

The Pilgrim

St Laurence's Parish Magazine, Lent Edition 2022



**Let us pray for peace:
peace in the world
and in each of our
hearts**

Pope Francis



Lent: Let Light Shine out of Darkness

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A very brief Summary of Parishioners' Open Meeting 17th March 2022 full Minutes on the Parish website

Hybrid meeting with 16 parishioners online and 12 in the Parish Room

Arrangements for Easter Triduum

Good Friday

With more people attending the Easter services this year, there will be two Liturgies of the Passion, at 2pm and 4pm.

As to managing numbers, it must be left to individuals as to which Mass they attend.

Veneration of the Cross: Fr Simon suggested that there could be a single procession to venerate the Cross and then take Holy Communion.

Easter Vigil

This will start at 9pm.

Fr Simon proposed that the readings will be cut to 5 from 9 in the interest of keeping the Mass a little shorter.

Easter Sunday

The Masses will be at 8am, 9.30am and 11am.

Parish News

Seating and social distancing

The seating signage at the end of the church pews has been removed as there are now more people in church and are no longer sitting in every other bench. We are still encouraging everyone to wear masks and to keep the windows open.

As we have social distanced for a couple of years now, people are used to leaving some space between each other and should try and continue with this.

It was requested that the Parish Homepage should be updated with the current advice and information.

Offertory Procession

Fr Simon would be happy for the Offertory procession to restart but the Ciborium would need to be covered. Alternatively, the procession could be symbolic without the hosts in the Ciborium. **Collection** – The Meeting felt that having the baskets at the exits is the preferred option.

Synodal Pathway summary

Ron Haynes, Roberta and Michanne represented the Synodal Pathway group at the meeting. The Meeting looked at the document sent to the Diocese summarising our discussions and heard a short summary of how the conversations had gone. In addition to the weekly meetings, the SVP group had held two conversations and Helena had talked with the Confirmation group, Sue Price had done the same with the Yr 6 pupils at the school.

The points that came up most frequently were:

- The need to restart social activities
- Better support of families, in particular with the education and formation of the children
- The need for ongoing education and support of our youth beyond preparation for the Sacraments
- Adult faith education: learning more about our faith and about each other, perhaps using courses similar to Alpha.
- How can we make the exterior of our church more welcoming

- Find ways of welcoming families, helping, supporting them to pass on the faith to their children
- That we should move away from the '4 communities within 1 parish' formed around the Masses we attend. We need to do more things as a whole Parish.
- More – and varied in style – prayer groups, bible study and craft groups.
- How can we get more parishioners to join in Parish activities?

Finance

Parish Treasurer, James Dore: Income was down a little but held up thanks to those who were donating via Standing Order. Expenses have also been lower than predicted for the year, having only spent £15k of an expected £35k expenditure, and our reserves are very healthy at just over £200k. James confirmed that if we wanted to move forward with the idea of hiring a **pastoral worker** as mentioned in the minutes then this would be something the Parish could afford at present.

Collection envelopes have also been **restarted** by Jim Scally.

Parish Groups

SVP Update – Catharine Warren

The Maundy Thursday collection will be for the SVP support of Ukrainian refugees. Not forgetting South Sudan, SVP will also match funds (up to £500 from their reserves) raised for Ukraine and donate this to SVP South Sudan appeal. Plans for this year, include a trip to a Garden Centre in May, and a Mass of Anointing possibly in late July. It is hoped the Annual SVP Pilgrimage of the Sick to Walsingham will go ahead this year. The date for this is Sunday 3rd July.

CAFOD Update – Serga Collett

Walk Against Hunger – we have reached Italy walking over 1,000 miles in the last 2 weeks, and our JustGiving page has received £630 in donations so far.

Family Fast Day – £700 was donated using the contactless unit. We await the counting of the cash received.

Justice and Peace – Ron Haynes

Peace Sunday – £400 was raised for Pax Christi at collections across 2 Masses

Station of the Cross – please join us online on Wednesday evenings from 7.30–8.10pm. The Zoom link has been published in Keeping-in-touch email or is available by applying via email – see their website for email address.

Tech Group – Ron Haynes, Richard Birkett

It is hoped that the hybrid meeting set-up can be made into a permanent feature in the Parish room. We are still waiting to hear whether the livestream camera sent for the repair can be fixed and re-used in the hybrid set-up.

Confirmation group Helena Judd

We have a group of 23 candidates which includes candidates from St Vincent's in Fen Ditton. Our Confirmation team has been enriched by Debbie, who was running the confirmation classes at St V's prior to joining the two groups together.

At their next meeting the candidates will pray the Stations of the Cross and have the opportunity to go to Confession.

The date for Confirmation Mass has been set as Monday 4th July at 6pm.

First Holy Communion – Saturday 11th & 18th June at 10.30am & 3pm and Sunday 12th & 19th June at 11am.

What's New?

Building Parish Life at St Laurence's

Nora Darby

In the Advent edition of *Pilgrim* there was an article about the success of the October Parish Survey. Many parishioners filled in the forms either on paper or online. This allowed a much needed Parish database to be set up and enabled people to volunteer for various Parish activities.

It has now been decided to repeat the process. As regulations have been relaxed and many more people have returned to the various Masses in our Church, we want you all to be part of an active, thriving, supportive community and be on the Parish database so that we can communicate with you. The plan is for you to be able to fill in forms, online or on paper as before. The forms are available in the church porch or online here: <https://www.saintlaurence.org.uk/buildingup/>

Parishioners who have already filled in forms do not need to do so a second time. BUT if you did not fill in a form first time round it would be great if you can do so on this occasion so that you are included in the database.

Coffee on Sunday

Mary-Jane O'Sullivan

One of the things many of us missed during the pandemic has been the opportunity to gather in the Parish room after 11am Mass on Sunday for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. The virtual coffee Zoom meetings on Sundays after Mass filled this gap quite nicely for many months, and they continue to happen each week.

Since June, we've also gradually re-introduced coffee in person after 11am Mass, initially in the Parish garden, then back in the Parish room as the weather got colder (and more of us were vaccinated!). Gradually more people have drifted back to coffee after Mass and in recent weeks it's started to feel refreshingly like 'normal' with the Parish room buzzing with life.

On 30th January, we were unexpectedly interrupted during coffee by an announcement from Fr Simon that there was about to be an official opening of the new Flower Arrangers' Shed.

The old shed was one of the Parish's hidden secrets, tucked away in the corner of the garden by the back wall of the church and far too small to store everything for the flower arrangers' needs, hence the building of the new, larger shed.....

The New Potting Shed

Frances Stafford



The grand cutting of the ribbon for the opening ceremony after 11am Mass, 30th January 2022

After months – or was it years – of badgering poor Fr Simon, the 'flower ladies' have the luxury of a potting shed! It was purchased from, and erected by, a very reliable firm by the name of GBS Services Ltd who are based at Milton Ernest Garden Centre, Bedford.

Why a 'potting shed' and why for the 'flower ladies'?

Well, there are times – especially on a Saturday – when the popularity of St Laurence's makes it very difficult to access the church in order to arrange the flowers for the week.

The potting shed has two full length shelves which are ideal for flower arranging prior to lifting the completed arrangements into the church. It has also enabled me to relieve my garage of numerous boxes, equipment used throughout the year for the various seasons and – EUREKA! – a home at last for the multitude of flower stands which we have acquired through the years.

Thank you Fr Simon, and ... enjoy your luxury, ladies!

Stations of the Cross, Lent 2022

Gail Osman

Dear Parishioners,

Welcome to our wonderful **Stations of the Cross** walk in Cambridge. All locations are outside and each is chosen for its spiritual/metaphorical location. Walk on an immersive adventure where all your senses will be stimulated by this moving event. Maybe you will discover a previously unknown gem, an ancient churchyard, a spiritual haven, or be revived by the beauty of nature, but mostly lose yourself in being with God. I'm sure it is an experience you will never forget.

The map with annotations and the annotated locations sheet are designed to be used together. You will also need a set of reflections/ prayers. You may have your own favourites or there are options available online, including on the Radio Maria webpage (<https://radiomariaengland.uk/the-stations-of-the-cross-on-radio-maria-england/>) or in the church porch; I have also provided a set for families.

I originally designed it for the CAFOD 10,000 step walk in Lent 2021 to remind us how far in this world many have to walk just for clean water each day. This year CAFOD's campaign is to 'Walk Against Hunger'.

If you'd prefer a shorter version, all in town and minus a few thousand steps, you could start at Jesus' Bridge and do Station 1 there. The bridge is covered in crosses!

You could also finish in St Giles churchyard – there is a bench here – next to station 13; or return to St Peter's churchyard (station 10); both are beautifully peaceful. Or, walk to Magdalen Bridge or even sit in a quiet spot by the river and contemplate.

These shorter versions are more compact and take less time by removing the walk to and from St Laurence's. I have done both versions, maybe you could see which you enjoy best? I have done the walk on my own; with a dear friend, where I directed us and she read a set of reflections; with a group of church friends; and even with my mother and mother-in-law on FaceTime when they were unable to get out. This year I will be pushing a friend in a wheelchair. I also have a cup of tea as I go and there are toilets along the route.

It is a great family walk too and on page six is a set of reflections/prayers for young people.

I am so looking forward to doing this walk again and sharing it with others. It is a beautiful, thoughtful and spiritual experience which we all deserve this Lent.

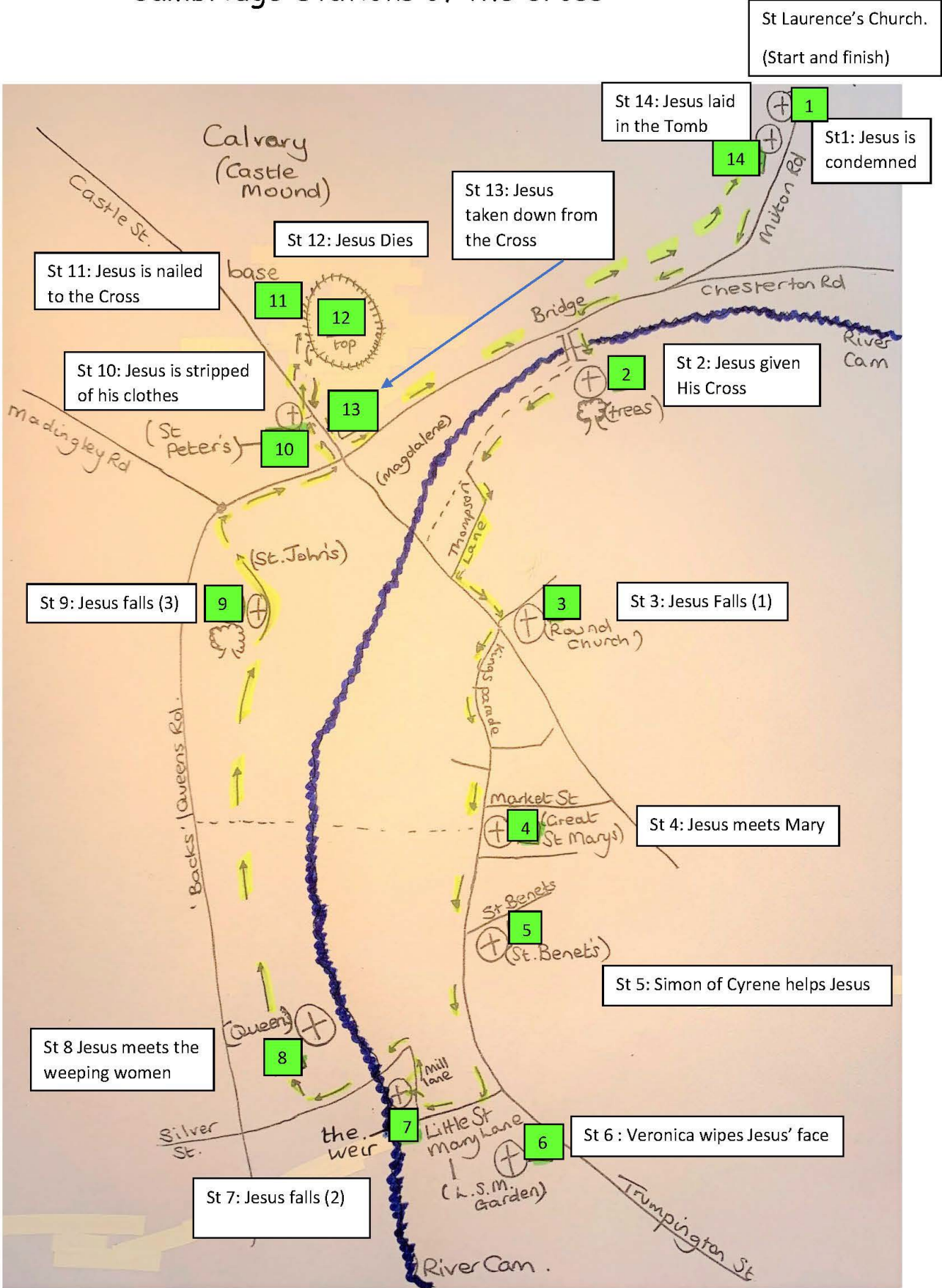
For more information please contact me on gailosman@aol.com

Some St
Laurence's
parishioners
walking the
Stations route
last year



PIC-COLLAGE

Cambridge Stations of the Cross



Cambridge Walking Stations of the Cross

Start and finish: St Laurence's Church (10,000 steps)

Station 1: St Laurence's Church: *Jesus is condemned to Death*



Station 2: *Jesus takes up His Cross*

Tree by bridge Jesus lock/ Jesus green



Station 3: *Jesus falls the first time*

Round Church/ Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Station 4: *Jesus meets Mary*

Great St Mary's Church



Station 5: *Jesus is helped by Simon*

St Bene't's Church

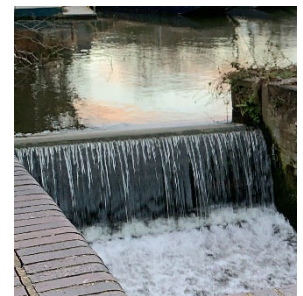


Station 6: *Veronica wipes Jesus' face*



Station 7: *Jesus falls a second time*

The weir near Scudamores



Station 8: *Jesus meets the weeping women*

Queen's College



Station 9: Jesus falls a third time

The trees to the rear of St John's College.... Still a way to go!



Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his clothes

Little St Peter's Church



Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the Cross



Station 12: Jesus dies on the Cross



Station 13: Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Station 14: Jesus is laid in the Tomb

Return to St Laurence's Church



God Bless!



Stations of the Cross for young people

Gail Osman

After each reflection we say together:

Jesus by your cross and resurrection, you redeemed the world.

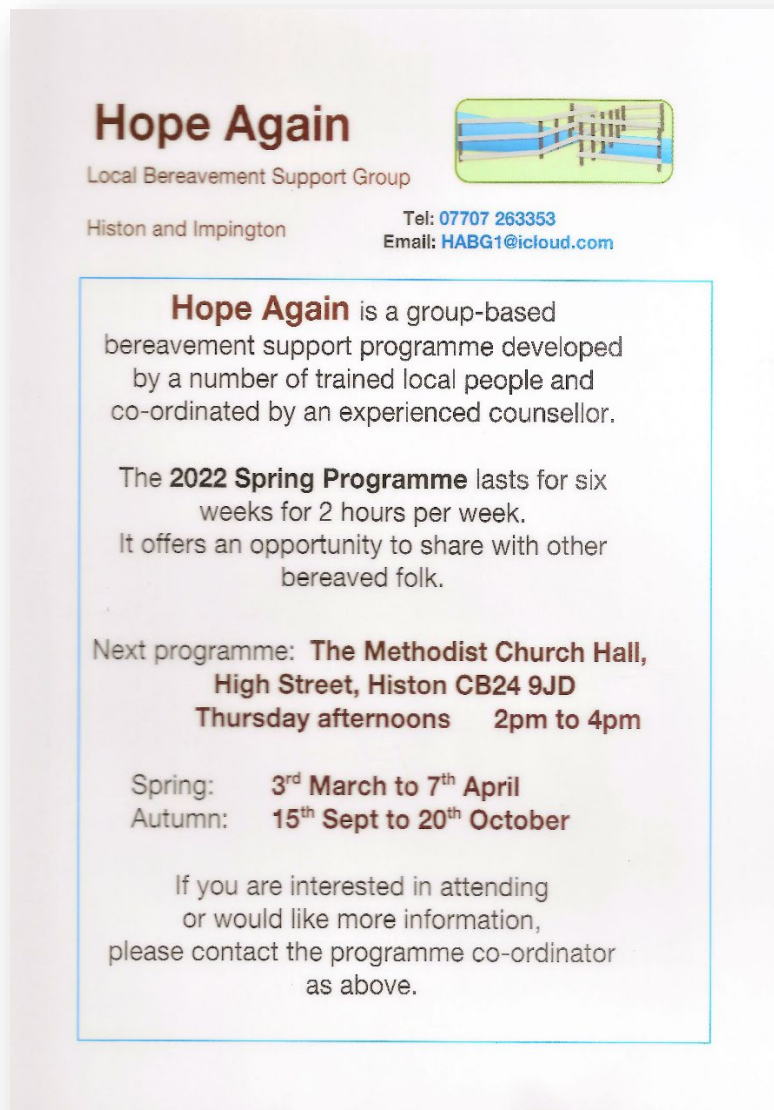
1. Dear Jesus, you were condemned to death because people lied about you. Help us to be more truthful and realise the damage we do when we lie about others or pass on stories that we don't know to be true.
2. Dear Jesus, because of your great love for us, You carried the cross. We want to be more like you. Help us to accept difficulties knowing that they help us to grow and not just complain if things don't always go our way.
3. Dear Jesus, help us to be good and if we fail, forgive us and help us to try again.
4. Dear Jesus, help us to remember our dear Mary who helped to console you. Help us to console and really pray for those who suffer.
5. Dear Jesus, we promise to help everyone we can, as Simon did. Help me NOT to wait to be asked to help people. Please make me more thoughtful, and ask if I CAN help first. Help me to help my brothers and sisters.
6. Dear Jesus, help us to have the courage to show kindness and compassion for others... even if it makes us stand out....give us the courage to be kind.
7. Dear Jesus, our sins hurt you each time we do wrong. Help us to change our ways and be truly sorry.
8. Dear Jesus, sometimes we cry when things don't go the way we want, and we make others feel bad. Help us to not just cry about problems, help us to be active and part of the solution.
9. Dear Jesus, you teach us that even if we fall many times, we should always start again...or carry on!
10. Dear Jesus, when they tore your clothes, they hoped to humiliate you, but you would not let them. Help us to stand up to people who try to hurt us.....help us see that they can't win if we show they don't affect us.
11. Dear Jesus, when you were nailed to the cross, you forgave our sins. Help us to be obedient and good, and ready to forgive all those who offend us. Help us to see that they have no power over us if we forgive and forget.
12. Dear Jesus, thank you for your GREAT LOVE; for giving your life for us. We want to love you more each day and make our lives a source of joy for You.
13. Dear Mother Mary, you cleaned your son's wounds with such love! Help us to love everyone who wounds us.
14. Dear Jesus, prepare our hearts for you, make us Your home, and help us love you more.
15. We thank you, Jesus, for your resurrection. May we be with you in heaven one day.

FINAL prayer:

Jesus, you love me so much
That you were willing to suffer and die on the cross.
Thank you!
Make my love for you, and for all my brothers and sisters grow stronger every day.
I want to always think, act and speak as you would.
Help me to spread the peace and joy of your resurrection everywhere I go! **Amen**

Hope Again - a bereavement support programme based in Histon

Nikki Searle



Hope Again
Local Bereavement Support Group

Histon and Impington

Tel: 07707 263353
Email: HABG1@icloud.com

Hope Again is a group-based bereavement support programme developed by a number of trained local people and co-ordinated by an experienced counsellor.

The **2022 Spring Programme** lasts for six weeks for 2 hours per week. It offers an opportunity to share with other bereaved folk.

Next programme: **The Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Histon CB24 9JD**
Thursday afternoons 2pm to 4pm

Spring: **3rd March to 7th April**
Autumn: **15th Sept to 20th October**

If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please contact the programme co-ordinator as above.

‘Helping you at a difficult time’

Open to everyone.

**Thursdays from 2pm to 4pm,
3rd March to 7th April 2022.**

Histon Methodist Church Hall in Histon High Street. And later in the year from 15th September to 20th October 2022.

Bereavement is a journey to be travelled, not an illness to be cured or a problem to be solved. Some who are bereaved need companionship on that journey. It’s good to have people around who understand loss and grief, and who can offer reassurance as specific issues are faced.

The **Hope Again** programme offers the kind of support that is needed; it focuses on particular aspects of the journey of loss and allows people to feel that they are in the company of those who are dealing with similar concerns and feelings. The feelings we experience in loss, grief and bereavement are normal, but we know it's hard for people to be reassured of that in the isolation of their own personal situation.

The **Hope Again** programme is open to all those who are living with loss. During the six weeks of the programme there will be an opportunity to think about:

- the bereavement journey – coming to terms with grief
- self care – the concerns of looking after yourself
- memories – remembering and celebrating
- accessing practical help
- socialising
- where next? How to look forward and move on.

Some people bring a friend or family member with them for support. But, of course, you are welcome to attend by yourself.

There is no cost, but the organisers encourage you to ring or email if you want to attend.

07707 263353 HABG1@icloud.com

Features and Opinions

The Fight between Carnival and Lent

Mary Walsh



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/92/Pieter_Bruegel_the_Elder_-_The_Fight_between_Carnival_and_Lent_-_WGA3373.jpg

This is a painting by Flemish artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder who was the most significant artist of Dutch and Flemish Renaissance painting. He is known for his peasant scenes and landscapes and for the symbols and metaphors that are in his work. It was painted in 1559 and now hangs in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The artist uses a world landscape style giving us a panoramic view of the imaginary scene from above. The subject matter of this genre of painting is usually biblical or about an historical event. The characters often appear small compared with their surroundings. Here there is a clash of conscience, a fight between temptation and virtue.

‘Carnival’ comes from the Latin expression *carne levare* which means to remove meat or from *carne vale* which means farewell to meat.

The scene depicts the festivities which occurred all over Europe on Shrove Tuesday when people partied and ate well before meat free Ash Wednesday, a day of religious devotion and fasting. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a 40 day period of penance and preparation for Easter. Some of the people on the right side of the painting have ashes on their foreheads.

Carnival and Lent are personified. At the centre of the painting a fake joust takes place. A well-fed man (Carnival) with a game pie hat holds a roasting spit with the end of a hog roast on it. He sits on a barrel, no doubt having consumed much of its content. He challenges a thin gaunt figure (Lent) who sits on a wooden seat and wears an empty bread basket on her head. She holds out a bread peel with two fishes on it. She is surrounded by simple food.

On the left of the canvas is a tavern where people are drinking and partying and on the right is the church where a priest hears confession and people are giving alms to the poor and generally being obviously impressive!

A woman is seen at the well looking at her reflection in the water. The water reminds us of Baptism and the well represents the font. We are encouraged in Lent to examine our consciences and return to the font. It is during the Easter Vigil service that people are baptised and adult catechumens are received into full communion with the Church. The baptismal font in a Catholic church is full of water blessed during the Easter Vigil.

Behind the well in the painting two people walk between the two areas. They seem to be following a fool/jester who is carrying an appealing light. Will they be led into temptation? Their feet seem to be reassuringly pointing to the church where they will be able to lay their burden down and find the true light for their unlit lantern.

Living with COVID and beyond

Dr Sue Price, Co-Principal and Pastoral Outreach Coordinator, Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology

The headlines are now moving towards this whole idea of living with COVID. One way of looking at this might be to consider how God is calling us to live with COVID. We are being urged to live with COVID by taking personal responsibility for how we act with each other.

For me, one of the most important discoveries in my own ongoing theological education was to learn the significance and importance of the word 'person'. What do you think that it means? When I have asked various people in different settings, the understanding that is most frequently given is that 'person' equates to 'individual'. However, if that word is understood in a theological sense, then a whole new meaning unfolds which gets very exciting. We all know that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, *imago Dei*. That image and likeness of God is the Trinity, three persons in one. The three persons in one are intertwined, inter-connected, inter-related, Father-Son-and- Holy-Spirit, all in one breath and one word. God is relational and God is community. Therefore, to take 'personal responsibility' means that we need to take our responsibilities in relation to each other as well as in relation to ourselves, for we are made in the image and likeness of our relational God.

Within our faith, we have been given gifts that help us to take that communal, personal responsibility: the Sacraments. It is all too easy to think of the Sacraments in a straight line, ticking them off as we go, starting with Baptism, then moving through in order. There is a different way to think about them, as a way of incorporating them into our everyday experiences, a way of living a Sacramental Life. This is the focus that Sr Gemma Simmonds, CJ, will be taking in our next Catholic Theology and Practice module at the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology. This particular module is part of our learning space for Catholic Women course. It will be held online for 4 Thursdays, 28th April – 19th May, 2.00 – 5.30pm with a break. Cost: £180 apply via email@ apply@mbit.cam.ac.uk.

We are also running study days in May that will also be considering different aspects of personal responsibility as seen in St Paul's letters to the Thessalonians and Ephesians, as seen in Mary's life, and as seen in Living well, Ageing well and Finishing well. More details on our website <https://www.mbit.cam.ac.uk/> and our Eventbrite page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/the-margaret-beaufort-institute-of-theology-33109216441>

Let us take our personal responsibility, as we learn to live with COVID, seriously with generous and kindly hearts and minds, as we journey through Lent into Easter.

On Mission

Reece King

Whilst sitting at my desk in the church office I am in the lucky position of being able to overhear the conversations that follow from the Synodal Pathway discussions. Like a modern-day Zacchaeus, I listen from up high and am always intrigued to hear the thoughts of other parishioners.

Recently the question of what defines Mission has been discussed. Perhaps it is the Philosophy graduate in me, but this question, which opens itself to a range of perspectives as wide as the Church herself, has led me to a conclusion that I hope might ring true to others in the Parish. Or at least, I hope, spark some compassionate discussion on what Mission means to us, both as individuals and as a church community.

I have a theory that the best lines of the Bible have a tendency towards repetition. It seems that you can't keep a good quote down, and so they tend to be repeated by patriarchs, princes and prophets across the pages of the biblical narrative. One such verse, first found in the book of Exodus (15:2), as a song of praise celebrating the Israelites deliverance from Egypt, repeated in the Psalms (118:14), then in Isaiah (12:2) reads:

The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation

It strikes me that perhaps, in this short line, we might find the simplest explanation of what Mission means for the Church. For what can Mission be, other than the welcoming expansion of the grace of God towards our fellow man?

As Christ said; *'you will know them by their fruits'* (Matthew 7:16). It's not the cleverness of rhetoric, the charisma of the priest or the finesse of Liturgy that draws the wider world into the arms of the Church. Rather, it is the spiritual fruits of our own relationship with the Divine, as seen in the lives of the faithful. The strength in times of adversity and the joy in times of celebration. The transformative hope of our assured salvation that we had not earned, nor yet deserved. It is our lived experience of the grace of God that stands to others as a beacon of how God can and does move in a person's life, and how that process can transform a person.

St Paul writes that *'It is by grace we are saved'* (Ephesians 2:8). It is the same grace that has been the ecstasy of the saints and the solace of the sinner. Its waters run deep and can never run dry. It is offered still freely to all that come in search of it. But to come to know it, first we must see it in the lived experience of

the faithful. And for others to see it, we must be that lived experience.

Our Mission, it seems to me, is to celebrate this grace. That it is, through *'rejoicing always'* (1 Thessalonians 5:16) in this gift, freely given as we must freely give, if our Mission is to be accomplished.

It is grace that transforms the person.
Grace that strengthens us in times of trouble.
Grace that restores us when we fall short.

Grace is the Good News of the Gospel and it is grace that we are commissioned to spread to the ends of the earth. It is grace that plants that mysterious combination of joy and strength, that in time rewards us with that *'peace of God that surpasses all understanding'* (Philippians 4:7).

But words will always fall short of the depth of the grace of God. It cannot easily be spoken, but it can be seen. Like a light on a hilltop, it is the reminder that God is good, and that he does still move within the lives of his faithful. Great is the mystery of faith, and no one person can ever expect to know the full truth. We are human and must have the humility to accept that sometimes we get things wrong. Grace, however, requires no intellectual defence. All we need do is trust in the Lord, praise him as our song in happy times and lean on him as our strength in hard times, always in the sure and certain hope of our salvation. When we do this our lives become our testimony of the transformative power of this grace. And in turn, this grace is seen by others and this gospel of grace is shared. Not a spoken testimony, but a live one. This, it seems to me, is the truest Mission of the Church. Or, as St Francis so eloquently summarised:

'Preach the Gospel always, sometimes with words.'

Cambridge City Foodbank

James Dore

The Foodbank is experiencing high demand as inflation bites into people's incomes – and that demand is almost certain to increase as energy prices continue to soar.

Please consider donating to the Foodbank if you have something to spare. You can either make a financial donation which can be used to buy urgently needed food, keep delivery vans on the road and pay for premises, or you can donate food itself:

<https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-funds/>

All items should be in date and unopened and undamaged. No fresh food please – we can only store tins, packets and jars. Also, please no items that need to cook for long on the hob or in the oven and therefore use lots of energy (for example, dried pulses, lasagne etc.). The up-to-date list of food items most needed can be found here:

<https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

At the time of publication, the following items were in short supply:

- Tinned fish
- Tinned meat (for example, Corned Beef, Chicken in White Sauce, Minced Beef, Stewing Steak, Hot Dogs, Meatballs, Stew, Chilli Con Carne)
- Tinned vegetables (Mixed Vegetables and Ratatouille are good)
- UHT milk
- UHT juices
- Olive oil (500ml preferred, maximum 1 litre)
- Cook-in sauces (pasta sauces, etc.)

There are donation points in most leading supermarkets in the city but we also have a collection box in the Narthex if that is easier for you. This is cleared approximately every ten to 14 days.

Thank you in anticipation.

The Cross is a universal gift

Homily, St George's Day, 2020

Fr Simon Blakesley

'To *all*,' Jesus said. The invitation to carry the Cross, the invitation to suffering, is to everyone. Perhaps at this time we recognise that this virus does not pick and choose; it can and will infect anyone. Please God, not everyone. But every human being is somehow implicated in this pandemic. That's the meaning of the word: *pan* – across all, *demos* – the people. All the people are affected by this. But the cross is a universal medicine. The Cross is a universal gift.

It doesn't sound like it. To be invited to take up your Cross every day and follow the Lord – who would want to do that? Surely there must be easier paths to salvation?

The reality is that Christ's way is the way of each and every one who wishes to enter into life through the mystery of His own death and resurrection. Every one of us would like to put into our own spiritual sat-nav

'avoid Calvary' and hope we get a route so calculated that it does not take us through the Lord's darkest time, through the 'Thicket of the Cross'.

We might even put in 'avoid descent into hell'. It doesn't work. 'Make a U-turn if possible.' No, we have to go with the Lord. We have to accompany Him, carrying the Cross that He has entrusted to us. For each and every one of us, our Cross is individual. It is our own way with the Lord and He will invite us to follow Him and to draw strength from His Cross so that we might carry ours with a lighter heart.

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. Even the Cross that I entrust to you.'

We pray for all those whose Cross is to suffer the virus, or to suffer in fear because those close to them are affected, or those close to them are caring for the Coronavirus patients.

We pray for all those bearing that Cross at this time that they will find strength from the Lord. We ask the intercession of St George, Martyr, who fought and overcame a dragon, that we may have that same courage in this very difficult, terrifying fight.

Thoughts of Easter

Barbara Quail

I begin to put away my basket of books, both adult and beautifully illustrated children's Christmas and Advent books, looking forward to getting them out again at the end of the year. Next, I start to pack away my cribs: I have to admit I have a fascination with their designs and variations. I put them in every room. My grandchildren love them and like rearranging the pieces as to where they feel the characters would be.



My thoughts turn to Lent and Easter. I know it's early and 'why rush my life?', but it's not the same. More holy I suppose. We get given a palm cross at the beginning of Holy Week. I do have a similar basket of books

for Lent and Easter reading, both adult and children.

Like many children I grow a pot of grass seed and cover a tiny pot for the empty tomb and place a small Cross, maybe a plant, but figures?

Last year on Easter Sunday my daughter and grandchildren arrived for a doorstep visit (lockdown) with a large pot of an Easter garden with amazing plain wooden figures (reminding of the Godly play figures used by many schools and churches to tell the Old and New Testament stories). I was so touched; I had never seen anything like it as a personal gift.



I investigated using the internet as I wanted to give others these figures. In doing so I discovered an additional set of the Holy Week figures.

So, I am very much looking forward to having them around to reflect upon.

I gave a set of the Easter garden figures to a friend for Christmas as I felt you needed them before Easter Sunday. She used them to embellish her crib scene as she felt they are all part of the same incredible story. How wonderful.



However, I am still left wondering why we do so little to share with others the Easter Story?

[If you want your own Easter scene similar to these then you can find sets on Amazon by searching ‘Easter scenes’]

Cardinal Points – Saints and Synods

Ronald Haynes

Imagine this – if Christianity were outlawed, or perhaps specifically Catholic Christianity were outlawed, and any or all of us were arrested and put on trial, would there be enough evidence to convict us? This classic thought experiment is perhaps a unique way to look at the call for the Universal Church to gather and reflect in what is called the synodal process.

While not everyone loves the term ‘synod’ or ‘synodal’, it is worth pointing out that it is the Greek equivalent of

the Latin-based term ‘council’ and that it is an expansion of the regularly scheduled gathering of bishops from around the world. The last Synod of the Bishops in Rome was in October 2021, and a follow-up meeting is due again in October 2023. In between those dates, Pope Francis has asked everyone in the Catholic communities all across the world to engage in this process of reflection, of listening to each other, and of consideration for the future of the Church – for the future of all of us as a Church.

The Vatican website for this process (www.synod.va) makes clear that ‘the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands’. That is an inspiring and most challenging call and commitment, and the question for each and all of us is – how will we respond and together help each other respond to these challenges?

Pope Francis has chosen three words as the theme of the Synod: Communion, Participation, Mission, and we have been using a set of questions to help us explore these words and this theme, along with space to explore other areas of consideration and concern. The responses to this part of the process, up to early March, will be shared with the Diocese, in some collated form make their way to the national Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, and eventually provide input for the 2023 Synod of the Bishops in Rome. These local responses will also be used in our own Diocese and Parish, as part of a pastoral plan of renewal and practical projects.

The theme of listening is integral to the synodal discussions, and the hope and effort is to help more of our community engage in this process, so that we can share and listen to each other as we are walking together as the people of God. The Irish philosopher, poet, priest John O’Donohue (1956–2008) writes about the power and mystery found in hearing and listening, in his celebrated work *Anam Cara* (1997):

‘With the sense of hearing we listen to creation. One of the great thresholds in reality is the threshold between sound and silence. All good sounds have silence near them, behind and within them.’

There may seem to be something of a paradox in connecting listening and silence, however this is deeply related to the sense we have that in our most sacred liturgies we are ‘celebrating the mysteries’ and along with the evident sounds there is much that remains unsaid and unsayable:

‘There is a very important distinction to be made between listening and hearing. Sometimes we listen to things, but we never hear them. True listening brings us in touch even with that which is unsaid and unsayable. Sometimes the most important thresholds of mystery are places of silence. To be genuinely spiritual is to have great respect for the possibilities and presence of silence.’

An awareness of these distinctions, of the importance of listening and hearing, helps ground us in the sacred mysteries, and better connects us in life and love and the broader promises of Creation. The American theologian, writer, minister Frederick Buechner provides another perspective on the vital nature of hearing – ourselves, each other, and God – in his inspiring book *Whistling in the Dark* (1988):

‘When I have only the sound of you to go by... I experience you more the way I experience the beating of my own heart or the flow of my own thoughts... It is no surprise that the Bible uses hearing, not seeing, as the predominant image for the way human beings know God. They can’t walk around him and take him in like a cathedral or an artichoke. They can only listen to time for the sounds of him – to the good times and bad times of their own lives for the words which out of his innermost secrets he is addressing to, of all people, them.’

Thomas Merton (1915–1968), the American Trappist monk, shared a kind of prayer poem that helps express something of the power awaiting as the presence of Christ within us starts to find expression in the hearing and sharing of those sacred mysteries:

‘Make ready for the Christ,
Whose smile, like lightning,
Sets free the song of everlasting glory
That now sleeps in your paper flesh,
Like dynamite.’

So what can we expect as we focus more on this process of listening and journeying together – something not entirely new, but rather renewed as a norm, as the standard for how we are to be as a Church, and something which is meant to stay with us well into the future? While the emphasis of the work of the Spirit raises many issues about gifts, charisms, and the mystical elements of faith and community life, there continue to be concerns about the ‘rules’ of the Church – whether actual or rumoured or even imagined. Many people’s experience of the Church seem either somewhat coloured by a sense of law and requirement and obligation, or entirely dominated by it. Despite St Paul’s warnings that the letter (of the Law) kills but the Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6), this concern about rules and restrictions has come up regularly in

discussions, and seems at times a persistent source both of uncertainty and of concern. The rule-driven approaches seem to not always know what to make of the spirit-driven approaches, and often perhaps *vice versa*.

J Philip Newell, the Scottish church minister and former warden of Iona, raises some key points about such mixed church traditions in his book *Listening for the Heartbeat of God* (1997), where he draws on the tradition of focussing on St Peter’s practical leadership along with the mystical guidance of St John the Evangelist. It was St John, the especially beloved apostle, who famously lay against Jesus at the Last Supper and so could be said to hear the ‘heartbeat of God’.

The latter tradition, of listening for God in all things, ‘represents the way of contemplation’, while the traditional focus on St Peter is one which represents ‘faithful action’. ‘In a sense’ says Newell, ‘they can be regarded as the male equivalents of Mary and Martha and as symbols of the tension between the contemplative and the active.’ ‘The two traditions’ says Newell ‘have often been pulled apart, but they are much stronger together. The truth of “God with us” that is celebrated by particular people in particular places need not be an exclusive celebration, it applies to every person and every form of life, because God is with and in all that has life.’

While lamenting the split of these two essential traditions and the resulting problems that this has meant, Newell sees hope if we can reintegrate them:

‘If the Church’s symbols and rituals pointed more clearly to the world as God’s dwelling-place, we might then more fully rediscover that God’s heartbeat can be heard in the whole of life and at the heart of our own lives, if we will only listen.’

It is worth asking and challenging ourselves with questions such as: what does a vibrant Church – alive in Spirit and Sacrament – look like, and how (and when) shall we become such a Church? The early Church communities were regularly addressed by a special name, certainly by St Paul, when he wrote to the ‘saints’ at a particular regional Church (for example, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome). Saints was never singular, always inclusive of the community of believers, and indicative of the mission of the Universal Church – salvation, of course, but not entirely awaiting the ‘hereafter’ but also of the present and the call to holiness. In this way, holiness is seen as not just for those ‘gone before us marked with the sign of faith’, but also for those alive in the sense we usually understand – those we can see and hear. Yet, more broadly, holiness is something for the wider community, which stretches across time as

well as space, and takes in not only the saints in the flesh, or saints in eternity, but all those together in the combination we recall in the Apostles' Creed as the communion of saints.

Buechner shares an insightful view of the communion of saints in his book *14-15 in the Dark*, by suggesting that those gathered around the altar table are joined together with the rest of creation and the communion of saints:

'The parson and his assistant and the usual scattering of senior citizens, parents, teenagers are not alone in whatever they think they are doing. The bird chirping outside, and all the Angels and Archangels and all the company of heaven ... Cherubim and Seraphim. They are all in the act together... And "all the company of heaven" means everybody we ever loved and lost, including the ones we didn't know we loved until we lost them or didn't love at all. It means people we never heard of. It means everybody who ever did – or at some unimaginable time in the future ever will – come together at something like this table in search of something like what is offered at it.'

This may be a bit overwhelming. Yet, it also can be incredibly comforting – not only to be reassured that aunts and uncles and relatives of all sorts join in with us in our prayer and worship, but so too do all those cousins and great-grand relations of ours and others who might help us out with some wise inspiration and example. This is in part why we are named after saints and good examples, but also why some feel closer to this or that person and perhaps canonised saint – we can always find some helpful role model among the many who have gone before us, much as we seek out mentors and advisers in the temporal world around us.

Newell shares a similarly mystical reflection on the communion of saints and ever-presence of Christ:

'Being part of the song of creation and, as members of the Church, of the living communion of saints, are two aspects of the one mystery. Teilhard de Chardin, who was a scientist, a priest and one of the twentieth century's great Christian mystics, saw, for instance, that when the priest raises his hands in consecration over the bread and wine at the church's altar he is declaring all matter, all life, to be Christ's body and blood.'

It would seem our job in this engaging synodal and listening process, as a local gathering of the 'saints' and together with the Universal Church and even the wider communion of saints, is to help balance the challenges of the calls of both Saints Mary and Martha, of Saints John and Peter, of the contemplative and active. There is much we have started reviewing about the needs of different sub-communities within the Parish and wider

community, including the promise of expanding the collaboration with other Christians and faith groups to help address those wider communal needs. A brief poem by the Welsh Anglican poet priest R S Thomas (1913–2000) provides some hope for not being too daunted by the challenges of the eternal calling to us through the here and now:

'I think that maybe
I will be a little surer
of being a little nearer.
That's all. Eternity
is in the understanding
that that little is more than enough.'

Jesus Blesses Children

Fr Bob Eccles

'And they were bringing children to him in order that he might touch them. But his disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he grew angry and said to them, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them. For of such is the kingdom of God".' Mark 10:13–14.

We were at a Catholic People's Week at Hengrave Hall, and whilst the children were supposed to be having adventures elsewhere in the grounds, their parents were caught up in one of those intense worry sessions, what they call sharing. It was all about failure to hand on the faith. How difficult it all is, what chance is there we'll pass on our faith to our children as they grow up? How can we hope to keep them in a secular world which is so unpromising, unfriendly to religion? So it went on, and the prospects for the future of the Church were looking grim.

But the mood changed at once when the young people came tumbling back into the room demanding to know what we were talking about and took the wind out of our sails. You always talk as though we can't think for ourselves! We have our own discussions about God and stuff, we stand up for what we believe is true, we have our own conversations with Jesus, and our own thoughts. All of us like being part of a family that prays. You don't need to worry about us!

There is an expression in all the Gospels, 'the little ones'. French translations put, *les petits riens*, the little nothings. But children big and little are not nothings, not by a long chalk. Only lately I discovered the children's voices of Penelope Fitzgerald's novels, just so authentic, and quite as believable as the children in Stevie Smith's uncanny short stories. To have an ear for what they have to say, there's a thing. Like some older

hands, Lewis Carroll and Mark Twain, writers just as quirky and offbeat, they know that children are not empty vessels only waiting for adults to come and fill them up, but real people. Another favourite book, by Peter and Iona Opie, is called just *The People in the Playground* (1993). So when I find my Lord – of whom we are told that he sees the heart – insisting on having the children round him, then I know he delights in their transparency and frankness, their capacity for awe and wonder (there are the beginnings of religion), and that rugged interest they always have in fair play. He responds to them because they respond to what he is himself, they are the kingdom of God already.

Parish Organisations and Activities

International Women's Day of Prayer 2022

The International Women's Day of Prayer took place on 5th March 2022. A group of women met at St Laurence's to mark this day and pray together.



It was started in 1990 to bring women together to pray for and with each other. It has been going now for over 20 years and has focussed on many different topics over the years including intercessory prayer, scriptural prayer and helping our children develop a prayer life of their own.

With thanks to Fortunata Hutson for these photos.

Book recommendation

Give Up Worry for Lent

Karen Rodgers

I am by nature and tradition a worrier. This book and the free newsletter which Gary sends out daily by email have been a great help to me and I warmly commend both to anyone looking for a Lenten devotion.

Give Up Worry for Lent!: 40 Days to Finding Peace in Christ by Gary Zimak

<https://www.alibris.co.uk/Give-Up-Worry-for-Lent-40-Days-to-Finding-Peace-in-Christ-Gary-Zimak/book/41448058?matches=4>

<https://catholicstand.com/give-up-worry-for-good-off-the-shelf-206-with-gary-zimak/>

You can subscribe to the free 'Thought for the Day' based on the daily Scripture readings here:

<https://followingthetruth.com/>



Synodal Pathway – St Laurence Parish, Cambridge – Diocese of East Anglia, UK – March 2022

Ron Haynes

Preface

Last October the Pope asked Catholics to engage with the Synodal Pathway. This was a period of consultation and discussion at Parish level throughout the Church worldwide, the results of which will eventually feed back into the Synod of Bishops due to take place in Rome in 2023.

There was a set of questions to be used as a starting point for each week's discussion and here is a short summary of our Parish's response.

The members of the Parish of St Laurence have engaged for well over seven weeks to share and listen together, and the following are key reflections raised in the Synodal process discussions. We want to thank the Pope and fellow pilgrims of the Universal Church for this vital opportunity to work together in this wondrous Synodal process. We very much want to follow up these questions requested by the Diocese on the more general and often local concerns, in the near future, with a more focussed attention to other widespread and pressing issues in the Church that transcend the parish (e.g. ministry, education, women in the Church, married clergy, clericalism).

Responding to the Diocese

1) How welcoming is our Parish?

At all our discussions, Parishioners said that our Parish is generally very welcoming, and particularly mentioned Welcomers at Mass, the welcoming approach from the priests, and the tea and coffee afterwards (a Saturday Coffee Hub has been of particular importance during COVID restrictions). The Parish can work together to make families with young children feel comfortable and be sensitive to the problems of families where only one parent is a Catholic. However, a persistent theme was that not everyone feels welcome in the Catholic Church because it appears exclusive and judgmental. LGBTQ+ people feel excluded.

2) How good are we at listening?

The Parish responses included a number who think this is an area of ministry we could develop. It was noted that there are differences between active or participatory listening versus passive or less engaged listening, in liturgies, prayer, etc. On a particularly positive note, the

Parish Open Meeting was commended for creating an open and listening atmosphere. We were not asked how good the Church is at listening. Many are sceptical of the whole Synod process because they do not believe that the hierarchy will listen with open minds and hearts. If we are to become a listening Church at all levels then the bishops need to be open to hearing lay and clergy voices.

3) How good are we at communicating?

At Parish level there is much that is good, and gratitude was expressed to our Tech Group and Office and Parish Communications Team. A number of practical suggestions were made, including even better use of our Parish magazine (*The Pilgrim*), website, noticeboards (with a particular interest in internal and external electronic noticeboards), mailing lists, and social media. Again, communication and transparency at Diocesan level has much room for improvement.

4) How well does the Church's liturgy inspire a deeper encounter with the Risen Lord?

Parishioners find our Parish liturgies helpful in bringing them closer to the risen Lord; as one person said "I leave ready to live my faith in all I do". Great love for the Mass was expressed. Parishioners recognise that they are fortunate to have varied Sunday Mass liturgies, including regular Children's Liturgy, and a monthly Charismatic 'Ablaze' Mass. Many said that they still find the new translation of the Mass a major impediment to prayer and worship and we agreed to ask the bishops to start the process of revising the translation so that it is no longer full of outdated language and Latinate constructions. What we need is a graceful vernacular, using inclusive language. Concern was raised about the impending further detrimental changes to the lectionary.

5) How well do we understand and participate in the Mission of the Church?

The parishioners who took part in our discussions had varied understanding of the Mission of the Church, though all understood it as preaching and living the Gospel and sharing the Faith. Some added that the Church has to be a sign of love and hope, at the service of people in need in the name of the Kingdom. It was a surprise to some parishioners that the Mission of the Church involves the salvation of souls and the redemption of the world. There is a perceived dichotomy between how the Church conveys the sense of Mission and how some parishioners understand it. We identified the

need for ongoing adult education and formation, to better understand and engage with the Church's Mission.

6) **How well do we engage with the wider world?**

Parishioners explored a number of ways to reach out to the community around us. SVP is there for anyone who asks for help. There is outreach to the wider world through CAFOD. Many parishioners are engaged in community action, environmental action, and the Justice and Peace group, as well as being individual members of non-church groups which include people of all faiths and none. We hope to find ways to share more activities within the city, region, Deanery, Diocese, and wider country.

7) **How good is our relationship with other Christian traditions?**

There is little institutional ecumenical activity but individuals do have strong ecumenical links. Some parishioners expressed disappointment at the lack of progress towards Christian unity. We would welcome a stronger push and assistance from the Diocese and Bishops' Conference towards shared Christian prayer and action.

8) **How well do we work as a team in the Parish?**

This is a Parish of many teams rather than one. Teams can report to and through the Parish Open Meeting. Major decisions are discussed though it is recognised that on some questions the Parish Priest has the responsibility to take the final decision after consultation. We are grateful to have a Parish Priest who encourages lay initiative and co-responsibility. Given the decline in the number of priests, this becomes ever more critical. Seminary training should prepare ordinands for collaborative ministry and for lay people to take more active responsibility in maintaining and developing parish life. There is much more transparency in our Parish than at other levels of the Church hierarchy.

9) **How open are we to the will of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit?**

Individuals discussed ways of opening themselves to God's will through prayer and attentive listening, including in taking time to wait on God in silence. Parishioners talked about opening themselves to the will of God during Mass and as they listen to the Word of God, the reflections in the homily, and in receiving Communion. There was a question

about whether the Church collectively listens to the Spirit speaking through all of us and in reading the signs of the times. There were concerns that the traditions of ongoing revelation and discernment were not well understood.

In addition, there was concern that there was a lack of understanding that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were flowing through all of us, and therefore greater education about this would be a benefit to all of us. There was also a question about being open to learning from the Spirit through the changes in modern society and relationships, so that we can better understand what is life-giving. These changes include the equal role of women in economy and society, and the developing awareness of the diversity of human relationships.

Some concerns were raised that the LGBTQ+ community feel excluded by the wider Church. There was a call for greater clarity and guidance from the hierarchy on Church teaching about gender ideology and same-sex relationships (both to adults and in schools) and how this is centred on Christ's teaching.

10) **How well do we pass on the faith?**

This was a recurring theme in our discussions. We identified much that is good at Parish level and ways the Parish can work to improve what we do and to support parents in the Christian formation of their children. There was great appreciation for the ability of faith schools to nurture the faith of the children. We acknowledged that there is a crisis in passing on the faith. We feel there is a gap in the follow-up to those who have prepared for and received the various Sacraments, which sometimes make them seem like a tick-box exercise.

Many who were brought up in the faith, whose parents have done their best to share faith and nurture their practice, no longer attend Mass or define themselves as Catholics. The Church needs to do some hard work to understand why her message is being rejected. The Church has to recognise the damage done to her authority by the scandals of child abuse and the failure to deal with it.

The Church also needs to understand the impact of the growth in the number of families where only one parent is a Catholic. The Catholic parent can often feel overwhelmed and a lone voice and it makes it harder to bring young children to Mass and to support the wider

aspects of Parish life. The increasing numbers of working mothers in society generally has also had an impact – most families now have both parents working which means they have less time and inclination to support and attend Parish activities.

What is the Catholic Women's League?

Margaret Plumb

2006 saw the Centenary of the Catholic Women's League. Its Patroness is St Margaret Clitherow, whose feast day is 30th August.

The Catholic Women's League (CWL) was founded in 1906 by Margaret Fletcher, a clergyman's daughter who converted to Catholicism and who was passionate about the need for improved educational opportunities for women. She insisted that the League needed women with 'balanced common-sense' and it should 'utilise the average woman in convincing the Catholic world that business-like methods and intellectual gifts are excellent weapons in the service of God.'

The League was modelled on a similar organisation in Germany and over a year later it held its first Annual Meeting in Cathedral Hall at Westminster with the Archbishop in the Chair as its President. Its objective was to promote the 'Associated Endeavour' of Catholic women and it adopted as its motto 'Charity, Work, Loyalty'. Branches were established all over the country.

The League was founded in the Diocese of Northampton in 1912 when branches were started in Northampton, Norwich and Cambridge. In March 1912, Provost Scott presided over a meeting held at St Mary's Convent, Cambridge, which was addressed by Miss Streeter, one of the pioneers who had been associated with Margaret Fletcher in founding the League, and at that meeting a resolution was taken to establish the League in Cambridge. The inaugural meeting was held in April 1912 at St Mary's Convent where meetings continued to be held with Mother Mary Salome being elected its first President and 'for years by her wisdom and guidance was instrumental in inspiring the branch with the right enthusiasm.'

During the First World War service was done for men at the front, the wounded in hospital and Belgian refugees by the Cambridge Branch.

In 1933, the Cambridge Section held its 21st birthday and the occasion was marked by the Headquarters of the League choosing Cambridge as the venue for their Annual General Meeting. This gathering included the foundress, Margaret Fletcher, Lady Rankeillour, Miss Balfe and other prominent Leaguers.

This non-political organisation was attractive to women because it was national, organised, disciplined, united in aim, secular and loyal to the hierarchy; characteristics preserved to this day. The League's mission, since its formation, has been to educate and encourage Catholic women to play a role in the work of the Church at parish, diocesan, national and international levels. They are concerned with social issues such as the plight of asylum seekers, ecumenism, bio-ethics and women's role in society.

The mission of the CWL is as relevant today as in the past but methods of communication must adapt to suit women of the 21st century.

If you wish to have further information about the Catholic Women's League a leaflet may be found on the noticeboard in the Porch or contact Janet Scally on C.365330.

Catholic Women's League Parish update

Janet Scally

We will provide simple soup lunches every Friday during Lent. Do join us and help us to support the Cambridge Food bank, which will be especially important as fuel prices are rising so very fast.

The money we raised for our Advent Lunches has gone to the Medaille Trust to support young people who have been trafficked. After they have been tracked down, usually by the police, they need a great deal of care and support to live a life that approaches normality, so the charity supports them until they are confident enough to consider either returning to their own countries or to settling here in Britain.

Throughout the rest of the year, we meet at 10.30am on the second Friday of the month. Anyone is welcome to attend our meetings.

As well as our meetings, some of us will be going to St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth to attend a pilgrimage on 22nd June and we will also go to the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Women's League, held at the Hayes Christian Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire later this year.

Image removed for copyright reasons.

Walk Against Hunger (Afghanistan)

Serga Collett, Parish CAFOD rep

When

Lent invites us to make our ‘minds’ and ‘hearts’ ready for remembering Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. It is a time to reflect on how to become the people God wants us to be.

And Lent is also a time to open the doors of our hearts a little wider and understand our Lord a little deeper. Jesus commanded us to love one another, therefore is Lent not especially a time for acting – being generous – does that not mirror the very nature of God the great Giver, who gives us the gift of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and our daily bread day by day?

Why

Should we therefore not do more than give stuff up, but ‘act out’ our love? When we observe so much pain and suffering of our brothers and sisters, is it not right and just, to do all we can to help?

The answer is YES! So what are we planning here at St Laurence’s: we are going to ‘WALK AGAINST HUNGER’. We are, once again, going to strap on our walking boots and walk! Walk to show solidarity with our brothers and sisters: it is that easy!

How

Walk as far as you are able/want to each day this Lent – no amount of steps is too few. Before you start – download a pedometer app (‘Pacer’ is a good one) on your smartphone, check how many steps you have taken every day, then go to the St Laurence’s website, follow the footsteps’ icon at the bottom of the homepage and add your steps to the step counter.

Where

So where are we going and who are we going to help? Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world – over a third of the population live below the poverty line and struggle to meet their basic needs. And that was before the Taliban took over! Since the Taliban took control of the country in August 2021, Afghanistan continues to plunge deeper into crisis. The Afghan economy has gone into complete collapse. The knock-on effect from this means the poorest suffer most!

“It has been heart-breaking,” Niamh – CAFOD’s programme officer for Afghanistan says. “I am sitting here, very comfortably in my house, continuing with my normal life, but only this morning we were on the phone to one of our partners in Afghanistan, where they are experiencing temperatures of around -8C or -9C and people don’t have basic things, food or heating. Just on a human level it’s very difficult not to feel so guilty when we’re faced with what the daily reality is like for these people.”

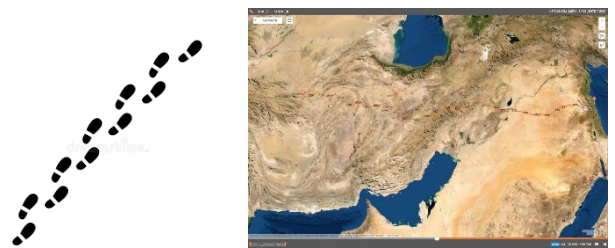
Join us

Can we make it? All the way to Afghanistan?

Last year we not only walked to Ethiopia but to Jerusalem for Easter! And we raised a staggering £10,000. This year we are aiming to do the same, or even beat it – let’s dream BIG! We were amongst the top parishes in the country with the amount we raised last year. Can we do it again? Get your friends, family and colleagues to sponsor every step you take this Lent, then go to the JustGiving website and type in **stlaurenceswalk2022-afghanistan** and donate the amount you want to give/have raised. You can also give through St Laurence’s Church by cheque, cash or bank transfer.

Account name:	St Laurences Church
Sort Code:	09-01-53
Account Number:	14255486
Payment Reference:	CAFOD

Please, please, please join us in showing our love this Lent every day, remember EVERY STEP WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE to someone who has no food, water or shelter.



Just like Jesus we will be (virtually) crossing the desert this Lent

Pray

Pope Francis has expressed his ‘concern for the situation in Afghanistan’. He called for prayers ‘so that the clamour of weapons may cease, and solutions may be found at the negotiating table’:

Compassionate God

We hold in your presence the people of Afghanistan.
Be a shelter for those who have been displaced.
Be a comforter for those who are mourning.
Be the peace for those who are afraid,
Be near to those who are hungry.
Be healing for those who are sick.
Be the strength of those working to bring hope.

Open our eyes and hearts,
so we may stand in solidarity,
and reach out in love,
to our brothers and sisters.
May they know they are not forgotten
and that we hold them in our hearts
whilst they search for the path to peace.
Amen



The impact of several years of conflict and drought have been made worse by the Taliban takeover. As a result, there have been massive increases in food prices and many people just do not have enough to eat. Families have been forced to leave their homes, and women and girls fear for their futures.

“At this time of year in Afghanistan it is extremely cold,” explained Janet Symes, CAFOD’s Head of Asia Region. “There are areas that get cut off for weeks on end. It is very important that people can access fuel, to keep warm and to be able to cook food with”.

The situation in Afghanistan is highly complex with decades of conflict that have taken a terrible toll on Afghan people, resulting in deaths, injuries and pushing families further into poverty. Drought and coronavirus have added even greater problems for vulnerable families struggling with hunger and healthcare.

CAFOD’s local humanitarian experts are continuing to do rapid assessments ensuring that the most vulnerable families are reached. They have already started providing short-term assistance to more than

8,000 small-scale farming families approximately 56,000 people – in over 50 of the most drought-affected villages in the country to allow them to **obtain basic food for their families and plant their crops for next season.**

Women

CAFOD’s Afghanistan Crisis Appeal will ensure that the most vulnerable people in Afghanistan will be assisted based on a thorough needs assessment. At the top of the priority list will be **older women, households headed by women, people with disabilities, pregnant and breastfeeding women.** Women are always disproportionately affected in humanitarian situations and in Afghanistan women have again been disproportionately affected by escalating conflict, Covid-19, floods and droughts, and the resulting poverty.

The impact of a Taliban-governed Afghanistan on women’s ability to go to work with guarantees of safety are still unclear.

Gift Aid – the good way to give to your Church

Jim Scally

Gift Aid is an arrangement that allows charities, including churches, to reclaim tax on donations made by a taxpayer. If you are paying tax on earnings, pensions or income/capital gains from investments, and you sign up for Gift Aid, the government gives back to the Church some of the tax you have already paid.

If you have not already signed up for the Gift Aid scheme, please consider doing so and read more about it [HERE](#) . You can find this form on the St Laurence’s website under ‘[Gift Aid](#)’

Or from the Parish homepage select: Parish Ministries and Groups → Parish Communication and Administration → Parish Finance Committee and Gift Aid

Parish Offerings. Many of you are now making your offering via Direct Debit. We continue to accept cash. Now as pre-pandemic, you can have a box of Dated Envelopes in which to put your donation before placing in the collection basket. If you would like to use this method contact Jim Scally on gift.aid@saintlaurence.org.uk

News from St Laurence Primary School

Mini Vinnies – Spring Term 2022

The Mini Vinnies are back in action at St Laurence! Over the last term they have channelled their energy into activities that have focused on their charity promise. In the photos you can see:

- Parish member of the SVP, David Brierley, collecting all the donations just before Christmas that the Mini-Vinnies either donated themselves, or asked others in the school, to help those in need.
- The Mini Vinnies saying ‘Thank you’ to all the parents and children who donated to the appeal. Going to Buchan Street Care Home to deliver cards and sing carols outside.
- The Mini-Vinnie’s presenting 50 ‘packs for the homeless’, that were bought using the money raised from the Toy Sale, to Melody from Winter Comfort.



Pancakes Races for CAFOD

To mark the start of our Lent fundraising promise, the whole school joined together to compete in Pancake Races. Earlier in the week, Jane Crone, our CAFOD representative talked to the children about CAFOD’s ‘Walk Against Hunger’ campaign to show solidarity with the 200 million children whose lives are at risk because of malnutrition.

We used the steps we accumulated in the races and put these towards our total, so far, we have raised £200.00!



This term St Laurence Primary has started to work towards the CAFOD *LiveSimply* Award which is an opportunity for the school community to respond to the Church's call to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the world's poorest. It is an invitation to the school to follow in the footsteps of Jesus who lived and preached a simple life, and to take meaningful action on the ecological crisis we face today.



To achieve the award the school must provide evidence of 9 *LiveSimply* actions per year. This is split between three main actions and six school-based actions. Actions must show impact on either the school, local or global community. If anyone from the Parish would like to support the school with an action that would benefit the Parish community, please contact Mrs Harvey via the school office.

Easter Garden



As I write, Mrs Chalklin and her Key Stage One team are collecting the resources together ready for the children to make the traditional Easter Gardens. Each year the children look very proud as they carry home their gardens which are a symbol of Jesus death and resurrection. If you would like to make your own Easter Garden here is a link to a video which explains how create one: <https://request.org.uk/restart/2017/02/23/make-an-easter-garden/>

Personal Stories and Experiences

Just a Minute – or Three

Rosemary Burdess

From the enclosed, built-up cities or the spreading flatlands of East Anglia with their immense skies, why would you travel over two hundred miles to gaze on moorland hilltops enveloped in cloud and listen to falling rain and leaves scuttling from a chasing wind? Well, why wouldn't you?

In Allensford, I learnt a different way to listen, a different way to engage in dialogue (with or without a pre-determined purpose) and a different way to bring about change. We started realising how diverse we all are but finished seeing how similar we are, and this is how it came about.

The first sessions were led by Caroline Pakel, a facilitator working for people and organisations going through transition or conflict and now enabling discussion about climate change. She was convinced that real change can only come about through dialogue – an energy spreading across groups of people. Her meetings have no set purpose but seek to create a safe environment, so all opinions are heard and from which an objective might arise. For this, there needs to be a different approach to both listening and speaking.

On the first evening, after a game of diversity bingo, the real challenge of listening began; each of us had been asked to bring an object from home to explain our outlook or faith journey. In pairs, one person, then the other, had three minutes, (yes, it was always timed!) to speak without interruption, question or comment from the listener. It was the opposite of Just a Minute – and longer. The aim was to create a safe space to allow each to express their thoughts fully without any distractions. We learnt not to use questions like, 'Why?' as they can be intimidating: it was better to encourage with expressions like, 'Can you tell me more?' or 'Yes, and..'

This became the new normal. The next morning, the idea was developed further, and you might like to try this at home. You will need a timer and some pictures or objects. We were given a selection of pictures to choose from. The first person had three minutes to explain their choice and everybody else had two minutes to share their opinion. Finally, the first person had a minute to comment again. We were learning to hear difference and value the opportunity it gives to enrich our own limited point of view.

That Friday evening, many chose to put themselves in the unfamiliar and controversial situation of attending a Latin Tridentine Mass. Afterwards, Canon Michael

answered questions. He described the Latin Mass as a vertical prayer flow and English as horizontal. Most found this alien and much preferred "God beneath, beside and beyond," as our chaplain, Chris Hughes, expressed it.

Chris did, in fact, lead a session and talked in very practical terms. He differed from Caroline as he had objectives to achieve. He belonged to Citizens UK, which is made up of hundreds of member organisations that work together for social justice and common good. As a leader, he used 'listening' to find common ground between people to bring about changes and improvements in society. He asked us to draw a stick person and in pairs use it to explain what was important to us in our lives: we soon realised how much we had in common. Listening brings people together and it was inspiring to hear how diverse people from all backgrounds could work together, overcome bureaucracy and apathy to make things happen – even relatively small but important things like a safe play area in a park in a disadvantaged district of Newcastle.

The long weekend was for all ages. Every day we watched the children skip off with the young helpers. The tinies were angels (YES!) and the teenagers were saints (another YES!). They both had suitable, interesting programmes of activities: the teenagers brought music to talk about and, of course, everybody decorated a pumpkin. We all came together for meals, prayers and the bonfire singing. After so much isolation, there was a warm, contented togetherness, despite windows and doors being kept open.

Since Allensford, there has been much to think about. I had always thought asking questions or commenting showed I was taking an interest in what I was listening to. However, I am now going to discipline myself and not interrupt and see if my conversations improve. In the grounds of Allensford, there is a chapel facing south. If you go early in the morning, the windows seem all misted up, but as the sun rises, mosaic pictures slowly appear. The brighter the sun, the more vibrant the colours and the clearer the images are. It gives life to St Paul's "For now we see through a glass darkly." My listening journey has also moved on.

We left Allensford with a prayer. Mine was from Boo Boo Bear, a little child's nickname. A little child is praying for me: that's got to be a good thing.

Catholic People's Weeks is a 71-year-old organisation run by the laity to support lay people in their experience, understanding and knowledge of God. Breaks are for families or child-free, of varying lengths' always themed and are often located in stunningly beautiful areas of the country. If you would like to find out more, go on the Catholic People's Weeks' [website](#).

Count Everyone In

Serga Collett

Some 35 years ago, shortly after I moved to Cambridge, an enthusiastic Christian (me) full of promise for the future, went to the then priest. I felt that I would like to commit my working life as well as my private life to the service of the Lord. The answer left me so deflated and empty: as a young woman with a husband and family, I was told, 'Well, I could clean the church or similar tasks.' I felt very much left out.

Not to be put off, I set out to spread the love of God in the only way I could, by teaching children about it, hence I started the toddler liturgy at St Laurence's and helped to run the children's liturgy, later founded and ran the only religious playschool (Noah's Ark at OLEM) in Cambridge, taught at St Laurence's and now I am your CAFOD representative. And yet as a woman, I still feel side-lined ... and dream of what could have -been.

I feel thrilled therefore that the synodal process has started, that the voices of the laity will finally be heard – those of the marginalised whether it be a person of colour, alternative sexual orientation or those with additional needs/disabilities.

I was trained as a lecturer in Special Educational Needs; my journey has been one of inclusivity. I therefore learned British Sign Language but soon found that it had its limitations – wonderful for the non-hearing community but what about those with additional needs, those with communication or learning difficulties. I had to find a way that would speak to all learning styles, auditory, visual, kinaesthetic



And finally, I found one.... MAKATON. Many people make the mistake of thinking that it is a sign language – yes, you do sign along with it (and many of the signs are derived from British Sign Language) but it is actually a language development programme – it uses symbols,

signs, facial expression and speech to communicate (note you do not speak with British Sign Language and you alter the sentence structure). Makaton is a way of supporting speech not replacing it.

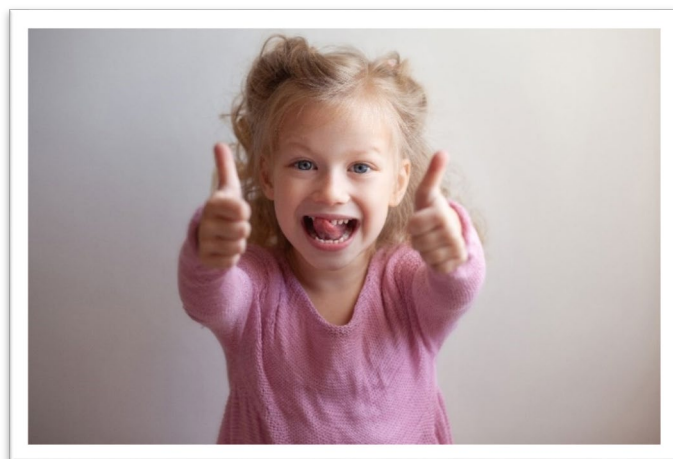
For some years now I have learned Makaton (and you will have seen me signing at some special Masses at St Laurence's). A few years ago, I became a Makaton Tutor – it is so exciting to see those lightbulb moments of understanding – I have one little lad in my class this year – he has been labelled as 'naughty and unresponsive'. Over the last few months, as his signing and understanding grew with the use of Makaton, it has been a delight to watch him learn and begin to 'smile'!

Makaton has been shown to be useful for all sorts of people including those who struggle with understanding concepts, those who have poor literacy skills, including grammatical knowledge and those with English as an Additional Language. Research has shown that by using Makaton, children and adults can take a more active part in life, because communication and language are the key to everything we do and learn.

More recently Makaton has been rolled out for people who suffer from memory loss and those who have suffered with strokes (I have recently started courses specifically for the elderly called 'Watch my Needs') and it is wonderful to see the excitement of those who have lost speech to suddenly be able to communicate again.

I would love to see the church become more inclusive and sign at least some of the most important parts of the Mass. There are 1.5 million people in the UK with learning disabilities, should we not make the service accessible to all? Being able to communicate is one of the most essential skills in life – I know what it feels to be left out – **let us count everyone in!**

If you want to learn more about Makaton, please do not hesitate to contact me: signwithserga@gmail.com If you would like to see some examples of signed Christian songs, the Our Father etc., go to the YouTube Channel: Becky George. Especially the UK Blessing in Makaton is very moving!



Never stop asking questions. Never give up!

Karen Rodgers, with the inspiration, help and many of the words of Teresa Brett

In the 1930s there were nearly one hundred thousand nuns living in Germany. With about 4,000 members, the Institute of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame was one of the largest teaching congregations in Germany at this time and the Notre Dame Sisters in Bavaria, Southern Germany were running many of the schools.⁴

However, by 1936, four of the Sisters at the Notre Dame Convent in Bavaria were becoming increasingly concerned that they were coming under pressure to teach the children things which were in conflict with the Faith. The Nazi regime had begun to require that schools teach that black children and Jews were less than human. The nuns were told by the Superior of the Order to simply carry on teaching and keep praying but these four nuns discerned that a line in the sand had been crossed and that, given the required curriculum, they could not in all conscience continue to teach there.

They left the school and their community and set off as mendicants, with only the clothes they were wearing. Over the next couple of years, walking across Europe, they tried to reach a place where they could pursue their vocations in peace. They walked northwards keeping to the byways to avoid attracting attention to themselves.

In 1939, they arrived at the Belgian coast and managed to stow away on a cargo ship in Ostend which landed at Woolwich. They were at once detained as potential German spies. After six months of interrogation the authorities accepted their story and released them with £5. The Sisters were fortunate enough to meet a Mr McClean who managed to negotiate the purchase of an old barn conversion for them for £5 and to arrange an out-of-work builder and another man to convert the premises into a convent and school. In 1940 they set up a small school on the premises. All comers were welcome and the nuns did not charge fees, merely accepted donations. There were plenty of these as the nuns taught well and thoroughly. One of our parishioners, Teresa Brett, was a pupil at this school.

She writes:

I went to school in a convent near the village where I grew up in the 1950s, Lingford, Surrey. The school was small but grew fast. It was run by the Sisters of Notre Dame, and paper, pencils and books were given by the local council. The school only taught up to 'O' Level but Sister Christa taught me history brilliantly and loved being asked questions. The nuns taught French and Latin as 'the most useful for Europe.. as much is based on

both'. I and one other girl continued to 'A' Level, using the 'O' Level books. The school, staff and curriculum had grown and all was paid for by donations made by grateful parents. Few were Catholic but nobody cared about that. The teaching was thorough and good fun. I was offered a place at Oxford and Cambridge in 1968 because I passed the entrance exam they then used. I chose Oxford because it was hilly.

The four nuns I knew left Germany after becoming increasingly concerned at being put under pressure to teach the children things they did not think Christian (in conflict with their faith). By 1936 they had to teach coloured, Jews and handicapped children that they were nothing; not made by God. They refused to obey their SSND order to follow the rules. Their consciences would not let them.

They left the school in their habits with nothing to eat or drink, keeping out of sight. They knocked on doors, begged and were helped. They walked northwards, then to Denmark and Holland, where life was easier because they were neutral, not Nazi countries.

At Ostend they stowed away on a cargo ship which landed at Woolwich in 1939. They were detained as potential German spies. After six months of interrogation, they were released with £5.

Goodness knows how my father [*Mr McClean*] heard about them. He was living about 40 miles away and helped them to come to Lingfield where he lived. There he bought them a disused house as their new convent. He hired an out-of-work builder to build classrooms nearby. It was the school I went to. I thank God for it. It still exists but no longer belongs to SSND and it has a different name. Sister Christa is buried at Lingfield.

These four nuns followed their conscience and are my life models... I still pray for Sister Christa often and can feel her smiling...[The nuns] did as they walked... They knew nothing about teaching to university level... They inspired and kept going... They never gave up. Blessed heroines. We must be like them.

Historical researcher, Martina Cucchiara notes; 'The Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame emerged from the Third Reich with their communities intact, but they also lost a generation of sisters to National Socialism.'⁴

'Almost all Germans were Christian in 1933...throughout this period there was virtually no public opposition or any readiness by Church leaders to publicly oppose the regime ... The general tactic by the

leadership of both Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany was caution with respect to protest and compromise with the Nazi state leadership where possible. After 1945, the silence of the Church leadership and the widespread complicity of ‘ordinary Christians’ compelled leaders of both Churches to address issues of guilt and complicity during the Holocaust...’²

Victoria J. Barnett notes: ‘The list of “bystanders” – those who declined to challenge the Third Reich in any way – that emerges from any study of the Holocaust is long and depressing.’¹

Professor of Theology, Randall B. Smith asks; ‘How could Catholics...have failed to understand the evil staring them in the face? And why did they ‘accommodate’ a regime that had labelled Christianity, and Catholics in particular, as ‘enemies of the state’?’³

I learned about the nuns in the course of one of our Synodal Pathway discussions from Teresa and I asked her what Sister Christa would likely say if asked what ‘Mission’ meant to her. Teresa thought for a moment and then said with great conviction; “Never stop asking questions”. I wonder which hard questions Sister Christa would be asking us today?

Footnotes

1) <https://www.adl.org/news/op-ed/role-of-churches-nazi-germany>

2) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-german-churches-and-the-nazi-state>

3) <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2020/10/21/on-the-nature-of-complicity/>

4) In the 1930s, nearly one hundred thousand nuns lived in Germany; this figure compares to about 22,000 priests. I present a representative case study of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame. With about 4,000 members, the Institute of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame was one of the largest teaching congregations in Germany in the 1930s. The Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame emerged from the Third Reich with their communities intact, but they also lost a generation of sisters to National Socialism (Martina Cucchiara <https://curate.nd.edu/show/dz010p11c1w> <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?>)

Poetry

Sing as the Sun is Going

Michael Allan

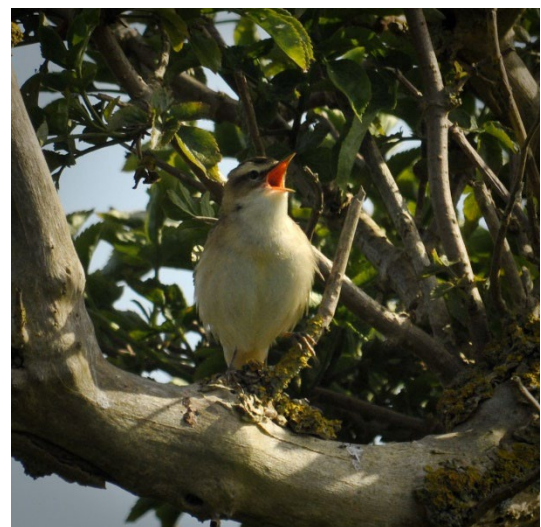
Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is one of the great English poets. His poems are fresh and alive, far from being dated and old fashioned as some might expect. He had a piercing appreciation and love of the life of the natural world.

Proud Songsters

by Thomas Hardy

*The thrushes sing as the sun is going,
And the finches whistle in ones and pairs,
And as it gets dark loud nightingales in bushes
Pipe, as they can when April wears,
As if all Time were theirs.
These are brand new birds of twelvemonths’ growing,
Which a year ago, or less than twain,
No finches were, nor nightingales, nor thrushes,
But only particles of grain,
And earth, and air, and rain.*

Birds and their song are of a season, come and then gone. Time sweeps them away, as it does us. But life, like a fountain, springs up anew every moment from the hand of the Creator. As another great English poet, the Jesuit priest Gerard Manley Hopkins, says in his poem *God’s Grandeur*: ‘And for all this, nature is never spent; There lives the dearest freshness deep down things.’ Time sweeps away, but life with its beauty is never spent, dwelling deep down and springing up: it comes down like the rain and snow from the heavens and springs up with new life from the earth.



Singing Nightingale

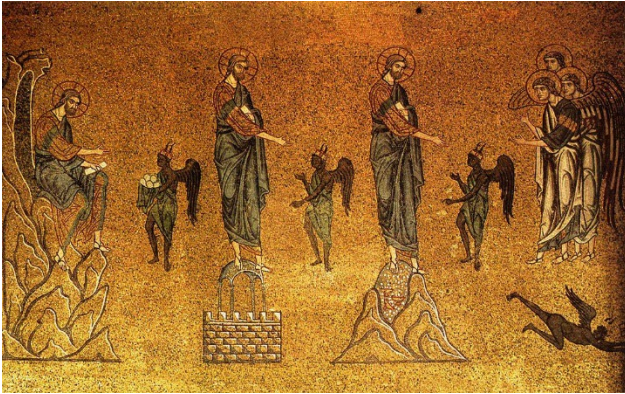
(Photo Credit: "Singing Nightingale (D3A 1639)" by swl is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0.)

40 days and 40 nights

Mary Gullick

I have walked in dark hallways,
I have seen the light and seen dark days,
But nothing brings such joy as knowing,
I'm one day closer to Him.
In every hour, in every day, I try my best to see,
To see through each valley of hope, of tears, of
darkness that comes my way,
I'm given courage upon my journey, that this load I
carry, I am not alone,
I have with me someone; He will help me bare.

40 days and 40 nights I Lead To Calvary with Him,
To know that everything I do is offered up, in silence,
in hope, in gratitude, in tears
For the love I have in knowing,
He took the pain for me, for you, for all.



Temptation of Christ, 12th century mosaic
in St Mark's Basilica, Venice,
anonymus, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Jerusalem (1979)

Roy Maclaren

Rich fragments of Byzantium
Scattered o'er the Holy Land
Commemorate the birth,
The Life, the death, of Jesus.
Over them new churches rise
Full of the splendour that He only knew.

He stood in Pilate's house
And Herod's palace and saw
Glories that perished long ago.
But on the hillsides
Still we see
Anemones and Asphodels He loved.

Only A Few Leaves

Wally Moscuza

River Rivus Rivals
The speed of light
Television by satellite
Seeds for thought
Life is an open road
The youth is alone no home.
A bridge
A dying tree is in the field
It is going bald
A bald head
Chemotherapy
Cancer
Pollution
No apples, pears or figs
Only a few leaves
Pale green under a dusky sky
Nature also fights to stay alive.
Man God Heaven
Flesh living again
Growing in the shadow of the sun –
Walls
No doors
Bare earth
No crop
Sandstorm
Houses made of cardboard.
I stood at the foot of the universe
No more rivals.
My body was christened in the sand.
Sunflower seeds
No more salad or cream,
Vivaldi's Four Seasons Mozart Requiem –
Birth Youth Manhood Death
Geometry was never my best!
I am weightless ...
Flying in the breeze
For safety.



[photo by Adrian Pelletier on Pixnio]

Editorial

Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes

Many thanks to all our wonderful contributors to this bumper edition. We hope you all enjoy walking the Stations of the Cross for CAFOD and wish you fine weather as you venture out. We are very well provisioned for Stations this year with Fr Simon in the church and on Zoom on Friday evenings, and Pax Christi also online on Wednesday evenings.

Thanks to those who volunteered to become Eucharistic Ministers or Readers through the recent Parish survey, and who have now completed their training. And thank you to those who were already serving in these ministries who came to the training to support the new volunteers and renew their own commitment. We are still in the process of recruiting more Welcomers and we are also looking forward to Altar Servers returning.

Thanks also to the group who organised and ran the Synodal Pathway consultation. We look forward to hearing how our responses will also be used in the Parish to develop a pastoral plan of renewal and practical projects.

It just remains for us to wish you a very happy and peaceful Easter!



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

The deadline for the next edition is
17 June 2022 for publication on 16/17 July

The production team:

Editors: Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes

Sub-editors: Alex Dias, Carol Williams, Susan O'Brien, Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes

Commissioning Editor: Nora Darby

Cover: Leonie Isaacson

Proofreaders: Caroline O'Donnell & Sarah Sykes

Layout (preparation for printing): Sarah Sykes, Nora Darby

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

Some Regular Events

The Parishioners Open Meeting is where **ALL** parishioners can come together to discuss and debate Parish matters and decide when and where things need to be done. The Agenda is planned in advance and the meeting is led by the chairman and Parish Priest. Meetings commence at 7.30pm and are held in the Parish Room with the option to join online via Zoom.

We are currently holding meetings every two months. The Zoom link is published in the Newsletter and in the Keep in Touch email. It is also published on the parish website.

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

The Pilgrim by Email

The Pilgrim magazine is available in hard copy or you can receive a pdf version by email. If you are not already on the distribution list, send a request to pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk

Pilgrim on the Web

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

ABLAZE

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



Upcoming Parish Events

Lent Stations of the Cross led by Fr Simon	Fridays In Church 7:00pm Online Zoom 7:45pm Meeting ID: 870 6824 2324 Passcode: 848944
Justice & Peace Stations of the Cross in Lent	Weds 7:30pm Online Zoom
Holy Week Masses Palm Sunday Maundy Thursday Good Friday: Children's Stations of the Cross <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearsal • Stations of the Cross Liturgy of the Passion Polish Liturgy Stations of the Cross (in church only) Easter Vigil Easter Sunday	Normal Mass times 14 April 7:30pm 10:00am 10:30am 2pm & 4pm 6pm 7:30pm 9pm 8am, 9.30am, 11am
Parishioners Open Meeting	7 May 14 July 7:30pm
Confirmation Mass	4 July 6pm
First Holy Communion	Sat 11 /18 June 10:30am & 3pm Sun 12/19 June 11am
ABLAZE Youth Mass (1st Sunday of the month) 5pm	3 April 5 June 3 July
Ignite Youth Festival	30 April – 2 May
Saturday Coffee Hub	10:00-12:00 After 9:30am Mass

All the above Mass times are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication, but please check the newsletter for any changes.



Follow St Laurence's on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/stlaurencecambridge>

ST LAURENCE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

91 Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1XB

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Email: office@saintlaurence.org.uk

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

Parish Priest:

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07946 390060

simon.blakesley@rcdea.org.uk

Deacon:

Rev. Dr Geoffrey Cook
01223 351650

Secretary:

Mr Reece King
01223 704640

reece.king@saintlaurence.org.uk

Treasurer:

James Dore
07980 467534

treasurer@saintlaurence.org.uk

Service Times

Saturday 9.30am

6pm Vigil Mass (sung)

Sunday 8am

9.30am (sung) with children's liturgy

11am (sung)

Join us afterwards for coffee and chat after Mass

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.30am

Wed & Fri 12.30pm

All Masses are also livestreamed. Please watch out for any changes to this and Mass times in the Parish website and weekly notices or announced at Mass

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