

# The Pilgrim

St Laurence's Catholic Church Magazine



The Parish's LivingSimply Award and the Solar Panels

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# The Pilgrim Journeys on

The Parish Forum wanted The Pilgrim to come back into print, and accepted my offer to get this edition out. This is what I and a team of helpers are trying to achieve:

Open to all parishioners and clergy of St Laurence's. Contributions normally signed, anonymous if you have uncertainties or it is very personal.

Outside contributions from time to time.

Notices of present and future activities in the parish and the Church outside.

An opportunity to express your views on plans, thinking and doctrine (see below) and to respond to articles in a Readers' Letters and Feedback section and in other ways. We need you to use this part of The Pilgrim. If you disagree with an article, write and say so – a letter or a long article.

All opinions accepted; only hurtful personalities not.

A team to produce and distribute it and to find a replacement for the editor and others from time to time. It is a heavy task for one person, but not for several.

**Write to us with your comments and ideas.** Email address: [pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk). By post to Pilgrim at 91 Milton Road. We plan to publish quarterly, on the first Sunday in Lent (March 9<sup>th</sup> 2014), Pentecost (8<sup>th</sup> June); Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>, first Sunday in Advent (30<sup>th</sup> Nov.) Contributions should be in three weeks before. Many thanks to everyone who has helped to get this edition out.

Dick Wilson

## What's New?

### New initiatives, consultations, suggestions

### Proposed tapestry on the wall behind the altar – say what you think

An anonymous donor has offered two tapestries to enhance the meaning and messages of the crucifix and tabernacle, with the altar in front of them, on the end wall of the Church. Joe Tucker is acting for the donor and at the last Parish Forum introduced a professional textile artist, Fiona Rutherford, who presented a series of sketches leading to a proposed design. A picture of how these might look in two different positions can be found in the middle pages of this edition of The Pilgrim, with a summary on the previous page of correspondence and discussions that have already taken place. At Masses on Nov 30<sup>th</sup>-Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> and Dec. 7-8<sup>th</sup> a larger display with explanations will give the opportunity for parishioners to see what is offered and let the Parish Forum know whether you agree with the idea and like the samples. **See pp 14-15.**

## The Synod of Bishops

The Synod of Bishops was set up in 1965, at the end of the Second Vatican Council, as an advisory body to the Pope. It has its own secretariat, separate from the Roman Curia. It has plenary meetings every few years, and also local meetings from time to time. In October this year, Pope Francis called for an Extraordinary Synod in October 5–19 2014 to discuss the subject of the family, a year before the regular meeting due in 2015. Its subject will be "Pastoral Challenges of the Family in Context of Evangelisation". Only about 150 bishops will take part in the session. The Preparatory Document issued in November asks each diocese to send in its wishes for specific matters on the agenda by Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>. A questionnaire was sent out by the East Anglia Diocese shortly before our Council of Laity on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> asking responses and comments from parishes and individuals by Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>. The timetable was very short, largely because responses from dioceses were needed in December to allow for the preparation of the agenda for the October meeting. Jim O'Sullivan, our representative on the Diocesan Council of Laity, sends this report of the meeting:

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, on behalf of St Laurence's I attended the first meeting of the Council of Laity to be hosted by Bishop Alan. It was a lively meeting, with only two topics on the agenda. In the morning we discussed The New Evangelization, with Bishop Alan drawing from the 30-odd assembled diocesan parish representatives some thoughts on how we should approach this. There was a strong sense that we needed to start within our own communities, parishes and families, in order to refresh and strengthen our own faith, in order to be able to spread god's message more widely. There was also a suggestion that evangelisation is not just "top-down", but that perhaps in the light of the current consultation, in some sense the clergy, episcopate and church hierarchy could also be "evangelised" by the laity.

After lunch there was discussion and many questions asked regarding the consultation launched by Pope Francis on "Pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization". Delegates were overwhelmingly supportive of the consultation, whilst bemoaning the extremely short timescale for responses. There was a definite feeling from the meeting that it was high time the challenges facing the church on subjects such as divorce, contraception and homosexuality received a comprehensive review and discussion. The enthusiasm was tempered by an understanding that this was NOT a "vote" or the precursor to a wholesale reappraisal of the church's teaching on the subjects, and that the consultation itself could be open to hijack by groups with their own agendas, both within and exterior to the Church. Nevertheless it was seen as another example of Pope Francis's apparent willingness to encourage dialogue within the Church.

This was my first meeting with Bishop Alan, and I must say that I was impressed by his openness and welcoming of frank and sometimes challenging questioning, as well as the way he took the time to meet individually all those present. Whilst admitting the limitations and weaknesses of the survey (not least in the "Vaticanese" language used), he made it clear that this was an unprecedented step for the Church, and he looked forward to receiving as many responses as possible."

As Fr. Pat has mentioned at Mass, consultation of the topics must continue up to the synod. A parish can organise this, with whatever means it has – the Parish Forum, The Pilgrim, our website, or special meetings, but so can individuals and groups who wish to pursue the matter and let their views be known to our Bishop and beyond.

What is remarkable, indeed unprecedented, about the consultation document is the range of topics and the intention that they should be widely and openly discussed within the Church. The list of topics is a series of questions which are burning issues in some countries, sometimes less in others. The topics are, to summarize:

**1. The Diffusion of the Teachings on the Family in Sacred Scripture and the Church's**

**Magisterium.** Is the Church's teaching understood by people today, is it taught, and is it accepted?

**2. Marriage according to the Natural Law** [Note: The concept of Natural Law, not uncontested, is that the creation and human beings are so constituted that on them one can base moral principles – the right to life, to property, to education, to a family; and what is permissible or not in society or private life.] What, then, is the basis in natural law for the idea of the family? Is it being challenged?

**3. The Pastoral Care of the Family in Evangelization:** How is the family functioning in forming and nurturing Christian belief and practice in the modern world?

**4. Pastoral Care in Certain Difficult Marital Situations.** What is happening within the church regarding "trial marriage"; do unions which are not recognized either religiously or civilly exist? Are reliable statistics available? How do we respond to the situation of those divorced and remarried? What nullifies a marriage?

**5. On Unions of Persons of the Same Sex.** Does the law recognize same sex unions and what can or does the church do about them, and children adopted into them?

**6. The Education of Children in Irregular Marriages:** What proportion of children are in various unions and how does the church handle this in its teaching and the sacraments?

**7. The Openness of the Married Couple to Life.** To what degree are Church's doctrine on family planning taught and accepted, and what causes difficulties,

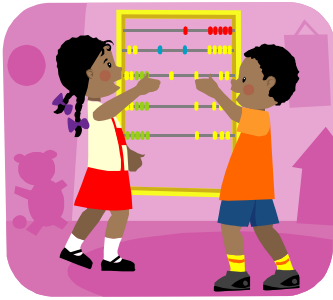
**8. The Relationship Between the Family and the Person** How can the family make manifest the vocation of the human person and what situations obstruct this?

**9. Other Challenges and Proposals** What other challenges or proposals related to the topics in the above questions do you consider urgent and useful to treat?

Whole document from [www.catholic-ew.org.uk/content/.../lineamenta-family-synod-2014.PDF](http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/content/.../lineamenta-family-synod-2014.PDF), questionnaire <http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/Home/Featured/Synod-of-Bishops-on-the-Family-2014/Questionnaire>. Or from The Pilgrim (large s.a.e, large letter, stamps £1.10 for both at once, via church.

## A New Crop of Mustard Seeds

As I am sure some parishioners will remember, St Laurence's used to have a children's play group called Mustard Seeds. However, owing to the children growing up and other commitments of the adult leaders, the group was stopped.

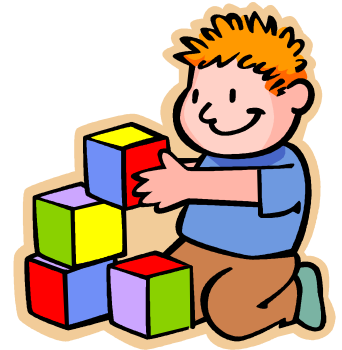


Now, as it is in nature, the cycle has come round again. There has been a growing interest in re-starting the play group by a small number of parents with young, pre-school aged children. The idea of having a weekly place and time for the children to meet and play and for parents to enjoy some support time, too, has had some initial discussions with Fr. Pat, and was also reported at the last Church Forum. The proposal is to have a weekly play group session in the church's Parish Room after mass on Thursday for a couple of hours. In addition to the usual play activities, singing and storytelling, it is intended to include some form of teaching for the children,

getting them used to church practices and liturgy.

There is a small group at present wishing to put all this together, but clearly more children and parents would be most welcome. Additionally, in these early stages, advice on activities, planning and how to run the group would be most helpful. There is also a need to collect toys and items for the group and, of course, for storage suggestions.

If you are interested in joining the new group and/or would like to contribute to helping set it up, or help out at the sessions, or can offer any advice, then please do contact in the first instance Fr. Pat via the church office.



**We look forward to hearing from all you future Mustard Seeds!**

### Parish data base

The parish has numerous lists of home addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. Those in regular use for finances, rotas and small organisations are kept up to date, but naturally nobody tells anybody else. There's a central list which is wildly out of date.

A small group is planning a common list, to which all users will have access in the same way as the now have to their own list – and to no more - but if they make a change in it any other user of that address will find it has immediately been corrected. We are working out how such a list could be used (not all innovations at once!), and preparing some software, and then we will run some trials with part of what is available already. We have already realised that questionnaires on paper and by email will have to be carried out to correct present errors, with other enquiries on the internet to tell people what uses they have in practice already agreed, and to ask whether they want that to continue, and what new uses, if any, they consent to.

If it works perfectly, you will hardly notice.

# Features and opinions

## One of life's unexpected journeys.

Petra Tucker

It's a truism that life is a journey, full of surprises - even so our brief involvement with James has left an impact on us. As an Age Concern volunteer, Joe was asked if he would be a court of protection visitor for James, the 85 year old resident of a Cambridge nursing home. A court of protection visitor represents the interests of a ward of the state who is no longer able to speak for themselves and has no relatives to look out for them. James had dementia and would chatter rather incoherently to Joe about New Zealand and life in the army but was well cared for and the staff were happy for Joe to see what his money was being spent on and to show that his needs were being met. One morning, the home rang to say that James was ill and possibly close to death. When Joe visited James the next day he was lying peacefully in his room, then two days later the home phoned again to say that James had died. Joe knew there was a next-of-kin in his records and decided to pass on the news without delay so at 8 am - after several failed attempts due to area code changes - Joe got through to a phone number in New Zealand. It was then that we learnt about James' earlier life.

James was born to a single mum in the early 1920's in London. She was extremely poor and in desperation she took him to The Coram Foundling Hospital when he was 18 months old, since the alternative was the workhouse. She wrote letters to him but, as James discovered years later, these were never passed on to him. She also sent presents on his birthday and again these were never given to him. The Foundling Hospital trained girls as domestic servants and boys were

taught a trade. James trained as an electrician and after demobilisation from the army in 1945 he went to New Zealand, where he spent many years working for the electricity board. He never married and made some good friends who always kept an eye out for him. In his early sixties, James came back to the UK to trace his birth mother - this was not successful but he did obtain a copy of one of his mother's letters from the Foundling Hospital, now called The Coram Institute. Unfortunately he stayed out of New Zealand for more than two years and since he had never taken citizenship the NZ government would not allow him back into the country. He lived out the rest of his life in the UK having lost all his roots.

When Joe phoned the court of protection administrator to tell them of James' death and to ask about funeral arrangements, she said that his role had officially ended but that he was welcome to arrange the funeral, for which £20,000 was available since James had left no will and all money left over would go to the state. Joe went to Cambridge Funeral Services, who were happy to agree that no expense should be spared - the best coffin covered in white lilies. He hired the services of an excellent organist and asked a local Anglican vicar, the Revd Philippa King, to lead the service. She gave a thoughtful sermon about James' life story which was videoed for the benefit of his friends in New Zealand. Joe and myself and the funeral director were the only mourners for this all-too-brief remembrance of a life well lived. We were given the ashes and scattered them off the Norfolk coast a few months later.

## Parish gains LiveSimply Award

Mary Watkins. Coordinator of the LiveSimply Award bid  
With thanks to Anna Rowlands.

Did you know the parish has been recognised for putting new Pope Francis's vision for "a poor church for a poor people" into action this year with a LiveSimply Award? We are the first in East Anglia and only the ninth in the country to achieve this by providing detailed evidence of our attempts to work

context as basis for Catholic Social Teaching. In a recent afternoon looking at the theology behind

more Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity with the poor.

The LiveSimply campaign resulted from a revisiting of Pope Paul VI's encyclical "Populorum Progressio" (On the Development of Peoples), 1967, the first 'global' encyclical, to explore the African and Asian LiveSimply, Dr Anna Rowlands reminded us that "working for personal transformation as well as social

justice is 'core' to the identity of the Church" .... "that personal conversion is part of economic justice" and that "justice is, for Christians, always relational: not just feeding the hungry, but sharing the same table..."

Pope Paul told us that God calls us to help create a world in which human dignity is respected and everyone can reach their full potential. This would be true progress, worth much more than economic growth alone. In order to do this we need to review how we live by choosing:

- to live simply, taking only what we need from the earth
- to live sustainably, taking account of the impact our choices make on others and the earth
- by living in solidarity with people who are poor so that all may live a full life.

### What we have been doing so far

You may have taken part in one of several initiatives under the LiveSimply banner over the last few years. Longstanding commitments to charitable and justice causes such as signing letters for prisoners of conscience after Mass, using fair trade tea, coffee and sugar, the Lent and Advent lunches, twice yearly Cafod collections and the work of the SVP are just a few instances of our work for Solidarity. More recent innovations include supporting the local food bank. We support regular national campaigns to change policies which result in unfairness and injustice – Hungry for Change and Thirst for Change are again just examples.

Efforts to live more Simply have been demonstrated by fundraising Simple Suppers in Lent and Harvest and challenges to cut down on consumerism and enjoy the simpler things in life. Cafod's World Gifts, the Giving tree offer ways in Advent of helping others whilst exchanging seasonal gifts.

### Where do we go now?

The parish has reached one stage on our journey to LiveSimply by achieving the Award. Now we need to decide how to proceed. I suggest we set up a small sub -group of the Parish Forum to meet perhaps twice a year prior to Advent and Lent to review progress and to ensure that LiveSimply permeates our parish life. Perhaps we might use some of the personal Reflections suggested by Anna Rowlands as a starting point?

Ideas for a more Sustainable and Simpler living in our own lives have been offered in Lenten Calendars and encouragement offered via a Wall of Promises. The parish has installed solar panels, improved recycling, avoided the use of disposable items and installed a cycle rack. The garden has a regular band of helpers who have installed bird boxes and encouraged wildlife and we have held two Growing and Sharing afternoons to encourage each other and learn more about growing our own food.



The Emmaus Meal

We held a Pride In Our Parish Day to maintain our buildings and grounds. Our school planted trees in commemoration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation candidates presented flowering bulbs to their sponsors as a sign of growing in the faith and asking for their prayers.

We have drawn attention to the Mass as social teaching by emphasising the LiveSimply message with a specially commissioned altar cloth, including symbols of living simply, sustainably and in solidarity in the entry procession, writing bidding prayers and choosing hymns.

- What is good about my life at the moment? Where do I receive blessings? What do I enjoy most?
- Which areas of my life make me most unhappy? What would I like to change?
- What do I spend most of my time doing? Is this the right priority for me at the moment?

- What do I spend most of my money on? Is this the right priority for now?
- How did I decide on my priorities, when thinking about question 3 and 4? Is my faith part of my decision making?
- Have I got too much of anything? Or just enough? Or not enough? How do I decide how much is enough?
- If I decided to live more simply, would I be in a position to share more of what I have? Is there one thing I could share more of –

money, time, skills, resources? Are there things I should do less of?

- Do I consider my responsibility in solidarity with people who live differently to me, especially the poorest, when I make my political and economic choices?
- How confident do I feel about talking about these questions with my MP? My family? My peers?
- Are there practical things I could do to help create the sort of world I want to live in?

**The Pharisee and The Tax-Collector:** A Homily on St Luke's Gospel Chapter 18 verses 9 to 14.  
Fr Bob Eccles

“Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one of them a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.”

Let's just see who these people are. The Pharisees are a group who are very serious about their religion. St Paul himself had a Pharisee background and was really proud of that. They are what good Jews ought to be. This one prays inwardly, keeping his prayer to himself. He humbles himself before the Lord by fasting twice a week, that means he doesn't eat or drink from dawn to dusk. Observant Jews really only had to fast like that on the Day of Atonement, which came but once a year. He gives away a tenth part of all he gets, which again is more than is necessary, the producer of the goods he buys should have given the tenth already.

This Jew is no pettifogging legalist then, he does far more than the Law demands. In his prayer he doesn't appear to be vainglorious or boastful. On the contrary, he gives all the credit and the praise to God who has kept him faithful. Indeed, he ought to thank God like this for keeping him in grace. The presence of the tax collector lingering miserably in the background only serves to remind him of how much he has to be thankful for. Here is a man after God's own heart. Why would anyone suppose he is a hypocrite?

The other one is described as a tax-collector. Who were they? The social system works like this. The Roman Army occupies the Holy Land of Israel where only the Lord and his Christ should rule and reign. The Jews are under the jackboot of pagan Caesar, an unjust aggressor, who has made himself a god. In fact

it says on the coinage next to his face, “the divine Caesar.”



Ti[berivs] Caesar Divi Avg[vsti] F[ilivs] Avgvstvs” (“Caesar Augustus Tiberius, son of the Divine Augustus”),

Basically there were three different reactions to this national tragedy. So some Jews worked for the Resistance. They were called the Zealots. Some of Jesus' disciples had belonged to the Zealots. They were uncannily like modern political terrorists. They raided and killed frequently. Their favourite trick was to stab people unexpectedly so their nickname was the Stabbers. Most practising Jews avoided them. They brought down on the people a lot of cruel reprisals and purges.

The second kind of solution looked like this. Some other groups just kept as much as possible to themselves and kept all the Jewish laws as far as the Romans would let them, not buying anything from the Romans or eating their food because their goods and their food were got from extortion. They were supposed not to hear the evidence of Romans in a Jewish court of law even. It was hard. The Romans

could billet soldiers on you, make you carry their burdens, conscript your children. Before long they would smash the Temple and crucify lines of people by the side of the road.

But then there was another, a third response that was quite shameful. There were the turncoat Jews, the traitors and quislings who actually worked for the Romans, like those working for the Nazis in occupied Europe who were mopped up at the Liberation. Herod was one of those puppets. To hold down a country as volatile as Palestine with an occupying army cost a lot of money, evidently. The Romans did not run an empire to do the subject races any good but to make a profit. They had a cynical way of collecting their heavy taxes. They put up the tax-farming jobs for auction.

The highest bidders won the posts. They then sent round hoods to screw the market traders. The more money they extracted the better they did for themselves, whatever extra to the amount of the tax they made they could keep, if there was a shortfall they bore the loss, so they had every reason to be harsh on their own people. If the Jews hated the occupying army, you can imagine how they hated the tax men. We see why people spoke of "tax-collectors and sinners" in one breath. Tax-collecting as a way of making a living was a one-way street. The people who did it even if they gave up could never go back to the Temple or the synagogue, for they could never indemnify all the wretched people they'd extorted money from.

The difference between the two men in the Temple that day is that one has kept his innocence and the other has lost it for good. One can only be held up as a good example and the other has excluded himself for ever. The technical Catholic word would be excommunicated. There is no way back for him.

Chaos and bitterness and destruction are the work of collabos like the tax-collector, oppressing and robbing the people at the point of a knife. Any hope for the restoration of Israel depends on the faithful peaceful prayerful suffering of men like the holy Jew here, who is giving heartfelt thanks to God who has kept him free and heart-whole, and saved him from becoming like the men of violence.

How do you read the parable? Are you finding fault with the holy Pharisee who must have forgotten something? Or are you trying to find some good points in the tax-collector that must have been overlooked?

What is a parable for? We have been talking every Thursday afternoon about parables. We are having an open discussion in the parish. Sooner or later you might look in to see what is going on. What does a parable do? Make you revise your opinion of Pharisees and Publicans? Both those types went extinct long ago.

Doesn't a parable rather want you to reckon with the Lord our God, and focus on Jesus' revealing of the heavenly Father? In fact, does Jesus set us before his Father, before the mind of the One whose mind he intimately knows, the one true God?

One of those men went home again at rights with God, and not the other. To be at rights with God is to be justified, just right with God. In Church-speak, to be in a state of grace. What are you supposed to do to make a good confession and recover the state of grace that you have lost through sin?

Why, you have to put a name to your offence, to have true contrition, do penance, and seek pardon of your victim, and make restitution for the harm done in so far as you can, and amend your life and purpose by the help of God's grace not to sin again. Aren't those the rules? What do you think?

Suppose the God of Jesus is not bound by those rules. Perhaps He does not even care to know them! Perhaps He looks to the heart of a man with infinite understanding, pity and compassion. Perhaps He leaves no prayer unanswered, no cry for help unheard. Here is someone who is utterly hopeless and unable to help himself, who cries out in his distress and who does not dare to lift his eyes to heaven. But the Lord answers him before the just man who is blameless, righteous and dutiful (like the eldest son in the parable about the Prodigal, of which this parable is the twin). Perhaps where our heavenly Father grants true sorrow, He also grants absolute forgiveness.

#### **Discernment and Mindful Parenting – Karen Rodgers**

"I had to" - "No time to do anything else" - "He made me!"

The tendency to go with the flow and to "phone a friend" whenever an actual decision become inconveniently unavoidable is no longer the preserve of the school child giving excuses; to have others think for us has become the default mode for our society. Many of us live with a vague but nagging awareness that we have not



consciously arrived at where we are and are not happy with where we have ended up.

C.S Lewis writes eloquently of this phenomenon in his "Screwtape proposes a toast";

"In each individual choice of what the Enemy [Screwtape is a Devil so he is referring to the Almighty] would call the "wrong" turning, such creatures are at first hardly, if at all, in a state of full spiritual responsibility. They do not understand either the source or the real character of the prohibitions grants true sorrow, He also grants absolute forgiveness. they are breaking. Their consciousness hardly exists apart from the social atmosphere that surrounds them... The job of their Tempters was first, or course, to harden these choices of the Hellward roads into a habit by steady repetition, then (and this was all-important) to turn the habit into a principle...the creature is prepared to defend. After that, all will go well. Conformity to the social environment,.. now becomes an unacknowledged creed or ideal of Togetherness or Being Like Folks."

How at odds this is with the Christian concept of personhood (Catechism of the Catholic Church, para 311): "We have a conscience ...Its voice ever calling [us]to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in [our hearts] at the right moment.." and "The education of the conscience is a lifelong task" (1784).

We must be well informed as to Church teaching (para 1780), discern the truth of a situation and a "human being must always obey the certain judgement of his conscience"(para 1800)." It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience.

Discernment is arguably nowhere more crucial than in Catholic parents whose awe-inspiring divinely commissioned task (which no one, except presumably a Judge finding that they are no longer fit parents), has the right to deprive them of (2221) is the raising of their children in the Faith. "Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children.. to give a good example to their children.. [they] should teach children to avoid the compromising and degrading influences which threaten human societies."(CCC para 2223-2224)

Neither letters after your name nor a desire to run other people's lives are a substitute for the special grace given to each loving and discerning parent to decide what is best for their own child. For children, parents are a moral compass capable of no adequate

substitution. The small child on first encountering something new such as a spider, will first look to his mother to see what the appropriate response is. Should he laugh at it? Shriek and run away? Stamp on it or eat it?

Children of all ages do not want to know what Google or some self-appointed expert says on a particular moral question, they want to know what their mother and father really think. And the older they get of course often the more challenging the questions. Unsurprising then in this social climate of indecision why so many shy away from parenting. It means that even adults can duck those fundamental and crucial questions such as "who am I?", "Why am I here?" "What is my purpose in life?". Catholic parents have the commission not only to answer these questions for themselves but to come to a personal considered view on a whole range of crucial issues.

This is very countercultural and few of us Catholic parents have been prepared for the role and for just how countercultural it is, the first couple of years after the arrival of a couple's first born can be very challenging indeed. At what is probably the most vulnerable time of a couple's relationship and individually of their personal lives Catholic mothers and fathers are bombarded with questions and very often harried by other parents or by "Experts" into following one course of action or another before they have been able to take the time and gather the energy to reflect and come to a considered personal view. So how can we parent mindfully in this lemming-like world?

We need to find out not who is right but what is right. And as the Catholic author Flannery O'Connor once said "The truth does not change according to your ability to stomach it". The first and most important step is to acknowledge our personal responsibility and hence right to take a decision; to get everyone trying to push a particular response on to us to take a step back and to respect our autonomy. Then to listen to all except those who mission is to undermine our ability to take a free and informed decision, reflect and pray for guidance. "Knock and the door will be opened". If we ask and listen we will discern the right answer.

Once we have discerned what to do, we need to be ready to explain in a kindly way why we have reached our conclusion but not feel at all obliged to justify ourselves. Do not be bullied out of a decision arrived at in the exercise of their informed conscience. If we are to teach our children that most precious and vital

lesson that licence is not the same as liberty and that morally speaking the buck stops with us, we ourselves need to model for them the Christian calling to discernment. We are privileged to be called to be partners with the creator in raising the next generation, one questioning, example-hungry, unique child at a time. Then each morning as we see our children we can give thanks for the inexpressible privilege of being mothers and fathers and can say alongside Christ: "I have come that they may have life

### **YAYA at St Laurence's**

Catherine Phillips

The first YAYA (Youth And Young Adult) Mass at St Laurence's took place in February. It was a wonderful occasion where the music and liturgy was organised by youth and young adults in our parish. A small but enthusiastic choir led the congregation in singing modern and uplifting worship hymns. The turned out was quite small but as Father Pat said, there were twice as many people there as were at the Last Supper and look how the message spread after that! The people who were in attendance at our first Mass knew that it was the start of something special.

Our second YAYA Mass took place on Palm Sunday. It was great to see the Lord's Passion played out by Father Pat supported by a team willing volunteers from the congregation. There were twice as many people there as were at the first Mass...the message is spreading already!

In July, we celebrated a wonderful outdoor YAYA Mass in the Church garden. The weather was lovely and the atmosphere created by the contemplative and

### **A Day with Catholic Voices**

Laura Keynes

On a freezing Saturday morning in January I found myself gingerly stepping through snow and pigeons in a deserted Trafalgar Square, on my way to meet the team behind the 'Catholic Voices' initiative at their borrowed base in the American 'Notre Dame University' building in London. I'd heard about Catholic Voices from various people who recommended its training programme, but I didn't know much about it. So when an acquaintance emailed me a flyer advertising a one day workshop with Catholic Voices, I quickly booked my place on the workshop and looked forward to what I might learn about the so-called 'New Apologetics'.

and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

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Further reading and reference:

<http://staff.tuhsd.k12.az.us/medel/screwtape.pdf>

<http://www.catholic.net/index.php?option=dedestaca&id=3292>

<http://www.loyolapress.com/ignatian-spirituality-discernment.htm>

<http://vocationsreno.com/discernment/foursteps.shtml>

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/cw/post.php?id=513>

uplifting music was beautiful. We enjoyed tea, cake and pizza after Mass which provided an opportunity for new friendships to begin and for us to plan exciting things for the YAYA Masses in the next academic year.

Our October YAYA Mass coincided with the confirmation preparation class. It was wonderful to see so many young people with their families share in the YAYA experience.

YAYA Masses are being held monthly at 6pm on Sundays in St Laurence's, with the music and choir practice starting at 4.30pm. All are most welcome to join us – youth, young adults and the young at heart! Look out for further information in the Parish newsletter and on posters in the church. Check out our facebook page (YAYA Mass at St Laurence) or email us on [hannah.tiziano@gmail.com](mailto:hannah.tiziano@gmail.com) or simply join us at the YAYA Mass. We look forward to meeting you!

Catholic Voices began with a single aim: to ensure Catholics and the Church were well represented in the media when Pope Benedict visited the UK in September 2010. Twenty young professionals were trained in media skills and briefed on issues proving the most controversial in the media, so that media channels needing a Catholic speaker on any subject could contact Catholic Voices for a representative trained and ready to speak on 'neuralgic' issues in live studio debates.

Neuralgic issues are those touching on nerve endings, like points on the body that when pressed cause

people to squeal. Touch on these issues in public conversation and people get annoyed. 'How can you believe that?' they ask. Chances are that if you see or hear a story in the news featuring the Church it'll involve a neuralgic issue. Perhaps the pope has spoken about AIDS and condoms, or a bishop made an off-the-cuff remark about same-sex marriage. The perception in newsrooms is that these views are totally outrageous, as if Catholics must be living a different universe miles outside mainstream social thinking. The news story runs and enters public conversation. You then might be at a dinner party or standing at the office photocopier when the issue comes up. Someone says, 'You're a Catholic aren't you? How can you believe that?' All eyes turn to you and you have about a minute to respond quickly and compellingly, putting the Church's view in such a reasoned and articulate way that you immediately gain people's interest and sympathy so they'll want to hear more.

Or, as Catholic Voices co-ordinator Dr. Austen Ivereigh puts it in his book *How to Defend the Faith Without Raising Your Voice*, 'Perhaps what happened was you got a little flustered and said a whole load of things that sounded pretty unpersuasive – even to you. You got irritated at the Church being constantly made to answer to a self-appointed inquisition of secular humanists and accused of bizarre conspiracies by people who had read too much Dan Brown. In fact, you became very flustered and flew off the handle; the feeling of persecution got to you. By the time you had spluttered out your angry defence, the gulf between you and everyone else had widened impossibly – and someone had quickly, nervously, introduced a new topic. You didn't manage to reframe the issue. People still had the same view of the Church – dogmatic, authoritarian, anti-democratic, hypocritical, inhuman – as before you started speaking. You didn't turn the tables, recast the issue, open minds and hearts.'

It's tempting to shrink away in those situations, and avoid them altogether. Apologetics – the art of defending Christianity by argument – is suited to some more than others. But during his visit to the UK Pope Benedict called for a laity ready 'to put the case for the promotion of faith's wisdom and vision in the public forum. Do not be afraid to take up this service to your brothers and sisters, and to the future of your beloved nation.' I'll admit, sometimes I am afraid, but by virtue of my baptism I have to engage in apologetics these days whether I like it or not. The nature of apologetics has changed though, even in the last ten years. It's no longer the stuff of reasoned,

academic debate where everyone shares a common frame of reference and can argue from the same general cultural background. We now live in a dechristianised culture where people no longer recognise the liberties of free speech and reasoned discourse as having a basis in the Christian values that formed our nation. We live in a nation in need of "New Evangelization", as Pope Benedict called the process of learning to speak to countries where the Church has long existed but which are rapidly undergoing secularization.

Learning to speak to dechristianised cultures of the West means finding some common ground before genuine dialogue can occur. Catholic Voices looks "for the positive, usually Christian value, behind the often ferocious criticism directed at the Church, while identifying the 'frames' which unconsciously our culture imposes on Catholicism." In other words, part of the Catholic Voices training is learning that behind every criticism of the Church is an ethical value to which the critic is appealing; that secularization means people abandon the Church yet continue, unconsciously, to adhere to its values. Issues become neuralgic precisely because of the feeling that those core values are threatened. In the case of same-sex marriage for example, critics of the Church speak about love of neighbour and including those on the margins of society, which are recognisably Christian values. Identifying these shared core values is therefore important if dialogue is to occur, and it's much easier to persuade the critic if you can appeal to shared values. Empathy is the start of dialogue. So by identifying the positive intention behind the criticism we can move from a beleaguered mind set of "How can I justify this?" to 'What is the real source of disagreement here?'

Identifying the shared value also helps identify the frame imposed on Catholics. In the case of same-sex marriage the frame is that Christians are prejudiced, hypocritical and dogmatic: 'you say you follow Jesus's teachings regarding love of neighbour and including those on the margins, yet you exclude gay people.' As Dr. Ivereigh and his partner in the Catholic Voices initiative, Jack Valero, maintain, the way to reframe the issue is to resist being framed in the first place. If everyone thinks Catholics are dogmatic, authoritarian, hypocritical and anti-democratic then you have to be alert to the subtle ways in which their language pins you into that frame. Whilst being alert to the frame, you must counter and resist it so dialogue can instead focus on the real source of disagreement. All too often the media takes delight in Catholic speakers who come across as arrogant, defensive and easily

side-tracked by tough criticism. Such speakers frequently fall in to the traps laid for them during live studio debates, failing to see that they are being framed in certain ways by a media intent on reinforcing the popular stereotype of Catholics as dogmatic, hypocritical, and so on. Falling into these traps, many speakers grow increasingly frustrated, disputatious, and inclined to say something rash, confirming the listening audience's pre-conceived ideas about Catholics. It takes a good deal of quick thinking, patience, and awareness to reframe neuralgic issues so that listening, understanding and dialogue can replace spiralling hostility in these situations.

I learnt just how much quick thinking is required when, at the end of the day's workshop, Ivereigh and Valero invited me to participate in a mock studio debate. It was set up much as it would be on BBC Radio 4's Today Programme, with a John Humphries-esque presenter inviting two speakers to discuss same-sex marriage, in a five minute slot. I was to put the case for traditional marriage, from a Catholic point of view, against a woman called 'Jane', presented as an Anglican who was civilly partnered to another woman for ten years and raising a six year old daughter within this committed stable relationship. It was a tough debate, and everyone present at the workshop watched and took a turn. Some fared better than others. Those who fared best came across as entirely sympathetic to 'Jane' whilst resisting getting drawn in to her rhetoric, and keeping the debate tightly focused on certain key points.

## Personal stories and experiences:

### Coming back to Cambridge

Fr. Pat.

This is my second term in Cambridge, the first being a three and a half year spell as curate at OLEM from January 1979. I enjoyed being in Cambridge then, but it was such a busy parish that I didn't really make the most of my surroundings and the opportunities life here affords. This time round, I'm also in a busy parish, but I'm making a determined effort not to let the Cambridge experience pass me by to the same extent. I love the occasional visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum and to the theatre and the rather quirky Arts cinema which screens movies not widely available elsewhere and whose temple doesn't seem to be set in the Hollywood hills! There are other experiences that could only happen in Cambridge:

As ordinary lay Catholics we may not be live on air in a studio debate very often but we are nonetheless 'live on air' at a dinner party or at the pub or by the office water cooler. The scenarios are not so different: we have at best a few minutes to come across as reasoned, kind and civil in our treatment of others whilst reframing the debate so that people will listen to what we have to say. Catholic Voices has initiated these one-day workshops precisely for ordinary Catholics. During my day at Catholic Voices I met Catholics from all walks of life, including a human rights lawyer, a radiologist, a mother of four, and a head teacher. Whilst we all admitted to being afraid of apologetics, we reminded each other that if people are asking for our opinion they must want to hear what we have to say, and that perhaps their interest is indicative of a thirst amongst a dechristianised populace for the truth of the Catholic message.

I left with the words of Blessed Cardinal Newman ringing in my head: "I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but [people] who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they can hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of the history that they can defend it. I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity." Can we really be that laity?

For details of up-coming workshops see [www.catholicvoices.org.uk](http://www.catholicvoices.org.uk)

You know you're in Cambridge when:

- jogging past a couple walking in the opposite direction, the only word of their conversation that you hear is 'research'. That did actually happen to me when I was training for the half marathon.
- You hear motorists who ride bikes complain about cyclists and cyclists who drive cars complain about motorists.
- When in a three lane road, two lanes are marked 'Science Park' and only one marked , 'City Centre'.
- A road for which you need a spirit level to discern which end is higher, is called Peas Hill.

One experience I had was uniquely Cambridge. I had an evening freed up by a couple of rearranged appointments. Rather than sit in front of the TV, or waste time catching up with mail (e and snail), I took myself off to the aforementioned Arts Cinema. Not sure what I wanted to see, I spotted a PD James mystery entitled, "Death comes to Pemberley". Just the thing to while away a bonus evening out, I thought, as I approached the ticket counter. "There's only one ticket left for 'Death comes to Pemberley'", I was told, which surprised me for an early evening showing. Thinking no more about it, I said that I would take the ticket, and, fumbling for my membership card, enquired how much it would be, "Oh, there's no charge". That surprised me, but I was already distracted by the popcorn on offer and wondered whether to get one the size of a dustbin or the large one. Popcorn in one hand and Diet Coke in the other, I recalled someone on TV saying that a balanced diet is having a chocolate biscuit in each hand!

I was expecting to enter a darkened auditorium with the trailers for horrors and delights to come showing on the screen; however, the place was well lit and I could see my seat in the middle of the auditorium.

#### **A letter from Doreen Crampsey.**

Sent on by Nora Darby.

When we were planning this edition of *The Pilgrim*, a very special parishioner Doreen Crampsey said she was going to write a letter to be published if possible.

We who regularly attend 6pm Mass knew her so well. She was always there to greet us, smiling and chatting as she gave out hymn books etc. Then one Saturday she was missing and Fr. Pat told us she had had this terrible accident and was in a coma with serious head injuries. She remained unconscious in the Neuro-Intensive Care Unit and the outlook was not good. Fr. Pat visited regularly and kept us informed and we all prayed and prayed. Then after many weeks the Miracle happened – Doreen is absolutely convinced that it was so and I think many of us agree. She regained consciousness and then after a time started to recognise people and with help began to speak and eventually left Addenbrooke's.

She has now been back with us for some time and each week sees her improving. We are all so happy to see her smiling face as she sits quietly at the back of the church and we are able to say hello. Her belief

Every other seat was taken by quite well dressed people absorbed by PD James herself talking from the stage! I made the usual "Excuse me, sorry I didn't see that was your foot" etc. as I made my way to the vacant seat. P D James waited until I was seated with my popcorn and coke, feeling as though they were live ammunition as I was the only person present with such reinforcements!! There was another author there whose name escapes me, and they spoke about "Death comes to Pemberley", P D James' most recent novel.

Once I had recovered from my embarrassment on several levels, I settled into what was a most enjoyable occasion. I love to hear the English language used by an expert, with the use of the precise, rather than the generic word. After the lecture, there was a book signing session in the foyer, and as the queue was long, I took a seat. An elderly gentleman was sitting beside me and in response to my enthusiastic comments about what we had just heard he drew himself towards me and enquired in a conspiratorial tone whether I had noticed that the other author had split an infinitive?!

Oh! to be in Cambridge!

and faith is an inspiration to us all and she makes me feel very humble.

Here is Doreen's letter:

I was just going shopping to Bedford with my friend Christine, we went to the Park and Ride for a bus where I was knocked down by a car and taken to hospital in a coma.

I am writing this because I would like to say thank you to everybody that prayed for me and especially Fr. Pat who visited me many times in hospital. I do not know what I would have done without my two sisters Jean and Joan and my brother Tony who still visit me every week. They all do so much for me.

I feel it has made my faith stronger and I try to go to Mass nearly every day to thank God for being with me at this time in my life. I cannot begin to thank you for all the cards and prayers I received and the love you have shown towards me - it is very humbling.

I thank God for the surgeons, the nurses and my immediate family, Fr. Pat and all of you at St. Laurence's. This is what I feel a church should be.

My thanks to you all especially Ted and Bunty and a very special thank you to Fr. Pat.

Love, Doreen Crampsey

## **Coming into the fullness: From Judaism to Christianity (part 1)**

Gila Margolin

When I told my Jewish mother that I was becoming a Catholic, she cried and I cried and then she said: *'I think this was intended from the day you were born.'* Then she kissed me and blessed me with the words: *'May the Lord bless you and keep you, shine His face upon you and grant you favour, lift up His face to you and give you peace.'*

Not all Jewish converts are quite so fortunate, but I grew up in a rather unusual Jewish family, which embraced all kinds of different people. Round the Sabbath table were rich and poor, gentile and Jew, men and women. We sang the beautiful Grace after meals: *'Let those who sow in tears sing when they reap,'* from Psalm 126 and I fell in love with the liturgy of the Synagogue, where my father took me from an early age.

I grew up in North West London, but my grandparents were Scottish, Swedish, Russian and Polish. I attended quite a strict Jewish primary school in Golders Green but it was a good grounding in the faith and has served me well throughout the years. I often describe my conversion to Christianity as 'moving along the way' as Orthodox Judaism flows naturally into Catholicism, with Prophecy, Priesthood, Kingship and Service being the four great Institutions of the Jewish religion. They lead to Christ - if He reveals Himself to you - and are valid in their own right otherwise.

I was first touched by Jesus and the Saints when we moved to Glasgow when I was eleven and I went to a Scottish Presbyterian girls' school. At age fourteen the girls and I gave a moving performance of Robert Bolt's *'A Man for All Seasons'* about the life of St Thomas More. A profound seed was sown in me then and when I was sixteen I had a dream about Christ. It was the late sixties and I had left home to go to Glasgow University (You only needed Scottish Higher exams to enter.) When I told my friend about the dream she took me, thinking it was for the best and that we had to act, to a Presbyterian Christian lady, who tried to convert me by rather unorthodox means, appealing to my emotions and random passages from Scripture. At that time it came to nothing.

I was about to enter a period of instability and rejection of my upbringing. Although I would continue to use my musical gifts, a long period was about to ensue when I couldn't easily make any moral choices. Another seed of Christ had been sown, but it was to be a further twenty years before these seeds came to fruition.

(To be continued.)

**Personal stories and experiences:**  
**continued on p. 16**

## More Light on the Mass – an offer of two tapestries

Behind our altar we have a fine crucifix, and the tabernacle that houses the Blessed Sacrament below. What does this tell us? Jesus Christ died for us, and in the sacrament gives us himself and all his passion has brought us. Of course this is not the whole story. He rose from the dead, he dwells not just in the sacrament but in every member of his church, we receive and listen to him at the meal we share with him and he sends us to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God in the world. In the Mass all these things happen.

We have an offer of two tapestries to stand beside the crucifix – these will on display in the Church on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December. There are two samples of a layout overleaf. Joe Tucker is acting for the donor and at the last Parish Forum introduced a professional textile artist, Fiona Rutherford, who presented a series of sketches leading to the proposed design. What do you think? Tell us your views (slip provided) or email them to [pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk). Or come to the Parish Forum in January.

Here is a short note from a discussion Joe Tucker and Dick Wilson had about it.

DW: The crucifix and the tabernacle beneath display Christ's suffering and death and proclaim that he in his very person, at the altar, gives us what he has won for us. What would the tapestries add to this?

JT: These tapestries can provide a reflection of our response to the gifts we receive from Christ, both within the Mass and in our everyday lives.

DW: I agree with a clear image of "the work of human hands" as the vehicle of our sharing in his passion and his indwelling in us. Why not add some representation, images rather than symbols, of the growth, manufacture and offering of the bread and wine? It doesn't now mention the wine. Could this not carry as powerful and self-evident a message as the crucifix and tabernacle that it will stand near?

JT: While in theory grapes/wine could be fitted within the overall theme of "sowing and reaping", the artist

has chosen to allude to this via a chalice-shape. The understatedness of the corn stalks is intended to leave open a wide range of interpretations around the many parables which refer to bread, hunger, fruitfulness and new life. I particularly like the large seeds, blowing around to reach unexpected places.

DW: Shouldn't it be more specific? Can the simple design of corn ears and stalks convey all that, or the shape of the tapestry? Is it not too allusive, understated even, requiring an explanation of itself to make sense? Where would it go? Tucked in close to the crucifix – would this obscure that part of the imagery? Or alongside, a bit lower than the crucifix – ample room for two very expressive pictures looking towards it?

JT: If a primary idea is "our response to the Cross" then it is natural to place the tapestries near the cross, with just a small gap for ease of viewing. The uneven texture of the tapestries will ensure that they are less prominent than the Cross, in case anyone is worried about the Cross being drowned-out.

DW: I think the different aspects of the Mass all count – they don't just relate to Christ's redeeming work, they're part of it. If you want to mention them, shouldn't you display them, as the crucifix does, with a clear image, not a symbol that is not self-explanatory? Wouldn't this help not to mix the ideas up? You could have pictures for many things – the angels and archangels, for example, who are present at Mass with us.

JT: Indeed, once we have "broken the ice" with these tapestries there are many opportunities to go further. Our church may never win prizes for architecture but we are an active faith community and should not be afraid to make our building reflect this.



Example 1. The two tapestries close to the Crucifix.

**Example 1 – The tapestries close to the Crucifix**



**Example 2 – the Tapestries near the Crucifix but outside its lines**



### Speaking in the Houses of Parliament – Excitement and Trepidation.

Barbara Quail, Teacher at St. Laurence's Catholic Primary School in Cambridge

Having recently achieved the R.E. Quality Mark Gold Award, representatives from St. Laurence's Catholic Primary School in Cambridge were invited to attend the launch of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales' (<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/about/about-the-rec>) Young Ambassadors scheme at the House of Commons on 24 June. A number of other schools also participated in the day and each school was asked to talk for 5 minutes to MPs of the All Party Parliamentary Group on R.E. (APPG, <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>). This provided an opportunity for the parliamentarians to gain an idea of what high quality R.E. provision looks like.

Max Isaacson, Agnese Marchetti and Jalila Yousif (known as JJ) were the three children chosen from Year 5 to represent St. Laurence's and were accompanied by teachers Mrs Quail and Mrs Bradshaw.

We travelled by train from Cambridge and arrived at the Houses of Parliament full of anticipation and very excited! Once through security, and having received our visitor's passes, our first experience was standing in St Stephen's Hall on the very spot, marked by a plaque, where Nelson Mandela stood to deliver his message to Parliament. Max, Agnese and JJ were quite in awe!

The children sat outside the House of Commons on a green bench practising their speech. We were then shown into a dining room with the other school children, MPs and members of the R.E. Education Council. The room was fairly crowded so Max, Agnese and JJ sat crossed legged on the floor at the front so they could see and hear everything.

Stephen Lloyd (MP for Eastbourne and Willingdon) is the Chair of the APPG and he introduced the event. He talked about his new Early Day Motion on the value of R.E. (this is something MPs from all parties can sign up to in order to say they agree with it. You can see a copy here: <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/272>). Helen Harrison, Deputy Chair of the R.E. Education

Council, spoke next about the Young Ambassadors and the REQM schemes. She then introduced each of the school:

- Broughton Business and Enterprise College, Lancashire
- Francis Holland School, London
- Lower Peover CofE primary school, Cheshire
- Perins School, Hampshire
- The Redhill Academy, Nottingham
- St Laurence Catholic Primary School, Cambridge
- The Venerable Bede CofE Academy, Sunderland

Time went so fast and we were very impressed by all the presentations which showed how the secondary schools reflected what we did, but at a higher and wider level. Finally it was St. Laurence's turn. Max, Agnese and JJ got up to speak. The microphones were lowered and I was relieved that someone else had the job of switching on our PowerPoint slideshow - I think I was more nervous than the children!

#### The children took it in turns to speak and ask questions...

**A:** On behalf of St Laurence School, Cambridge, we would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to show you how R.E. lessons underpin everything we do in our school

**JJ:** Now, we proudly present a short clip of some aspects of R.E. in our school and what it means to us! ***A two minute PowerPoint of R.E. and life in our school followed.***

**M:** I hope you enjoyed our PowerPoint. Later on please feel free to ask any questions about the pictures.

**M:** Why are R.E. lessons important?

**JJ:** They teach us how to listen to God.

**M:** They teach the values of our faith to be welcoming, to grow in the family of God and the community, saying sorry and forgiveness

**JJ:** They teach us the wider awareness of how communities work.

**M:** They teach us how to gain knowledge and understanding to enable us to put a positive approach to life.

**JJ:** They teach us tolerance and respect.  
**A:** They teach us to enjoy God's beautiful world.  
**JJ:** They prepare us for eternal life  
**A:** They teach us to have a vision for life that is more than just self-seeking celebrity life style.  
**M:** They show us the wider vision of life, that hard work is important, but that there are endless possibilities, that there is a purpose to life and we know who we are and that we are loved.  
**A:** What impact do R.E. lessons have on the social and moral decisions we make?  
**JJ:** We have the opportunity for Reconciliation  
**A:** We have the open discussions. We can say what we think and be guided.  
**M:** We have lots of opportunities for role-playing social and moral decisions.  
**JJ:** We are all different yet we make a community  
**M:** In our faith we accept death as part of the journey to new life.  
**M:** I wonder what you liked most in your lessons?  
**A:** I love it when we listen to the bible stories. I love doing and watching the Nativity plays and especially the yearly Passion play. It is so important to feel the emotions of the story. I love all the artwork, illustrating and using clay.  
**M:** I wonder what you liked most about your R.E. lessons?  
**JJ:** I love the beauty of God's world. I loved learning about Sikhism. I especially like their clothes and how their faith is different from ours  
**M:** Thank you for listening to us. When you go back to your committee meetings we would like you

### **Tony Brochie (1924-2013)**

Tony Brochie died on February 20<sup>th</sup>. An appreciation of him was given at his funeral by Anthony Clay and sent to us by Anthony and his brother John.

I would like to tell you about how I, and my brother John, first met Tony. We have to go back to 1950, when two small boys, 5 and 6 years old, traumatized by our parent's dramatic separation, landed on their doorstep in Hertford Street. From day one we were welcomed into this new family, who showed us love and reassurance, close by, always at hand, ready to answer questions big and small, helping us to toe the line that all children must find, kind and considerate and always with a ready smile. For us, Tony was the father we never had (my own father worked in India after the war and came home a stranger). As a

to consider what we have said today and how we feel R.E. lessons in school are so important.

### **Just to recap why R.E. is so important...**

**A:** We learn about other faiths in a safe environment.  
**JJ:** We learn about religious tolerance.  
**M:** We learn to feel the security of belonging to a community.  
**ALL:** We build the life skills we will need in the future as we become adults with a firm foundation of our faith.

I'm delighted to say that the three children were a credit to our school and all the Catholic primary schools in England and Wales. Max, JJ and Agnese enjoyed the lovely food provided by the Houses of Parliament as they mingled with the politicians after the presentations. Everyone congratulated them on their public speaking and said it was obvious that they spoke with passion and from the heart. What a wonderful experience for the children!

For further information:

[www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk) ;

Young Ambassadors scheme at the House of Commons on 24 June. A number of other schools also participated in the day and each school was asked to talk for 5 minutes to MPs of the All Party Parliamentary Group on R.E. (APPG, <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>). The R.E. Council of England and Wales) aims to strengthen provision for R.E. in schools and the Young Ambassadors scheme (<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/young-ambassadors/what-is-the-young-ambassadors-for-re-scheme>) gives pupils opportunities to share their enthusiasm for R.E. with educators and others as well as gaining valuable communication and leadership skills.

fireman, we looked up to Tony in his imposing uniform, big, strong but gentle, he knew so much and loved showing us how. Brother John remembers a lot more than me, but that first year and several summer holidays afterwards for me were spent out in the open, in the fresh air (a shock for a Londoner) and as often as not playing or watching cricket. Nowadays everybody googles everything. In the fifties Tony taught us the googly. That takes time and effort. But Tony managed. And in all things his patience, good humour, his insight into a young mind, made being with him a joy. He has been part of my life for over 60 years.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Jennifer for sharing her dad so selflessly with us. He was a treasure, and will be sorely missed.

## **Baptism Experience – the Shiode family**

Shino, Narushige and Maito Shiode

We received baptism during the 9.30 morning Mass on Sunday 27 October 2013. Being accepted to God's church is a wonderful blessing and, to have all three of us, my wife and my son and myself getting baptised at the same time was such an amazing experience.

We are originally from Japan where two-thirds of the population consider themselves as non-religious, and Christianity of various denominations is followed by less than 2% of the population. However, we were fortunate to be exposed to Christian teaching earlier in our life. My wife, Shino, was raised in a Christian school in Western Japan where she had an hour of school mass every morning, and I was regularly taken to the church on Sundays by my parents during my childhood in Switzerland and West Germany. In fact, my mother told me that I was literally saved by Catholicism at birth — I may have not been born, had it not for the doctors at St. Mary's Catholic Hospital in Tokyo who believed in saving the foetus at the time she had to go through a difficult operation with uterus fibroid.

We started thinking about our faith around the time we got married 10 years ago. Since then, we lost several close family members and had some other challenging experiences, each of which reminded us about our faith, but we always thought we will "think about it later." Then, three years ago, we were blessed with the arrival of our son, Maito, and we felt the timing was right for us to start the journey. Even then, raising a child whilst attending to our work commitment (my wife's commute to London and my work in Cardiff) presented logistical challenges and yet again gave us the excuse to "think about it later." It wasn't until this spring that we found the time to attend mass on Sundays. Many of Maito's friends'

### **Sit Down Mummy! I'm Going to Tell You a Story...**

(From a parishioner)

In the light of Father Bob's 'Tell us a story' talks to the parish, I feel prompted to share the following story, as recounted to me by my six year old daughter, at a time when I felt very discouraged by my own weakness and failure. It made such an impact on me that, though a generation has passed since it was first delivered with much gusto by a small child, I can still remember it clearly.

family are also Catholic, and they encouraged us to attend a school mass. There, we met Father Pat and Father Bob who kindly offered to guide us on our journey to Baptism during the summer months, perhaps the only period my wife and I will be free of our work commitment. Visiting Father Bob at Blackfriars and receiving his guidance and teaching there was a truly delightful and memorable experience we shall cherish. Getting there has been more than half the journey for us!

To be baptised by Father Bob during the Sunday school mass with our son's closest friend's parents as our godparents was the best possible baptism we could receive. It was a moment of sheer joy, and we felt as though we were being embraced by light and warmth that reached inside our body and soul. Our first Eucharist immediately followed, which asserted us the fact that we became part of this church. We are deeply grateful to everyone who was there to witness our baptism and accept us.

One concern we had during our baptism was our son's aversion to water (being poured on his face). Although we had practiced it a few times during bath, we feared that he might start screaming in the middle of baptism. Fortunately, he decided not to be difficult about getting his hair wet (although he did make a bit of a scene by refusing initially to wear a white garment). In fact, he became fond of the experience and, since then, he has been pouring some water on my hair every time we take bath together...

All three of us still have much to learn and we hope you will be patient with us and guide us from time to time. Thank you so much for giving us such a wonderful new life.

Once upon a time, in a country far away, there was a good King. All his people loved him because he was so kind and knew them all by name. Every year on his birthday, he invited all of them to meet him at his palace and join in a great feast. Each person would take the best gift they could afford to give to him.

One poor man decided to take his very best cheese as a present for the King. He rolled it into a wheelbarrow and set off down the long road to the palace. As he walked down the road, a little mouse popped out of the bushes and squeaked 'Please can I have a bite of your cheese?'

'No, No, No!' said the man. 'This cheese is for the King!'

'Awww, please!' said the mouse. 'Just a bite, just a nibble, just a sniff!'

The man felt sorry for the hungry mouse so he said he could have just one tiny bite, whereupon the mouse gave a loud squeak and dozens of little mice ran out of the woods and began to eat the cheese.

'Help! Help!' shouted the man, and a big cat suddenly appeared and chased away all the mice. The man set off again down the road to the palace and the cat walked with him.

After a while the cat spoke to him. 'I'm so hungry! Can I have a piece of your cheese?'

'No, No, No!' said the man. 'This cheese is for the King!'

'Awww, please!' said the cat. 'Just a bite, just a nibble, just a sniff!'. So, because the cat had helped him by chasing away the mice, the man agreed that he could take one little bite. As soon as he did so, the cat gave a loud miaow, and a crowd of cats ran out of the bushes and began to eat the cheese.

'Help! Help!' shouted the poor man, whereupon a large dog ran up and chased away all the cats. The

man set off again on his journey to see the King and the dog walked with him. After a while the dog said 'Do you think I could have a small piece of your cheese for my dinner?'

'No, No, No!' insisted the man. 'This cheese is for the King!'

'Awww, go on!' the dog said. 'Just a bite, just a nibble, just a sniff!'

The poor man forgot about what had happened with the mice and the cats, and just remembered that the dog had helped him, and said he could have just a tiny bite. Then the dog gave a loud bark, and out of the bushes came a pack of fierce dogs who all began to eat the cheese.

'Help! Help!' shouted the poor man, and a big bear appeared, who chased away all the fierce dogs but who then turned back to the wheelbarrow and ate up all the cheese!

By this time, the poor man had reached the palace gates but his barrow was empty. When it was his turn to meet the King he felt so ashamed because he had no gift to give him. But the King just looked at him, smiled, and said 'It's alright! Don't worry, don't be ashamed! You can try again next year.'

So the poor man went away, remembering the smile and the kindness of the King, and resolved to make the very best cheese he could, and take it all the way to the King next time.

## **The Parish as Home.**

Michele Marchetti

Where should I start? I am not talking about this article, but about the emigrant experience.

Suddenly I find myself far away from everything I had: my family, my friends, my home, my village... and in no time, almost without realising it, I am in another country!

I've been in this situation twice: the first time in Finland (2001), then in England (2006).

The first time in particular was quite traumatic: I didn't know anyone, I didn't understand what people said, and I could not read what was written either. I

went to the shops and I had to rely on what I saw in the pictures on products themselves, as I could not read the ingredients. I was walking around with a map trying to get the right bus for the right place...nothing sounded or looked familiar. Not the people around me, not the sounds I heard, not the climate, not even the smell of things!!

I felt lost. Was there any place where I could feel a bit at home?

The answer was the Church. First I had to look for a Catholic one and realized that there were only 12 parishes in the whole country.

Once I found it, I had to sort out the way to go there via public transport and that meant an hour each way. Finally I was there: Entering the Church I knew only one thing, the Christ in the Eucharist was exactly the same one I had left at home! And there I could pray using my language and this time I would be understood.



St Henry's Cathedral Helsinki

Starting from there everything fell into place, little by little, the people in the parish would also be the people that would have walked together with me on our path of faith. It was not just a matter of seeing the same faces every Sunday, it was also a matter of sharing bits of the same road. These were the fellow Christians who would pray with me, who would welcome with joy the birth of Jesus at Christmas and who would exult with me for his resurrection at Easter time.

A few months later I got married and my wife moved to Finland as well: I was happy to introduce her to our Parish, which was going to be a kind of lighthouse for us.

## Books – Reviews, comments and short notices:

### St Laurence's Library

Virginia Bird

Have you found our library yet? I suspect not!

Upstairs in the small room we have a small but growing library at present housed in rather inadequate book shelves. We have books on Spirituality, that's books to help our growth in our spiritual life; books on Theology, that's the study of God; books on Bible Study, I guess that is self-evident; books on history of the Church, biographies, the Reformation etc. And there are a few books on

Parishioners were really welcoming and we were at the 'student' age so we joined the Catholic Student Club, which used to have a Mass for young people and a coffee or dinner later. We made our closest friends in the Parish, and today these are still the people with whom we are in touch.

Years later we moved to the UK and being in Cherry Hinton, St Philip Howard's was the first place we felt we should be going to. Same story as before, starting from finding a community that would share our principles, to finding our first friends in the parish.

A year later we moved house and joined Saint Laurence's, once again with the same pattern. Obviously various things during the Mass were done differently in Italy, Finland and England, but the comforting thing was that even when different, they felt alike. And that is, in my opinion, because Jesus is the same Jesus everywhere. And when you kneel down in front of his living presence in the Eucharist, it doesn't matter where you are, where you are from, or what is your language.

You and people around you are all brothers in Christ, members of the same mystical body of the Church (as Saint Paul teaches us) This is why I believe that it is so important to welcome newcomers in the Church and especially foreigners who have nothing else nearby, but only "that family".

And this is - I believe - why entering the Church I felt at home: the Church is a lighthouse, the parish can be a new home.

various other areas too. Also we have a few really good videos.

To borrow you simply go upstairs after Mass, choose a book, sign it out in the book on the top of the bookshelf and when you have finished it bring it back, sign it in and leave on the top of the shelves.

We have 3 new books telling us about our new Pope Francis, his life, discussions he has had with a Rabbi friend etc. Not only is he our new Holy Father, he is

an interesting man, worth knowing more about. He has a powerful world position as well as being our Spiritual leader and world leaders are listening to him regarding world poverty and peace etc.

## Book Reviews

Silence: A Christian History . Diarmaid MacCulloch, published 2013  
Martine Walsh

This book is by the Oxford church historian now more widely known for his TV documentaries in which he wears his signature panama hat. Silence: A Christian History is a distilled and accessible version of his Gifford Lectures.

This is a book that can be enjoyed equally by those with only the vaguest knowledge of church history, as well as those well versed in the story of our faith, and by believers and non-believers, for MacCulloch writes as a historian with the ways in which histories have been manipulated by worldly powers. By doing so he has been able to weave two millennia of Christian history with questions about truth, dissent, authenticity and human constructions of the world around us. MacCulloch begins with the Bible, its Jewish origins and the eventual formation of the canon we know today – and the important fact that the many books within the bound volume contain many voices.

What does this opening section have to say about silence? There is an interesting section about Jesus's use of silence, as well as the key moments when he withdrew from the crowds and his disciples. From the place of silence in Jesus's ministry, we are taken to Paul's 'noisy Christians', speaking in tongues, arguing about who was in and who was out, and being led astray by false prophets.

It is almost a relief then to move from the turmoil of the early Christians to the second section of the book that examines early monasticism, the Desert Fathers, and the attempt to distinguish between 'meditation' and 'contemplation'. From here we read about St Benedict and the first monastic rule, which, unlike the East, discussed silence in moral and pastoral terms rather than mystical terms. Eventually, we come to the gradual split between the Eastern and Western Churches. While in the East, individual asceticism and itinerant mystics outside of monastic communities flourished in Orthodoxy, the Western Church began to take a dimmer view of such 'deviant' behaviour as the

Church became more institutionalised and centralised. Many such mystics were women and this put them in a precarious position. It is notable how few women from these centuries were canonised. Those that were, such as Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden, broke through the saintly glass ceiling because their prophecies pressed for the return of the papacy from Avignon to Rome.

No history of the church or silence would be complete without a chapter on the Reformation, which MacCulloch does a good job of surveying in the space of thirty pages. He writes well about Luther, the subsequent wrangling between Lutherans, Calvinists and radical Protestants, but is careful not to neglect the Reformation that took place in the Catholic church as it sought to rearticulate its doctrines, defend its traditions and better educate its clergy. Reeling from the shock of Protestant disruption, the monastic orders underwent their own renewal. Out of this crisis came a rich flowering of spirituality and contemplative practice. This was the era of the Spanish mystics Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. MacCulloch doesn't hide the fact that he is a through-and-through Anglican and, reading between the lines, it is clear which historians he rates and which he has little time for. He challenges accepted readings of history in ways that are often uncomfortable and some readers may take exception to his analysis of the Reformation:

"... the dominance of a single Western Church which looked to the Bishop of Rome was a freakish occurrence in human experience, albeit a freak with profound consequences for the present day. Its break-up in the sixteenth century was a return to normality in human and religious history, rather than some unexpected or even undesirable accident."

Yet, later on, writing about the 16<sup>th</sup>-century reformation, he is able to say:

"Protestant congregations threw off the old clericalism of Rome, only to embrace a new clericalism, together with one of the noisiest forms of Christianity – the least attentive to

the silence of God – in Christian history. Word overwhelmed silence.”

Amongst the other topics he covers enforced or deliberate silences in Christianity. For survival: The Iberian Jews who forced to convert to Christianity to avoid expulsion, but who continued to practise their faith in the home. In Elizabethan England, where papists were considered to be enemies of the state, many families clung to their practices in the home, away from the prying eyes of the authorities. The closing chapter handles more shameful silences, notably that of the church authorities in the face of the Holocaust and the institutional silence over child abuse in the church. MacCulloch writes, “I have questioned many of the ways in which authority has evolved in the Church, and I have drawn attention to stories which suggest that the fixity of doctrine is not all it seems.” *Silence* is a thought-provoking book that wears its learning lightly, and leaves you thirsty for more.

*Into the Silent Land: The Practice of Contemplation.* Martin Laird (published 2006)  
Martine Walsh

If church history isn't your cup of tea, then perhaps Martin Laird's short book *Into the Silent Land* will feed and refresh you. This is a pocket-sized book of just over 150 pages into which Laird has distilled the wisdom of many years' contemplative prayer, teaching and reflection. An Augustinian with catholic tastes, Laird draws deeply on his experience of Carmelite spirituality and sets out to write a practical guide for discovering the ground of our being. This is certainly not a book on techniques to master a craft, for as he says, contemplative practice is '... not a technique, but a skill. The skill required is interior silence.' What he does in an honest, warm way is to focus on the practical struggles we face when trying to be silent -- 'the inner chaos going on in our heads, like some wild party of which we find ourselves the embarrassed host'.

Each chapter usually starts with a story from real life or from literature to illustrate a wider truth or to draw out a deep question we all face. From there he draws on the wisdom of the gospels, the Desert Fathers or figures such as St Augustine, offering us inspiration and practical ways in which we might clear our minds of the party chatter so that we might fully enter into the present moment. Laird shows the reader how we “live much of our lives caught in the whirlwind of the stories going on in our heads.” And the way out of

this incessant drama is to practice contemplative prayer as a way of leading us to a silent land; a land where the voices fade, the chattering narrative of our life falls away and we glimpse who we really are – God's beloved, held in His embrace.

This deceptively simple book is rather like a lemon sherbet – best eaten ever so slowly so that just when you've forgotten it's in your mouth, you get that moment of fizz, or the 'ah ha' moment. If, like me, silence is something that you long for, stumble to find and struggle to nurture, then this book offers great encouragement and practical help.

*What binds marriage? Roman Catholic Theology in Practice.* Timothy J. Buckley CSsR (Continuum, London 2002 ISBN 0-8264-61921 (revised and expanded version, first published by Geoffrey Chapman 1997)  
Fr. Bob Eccles o.p. Blackfriars Cambridge

Carlo Maria Montini, the much-loved Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, often talked of as a possible pope, left a spiritual testament at his death in September 2012 which will be long remembered. He recommended a three-fold approach to what he called the exhaustion of the Church in Europe. The first was conversion: the Church must recognise its errors and follow a radical path of change. The second was the Word of God, that seeks as its companion a heart that listens. Only those who listen to this Word in their hearts could belong to those who seek renewal. The third tool of healing is the sacraments. “Who are the sacraments for? The sacraments are not an instrument of discipline, but a help for people in their journey and in the weaknesses of their life. Are we carrying the sacraments to those who need new strength? I think of all the divorced and remarried couples, the extended families. They need special protection. The Church upholds the indissolubility of marriage.

“It's a grace when a marriage and a family succeed. The attitude we hold towards reconstituted families determines the ability of the Church to be close to their children. A woman, for instance, is abandoned by her husband and finds a new companion, who takes care of her and her three children. The second love succeeds. If this family is cut off from the Church, not only is the mother cut off from the Church but also her children. If the parents feel outside the

Church and do not have her support, the Church will lose the future generation.

“Before Communion, we pray ‘Lord, I am not worthy...’ We know we are not worthy. Love is a grace, love is a gift. The question whether the divorced can receive communion ought to be stood on its’ head. How can the Church reach people who have complicated family situations, bringing them help with the power of the sacraments?”

Since the accession of Pope Francis, who in the way he approaches pastoral questions acknowledges a lasting debt to the Cardinal of Milan, many other bishops have raised the question of help for those in second unions not yet recognised by the Church. Bishop Egan of Portsmouth says he hopes next year’s Synod on the Family will show mercy and reconciliation to Catholics who are divorced and remarried. But the question of how to defend our belief in the sanctity and permanence of marriage, whilst at the same time ministering the love and compassion of Christ to those traumatised by the experience of marital breakdown, is one that is nearly as old as the Church. Fr. Timothy Buckley, a Redemptorist priest who in the 90s produced a report for the Catholic bishops of England and Wales on the pastoral situation among priests and people, gives in this book a complete account of the problem. In a nutshell, the pastoral solutions provided within the Church since the days when St Paul grappled with the problems of the Church at Corinth are not now capable of addressing present troubles.

*What Binds Marriage?* was first published in 1997. The National Pastoral Congress in 1980 had asked for action. If after this length of time the book is still so relevant and up-to-date, it is that there has been little advance since then in tackling these difficult issues, at least on the official level. The reader may be daunted by their complexity: after all, most Catholics get by without considering the problem until they are brought up short by the fact of marital breakdown occurring in their own circle of family and friends.

Has the Church taught and successfully handed on a spirituality of marriage and a sense of the vocation to be married? Has the Catholic community supported the married couple? How can those whose marriages have failed find healing and renewal amongst us? People of faith look for a Christian solution to their difficulty. They should not have to take No for an answer: “In Christ it is always Yes”! (2 Corinthians 1.18-22). And priests have to learn from their people

how to befriend and accompany those who turn to them

Every good community needs laws, and we have laws concerning marriage, but faith requires that all our laws should serve only one law, that of love. “What Binds Marriage?” is likely to be unsurpassed as a full and fair account, and as an invitation to the Church, especially the local Church – diocese, parish, circle of family and friends – to meet people where they are. The reader who finds the whole subject perplexing may do well to start with the first chapter, “Catholics adjusting to marital breakdown” and then turn to the last, “the theological future”, so as to test the water. But Timothy Buckley’s book reads well. It stays very close to those whose situation demands not only charity but justice. Every parish library should have a copy to hand.

THE OTHER ROAD: Lost Futures  
Ann Hales-Tooke

‘Somewhere in the heaven  
Of lost futures,  
The lives we might have lived  
Have found their own fulfilment’

Eavan Boland, *New Collected Poems*, Carcanet Press,  
2005

I find these words both mysterious and melancholy. I more or less understand what they are saying, but, their full meaning eludes me. I am convinced that the poet is describing a real happening that takes place in the world that exists parallel to our everyday lives. At many times in my life I took one road and left the other, or others, unexplored. What is the reality of all those un-taken roads?

Anyone could ask parallel questions about their own lives. Penelope as a gifted writer with a brilliant imagination can make her ‘other roads’ into compelling stories. ‘The whole process seems so precarious’ thinks Penelope Lively. I wonder is it ‘precarious’ meaning ‘depending on the will of another’ or ‘depending on chance’. A personal view of the road not taken will partly depend, it seems to me, on whether you feel there is a sense of design in your life or is all experience haphazard (chance.) There is pattern in our lives to the extent that one experience builds on others and all the choices I make will have the flavour of being my choices. I find that people I know who lead bewildering lives have often made unexpected choices.



## Organisations and parish activities:

### The St Vincent de Paul Society

Christine Knight

St Laurence's parish has an active St Vincent de Paul Society – more commonly known as the SVP.

Imagine being in an argument where you are taunted with the charge that “you call yourself a Christian, but you do nothing for the poor”. This was the allegation thrown at a French teenage student in 1833. So on his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, Frederic Ozanam and six fellow students started what they called a conference of charity. They recognised that their non-believing colleagues had a good point – an essential part of the Christian message is to love and serve those in need. They set off to visit poor families in their neighbourhood. Later they chose St. Vincent de Paul as their patron.

In 1998 Pope John Paul the 2<sup>nd</sup> beatified our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, as an example to young people of what they could achieve. Frederic Ozanam was born in 1813 and so this year we celebrate the bicentenary of his birth.

The Christian message has not changed. Scripture is full of references to our Christian duty to care for the poor. In Mathew's gospel we hear that the two greatest commandments are “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart” and secondly “Love your neighbour as yourself”.

In Pope Francis's inaugural address he invited us to be protectors, showing loving concern for every person, especially those in need. Many of us go through periods of need during our life, sometimes financial but in many cases it is unconnected to possessions: Needs such as sickness, bereavement, family

### Who are the Children's Liturgy Leaders & what do they do?

From various members of the Children's Liturgy Team

We are a group of about 18 adults who take it in turns to lead one of the four children's liturgy sessions that happen at Mass each Sunday. We are mainly (but not exclusively) parents of children who attend, or used to attend Children's Liturgy.

We run Children's Liturgy at the 9.30am and 11am Masses and the routine is pretty similar for both

breakdowns, lack of mobility. In fact, loneliness is probably the greatest poverty in today's society. These forms of poverty are what the SVP tries to relieve. The Society exists today in 149 countries and has over eight hundred thousand members, helping over 30 million people world wide each year. Within East Anglia, conferences support those with mental health issues, asylum seekers and prisoners as well as the homeless and the elderly or sick.

Here at St. Laurence's, we have around ten active members (including several new members). Our main work is visiting and befriending, often for older parishioners. We are grateful for the generous donations many of you provide us with each year which allows us to help families from all parts of our community with financial as well as practical support. Whilst the majority of our work is for those within this parish, we do give some financial assistance to those abroad including donations to India, Grenada, Guyana, the Sudan and South Sudan.

Serving our neighbour is the command every Christian receives. One of the prayers we say at the start of every meeting asks for God's help that we may “be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves”.

If you would like to find out more about the work of the SVP in this parish, or if you would like to ask us to assist you or someone you know, please do talk to a member of the SVP. You can contact us via the office or contact Christine on c.423823 or via [crig1uk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:crig1uk@yahoo.co.uk)

Masses. We take the children out to give them time to hear and respond to the reading from the Gospel.

We parallel what the grownups are doing in Mass, but in a way that the children can more easily follow and take an active part in.

When we come out of mass, the two leaders introduce ourselves to the children. We briefly

introduce the theme of the day's gospel, sing a song (normally a rousing one, sometimes with actions) and say a brief prayer.

Then the group splits into two age groups.

The younger group (toddlers up to about Reception Year) is aimed at children who cannot yet read and the expectation is that an adult accompanies them out to Children's Liturgy. There are various reasons for asking an adult to come out. Partly it's about 'crowd control' (a group of 20 pre-school children with just one or two adults who may not know some of the children has the potential to be pretty chaotic). Partly it's about making Children's Liturgy a positive experience for the children, and so giving them the reassurance of being with an adult they know well. However, it's also about the fact that as well as trying to present the Gospel of the day to the children, we're hoping to make it easier for parents to talk about the Gospel with their own children. Coming to Children's Liturgy, being part of it, and talking to other parents is a chance to do that.

The older group tends to be children from about Year 1 upwards – these children tend not to need an adult accompanying them (though anyone who wants to come along and see what's happening is very welcome).

Each session starts with someone reading the Gospel reading for that day. Then the leader discusses the Gospel or leads some activity linked to the Gospel. For the younger children (and sometimes the older ones) this ends with a colouring activity.

## **Work in front of the church.**

Virginia Bird

You will experience a shock after 14th January when the tree surgeons will be doing some pretty dramatic work in the front area of the Church.

Have no fear, however, once the ground is cleared you will be thrilled with the new look. Along the right hand side of the car park, when facing the Church, the area will be grassed over with some of the remaining shrubs and trees. You may not be aware that in the centre of that area there is a small place where some Ashes have been buried. These were marked with rose bushes which have all died, save one, due to the lack of light. The survivor has never flowered for the same reason. So in that place there will be an oval bed and some new rose bushes which should look lovely in due course.

The older group normally says a children's version of The Creed and some Bidding Prayers.

We end by returning to Mass all together as part of the Offertory Procession (well that's the theory.....sometimes we don't quite get the timing right)

Pretty much anyone can be a Children's Liturgy leader – no qualifications or experience are needed, just a bit of enthusiasm and a willingness to lead a session once every 4-6 weeks (depending on how many leaders we have). All of the Children's Liturgy Leaders have had a CRB check (nowadays a DBS check) – the cost of this is borne by the parish.

Guidance is available. We use "The Complete Children's Liturgy Book" by Katie Thompson. This has a leader's preparation sheet and a colouring sheet for every Sunday in the 3 year cycle. The preparation sheet contains a simplified version of the Gospel reading, relevant prayers, ideas for a discussion, and suggestions for simple activity to do with the children. Sometimes when it's one of those Gospel reading that's really tricky to present to young children these sheets are invaluable.

As a group, the children's liturgy leaders tend to meet a couple of times a year – normally to discuss general issues about how it's going and plan for seasonal activities during Advent and Lent. Occasionally we're organised enough to go out for a meal together.

The big trees along the roadside all remain and the hebe shrubs beneath them will be heavily pruned. Instead of very poor soil, weeds and rubbish there will be a gravel area. Thus should be far easier to keep litter free and, due to the trees, the soil will always be too poor for much to grow.

After the grass turf is laid in March or April, weather permitting, a huge lot of bulbs can be planted making swathes of colour for spring 2015. If you want to contribute to them let the office have your money and we can buy them in the autumn for planting.

Right next to the Narthex entrance the laurel shrub has been cleared. Some years ago this little bed had roses and a clematis in memory of Belinda Holden. Once again this will be like that. The flower

arrangers will not be deprived of laurel as there are several large shrubs in the back garden and it is probable that a laurel hedge will be planted between the Church and the flats next door.

Believe me, in a year's time the front of St Laurence's Church will look lovely. Please help to keep it so by

### **R.E. Quality Mark - Gold Award**

Barbara Quail

St Laurence's Catholic Primary school has gained national recognition for their high quality learning in Religious Education. The school achieved the highest award of GOLD in the national R.E. Quality Mark (<http://www.reqm.org/>) scheme. This award is supported by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/about>) and recognises high quality learning in religious education in schools.

An important aspect of the REQM was that an assessor, Sue Ward, visited the school and talked to the children about their experiences in R.E. lessons. Among other things Sue Ward asked the children if they ever had opportunities to ask really deep

### **Lord I am not Worthy - a House Mass**

House Masses have been a feature of Advent and Lent in recent years. Here is account of one by a parishioner

On one of the coldest evenings this winter and in the second week in Lent, Fr Pat and then ten friends and neighbours in ones and twos slipped into our house (almost like the Catacombs, I thought).

We gathered around the table – there was a white cloth, a candle was lit and Mass began. The gospel was open at the reading for the day (Luke 6: 36-38). We were reminded to be merciful as our Father is merciful – not to condemn, to forgive and we will be forgiven: and that the measure we give will be the measure we get back.

Fr Pat explained that we should remember to be compassionate to ourselves also. Many people were utterly selfless for others and yet were loaded with guilt that they were not good enough themselves.

We all joined in saying the Creed, then the Liturgy of the Eucharist, within an armspan of each other. One

picking up any rubbish you see and putting it in the bins beside the Presbytery. If you want to help regularly with the garden do let Virginia (01954 782685) know. Help and ideas are always welcome

Virginia Bird

questions like "Who is God?" The Year 5 children said they really enjoyed the open discussions they have in their R.E. lessons. Another pupil said: "I liked learning about the many different religions which are different from my own. This has given me an understanding of others views and beliefs."

Commenting on the award, St Laurence's head, Mrs Southgate, teacher Mrs Quail and Chair of Governors Mrs Scally said "This is a rigorous process which helped all the staff analyse how they were teaching R.E." Mrs Quail added "I think the children enjoyed been part of the assessment and that their views were considered."

Barbara Quail

could look clockwise and see six familiar faces and then the other way to take in four more, while the priest said "O God Almighty Father in the Unity of the Holy Spirit" – and it felt like that!

Our bidding prayers reflected the needs of the world, of a sick priest in Tasmania recently visited by one of our 'congregation', and the sister of one of us who was ill. We shared the sign of peace, received the Body and Blood of Christ and were dismissed to the kitchen for tea and biscuits.

This was a very intimate experience, quite different to Mass at church and we feel greatly privileged to have been able to share it with friends and neighbours, who may go to a different Mass or maybe a different church. We would like to thank Fr Pat and all those who made this possible.

It felt like I imagined the Last Supper must have felt: and as Fr Pat said we didn't all sit on the same side of the table – as in Leonardo's mural in Milan! And for at least one of us, this greater sense of sharing served to

reinforce appreciation of what we experience at

### **Ecumenical Healing Service**

Sandy Hobson

Our first get together at Longstanton was an unexpected surprise to everyone. Fr Pat's idea for an ecumenical service in one of the little villages at the edge of our parish boundaries, was realised and in Longstanton in the little decommissioned thatched medieval church, a little church with no heating, lighting or sanitation, but suitably placed. Rev Daniel Cozens, a well known artist and leader of "Walk of a Thousand Men", Elder Andrew Martin, and his wife Pauline, and Susan, an Anglican lay member of the local church here, all lived near. was also free and enthusiastic.

A heater appeared from a local farmer who uses it in his cattle sheds. Some of the electricity came from a friend's garage, over the church wall and in through a window, and the rest from a generator. The toilets were nearby.

As we sang, talked and prayed together, we realised that some of those present had been blessed with the wonderful gift of being a channel of healing. Everyone was surprised and delighted at the number of people who came up for individual prayer, the delight expressed by many at how close to God the service made them feel, and the healing which some had experienced. Needless to say, the service didn't finish

### **Pax Christi Awards 2013 – Ann and Stewart Hemsley** Arn Dekker

Pax Christi's bi-annual Peace Award was given earlier this year to Ann and Stewart Hemsley from Cambridge. The award, a beautiful medal reflecting the work of Neve Shalom-Wahat al Salaam village in Israel for Israelis and Arabs to live together, was presented during Pax Christi's AGM, by Jose Henrique, the new General Secretary of Pax Christi International.

Ann and Stewart have both been very active Pax Christi members, organising local events and present at innumerable local and national peace vigils and demonstrations, always with banners, beautifully hand written by Ann, with appropriate scriptural references. Stewart was often to be seen at these in sackcloth! Stewart offered his services to the Pax Christi Executive and was its Chair for many years, representing Pax on many occasions including monitoring elections in Turkey and Palestine. Helping

Sunday Mass.

until our Lord had finished with those present – so much for human timing!

The Church Trust in London, just asked for a donation towards the upkeep of the church buildings in their care offered it again should we wish to hold another such occasion, which we did last June.

**Celebrate Conferences** are for the whole family and caters for everyone. It seeks to provide spiritually for children teenagers and young adults in streams or groups according to age or academic year. There are chances for reconciliation and individual prayer, and the gospel is told in many ways, through music, mime, drama. Mass in offered each day. The last conference, early this year, was near the seaside, at Ilfracombe. The John Fowler holiday camp was completely taken over by the Celebrate conference for the week and was booked up very quickly.

There will not be a Conference in 2014, but one is expected again in 2015, with week-end conference in various places. See [www.celebrateconference.org](http://www.celebrateconference.org)

Some magazines and more information are usually available at back of church.

**The New Dawn Walsingham Pilgrimage Conference** will be held this year from Monday 4th August to Saturday 9th August 2014. See [www.newdawn.org.uk](http://www.newdawn.org.uk) or tel. 0151 228 0724

to deliver peace education in local schools has also been part of their work. Ann was involved with action against Cruise missiles, visiting Upper Heyford Airbase and Greenham Common.

Ann is well known in Cambridge and was responsible for forming the Cambridge Campaign for Peace, Campeace. Later in 2002, with one other townswoman, she started monthly silent vigils outside the Guild Hall, the so-called Women in Black, still regularly turning out with six to eight participants. Stewart, on these occasions classified as an honorary woman, also takes part.

Many American airbases in East Anglia have been visited by Ann and Stewart, usually outside the perimeter fence to protest and to pray, but on one occasion Stewart managed to drive onto the base to

the astonishment of the guards at the gate.

## Tail Piece

Jokes, oddities and other trivia.

A funny thing happened to a Bishop of Birmingham, taking part in a solemn episcopal ceremony. At one point the deacon lowered the mitre on to his head, unfortunately back to front, with the two lappets hanging in front of his face. The deacon hurriedly started turning it the right way round. "There's no need to screw the bloody thing on," said the bishop. In every corner of the cathedral, the loudspeaker system worked perfectly.

Fr Pat tells a story of an elderly parishioner who had been born in Austria under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was a football fan but did not have a TV, and friends asked, "Would you like to come round to watch the Austria-Hungary match?" "Why, yes," he said, "who are we playing?"

Brother Giles was a lay brother of the Church of England's Mirfield community – and also a lay preacher. His text one Sunday evening was Matthew 7:15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Quoting from memory, he naturally began with the real danger, the wolves. "Beware of wolves," he proclaimed, "for inwardly they are ravishing sheep!" Sensing something wrong, he had one or two more tries, starting each time with the wolves, then gave up and went on to his sermon.

St Laurence's School posted up what the children of one class wanted to be when they grew up. Teacher, hairdresser, astronaut... and one girl wrote "I want to be a politician for the Labour Party." Hang on in there Ed, all is not lost.

We went to a concert in a church near Liverpool. Wonderful local choir. And one of the visiting soloists, we were told, had sung in opera at the Grimebourne Summer Festival. Somewhere Up North?

## A Call for Help

Editing. The Pilgrim needs a group of people, to gather and assess material, to tidy it up in length and content, to check the spelling and bring headings, signature and decide where it goes. We have started to build up such a team.

**We also need someone with experience of layout for publication, particularly with recent software. The oddities of the present edition will probably make this clear. Contact us.**

Above all of course we need material. We need particularly contributions to a section which is not in this issue – Readers' Letters and Feedback, because it's new. If you want to comment briefly on some issue, write in. If you disagree with what somebody has said, write in to say so (longer than a letter if you need to).

And of course if you have a view, an experience or something worth passing on, there will be a place for it. Mostly Parish, Church and other Christian topics. Your own words rather than downloads! Book reviews – plenty of brief ones – one or two longer, if you want to recommend or discuss – but don't rewrite the book.

And most of all, let us hear what you say about the topics before the Synod of Bishops. We have been asked for our opinions. Make them heard. Share them.

**To contact The Pilgrim, email [pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk).** No telephone number at the moment because the Coordinator will be abroad from early December to mid-January. Send a letter to the church office, and we will arrange to pick these up if necessary. Watch the Newsletter later in January.

Addendum: this piece was inadvertently omitted from the printed edition. Rather than change all the page numbers for the online PDF edition, it has been included here:

### **One Man's View of the Anglican Communion**

The Revd Canon Richard Kew, Canon for Development, Ridley Hall, Cambridge

When invited to write a piece for St. Laurence's on the Anglican Communion I thought it would be a breeze. As an Anglican priest born in Britain, who has served for most of his ministry in the USA, has participated in the life of a large part of the Communion, and who is Canon of an African cathedral, it would not take long to dash something off. Wrong! This is the umpteenth draft and I have now run out of time...

The first challenge is the word *Anglican*. It is extraordinarily elastic because immediately you define it someone comes along and says, "But I'm not *that* sort of Anglican." There are over 80 million of us in 160+ countries from the Arctic Circle, to the Equator, to the southernmost tip of South America; there is just a handful of us in places like Indonesia but tens of millions in countries like Nigeria. In England we can worship in ancient parish churches, but this is not the norm. A rural congregation in Africa might gather in a mud-brick affair, while one of my American congregations gathered in a former boot factory. I have only been to one community where every person was Anglican – high in the mountains of Panama!

A common misunderstanding is that the Church of England came into being due to Henry VIII's marital problems, but the English Church had already been around for more than a millennium. Certainly Henry's issues, rising nationalism, a renewed appreciation of the Bible, and a slew of other things led the Church of England to disconnect from Rome's authority and tweak its theology, but it did not abandon the ancient creeds nor the continuity of the church's catholic ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons in the historic succession. The 1530s were more a parting of friends rather than a starting afresh – Anglicans and Catholics are cousins more than feuding Hatfields and McCoys! The English Reformation evolved over several generations, but was given its shape by a fresh awareness of the Scriptures and their authority. Since 1548 our liturgy has been in the vernacular, has reflected this love for the Bible, and through the Sacraments as well as by teaching and preaching has sought to make God's Word accessible to monarch, university professor, young mother, farmer, factory worker, and also children – Sunday School is an Anglican invention.

The role of the Archbishop of Canterbury is not that of a Pope. He is first among his episcopal equals. Being in full communion with Canterbury is one focal point of unity for the 38 Anglican provinces. The Archbishop convenes, chairs, and sets the tone, he does formulate and define theology. Canterbury is privileged in this way as the original see in our global Communion.

While shaped by the *Book of Common Prayer* and its liturgical successors, the Scriptures, the historic Creeds and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Anglicanism has never been monochrome. That there are two rather different Church of England theological colleges in Cambridge says something about Anglicanism's breadth. Some of us lean more toward Catholicism, others are distinctly Protestant, while Charismatic renewal has left its mark in recent decades. Nonetheless Anglicanism is at its best when it sets aside domestic squabbles to concentrate on the mission of bringing the transforming love of Christ to individuals and whole societies.

Right after the Reformation Anglicanism grew primarily through the spread of English speakers around the world. However in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries global evangelization accelerated – mostly from the churches in the North Atlantic region. In today's Communion tables have been turned. Anglicans in the Global South are dynamic, and are now sending missionary teams to share the work of re-evangelization with the older northern churches.

Like all churches living through these tumultuous times the Anglican Communion is changing. Our tensions catch the media's eye because we are so good at washing our dirty linen in public. The papers would like you to believe that we are paralyzed by our differences and shrinking into irrelevance. While this may be true in some places, from small parishes like ours in Impington, to the Diocese of Owerri, Nigeria, where I am a canon, the priority is the church's mission, growing in Christ, and reaching out to neighbors here and to the ends of the earth. As a lifelong Anglican it feels as if we are actually being retooled for the next stage of God's journey for us.

# ST. LAURENCE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Parish Priest:**  
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**Assistant Priest:**  
**Fr. Bob Eccles OP**

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**Diocese of East Anglia**

**Deacon:**  
**Rev. Geoffrey Cook**  
**(Tel: 01223 351650)**

St Laurence's Parish covers the area of Cambridgeshire north of the river Cam including Arbury, Chesterton and King's Hedges and the villages of Histon, Impington, Girton, Cottenham, Milton, Landbeach and Waterbeach.

## SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday 6 pm (Sung)

8 am

9:30 am. (Sung)

This Mass is usually held at St Laurence's School, Arbury Rd

11 am (Sung)

Coffee is served after 11am Mass in the Parish Room.

Usual weekday Mass times

Monday 9.30 a.m.

Tuesday 9.30 a.m.

Wednesday 9.30 a.m.

Thursday 9.30 a.m.

Friday 12.30 a.m.

Saturday 9.30 a.m.

6.00 p.m (Vigil Mass as above)

Check the weekly newsletter for temporary changes.

## St Laurence's School

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To contact The Pilgrim and submit articles use [pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk). No phone arrangements at present. Mark letters to Church Office "For The Pilgrim".