and others and remembering with love and sadness past pilgrims and others no longer with them. I particularly enjoyed some of the old photographs on these postings.

There was an opportunity to respond to posts if wished but no obligation to do so or to read any specific number of posts, so it did not feel at all pressured. Indeed I looked forward to my emails and hearing more anecdotes about Benedict and other holy men and women, how the bishop got stuck in the mud and the lovely description of Holy Island itself. We were invited to a final Pilgrim Mass streamed on YouTube to end the 11 days journeying together. I found this virtual pilgrimage a great way to help structure the long lockdown days and encourage a prayerful use of an unexpected time of quiet. The blog is still available at <https://cafodhexhamnewcastle.wordpress.com> . Go to *Pilgrimage 2020*.



Images from:
<https://cafodhexhamnewcastle.wordpress.com/2020/07/22/are-you-cafod/#more-9878>

The Need To Hope

Teresa Brett

This is a short account of my finding hope by hanging onto faith by needing to do so. The closure of St Laurence's for public Masses has been a savage loss. I so loved the sense of togetherness and universal prayer fellowship that I could not imagine surviving it. My six incurable conditions, including severe brain damage, hindered me, preventing me from greeting other parishioners at online Mass and feeling our real-life closeness in worshipping Jesus. My husband helped me by showing me how to reach Radio Maria England on the radio. I prefer the Blackfriars Mass broadcast from there to the one broadcast from St Laurence's because I hear the Dominican community responding to and taking part in prayers and readings, which seems to invite me to join in, so I do. At St Laurence's I hear only silence, which feels wrong for Mass. But I expect it suits other people.

I have not stayed at home because one of my conditions is type 1 diabetes (50 years now). I need to walk one to two miles each morning and again each afternoon, to keep blood sugars under control. I used to rejoice in the people I passed when walking the streets. I smiled at them and greeted them and many smiled at and greeted me. Rheumatoid arthritis made it hurt, but so what? Often we waved. During lock-down I pass one or two instead of one or two hundred, intensifying the loneliness inflicted by Alzheimer's and dementia, which pretty well destroyed my brain about 15 years ago, resulting from savage serial epilepsy for about 25 years. Still, I find Fr Pat Cleary's advice to me 'Never underestimate the power of a smile' invaluable, even with few people concerned. A smile and greeting remains a powerful communication. Each day I exchange smiles and waves, through the window, with anyone in a nearby care home and I feel better, hoping the other smiling waver does too. With excellent help from my neurology consultant at Addenbrooke's hospital, I learnt to get up, dress and walk again, slowly but well; a big help. I can cook, despite having no feeling except pain in my hands (advanced Raynaud's Syndrome.) About nine months ago my brain had improved enough for me to hold a pen and write. Cards and letters are a wonderful link with people, despite my having no memory of the person to whom I send the card or letter. I list birthdays and feast days in my diary.

I told Fr Bob how lonely I found it, walking empty streets. He suggested I spend 10 minutes each day in silence before Almighty God. Usually I feel nothing. I'm not sure if silence is meant to exclude feelings and thoughts, so I am never consistent with my 10 minutes. But sometimes, when I go out afterwards, I find the

sight of a beetle scurrying along a stone or wind blowing a leaf suggests a designer power controlling them. Even so, I am lonely. I don't know God personally and can't imagine Him. When He was on earth as Jesus, no-one who met him described Him, only what He did. I need to see and hear Him. Maybe the root of everything is that I need to believe in God. That is the key to life. Almost 50 years ago, working in the slums of Mumbai, India, I stopped believing in God because I was appalled by the starvation and desperation every time I went outside. I thought I was making up God because I needed Him. I told my employers I could not go on. They sent me to see a half-European, half Indian priest, who asked me if I felt the need for God. When I said yes, he said, "Hang onto that need like a rock in the sea. Ask yourself, whence cometh that need?" His words kept me going as I let down my employers, fled and hitched back to Europe, along camel routes, through northern India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Turkey. I was so ill by the time I reached Istanbul, with choleric dysentery and undiagnosed type 1 diabetes, that I weighed 24 kilos, having started at 63 kilos. I was incontinent and barely able to stand. I was kept alive by the protective side of Islam. A man stood guard over me while I slept on the ground. Another one lifted me on top of their camels, with the rest of their luggage. When I saw a cross as well as a dome, approaching Istanbul, tears came to my eyes.

The British consul found me collapsed on his doorstep and rang my parents, who paid for my flight home. I slowly began to recover. Each time another incurable condition developed I did not ask why but hung onto the sense of someone giving me my need for God. Who? Must be God. Please exist, God. Please forgive me my weakness amidst earthly nightmares and, if You do exist, one day please let me greet, stroke, adore, glorify and have dinner with You and all beloveds, individually and together. Amen.

A Coronavirus Reflection

Serga Collett

As I contemplate the uncertainty that these times have brought us, I keep coming back to this poem. It was written in 1941, also a time of great insecurity. My mother sent me this poem, when I as a young woman, went abroad to start a new life. The poem really touches me, I love it, wise words and so beautifully written – it's about life and the steps we take, the changes that occur and how to deal with them. It reminds us that there will always be a tomorrow and we must not hold onto the old but embrace the 'new

normal' – have courage, it's only another stage in life's rich tapestry.

Stages

*As every blossom fades and all youth sinks into old age,
so every life's design, each flower of wisdom,
attains its prime and cannot last forever.
The heart must submit itself courageously
to life's call without a hint of grief,
A magic dwells in each beginning,
protecting us, telling us how to live.*

*High purposed we shall traverse realm on realm,
cleaving to none as to a home,
the world of spirit wishes not to fetter us
but raise us higher, step by step.
Scarce in some safe accustomed sphere of life
have we established a house, then we grow lax;
only he who is ready to journey forth
can throw old habits off.*

*Maybe death's hour too will send us out new-born
towards undreamed of lands,
maybe life's call to us will never find an end
Courage my heart, take leave and fare thee well.*

Hermann Hesse (translated from German)

A summer visit to Buckfast Abbey

Sarah Sykes

A few days away in Devon in July to visit my parents, led to a trip out to Buckfast Abbey. I had visited many years ago. However, my parents had been there more recently, but we all wondered how things might have changed during the lockdown.



Necrothesp / CC BY-SA (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)

It was nice to see that we weren't the only visitors, but also that the grounds weren't overly busy. We were able to buy a sandwich/salad lunch and sit out on some newly-placed picnic tables in the grounds, which were very well kept.

The large gift and book shop were closed and a smaller gift shop had been opened with only three people allowed in at any one time. It was well laid out in a one way system. The famous Buckfast tonic wine was there and I bought a bottle for my co-editor!

The Abbey itself was also open admitting visitors on a 45 minute rotation and then closed for cleaning after each period. Numbers inside were, of course, limited. We had unfortunately missed Mass at noon and the first rotation of visitors afterwards, so we made sure to be at the front of the queue for the next available opening after lunch. We slowly wandered round the grounds where some new building work was taking place – perhaps an addition to the conference facilities?

A strict one way system was in place inside the Abbey and there were stewards inside and out managing queues and wiping down surfaces.



The Abbey is a fairly modern build.

In 1904–1906, the original foundations were uncovered and the rebuilding started.

The work began with only £5 in funds, a horse and cart lent by a neighbour and a load of stone.

One monk was trained as a mason, five others formed a team to assist him and more monks helped as necessary.

The Abbey was consecrated in 1932 and the last stone put in place in 1937.

Abbot Vonier was the monk behind the plan to rebuild and he died in 1938 just as the work was finished.



Poets Corner

Philip Speaks

Caryll Houselander

Published in *The Flowering Tree*, published by Sheed & Ward

Contributed by Fr Simon Blakesley

When we returned and told Him all we had done,
I for one was emptied out like a husk
that has scattered its seed upon hard ground.

We had not had time even to eat;
always the open hand,
always the blind eyes,
always the deaf ears,
always the wound to be healed.

My thoughts were like wild birds
beating the bars of the cage
for empty skies.

Even now the smell of the people
clung to my hair and clothes,
a rotten sweetness of oil and musk
that smells like death, it hung in my hair.

Their voices went on and on in my head,
monotonous waves wearing my mind away;—
rock is worn by the waves to sand.
I wanted to shut my mind, that my thoughts might
close
on my own peace, I wanted to close
the peace of my love in my heart
like dew in a dark rose.

He told us to rest.

We went in a small ship,
the wind and water moving in her,
She lived in their sweetness of life, a bride.
Her sail a white wing, unmoving, moved with the tide.
She lay to the wind, and we gave our hearts with a sigh
to the breath of the spirit of love.

But when we came to the shore
the people were there;

they had found us out.
Always the open hand,
always the blind eyes,
always the deaf ears,
always the wounds to be healed!
They were there,
swarming there, everywhere,
insects there in the sun
when someone has lifted a stone.
I knew they would drain Him
and wring Him out – wring Him out
to the last drop of the fountain water of Life.

I was sick of it all
with a dry husk for a heart.
But He saw the flocks wanting shepherd and fold, pity
in Him rose in a clear spring
for the world's thirst, and love was a pastureland.

So it went on all day.
Always the open hand,
always the dull mind,
always the slow heart
always the nameless fears,
and self-pity, self-pity and tears;

Until the sun went up in the blaze of the day's heat
and with red wine burning through thin gold
it was lowered slowly on to the altar stone
of the darkening world, where the sheep were in fold.

We thought "Now it is night, He will send them away,
The hour is late," we said "this is a desert place,
send them away, Lord, to buy food and be fed!"
But He "You give them to eat!"

The grass in that place shone exceedingly green,
I remember, because when the brain is dust,
the cool greenness of grass is absurdly sweet.

"There is a lad here," said Andrew,
"with two little fish and five loaves of bread,
but what are these, if this crowd must be fed?"
"Bid them sit down on the grass and give them to eat,"
the Lord said.

The lad was one of the crowd, he went as he came.
As long as the world lasts, the world will remember
him,
but no one will know his name!

They sat down on the grass.
My heart contracted, my mind was withered up,
but Christ poured out His tenderness,
like wine poured out into a lifted cup.

Always the open hands,
always the blind eyes,

always the mouth to be fed,
and I for one was emptied out like a husk
that has scattered its seed upon hard ground.
But He saw the flocks wanting shepherd and fold;
Pity in Him rose in a clear spring
for the world's thirst, and love was a pastureland.

The Lord blessed the bread.
He put it into our hands
and it multiplied,
not in *His* hands but in *mine!*

Even now, remembering this,
my thoughts shut like a folding wing,
my mind is a blank sheet of light
in the mystery of the thing.

I gave and my hands were full, again and again;
Pity in Him fell on my dry dust,
it was summer rain.
and the husk of my heart expanded and filled again,
and was large with grain.

For me, the miracle was this,
that a clear stream of the Lord's love
(not mine)
flowed out of my soul,
a shining wave, over my fellow men.

These things I have told you happened a long while
since,
Our cherished Lord is dead, He was crucified.
Now, as then, we go about in the crowd telling His
love,
and how He rose from the dead, and risen in us
He lives in the least of men.
But I think nobody understands,
until I touch their wounds and they know
the healing of *His* hands.

On the night of the Pasch, before He died,
He blessed the bread, and put it into my hands,
to increase and be multiplied to the end of time.

Now if I turned my face away from the market place,
I should be haunted,
hearing the rustle of wheat in the darkness,
striving, pushing up to the light.
I should hear His words falling like slow tears
In the Supper room,—
when He prayed that we all be one,
even as they are one, the Father and Son,—
falling like slow tears
over the sown fields,
and I should see the world
like a young field of wheat
growing up for the grain
watered by Christ's tears.

Always the open hands,
always the blind eyes,
always the slow mind,
always the deaf ears,
and always Christ, Our Lord,
crowned with the flowering thorn
and ringed with spears.

I know, — now that I never see
the print of His feet in the dust
where the Son of Man trod,—
that in every man for ever
I meet the Son of God.

Postscript from Nora Darby

Thank you Fr Simon for introducing me to Caryl
Houselander and especially to **Philip Speaks**.

When I asked you for an article for *Pilgrim* you said
you would let me have something by her and this was
the result. It is one of the most remarkable poems I
have read. I was with Philip the Apostle from the first
line to the last.

When I told you my feelings for it you were so
delighted and we said together that we were there with
Philip feeling his exhaustion and pain, being sick of it
all. *The crowds always there*. The wonder of the
miracle of feeding all of the people and the feeling of
the Lord's love and pity for him. The Last Supper
when Philip as one of the twelve received the blessed
bread.

The last verse, the last line, *That in every man I meet
for ever. I meet the Son of God*.

You told me it was from *The Flowering Tree* which is
now on my wish list!

Foxes

Josephine Cullum



I see a fox in my garden,
It visits me now and then.
I also saw it last year
When it made a secret den.

Last year I looked out of my window
And to my amazement I saw
Two or three little fox cubs
And then I saw some more.

They played in my garden all summer,
While their mother looked happily on.
But all of a sudden they vanished
And I realised that they had gone.
I felt quite sad about it
As they were important to me,
But I knew that it had to happen
And that's how it had to be.

We know that wildlife's around us
For all the world to see,
And, of course it's so essential
That they can always be free.

Knock, Knock, coming, ready or not

David Richardson

Listen people!
Today salvation has come to your door!
No more war inside,
abide in Me,
do you see?
Pity the pretty.
Care for the rich,
'cos they're poor outside the castle gate,
their fate?
The first shall be last,
the last shall be first.
Those laughing now,
will be crying later.
It would be better to have no eyes and hands,
than to be chained by the bands of the Evil One....
Unchain, release, pay homage.
Don't return to eat your vomit, promise?
Tis harder for a rich man to get to the kingdom,
than a camel fit through eye of needle,
take heed all.
Woe is me,
the comfortable lone tree,
love of comfort and for what?
Fear of comforts lost.
'Zacchaeus, come down immediately,
from the tree',
believe me,
'I must stay at your house today',
at your expense.
Pull down the fence....
Don't give a toss?
Your loss.
Moss don't gather on rolling stone,
don't cast your pearls before swine,
water into wine,
shine!
Give yourself a chance,

the Lord of the dance knocking,
devil blocking,
rocking in the corner no more,
not a whore with Babylon,
I'm moving on,
onwards and upwards,
world without end.
Jesus friend,
lend us your Holy hands,
in bands of marriage,
the wedding feast of the lamb.
'I am' says the Lord,
in front of a judging hoard,
'Do you really want the reward?'
Great loss, great gain, born again!
Alone no more.
Listen people!
Today salvation has come to your door!
What's more,
He's coming in,
ready or not.

Mum and child

Mary Gullick

Mum, why you cry so often?
Because you aren't as small as you once were.
And time is getting on fast and furious.

Mum, I'm supposed to grow; all children do.
Yes, you are and I am in awe of you, so
Much, you make me so proud of what you do.
Every milestone, every achievement you are
Your own success.
Be so proud of you ☺
That lights go on and it can't be stopped. ☺

You will meet so many people in life, some will
be like the seasons in the year.

Some will come to Brighten your life with flowers,
Others come to bring Rain and Storms
But others will Stay and Build with you all the
Way through.

The child asks – which one do I stay with?
Muma says all of them, sweetness, because each
have
Value in what they bring to your life.

ABLAZE Mass



**1st Sunday of the month
Next Mass
Sunday 6th September, 5pm**

Then 4th October and 1st November

A joyful, lively and upbeat worship for youth and the young at heart

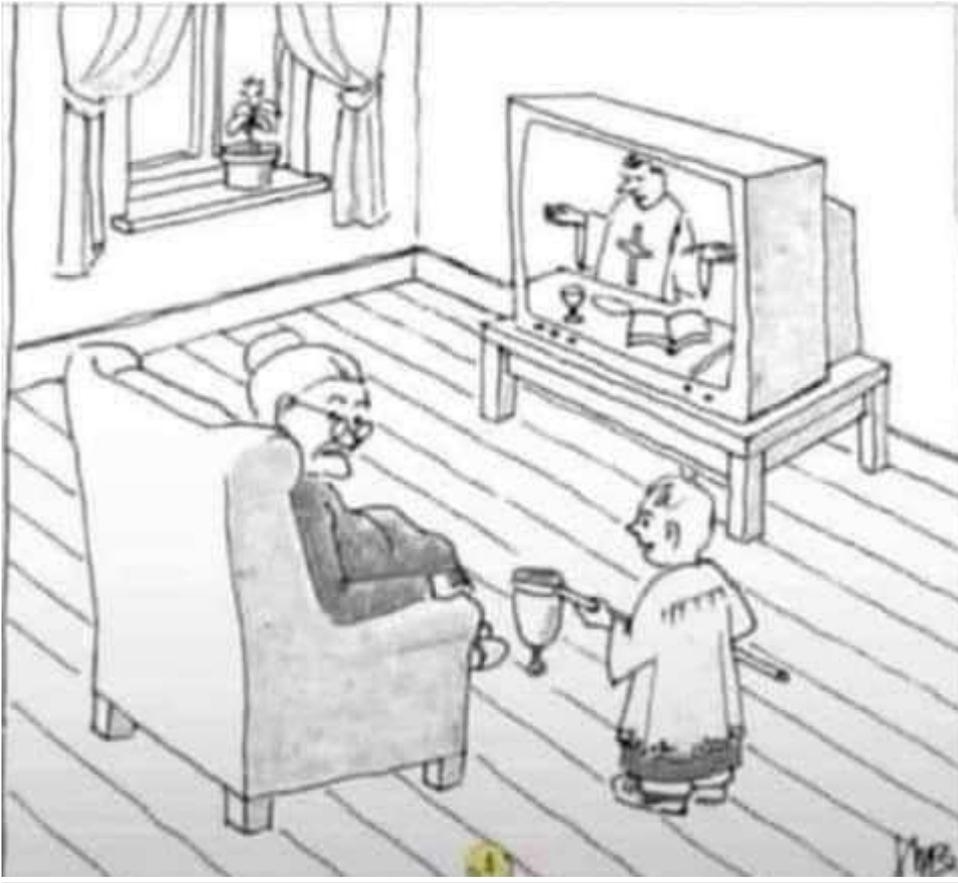
In church or via livestream



ABLAZE stewards

Tailpiece

Livestreaming with enterprise!

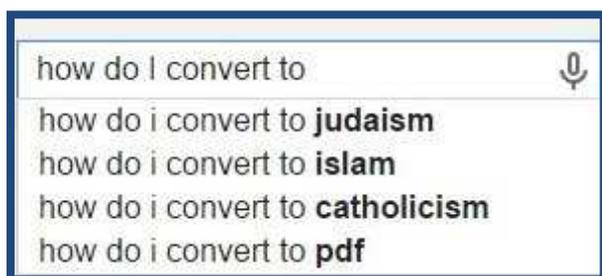


A sign of the times?

‘On hearing ill rumour that Londoners may soon be urged into their lodgings by her Majesty’s men, I looked upon the street to see a gaggle of striplings making fair merry, and no doubt spreading the plague well about. Not a care had these rogues for the health of their elders!’ Samuel Pepys Diaries – London 1664

‘Due to Covid19 I will not shake hands or hug anymore; you may either kneel or bow to me! (from ‘Things only Irish People will get’ Facebook page)

PDF becomes 4th most popular religion!



Editorial

Since we published the Summer edition of *Pilgrim* in June – our ‘lockdown’ issue – when we were all attending Mass via livestream, many of us find ourselves now back in church for Mass. However, for those unable to attend, livestreaming is always available. It has taken a great effort by a small team of parishioners to enable the safe opening of the church for all. We owe them a big debt of thanks! Thank you also to those who are giving their time and effort, the stewards, ministers and musicians and to everyone contributing to safe attendance at all Masses.

We hope that things will have improved again by the time you read the Advent edition! However as we move forward into the autumn and winter months we know we are still in uncertain times. For now we look forward to hearing news as to whether our children can make their First Holy Communion and be confirmed this year. We hope that some Parish groups can restart meetings and that once again we will be able to hear and read about events that take place in the coming months.

Wondering where to send your article, photos or drawings? Our email address is at the bottom of the page, and you’ll also find it every week on the front page of the Parish newsletter. Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition. We welcome interesting and original material for all sections in the forthcoming edition.

The deadline for the next edition is

6 November 2020 for publication on 5/6 December

The production team:

Editors: Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes

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Commissioning Editor: Nora Darby

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All members of the Pilgrim team can be contacted at
pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk

Some Regular Events

The Parishioners Open Meeting (formerly the

Parish Forum) is where **ALL** parishioners can come together to discuss and debate Parish matters, and decide when and where things need to be done. The Agenda is planned in advance and the meeting is led by the chairman and Parish Priest.

The next meeting has been scheduled for the 15th of September at 7.30pm. It will be held online as a Zoom meeting, and should not last any longer than an hour. To register your request to be sent the Zoom link, please e-mail Stephen Warde at openmeeting@saintlaurence.org.uk.

You can raise a topic at the meeting but it helps if you send a short note about 10 days before the next meeting, again, to Stephen Warde at openmeeting@saintlaurence.org.uk, which can then be circulated.

The Pilgrim by Email

As with the previous edition there will be a few printed copies for those who requested one last time and anyone else who is unable to access Pilgrim via email or the Parish website. You can receive a pdf version by email. If you are not already on the distribution list, send a request to pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk

Pilgrim on the Web

The most recent back editions are now available on the Parish website
<http://www.saintlaurence.org.uk/pilgrim>

ABLAZE

The St Laurence Youth Mass is known as Ablaze. The Ablaze Mass is designed to encourage our youth to build their confidence in running the Mass for the benefit of us all. It is a vibrant and fun Mass. We encourage young readers, Eucharistic Ministers, budding musicians of all ages and the only requirement is enthusiasm for God. If you are looking for 'perfection' you won't find it here, so if you fancy it, pluck up your courage and join in.

Upcoming Parish Events

Parishioners Open Meeting	Tues 15 Sept 7:30pm Tuesday 20th October, 7.30pm
Ablaze Mass	1 st Sunday of the month 5pm Sunday 6 Sept Sunday 4 Oct



Follow St Laurence's on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stlaurencecambridge>

ST LAURENCE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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St Laurence's Parish is in the Diocese of East Anglia, and covers the area of Cambridge north of the river Cam including Arbury, Chesterton and King's Hedges, and also the villages of Histon, Impington, Girton, Cottenham, Milton, Landbeach and Waterbeach.

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Service Times

Saturday 9.30am

6:00pm Vigil Mass (with music)

Sunday 8.00am

9:30am (with music)

11:00am (with music)

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.30am

Wed, Fri 12.30pm

Check the weekly newsletter for changes to the above times

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