

# The Pilgrim

St Laurence's Parish Magazine, Summer Edition 2023



## Celebrating Parish Life

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# CONFIRMATION 5 JULY 2023 with Bishop Peter Collins



**CONGRATULATIONS** to all 35 candidates from our Parish who have been confirmed this summer.  
21 were confirmed at St Laurence's and 14 joined the OLEM candidates on 4 July.

## What's New



The biggest visual change at the church since the last edition of *Pilgrim* is the new carpet and layout in the Sanctuary which has given it a fresh look. Fr Simon also took the opportunity to re-order the area in to the more traditional format, having the priest seated to the right of the altar and the lectern to the left. With thanks to Martin Avery for the rewiring of the microphones to suit this new layout and to all those who helped to move the furniture on and off the Sanctuary.

## Crowning of Mary



On Sunday 21st May after the 11am Mass we celebrated the crowning of the statue of Mary in the Parish garden



## Strawberry Fair



St Laurence's had a stall at Strawberry Fair this year, organised and run by Joanne Kerrigun, James Dore and Jim Infield. Giving Christian witness amongst the people of Cambridge.

## Coronation Celebration

Fr Simon hosted a Coronation Coffee Hub Special to celebrate our new King. The Coronation was shown on the big screen in the Parish Room. There was plenty of food and drink, including a special cake baked by Jeanette Milbourn.

## First Holy Communions

### Paula Hawkins

After months of preparation the big day finally arrived! The children and parents have worked hard to prepare for this special next step in their Catholic journey. At the time writing, we still have one more weekend of Masses before all the children have made their First Holy Communion. In all we have had 65 children this year, a combination of St Laurence's school and Parish children. Here a few pictures of the children on their big day.



Some of our First Holy Communicants

## Holy Communion returns to both kinds

### Nora Darby

In late April Fr Simon announced at all Masses that a Diocesan notification stated : From 10th June, the Feast of Corpus Christi, we will return to Holy Communion under both kinds, that is Bread and Wine.

This meant we would now need more Eucharistic Ministers at all Masses. A request was made in the Keeping-in-Touch email (KiT) and Newsletter for new, and pre-pandemic, ministers to sign up for training. We only had just over a month to prepare but we had a good response and after training we were able to complete a new rota in time.

We would like to give a big **Thank You** to all those who came forward in a fairly short time period for training and then agreeing to be on the rota at their preferred Mass.

We now also have full Offertory which requires Welcomers to ensure that there are two people to take up the bread and wine and two to take the collection. Again **thank you** to all who have helped to make this work.

## Features and Opinions

### Anne Frank and finding happiness

#### Michael Allan

‘Beauty remains, even in misfortune.’

How can happiness be found or, when lost, how can it be recaptured? By lying on an expensive far-away beach, or walking through the Botanic Gardens on a bright spring morning, or looking out of a dusty attic window, hiding from those seeking to destroy you?

Anne Frank, her older sister, Margot, and their parents, Otto and Edith, together with another family and a single man, hid from the Gestapo in a secret annexe of a factory in Amsterdam from July 1942 to August 1944. For those two years they dared not step outside.

On Wednesday 23rd February 1944, Anne wrote in her diary:

‘I go to the attic almost every morning to get the stale air out of my lungs. This morning when I went there, Peter was busy cleaning up. He finished quickly and came over to where I was sitting on my favourite spot on the floor. The two of us looked out at the blue sky, the bare chestnut tree glistening with dew, the seagulls and other birds glinting with silver as they swooped through the air, and we were so moved and entranced that we couldn’t speak. He stood with his head against a thick beam, while I sat. We breathed in the air, looked outside and both felt that the spell shouldn’t be broken with words.’



Anne Frank, May 1942

Later in that diary entry she returns to looking out of the window:

‘...my eyes roam over a large part of Amsterdam, over the rooftops and on to the horizon, a strip of blue so pale it was almost invisible. “As long as this exists,” I thought, “this sunshine and this cloudless sky, and as long as I can enjoy it, how can I be sad?” The best remedy for those who are frightened, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere they can be alone, alone with the sky, nature and God. For then and only then can you feel that everything is as it should be and that God wants people to be happy amid nature’s beauty and simplicity. As long as this exists, and that should be forever, I know that there will be solace for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances. I firmly believe that nature can bring comfort to all who suffer. Oh, who knows, perhaps it won’t be long before I can share this overwhelming feeling of happiness with someone who feels the same as I do.’

In the following she addresses her thoughts to Peter who, with his parents, was sheltering with the Frank family, and to whom Anne had become close:

‘This morning, when I was sitting in front of the window and taking a long, deep look outside at God and nature, I was happy, just plain happy. Peter, as long as people feel that kind of happiness within themselves, the joy of nature, health and much more besides, they’ll always be able to recapture that happiness. Riches, prestige, everything can be lost. But the happiness in your own heart can only be dimmed; it will always be there, as long as you live, to make you happy again. Whenever you’re feeling lonely or sad, try going to the loft on a beautiful day and looking outside. Not at the houses and the rooftops, but at the sky. As long as you can look fearlessly at the sky, you’ll know that you’re pure within and will find happiness once more.’

News often reached them of fellow Jews being arrested and sent to slave labour camps and death-camps. The mass murder of Jews and others by gas chamber had also become known to them. They knew the fate that possibly awaited them.

Diary entry, Tuesday 7th March 1944:

‘At such moments I don’t think about all the misery, but about the beauty that still remains. This is where Mother and I differ greatly. Her advice in the face of melancholy is: “Think about all the suffering in the world and be thankful you’re not part of it.” My advice is: “Go outside, to the country, enjoy the sun and all nature has to offer. Go outside and try to recapture the happiness within yourself; think of all the beauty in yourself and in everything around you and be happy.” I don’t think Mother’s advice can be right, because what

are you supposed to do if you become part of the suffering? You'd be completely lost. On the contrary, beauty remains, even in misfortune. If you just look for it, you discover more and more happiness and regain your balance. A person who's happy will make others happy; a person who has courage and faith will never die in misery!

On 4th August 1944, following a tip off to the Gestapo from an unknown informant, they were discovered and arrested. They were taken to Westerbork, the transit camp for Jews in Holland. They were deported on 3rd September 1944, in the last transport to leave Westerbork, and arrived three days later in Auschwitz.

Anne and Margot were later transported from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen camp. The typhus epidemic that broke out there in the winter of 1944–5, as a result of the horrendous hygiene conditions – along with starvation, the bitter cold, and the inhuman cruelty – killed thousands of prisoners, including Margot and, a few days later, Anne. She probably died in late February or early March 1945, aged 15. (The Nazi authorities were happy to let the typhus do their work for them.) The bodies of both girls were probably dumped in Bergen-Belsen's mass graves. The camp was liberated by British soldiers only a few weeks later.

Anne's mother died in Auschwitz, but her father managed to survive, and dedicated his life to promoting her diary, which had been found and kept safe by a friend.

Are Anne's words about God, nature, beauty and happiness wiped out or disproved by the horror and evil of what happened to her? Or is that letting evil win? Perhaps only those who have been to that terrible place have the right to answer. But Anne's thoughts and words still live, which is what she wanted: her passion and ambition was to be a writer, to speak to people, to be of help. She succeeded. She is part of humanity's answer to that evil.

Diary entry, Saturday 15th July 1944:

'It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better that this cruelty too will end, that peace and tranquillity will return once more. In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals. Perhaps the day will come when I'll be able to realise them!

Yours, Anne M Frank'

## Leonardo da Vinci's *Virgin of the Rocks* (*Vergine delle rocce*) sometimes called *Madonna of the Rocks*, 1483-1486, Oil on Panel

Mary Walsh



In the public domain

This beautiful oil painting is in the Louvre. It measures 1.99m x 1.22m. It was commissioned as an altarpiece for the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in Milan.

Leonardo had been trained by the fine artist and skilled goldsmith, Verrocchio. His first big commission was *The Adoration of the Magi*. We have all received or sent this image as a Christmas card.

Leonardo wanted to work for a prince or a duke not for the Church. He wanted to be involved in engineering projects and to establish himself as an artist and an intellectual. He had no formal education. He believed observation to be the source of empirical knowledge and declared, "My work is based on observation, the one and true mistress of knowledge." The court of Milan was ruled by Duke Ludovico Sforza whom Leonardo contacted, sending him a curriculum vitae stating that he could build bridges, blow up castles and design chariots – none of which he had ever done. He

was commissioned to work on an altarpiece with two other artists. The subject was the Immaculate Conception.

Four figures sit in a rocky grotto. The figures are in the foreground and a lake is in the distance. The cave gives the work scale and depth. The mouth of a cave is used often in sacred art. The cave was depicted as a sanctuary for Jesus when he fasted in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. The cave in this painting is a metaphorical womb. It is the womb where Mary grew for 40 weeks before her birth. The Immaculate Conception only refers to Mary. The Church believes she was born free from original sin because she was chosen while in her mother's womb to be the spotless Mother of God. This cave which bears Mary is full of flowers. Leonardo studied the natural world closely and the flowers in the painting are all perfect botanical specimens. The primrose beneath Christ's hand is a symbol of sinlessness.

The undisturbed water in the foreground also references Mary's purity and is a symbol of Baptism which washes us clean and makes us all God's children and part of the Church.

Mary has a protective hand around St John ushering him toward Christ and a maternal hand over the infant Jesus. Here Mary does not sit on a throne in heaven but on the stony ground. Here she is a real woman, a young mother rather than an object of veneration. It is the powerful role as mother, first guide of Jesus and her sinlessness, which we admire. The impact of this painting was huge because of its depiction of Mary. An angel gazes at us and points to John (the Baptist), who is clasping his chubby little hands in prayer. The angel is reminding us to imitate him in worshipping Christ and is also telling us we are all Mary's children. So how do we know which baby is Jesus? Well, as in many depictions of Jesus, He has His hand raised in benediction. He is blessing John the Baptist. Three of Christ's fingers are curled towards His palm signifying the Holy Trinity and the other two digits, a thumb and a finger, representing the dual nature of Christ, fully human and fully God, are pointing heavenwards. A priest often blesses us in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with his hand in this position.

The palm tree at Mary's right hand appears to open as a scallop shell. The palm fronds foreshadow the palm leaves that will be waved as Jesus enters Jerusalem on the Sunday before his crucifixion. The scallop shell is often used in art to represent Mary's Immaculate Conception. Pearls from within a scallop shell were a sign of miraculous fertility. Pearls were thought to grow supernaturally from a drop of dew. Mary's cloak is fastened by a brooch with a central stone surrounded by pearls. We know that the brooch is connected to the

palm and the scallop shell because if we follow the trajectory of Mary's outstretched cloak our eyes go directly from the pearls to the shell. Pearls are also a symbol for tears. We are reminded that Mary, despite her contentment as a mother, will experience dreadful sadness.

Leonardo uses *sfumato*, a technique where no hard outlines are used as the colours blend into each other to create an atmospheric dreamlike quality. It produces a smoky haziness. He also uses *chiaroscuro* where there is a contrast between light and darkness. The flash of yellow across Mary's waist reminds us that she is a mother to Jesus because the Holy Spirit (often depicted as light) 'overshadowed' her. But this painting was not about the virgin birth of Jesus but the completely different fact that Mary herself is immaculate. She is perfect and sinless in every way. Mary has been immaculate from the moment she was conceived.

The Confraternity of The Immaculate Conception who sponsored the painting rejected it because they didn't feel the Immaculate Conception of Mary was clearly depicted. They did not like the size and importance of John the Baptist and the fact that he was next to Mary. The painting was never displayed as an altarpiece. It was purchased by Louis XII and displayed in his art collection.

A second similar painting, *The Virgin of the Rocks* now hangs in the National Gallery in London. It was painted by Leonardo's pupils and includes halos and the angel no longer points out John the Baptist.

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## **'The Cup of Blessing which we Bless'**

**1 Cor.10:16**

### **Fr Bob Eccles**

The chalice is being restored to the faithful. Isn't it time to talk about bread and wine? Bishop Peter suggests we should. Have you ever thought – the elements of the Eucharist are not like the mountain stream or fresh air, pure and innocent creatures. They bear man's swink and wear man's smell, being manufactured articles and complex, ambiguous realities. Bread can be the home-baked crusty loaf that smells so delicious as it comes from the oven, but can also remind us of the food that famished people hunger for while well-fed folk let it spoil and go to waste, it smacks of the bread line and the dole queue, price rings and tariff wars. The good wine is the drink for enjoyment, for weddings and for lovers, but it is also alcohol, stuff of addiction, that can spell battered wives and broken homes. Ambivalent things, then, spoilt realities. Jesus takes them from the table of the world and makes them new for our use. Give us this

day our daily bread, we pray in the Our Father, and bread that earth has given and human hands have made. We need to talk about the bread.

At home you weren't supposed to throw away even crumbs of bread – the bird's share. In some Catholic families the mother makes the sign of the cross with the breadknife over the new loaf before she cuts it. A lovely modern hymn asks Mary to bake us the bread that is the Lord's Supper. Mary, bake us the bread, we need to be fed. We don't forget about the bread. The Jews had a choice of leavened and unleavened bread. The unleavened kind is faster to make – suitable for guests or for parties. One loaf does for everyone and the father or the host breaks it up with his hands so each has a share. The first Mass-goers expressed, or did they hide, what they were doing when they called it just, the breaking of the bread. Where does Christian unity begin? We who are many are one body because we all get our share from the one loaf.

Let's talk too about the chalice. Let's start with two points in mind. The first is that some communicants let the Cup of Blessing pass them by. Having received Our Lord under the form of bread, they return to their seats without receiving the Precious Blood. No doubt there are explanations for this, sensible non-religious explanations, they don't lack faith in the Real Presence. One everyday reason has to do with their country and culture. Both grapes and wine are unfamiliar where they come from. They have no associations for people, except as something foreign and exotic. On the other hand, for some wine may be an everyday, ordinary drink and not particularly special. In the sunny South wine may be on the table every day for those who want it. Then we were taught as children not to share cups and plates in the family. What about the health risk? These are just some of the ordinary, everyday attitudes that lie behind not receiving the Precious Blood. Looks as though we need to develop our spiritual imagination. Grow a new devotion to the Precious Blood.

The second point is that we need to understand what Peter, James and John (those not especially bright disciples!) thought they were doing as first-century Jews, who only drank wine on special occasions, perhaps when there were guests, not every day, and there was a special way to do it properly.

There was one big bowl of wine on the table. When the first course was finished, the father of the family had to raise the bowl in both hands and pronounce over it the prayer of thanksgiving in the name of all present: 'Blessed are you, Lord of all creation, who gives us the fruit of the vine to drink'! Then he passed it round. They all drank out of the one cup (they had already been given a piece of the one loaf). You can see how drinking out of the same bowl expresses having a life together,

sharing, fellow-feeling, communion. Just as today when newlyweds cut the cake, every one of the guests must be given their share, and absent friends are sent some too, to share their joy.

Sharing the cup, like sharing the loaf, is emblematic of a person's share in the things of life, his or her portion, or lot, or destiny. Sometimes the blessing or even the suffering that awaits us all. Open the Psalms, or the prophet Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, and find expressions like, 'Lord, you are my portion and cup, you yourself are my prize' ... 'The cup of salvation I will raise, and call upon the name of the Lord' (to express gratitude) ... 'my cup overflows' (signifying God's generosity) and 'take from my hand the cup of my anger' (signifying God's blame and displeasure). Jesus asks James and John, "Can you drink the cup that I shall drink?" What an arresting phrase! He means, I go to my death, do you really want to come too? I must, he simply said. It was his destiny. Think how in the Garden He prayed, "let this cup pass me by, nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done."

What is in the cup is also quite special. Our Lord speaks of 'the fruit of the vine'. He touches on something very central to his people's story. Joshua sent his spies into the Promised Land before invading, and they smuggled out a mega bunch of grapes, so big it needed two to carry it! (Someone is exaggerating here!) The Lord God says in Scripture, 'I brought a vine out of Egypt, to plant it I drove out the nations.' How many gospel parables do you know where there's a vineyard? God's acre, that vineyard. The people of Israel is his pleasant planting. Where our coins have roses and leeks and thistles, the coins of Israel – ancient and modern – put grapes and vines. The emblem of the Holy Land.

And in St John's Gospel, our Lord calls Himself that Vine, and His disciples are to be the branches. Just as he has also named himself our Bread, the living Bread, the Bread that comes down from heaven. In the manna the fathers, we are told, in a prototype or image were given bread to eat – we noticed how 'bread' will do for food in general as when we pray, 'give us this day our daily bread'. At the Last Supper He says, "I will not drink wine with you again until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God." So the vine and the fruit of the vine are rich symbols. They speak of God's plan for Israel that comes to its wonderful flourishing in the Messiah, who shares the Cup of Blessing that spells communion and fellowship with Him and sharing in the life of God, already now and in the age to come.

(Our story now gets even richer and more rewarding.) Before the Passover, Jesus told the disciples to prepare the Passover Supper (the readings for Holy Thursday, drawn from the Old Testament and the New, have it all). By sharing in the Passover, the Jews in every generation



make memorial of how they were rescued from cruel Pharaoh and became the people of the Covenant. On the table, with the unleavened bread and the lamb and the herbs, stand cups filled with wine (since the destruction of the Temple, there is no longer a paschal lamb). The account, found in the first three Gospels and in St Paul, of the consecration of the chalice tells what happened when Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples: the cup He takes into his hands received a new interpretation, a whole new depth of significance.

We ourselves know what we understand by life-blood, by being of the same flesh and blood as other human beings, and by ties of blood (belonging to one's family of birth). Christ Jesus says, "Take this, all of you, and drink of it. This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood." Here is sealed for us the seal of the Covenant that binds the new Israel in the blood that is shed for the forgiveness of sins. Ours the sharing in the redemption won at the cross, and living communion with Him, His victory over death made ours, His living presence all the way down our lives. The cup that we bless is a sharing in the Precious Blood of our Saviour, who is our Way, our Truth and our Life.

To sum up then, when we take into this holy and life-giving cup, it is so that we may find life in Him, the life of the Blessed Trinity. We declare ourselves ready to drink from that cup which our Saviour said he must drink in his Passion, to share his sorrows and his joys. As in the worship of the old Covenant animal blood was sprinkled in the Temple in a rite meant to take away sin, here we recognise that one drop of the Saviour's blood sprinkled on guilty hearts is enough to take away our sins and the sins of all the world. Bit by bit this mystery shapes our faith. 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not our communion in the blood of Christ?'

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## **Where a Parish Priest should live?**

### **Fr Simon Blakesley**

It may well be that your experience of the pastoral life of every parish you have encountered is that the priest(s) live next door to the church, either in a presbytery that is physically connected to the church itself or one that is within the same complex even if not physically linked. In a word, the gentlemen of the road and any other visitors know the door to call at. It so happens that my last two appointments (before St Laurence's) have set me in a variety of situations where this has not been the case, and in a time when the positioning of priests is going to become a pastorally and psychologically sensitive issue, I thought that I could offer some thoughts based upon my recent experience.

Canon 533:1 deems residence close to the parish church as an obligation linked to the 'performance of parochial functions' so dwelling elsewhere, particularly so that a number of priests may dwell in community, is allowed provided that the life of the parish does not suffer. It should be noted that a 'just cause' is required for a variation from the normative situation to be allowed. Therefore, simply because it may be the individual preference of a priest to live at a distance from the parish church does not appear to be an adequate reason to derogate from the norm.

My first geographical departure from being close to the parish church was due to a temporary need to sell the presbytery as part of an overall plan to relocate the whole church plant to a new site. Unfortunately, this coincided with the property depression of 2008 and the whole project took much longer to effect than anticipated. Although there were reasonable alternatives available to the use of rooms in the presbytery for parish meetings, etc. the actual result was that many activities went into abeyance pending the commissioning of the new facilities. This was understandable, but it also impoverished my sense of the presbytery being the hub of parish life. Due to the fact that I had a dog, the choices open to find rented accommodation were limited, and, in fact, I stayed for a number of months in a parishioner's granny-annexe as we had anticipated the start of the building project a lot sooner than in fact was to be the case. When I did find a suitable place to rent it was, in fact, very nice and served as a location suitable for the parish barbecue, but the difficulties of being apart from the church were endemic. My car became my office and vital documents could be left in the wrong place at the most inconvenient of times, but eventually all was resolved.

My second situation was different, and this was again prompted by a significant parish building scheme wherein a large supermarket chain bought land from the parish, and, of necessity due to planning and highways constraints, this included the land on which the presbytery and hall stood, but not the main church. The financial compensation allowed for the building of a very comprehensive and well-thought-out parish centre, but the building of accommodation for the priest was envisaged and was always in 'phase two' of the project. This was possible because the parish had a chapel of ease five miles from the town centre with its own three-bedroomed house in a pleasant rural setting. My predecessor was more than happy to live in this house and then the implementation of phase two stalled for many reasons. He had bought a terraced house in the centre of town to serve as a temporary parish office while the new centre was built, and this was either used for temporary accommodation for assistant priests or rented out on a short-hold tenancy to bring in revenue to the parish. The Diocesan trustees and the Bishop

were keen for him to build on the generous plot that had been earmarked in the development, but he would not take such a project forward. He had done much to persuade the parishioners, especially those mentioned in Acts 13:50, that a priest should live apart from the church plant as his life would be less disturbed by anti-social elements, etc.

Into this stalemate I arrived, and my predecessor had retired where he was and I moved into the unfurnished terraced house as my new 'presbytery', a five minute walk from the church – welcome to the parish! So, I have been able to reflect on the various advantages and disadvantages of living away from the church site. I can well imagine that there are some priests who live in difficult urban settings who devoutly wish that they could live anywhere else but 'over the shop' and I can understand why, but I offer some reasons as to why it is healthier for a priest to both live and work next to the parish church he serves.

First of all, a presbytery is an extension of a priest's personality. There will always be any number of small 'sacramentals' of his life and work that people will see and understand as a part of his persona (even if this is like an excerpt from 'Hoarders from Hell...'). Even the way a house is decorated and furnished speaks of a number of choices with regard to material things that our parishioners are quick to notice and evaluate. Some might say that this is all the more reason that a priest's quarters should be private and away from prying eyes, and there should be those areas, normally the upstairs, that are strictly off-limits to parishioners. However, the main rooms of a presbytery are of their nature a 'socialised space' which are used for multiple purposes in the everyday sorting out of a parish priest's work among and for his people.

This does bring forward some foundational issues regarding the standard of living that a priest can or should enjoy in comparison to the majority of his parishioners and this is a sensitive area, but not one that should paralyse us into mediocrity. I can remember a couple of honest descriptions of presbytery décor of old that stick in the mind; one was of a waiting room for visitors that 'looked like a downstairs toilet, but without a toilet in it...' and the question asked by a convert clergyman of a colleague (the wonderful Fr Dick Wilson) "Why is it, dear Dick, that all Catholic presbyteries are painted in six different shades of s\*\*t?" Presbyteries should speak of a priest who enjoys life, has reasonable taste – or, if not, will allow others (who do) to make those key decisions – and who wants his parishioners to feel that they are welcome in his home. The Gospel gives us a fleeting glance of where the Lord himself lived (John 1:38–39) and we deduce that his home and the way he lived spoke to them of his life and his priorities and that it was somewhere that he was able

to leave as he began his journeys, but it was somewhere that others could stay and be entertained. It was most definitely relevant to his ministry.

A parish priest's home should be more than an office/meeting room and I have been in some parish houses where the photocopier room takes the place of the holy of holies and all seems to be focussed on administration and the heresy of 'activism' is worked out in the priorities of space and function. In some presbyteries the priest has been able to create the separate living space with a flat for himself upstairs, and indeed in larger rectories there is good sense in having a breakfast room on the first floor so that a priest on his day off does not have to mingle with well-meaning but over-involved parishioners who invariably want to talk shop. This separation and creation of autonomous 'private quarters', however, does then set up a 'boundary issue' if some parishioners and not others are invited into this space. Perhaps it should be evident that such a separation is to create a clear space so that a priest can have some rightful autonomy, but then this same autonomy can very quickly shade into loneliness and isolation. Now with safeguarding concerns being high up the everyday agenda, such boundaries are not just incidental or accidental, but a matter of Diocesan policy.

As an example of this I would offer my dilemma with regard to putting up a Christmas tree at the seasonal time. First of all, there were no decorations, etc. as these, if there were any, had, by default become the personal property of the priest when he retired. I had no intention of going around to his house and saying: 'Those are parish fairy lights, or that's a parish colander...' On the other hand, however, perhaps the parishioners and the finance committee didn't fully realise that there is a division between what is personal and parish property and that a priest who was no longer the holder of the office just by 'staying put' in the parish house had caused a major blurring of this distinction to occur. To return to the Christmas tree, however, I decided that I wouldn't put one up in my own house as there was one in the lobby of the parish centre that was tastefully decorated and that I could personalise if I wanted to. It goes back to the description of a presbytery as a 'socialised space' and as no-one else would have seen one in my terraced house as they have no reason to call, why put up a Christmas tree for an audience of just one?

There was also a question of where post was addressed to, and for ease of administration everything was sent to the parish centre. I already had two desks in my life, I didn't need a third! Even with only a 'five minute walk' separation between house and church there were some things that I decided to keep in my office at the parish centre, e.g. a toothbrush and toothpaste and a basic shoe

cleaning kit as there were things that you (well if you are as forgetful as me) might forget to do before leaving the house first thing in the morning, or just might want to do more than twice a day. It was also the fact that I then had two breviaries on the go, one in the sacristy and one ‘at home’ as I would never remember to carry it with me or would forever be leaving it in the car. There was also the fact that if people only ever see the priest in an ‘office’ setting it is too easy to think of him as just another bureaucrat without a broader human dimension. Even when the time would come to build a presbytery on site I feared it too would become an ‘un-socialised space’ (as it would be 80 metres from the parish centre at the far end of the car park) and I would have to make specific efforts to not make it so.

Perhaps my conclusion is to say that a priest can make his presbytery a rich resource for his ministry. It can help to express his personality and create a sense of welcome that is more individual and genuine than would be encountered even in a well-arranged doctors’ surgery for example. If we go the route of separating both geographically and logistically ‘office’ and ‘home’ we will, I fear, impoverish the lives both of our priests and of our people. “Rabbi – where do you live? Come and see, he replied...”

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## Cardinal Points – Deception and Discernment

### Ronald Haynes

‘Oh, what a tangled web we weave,  
When first we practise to deceive!’

This timeless phrase, often attributed to Shakespeare, is from the 19th century Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott’s poem *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* (about the famous 16th century battle between Scotland and England). The original context of deceit was concerning a love triangle which highlighted a military leader’s bad character:

‘Where shall the traitor rest,  
He, the deceiver,  
Who could win maiden’s breast,  
Ruin, and leave her?’

While it does not end so fully tragically, it still is somewhat reminiscent of the resulting deceitful damage of King David’s forced affair with Bathsheba, and his attempt to hide her resulting pregnancy by ultimately sending her husband Uriah to a battle’s frontlines and to his death. Perhaps another oddly related tragic theme is found in Shakespeare’s *Othello*, where Iago’s deceptions of spousal unfaithfulness stoke jealousy and ultimately incite Othello’s murder of his wife Desdemona.

Of course, and in some or all cultures, selected deceptions are not only considered acceptable – such as those who are younger in age at times who wanted to be considered much older (and vice versa). Some deceptions are also sought after, in terms of much humour and fiction writing, and some are paid for as entertainment, whether in the theatre, in the movies, or for stage magicians (or illusionists). We love to share stories, tall tales, and exaggerations – all of which are positive, helpful even, when shared, clearly distinguishable from ‘reality’ and more serious non-fiction matters, and perhaps a way to comment on matters of truth artistically and tangentially.

Some of the many resources on the related subjects have some helpful insights to share about lies and discerning the truth,<sup>1</sup> including that ‘Real lies and their repercussions aren’t simple; they don’t just destroy, they create. They’re dualistic by nature and infinitely complicated.’<sup>2</sup> Perhaps given this: ‘Research suggests dishonesty is hard to spot; there is no easy way to tell if someone is lying. Specifically, though research has identified certain verbal and nonverbal signs of lying, there are no completely reliable signs of deception. As Vrij and Easton note, “there is nothing as simple and obvious as Pinocchio’s growing nose.”’<sup>3</sup>

In addition, other research indicates that ‘confirmation bias plays an important role – we tend to look for information that supports what we suspect and discount what contradicts what we want to be true.’ ... What’s more, there is frequently a ‘prefactual effect’ – when ‘people expect that something may become true in the future, they were more likely to excuse the falsehood in the present. Across the several studies, this effect held for lies about commercial products, falsehoods on resumes in job applications, and around divisive political issues.’ Collating multiple research indicates that:

- ...when people’s beliefs (e.g. political) were strong, they were able to more vividly imagine lies becoming true in the future (prefactuals), which in turn led them to rate the gist as truer, and therefore to see the falsehood as less unethical – finally leading to differences in behavior including a greater tendency to give known lies a pass on social media.
- These ‘...findings weave a cautionary tale about susceptibility to bias and overt deception, about how easily we can be convinced not only that lies are more or less true but also how folks can give a moral pass to potentially harmful lies.....
- ‘The work also suggests ways in which we might safeguard ourselves, for example identifying prefactual thinking in messages we hear, attending to whether we are looking at the

facts or merely the slippery gist, and frankly recognizing the way our own preferences and biases allow us to believe what fits with our preconceived notions.<sup>4</sup>

Given this, and our lived experience, we see hints of how we and others might live so readily with falsehood and lies. Yet, how do we discern and support what is true, individually and in our communities? What is the damage, for ourselves and for others, when we get it wrong, and what is the hope and impact of reconciling our differences, for each of us and for the wider world?

While deception is sadly too common and seems to occur too readily, it also requires a few common conditions to take hold in any of us. Put simply, to be convinced to believe what is not true is to be deceived, whether because of our own false suppositions or because we have been wrongly steered by others (or both). When we are misguided (or have unwisely convinced ourselves) to believe what is not true, either because it is provably false or we cannot reliably confirm that it is true – but we believe it as if it is true anyway – is to be deceived.

The latter type of deceit may turn out to be negated by a later verification that something that was uncertain is in fact true, however, to confuse the uncertain assertions with what can be confirmed as true is dangerous and generally can undermine the important differences between untenable beliefs and our relationship with the truth.

A related problem with ‘hard’ atheism, asserting that there is no God, is that there is no way to prove that position. How could someone prove, with certainty, that God (*or anyone!*) does not exist? In *God and Other Minds* the American Christian Philosopher Alvin Plantinga reviews proofs for believing in other people, alongside proofs for believing in God, and profoundly concludes it is at least as rational to believe in one as the other. By contrast, those in a faith community have stories of predecessors experiencing direct encounters with God (e.g. prayer, visions, in person), or report their direct relationship with God.

This important ‘relationship’ is also a connection with Jesus’ identification with truth: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), and the promise that: “you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32) This connection and promise is in sharp contrast with the deceiver’s art, which of course is to convince us to believe as true something which is actually false or at best uncertain or highly unlikely (and so not verifiably true). Unlike Jesus’ promise of truth and freedom, those who knowingly practice deceit so often do so for some type of personal gain – money,

power, perhaps a dampening down of the community and as Milton’s *Paradise Lost* has Satan declare:

‘The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a heav’n of hell, a hell of heav’n’

and Satan later prefers to ‘reign in Hell rather than serve in Heaven’.

Bearing that in mind, there are so many ‘cons’ (‘confidence’ tricks and scams) and related conspiracies, too often aiming to separate some money from so many. For instance, we witness deception when we hear others declare with certainty that ‘the earth is flat’ or ‘dinosaurs and early humans lived together’ or ‘no one ever has been in space’ or ‘no people have ever landed on the moon’. These are testable, verifiable matters of falsehood, countered by matters of fact, which can stand up to respond to the negative narratives in a fair assessment of the records and the expert testimonies (as well as common witnesses) concerning these matters.

Those who might insist otherwise would have difficulty convincing any but those who would ignore or dismiss official records, recordings, scientific and engineering reports, so many years of studies and analyses of the original and resulting data and information associated with these areas. In short, someone needs to be prepared to believe that selected, perhaps all, accumulated human knowledge, study, and shared experiences are ‘fake news’ and this alternative version of these matters somehow cancels out the other areas of shared community understanding, knowledge and relationship with the truth. While there is a long, understandable tradition for common, sharable truth, it is good that this can be discussed, questioned, tested even – which is a part of the educational and scientific inheritance from shared religious beliefs that God created an ordered and understandable world.

In the Christian tradition, it is expected that the shared world, and our working together to understand and interact authentically with the wider community, will also be met with destructive deceivers. Jesus potently warns about this, for instance in Matthew 7:15–20:

‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.’

## Parish Organisations and Activities

### St Laurence's Saturday Coffee Hub

#### Jo Wager



Many of you have been supporting the Coffee Hub since we started up in July 2021 but many more in the Parish may not know that it is still going and is open to all!

Originally, we set up outside in the car park on a Saturday morning to help those who had

been self-isolating during Covid to have a safe place in which to socialise again.

Two years on, we set up in the Parish Room and run from 10am to 12pm, serving tea, coffee, biscuits and bacon rolls after the 9.30am Mass for anyone who wants to come along and chat with friends or make new ones.

The bacon rolls have been a huge success since we introduced them in January. We are about to replace them with some tasty cakes for the summer months but, fear not, we shall bring them back when the cold weather returns in the autumn!

The Coffee Hub has a lovely informal atmosphere and has helped strengthen friendships and Parish links. It has proved to be a good base to support other Parish initiatives as well such as the discussions for the Synod, the Cambridge Renewal day of prayer and the SVP drop-in centre. We hope that more Parish activities start to use the Coffee Hub as a base for social activities, sacramental celebrations etc – all you need to do is ask and we will be happy to help!

We have a lovely group of volunteers setting up, serving, cooking, chatting, listening and living our faith. We aim to be welcoming to all and warmly encourage you to come and experience the Coffee Hub for yourself one Saturday soon.

If you would like more information or fancy joining the volunteer team, please contact us through the Parish Office.

Very much in a related way, there is wide and long-standing Christian tradition for the 'discernment of spirits', and while not solely based in one tradition, this is perhaps most notably known from the well-known sharing of Jesuit spirituality and the various approaches to working through their founder St Ignatius Loyola's extensively engaging *Spiritual Exercises*. The writer William A Barry (SJ), a former provincial of the New England Jesuits, quotes from the *Spiritual Exercises* to convey a key difference between two diametrically opposing spirits:<sup>5</sup>

'...it is characteristic of the evil spirit to harass with anxiety, to afflict with sadness, to raise obstacles backed by fallacious reasonings that disturb the soul. Thus he seeks to prevent the soul from advancing. It is characteristic of the good spirit, however, to give courage and strength, consolations, tears, inspirations, and peace. This He does by making all easy, by removing all obstacles so that the soul goes forward in doing good.' (*Spiritual Exercises*, n. 315)

With some closing, subtle thoughts from Emily Dickinson, we find in her poem *Tell all the truth but tell it slant* what appears as a call for discernment through telling the whole truth, but doing so indirectly, tangentially we could say, and in a gradual manner (and it seems communally) – because Truth is so bright, too dazzling for us to be able to cope and take in more directly. The poem highlights Truth for surprisingly and superbly preparing us in a gradual manner, much like a scared child is helped to understand lightning with an appropriate level of explanation.

'Tell all the truth but tell it slant  
Success in Circuit lies  
Too bright for our infirm Delight  
The Truth's superb surprise  
As Lightning to the Children eased  
With explanation kind  
The Truth must dazzle gradually  
Or every man be blind'

#### Footnotes

1. BBC Future, *Can you tell when someone is lying?*  
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210401-how-to-tell-when-someone-is-lying>
2. The Guardian, *Top 10 books about lies and liars | George Orwell's 1984*  
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/sep/15/top-10-books-about-lies-and-liars-aja-raden-the-truth-about-lies>
3. Psychology Today, *How to Detect Lies*  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/finding-new-home/202104/how-detect-lies>
4. Psychology Today, *How We Believe Lies Despite the Obvious Truth*  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/experimentation/202204/how-we-believe-lies-despite-the-obvious-truth>
5. Spiritual Direction & the Encounter with God: A Theological Inquiry, 1992

## Safeguarding at St Laurence's

### Mary Jane & Jim O'Sullivan (your Parish Safeguarding Representatives)

#### What do we mean by 'Safeguarding'?

Safeguarding essentially means protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm. In our Parish community where we actively reach out to children and vulnerable adults, it means having procedures in place to ensure that the children and vulnerable adults we work with are safe when they participate in Parish activities (such as having enough adults in the room during a Children's Liturgy session). It also means ensuring that volunteers are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect (including those that have occurred outside the Parish) and know how to respond.

A quick look on the Diocese of East Anglia website will tell you that *'The Catholic Diocese of East Anglia is fully committed to safeguarding in the Church in order to ensure that we maintain peaceful, loving and safe Christian communities in which everybody, particularly young and vulnerable members, can confidently participate.'*

When we translate this into what it means for us at a Parish level, we could say that it's about ensuring that our Parish is a community where:

- we all look out for each other, we don't just assume 'someone else is responsible for that',
- we have an attitude of 'it could happen here', we don't assume that we are immune to something bad happening in our Parish,
- we all feel able to say something if we are worried about someone or notice something that doesn't seem right,
- we all know whom to speak to if we do have a concern.

#### How do we do this?

Each Parish has one (or more) Parish Safeguarding Representative. Parish reps are responsible for promoting safe practices in the Parish and are a point of contact if you have any questions. We co-ordinate all the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for volunteers in the Parish who need them.

At the next level up, the Diocese employs a team of three Safeguarding professionals who support and train the Parish reps and advise on the procedures to follow. The Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator develops Diocesan safeguarding policies and ensures that the Bishop is kept up to date with safeguarding issues. The Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator can also be contacted directly by anyone who has a Safeguarding

concern relating to the Parish. The Diocesan policies are derived from the policies set by the national Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

The CSSA is a professional standards body with regulatory powers. It was set up following an independent review in 2019 of the Catholic Church's Safeguarding arrangements. So, the Safeguarding procedures and policies that we follow in the Parish are set out at a national level by the CSSA.

#### What are DBS checks and who needs to be checked?

Anyone volunteering with children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Parish where they may end up being in 1:1 unsupervised contact needs to have a DBS check registered with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. DBS checks replaced CRB (Criminal Record Bureau checks) in 2012. DBS checks are required for a range of jobs (such as care work, teaching, healthcare) as well as voluntary roles. The aim of the checks is to minimise the risk of people who might pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults working unsupervised with them in positions of trust. This is done by checking to see if you have a criminal record before you start volunteering. Minor offences are not a barrier to volunteering in the Parish. Decisions about this are made by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and information about any previous convictions is not shared with the Parish Safeguarding Reps. DBS checks are free for volunteers and need to be renewed every 3 years. Parish reps will meet with you to go through the DBS paperwork. We also use this as an opportunity to talk through the Diocesan code of conduct and guidelines for what to do if you have any concerns.

We routinely check with Fr Simon and Parish groups to update our list of who needs a DBS check. Examples of groups whose volunteers need a DBS check include:

- St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP),
- Children's Liturgy, First Holy Communion Catechists, Altar Server Trainers and Youth Group,
- Eucharist Ministers who take Communion to people in their homes,
- People who provide transport to Mass on behalf of the Parish.

If you think that you might need a DBS check for any volunteer work you do in the Parish and haven't already been contacted by us, please get in touch.

#### How can we find out more information?

- If you have any questions about safeguarding in the Parish, do talk to us. We can be contacted via [safeguarding@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@saintlaurence.org.uk) and are usually at 11am Mass on Sunday.

- We have left some fold-out cards in the Narthex which describe signs of abuse to be aware of and give advice on what to do if you have a concern.
- The safeguarding page on the Parish website gives our details as well as the details of a range of helplines  
<http://www.saintlaurence.org.uk/safeguarding/>
- The Diocesan safeguarding webpage has information about national safeguarding news, youth safeguarding resources and contact details for Mick Thurley, the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator.  
<https://www.rcdea.org.uk/safeguarding>
- The CSSA website has a range of information about what the Church is doing nationally to promote safeguarding and to support victims and survivors.  
<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

### What are the key things we need to know?

- You can always approach your Parish reps for advice if you have any questions or concerns about safeguarding. If you have a specific safeguarding concern, we can support and advise you, although we wouldn't investigate it ourselves (and we wouldn't want you to either!).
- If you are working on behalf of the Parish and become aware of any allegation of abuse, you must report it directly to the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator or directly to the police. Any member of the public who becomes aware of an allegation of abuse relating to the Parish should report it to the police and also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- Diocesan procedures are not a replacement for reporting to police or social care! The Church's policy is that any allegation of abuse will be reported to the relevant statutory authority.

### And finally....

Safeguarding is about ensuring Parish activities are safe for everyone to enjoy whilst being aware of what could go wrong and knowing what to do if we have concerns. It's important to be informed and report things so that they can be checked out. Although we need to have that attitude of 'it could happen here', no one wants us to develop a culture where we are unduly suspicious of each other. We are very fortunate to have a lively Parish where a large number of people volunteer for a variety of roles. We all need to be aware of the importance of safeguarding, know where to find information if needed, and then go out and enjoy volunteering in the Parish.

## Children's Liturgy

### Jim Infield

Leonie and Jim are very pleased to tell you that the Children's Liturgy is thriving, now at both the 9.30am and 11am Masses. We generally have between 20 and 30 children at each, and sometimes more! The children are attentive and eager, with hands flying up when we engage them in discussion, and often what they have to say is thought-provoking and inspiring, both for us adults and the other children. It's also lovely to see how quickly and co-operatively they all settle down on the floor together when we hand out the colouring and activity sheets.

The response we have had for volunteers has been very encouraging, especially with such a strong cultural mix of people that reflects our wonderfully diverse congregation, as it should. It's understandable that some may feel anxious about their spoken English, but the richness and different perspectives that brings, far outweigh any language challenges. We are also happy to have some young volunteers, which the children really identify with.

If you are interested, there is still room on the rota, especially for 11am. It's not a big commitment, about once a month. Do come out and see what we do and if you want to know more get in touch with us: [jim.infield1@gmail.com](mailto:jim.infield1@gmail.com) / [nonie.isaacson@gmail.com](mailto:nonie.isaacson@gmail.com). We will give you all the guidance you need. You will be joining a team of very supportive and kind volunteers. We are always learning on our Children's Liturgy journeys with the children whom we are so blessed to have at Mass, and who need a spiritual experience that is meaningful and enjoyable.

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## Catholic Women's League

**On the 2nd Friday of every month we hold a lunch after the 12.30pm Mass. All are welcome to join us.**

The Catholic Women's League meet at 11am before the lunch, we decide what we're going to prepare for the next month's lunch and also pray for all the people who so urgently need prayers. If you think this would suit you, do join us.

Recently we have sent £140 to PACT (the prisoners' charity), which is the National Catholic Women's League charity for this year. We are currently sending the money we raise at the lunches to the Arthur Rank Hospice, in memory of Vicky Simpson.

Janet Scally 01223 365330

## Summary of Parishioners' Open Meeting 20th April 2023 at 7.30pm

(Full minutes available on the St Laurence website. The most recent meeting took place on 4th July and the minutes for this are not available at the time of publication).

Present: Fr Simon, Stephen Warde (Chair), Sarah Sykes (minutes), plus 9 and 6 online.

The Chair updated the meeting about

- The carpet tiles for the Sanctuary, which have now been ordered and will be installed shortly.
- Parish database – continues to be updated and now has 400 adults. You can either sign up on the Building-up-the-Parish webpage of the Parish website or filling in a paper form.

### Parish and Diocesan news:

#### Easter Liturgies

Thanks were given by the Chair to all who helped with the Easter Liturgies, including those who decorated the church, Readers, Eucharistic ministers, music ministry and many other unseen tasks. Fr Simon reported that having two Passion Liturgies on Good Friday had worked well and both had been well attended. It also made it possible to separate the veneration of the Cross and Communion processions which is liturgically preferable.

Easter Vigil – thanks to the Tech team for providing audio, particularly from the outside part of the service, and video for those watching online.

**Eucharist under both kinds:** We will aim to return to receiving Communion under both kinds from the Feast of Corpus Christi. A notice will go in the newsletter asking for those who were Eucharistic Ministers pre-COVID and those who would like to become a Eucharistic Minister to make themselves known. Training and re-training will be organised.

**Offertory:** We have already restarted the basket Offertory Collection and the Offertory itself will also return.

**Sign of Peace:** It was also felt that it would be an appropriate time for the physical sign of peace to return, but it should be officially announced.

**Children's Liturgy:** This will be restarting at 11am Mass from this Sunday. There will be a trial run for 2 months during which it is hoped that a few more people will be recruited to make it feasible for it to continue beyond the initial 2 months. Thanks were given to Leonie Isaacson, Jim Infield and the Children's Liturgy Team.

**Confirmation:** Bishop Peter will be celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation at the church on Wednesday 5th July.

**The Bishops Council of Laity:** Helena Judd attended the last meeting but is unable to go to the next meeting. Would anyone be able to attend on behalf of the Parish? Fr Simon suggested that someone from SPAG (Synodal Path Action Group) could go.

**Finance Report:** James Dore shared a summary of the Parish finances for the year 2022-2023.

He showed spreadsheets which covered our last four years income and expenditure. He pointed out that our Offertory Collection is nearly back to pre-pandemic levels, particularly in the last few months.

Outgoings for the year are about £117,000, and so we have a small surplus of £6000 overall for this financial year. We also continue to maintain our long-term savings which stand at £250,000. Some of these savings are ear-marked for building work, if we are able to find people to volunteer to project manage works which need to be done as highlighted in the 5yr survey report; in particular, some roofing works to repair leaks, and replacement of the church heating system.

After his presentation, James mentioned that he has held the position of Treasurer for 4.5yrs and it is now time to look for someone else to take on this role. Fr Simon said that Paul Raines, based in Ely, is the new Director of Finance for the Diocese, and is interested in providing training for Parish treasurers.

The Chair offered thanks to James for his work as Treasurer (a position he holds jointly with Joanne Kerrigun) and he also thanked the Finance Committee for its part in supporting the Treasurer's work.

### Synodal Pathway Action Group (SPAG) update

#### Adult education and faith-sharing

Gospel study group – Roberta reported that the Gospel study group has a small group of attendees who get a lot out of the meeting, but they are open to holding it at another time, if there is demand for it.

Sycamore group – was well attended online and people had felt free to share their thoughts and opinions. The course had been a good starting point for faith-sharing and learning. It's also planned that another Sycamore course will be held later in the year, but this time in person, when the evenings are lighter.

**Pentecost Eve** – proposal to have a Taizé session from about 9pm -10pm.



Karen Rodgers said that all this work going on was good but she would like us to encourage more in-person work to build up the faith community. We need to encourage people to tithe their social time to the church.

### **Social activities**

Fish and chips get together was held last month to bring together the different people who often support the social side of hosting Parish events.

The Coffee Hub will show the King's Coronation in the Parish Room, with refreshments.

Bring and Share and/or BBQ to replace the cancelled CAFOD Curry Night. Friday 23rd June at 6pm – a talk by Jim Infield about his trip to Bangladesh, followed by food.

### **Communications**

Karen Rodgers has put together an initial draft of a Parish brochure, however, it needs to be more fully discussed within the Communications Group.

### **Pastoral Assistant**

**Fr Simon sees the role as one** which would have an overview of Parish activities. The person would need to hold professional qualifications. He noted that other parishes in the Deanery would also like a part-time Pastoral Assistant and would we therefore go halves on a whole assistant, but that would need careful consideration. He is keen that we ask the Diocese for help with putting a job description together and to consider how such a position would be managed.

Ron and Jeanette have offered to collect some role descriptions from other parishes. These descriptions cover a wide range of responsibilities but it is useful to use these to get ideas of what might be possible for the role. We will need to narrow down what we want the role to achieve. Parishes are very different from each other and we need to be very clear on our priorities. We, as a Parish, will need to decide exactly what we would like a Pastoral Assistant to accomplish and what responsibilities would make up this role.

The Meeting supported moving this forward this year.

### **Parish Group updates:**

**CAFOD** – Serga thanked the Parish for its support of the Lent Family Fast Day which raised £1119.00. The Walk to Bangladesh made it to Pakistan. Not quite Bangladesh but, having passed last year's goal of walking to Afghanistan, we have done very well. The total raised for this so far is £1,023.00. Events to encourage steps were the Cemetery walk, a cycle ride to Audley End and Cambridge Churches Walk on Good

Friday, when a CAFOD prayer was prayed at every stop.

There will be a Volunteers' Meeting on 16th September during the Coffee Hub. Helena Judd has asked for us to do a CAFOD Family Friday on 14th July with a Laudato Si Mass on 15th and 16th July. After the 11am Mass on 16th we'll gather for a bring and share lunch and celebrate nature by helping in the church garden. Harvest Fast Day is on 6th October.

**SVP** – 8th May, a lunch for older parishioners.

Saturday morning drop-ins in the Parish Room between 10am and 11am are planned to start soon. A rota is being put together of members of the SVP who will be available to chat with people who need help. This will run alongside the Coffee Hub.

**Justice & Peace group** – was part of a couple of trials of hybrid Stations of the Cross during Lent, this enabled those online to pray along with those walking the Stations in the church. A Caritas Fair is planned to take place on 4th November 2023.

**Tech group** – Ron reported that there is a new sound bar and microphone on the large screen which will help with clearer sound for those joining meetings online. The opportunity provided by the change of carpet in the Sanctuary will give us an opportunity to give the cabling a thorough check and reroute parts for the new layout in this area.

The keyboard continues to remain secure with storage out of the main body of the church. The music tablet interface is very fiddly to use, and perhaps the user interface could be made more user-friendly.

Jo Wager wondered whether the website could be modernised. The idea of having a digital noticeboard to face the road which could have Parish notices on and maybe some Catholic images (such as the Divine-Mercy or Sacred Heart for example) was also mentioned. These things have been discussed in the SPAG. With regard to the implementation of these ideas, it is a matter of finding both the time and manpower.

### **AOB**

We will mark our Patronal Feast Day on Thursday 10th August with a Mass and bring and share meal with BBQ as we did last year.

**Next Meetings:** 14th September, 2nd November

All take place in the Parish Room at 7.30pm with the option to join via Zoom.



## News from St Laurence Catholic School

Members of the Gardening Club, which is run by Mrs Quail, have been busy caring for the school grounds and getting it ready for the seasons ahead. To protect their precious plants, they have built scarecrows to ward of any unwelcome guests!

The school are very lucky to have support from Mrs Quail and her fellow parishioners, David Brierley and Sue Price, who ensure the grounds at St Laurence are well cared for and remain a beautiful setting for the children.



The Mini Vinnies are planning their Summer fundraising events. The group will be supporting the school's Summer Fayre on Saturday 24th June by manning the toy stall. The PTA have kindly agreed that all proceeds from the toy sale will go directly to the St Vincent de Paul Society.

The group, along with Mrs Harvey, are also planning to support the SVP Big Sleepover to raise awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness in England and Wales. For all those who lack a secure place they can call home, who may be sleeping rough, fleeing from danger, stuck in hostels, bed and breakfasts, or sofa surfing, the Mini Vinnies want the Summer Sleepover to demonstrate our solidarity with them.



## St Vincent de Paul Society within St Laurence's

### Ciarán Ward

Dear Parishioners,

We are, and continue to be, ever grateful for your support on Maundy Thursday which provided us with a total of £792.36 + some Gift Aid for the people and partners of SVP South Sudan. Thank you!

Since our last article, the members have been busy providing support for people in need. Some of the things we have been doing are as follows:

- We now offer a Saturday drop-in service during the Coffee Hub in which 2 members are committing to being present for people in need from 10am to 11am. This is open to parishioners and non-parishioners.
- We continue to support the Cottenham Community Hub.
- We're supporting some very vulnerable families and their children.
- We are supporting a family during the summer holidays by contributing to their children's summer camps so the parents can go to work.
- We're supporting beneficiaries to attend appointments and emergency care by either accompanying them to their appointments and/or paying for their transport.
- We've run a successful event, the Senior Parishioners Lunch; and,
- We continue to visit, provide lifts, offer Holy Communion and more...

We appreciate our beneficiaries very much and learn from them and need them.

### Upcoming events

Our upcoming events are as follows:

- Next week the 14th June is our Coton Garden Centre outing from 2pm.
- Sunday, 2nd July is the SVP National Pilgrimage of the Sick at Walsingham.

### Stories from our members

The cold winter months of January and February seem a long time ago now we have entered the sunny months of summer, but back in the winter, the SVP joined the Cambridgeshire Health Team, on Wednesdays at All-Saints Church parish room in Cottenham, to provide a warm lunch for the Traveller Community. Living in a caravan in the winter months can be a cold existence and the drop-in centre at All Saints parish rooms

provided a warm hub. We worked on the basis of £1 a meal, supplementing it with fruit puddings using fruit grown in the allotment. On average we made 15 meals a week ranging from cottage pie followed by rice pudding, to tuna and tomato pasta bake with blackcurrant sponge and custard. Only a few attended the lunch, but we were able to pack up meals in boxes to be distributed to families by the team, so it was a very worthwhile exercise.

In May the SVP hosted the Senior Parishioners' Lunch and after Janet Scally sent us the essential template list, we were set to prepare a menu. This was a more lavish affair – a starter of mushroom soufflé, then roasted meat and potatoes, carrots, broccoli and peas, with plenty of gravy, followed by trifle, with and without alcohol, and all served with wine, juice or sparkling water. Many of the SVP members helped to make the event a success on the day by driving parishioners to and from the Parish Room, pushing wheelchair users from the local care home, serving the three courses, ensuring there was sufficient conversation and wine for all, not forgetting the clearing up afterwards. Margaret Martin was our secret weapon throughout the day as the one who understood how the kitchen worked and knew that Father Simon had an oven that would give us the essential boost to our roast potatoes. Special thanks goes to Joy who remained calm as 'drinks manager' and helped with all the serving. Overall, I think our senior parishioners enjoyed the return to the much-loved lunch and chat after the Covid break building the community bonds that make St Laurence such a wonderful Parish.

### Want to Join

Bishop Barron (Word on Fire Institute) once said that "Once you allow God to become the centre of your life, everything else falls into perfect harmony....and to take the fulfilling and fruitful life of the Saints as an example, not the reclusive and withdrawn life that being holy is sometimes perceived". (Adoremus National Eucharistic Congress 2018)

Perhaps making God the centre of your life starts in saying 'Yes' – to doing something small like providing a lift or helping in an event or in doing small, simple kindnesses well or making yourself available when the opportunity presents – there really is no help too small for the SVP – from the saplings to great oaks, healthy groves depend on both and so does the SVP.

Contact us:

- SVP President Ciarán – 07540 842 078  
[svp@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:svp@saintlaurence.org.uk)
- Any member of SVP that you know

God Bless  
The SVP Members

## Synodal Pathways Action Group

**Roberta Canning, Kay Dodsworth, Ron Haynes**

### Faith Sharing

The group reading the Gospel of St Matthew together met on Wednesdays after the 12.30pm Mass from just before Advent till the middle of May. After a short break, we met before the 12.30pm Mass on the four Wednesdays in June to reflect together on the teaching of Jesus in the parables. The meetings have been an opportunity to reflect on the Gospel and on our shared faith. The group has been quite small but our conversations have been good. We plan to continue but would like to know whether others in the Parish would be more likely to come at a different time or if we met on Zoom.

In Lent, we had six meetings following one pathway in the Sycamore series. The group who came found it worked well accessing the material each week in our own time and then talking together on Zoom once a week. Some have said it would be good to follow another pathway in person. We need to hear from parishioners whether they think it would be good to have this opportunity and when would be a good time to run it. Do let us know what you think by emailing [roberta.canning@btinternet.com](mailto:roberta.canning@btinternet.com)

At our last Sycamore session, we talked about prayer and there was a feeling that it would be good to develop and deepen that conversation. On Tuesday, 13th June, there was a Zoom session to continue the discussion and do a prayer exercise. We hope to have an afternoon of prayer in September as an opportunity to talk about our experience of prayer if we would like to and to try a couple of approaches to more reflective prayer. This is not just for people who came to the Sycamore group or the Scripture sharing; everybody is welcome.

There is an example of a reflective way of praying from Scripture below.

Take a few moments to become still, slowly read one of the passages, then read it again putting your name into the spaces, letting God speak to you directly through the Scripture. You might like to linger with a phrase or word that speaks to you, or recall it occasionally through the day.

A passage from the Old Testament

You are my servant \_\_\_\_\_.

I have chosen you, not rejected you.

Do not be afraid \_\_\_\_\_ for I am with you.

Do not be alarmed, for I am your God. I give you strength, truly I help you.

Truly, \_\_\_\_\_, I hold you firm with my saving right hand. (Isaiah 41:9b–10)

Or from the New Testament

Do not let your heart be troubled \_\_\_\_\_,

Trust in God and trust in me. The Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. Peace I leave with you \_\_\_\_\_, my peace I give you. A peace which the world cannot give, that is my gift to you \_\_\_\_\_.

Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid. (John 14: 1,26–27)

### Communications group

The Communications working group is drafting a poster and flyer for the Saturday Coffee Hub, which can be shared with our neighbours, including we hope with the Milton Library. This is part of the outreach and community sharing which was one of the key concerns in our Synodal discussions earlier in the year. If there is interest, we could perhaps extend this in a future edition, to create a brief and shareable Parish brochure.

### Social group

The Social working group organised an early St Patrick's Day fish 'n' chip supper, for all involved in preparing, sharing and supporting the social activities of the Parish (e.g., CWL lunches, Family Fun Fridays, Saturday Coffee Hub, after 11am Coffee). We discussed ways we might work better together in planning occasional Parish social events, such as we had last year for the Parish Feast Day (and a special birthday for Fr Simon!). As you will have seen in the newsletter, we organised a Parish social event after a special Mass on Friday 23rd June. Hope you enjoyed that, and please do get involved in future social events.

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### Gift Aid

If you pay tax on earnings, pensions or income/capital gains from investments, and you sign up for Gift Aid, the government gives back some of the tax you have already paid. Your donations will qualify as long as they are not more than four times the tax you have paid in that tax year (6th April to 5th April).

All you have to do is complete a simple form called a Gift Aid Declaration with your name and address, which you can find on the St Laurence's website.



### World Youth Day

Lisbon, Portugal

**1–6 August 2023**

World Youth Day is the gathering of young people from all over the world with the Pope. WYD opens its doors to everyone, no matter how close to or distant from the Church they are. (<https://www.lisboa2023.org/en>)

## Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage



The Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage took place on 30th May led by Bishop Peter, Hamish MacQueen (Youth Services Director) and a familiar face, Fr Pat Cleary.

Over 400 children and parents from many parishes including Cambridge were there. The pilgrimage started in the village of Little Walsingham, outside the Church of the Annunciation, where the pilgrims were greeted by Bishop Peter Collins.

The procession went along the old railway line (Pilgrim Way) to the Walsingham Shrine, stopping for prayers along the way. On arrival at the Chapel of Reconciliation, Mass was said by Bishop Peter with a homily from Fr Pat, about the sheep and their shepherd. He also talked about St Walstan, a young Anglo Saxon prince who came from near Norwich, 1,000 years ago, and gave up everything to follow Jesus. (I wonder how many of us have heard of him?)



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## Parish Midsummer social evening 23rd June



The Parish had a mid-summer social on 23rd June starting with Mass and then a bring-and-share party in the Parish Room. We will have a couple more celebrations through the summer, with a Laudato Si weekend (14–16th July) which will include a talk about life in Bangladesh by Jim Infield at the Family Fridays session on 14th July, themed Laudato Si Masses and some gardening. And then our annual celebration of St Laurence on 10th August (plus someone's birthday!).

## Personal Stories and Experiences

### MAPPA and its Lay Advisors

#### Petra Tucker

During the 1980s, concerns continued to grow about dangerous offenders being released from prison and how they were managed in the community, leading to public protection becoming a formally stated aim of the National Probation Service. In 2003, the Criminal Justice Act (CJA2003) set out the terms of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and the creation of a MAPPA panel for each of the 42 criminal justice areas in England and Wales, through which statutory agencies work together to carry out their responsibilities, plus a Strategic Management Board (SMB), which is usually chaired on a revolving basis by a senior member of the Police, Probation or Prison Service.

As soon as the Parole Board decides that a serious sexual offender and/or violent offender is ready for release, a MAPPA panel runs a detailed risk assessment on how to minimise serious harm to the public, then puts in place appropriate arrangements, including post-release monitoring. Each panel hearing is 45 to 60 minutes long and is usually heard remotely.

Agencies represented at a panel meeting can be numerous – Victim Liaison Officers, Local Housing Authorities, health authorities (including professionals from safeguarding teams, forensic psychiatry and mental health teams), Education, Youth Offending Services, UK Visas and Immigration, Police, Probation and Prison Services. It is common for any one panel meeting to have 10 to 15 attendees.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 stipulated that each MAPPA panel had to have two lay advisors – an unpaid voluntary public appointment appointed by the Secretary of State. These lay advisors are drawn from the local community as they have knowledge of the locality.

As a lay advisor you are not involved in the management decisions of individual cases; however, you can contribute to the discussion, for example, by posing questions that the professionals closely involved in the work might not necessarily think of asking.

I was appointed as a lay advisor for Cambridgeshire in January 2022, initially for three years. The work is interesting and challenging but one that I believe is valuable. Each month I spend one full day listening to Level 2 cases and another day listening to Level 3 cases. There is preparatory reading for each case as lay advisors have access to the same documentation as all

panel members. Due to the nature of the offences, I have learned to do this reading in the morning as the information is explicit and not conducive to good sleep hygiene. Each panel day, we hear from three to six cases. At the end of the day's session, the MAPPA panel co-ordinator checks in with lay advisors as a support mechanism/debriefing discussion. After all of this, I go for a long walk just to clear my head. Once a quarter we are expected to attend the strategic management board meeting where we are asked to give a short report.

Given that the majority of prisoners will be released back into the community – some 25,000 are released each year – the public need to be protected by statutory agencies from offenders who pose a high risk to the public. I am very impressed with the dedication of the professionals who work to minimise this risk and I see at first-hand excellent inter-agency collaboration where information is shared for the benefit of both the offender and the public. The cases are often complex and everyone works within challenging constraints to put in place effective arrangements.

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### Dick Wilson, a rich life (1935–2023)

#### Judy Wilson



Dick Wilson, who has died aged 87, was a committed member of St Laurence's congregation from 2004, when we moved to Impington, until 2021 when dementia really took its toll. He needed care in Bramley Court Care Home from then on and only managed a couple of visits to Mass.

Prior to that, people attending the 9.30am Sunday Mass at the school will remember him arriving on his bike, setting out the chairs and often reading the Lesson, in his distinctive Carlisle accent. His most significant contribution to the Parish was restoring publication of the Parish magazine, *The Pilgrim*, in 2013. He loved being Editor. He enjoyed commissioning and writing articles, broadening the scope of the magazine, inserting jokes and working with Nora and Sarah and other

members of the team. Gradually, as his health became worse, he reluctantly had to let go of the responsibility but continued to submit articles, latterly often about *Married Priests!!*

He would have been glad that Nora suggested I write about his life for The Pilgrim.

He had retired from paid work by the time we came to Cambridgeshire, my home town, but here as well as Church commitments and local politics, he became an active member and contributor to U3AC – University of the Third Age in Cambridge – often as a tutor. Dick started many new classes and helped to expand the range of subjects offered by U3AC. His interests ranged from philosophy to theology, from history to maths to philosophy of science. And he also started a successful cycling club. Passionate about life-long learning (and also keen to encourage and support young people in their studies), he was curious about so many different subjects, languages and countries, and had great ability to tackle, learn and retain knowledge and teach new topics.

When our daughter Clare was writing the eulogy she delivered so well at his funeral at St Laurence's in April, she rightly stressed the richness of his life and the wide scope of his interests. It is not easy to summarise his career.

It began with Dick gaining a scholarship to Oxford from Carlisle Grammar School, where he had spent seven fruitful years, when the whole school was awarded a day's holiday in his honour. Here, his intention was to study Modern Languages but during National Service he decided to change to Theology, though he continued to be passionate about both subjects. During his time at University, he made a commitment to become ordained in the Church of England after which he became a Church of England curate. It was not to last. After less than two years in that role, he decided not to continue and left the Anglican Church. He then committed himself to the Roman Catholic faith for the rest of his life.

A series of roles followed: working as a translator, as a teacher and as a politician, both part and full time. We had married and settled in Nottingham by that time and in 1974 he was elected as Labour Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council, to be followed by two years as Chairman of the local Health Authority. He contributed an immense amount to the community in both roles but with the uncertainty of the political world, neither lasted really long enough.

Dick's final career role was in advice work, working for NACAB, the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, setting up a new CABx. in the East Midlands.

He later travelled to Eastern Europe where he provided consultancy to new advice services in Hungary and Lithuania, using his language skills added effectively to his work.

We are all very sad that he has died. But members of his family and his friends, rather than mourning his death celebrate his life, and all he contributed both to the community and to individuals. Whatever he did was informed by his religious beliefs, founded on his unflinching commitment to social justice and to equality, and his empathy for those in need.

Thank you, Dick. It was indeed a 'Rich Life'.

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## Local update on Stella Maris – the Apostleship of the Sea

### Mary Watkins



The highlight of my year as Parish volunteer, so far, was a visit to the huge container port at Felixstowe. The chaplain, Julian Wong, had wanted to take me for some time but Covid restrictions and subsequent tightening of security had made this impractical until late-April this year. I was accompanied by Jo, formerly a member of this Parish, who has been knitting much appreciated woollen hats for the seamen who often come ill-equipped to face English weather! We had to bring our passports and be issued with ID before entering the vast area of the docks. Julian was not allowed to take us on board but gave us a good tour and we were able to see the enormous size of these modern container ships, the continuous loading and unloading and the on and off of lorries. We observed the dismantling and moving of one huge crane, an awe-inspiring sight! We were reminded that approximately 95% of all UK imports and exports by volume are moved by sea.

After our visit, Julian returned to go on board a couple of the container ships. He also has a large number of Facebook friends who let him know when they will be in port so he can keep in touch. A significant part of his job is providing top-up and SIM cards for seafarers who are often away for over a year from their families. On this occasion, an Egyptian seafarer was delighted to receive such help. Julian can also provide MiFi units which the

crews enjoy using to connect with their families. He says they are sometimes reluctant to return them as often they don't have access to Wi-Fi or are sold SIM cards at a high cost.

Sea Sunday is the big fundraising event for Stella Maris and your opportunity to be a friend for seafarers in their time of need. Last year, your generosity helped us to support over 100,000 seafarers in ports around the UK and many more around the world. Look out for details of this year's Appeal in the Parish Newsletter and more news of how your generosity is providing help for seafarers. Finally, please remember seafarers and fishers in your prayers. Thank God for them and the vital role they play in our lives, often working in difficult, hazardous conditions.

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## Holiday memoir: A trip around Ireland in June 1990

### Arn Dekker

My wife, Lyn, and I went by car over to the Republic of Ireland, taking the *Rough Guide* as our companion, staying in B&Bs for one or two nights and then moving on to the next place. These were the pre-satnav days, and before mobiles.

Lyn passed away last year, November 2022, and in going through her belongings I found her handwritten notes in a plain notebook, here are some highlights from our trip.

#### Sunday, 17th June 1990

##### *Cambridge – Wexford*

Left after 8am Mass. Sr Loreto (Parish sister), Eamon and Iris Keogh (fellow parishioners), wishing us well. Iris wonders if we could call in at Cahir Church (Tipperary, Ireland) to see if she had left her reading glasses there.

Sunshine most of the way and not too many hold-ups. Only made a couple of short stops and got down to Fishguard Harbour at 2.30pm. Grey and breezy as the boat pulled out. The boat is huge and is called 'The Felicity', which I hope bodes well. Lovely crossing, gently slipped into Rosslare Harbour. Sunlight on the water.

Pleasant drive into Wexford which is a bit of a maze. Drove round and round trying to find our B&B. Hailed down by an elderly lady who had just come out of church and was in search of her daughter in a car. Turned out she was a complete stranger! Took her to the church and left her in the care of a man who pointed out our B&B. Spent the evening walking along the quayside. Then to a pub, Guinness and a couple of good

musicians. We have a singsong. Football supporters a bit down over the result of the match, 0-0 (1990 was the year of the FIFA world cup).



#### Monday, 18th June

##### *Wexford – Graigueamaneagh – Kilkenny – Cashel – Cahir – Tipperary – Limerick*

Pretty countryside, lush farms, mountains in the distance, pretty river valleys. Drove on to Kilkenny through Thomastown. Kilkenny busy – tourists. Lunch in Flannery's Hotel. Heavy downpour, walked through Kilkenny. Some lovely shops. Colourful shop fronts.

Down some narrow road to Cashel, got stuck behind a school bus which in turn got stuck behind a tractor. Reached Rock of Cashel – very striking, beautiful views from the top. Ruins of the cathedral and castle.

On to Tipperary – not very attractive. Phoned Limerick to book B&B which was over the Shannon, along a wide avenue. Very posh looking house. Our room on the ground floor through French windows. Drove back into town for sandwiches and coffee at Flannery's bar, no great atmosphere. On the way back, drove up to a spot overlooking the Shannon. Three fishermen down below, near a weir. The river wide and bubbling here, lovely stay. A very peaceful and beautiful spot.

#### Tuesday, 19th June

##### *Crauggaunowen Project – Quin Abbey – Ennis – Spanish Point – Lahinch – Cliffs of Moher – Galway*

Very pretty countryside, winding lanes, overhanging hedges. Our first stop, the Crauggaunowen Project, reached through some woods and a turn to the side of a lake. A 16th century fortified tower house with fire burning inside. Some very interesting 16th century wooden carvings. In the grounds were reproductions of a crannog (huts with thatched roofs built for living on the water). Fires lit, two girls dressed in simple woollen dresses. There was to be a TV crew there later on. Also reproduced was a ring fort. There was an actual Iron Age road brought from Corlea Bog, Co. Longford. In a large glasshouse, the replica of St Brendan's boat that



Tim Severin and crew used to sail across the Atlantic complete with leather patch that had to be sewn on when ice pierced the hull.



Took a narrow winding road, went for miles with no signs at all. By chance came across the road to Quin Abbey, the ruins of a small Franciscan friary. Took the road down to the coast and Spanish Point. Some ships of the Armada were wrecked there. There is a memorial stone to mark a visit by King and Queen of Spain in 1986. Beautiful dramatic coast. Waves crashing in from the Atlantic.

Next stop the spectacular Cliffs of Moher. Quite a few tourists but we could walk a long way either side of the entrance road and get away from the crowds. As we returned from our walk and changed back from our wellies, there was quite a bit of security activity. Gardai cars and men with walkie-talkies. Three coaches of EEC ministers or their minions had arrived, most of them ill-equipped for the conditions.

#### Wednesday, 20th June

*Galway – Coast Road – Connemara – Carna – Roundstone*

After breakfast, we walked through the town and over the bridge to Claddagh and along Claddagh pier. The sun had come out and it was quite hot. Lovely views looking out over the bay. Lots of swans and some cormorants in the estuary. Strolled along the canal. Saw some yellow wagtails by a waterfall. Liked Galway – attractive shops and restaurants. Took the coast road out to Gaeltacht villages of Bearna, Spiddal, etc. Took off on the coast road but made a couple of wrong turns! Stopped briefly at Carraroe where the beach is made up of coralline seaweed. Eventually got on to the right road again but the coast road is very long and winding and badly pot-holed in places so it was a bumpy ride.

The journey took longer than I thought but very beautiful scenery all along. We drew ever closer to the Twelve Bens or Pins, a mountain range. Could see in the distance the Errisbeg mountain and strips of golden sand. Decided that we would stop in Roundstone, which lies at the foot of the mountain, for refreshment, but when we got there it looked so beautiful that we decided to stay the night. We found a B&B at St Joseph's – very friendly welcome. Room at the top with a view over the little harbour and the 12 Bens in the distance. Little boy called Cormac came and said hello and showed us to our room. The landlady brought us tea and a sort of scone / cake. Key is left in the front door. Went out by car to see the nearby beaches at Gurteen Bay a couple of miles

away. Really beautiful spot, just a small camping site but the lovely golden beaches with rocks and little rock pools were so inviting. The water looked so blue but was icy cold. The sun shone strongly while clouds rolled off the mountain above. Hardly anyone on the beach, the water so tranquil.

#### Thursday, 21st June

*Roundstone – Westport – Sligo – Ballyshannon*

Raining – set off for Westport. Saw lots of lovely little beaches along the way. Went through Clifden and Letterfrack the latter being near the centre for the Connemara National Park. Stopped near there at a little waterfall near a bridge. Beautiful land of mountains and loughs. Lots of boggy land with peat cut out and azaleas / rhododendrons growing out in the wild.



Along the road beside Killary Harbour (the only fjord in Ireland). Stopped at a grocers-cum-bar in Leenane. Signed picture of John Hurt on the wall amongst others. Left

the coast road to take a more direct route to Westport. Signs along the way saying 'No to Gold mining'. Passed Croagh Patrick just outside Westport. The latter a charming little town. New statue of St Patrick in the marketplace. Arn bought a cap and tie in Donegal wool. Lots of lovely shawls, etc. in the shop. Many attractive craft shops in the town.

Took the route out across country to Sligo, a very busy town, and stopped for tea and cakes. Started to rain in earnest. Despite umbrella got very wet. On way back to the car passed a brass plaque for a local solicitors called 'Argue and Phibbs'.

Left Sligo on the road which passes the heights of Benbulbin (an ominous looking mountain), briefly in and out of Leitrim and finally into Co. Donegal. Passed close by Mullaghmore where Lord Mountbatten was murdered. The bay looked so peaceful there, it was horrible to think of something so evil taking place there.

We reached Ballyshannon for our overnight stop. B&B just outside the town. Went back for a meal and then spent the evening in Sean Og's pub full of Irish football supporters watching the Ireland v. Holland match. Holland had already scored when we got there. I had Irish coffee and Arn a Guinness. Great atmosphere in the pub and when Ireland finally equalised, the place was in uproar. Chairs overturned, everybody hugging one another. Goodness knows what would have happened if they had won. Afterwards cars on the streets sounding horns. Ole, ole, ole! Lovely evening, beautiful sunset.

## Sunday, 24th June

*Rathmelton – Letterkenny – Road to Derry – Grianan of Aileach – Fahan – Bunrana – Dunree – Mamore Gap – Clowmany – Ballyliffen*

9am Mass at St Joseph's, Rathmelton. Boring sort of church. Few benches at the back behind a glass screen, presumably for mums with small children. Very few people at the front! Altar boys sit in front bench, priest (who was on holiday from Scotland) sat on throne (!) right at the back of the Sanctuary so we couldn't see him. Mumbled responses, Communion only under one kind. Planned giving envelopes at the collection. Parish priest read the Gospel and preached. We did have the sign of peace.

The weather as we arrived was wild, wet and windy. It had eased off a bit by the time we left but the weather had really closed in – the clouds were very low.

We took the road to Letterkenny passing the Rally HQ where the cars were going to finish that day and then took the road to Derry and onwards to the Inishowen 100, one of the best scenic drives in Ireland – named for its approximate distance in miles.

Very Sunday-ish. Everything closed except the churches. People coming from Mass in droves. Found a hotel after some searching and had coffee and biscuits.

On the '100' again, saw Dunree Fort above us, took a wrong turning (due to lack of signposts at junctions) started up a narrow winding road, up a mountain, decided to turn back. Now headed for the Mamore Gap, a pass through the mountains. High up and we started to disappear in the mist!

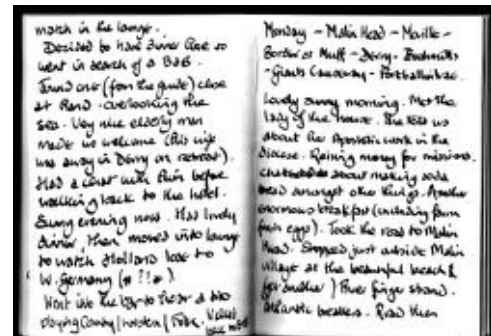
A fantastic view in the distance. We stopped at a viewpoint. Could see far below where the sun poked through the clouds and crop fields or the sea. Down the mountain, next stop a little village called Clowmany, surrounded by mountains. Bought ices and films in a little shop. Drove on to Ballyliffen. Marvellous strand and in the distance the ruins of a castle. Sun was out so decided to head for the ruins across the sands.

Walked and walked with the wind behind but castle did not get any nearer. Black and white wading birds on the shore. Eventually reached the road but fenced off so we had to turn around. This time into the wind which was so strong that you felt you could lay on it. Wind very strong and whipped up the sands stinging my legs. What with that and the spray we felt quite exhausted by the time we got back to the car.

Found a nice hotel where we had drinks and watched the Brazil – Argentina match in the lounge. Decided to have dinner here so went in search of a B&B.

Found one (from the Guide) close at hand – overlooking the sea. Very nice elderly man made us welcome (his wife was away in Derry on retreat). Had a chat with him before walking back to the hotel. Sunny evening now. Had lovely dinner, then moved into lounge to watch Holland lose to W. Germany (\*?!\*).

Went into the bar to hear a trio playing country & western / folk. Walked back to B&B.



## Monday, 25th June

*Malin Head – Moville – Border at Muff – Derry – Bushmills – Giants Causeway – Portballintrae*

Lovely sunny morning. Met the lady of the house. She told us about her Apostolic work in the Diocese. Raising money for the missions. Chatted about making soda bread amongst other things. Another enormous breakfast (including farm-fresh eggs). Took the road to Malin Head. Stopped just outside Malin village at the beautiful beach (yet another). Five Finger Strand (the name comes from five narrow sea stacks that protrude from the water on the north side of the beach which look like fingers). Atlantic breakers. Road then climbed up the hillsides. Stopped for view overlooking the beach that we had just been on.

Near Malin Head, saw a helicopter in a field near the road, man in it was filming. Very cold and windy on Malin Head but nice and clear for views. Sheltered behind the disused Lloyds look-out tower. Helicopter passed by us and waves were exchanged.

Back on the Inishowen '100' and on to Muff and the frontier post just beyond. Arn did not see the caution speed bumps sign and hurtled over them. Stopped at army post where soldier asked Arn if he had read the sign! He recommended that we see the Antrim coast. The border seemed an obscenity in such a beautiful place.

Derry – did not really see any of this as the road to Limavady, Coleraine etc., turned off before the centre. Stopped as about to go over the bridge over the Foyle. RUC van and soldiers. Soldier raised his rifle and pointed it at us. After a minute they packed up and we were over the bridge. Through Limavady and Coleraine to Bushmills. Followed signs to old distillery but too

late for visit so went on to Giants' Causeway. Strange pillar formations. Took lots of photos. Quite a few people about but less as we set off along the cliff path. Seemed to go on forever. Arn turned back at the 'Chimney' but I decided to go on. A party of four also seemed to be coming along but I outpaced them and I think they gave up later on. Soon it was just me and the sea birds on the cliff face. The path could be seen stretching ahead of me. Seemed silly to turn back now. Nearly twisted my ankle. Pretty slippery and stony path in places. Could finally see the end above up a flight of wooden steps. Hoped this would lead me to the gravel path. But I was all alone up there with a footpath going on ahead of me and going back to the Causeway along the cliff top. Wire fence all along the path as there were cattle and sheep up there. Nothing else for it but to set out along the path. Bit phased when I saw some cows ahead of me on path. Said a few prayers and tried to feel brave. Cows obligingly moved out of my way. Path went on and on and in and out as it followed the contours of the cliffs. Magnificent views everywhere. Getting worried I was taking so long. Arn would have been back at the hotel having a drink and wondering where I was. At last, I saw the Causeway Centre ahead of me. Staggered into the hotel and saw Arn sipping his lager. He'd only got back about an hour before me and wasn't in the least bit worried. I thought I deserved a drink and got a large rum and coke.

#### Wednesday, 27th June

*Drogheda – Newgrange – Slane – Hill of Slane – Navan – Kells, road to Wexford – Baltinglass*

Another lovely breakfast and left to go to Newgrange. Weather started bright and we had sun and showers through the day. Travelled around the Boyne country. This year is the 300th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne. Newgrange – very special place. Looks beautiful with its reconstructed outer wall of white quartzite stone. Very good guide gave us a lot of interesting information. Lots of interpretations of the meaning of the patterns on the entrance stone – a depiction of the grave passages, fields and river, a description of those buried within, a means of meditation, an illumination of the circle of birth, life and death, etc. Very narrow entrance to the grave. The entrance chamber was as it was 5000 years ago. The roof with its huge stones interleafed is a marvellous construction and allows for rainwater to seep away leaving this chamber dry. Guide switched out lights and an orange light was beamed in from outside to show how, at the winter solstice, the sunlight gradually steals up the narrow passage until it lights up the chamber. Outside, the guide had pointed out a grassy mound in a field of oilseed rape which was one of the satellite tombs.

We drove on to Slane, a neat little town on the crossroads with four nearly identical 18th century

houses in grey limestone on the four junctions. Had toasted cheese sandwiches in a pub there and drove up to the Hill of Slane. Picked out the way through the cow pats and then explored the ruins of the abbey. Also, a ruined church and a graveyard close by. I climbed the narrow winding staircase in the church tower. Lovely view over the surrounding countryside.

Drove on to Navan then on to Kells. Guidebook was wrong. The high Celtic crosses, the round tower and the exhibition about the Book of Kells are not in the grounds of the Catholic Church but a Church of Ireland. Very fine crosses and great tall round tower with five windows round the top. I tried the door inside the church where the exhibition was but thought it was locked. Outside the church grounds, up the hill, around the side there was St Columba's Oratory. Got the key from one of the houses on the hill. The caretaker later came up to tell us a bit about the Oratory. Said we should be able to get in to see the exhibition in the church. So went back and Arn managed to get the door open. Climbed the stairs to church gallery. A small exhibition of replicas of pages of the Book of Kells and photographs of the high crosses. Cup of coffee and cake in another little cafe and set out on the road to Wexford. Wanted to avoid Dublin so we went on a lot of minor roads(!). Went through horse racing country, lots of sheds and expensive houses. Saw signs to the Curragh Races. The big Budweiser Derby is on Saturday. Drove through the Wicklow Mountains – pretty countryside – and arrived in Wexford just as race meeting finished. Crowds pouring out of the track.

Got to B&B just before nine. Met Mrs Tobin again and had the same room as before. Went out for a drink and saw that traditional Irish music was on that evening at the Centenary Stores. Nice airy place. Group of musicians already assembling: accordionist, guitarists, other string instruments and tin whistle (later joined by a bodhran player). Enjoyable evening.

#### Thursday, 28th June

*Rosslare – Home*

Mr Tobin gave us our breakfast. We were up early and left the house before nine. Lots of cars waiting to get on the ferry. Think we left it a wee bit late. Lovely sunny day. A party of schoolboys from County Waterford on board for a day trip to Fishguard (together with priest and teachers)...

Lyn's notes end here, but I remember us travelling back to Cambridge on an uneventful journey, our heads still full of the scenery we had seen in Ireland. We never did get to search for Iris Keogh's reading glasses, but she didn't really mind when we spoke to her a few days later. It was a lovely holiday and it feels wonderful to be able to share the experience with the readers of *The Pilgrim*.

## Poetry Corner

### Trinity Torment

**Teresa Brett**

It's hard to write when you're in pain  
Which never stops, day or night.  
I ask God to help me fight  
As Jesus did, again and again,  
Putting others first.

The Spirit's quirky ways unseen  
To help us do God's mighty will?  
I'm not pure enough to spill  
The beans and wait, serene,  
For some relief.

Hope is my joy; of that I'm sure.  
For me it is an ageless tie  
To what I see, feel and cry.  
Can that be coming close to shore?  
Groping through hope for love....

## In Style

**Wally Moscuazzo**

East street, West street – the cliff  
A crescent of houses built in Regency  
Medicinal water for the diseased  
The Pavilion turrets overlook the sea and  
the Alfred Waterhouse red bricks

A bay-window in a large room  
Overlooking the beach  
A king-size bed dressed in beige and gold  
In Rococo style  
A painting dominating one side wall  
Showing a deck chair in the rain, in the rain alone  
Mirrored on a pond—  
Rain and wind whistled through the night  
The Pier was a queen alight  
A castle full of youths  
Inundated in a veil of fog and sand it was  
A fortress for the young.  
The sea-gulls were not asleep and fed  
From the breast of the sea  
Spongy white waves crashed against the sand  
I thought...  
Where is the blue  
The azure...  
Goodness of man?  
As nature he can transform  
into Jekyll and Hyde  
To understand, to feel...  
Under the rain and gusty wind  
The sea-gulls can still fish  
Man is strong yet he steadies himself  
on the green rail lining the promenade  
Envious of their wings and a little sorry maybe  
But I stop and wonder if they can think....

## Tailpiece

### QUIZ

#### Mary Walsh

*Can You Name the 12 Apostles?*

If you write the word BAPTISM and change the 'I' to a 'J' you have the initial letter of all of them.

B - - - - -

A - - - - - (Peter's brother)

P - - - - and P - - - -

T - - - - -

J - - - - and J - - - (sons of Zebedee ) J - - - - (son of Alphaeus) J - - - (AKA Thaddeus) J - - - -

S - - - - (the Zealot)

M - - - - -

*Do You Know The Seven Sacraments?*

The first three are rites of initiation into the Church:

1) B - - - - - The sacrament of admission to the Faith. 2) E - - - - - This sacrament can be received daily. 3) C - - - - - The gifts of the Holy Spirit are received. Anointing with Chrism oil seals the person as a member of the Church.

The next two are rites of spiritual healing:

4) R - - - - - Also known as Confession. This sacrament is a means of obtaining pardon from God for sins for which we are truly sorry. 5) A - - - - - O - T - - S - - - Formerly known as Extreme Unction. This sacrament gives strength and comfort to the sick person and unites his or her suffering with that of Christ on the cross.

The last two are rites of service to God:

6) M - - - - - Catholic marriage reflects the union of Christ with the Church. 7) O - - - - - or Holy Orders This sacrament gives priests the sacramental power to baptise, confirm, absolve sins, witness marriages and consecrate the Eucharist. Deacons can baptise, witness marriages, preach and assist during Mass but they cannot consecrate the Eucharist or hear confessions. When a bishop is ordained, he has the sacramental power to ordain.

Answers  
The 12 apostles are: Bartholomew, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James and John, James, Jude, Judas, Simon and Matthew  
The Seven Sacraments are: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Ordination.

## **Thank You, Susan and Dick**

We would like to thank Susan O'Brien, who was one of our sub-editors for all the work she did for us over a number of years, and who recently moved away from Cambridge.

We also take a moment to remember, Dick Wilson, who restarted the Pilgrim in December 2013 after a short hiatus in publication. He passed away in March this year and you'll see the article written about his life by his wife, Judy, in this edition.

Finally, a big thank you to all contributors to the last edition. We had to extend the magazine beyond its usual maximum of 28 pages to 32 pages and, luckily, the printer coped!

*The Pilgrim Team*

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# **The deadline for the next edition is **20 October** for publication on **18/19 November****

Wondering where to send your article, photos or drawings? Our email address is below and you will 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. Anything you send should be your own work in your own words and a maximum of 2,000 words.**

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### **The production team:**

Editors: Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes

Sub-editors: Alex Dias, Carol Williams, Sarah Sykes, Nora Darby

Commissioning Editor: Nora Darby

Cover: Leonie Isaacson

Proofreaders: Caroline O'Donnell, Miriam Santos Freire & Sarah Sykes

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

All members of the Pilgrim team can be contacted at [\*\*pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk\*\*](mailto: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.

The Zoom link is published in the Newsletter, Keeping-in-Touch email and on the 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](mailto:openmeeting@saintlaurence.org.uk)

### The Pilgrim by Email

The Pilgrim magazine is available as a paper 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](mailto:pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk)

### Pilgrim on the Web

The most recent back editions are 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 a vibrant and fun Mass. We encourage young readers, Eucharistic Ministers, budding musicians and singers 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 the courage and join in.

ABLAZE Masses are generally held Sunday 5pm on the 1st Sunday of the month. There is no Ablaze in August. Look out for the next date in newsletter in September.

## Upcoming Parish Events

<b>Saturday morning coffee hub</b> Parish room after 9:30am Mass	10am–12pm
<b>Sunday morning coffee</b> Zoom details in the parish newsletter	After 11am Mass
<b>Laudato Si weekend</b>	14-16 July
<b>St Laurence's Feast day</b> 6pm Mass followed by Parish party	Thurs 10 August
<b>Parishioners Open Meeting</b> Dates for 2023	Thurs 14 Sept Tues 21 Nov At 7:30pm
<b>CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day</b>	Fri 6 Oct



Follow St Laurence's on Facebook:

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

# ST LAURENCE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

91 Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1XB

Tel: 01223 704640

Email: [office@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto: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:

Fr Simon Blakesley

07946 390060

[simon.blakesley@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:simon.blakesley@rcdea.org.uk)

## Deacon:

Rev. Dr Geoffrey Cook

01223 351650

## Secretary:

Reece King

01223 704640

[reece.king@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:reece.king@saintlaurence.org.uk)

## Treasurer:

James Dore

07980 467534

[treasurer@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@saintlaurence.org.uk)

## Safeguarding:

Mary Jane & Jim O'Sullivan

[safeguarding@saintlaurence.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@saintlaurence.org.uk)

## Service Times

Saturday 9.30am

6:00pm Vigil Mass (sung)

Sunday 8.00am

9:30am (sung and with Children's Liturgy)

11:00am (sung and with Children's Liturgy)

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.30am

Wed & Fri 12.30pm

*All Masses are livestreamed. Check the weekly newsletter for changes to the above times*

## St Laurence's School

Head of School

Assistant Head

Address

Mrs McGhee Wallace

Rachel Chalklin

St Laurence's School

Arbury Road

Cambridge

CB4 2JX

Telephone

01223 712227

Email

[office@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk)

Website

[www.stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk](http://www.stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk)