

PORTSMOUTH PEOPLE

February/March 2010
Vol 10-1

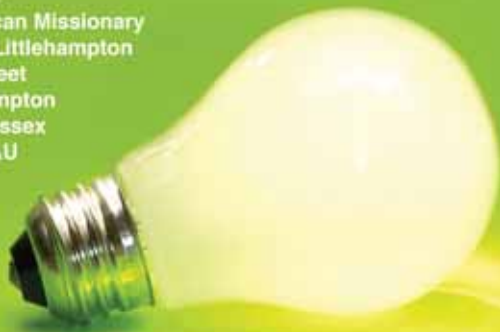


Bishop's Bulletin **Diocesan Archives** Publication of the
40 Hours of Prayer Lew and Sue Sternberg Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
This is IT! **Make the Cross Count**
Passionate about Prayer Living Our Faith at St Andrews
Learning Curves **The Silent Service** My Son, the Priest **OLQP..**

DISILLUSIONED WITH LIFE?

So was Francis!
Why not visit and see how our Franciscan Sisterhood works.

Contact:
Franciscan Missionary
Sisters Littlehampton
East Street
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 6AU



www.franciscan.co.uk e-mail: fmsl@franciscan.co.uk

**PRIOR PARK
COLLEGE • BATH**
An Education For Life



Talents blossom within this high
achieving, friendly community

From September 2009

- New Headmaster
(James Murphy-O'Connor)
- No Saturday lessons
- Attractive weekly boarding
- Enhanced weekly & weekend
co-curricular programme

Open Door Days

Friday 12 March 2010

11.00am - 1.00pm

Friday 7 May 2010

11.00am - 1.00pm

See the school in action on a normal
working day.

No appointment necessary.



Ralph Allen Drive, Bath, BA2 5AH
T: 01225 831 000 F: 01225 835 753
Email: admissions@priorpark.co.uk
www.priorparkschools.co.uk

HMC Co-educational Catholic School 11-18 Day 13-18 Boarding
Senior School to The Paragon, Bath & Prior Park Preparatory School, Cricklade, Wiltshire

THE HOME OF COMFORT

Residential Care Home with
Nursing, founded in 1896.
Registered for 30 female
residents



Modern medical facilities with:
24 hour compassionate, professional nursing
Homely, cheerful surroundings and dignified atmosphere
Long and short stay – all rooms single
Good, wholesome home cooking
Reasonable rates

Visit with or without an appointment

17 VICTORIA GROVE, SOUTHSEA PO5 1NF

or telephone Matron 023 9281 1365;
email hocomfort@aol.com



St John's

An independent day & boarding school
for boys & girls aged 2-18

- ★ Academic excellence
- ★ Continuity
- ★ Firm foundations
- ★ Caring community
- ★ Sport for all
- ★ A chance to perform



Visit our website
www.stjohnscollege.co.uk

Tel: 023 9281 5118

St John's College, Grove Road South,
Southsea, Hampshire PO5 3QW



Open Morning: 18 March 2010, 9:30am - 11:00am

PORTSMOUTH PEOPLE



Jay Kettle-Williams

Contents

Bishop's Bulletin	2 & 3
The Archives of the Diocese by Dr V J L Fontana	3
40 Hours of Prayer by Karen Platt	4
Lew and Sue Sternberg by John Shepherd	5
Teens and 20s by Aaron D'Souza	6
This is IT!	7
Parsons Pointers by John Parsons	7
Profiles	8 & 16
Behind the Scenes	8
Make the Cross Count by Tom Horwood	9
Calendar	9
Prie-Dieu by Fr Denis Blackledge	10
Passionate about Prayer	10
Living Our Faith at St Andrews by Dawn Harrison	11
Movers and Shakers	12
Learning Curves by Colin Parkes	14
Live Issues by Dominica Roberts	16
A Broader View by Lawrence Fullick	17
Letters	18
The Silent Service	19
News & Announcements	20
Community Spirit by Mary Lee	22
Faith in Action: My Son, the Priest	23
Just for Juniors	24
Bookmark	25
OLQP by Anne Hartley	26
Hints & Wrinkles	27
Coming Closer to God in Lent by Jeremy Corley	28

The older I get, the more I see my parents looking back at me when I shave in the morning. Well, that fact certainly puts the nail in the coffin of Existentialism: we can't be purely, or even impurely, the mere sum of our acts. 'Like it or lump it,' my parents used to say. 'We're born in an image.'

Well, I leave the question as to whether we develop in linear progression or in cyclical fashion to the *grands philosophes* of old. Admittedly we all try to develop in one linear way or another, perhaps running faster, learning more, being better Christians. But, then again, we all recognise the cyclical nature of the world around us with its seasons turning in tandem with the Church's year.

We now enter the period of Lent, journeying as Spring develops towards revival and the most glorious mystery of Easter. So, what better reminder of nature's cycle than the wild daffodil.

The wild daffodil (Latin: *narcissus lobularis*), with yellow trumpets and paler petals, is also known as *lilium candidum* or Annunciation Lily, or even White Lily, but more commonly as Lent Lily. Closely identified with the eastern Mediterranean but known extensively worldwide, the Lent Lily is so named because it flowers at the approach of Spring, remains in bloom with riotous colour throughout Lent yet generally fails to live beyond Easter: 'And there's the Lenten lily/That has not long to stay/And dies on Easter day' (from 'The Lent Lily' by A E Houseman).

May your Lenten journey be accompanied and encouraged by a host of golden daffodils.

Acknowledgements: Photographs © by Denis Blackledge, Anne Bothwell, David Cardinal, Samantha Cook, Cath Farrow, Dominic Fontana, Pete Hughes, Ann Saunders, Woking News and Mail and, ref: Church in Focus, Philip Crook and Tom Olding.

Photograph The Yomper © Copyright Colin Smith, licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

Design and Print by South Hants Digital
t: 023 9238 8087





Lent 2010

CRISPIAN HOLLIS BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH



deepening of our faith. It is a time for generous giving and for a renewed trust in the goodness and love of the Lord who calls us to be his disciples.

The Gospel context for the last Sunday before Lent is the call of the disciples. On the previous Sunday, we hear Jesus inviting Peter to put out into the deep with total trust in him, so that he could become a 'fisher of men'. In the passage that immediately precedes that passage, we read of Jesus spending the night in prayer before he chooses those who were to be his special companions. Our Gospel (Luke 6:17, 20-26) tells of Jesus coming down from the mountain and introducing his newly chosen apostles to a sea of humanity into which they, as 'fishers of men', must enter without fear, casting their nets for a catch and becoming, in their turn, the star that will lead men and women to Jesus.

This is the beginning of the Church which we know and love and within which we find the Lord. This is the Church in which, through baptism, we begin to share in the work and the loving of Christ. This is the world of the poor, the needy, those who are troubled and distressed, and Jesus calls us to be his presence among all people, to bring joy, satisfaction and comfort – but, not without cost.

When the new disciples heard Jesus' words, they must have wondered, as perhaps we do ourselves, 'how can this be?' The answer to that question lies in the angel's words to Mary at the start of Luke's Gospel: 'the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.' These things will come about because the power of God's Spirit is poured out on the disciples. Through the Spirit, they will discover the courage, the wisdom and the understanding to proclaim and live the Gospel. We, today's disciples, like those first followers, are called to witness to the truth that real joy and happiness and fulfilment come because we trust in the Lord, rather than in those aspects of modern living which are so neglectful of God and seemingly so transient. This

understanding of the call to discipleship, and our response to it, has been central to all my recent teaching and forms the lynchpin of our Pastoral Plan,

We come today to the threshold of Lent; it's another opportunity to continue and deepen our journey in faith, bringing us to the Lord in new and exciting ways.

For some – I am thinking particularly of our catechumens seeking baptism and of those seeking to come into full communion with the Church – their journey is quite specific and has a very sharp focus. Easter for them will be a wonderful culmination and fulfilment of deepest hopes. It will bring joy to them and to all us who have journeyed with them.

For those of us who have been longer on the journey, Lent is a time of renewal and ongoing conversion with a greater and more generous concentration on the gifts the Lord has given us. Whatever Lenten penance we undertake, it should aim at making us more aware of the extraordinary love and care the Lord has for us.

For all of us, wherever we are in our journey of faith, Lent is a time for renewed prayer and for giving more time and space to God and to all those who, together with us, make up the human family, the brothers and sisters in Christ.

It's time to seek again the face of Christ. There we will find the compassion and healing love that renews our spirits. Look on that face in the silence of your prayer and give thanks to the Lord who has such love for us. Coming to the heart and face of Christ, we discover anew what it means to be truly one of his disciples, sent out to proclaim and be the Good News of the Kingdom.

May God bless you all,

'Happy are those who trust in the Lord'

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It seems like only yesterday that we were celebrating the feast of the Epiphany and the revealing of Christ to the wise men from the east. They followed the star and it brought them to kneel before the infant Christ to whom they offered their exotic gifts. But, unknown to them, at that time they were being gifted by the Lord in a way far richer than anything that they had been able to offer him.

St Matthew sums it up when he writes at the end of the story that they returned to their own country by a different way. That phrase means much more to me than just something about geography or map reading or the fear of Herod. It says something profoundly spiritual about conversion and the journey of faith, and it's entirely appropriate for us to revisit it today, as we stand on the threshold of Lent.

We too have followed a star; we too have journeyed in faith to bring our gifts – not least the gift of ourselves – to the Lord. In return, he has gifted us with so much and he has called us to be stewards of those gifts. As we recognise this, our lives, like those of the wise men, will begin to take a different direction. Our journey of faith continues, but in a different way. The season of Lent marks yet again an opportunity for that change of direction, for conversion and for the

Bishop Crispian's Engagements

FEBRUARY 2010

Mon 1-4:	Rome – Ad Limina Visit	
Fri 5:	St. Edmund's (Southampton) Induction & Welcome of Mgr Vincent Harvey	7.30 pm
Tue 9:	Bishop's House, Portsmouth - Diocesan Council of Priests	10.00/10.30 am
Wed 10:	St. Bede's, Basingstoke - Campaign Advisory Committee Meeting	2.30 pm
Thu 11:	Bishop's House, Portsmouth - Diocesan Trustees Meeting	10.00/10.30 am
Fri 12:	Park Place Pastoral Centre, Wickham - Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting	pm
Sat 13:	Park Place Pastoral Centre, Wickham - Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting	am
Sun 14:	Visit to Three Rivers Pastoral Area	
Tue 16:	London - Caritas Social Action Board Meeting	
Thu 18:	London - Overseas Mission Committee Meeting	11.00 am
	Hampshire Downs Pastoral Area Meeting	
Sat 20:	St. John's Cathedral, Portsmouth - Rite of Election	
Sun 21:	Visit to Three Rivers Pastoral Area	
Tue 23:	Havant Pastoral Area Meeting	
Wed 24:	Salesian College, Farnborough - Independent Schools Mass	4.30 – 7.00 pm
Thu 25:	Winchester – Bishop's Council Meeting	10.00/10.30 am
Fri 26:	St. John's Cathedral, Portsmouth – CAFOD Mass	12.15 pm
	South Berkshire Pastoral Area Meeting	
Sat 27:	Jersey - Stewardship Day	
Sun 28:	St. Joseph's, Basingstoke - Mass	11.00 am

MARCH 2010

Tue 2:	Clergy Liturgy Meeting	
Wed 3:	East Hendred Charities A.G.M.	am
	North Downs Pastoral Area Meeting	
Thu 4:	Central and West Reading Pastoral Area Meeting	
Fri 5:	Solent Pastoral Area Meeting	
Sat 6:	Southampton - Diocesan Gift Aid Day - Mass	10.00 am
Sun 7:	Visit to Three Rivers Pastoral Area	
Tue 9:	Pompey Pastoral Area Visit	
Wed 10:	Alton/Petersfield Pastoral Area Visit	
Thu 11:	Bishop's House, Portsmouth - Co-ordinating Pastors Meeting	10.00/10.30 am
Thu 11:	Three Rivers Pastoral Area Visit	
Fri 12:	New Forest East Pastoral Area Visit	
Sun 14:	Visit to Three Rivers Pastoral Area	
Thu 18:	London – Bishops' Conference International Affairs Committee Meeting	10.30 am
	North West Hampshire Pastoral Area Visit	
Sun 21:	Visit to Three Rivers Pastoral Area	
Sun 28:	Palm Sunday, St. John's Cathedral, Portsmouth - Mass	10.00 am
Tue 30:	St. John's Cathedral, Portsmouth - Mass of the Oils	11.00 am

THE ARCHIVES OF THE DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH



Dr VJL Fontana, Assistant Archivist

In 1997 the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church issued a circular letter entitled **The Pastoral Functions of Church Archives**. This letter pointed out how important it was to collect and preserve archival material that told the story of the Church's cultural heritage and history in each particular area where the Church had been and is pursuing its mission to spread the

Gospel of Christ. This letter was preceded by the codification of Canon Law in 1918 and its subsequent revision in 1983, which included considerable legislation concerning the conservation of archives. It was this that prompted the late Father Francis Isherwood to start setting up the present Diocesan Archives in the mid 1980s.

Six years have now passed since the Bishop appointed Rev Father Brian Croughan to succeed the then very seriously ill Father Isherwood as Diocesan Archivist with Dr Val Fontana as Assistant Archivist. Shortly after these appointments Father Francis died but left behind him the very efficient cataloguing system he had initiated. The present archivists have since added to Father Isherwood's catalogue and modified it to deal with the ever-evolving situation, which has included the recent reorganisation of the diocese and the lodgement of much new material. This catalogue is available for consultation by any member of the public pursuing

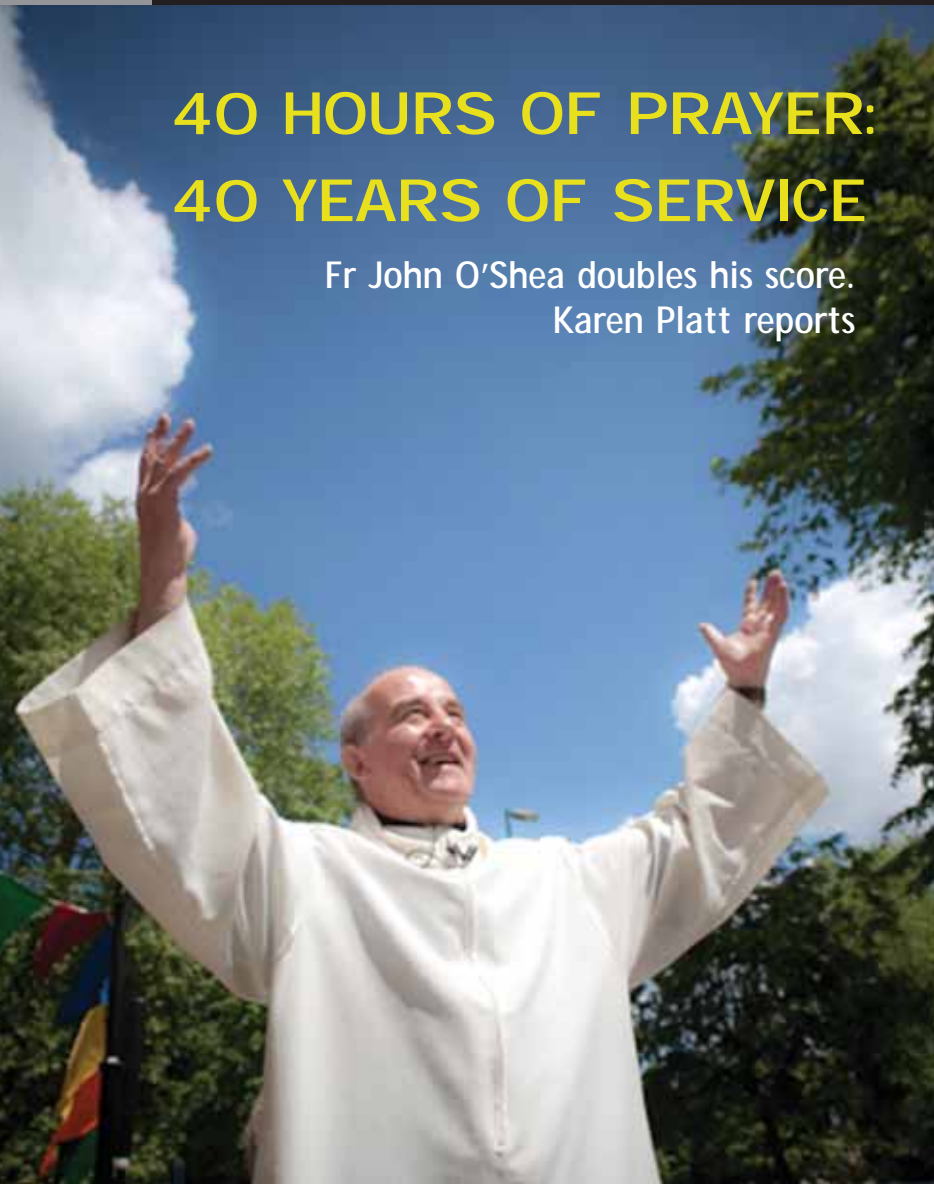
historical research particularly of parish histories or family history enquiries. Non-diocesan enquirers and family historians are expected to pay a small sum for this access. However it must be remembered that these documents are subject to confidentiality rules so that the more recent archives may be held as closed documents for periods varying between 30 and 100 years. It must be stressed that the archivists are not in a position to carry out research for individual enquirers who must arrange to do it themselves or arrange for someone to do it for them. However, the archivists are always ready to help and advise. Please note that if you communicate by Email include a telephone number and postal address.

Because the area covered by the diocese is very large, stretching, as it does, from the Channel Isles to the South of the River Thames, the archivists have felt it necessary to set up a team of volunteer archivists throughout the diocese to oversee the archival material that has been retained in the parishes and pastoral areas. In this way the diocesan archivists have been able to keep track of what is happening to the archival material held throughout the diocese without the necessity of requiring all parishes to send any archival material to the central archives in St Edmund's House as soon as they cease to be of immediate relevance to the administration of the parish or pastoral area. All these volunteers have been required to sign a covenant of confidentiality and several have attended training sessions organised in Portsmouth and Winchester over the past three years. As yet we do not cover all Pastoral Areas or parishes. So, if anyone wishes to help, please get in touch with the archivists at St Edmund's House, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3QA (t: 023 9282 5430 f: 023 9287 2424).

Dr Fontana concludes his report in the forthcoming issue of **PP**

40 HOURS OF PRAYER: 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Fr John O'Shea doubles his score.
Karen Platt reports



nag you on a daily basis, not just one (and love you). John was not sure about this offer. God continued to call John and slowly John realised that God was not going to stop. On 7 June 1969 John became Father John. And we all thank God for that.

Father John O'Shea has now celebrated his 40th Anniversary as a Priest which we felt was an incredible achievement, even more so because he still claims to be 21 years of age.

We had asked Father John how he would like to celebrate his anniversary and we were expecting words like Guinness, dancing and music. Instead he said he would like to mark this occasion with prayer. We decided to offer 40 hours of prayer for his forty years of service.



So a programme was put together offering a range of different types of prayer, such as Ignatian Prayer, Taizé, Sensory Prayer, Meditation, prayer with the scriptures. Some of the hours were run by experienced prayer leaders and to our great surprise some of

our parish groups, who had never done anything like this before, lead an hour. Our local Catholic Schools also took part.

Paul Leonard (now Father Paul) started off our forty hours of prayer. Those of us present felt quite privileged to be there as Deacon Paul, about to start his journey as a Priest, prayed and focused on Father John's forty years of service.

Once upon a time there was a little boy called John. John liked to live life to the full, he especially liked to play on his little red truck he got from Father Christmas. He would tear around the house on his truck and his poor brother and sister never knew which direction he was coming from next. Nobody would get in his way.

As John grew up he enjoyed sports, especially rugby. Then one day God spoke to John, God wanted John to become a Priest. John thought, 'No, I want to be a world famous rugby player.' So he tried not to hear what God was saying to him. God continued: 'John I want you to become a Priest.' John thought, 'No I want to marry a beautiful woman, have children and live happily ever after.' God said to John: 'If you become a Priest, I will give you hundreds of women to

Father John was asked to share with us some of his memories of the past forty years. He felt that the RCIA process, Ignatian Prayer and Stewardship are what have had the biggest influence on him.

The forty hours of prayer was Father John's gift to us, we were shown new types of prayer, taught how to enrich our prayer time and encouraged to have a go, prayer is for everyone. The forty hours of prayer was also our parish gift to Father John, our way of saying thank you for his service to us, thank you for saying 'YES!' to God's call, and our way of saying we love him.

Father John thank you for the last forty years. Please can we have many more?



IT ALL BEGAN WITH LEW AND SUE STERNBERG

John Shepherd offers a personal account of inter-faith dialogue

I should like to claim that my involvement with Christian and Jewish inter-faith dialogue arose from some intellectual curiosity or religious conviction but, like most things in my life, it arose from personal friendship. I would explain.

Some years ago my family moved into our present house and on the very day of such arrival we were warmly greeted by our new next-door neighbours the Sternbergs. An observant Orthodox Jewish couple 'of mature years' and with their only daughter and her family living in London, they were especially welcoming of our children. A pattern of mutual visiting quickly established itself and it was within that context that it became my custom to call on them each Friday evening, when, at the appointed hour, candles were lit, prayers said, wine blessed, kisses exchanged and Shabbat Shalom, the Sabbath greeted. As Lew became older and more frail I started to accompany him on his journey to the Synagogue on Saturday mornings and so began my connection with the Orthodox community in Bournemouth.

The connection and interest established, I joined the Council of Christians and Jews, an organisation founded in the anxious days of World War II with the idea of promoting dialogue between the two faiths. It is an organisation based exclusively upon mutual respect and without missionary function or intention of any kind.

Within our local, Bournemouth Branch both groups feel sufficiently confident to address difficult issues and this current year have enjoyed a programme of lectures under the general title 'The Parting of the Ways' being the history of the separation of the two faiths in the First Century. Speakers to date have included Rabbi Norman Solomon who gave the opening address, Fr Nicholas King S.J. and Professor Geza Vermes. Recently Fr John McDade S.J. the Principal of Heythrop College talked to the topic 'Christians and Jews: Rivals or Friends' dealing with developments in the Church's relationship with Judaism since *Nostra Aetate*, one of the documents which emerged from Vatican II.

Our branch does not only listen to talks, for we do attempt to promote more social contact at each meeting as well as each year-end Advent-Hanukkah social. A recent development has been the invitation extended to members from the Adult Education arm of the Synagogue. The more relaxed and confident that each group feels in the company of the other the more profound becomes the level of dialogue.

Sadly both Sue and Lew Sternberg have now died. They are remembered at the anniversaries of their deaths with the recitation of Kaddish in the Synagogue. On a very personal level they are recalled and blessed at all of our dinner parties when we use the wine coasters which was their gift to Ruth and myself for the silver anniversary of our wedding, as well as on each occasion that I visit the Synagogue [see inset] or visit the homes of Jewish friends when I put on Lew's kippah, so lovingly crocheted for him by Sue.

With grateful thanks to Samantha Cook of Samantha Cook Photography Bournemouth, we feature two of the pictures taken at the recent Induction by the Chief Rabbi, Lord (Jonathan) Sacks of Aldgate, of Rabbi Adrian Jesner, a rabbi of the Orthodox Synagogue in Bournemouth: (Left. L to R) The Chief Rabbi, Gerald Normie, Denis Blackledge S.J. and Rabbi Neil Amswych of the Bournemouth Reform Synagogue; (Right) John Shepherd (centre) being introduced by Irwyn Yentis (left), a senior member of the Bournemouth Orthodox Synagogue, to Harvey Lipsith, current President of the Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation. For a full photographic inventory of the Induction Service, visit www.samcookphotos.co.uk and click on the gallery tab > Weddings Folder > View Online Albums > Events > Service of Induction > [Password = event].

Note: The kippah, yarmulke or kappel is a thin, slightly-rounded skullcap traditionally worn at all times by observant Jewish men, and sometimes by both men and women in Conservative and Reform communities. Its use is associated with demonstrating respect and reverence for God.

What's in a Word - EOSTORMONATH

EASTER SUNDAY

A major Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, which takes place on a Sunday in the Spring. This is because the resurrection is understood to have taken place on a Sunday, after Jesus was crucified to death the Friday before. The name comes from the Old English word *Eostormonath*, which was the name for the month in which the festival fell. In other languages, the festival is usually given a name drawn from the Hebrew word for the festival of Passover (i.e., *pesach*) leading to the French *Pâques*, the Italian *Pasqua* etc. The festival of Easter marks the end of the forty-day season of Lent.

Words, and their definition, taken from the Bible Style Guide (Bible Society 2008) and reproduced here with the permission of Bible Society. No part may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise without prior permission from Bible Society. For permission requests, please email permissions@biblesociety.org.uk or telephone Bible Society on 017 9341 8100. To access the Bible Style Guide please go to <http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/style-guide>

TEENS & 20s



Aaron D'Souza reflects on life as an undergrad at uni in London

University marks the beginning of a new era for students; the end of being the top dog in college/sixth form and embarking on a life of freedom! I have just started my first year, studying History and Politics at Queen Mary, University of London in East London. You're thinking it already: that's a bit of a rough area... actually, it's not too bad though I've never realised how many takeaway restaurants can be packed along one street (say about twenty!!)

In the weeks running up to university, I was like a pendulum swinging from being really eager, ready to confront university and being scared senseless. Despite the old Spiderman philosophy of 'with great power comes great responsibility' being drummed into me 24/7, I knew that uni was essentially made up of two components: studying, partying! For this part I was spot on, constantly reminded by the umpteen shouts of 'DOWN IT FRESHER!' (thankfully not to me) during fresher week. Shockingly though, were the amount of things I hadn't even considered, that UCAS, student room, whatever hadn't bothered mentioning, that changes university life forever.

First: 2am becomes an early night. Becoming an insomniac, for me, was not really an option: I need sleep. Two days in, I knew this was not going to happen. Whether it be clubbing, being forced to stay up because some drunkard thinks he's got the X-Factor, it will happen. And, trust me, you will be asking yourself: why is it that you always go out and come back in the early hours of the following morning knowing you have a 9 am lecture that will



BEING A FRESHER: WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU

allow you to have only 4-5hrs sleep? If that's not the case, then it's: why does the uni think it's necessary to have an 8am fire drill without notifying you? Take your pick.

You will gradually, or rapidly, find how much you take home for granted. Washing, cooking (except for those people who are catered for), television, lack of dishwasher... I could keep going. One week the toaster, cooker and oven decided to break down on the same day: I'm sorry no-one can survive without that, being at home or not! And you may think 'dishwasher: That's a bit far'. But you'll change your mind when you've experienced student laziness of the highest degree when you enter a kitchen reeking of mould. If I had any advice, (and here I'm being deadly serious) keep in charge of your flatmates: not in the manner of keeping a baseball bat for good measure, but just make sure they know who's boss.

Food is important, assuming you want to last the first semester (there are plenty of people who don't seem to want to). But let me teach you a lesson: if you buy food to cook (properly – not just shove in the oven) you have to be motivated. Otherwise, you

will end up buying food that stays in your fridge because you can't be bothered to cook it. You might as well just get a takeaway – it's not as if there isn't a choice!

So, some of you may now be thinking that food is the essential tool to survive university: how wrong you would be. Nope. Food is thrown into oblivion when compared to the number one necessity of all: the infamous internet connection. No matter what, you **MUST** have a laptop or computer, even if you are still a Shakespeare-loving, quill-using person of the 16th century. It will define your existence: not joking. Facebook, movies, games...everything: **YOU NEED A LAPTOP**. I nearly cried when internet connection failed for a full day in my halls: seriously, there was nothing to do but study!

For those sceptical, or for that matter enthusiastic about uni, I hope I haven't put you off. It has been a blast so far!

Uni fact: You can check if an egg has gone off by putting it in a glass of water. If it floats, it's bad, if it sinks, it's ok to eat!

Aaron D'Souza lives in Bracknell where he is a parishioner at St Joseph and St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Church. Aaron is currently studying History and Politics at Queen Mary, University of London.

Fascinating Facts and Figures

One in ten children in the UK are of mixed racial parentage.

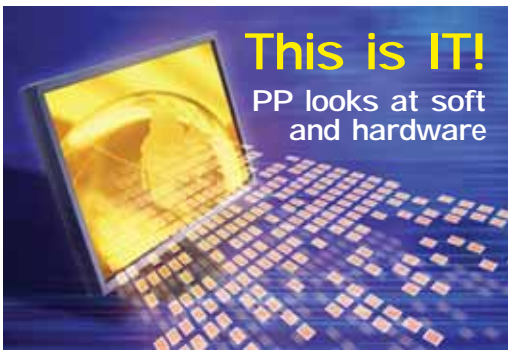
People living in Bournemouth enjoy the fastest average broadband speed in the country (8.06Mbps) just ahead of that of Portsmouth and Dudley (West Midlands) and 92 Mbps slower than that in S.Korea.

Münster in Ulm (Germany) claims to be the tallest church in the world: 161.5m (530ft).

25% of all food bought in the UK is reputedly wasted.

Every year Brits spend 36 days online and 84 hours talking on the telephone.

Dubbed 'God's Filibuster', Dr Donald Thomas of the US is generally acclaimed as having given the longest sermon ever: 93 hours, 18-22 September 1978.



BUILD UP YOUR LIBRARY

Google Book Search (<http://books.google.com>) lets you view more than seven million books. Titles in the public domain or no longer protected by copyright can be downloaded as PDFs. The **Internet Archive** (www.archive.org/details/texts) also holds a vast selection of texts including dictionaries and sheet-music songbooks all free to download.

OOO4KIDS

Although an early beta version, this special childrens' edition of Open Office, aimed at pre-teenagers but equally as suitable and useful for folk with limited computer knowledge, offers a word processor (Writer), spreadsheet (Calc), presentation creator (Impress) and a drawing programme (Draw) all available from <http://download.0004kids.org/en>

TEST YOUR SECURITY

The UK Government's website (www.getsafeonline.org) will help you determine how well the data on your computer is protected.

VIDEO TO DVD CONVERTER

Retailing at £79.99, TerraTec's (www.terratec.net) video-to-DVD converter, which plugs into the USB port of your computer from where it's powered, is a handy bit of easy-to-use kit for revisiting yesteryear's PAL, NTSC and SECAM videos of weddings, christenings, school sports days, open days etc. in modern DVD format.

CREATE YOUR OWN E-BOOKS

Producing an e-book for school, parish or your personal reference is easy. Save your work as a .doc file – alternatively save in Writer, available free from www.openoffice.org – and then convert it into a PDF using a free PDF Converter downloadable from the web (see below). Users of Microsoft 2007 can install the free plug-in Save as PDF or XPS (<http://bit.ly/save219>) and then save documents directly to PDF. E-books can readily be sent via email or uploaded e.g., to Scribd (www.scribd.com) where you can even sell the fruit of your endeavours.

WORKING WITH PDFs

Eager to edit PDFs for parish or school work? **FOXIT READER**, the free no-hassle, jargon-free download from www.foxitsoftware.com, could well be the answer to your dreams. Alternatively there's a free PDF facilitator downloadable from www.openoffice.org which might be what you're looking for.

(Contributions to this column warmly invited. Ed.)

Parsons Pointers with John Parsons

I seem to remember that in 1989 I wrote an article for the local paper about the coming decade. If my memory serves me correctly I recalled that the 1890s had been called the 'naughty nineties'. I expressed the hope that this time it would be the 'neighbourly nineties'. I will leave each of my readers to decide for themselves whether that was the way that decade turned out. But I can't help recalling that it was in that decade that war raged in the former Yugoslavia. Not much neighbourliness there!

Ten years later in this column I said: 'My prayer for the next century is that people will work together to uphold those standards which come from God and not from selfishness or greed or hunger for power.' I'm not so sure what the verdict should be on progress so far. In the first decade of this century the headlines have been dominated by war and terror. 2001 will no doubt go down in history as one of the most damaging years of the century.

And so now we are in what I believe we are to call the 'twenty tens'. What will the next ten years bring? Peace in the Middle East and Afghanistan? Real progress towards countering climate change? Better distribution of the worlds' resources and reduction of poverty in Africa? Please God all these things will come about.

But what about our faith and our church? How will we love our neighbour over the next decade? And perhaps most important of all how will all Christian Churches work together to meet the challenges of the decade? We hear much about drunkenness among young people and the damage that can cause. We also hear about initiatives such as the Street Pastors in Portsmouth that were mentioned in the last issue of **Portsmouth People**. In my home town of Fleet there is the Town Centre Project which has been going for the last two years. The volunteers, dressed in red coats, are all accepted and recognised in the town by the youngsters. They work together as teams from all the churches in the town and so fostering long-lasting friendships, breaking down all barriers.

My hope for the next decade, which after all may well be my last, is that it may mark closer collaboration between Christians so that in God's good time and in God's way we may all be one.



John worships at the Church of Our Lady in Fleet and is in the choir there. He is a keen ecumenist and is a former Chairman of the Diocesan Commission for Christian Unity. He has been a regular contributor to **Portsmouth People** for some years with his column Parsons Pointers.

PERSONALITY PROFILE



Rachel Lowe has her destination mapped out

Having attended Portsmouth's Corpus Christi and St Edmund's schools, Rachel went on to Southdowns College to study Music and Law. She then continued to Portsmouth University. As a cash-strapped undergraduate, Rachel worked part-time driving a taxi to help pay her way through Uni. It was at that time that the business idea for which she is well-known came to mind. By the time she graduated with a BSc Honours (2.1) in Law and Business, and by the time that her episode of *Dragons' Den* hit the airways, Rachel was already well down the road of single-handedly developing the prototype of her 'Destination' board game. 'But life wasn't to be all plain sailing,' commented Rachel. 'Despite Government encouragement and support, RBS withheld funding for businesses, especially for small start-ups like mine. Admittedly any business

experiences its ups and downs and mine was no different. But as the song says: "Pick yourself up, dust yourself down and start all over again". So that's what I did.' And Rachel now has over 20 'Destinations' she's taking to market – including Destination Portsmouth – with yet more on the horizon.

Mother of two (Hannah and Lauren), Rachel, pictured here with her MBE, has found time between running a young family and running a young business to give talks and presentations on 'Education - Enterprise' to schools, societies and colleges. When not busily engaged with work and family ('No wonder my favourite film is *Sleepless in Seattle*'), Rachel likes to relax playing the piano, strumming her very special guitar and writing songs.

Of Maltese descent (Both grandparents on my mother's side came from Malta), little known for her mini-marathon runs ('Better keep quiet about my running!') yet widely recognised for having made it to *Dragons' Den*, ex-Pompey pupil Rachel Lowe was delighted when recently invited to Buckingham Palace to receive an MBE for her services to business.



With this issue

BEHIND THE SCENES takes a look at ...

The Catenian Association



The Catenians are an association of like-minded Catholic laymen who gather socially each month and arrange varied activities for their families and friends. Catenians (from Latin *catena*

meaning 'chain') uphold Catholic ethics at home and in the workplace and many individual members are deeply involved in the support of their local parish and clergy. There are more than 10,500 members both in the UK and in overseas countries. The Association does not generally become involved in active fund-raising although many Circles (i.e., branches) and individuals raise funds each year for a charity of their choice. The Catenian Association organises a national public speaking competition for sixth-form students in Catholic Schools, it operates a fund that provides top-up grants to young Catholics who have the opportunity to involve themselves in projects for the benefit of the community, particularly overseas, and it offers practical support to help vocations to the priesthood. The Association,

which is non-political and has no secrets, comprises some 25 regional areas (i.e., the Provinces) divided into about 300 local branches (i.e., the Circles). Three Provinces are in the Portsmouth Diocese and include the following circles:

Province 8. Circles: Bracknell Forest, Maidenhead, Reading, Newbury, Wokingham. Secretary: Mr N J Lamb, 35 Old Kennels Court, Burghfield Road, Reading RG30 3NS
t: 011 8958 1597

Province 11. Circles: Basingstoke, Bournemouth, Fleet, Guernsey, Isle of Wight, Jersey, New Forest, Portsmouth, Southampton, West Surrey, City of Winchester. Secretary: Mr K G Eastham, 14 Cedarmount, Lyndhurst, Hants SO43 7ED
t: 023 8028 3418

Province 19. Circles: Ascot & Sunninghill, Runnymede, Windsor. Secretary: Mr T McCarthy, High Pines, Bishops Walk, Croydon, Surrey CRO5BA
t: 020 8656 0170

For further details: www.thecatenians.com/

CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

For further information please contact the parties identified

February

- Mon 01: **Preparing for the Rite of Election 2010**,
Discovery Centre, Portsmouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Tue 02: **World Youth Day Launch Evening**,
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Bournemouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Wed 03: **Preparing for the Rite of Election 2010**,
St Joseph's, Tilehurst, Reading
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Wed 03: **World Youth Day Launch Evening**, St Edmund, Southampton
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Thu 04: **Preparing for the Rite of Election 2010**,
St Edward the Confessor, Chandlers Ford
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Mon 08: **Preparing for the Rite of Election 2010**,
Immaculate Conception & St Joseph, Christchurch
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Mon 08: Launch of the **Believe** programme at St John's Cathedral,
Portsmouth
t: 023 9282 6170 e: info@portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk
- Wed 10: **World Youth Day Launch Evening**, St Joseph, Maidenhead
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Mon 15: **Preparing for the Rite of Election 2010**,
Our Lady Help of Christians, Farnborough
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Sat 20: **Rite of Election 2010**, St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Sat 20: **The Desert Blooms** (Early Desert Tradition of the Church),
Methodist Hall, Brockenhurst
t: 015 9062 2301 e: dunmary@mac.com
- Mon 22: Start of Fairtrade Fortnight: www.fairtrade.org.uk
- Fri 26: **CAFOD Lent Fast Day Mass – 50th Anniversary**,
St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
t: 012 5232 9385 e: portsmouth@cafod.org.uk
- Sat 27: **National Youth Leaders' Congress**,
Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd, London
www.cymfed.org
- Sat 27: **Turning Aside – Workshop on Prayer**,
St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
e: teag11@ntlworld.com

March

- Fri 05: **Lenten Retreat** by Fr Antony Gatt, Park Place, Wickham
-06 t: 013 2983 3043 e: PastoralCentre@aol.com
- Tue 09: **Young People and Scripture**, St Joseph, Tilehurst, Reading
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Thu 11: **Young People and Scripture**,
Immaculate Conception, Southampton
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Tue 30: **Chrism Mass**, St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Wed 31: **Easter Stay** led by Fr Andrew McMahon ofm,
Park Place, Wickham
t: 013 2983 3043 e: PastoralCentre@aol.com

April

- Sat 17: **Marriage Refresher Day**, Winchester
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

May

- Sat 08: **Marriage Refresher Day**, Bournemouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Sat 22: **Day for New Catholics with Bishop Crispian**,
Discovery Centre, Portsmouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: tvasallo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

June

- Sat 12: **Celebration of Significant Wedding Anniversaries**,
St Bede's, Basingstoke
t: 013 2983 5583 e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
- Wed 16: **Good Shepherd Mass**, St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
t: 013 2983 5583 e: schoolspa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

July

- Sun 04: **Ordinations to the Permanent Diaconate**,
St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth
- Sat 24: **Ordinations to the Priesthood**, St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth



MAKE THE CROSS COUNT

Tom Horwood highlights the importance of voting

As a general election approaches, it is tempting to be cynical or bored by angry debates and glossy campaigns. It is too easy to forget that the debates are lively because elections matter.

There are many ways to participate in our democracy, but voting is fundamental because it is how we decide who will run our country. As the Catholic bishops said in 2005, 'At a general election we are asked to think about the kind of world we want to live in.'

In the run-up to polling day, candidates will compete for attention and support. They will have different perspectives on the major national and international issues. Lobby groups, the media and the churches will state what they believe are the most important concerns.

We will not all share the same priorities, but our democratic system allows everyone to have their say. The secret ballot means that every voter takes responsibility for marking the cross according to their personal convictions.

Anyone who can vote should vote. As the Catholic bishops have said, 'In a democracy we have a moral if not a legal duty to vote. We should be careful not to withhold our vote out of indifference, apathy or cynicism. The right to vote carries with it a corresponding obligation to exercise that vote responsibly.'

In 2010, voting is as easy as it can be.

Any British citizen (or Irish or Commonwealth citizen resident in Britain) who is at least 18 years old must first be on the electoral register. Registration forms are sent by the local council annually, but you can also register at other times of the year, particularly if you have moved home. Registration has to be completed a couple of weeks before polling day. A form and information can be obtained from the local council or online at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

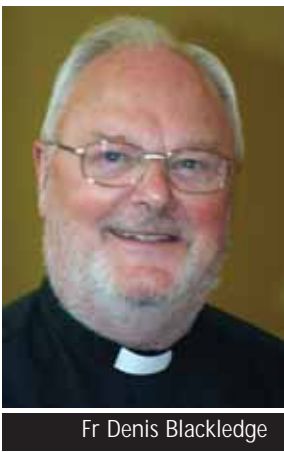
Polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm on election day. Anyone not available on that day can apply in advance for a postal vote or a proxy vote. However busy we are and whatever our other obligations, we can still play our part.

As well as reading political manifestos and following the media coverage, it is important that individual prospective MPs are quizzed on their views and priorities.

Involvement need not stop on polling day. Wherever we place our vote, our MP works for us too. He or she should listen to our views and represent us in Parliament.

We could also think about how to get involved in supporting local democracy, whether in lobbying the local council or even by standing for election. As Pope Benedict has pointed out, 'The life of a democracy could not be productive without the active, responsible and generous involvement of everyone.'

Tom Horwood, a parishioner of St Laurence, Petersfield, is head of democratic services (Communications, Customer and IT Services) involved in preparing for the General Election at East Hampshire District Council, based in Petersfield.



Fr Denis Blackledge

COME BACK TO ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART

Loving Lord,
Lent's a time
of coming to our senses,
of realising that it's only
at the level of the human heart
that any true growth can take place.

Loving Lord,
it's possible to be
superficial to a great depth.
Lent's a time for peeling off the layers,
for taking off all the masks,
for letting go of all the pretence,
for getting down to the core and centre,
the human heart.

Loving Lord,
more importantly, it's a time
for getting to know You better,
to see how your heart ticks.
By knowing each other better,
we can grow into an ever deeper
vibrant and vital bond of relationship,
based on trust and loving knowledge.

Loving Lord,
help me, help us, this Lent
to become ever more aware
of the hidden beauty of God and man.
For we're all made in your image,
even if we're not yet like you.

Loving Lord,
the Prophet Joel says it all;
"Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –
come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning."
Let your hearts be broken
not your garments torn,
turn to the Lord your God again,
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,
and ready to relent.
Who knows if he will not turn again,
will not relent,
will not leave a blessing as he passes!

Loving Lord,
at the heart of your heart
is a deep-felt compassion.
And that is the gift above all gifts
that you wish to hand over
to each one of us.

Loving Lord,
the first person I'm asked
to give compassion to
is my very own self.
I have to apply the words above
that Joel uses of our Loving God
to my own self,
to see how I match up.

Loving Lord,
if I've no compassion for my own self,
how will I have it for others?
If I can't turn again and relent
for my own self,
how can I possibly do it for others?

Loving Lord,
this Lent,
this wonderful springtime
which is a gracious gift of our Church,
may I have the courage to go deep
into the heart of my being,
and let you touch me
with the tender gentleness
of your compassion,
so that I may spread this awesome gift
to all whose lives I touch.

Loving Lord,
turn my passion into compassion,
turn my doubt into trust,
turn my harshness into tenderness,
turn my anger into peaceful calm,
turn my curse into blessing.
turn my heart into your heart.

Amen.

Fr Denis Blackledge SJ is Parish Priest, Corpus Christi Boscombe and Pastoral Co-ordinator, Bournemouth

© Denis Blackledge SJ

PASSIONATE ABOUT PRAYER

Ways of Praying – Workshops in Brockenhurst

For those who are passionate about prayer there is a strong desire to deepen their relationship with the living God. This desire may come and go, is often thwarted by one's own ego or circumstances. We may have rejected the ways of prayer which have come our way, it may be because they were alien to us or badly taught: guilt-inducing, monastic, formalised, regimented, ecstatic or dark – ways of praying which we might have found unattractive. And we may have rejected them because they were quite wrong for us as individuals. Models of prayer are often based on a particular kind of God-image, and as we mature, so our God-image changes with our experience. If our approach to prayer is based on a caricature of God, it won't feel authentic, and we withdraw from prayer.

The questions are: How does God speak to us? How can we best hear Him? What are our blockages and practical difficulties with prayer? How might our lives be different if we were enabled to engage in regular prayer which suited our personality and situation? How can we learn from the giants of prayer of our Christian tradition? How might our presence at the Eucharist be different if we brought a deeply personal and nourished relationship to the table? Can we enter into a living

relationship with Christ who dwells within us, transformed by him and in him such that our life is lived in harmony?

For the last two years Brijji Waterfield and Mary Dunn have been facilitating workshops in Brockenhurst which engage with these questions. Brijji is a Spiritual Director and a member of The World Community for Christian Meditation. Mary is a Clinical Psychologist and Spiritual Director. They have focussed on a different prayer-tradition each time: Apophatic prayer and Dionysius, The Cloud of Unknowing, Meister Eckhart, Jung and Teresa of Avila, and Ignatius. In addition to the presentation of each tradition, participants have experienced several different methods of prayer during the day. A growing number of people have attended and have been enthusiastic to return, and the next day planned is on the early Desert Tradition of the Church called **The Desert Blooms** led by Brijji, on 20 February 2010, in the Methodist Hall, Brockenhurst, 10 - 4. If you would like to join them please contact Mary Dunn t: 015 9062 2301, e: dunnmary@mac.com. They ask for a donation of at least £5 for expenses. Please bring your own packed lunch.

Bishop Crispian witnesses LIVING OUR FAITH in action at St Andrew's

Dawn Harrison reports

This year, parishioners of five churches within the Pastoral area of 3 Rivers were invited to consider a personal commitment to the Living Our Faith campaign. It was a challenge for the representatives of the churches to go out into the parishes and ask families for a financial pledge during this time of recession and yet the invitation was warmly embraced by parishioners.

The Living Our Faith initiative offers its own pledge: in addition to the amount raised for the Diocesan priority of clergy and laity formation, a proportion is returned to the churches to be used for their own priorities. St Andrew's is the first such beneficiary of the campaign in the 3 Rivers Pastoral area. Built in 1975, this much loved church was in great need of a facelift. Typical of its time, its construction was futuristic and cost-effective; a large concrete slab with walls made of hollow concrete blocks, a cement slate roof, and no interior or exterior paint to soften its functional and austere appearance. The theory behind a simple design may have been a focus of purity in a decade where values were rapidly changing; unfortunately, the result was a little stark and the squareness of the building set so low in the ground created a bunker effect.

In 2009 St Andrew's underwent a transformation under the guidance of Father George Lyons and the builder was actually a parishioner, Gus Reynolds. The exterior was painted and the visual effect of the roof was improved with the removal of the square lantern at the high point and coloured glazed gables at the back. The most dramatic transformation was to the entrance whose roof was converted into a vertical gable end, thus creating a welcoming feel and reminiscent of a temple. Internally, the walls have been plastered and painted giving a bright and cheery atmosphere. A new suspended ceiling gives light with 4 large velux windows and there is a lit alcove for the tabernacle and a large new crucifix behind the altar. The Sacristy has been updated as have the meeting room and facilities and, for the



first time in 10 years, St Andrew's has a confessional. During the winter months of 2009/10, the parishioners will no longer need to wrap up well to come to church as the floors have been carpeted and the heating improved.

On a wet November evening Father George Lyons hosted a private viewing of the completed renovations for Bishop Crispian. Amongst the welcoming party were project manager, Gus Reynolds, and those involved in the decision-making process. Bishop Crispian listened with interest as Gus outlined the rebuilding programme and Father George accompanied the Bishop around the Church interior, showing him the few artefacts that grace the walls such as the simplistic effigy of Saint Andrew on his cross and the wooden Stations of the Cross which were turned by parishioner Chris Davey. The tour was followed by sandwiches, cakes and cups of tea in the meeting room and the welcoming party enjoyed this unique opportunity for an informal chat with Bishop Crispian before he departed to continue on with his busy schedule.

It was a proud evening for St Andrew's to share with its Bishop; the renovations have truly transformed this church from a functional building into a place so pleasing to the eye and whose mellow and minimal décor creates both a calming and uplifting ambiance for its worshippers. On the Feast of St Andrew's, parishioners of St Andrew's and St Joseph's shared a very emotional Mass, attended by 12 priests, to celebrate the transformation of the church that has been their spiritual home for so many years. Diocesan medals were presented to those involved in the renovations but praise must also go to Father George Lyons whose impassioned championship of the campaign and inspiring leadership encouraged the parishioners of North Baddesley and Romsey to make their pledge to the Living our Faith campaign.

Dawn Harrison is a parishioner of St Joseph's, Romsey, where she is a photographer and organist and is involved with the KIT Diocesan Team.



MOVERS and SHAKERS

We pick up on the enthusiasm and achievement across our diocese

GOLDEN GIRL GEORGIA



*Georgia Peel,
World Champion and Gold Medalist.
Photographs: Woking News and Mail*

Farnborough Hill student, Georgia Peel, named Sporting Schoolgirl of the Year in the School Sport Magazine awards, has been presented with the Michael May Cup for the single most outstanding performance in 2008/9 by the Hampshire Schools' Sports Federation: Georgia took the English Schools' Athletics Association national 1500m title smashing a 30-year old record. Not content with that, Georgia then ran off to Qatar for the World School Games and, competing against 22 other countries through the heats to the final of the 1000 mtrs (15 to 17yr olds), Georgia gave it the 'Chataway Challenge', kicking into gear with 200 mtrs to go and taking the Gold for England in a time of 2:49.66.

ALTON AULA

On 27 September members of St Mary's, Alton, were joined by Bishop Crispian and clergy and parishioners from the Larger Pastoral Area to dedicate the new church hall to St Joseph. Celebrations continued with a finger buffet [See inset] enjoyed by people of all ages.



TOP SCHOOL BAR NONE!

St Peter's school (Bournemouth) triumphed in the Bar Mock Trial competition in Portsmouth shortly before Christmas. Fourteen students, led by Head of Psychology, Sarah Middleton, planned a presentation of two trials in cases to be heard before real judges at Portsmouth Crown Courts. Students expertly played the part of barristers, witnesses, ushers and court clerks. In all, eight schools from across the South were involved, and in the final heat St Peter's faced stiff opposition from Bournemouth School for Girls. Sarah Middleton who has organised St Peter's entry to the competition for the past three years said: 'It was a privilege to bring such a fantastic team to the competition. This is what makes teaching young people such great fun'. The students will now play their part in the final to be held in Edinburgh in March.



HARVEST SUPPER



St Agnes Catholic Church in Liss recently held its annual Harvest Supper with fellow parishioners from St Laurence Petersfield. A total of £572 was raised in aid of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre for their work in providing education for young Christians in the Holy Land. Parish Priest Canon Hetherington said, 'The KHS lack funds, teachers and infrastructure and they are dependent on the wider Christian community for monetary support'. Frank and Margaret Effenberg, organisers of the evening, said they were thrilled with the best-ever response from both churches: 'Parishioners all

helped out, either with food, entertainment or buying the many raffle prizes. We joked that there was almost a prize for everyone!' Before the buffet supper, music and poems were provided by the younger members of the parish, as young as 4 years old, led by Julia Nesbit and other young Mums.

PILGRIMAGE TO ISRAEL AND JORDAN

Starting in Jerusalem, then travelling on to Bethlehem, 49 pilgrims from Southampton's City Centre Parish led by Canon John O'Shea recently crossed the desert into Jordan to follow in the footsteps of the Wise Men. They explored The Rose Red City of Petra [See inset]. From Mount Nebo they viewed the Promised Land as Moses did many years ago. They then visited many of the historical sites including the Roman city of Jerash. Back in Jerusalem they followed the Via Dolorosa to the Holy Sepulchre and took parish prayer notes to the



Wailing Wall before heading back to Southampton, inspired to read the Old Testament books with renewed enthusiasm.

ABINGDON PARISHIONER MEETS POPE

Ian Corbett, a parishioner of Our Lady and St. Edmund of Abingdon, had the honour of being presented to Pope Benedict XVI during a celebration of the International Year of Astronomy in Vatican City on 30 and 31 October.

Ian said 'It was a wonderful experience to hear and meet the Holy Father face to face, and to see the Vatican Archives and the original papers of Galileo. You can never forget an event like this'.

The photographs, by courtesy of Osservatore Romano, show (1) Pope Benedict XVI entering the Sala Clementina and (2) Ian and His Holiness with the Director of the Vatican Observatory and Cardinal Lajolo in the background.



THE WAVE

On Saturday 5 December, over 50,000 people from all over the country attended The Wave in Central London, the biggest rally on climate change ever organised in the UK. The event was organised by Stop Climate Chaos, a coalition of over 100 UK groups and organisations (including CAFOD, Progressio and Christian Aid) united in their demand for a fair and just international climate change deal that protects the world's poorest communities. The event took place ahead of the opening of the Copenhagen conference on climate change. Rita Belletty, CAFOD volunteer and parishioner at St John Bosco (Woodley), organised the coach from Reading and Maidenhead for a group of over 40 people.



CAFOD supporters from the Diocese at the start of the march

MARIST HELP FOR TROOPS



Pupils of The Marist Senior School (Sunninghill) collected and filled over 200 shoeboxes with items to send to our troops serving in Afghanistan in time for Christmas. The whole school worked together to fill the boxes with goodies such as tea bags, chocolate, cereal bars, sweets, as well as practical items such as shampoo, toothpaste and shower gel.

SEARCH FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

People from around the diocese met at St. Bede's Church in Basingstoke to assess the current state of Christian unity. They were led by Monsignor Andrew Faley, Assistant General Secretary of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England & Wales [See inset]. A full report of the forum can be found on the Christian unity pages of the diocesan website: www.PortsmouthDiocese.org.uk

ON THE FEAST OF STEPHEN



Altar staff at Corpus Christi (Boscombe) are seen here on the feast of St Stephen, their patron saint. Most of them are dressed in the brand-new robes that arrived on Christmas Eve from the twin parish of Our Lady of the Wayside in Harare, Zimbabwe. Corpus Christi parish raised £7,000 to provide a much-needed water bore hole in Harare. Our Lady of the Wayside in turn provided the new cassocks for the servers.

CARMEN AND THE CARVING KNIFE



Carmen Ybanez-Mate of St Joseph's in Tilehurst, Reading, prepares to cut a cake in honour of her 25th anniversary as a member of the Servite Secular Institute. The church was packed on a wet winter Saturday as her many grateful friends - along with 6 priests and 11 altar servers - gathered to celebrate her life of service.

In 1984 Carmen took vows of celibacy and poverty, and committed herself to the Institute's main aim of living life in the service of others. Unlike other religious orders, the Servites do not live in community, and Carmen continued in her work as a cleaning supervisor at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

But over the years she has also devoted herself to visiting sick and lonely people in hospital and in prison, often taking them Holy Communion. All that time, and especially since she retired, she has also worked tirelessly in the parish.

She took over the duties of sacristan, manages the church hall, is a member of various working groups, and is constantly checking, chivvying and organising. She is always somewhere about the church, ready to make tea or coffee or give a worried person a hug. In short, the parish couldn't manage without her.

In his homily Fr Joseph Awoh paid tribute to Carmen's boundless enthusiasm: 'She does everything not because it's something she's got to do, but because her heart is really in it.'

PP is preparing an education bulletin offering the opportunity to highlight the major successes of schools and pupils. Further details from the Editor.



Learning Curves

Colin Parkes hopes his experience of commissioning a new font might prove useful for other parishes thinking of changing their church furnishings.



Depending on what you think of these pictures, this is either a success story or a cautionary tale.

The story begins with a working group at St Joseph's in Tilehurst charged with finding a new font. We were saying a reluctant goodbye to the old one, which had seen better days and was not helping to bring out the significance of baptism.

But what sort of font should we have? How much would it cost? And where do you get them from?

We looked online and at the catalogues of two church furnishing companies, Hayes and Finch, and Ormsby of Scarisbrick. The possibilities were either mock Gothic – nice in a way, but out of place in our 1970's church. Or more contemporary designs which somehow failed to inspire us.

Then, from somewhere, I got this idea. 'What we need,' I said, 'is something like a tree. It should seem to be growing from the ground like the Tree of Life, and its branches should open to contain the bowl!'

The others were polite, but non-committal. I said I would try to find a wood carver to come up with a design. We agreed on a budget of about £2,000.

Googling 'woodcarver', and writing dozens of emails yielded a single small pencil drawing from a man near Cambridge called Richard Bray, together with a photograph of a piece of tree he had in mind. We put it with some colour catalogue pages, to make a shortlist.

At this point, somebody had the brilliant idea of calling in Canon Alan Griffiths, the Adviser on Liturgical Buildings for the Diocese. His more detailed guidance is on the opposite page, but briefly he was enthusiastic about the sketch, and gave us the confidence to step into the unknown.



1) Tree



RICHARD BRAY
MAY 2009

PROPOSED: LEAD OR COPPER BOWL SUPPORTED BY
THREE TEE-LOOD TWISTING AND SPIRALING
ARMS
FONT SIZE c 54 CM DIAMETER.
ENGRAVED (CRASS) FITTED LID ALSO IN LEAD
OR COPPER

2) Sketch

But it was still a bit worrying. It was quite possible that the parish would be spending £2,000 on my idea and that I would get the blame for a horrible disaster.

We had decided that the bowl should be made of stone. After agreeing dimensions with Richard Bray, I got it made by Reading stonemason A.F. Jones. For the plug we decided on a rubber bung, with the top covered by a small brass drawer handle.

Then it was off to Cambridge with the bowl in the back of the car to meet the woodcarver for the first time.

On the floor of Richard's workshop was our tree – a triple branched (Father, Son and Holy Spirit!) yew trunk that had been lying around in a neighbour's barn for twenty years. It looked alarmingly rough, and deeply cracked in places, but he assured me he would be able to get a good finish. I didn't set a deadline, thinking it would be better for an artist if he could take time for his ideas to take shape.

After a couple of months, Richard e-mailed to say the font was ready, and he would deliver it one Saturday morning. Half a dozen parishioners met at the church to welcome it. I helped Richard carry in the base, and he carefully set the bowl into its 'branches'.

To my huge relief, we all thought it looked terrific. It had a quality – ethereal or weird depending on your

point of view – that would help people see the Spirit at work in the Sacrament of Baptism. The wood still looked like a living tree, but Richard had found an extra element– the idea of upheld muscled arms holding the bowl, even the world, in its hands.

Over lunch in the Presbytery, Richard explained that this, like the colour-contrast between the heart of the trunk and the sapwood, had emerged from the tree as he worked.

He also told us that, for an artist, a church is a rewarding place to exhibit work. 'The font symbolises something, which is unusual these days. Lots of people will see it for many years to come, and hopefully they will find spiritual meaning in it.'

There's a message for us there: don't be afraid to ask an artist to make something for your church. They might leap at the chance.

The project ran a bit over budget – total cost, £2,300. But on the whole it's a hit with the congregation. Some of the more traditionally-minded would have preferred something Gothic, but most love it. 'Organic' seems to be the word that most commonly springs to people's lips. Canon Alan says it has 'real merit'.

So my advice for anyone thinking of a similar project? Consult widely, say your prayers, and take the plunge!

Go for the Best

By Canon Alan Griffiths

My first advice to parishes who want a new font, altar or tabernacle, is: don't buy something off the peg. There is a better way. Take the place of baptism as an example.

First, get a small group together, with your priest. Ask 'What do we want to say about baptism?' We should be saying that it's the primary Sacrament of the Church, where someone passes through sacred waters and into New Life.

If Baptism is important, expect the baptismal font to say: 'I am important!' A commercial 'off the peg' product may not do that, or do it the way you want.

Why not go looking? Good fonts are not hard to find. In our area, visit the Anglican Cathedrals in Salisbury and Portsmouth, or our own Church of St. Bede in Basingstoke. Their fonts say something dramatic about Baptism.

Look for ideas to aspire to. You might want to commission an artist, or you might find that skilled people in the parish, or a local stonemason might be able to make your idea a reality.

Take time to talk to the designer. With them, evolve a brief. Both you and they will have insights. Expect the artist to contribute their own ideas. When you have evolved something, set a budget.

When you get a design, consult. Consult both those who go to Mass and those who don't. It's their Church too. We might know what something signifies, but does it get that across to everyone?

It's a long process, not without ups and downs, but rewarding. You will have something unique to your Church and special.



3) Progress

4) Placed

5) Baptism

PRIEST'S PROFILE



Father David Sillince

Only child, with an artist for a father, born in Sussex 'but with a few tender years spent in Yorkshire' before becoming a boarder at Henry VI GS in Slough, Fr David Sillince went on to study Modern Languages at London 'having reverted from History at Cambridge' and then to teach Spanish 'because I liked it' and French 'because I had to' at secondary school.

Having converted to Catholicism in his mid/late twenties, David joined the Diocese in '86 ('My friends said it was a drastic way of avoiding the National Curriculum'). After 4 years of study in Rome, Fr David was ordained at Sacred Heart (Bournemouth) and promptly dispatched to St John's Cathedral to hold the fort till a certain Fr Declan Lang [What did happen to him?] moved to Portsmouth. For 10 years David was then PP at Sacred Heart at Waterlooville ('Where I failed to build them a new church') before going to Southampton in 2004.

Keen on travel ('ideally in places where I can make myself understood'), classical music, the cinema, history, 'church crawling', holidaying in warm climes, playing the ivories (organ and piano), Fr David, no longer astride the 800cc Honda bike which he gave up three years ago, remains readily recognisable for his sense of humour, his canny smile and that playful glint in his eye: 'As for sport, I'm no sportsman. One of my school reports said: "Simply not geared for it".

'My vision? To deepen appreciation through scripture of where we come from, where we are and where we're going. Is progress synonymous with upheaval? ... Well, I suppose now you want to take a picture of me. Will you make me look friendly, or as if I might bite? I've been told both are possible.'



Prayer, fasting and almsdeeds are of course the traditional activities for Lent. The need for fervent sustained prayer about pro-life matters in Britain at the moment is obvious. There is a strong push towards legalising some form of euthanasia, and proponents are open about this being only the start of what they want.

On abortion things look a little brighter. Many younger doctors are unwilling to do them or even be involved. There is a real chance that Parliament might vote for women to be fully informed of the risks, and for late abortions to be outlawed. But the public is ill-informed about human embryo abuse and does not understand that, although obviously a ten-day old embryo cannot suffer pain, he or she is, to quote the makers of the first test-tube baby, 'a microscopic human being - one in its very earliest stages of development'.

Fasting need not only concern food. Anyone who can give up a little time to write letters to newspapers or MPs, or to ring phone-ins, can do immense good. Many new candidates for Parliament will not be knowledgeable, or have thought much, on pro-life issues and will be persuaded by polite intelligent letters. SPUC's weekly digest of news is a good resource for this.

As for almsdeeds, every pro-life group makes good use of whatever money they receive, whether it is for practical help to women, like LIFE and the Good Counsel Network, or the equally important work of education and politics, like SPUC, the Pro Life Alliance, Right to Life and the Linacre Centre.

Live Issues

Dominica Roberts calls for prayer and action

Dominica Roberts is a parishioner of St Joseph and St Margaret Clitherow in Bracknell, and active in several pro-life groups.

Quotable Quotes

'Educate people without religion and you make them but clever devils'

1st Duke of Wellington

'There's something Vichy about the French'

Ivor Novello

'Never mind, dear, we're all made the same, though some more than others'

Noel Coward

'He said it was a question of mind over matter. He didn't mind and I didn't matter'

Keith Floyd

'Those who will not reason are bigots, those who cannot are fools, and those who dare not are slaves'

Lord Byron

'Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire'

W.B. Yeats

'One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors'

Plato

'There are moments when everything goes well; don't be frightened, it won't last'

Jules Renard

'The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference'

Elie Wiesel

'Too bad the only people who know how to run the country are busy driving cabs and cutting hair'

George Burns

'If the English language made any sense, lackadaisical would have something to do with a shortage of flowers'

Doug Larson

'There are two different kinds of people in this world: those who finish what they start, and'

Brad Ramsey

A Broader View

Lawrence Fullick looks at the wider world

What will 2009 be remembered for? Naturally many will think of the harsh weather and attendant travel problems many in this country have experienced around Christmas.

In England our Church will recall the installation of two Archbishops to their new posts and the visit of the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux. For the worldwide Church the highlight will be the publication of the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, in large part a reaction to the current economic crisis.

While these events interest members of the Catholic Church will they interest other people who will be more preoccupied with the economic crisis as a whole? We must remember that for many non-Catholics the main stories about the Church are those concerning child abuse especially in Ireland.

Our Church and other religious groups need to compete with more secularist groups for attention; the rights which different churches had in countries where they were dominant are no longer taken for granted by everybody else. In *Caritas in Veritate* the Pope says 'God has a place in the public realm'. He limits that role to the statement of principles not the prescription of policies on every economic and social issue.

The process of reforming the working of the European Union's working methods reached a significant point with the entry into force on 1 December 2009 of the Lisbon Treaty. A little known feature of the Treaty is its Article 17 which respects the legal status of religious communities and states that 'the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue' with them. This gives churches a status which many do not wish them to have. Regular meetings between religious representatives and leaders of EU institutions are already



taking place and these opportunities for dialogue need to be taken.

Dialogue is also necessary at local and national level. Baroness Shirley Williams recently delivered the Paul VI Lecture 'Capitalism, Catholicism and Community: harmony or dissonance' for CAFOD in London. She referred to the outstanding tasks of achieving the Millennium goals in dealing with the needs of the developing countries. These issues relate to those discussed at the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change. In answering questions afterwards Lady Williams called for regular dialogue between Catholic politicians and senior clergy, and she has written to the Archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols, making this point; the Bishops' Conference's parliamentary coordinator has been asked to look at ways of achieving this.

To conclude on a hopeful note there are signs of improvement in relations with Russia. President Medvedev has signed a decree establishing diplomatic relations with the Vatican. This has been welcomed by leaders of the Orthodox Church. Generally they wish Christian churches to be more assertive on ethical issues than has been normal in the West and have proposed a strategic alliance with the Catholic Church intended to save Europe's soul from 'Western post-Christian humanism'. Perhaps greater East-West dialogue will help to improve the domestic political and business atmosphere in Russia.

Lawrence Fullick, a parishioner in Bournemouth, is treasurer of the Wyndham Place Charlemagne Trust, a charity which promotes discussion of international issues among people of all faiths or none.

CESEW RESPONSE TO THE SUPREME COURT RULING IN RELATION TO ADMISSION TO A JEWISH SCHOOL



I am very disappointed at the ruling in which a secular body, i.e. the Supreme Court, is deciding on the matter of membership of a faith group for the purposes of schools' admissions. What constitutes membership of a faith group or a religious denomination should be a matter for that faith or denomination to determine. That any other authority should deem to do this in place of the faith group, or for a body outside the faith group to claim that its decision as to what constitutes membership has priority, is a sad and undermining state of affairs. It is important whilst noting our sympathy for our Jewish brothers and sisters, to remind ourselves that the judgment should not impact on Catholic schools. This is because the definition of being Catholic is clearly based on baptism and not on any ethnic or other factors.

We will continue to keep this situation under close review.

Oona Stannard
Chief Executive and Director
Catholic Education Service for England and Wales



WELCOMING LAPSED CATHOLICS

We were somewhat saddened by what we felt was an important omission from the excellent Feature Article on page 27 of December's issue. There is no mention of the very active Diocesan Keeping in Touch (KIT) team one of whose purposes is to advise and encourage the welcoming back of lapsed Catholics and which was set up in response to feedback from the discussion document *Growing together in Christ* when hundreds of people across the Diocese expressed their sadness about people who were no longer attending Church.

The article was by an organisation outside the Diocese and that organisation cannot be blamed for the oversight. It seems that the KIT team still needs to do more to advertise their presence and expertise!

Please let it be known to you, readers, that Keeping in Touch (KIT) is available to all parishes, including those of other Dioceses. If you want to encourage returners or if people are expressing an interest in coming back to the Church in your parish, the KIT team is eager to work with you and advise on finding those people and making them as welcome as possible.

The article indicated that it is the lapsed person who must take all the initiatives. We do not believe this is the whole story. We feel that it is more effective if the parishioners, in cooperation with their priest, take action as well. The KIT process is excellently suited to promoting appropriate parish action.

Further information is available from the KIT web site: www.kit4catholics.org.uk or from the Dept of Pastoral Formation t. 01329-835583.

Anthony Kirke
Keeping In Touch Team member
Milford-on-Sea

[As you mention, Anthony, KIT, under the aegis of the Dept for Pastoral Formation, functions as a portal for resting/returning Catholics to be welcomed back into the body of the Church. But those returning to the faith could have any number or permutation of concerns. For this reason the item in the former issue of *PP*, originating from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, offered *inter alia* our own diocesan website (www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) with its many links and varied content as the first port of call in our diocese for those looking to return. This reference, far from excluding KIT, was to help bring KIT onto centre-stage. *PP* is delighted to help promote KIT and more than happy to make every effort to carry any copy, articles, announcements submitted for publication by the KIT team. Ed.]

LIVE ISSUES

Thank you for taking the trouble to reply to my Live Issues column. I am much happier when people say they disagree, than if they just assume I am wrong and do not bother. Of course one cannot help being a bit simplistic in 300 words on a complicated subject. How far it is permissible to be complicit in something manifestly wrong occupies conferences for a week at a time, but the Church has repeatedly stated that voting for a law which allows the deliberate killing of an innocent human being, when there is the option of voting against it, is seriously sinful. (Everyone understands that this does not apply to the rare cases where in the process of saving the mother's life the baby cannot be saved but will, as a foreseen but not intended consequence, inevitably die.)

Recent large scale rigorous research has shown the enormous harm done to women by abortion, not just in increased mental but also physical problems such as miscarriage, infertility and giving birth prematurely. Our recently selected Conservative candidate in Bracknell is a GP with no serious religious background who never sends women for abortion, on the grounds that it is killing a human being, and he has seen the psychiatric problems resulting.

Dominica Roberts
Bracknell

MAKING WAVES

I DO like your new magazine format and brief but interesting articles; please keep them brief as there is so much to read these days.

I want to tell you about the day in London which 4 of us from St Mary's Parish, Ryde, Isle of Wight, Justice and Peace Group, enjoyed on 5 December, taking part in the Waves ecumenical service at Central Hall Westminster and the march afterwards from Grosvenor Square to the Houses of Parliament.

We had decided to book our own National Express coach to London as the CAFOD one would arrive too late for the service. It cost us only £8 return and arrived in Victoria at 10.15 am, non-stop from Portsmouth (mind you, it cost more than £8 return to cross the Solent!)

Central Hall was packed with people from all walks of life and all ages, dressed predominantly in blue as requested by the March organisers. We were proud that Archbishop Vincent Nichols had such a prominent part in the service; the hymns were a bit slow and repetitive as they were accompanied by a very loud rock band, not like our talented organist and choir at St Mary's!

Between the four of us, all pensioners, we covered the whole route of the march and were proud to be part of such an important, if ignored by most, demonstration of our concern for the planet. Even after the inevitable rain started to fall, we still felt cheerful but glad to be restored by a quick drop in a pub before boarding our coach back to the Portsmouth ferry to the Island.



Ann Thorp
Ryde, IoW

The Editor regrets being unable (1) to enter into correspondence other than through the pages of the magazine and (2) to accept for publication any copy, including Letters, submitted other than electronically.



THE SILENT SERVICE



Mgr Paul Donovan, Naval Chaplain

'It's not just their fitness or their responsiveness which take a step change. They'll often discover that Mass on Sunday is something to which they look forward because the Chaplain pitches the way it's celebrated at them. Fr Andy McFadden, the Catholic Chaplain at HMS RALEIGH, has a wonderful way of teasing out that latent faith and developing it. This often leads to people taking their faith a step further with Confirmation, and Fr Andy probably celebrates more Confirmations among the 18-25 age group than many Bishops.'

The Royal Navy is sometimes known as the Silent Service and Mgr Donovan reflects that this means that much of their work goes unnoticed. 'You would be hard-pressed to know from TV news how much the Royal Navy and Royal Marines contribute to British Force levels in land-locked Afghanistan. 1/3 of our Catholic Naval Chaplains have spent 3 months or more in Afghanistan in the last 3 years – with the Royal Marines out at the forward operating bases, with the helicopter and Harrier forces and in the hospital.'

'For close on 200 years the Navy has said that the Chaplain should be the 'friend and adviser of all on board', says Mgr Donovan. 'In those days, Chaplains were always at sea in sailing ships. Today a Naval Chaplain is as likely to be ministering to the sons and daughters of this country in a demanding training environment or in the parched lands of Helmand province as on board a frigate or destroyer.'

Portsmouth and the Royal Navy are inextricably linked. Although the Catholic Naval Chaplains are not part of our diocese - they are priests of the Bishopric of the Forces with Bishop Richard Moth as their bishop - the Portsmouth based chaplains are very much part of our diocesan life. They frequently celebrate Mass in local parishes and in our Cathedral and are always present at major diocesan events.

Think of what a Naval Chaplain does, and the image which comes to mind will likely involve steely warships and expanses of ocean. 'Would you think of it, though', asks Mgr Paul Donovan, the Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain, 'as one of the most successful evangelical and catechetical ministries to young adults in this country? Well it is.'

The 3 new-entry Naval Service Establishments in the West Country take civilians and form them into Servicemen and women. Each of the establishments has a Catholic Chaplain who finds this a fruitful pasture. 'These young men and women join', says Mgr Donovan, 'and it's a quite a culture change for them. They're held responsible for their lives and behaviour. While it's nothing like Hollywood thinks of Boot Camp – the Royal Navy and Royal Marines work to get people to achieve, not to fail - it's demanding.'

The effect, explains Mgr Donovan, is that these young men and women begin to reconsider their lives quite profoundly.

TURNING ASIDE
A WORKSHOP ON PRAYER

An opportunity to explore new ways of praying, or to deepen your practice of prayer.

Saturday 27th February
1000 - 1600

The day will be led by Peter Lippiett, Spirituality Adviser in the Anglican Diocese of Portsmouth.

Please bring a packed lunch to share.

St John's Cathedral Discovery Centre, Portsmouth

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INFECTIOUS HAT TRICK



Over 250 people attended the 3 days on stewardship hosted by Bishop Crispian. As an introduction to stewardship and entitled **Give Thanks to the Lord**, each day involved a theological input and reflections on that everything we have and are is a gift from God and that we are called to respond out of gratitude. Speakers reported on what it is like to be part of a stewardship group in their parish/pastoral area. There followed an overview of how different parishes and pastoral areas in our Diocese are living out their stewardship journey. Bishop Crispian spoke about the link between stewardship and the pastoral plan: the former underpinning the latter. Time for prayer and reflection focused on using our energies, gifts and material possessions in co-working with God for the building of the Kingdom. The enthusiasm among the delegates was as palpable as it was infectious as delegates explored stewardship, one way for us to respond as disciples of Jesus Christ.

FRIENDS AND HEROES

Churches looking to invigorate their children's ministry should try **Friends and Heroes**. For further details and information: www.friendsandheroes.com/biblelessons



BRITS ONLY HALF RELIGIOUS?

Latest research from NatCen (the National Centre for Social Research) records a sharp decline in religious faith in Britain and reveals the contrast with Americans, who are much less likely to be atheists or agnostic. Yet people in Britain and the US share views about the place of religion in society. *NatCen's British Social Attitudes: the 26th Report*, published by Sage on 27 January 2010, can be accessed at <http://www.uk.sagepub.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book234304&series=Series30&>

GROUP MATERIALS FOR LENT AND EASTER

Leaflets for group discussion on Sunday readings for Lent and Eastertime are available from the Dept. for Pastoral Formation. For a sample and/or further details contact Eileen Stephenson at e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk t: 013 2983 5583

CALLING ALL PARISH BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

The Diocesan Bereavement Group is looking to make contact with all engaged in bereavement support groups (or similar) in our parishes and Pastoral Areas in order to gather ideas and identify good practice. Please send details to Nicky Stevens (Dept for Pastoral Formation) at e: nstevens@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk t: 013 2983 0944

CONDOLENCES FOR SLAIN COPTIC CHRISTIANS

Millions of Coptic Orthodox Christians gathered in Egypt on 6 January to celebrate Christ's birth. Sadly, according to published reports, shortly after an 11:30pm church service in the Nile community of Naga Hammadi City (near Luxor) an unknown assailant opened fire on a crowd of worshippers, killing five Coptic Christians and a police officer. Seven others were injured. 'This is a truly horrific attack, one specifically targeting Christians on one of the holiest days of the year,' says David Harder, SAT-7's Communications Manager.

SAT-7 is a Christian satellite network made by and for the people of the Middle East and North Africa, making Christ's message of hope available to every home in the Middle East. SAT-7 consists of four channels: SAT-7 ARABIC, SAT-7 PARS (Farsi/Turkish), SAT-7 KIDS (Arabic) and SAT-7 TURK (Turkish). Each channel broadcasts on the Hotbird satellite platform. Further details: www.sat7trust.org

BELIEVE

'Go out and tell others about the good news of Jesus Christ!' That was the commission given to the disciples and to all Christians through their Baptism. But that begs the question: **How do we go out and tell others?** Alternatively: **What do we tell others?**

BELIEVE, a course starting on 8 February and running weekly throughout Lent at St John's Cathedral (Portsmouth), is designed to help Catholics find out more about their faith and develop their confidence in speaking about it to others. **BELIEVE** is also designed to help those wishing simply to learn more about the Catholic faith.

Further details: St John's Cathedral, Bishop's House, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3HG
e: info@portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk
www.portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk
t: +44 (0) 23 9282 6170



The Yomper of a Royal Marine at Eastney Barracks now The Royal Marines Museum.
Photograph © Colin Smith

AN INVITATION ...

The Friends of the Cathedral invite contributions towards the sculpture of **St John the Evangelist** by Philip Jackson, famous for *The Yomper* (see **PP** Vol 09-5, page 20). To stand 3 metres high on a 2-metre plinth, the bronze sculpture of a young fisherman is scheduled for completion this summer and will stand outside the Cathedral's West Doors looking towards the dockyard and naval base. Contributions to Canon David Hopgood, Bishop's House, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth PO1 3HG t: 023 9282 6170 e: sjcfinance@hotmail.co.uk

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SCHOOLS WITH RELIGIOUS CHARACTER: COMMUNITY COHESION

Strong Schools for Strong Communities, a report published by the Church of England demonstrates that schools with a religious character contribute strongly to community cohesion. Welcoming the report, Oona Stannard, Chief Executive and Director of the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales, commented, 'The findings of this report come as no surprise to those who know schools with a religious character. It counters the myth that they are damaging to communities and shows that the reality is that schools with a religious character make an important contribution to community cohesion.'

NEWS IN BRIEF (STOP PRESS)

- The Holy See has regretfully accepted the resignation of Archbishop Kevin McDonald of Southwark, forced to retire through ill health.
- Bishop Crispian celebrated a Mass to mark the diocese-wide launch of the **Living Our Faith Campaign** in the Cathedral on 9 January. The Bishop's homily appears as an online supplement to this issue of **PP**.
- To avoid people being plagued by unwanted and sometimes distasteful text messages, The Direct Marketing Association (t: 0845 703 4599) offers telephone, mailing and fax preference services for curbing nuisance contacts to individuals
- Volunteers sought for pastoral and hospital visiting. Training offered. Contact susan.bishop@porthosp.nhs.uk
- The English Catholic Community 1688-1745: Politics, Culture and Ideology written by Gabriel Glickman (Boydell Press) is now on sale @ £60.00
- The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has approved the final sections of the new translation of the Roman Missal. See online supplement to this issue of **PP** at www.portsmouthpeople.org.uk

PP distribution schedule 2010: w/c 25 January, 22 March, 24 May, 26 July, 27 September and 29 November

JUST FOR JUNIORS

Turn this page upside down to read the solutions and answers to this issue's JfJ section.

Q1: A 6-letter word could be 'teaser' or 'seater' (e.g., a 7-seater car)
 Q2: 33 + 4 + 4 + 12 + 10 + 25 + 2 + 14 = 100.
 Q3: LENT < Bent > Belt > Melt < Malt < Salt < Sale > Pale > PALM
 Q4: 1 = Seminar; 2 = Keystone; 3 = Peter; 4 = Papal; 5 = Few.
 6 = CAFOD (Catholic Fund for Overseas Development); 7 = Nun; 8 = Crozier or Crook;
 9 = Papyrus; 10 = Pre-Dieu.
 Q5: FRANCE = FRENCH; PERU = QUECHUA; PARAGUAY = GUARANI; CHILE = SPANISH;
 BOLIVIA = AYMARA; BRAZIL = PORTUGUES; ITALY = ITALIAN; HOLLAND = DUTCH;
 QATAR = ARABIC; AUSTRIA = GERMAN; AUSTRALIA = ENGLISH; INDIA = HINDI
 Q6: A chain is as strong as its weakest link.
 Q7: AVE > NAVEL < LEAVEN > HEAVENS
 Q8: This is a sentence with all the words in the right order but each word is written backwards: 'Jesus died on the cross.' When words are used back to front like this, it's called backward slang. The most commonly used 'back slang' word in English is 'yob';

Sacred Heart Victory

Colin Parkes reports on standing up and being counted

A Catholic couple from Reading have won a knockout victory against a nationwide retail chain.

Bryan Dent, of St Joseph's in Tilehurst, was in a local BHS store when his attention was caught by a statue. It was a traditional image of Jesus indicating His Sacred Heart.

What was different about this statue was that it was a soap on a rope.

On the front of the box were the words 'Wash Away Your Sins'. On the back it said 'Try for Heaven with Good Clean Living'.

Mr Dent said: 'Some people might find it funny, but a statue of Christ shouldn't be mocked. It's deeply offensive.'

He showed the statue to his wife, Liz, a member of the Union of Catholic Mothers. She was also incensed.

'I got on the phone to the BHS head office and told them that by the next day the news would spread among Catholics all over Berkshire,' she told

Portsmouth People.

'The day after that there would be protesting members of the Union of Catholic Mothers outside every BHS in the country.

'Two hours later they were back on the phone. They apologised for the offence they had caused, and promised that the soap on a rope was being withdrawn from all BHS stores nationwide with immediate effect.'

Central Reading Co-ordinating Pastor Mgr John Nelson said: 'This shows that if people are genuinely offended by something, they should take action. BHS did the right thing in this case.'

[If only The Sunday Times could take a leaf out of BHS's book, recognise offence and do the right thing. See MEA CULPA among Letters in our previous issue. Ed.]

Finished reading this copy of **PP**? Please pass it on to friends and colleagues, whether of faith or no faith, or dispose of responsibly for re-cycling



COMMUNITY SPIRIT 50 YEARS STRONG



Mary Lee reports.
Photographs by Cath Farrow and Pete Hughes

The community spirit that led to the Catholic community in Tadley working together to build St Michael's Church in Tadley in the 1950s re-surfaced in 2009 as the parishioners of Tadley & Kingsclere came together to prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the church on St Michael's Feastday.

The delight at the news that Bishop Crispian would be the principal celebrant at the Anniversary Mass had turned to concern when we recognised that we were not being very good stewards of the treasure we had been given: when had the window paint started to peel and how many times had we walked past those weeds? Mostly little things that anybody could have done, but nobody had!

A lack of funds meant that, like those first parishioners, we had to do it ourselves: parishioners of all ages lent a hand and enjoyed working together to restore the church and grounds, much to the appreciation of the residents living in the area; those who could not contribute their time and talents, gave generously to the anniversary fund.

Our parish priest, Fr Patrick Tansey, suggested we create a timeline exhibition of photographs, tracing the development of the parish. This attracted much interest, including the

local press, as we spotted our priests and many familiar faces from across the years.

We honoured the contribution of the founders of the parish (see panel) in our spiritual preparation. A St Michael's prayer card was printed and used at Mass to give thanks for the priests and parishioners who had built the church and developed the community, and to seek God's blessing on the current clergy and parishioners. A Mass was also offered for the deceased priests and parishioners of the parish.

Our continued link with Douai Abbey was evidenced by the Abbot, Rt Rev Dom Geoffrey Scott, joining Bishop Crispian to concelebrate the Anniversary Mass with the priests and deacons from our pastoral area and Fr James Keenan, former parish priest.

We also welcomed Cllr Avril Burdett, Vice Chair of Tadley Town Council, Tony Corish, Head of Bishop Challoner School, pastoral area council members and ministers from our local Anglican communities and the Tadley Community Church.

The Mass was uplifting, enhanced by the choir and the music group coming together to lead the congregation in singing a blend of traditional and

modern music. The Bishop reminded us that, having given thanks for the blessings of the past, we now needed to move forward, being a good witness in the communion and mission of the Church in Tadley.

Our thanks go to the Archangels Social Group and the volunteers who helped them prepare an enjoyable reception for guests and parishioners after the Mass.

Foundation of the Parish: After the Second World War, the building of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment to the north of Tadley and the neighbouring housing estates led to a huge influx of workers to the area. Their spiritual needs were first looked after by the monks of Douai Abbey with Sunday Mass being celebrated in a local hall. In 1954 the site was purchased and the church building commenced, finally opening in 1959. Fr Michael Young from Douai Abbey continued to serve the expanding community until the Portsmouth Diocese took over responsibility for the church in 1962. St Michael's Parish was formed, incorporating the community in Kingsclere, previously served from Basingstoke.

FAITH IN ACTION

MY SON, THE PRIEST

A 'very ordinary parent of a priest' reflects on opposing a call to the priesthood

'If either of my sons should show signs of wanting to be a Priest I would do everything in my power to dissuade him'. These were the words of a young mother with whom I was in conversation. Unusually for me I was speechless, but I was certainly bewildered and to some degree a little angry.

Since then I have given much thought to the attitude of this young mother, wondering why she should have adopted this strong opposition to a son having a vocation to the Priesthood. There was clear evidence that she was a practising Catholic so what was it that made her feel this way. I have come up with just a few possible reasons: one - that she thought it was too hard a life; two - he could do better for himself, perhaps become a doctor, an accountant or some other respectable profession. Perhaps she thought, she would be 'losing him' if he became a priest. Her wish may have been that when he grew up he would marry and provide her with grandchildren.

It seemed that she certainly wanted to direct her son the way she thought his life should run, regardless of what course the young man might wish to follow. More importantly this might of course defy what God might have planned for the young man. Her statement that she would do everything in her power to dissuade him from becoming a priest could mean she was prepared to oppose the will of God. Perhaps it was a question of 'the will of God is OK provided I approve of it'.



I continue to ponder the fact that, if this young woman remains a practicing Catholic, she will each Sunday turn up at Church and naturally expect a Priest to be present to celebrate Mass. However, she appeared to expect other couples to provide the Priests. They certainly are not dropped down from heaven, they are brought into the world by Mums and Dads like the rest of us.

There is no virtue in putting pressure on a young man to enter a seminary, but at the same time parents should be supporting a son who shows even the slightest interest in the Priesthood. When a boy is considering his career, parents could most gently suggest that, amongst career paths, the priesthood might be on the list. The Holy Spirit can take over from there.

To return to the young mother who was against a son becoming a Priest, it can be pointed out that there is great joy ahead for any parent whose son is training at a seminary. To have one's son become a Priest is a fantastic blessing. If you are close, you will be privileged to share something of his life in the Church. You will enjoy

learning of his work in his parish, his daily problems and of his joys in seeing the spiritual progress of his parishioners. You will have the opportunity of being there when he needs support to help him cope with the practical side of running a parish. When being sent to a new parish, the presbytery he takes over may need a lot of work doing to it to make it habitable and the garden may be a jungle. It cannot be taken for granted that his parishioners will jump to the rescue, often they remain indifferent to the situation. When this is the case you can perhaps do something about such problems whilst your son settles down to running his new parish.

An added joy will come your way: somehow the parents of a priest are invariably accepted with great affection by his parishioners. The parents may not expect any credit for having a son who is a Priest but it is a very satisfying and a joyful experience and indeed a blessing from God.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FAST DAY

In 1960, members of the National Board of Catholic Women, Catholic Women's League and Union of Catholic Mothers held the first Fast Day to raise money for the poor on the other side of the world.

Fifty years on, we are honoured to continue their work of connecting Catholic communities in England and Wales with poor communities worldwide.

Thanks to you, we help families facing poverty and disaster.

You are transforming lives.

Thank you for your continued support. Together we are making a real difference.

cafod.org.uk CAFOD is the official overseas development and relief agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and a member of Caritas International.

R27457

JUST FOR JUNIORS



1: BE A BRIGHT BUNNY!

See how many words you can make using only the 6 letters in the word EASTER. If you can get 10, then you're a Bright Bunny. If you get 20, you're a Brainy Bunny and, if you get 30, you're a Brilliant Bunny! You might even be able to get another word using all 6 letters. If you do, as well as 30 other words, that would mean you're a really Bright, Brainy, Brilliant Bunny!

'You are precious to me and I love you' Isaiah 43:4

2: IT ALL ADDS UP!

Think how old Jesus was when he was crucified. Think of the number of Gospels. Think of the number of Apostles. Think of how many commandments there are. Think of the day in the month we celebrate Christmas Day. Think of how many testaments there are in the Bible. Think of the number of Stations of The Cross. Add all these numbers together. What do you get?

3: BRING IN THE EASTER PALM

In eight moves or less, changing one letter at a time but making a proper word at every step, see if you can change the word LENT into the word PALM. This is a tough test, not for the faint-hearted. Good luck!

4: DOING THINGS THE WRONG WAY ROUND

We use dictionaries to look up words and to find their meanings. Here you have 10 meanings. Can you think what words they describe?

- 1: A young man attending a special college to train to be a priest
- 2: The middle stone in the top of an arch which helps keep all the other stones in place
- 3: The name of an Apostle which derives from the Latin word for 'rock'
- 4: Of or belonging to the Pope
- 5: A type of bench where the congregation sits in church
- 6: An organisation of the Catholic church set up to help people in poor countries
- 7: A woman who dedicates her life to doing God's work
- 8: The special staff carried by a Bishop
- 9: An old type of paper or parchment used long ago before paper was invented
- 10: A French word for a type of kneeler used for when people say prayers

5: MIX 'N' MATCH

Here you have a list of countries and a list of languages. Can you sort out which country is best identified with which language?

FRANCE; PERU; PARAGUAY; CHILE; BOLIVIA; BRAZIL; ITALY; HOLLAND; QATAR; AUSTRIA; AUSTRALIA; INDIA

ENGLISH; QUECHUA; FRENCH; PORTUGUESE; HINDI; SPANISH; ITALIAN; DUTCH; GUARANI; ARABIC; GERMAN; AYMARA

6: HOW STRONG IS A CHAIN?

Here's a clue. Chains can be of all sizes, of different strengths and of different materials. There are silver and gold chains which people wear round their necks with a cross or crucifix on them. There are paper chains used at parties. There are iron chains used for mooring ships in port. But irrespective of what they're made of, chains are always made up of the same things. So, how strong is a chain?

7: JUGGLE AND BUILD

Starting with the first word of the Hail Mary in Latin, add one letter to make the name of the central aisle in a church. Add one further letter for another way of saying 'tummy button'. You're now just one letter and a scramble away from a type of bread often referred to in biblical texts and then you only need add one more letter and change another to make a word often used instead of 'skies'.



Vikki says:

'I know all about cyber-bullying. This really nasty person kept getting on at me by text and email and saying all sorts of weird and horrible things about me. A really good friend told me to tell my teacher, parent, guardian or priest. So I did! And all that grief and hassle stopped right there.'

You'll find the answers in News and Announcements

8: CODEBREAKERS!

Crack the code to get the message:

S U S E J D E I D N O E H T S S O R C

BOOKMARK

Fr Denis Blackledge spots a LENTEN read



THE FAVOURABLE TIME - The CAFOD/Christian Aid Lent Book 2010



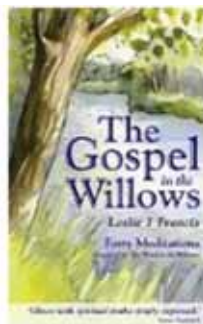
Clare Amos, Michael Campbell-Johnston SJ, Joseph Donders, Ben Edson, Katherine Schexneider, Peter Selby
95pp, pbk, 2009

This is excellent Lenten fodder, brilliantly insightful, eye-opening, heart-rending, refreshing. The variety of men and women writers brings its own freshness and flavour. Just two pages a day, giving you the references to the daily Scripture readings, a short reflection, a pause for thought and a prayer. Six authors with worldwide leadership experience sharpen the appetite for the sort of prayer that could easily be dangerous – it might change your way of living your life. It's up-to-date, challenging, deeply incarnational, and written from the heart.

THE GOSPEL IN THE WILLOWS Forty Meditations inspired by The Wind in the Willows

Leslie J. Francis DLT 102pp, 2009

This is a sheer delight. And an equally good read and pray for Lent – that's why there are forty meditations. The author is steeped in Kenneth Grahame's masterpiece. He sets out to have a balanced conversation between the characters in Grahame's text and those individuals of the four Gospels who come into contact with Jesus. There's a wealth of wisdom and insight which fairly leaps off the pages, as the author skilfully selects his passages from the original and blends them with a gospel passage. Mole, Ratty and Toad meet Jesus!



Just a click away...

We continue with our compendium of worthy websites:

www.yenra.com/catholic/prayers

- a well-indexed compendium for all occasions

www.rc.net/

- for daily Scripture readings and meditations

www.nccbuscc.org/

- Pope John Paul's Scriptural Stations of the Cross

www.PortsmouthCatholicCathedral.org.uk

- St John's Cathedral website

www.benetvision.org

- Sister Joan Chittister: lecturer, authoress. Prayer links etc.

www.PortsmouthPeople.org.uk

- to subscribe to PP online

www.PortsmouthDiocese.org.uk

- the new-look Portsmouth diocesan website

www.cptryon.org

- for reflections on the Passion

(URLs are non-case sensitive. Title casing is to improve readability. Submissions for 'JACA' warmly invited. Ed.)

French Connections

With this issue of **Portsmouth People** we offer a 'community communications checklist' for French nationals and for others in our diocese with Internet access who are interested in France:



Country Profile (BBC):

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/998481.stm

(Note underscore between country and profiles)

Tourism and travel information:

www.lonelyplanet.com/france

Travel Guide:

www.worldtravelguide.net/country/92/country_guide/Europe/France.html

(Note underscore between country and profiles)

National Tourist Office:

www.francetourism.com/

Travel advice:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/europe/france1>

Internet Radio Stations:

www.shoutcast.com/radio/French

www.live-radio.net/

www.listenlive.eu/france.html

Catering for catholic tastes ...

PP brings the world's cuisine to your table



Dhal Recipe, economical but delicious, for Lent (Give the money saved to CAFOD or a pro-life group?) submitted by June Matthews of the Bracknell parish of St Joseph and St Margaret Clitherow.

Simmer 2 cups of red lentils with 1 teaspoon turmeric powder in 3 cups water for about 25 minutes till soft.

In another pan heat 1 tablespoon oil, add 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon ginger/garlic paste (or 1 clove garlic, crushed, and 1 inch fresh ginger finely grated) and 1 chopped onion.

Fry till onions are slightly brown, then add 2 large tomatoes, skinned and chopped.

When the tomatoes are soft, add the cooked lentils and salt to taste.

Garnish with fresh coriander (optional). Serve with rice.

Bon appetit!

The lentil dish dhal is widely eaten across India.

(Similar 'Community Connections' compilations are welcome for other nationalities. Ed.)

OLQP



Anne Hartley Sums Up A Busy Year At OLQP

There were several major celebrations throughout 2009 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Southbourne, Bournemouth. In June the Church celebrated its 70th Birthday. The day was a coming together of the whole parish in one Mass only which followed on with a shared meal in the garden. There were several photo displays of events over the 70 years and posters of current groups involved today.



Also in June Fr John Dunne, Parish Priest, celebrated the Ruby Anniversary of his ordination so another party for parish and family along with presentations occurred.

Then on September 7 Father John Dunne retired on health grounds. He first came to the Diocese after ordination in 1969 and was posted to Lea Park Parish to join Fr Pat Murphy O'Connor. He was there for over 4 years. This was followed by a shorter term in Bitterne. The next move was to Hedge End where he served the community for over 10 years. During that time he was very much involved in Deanery events. This was followed by his move to St Mary's Ryde IOW for over 7 years after which he moved to Southbourne where he has been for 14 years. He arrived in Southbourne with 'Ricky the Dog' and in no time he was known for his care of the Parish family and the neighbourhood. He was famous for his cheery wave and greetings in the street to everyone.

His ultimate skill was in his openness and his acceptance of people as they were. He was non-judgemental and always encouraging especially with young families (the church of the future). He was devoted to caring for the sick and he supported the Churches Together initiatives.

He has now retired to Kiln Green under the care of the nuns at St John's Convent in Reading where he will be cared for and he leaves with prayers and blessing for a happy retirement.

He had a great send-off from the Parish, a huge party and presentations from the parish family, Churches Together, the Irish Society, St Peters' School and the De La Salle Brothers. He is seen here after his last Mass, having presented a silver medal to one of the altar servers.

We now welcome Father Gerry Onyejuluwa as Parish Priest and Fr Christian in a new chapter in the life of OLQP with excitement and enthusiasm.



I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
and twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
in such a jocund company:
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought
what wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' (known as 'The Daffodils') is an 1804 poem by William Wordsworth. Inspired by when Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy, came across a long belt of daffodils, the poem was first published in 1807. A revised version was released in 1815.



Hints & Wrinkles

How do I find out about the priesthood?

The diocesan priest is called to serve the people of God, to bring them Christ's

healing love through prayer, the sacraments and by proclaiming the Word of God. He also has the great joy and privilege of making Christ present in the Eucharist. Usually he will do all this in a parish - the local Catholic community.

St Teresa of Avila once said: 'Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.' That sums up the calling of priests, to be at all times another Christ - 'alter Christus'.

Priesthood is demanding and, to quote the late Cardinal Hume, no one can ever be truly worthy to be a priest. But the good news is that priesthood is not a human decision. It's a calling from God, who gives His strength and His grace to those who serve him. No priest can act fully for Christ without being sustained by his own prayer-relationship with God, rooted in sacrament and scripture.

A Priest is today's shepherd and fisherman - teaching, sanctifying and guiding the People of God through a life of ministerial service and leadership. Maybe you are being called?

Whether you're exploring your calling or just want more information about the priesthood, find out more at www.ukpriest.org - the official website for diocesan priesthood in England and Wales.

Further points of reference:

- <http://www.worldpriestday.com/index.htm>
- <http://www.ukvocation.org/>
- <http://www.clerus.org>

If you think the Priesthood or Permanent Diaconate could be your calling, do feel free to talk to a Catholic priest in your neighbourhood or alternatively contact our Diocesan Director of Vocations, Rev Gerard Flynn, at St Saviour's Presbytery, Weston Lane, Totland, Isle of Wight PO39 0HE (t: 019 8375 2317 m: 07870 207132)

e: gerarddominic@waitrose.com and/or our Diocesan Director of the Permanent Diaconate, Monsignor James Joyce, at 60 Sturges Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 2HE (t: 011 8978 0348 e: corpus.christi@ntlworld.com)

Please keep in your prayers those men training for the priesthood for our diocese:

- James McAuley
- Phillip Harris
- John Chandler
- Stephen Roach
- Benjamin Theobald
- Ross Bullock
- Philip Carroll

Are you married? Try a one day MARRIAGE REFRESHER

This day is for:

- Married Couples however long you have been married.
- Married couples who simply want to give their marriage some time for reflection.
- Married couples who would like to give their marriage an MOT.



- Brush up on your communication skills
- Are you handling conflict as you would like?
- Are you coping with change?
- Money, children - life is not always easy.
- Is your home a real community of Life and Love?

The new one-day **Marriage Refresher** as developed in our diocese was trialled in Basingstoke in April with 12 couples attending. The course was well received, one couple writing back:

'Thank you so much for organizing the Marriage Refresher Day, we both enjoyed it. You have clearly identified an important need and have succeeded in packing a lot into a short period of time, which is needed when so many are unable to make commitments to courses over several evenings or days. We pray that your initiative will grow and flourish'

The couples who attended gave very useful feedback and a second, slightly modified course was run in October in Fleet. Again the response was very positive and encouraging.

Who is this course for? The course is for committed couples who want to spend a day just reflecting on their relationship away from the hustle and bustle of daily life maybe after many years of marriage. During the day couples are encouraged to think and to share privately as couples how they are handling change, communication, conflict and marital spirituality in their relationship. There is no group sharing. The day is not designed for couples experiencing serious difficulties which would benefit from counselling.

A number of couples who have experienced the day have come forward and after some training will be presenting a **Marriage Refresher Day** in different parts of the Diocese.

The first two courses for 2010 are already scheduled:

- Saturday 17 April in Winchester
- Saturday 8 May in Bournemouth

For more information on how to book please contact Eileen Stephenson e: estephenson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk t: 013 2983 5583

cafod.org.uk/giveitup
50th anniversary of Lent Fast Day

CAFOD
Just the world

Could you turn biscuits into bicycles this Lent?
The materials coming your way in early January!

<p>Your 'Step-by-step' guide</p> <p>With plenty of tips and ideas to make give it up! a success in your parish.</p>	<p>Posters</p> <p>Display these in your parish where everyone can see them.</p>	<p>Stickers</p> <p>Give these out so people can show their support for give it up!</p>
<p>Collection envelopes & money boxes</p> <p>Make sure everyone gets one during Lent so they can collect what they save and then donate.</p>	<p>'Walking with us' prayer cards</p> <p>Give these out to your parishioners and use them in group prayer.</p>	<p>Give it up! bulletin</p> <p>To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Lent Fast Day, and tell everyone all about give it up!</p>

Visit cafod.org.uk/giveitup to register your interest

CAFOD is the official overseas development and relief agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, and part of the Family International Foundation. Registered charity no. 281774

CAFOD
Just the world



COMING CLOSER TO GOD IN LENT

Fr Jeremy Corley

During Lent, we seek to draw closer to God. Three tried and tested methods are almsgiving, prayer and fasting. Jesus speaks about these methods in the gospel reading for Ash Wednesday. These methods are not unique to us Christians. They formed a valuable part of the Jewish piety of the Pharisees, who receive a rather bad press in the gospels. They also form three of the Five Pillars of Islam: zakat (almsgiving), salat (prayer), siyam (fasting). So when we practise these methods, we are uniting with Jews and Muslims who yearn for God's mercy upon the world. Jesus presumes that his followers will practise charitable giving. Indeed, the abundance of Christian charities testifies to the generosity of thousands of believers. But there is a difference: Jesus calls his followers to remain as silent as possible about their generosity. We can be aware that there are probably many unsung heroes and heroines who are far more generous than we can ever be. And what we give is only what God has given us in the first place. So there is no need to shout when we donate £10 to charity. Jesus also presumes that believers will pray - as indeed we do. But we do not pray for the sake of show. That is why he suggests we pray in secret, before God alone. He is not forbidding public prayer - after all, he himself attended synagogue services. But through praying on our own, we can specially place ourselves at the disposal of God. Jesus also speaks against making lengthy prayers composed of empty phrases - like some pagans in the ancient world who

tried to hit upon the exact name of a particular deity in a culture that worshipped many gods. Instead, we can simply call out to God, 'Daddy', because God loves us more than any human parent could.

And Jesus presumes that his followers will fast, but his teaching is to keep any self-denial hidden. By tradition, Catholics denied themselves meat especially on Fridays ('fish on Fridays'), though this has not been prominent in recent years. But we need not limit our self-denial to meat. In fact, we can think of many forms of fasting - denying ourselves chocolate or alcohol, or deciding not to buy something we don't really need. All these methods can perhaps seem rather negative: letting go of our hard-earned cash, withdrawing for a little from others so as to spend time alone before God, and denying ourselves some kind of pleasure. Yet the aim is to open ourselves to the God who gives us everything. Sometimes we may need to do more during Lent, but at other times we may perhaps need to be less busy. Almsgiving, prayer, and fasting can help us in our Lenten journey to God. A nurse might pray for her patients and skip some chocolate to put some money in the Cafod box. Or a young person might reflect on his or her life before God and then act to save the planet for the future by avoiding wasteful spending and instead raising money to sponsor a rain forest in Africa or Brazil. Or a retired person living alone might give a good amount of time to prayer, living simply and offering help to someone in need. In fact, there are many possible ways to respond to Christ's call.

To be sure, in this harsh economic climate, some people today may not have the luxury to choose their Lenten penance. Financial hardship may force them to restrict their food purchases. Caring for others in need may lead them to share generously, even from their limited resources. And their concern for a loved one may bring them to pray fervently.

Whatever our situation, we are invited this Lent to come closer to God. Almsgiving, prayer and fasting are paths that can help us on our Lenten journey. May we receive the courage to play our part, so that God can work in our lives this Lent.

Fr Jeremy Corley recently edited *New Perspectives on the Nativity*, London, Continuum 2009

Portsmouth People is the diocesan publication for the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. It is distributed free of charge to parishes and other groups in the Diocese which covers Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, the Channel Isles and parts of Berkshire, Dorset and Oxfordshire. The Portsmouth Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust is a registered charity (number 246871) with its address at Diocesan Office, St Edmund House, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth PO1 3OA www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Editor:

Dr Jeremy L Kettle-Williams
Department for Pastoral Formation
Park Place Pastoral Centre
Winchester Road
WICKHAM Hampshire PO17 5HA
editor@portsmouthpeople.org.uk
t: +44(0)23 9283 3121
f: +44(0)23 9287 2172
www.portsmouthpeople.org.uk

Advisory panel: Fr Denis Blackledge, Barry Hudd, Paul Inwood, Nicky Stevens

Distribution Manager: John Ross
Area Contact (Romsey, N. Badd): Dawn Harrison
(dawn.harrison13@btinternet.com)
Area Contact (Reading and Newbury): Colin Parkes (colin.parkes@gmail.com)

Portsmouth People, printed on forest-sustainable paper in Rotis Semi Sans 10 pt, is a bi-monthly publication distributed no later than the last working day of every odd month. Material for publication should be submitted to The Editor in electronic format (Guidelines available on request) no later than the first working day of every month of publication. All rights of reproduction, translation and adaptation reserved for all countries. The Editor reserves the right to edit material. All material received for publication is understood to be free of copyright and any form of restraint. No undertaking, except by prior arrangement, can be made to return any material submitted by post. There can be no guarantee of publication for material submitted nor can the Editor or any other officer enter into discussions regarding decisions to edit or not to publish. **Portsmouth People** does not commission nor accept material on a fee basis. Views expressed in **Portsmouth People** are not necessarily the views of the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, its affiliated companies and charities, employees thereof or persons otherwise associated directly or indirectly. All material is published in good faith, without guarantee.



CHURCH IN FOCUS

With this issue we look at the
Church of St Boniface



The next issue of
PORTSMOUTH PEOPLE
will be distributed at the
end of March 2010





Catholic Church of St Boniface
413 Shirley Road
Shirley
Southampton
Hampshire SO15 3JD

t: 023 8077 1231
www.st-boniface.org.uk



When you have finished reading this magazine,
please pass it to a friend or dispose of it responsibly for re-cycling.