

St Pancras

January 2025

The Most Holy Name of Jesus



Free (one per household)



Contents:

- Holy Year 2025, Page 3
- Recipe, Page 6
- St Pancras' Mothers' group, Page 7
- Response to music, Page 8
- Monday book club, Page 10
- An interview, Page 11
- In memory of John Sales, Page 12
- 'Choosing my patron Saint', Page 13
- Alex and Jessie's updates, Page 14
- Reading suggestion, Page 14
- The St. Pancras' Holy Year Posada, Page 15
- Handmade rosaries, Page 15
- A tribute to Jan Patrick, Page 16
- Alex and Jessie's quiz, Page 17
- Gardening news, Page 19
- Recipe, Page 19
- Angels at Mass, Page 20
- Children's corner, Page 21
- A ghost story, Page 24
- A call to returning Catholics, Page 25
- Quiz answers, Page 25
- Sacraments and Sacramentals, Page 26
- From the archive, back cover

Editor's note:

Thank you to all our contributors for your interesting and engaging submissions, as always, which is greatly appreciated. A big thank you to those who sent in questions for the Q&A section, which will feature in the next issue. Thank you for your patience, and please do keep your questions coming! I would also like to welcome Jo Shevlin as the newest member of our team of proofreaders.

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine, and please make a note of the cut-off date for the next issue, which is Sunday, 27th April. Please email your articles, to matilda79r@gmail.com. I look forward to receiving your articles, essays, activities etc.

Filly Rampley
January 2025



Cover: Christ on The Cross, By Peter Paul Ruben, 16th century

St Pancras Catholic Church is part of the East Anglia Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust.

Registered charity no: 278742

1 Orwell Place, Ipswich, IP4 1BD

Phone number: 01473 - 252596

parishpriest@stpancraschurch.org.uk

Holy Year 2025

By Father Joseph

A Holy Year, or Jubilee, is a time for the remission of debts. Special indulgences are granted by the Church by which the temporal punishment due to sin can be remitted, both for ourselves and for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. Usually this involves going on pilgrimage to certain designated churches or shrines, undertaking certain acts of devotion and praying certain prayers, and walking through a specially consecrated Holy Door, which symbolizes the Christian's pilgrimage from death to life, from the slavery of sin to a life of grace, from this world to the next. Indeed the Holy Door is pre-eminently a symbol of Christ Himself who is the door to our salvation (Jn 10:9). The designated churches are, traditionally, the four major basilicas of Rome: St Peter's, St John Lateran, St Mary Major, and St Paul Outside the Walls.

In modern times, popes have also allowed certain churches and shrines in each diocese to be designated as places where the indulgences can be gained. The number of places is deliberately limited because the Holy Year indulgence has always involved a physical journey to a specially consecrated site of pilgrimage, helping us to encounter the living Lord who is, Himself, 'the way' (Jn 14:6). Originally, Holy Years were meant to be proclaimed every 100 years but that was soon reduced to one every 50 years. Since the 1500s, ordinary Holy Years have taken place every 25 years, although there have also been a number of extraordinary Holy Years in between, for example the Year of Mercy in 2016.

A Holy Year is proclaimed by the Pope through a Bull of Indiction (so called because of the seal made of lead, called a *bulła*, with which the document is officially sealed). This year's Holy Year was proclaimed by Pope Francis with the bull, *Spes non confundit*, which are the opening words of the document and which are taken from St Paul's Letter to the Romans, 'hope confounds not' (Rom 5:5). The full text of the Pope's proclamation may be found on the Holy See's website, but his message for the Holy Year focuses on the theological virtue of hope



Spes Non Confundit

which, he says, is no 'naïve optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life' (*Spes non confundit*, no. 24). The Holy Father then quotes the Letter to the Hebrews which teaches us that we 'have the strongest comfort, who have fled for refuge to hold fast the hope set before us, which we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm' (6:18-19). And he adds, 'The image of the anchor is eloquent; it helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus. The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope, which transcends life's fleeting pleasures and the achievement of our immediate goals, makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the grandeur of the heavenly goal to which we have been called'. (*Spes non confundit*, no. 25).

Hope is more than a vague wish or aspiration. It is much more than hoping it will not rain tomorrow because we have a family event planned, or I hope I will pass my exams, or even I hope my daughter will be kept safe on her gap-year travels. In fact, hope has very little to do with our feelings. Instead, the theological virtue of hope is: a supernatural virtue, infused by God into our souls, by which we desire and expect that eternal life that God has promised to His servants, as well as the means necessary to attain it. In other words, hope has much more substance to it than our everyday anxieties about how things will turn out. The Angelic Doctor, St Thomas Aquinas, teaches us that grace and glory are two sides of the same coin. In both cases, our soul is anchored in God Himself

on earth on the one hand, and to be in a state of glory in heaven on the other, are one and the same thing: in each case, we are in the presence of God. To be in a state of grace means, he says, that we already have one foot in heaven. This is the true meaning of hope: to have one foot in heaven already even while we are still living here on earth. This is what it means to have our souls anchored in God. And perhaps this is the dominant image to take with us during the Holy Year of 2025: to remain in a state of grace by receiving the Sacraments often, especially Confession; to water with prayer the seed of sanctifying grace that is given to us in the Sacraments; and to live a life of virtue in the way we behave towards God and towards our neighbour.

1700 th anniversary of the Council of the NICÆA:

In the Bull of Proclamation, *Spes non confundit*, the Holy Father draws our attention to the 1,700 th anniversary of the General Ecumenical Council of Nicæa in the year AD 325. At that Council, the main topic discussed was the nature of Christ. Arius, a priest originally from modern day Libya, held that Christ was not co-eternal with God the Father, that He had a beginning, and that He had once not existed. This, in the view of the Council Fathers, would have made Christ less than God; indeed, therefore, not God at all. The main accomplishment of the Council was, then, to clarify the truth about the nature of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Council of Nicæa clarified and re-affirmed orthodox Catholic teaching that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, holds the same nature as God the Father,

and that He is co-eternal (has always existed) with the Father. He was, declared the Council, begotten not made, and shares the same substance as the Father. The Greek word adopted by the Council was *homooúsion*, that is, of one substance or consubstantial, with the Father. It was the Council of Nicæa that gave us the Nicene Creed that we still recite at Mass every Sunday which includes the phrase, *Light from Light.* In drafting the phrase, *'Light from Light,'* the Fathers of the Council of Nicæa drew on the imagery conveyed in the word *apaugasma* – *'refulgence'* or *'brightness'* – which is used in only two places in the whole of the Greek Bible. First, in the Book of Wisdom where it says, *'For [Wisdom] is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness,'* and second, in the Letter to the Hebrews where it says, *'[The Son is] the brightness of [God's] glory, and the figure of His substance'* (Wis 7:26, Heb 1:3, Douai-Rheims translation). The Fathers understood that just as you cannot have a flame without brightness, so you cannot have the Father without the Son.

The two are co-eternal, as St Augustine wrote whilst commenting on the opening lines of John's Gospel, *'Are you seeking for a Son without the Father? Give me a light without brightness.'* The Incarnation of the One who is *'Light from Light'* – and who is Himself *'the light of the world'* (Jn 8:12) – is brought about by the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:35). And it is this light of hope, says our Holy Father, that the Holy Spirit keeps *'burning, like an ever-burning lamp, to sustain and invigorate our lives'* (*Spes non confundit*, no.3).

What are the origins of Holy Years?

The origins of our Holy Years – or Jubilees – can be traced all the way back to the time of Moses in the Book of Leviticus. The word jubilee probably comes from the Hebrew *jobel*, meaning *'a ram's horn,'* and from this instrument, used to proclaim the celebration, the idea of rejoicing was derived. Further, passing through the Greek *iobelaios*, or *iobelos*, the word became confused with the Latin *jubilo*, which means *'to shout'* and has given us the forms *jubilatio* and *jubilaeum*, now adopted in most European languages. For the Israelites, the year of Jubilee was pre-eminently a time of joy, the year of remission or universal pardon. *'Thou*

shalt sanctify the fiftieth year, and shalt proclaim remission to all the inhabitants of thy land: for it is the year of jubilee' (Leviticus 25:10. See also the whole of 25:8-55). Every seventh year, like every seventh day, was always accounted holy and set aside for rest, but the year which followed seven complete cycles was to be kept as a sabbatical year of special solemnity. The institution of the jubilee year evidently bore a close analogy with the feast of Pentecost, which was the closing day after seven weeks of harvest. (The Christian feast of Pentecost falls seven weeks and one day after Easter.) Pope Boniface VIII instituted the first Christian Jubilee in the year 1300, but we know that the idea of celebrating and solemnizing a fiftieth anniversary was familiar to medieval writers long before this. The words of a hymn from the 12th century run:

*Anni favor jubilaei
Poenarum laxat debitum,
Post peccatorum vomitum
Et cessandi propositum.
Currant passim omnes rei.
Pro mercede regnum Dei
Levi patet expositum.*

The blessing of the year of jubilee releases the obligation of punishments. After sinners have been purged, the cause against them ends. All the guilty go free by the mercy of God's kingdom, as set forth in the law of Levi.

Going on pilgrimage:

Going on pilgrimage is an essential feature of a Holy Year. As we have said, in the past pilgrims had to travel to Rome to gain the Holy Year indulgence, and are still encouraged to do so. By why do we have to go on pilgrimage at all? The idea of going on pilgrimage comes from the fact that the Son of God became Incarnate and dwelt among us in a particular place at a particular time in human history. Places touched by God's physical presence are, in themselves, holy places. As a result of Christ being born in the Holy Land – and living, teaching, working, suffering, dying, and rising from the dead there – Christians have long made the journey to these places of special interest and holiness. They have gone on pilgrimage to the place of Our Lord's birth, to sites where He is known to have taught and performed miracles, to the sites of His suffering and death, and to the sites of His appearances following His glorious resurrection.

In each case, pilgrims have venerated the places where God has dwelt among His people, have undertaken acts of penance for their sins, and have begged Him for the things they needed, both spiritual and material. We know that we can pray to God in any place and at any time. Yet to journey to where the Incarnate Son of God Himself brought down to earth the holiness of God is a very special thing. To make such a pilgrimage in a spirit of penance is a grace-filled thing to do. As the centuries passed, and war and troubles in the Holy Land made pilgrimages to such places impossible, the custom grew up of making pilgrimages to other shrines, and especially to Rome, the Eternal City, the earthly home and centre of Christ's Church. To mark the journey, and to symbolize the passage from a state of sinfulness to a state of grace, and the journey from earth to heaven, certain Holy Doors became the markers of the Holy Year pilgrimages. To pass through one of these doors became the chief feature of a Holy Year pilgrimage and the means of obtaining the Holy Year indulgence.

It is to Rome that pilgrims traditionally make their way during a Holy Year, journeying to the centre of Catholic faith and unity, to the home of our Holy Mother the Church, in order to draw on the great *'treasures of sanctification.'* Even though international travel has become easier down the years, the Church considers a Holy Year pilgrimage so important that in recent years popes have granted permission for there to be officially designated sacred places around the world where the Holy Year indulgence may also be gained. There are two such officially designated sacred places in the diocese of East Anglia. They are: St John's Cathedral in Norwich, and at the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham. Going on pilgrimage is part of the Catholic Church's understanding that we cannot be passive in the face of God's grace: we cannot just wait for God to save us without putting any effort in ourselves.

St Paul writes, *I 'now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body, which is the Church'* (Col 1:24). What could possibly have been wanting (or lacking) in the sufferings of Christ? What was missing on Calvary? We were.

Continued on page 5

We did not suffer for our sins on Calvary. So, through acts of penance (that is, by offering up to Almighty God our trials and tribulations, our hardships and pain, as penances for our sins) we can unite ourselves to Christ crucified, and conform ourselves to Him on the Cross. In this way, we can play an active part in our own salvation. This is the great paradox of the Catholic Faith: we can only be redeemed and saved by God's grace, and yet at the same time we must collaborate with God's gift of grace (unlike the unworthy servant who simply buried the gift God had given him in Mt 25:24-30) and become, as St Paul says, coadjutors or collaborators in the building up of God's Kingdom (1 Cor 3:9). Gaining indulgences is one of the ways in which we can do this.

What is an indulgence?

All sins are punished, whether in this life or in the next. If we have suffered more in this life than we have sinned – and have offered that suffering up to God as penances – then we will not have to suffer in the next life (in Purgatory). However, if, when we die, there is still some punishment outstanding then we will have to pay that debt in Purgatory and suffer accordingly. An indulgence is the remission in full (a plenary indulgence) or in part (a partial indulgence) of the temporal punishment due to our sins. (In this context, 'temporal' simply means not everlasting, that is, not the eternal punishment of hell.) Indulgences can be obtained for ourselves or for those who have already died and are in Purgatory (but not for other people who are still living).

The Holy Souls in Purgatory cannot gain indulgences for themselves because they have had their time on earth in which to live a life of virtue and undertake their penances voluntarily. So, once souls arrive in Purgatory they rely on us to pray for them. Normally, only one plenary indulgence can be obtained in any one day. However, during the Holy Year it will be possible to gain indulgences for the Holy Souls in Purgatory twice in one day.

How do I gain the Holy Year indulgence?

Each time there is a Holy Year, the Pope promulgates a Decree giving details of how indulgences may be gained. In the Holy Year of 2025 our Holy Father has decreed that: To gain an indulgence you must:

- Say the prayer or perform the work
- Be free from all attachment to, or affection for, sin, even venial sin; and, within several days either side of this,
- Go to Confession;
- Receive Holy Communion;
- Pray for the Pope's intentions (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be).

The works that carry an indulgence are: I. Going on pilgrimage to any of the officially designated Jubilee sites, and when you are there, either: attend Mass; attend a celebration of the Word of God; participate in Matins, Lauds, or Vespers from the Divine Office; make the Stations of the Cross; say the rosary; or attend a Penance Service which includes individual Confession. The officially designated Jubilee sites are: In Rome: the four Major Basilicas (St Peter's, St Mary Major's, St Paul Outside the Walls, and St John Lateran's). In the Holy Land: the Basilicas of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Annunciation in Nazareth. II. Making a pious visit to an officially designated sacred place, and when you are there engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith (the Creed, either the long Nicene Creed we say at Mass or the shorter Apostles' Creed), or invocations to Mary, the Mother of God.

In other places in the world: the two Minor Papal Basilicas in Assisi – those of St Francis and Our Lady of the Angels; the Pontifical Basilicas of Our Lady of Loreto, Our Lady of Pompeii, and St Anthony in Padua; any minor basilica, cathedral church, co-cathedral church, Marian sanctuary, any distinguished collegiate church or sanctuary designated by the diocesan bishop. In the Diocese of East Anglia: the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich, and the National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham. III. The Works of Mercy.

The Holy Year indulgence can also be obtained (so long as individuals fulfil the conditions given above) if the faithful participate in a popular mission or in spiritual exercises, carry out any of the Corporal Works of Mercy (feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, healing the sick, visiting the imprisoned, and burying the dead), or the Spiritual Works of Mercy (counselling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing sinners, comforting

the afflicted, forgiving offences, bearing patiently those who do us ill, and praying for the living and the dead). In addition, Works of Mercy include penitential acts such as: Friday abstinence, including and especially abstaining from the use of futile distractions (particularly those that involve screen time); fasting; donating money to the poor; supporting works of a religious or social nature; and by dedicating a reasonable proportion of one's free time to voluntary activities at the service of the community. The sick and housebound (as well as those who care for the sick and cannot leave them to travel to a place of pilgrimage) can obtain the Holy Year Indulgence if they recite a Profession of Faith (the Creed), an Our Father, and other prayers suited to the spirit of the Holy Year whilst offering up their suffering or hardship to Almighty God as a penance for their sins.

The Holy Year in our own parish:

A Holy Year is nothing less than a rare opportunity to join with the whole Catholic Church in a worldwide drive for sanctity! In our own parish we shall focus on ways in which we can become more holy and thereby 'work out [our] salvation' (Phil 2:12).

Going on pilgrimage

The chief means of working out our salvation during a Holy Year involves going on pilgrimage of course. Everyone is encouraged to go on pilgrimage during the Holy Year either to Rome, or to one of the other sacred places around the world, or at least to one of the two sacred places in our own diocese, the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich and the Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham (pictured below).



Sanctifying our Catholic Homes:

The second point of focus in our parish during the Holy Year will be on sanctifying our homes and making them houses of prayer and places where we put Christ at the centre of our lives, whatever may be going on outside in the rest of the world! To this end we shall put in place our Holy Year Posada. More details of this are given below.

House blessings In addition:

We should like to encourage as many householders as possible to have their homes blessed during the Holy Year. The house blessing itself only takes about 20 minutes, so please ask Fr Joseph to come and bless your home at some point during 2025. (But please note that whilst Fr Joseph appreciates invitations to lunch and dinner, it will not be possible for him to eat at every home in the parish! The main thing is to have your home blessed!) Becoming a Domus: separate from ordinary house blessings, a Domus is a household that has been consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus following a period of prayerful preparation and which, through its undertaking to say the Daily Prayer of the Domus, has become a house of prayer. If you think this may be something

you would like to consider, please take a 'What is a Domus?' leaflet from the back of the church and then speak to Fr Joseph. Throughout the Holy Year there will also be: I. catechetical instructions to help us learn more about the Catholic Faith; II. advice from the saints and great spiritual writers about how to grow in holiness; III. a focus on returning to the Sacrament of Confession if you have been away for a while; - an emphasis on the need to go to Confession frequently and regularly; IV. a special concentration on the nature and practice of prayer; V. and thoughts on the life of virtue.

Above all, we will look at how we can make practical differences to our spiritual lives and how we can do something in real terms about changing our habits and routines so that we can grow in holiness. In addition, there will be two main projects: 1. a Posada, with a beautiful statue of the Holy Family travelling around the households of the parish accompanied by a special Holy Year Posada Prayer of consecration to the Holy Family; 2. a call to returning Catholics to take up the practice of the Faith once more and join us on our pilgrim journey towards heaven. At St Pancras we have a sign above the front entrance to the church

which reads, 'I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved' (Jn 10:9). The front door of our church is not one of the official Holy Year doors which form part of a Holy Year pilgrimage, nor is St Pancras an officially designated sacred place. Nonetheless, the sign above our front door is a marker to remind us of the importance of the Holy Year and of Our Lord's teaching that it is He, and He alone, who is the gateway to salvation and heaven.



German baked apples (Bratäpfel)

By Tilly Rampley

Ingredients:

- 4 large apples (granny Smith, honeycrisp, or pink lady)
- 2 tbsp butter (28 g)
- 5 tbsp maple syrup (75 ml)
- 1 tbsp brown sugar (12 g)
- ½ tsp ground ginger (1 g)
- ¼ tsp nutmeg (0.5 g)
- 1 tsp cinnamon (2 g)
- about ½ cup hot water (120 ml)
- ½ cup walnuts (60 g)
- ¼ cup dried cranberries (30 g)

Tips: When baking with apples, pick a variety that holds its shape and delivers a good balance of sweetness when cooked. Core your apples carefully, and reserve the top.

For the filling, combine spices and brown sugar with melted butter and maple syrup. If you prefer a more traditional twist, swap the maple syrup for honey. Gently heat the mixture in a small saucepan until the butter melts and the sugar dissolves. Or, for a quicker method, melt the butter in the microwave and then heat the entire mixture until the sugar dissolves



Mix in slightly chopped nuts and dried fruit—walnuts and dried cranberries are my favourite, but raisins are a more traditional choice. To assemble, start filling the cored apples. Add a bit of the melted butter first, then pack in the fruits/nut mixture until nearly full. Finish by topping up the apples with more nuts and pouring the remaining butter mixture over the top, allowing it to soak into the core. Add just enough hot water so that there's about ½ inch of water in the pan. Place the filled apples in the oven and bake until they're soft. The time will depend on the variety of apple, but it usually takes about 40 to 50 minutes. Once baked, let the apples cool slightly before serving. Serve the baked apples while they are still warm. Can be served with whipped cream, vanilla ice cream, or vanilla sauce.

St Pancras' Mothers' Group

By Rosa Patten

Having had the summer break, the St Pancras' Mothers Group resumed in October. Traditionally, the month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, but the Holy Angels is often mentioned too, especially when we have the feast of the Holy Guardian Angels on the second of the month. Thus, it was fitting that the talk and activity that took place would be about the Holy Angels. With tea and coffees in hand, Father Joseph gave us an insightful account of these awesome (in the correct sense of the word) spiritual beings. Two books, which are dedicated to the Angels, were suggested for further reading: Devotions to the Holy Angels and World Invisible, the Catholic Doctrine of the Angels. We were taught that even the unborn child is assigned to them a guardian angel and Father Joseph stressed the importance of children (and adults) saying the Guardian Angel prayer! The talk was concluded with time spent in Church and the recitation of the Litany to my Guardian Angel- one that I confess I didn't appreciate until we recited it:

Angel of Heaven, who gives me wise direction, pray for me
Angel of Heaven, who dost take place of a tutor, pray for me
Angel of Heaven, who dost love me tenderly, pray for me
Angel of Heaven, who art my consoler, pray for me
Angel of Heaven, who art attached to me as a good brother, pray for me
Angel of Heaven, who dost instruct me in the duties and truth of salvation...

We also said the Guardian Angel prayer. Back in the hall we made a lapel badge with a Guardian Angel medal and the children coloured a Guardian Angel prayer sheet. November's group, with the solemn dedication to the Holy Souls, gave us a talk from Father about the existence of Purgatory; Indulgences; the danger of double predestination and the heresy of Jansenism (with the growing devotion to the Sacred Heart in the aftermath); and the importance of praying for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. We enjoyed homemade Soul Cakes, and the activity involved setting up 'altars' at home for the month of the Holy Souls. In Church we prayed the De Profundis. December, with our last meeting for 2024, was an informal affair, with tea/coffee and chat in the cosy sitting area. We enjoyed homemade decorated biscuits and made a Holy Family decoration for our own Christmas trees and, as it was the transferred feast of the Immaculate Conception, we recited the Litany of the Immaculate Conception as our prayer and time spent in Church. The children each lit a candle and got the chance to see the Nativity Scene with the animals waiting for the arrival of the Holy Family.



All parish events, reading suggestions, latest newsletter, most recent edition of the parish magazine and more are available at:

<https://www.stpancraschurch.org.uk/>



Response to music

'Bethlehem Down', words by Bruce Blunt, music by Peter Warlock

By Mim MacMahon



If I were to confide to you, gentle reader, that the piece I am discussing in this issue was written by two irreligious drunks in order to earn money to spend on more booze, you would probably think that you had picked up the wrong magazine. So, before I go any further, I will advise that if you have the technology, you should now listen to it. YouTube, as ever, is your friend. I heard a performance by the vocal group voices, and one by the choir of King's College, Cambridge from Christmas Eve 2022. The two performances differ in their treatment, so choose your favourite, and by all means explore others.

What you will hear is a lullaby-carol of captivating beauty, set for mixed choir, unaccompanied. The text is a lyric poem of four verses, each verse four lines long. Eleven-syllable lines alternate throughout with ten-syllable lines. (Technically, the first line of Verse 2 is a syllable short, but I'm just being picky.) I am quoting the text, but for convenience it has been submitted separately, so you will find it elsewhere in the magazine. Do please read it, it is quite lovely. 'Bethlehem Down' was composed in the year 1927 by Philip Heseltine, who worked as Peter Warlock, to words by his friend Bruce Blunt.

It was written as an entry for a competition in the Daily Telegraph. It won, and the Telegraph published it in full on Christmas Eve of that year. Blunt later described the origin of the piece. In the run-up to Christmas, he said, the two friends decided that they did not have enough money to spend on 'an immortal carouse' (his words) during the festive period. The carol's lyrics 'came' to Blunt, he said, one evening while walking from one village pub to another. He sent the words to Warlock, who composed the setting within days.

In the first verse, Our Lady, described as 'the young girl', speaks of her newborn son as a king endowed with 'king's gifts'. Her words are simple, beautiful and perhaps a little naive. (But how young she was!) The second verse describes the physical setting of 'Bethlehem Down' itself. It doesn't

feel much like the geographical reality of Bethlehem and its environs. Instead, Blunt describes a starry winter night on a 'down' that could be southern England. The words came to him as he walked at night between two Hampshire villages, and that is the setting he has brought into the poem, surrounding the Holy Family with frosty, starry sparkle and 'songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold', perhaps a snatch of something heard in the distance. The third verse goes dark. 'When He is King', it says, 'they will clothe Him in grave-sheets'.

Contained in Bethlehem, as it must always be, is the shadow of Golgotha. By the fourth, though, we have been brought back to the cosy stable, the arms of His mother, the warm bodies of oxen and the distant song of the shepherd. 'A short while for dreaming', before that most significant of all journeys carries on. The musical setting devised by Warlock for this tiny jewel is perfect for it. There is sweetness, but not too much. There is also darkness, and the suggestion of longing for warmth in a cold season, though even the bleak winter Downs are luminous with stars.

the melody and harmonisation to give a feel that somehow manages to be archaic and at the same time very modern. Warlock was an accomplished songwriter who knew exactly what he was about. And here is the thing. Peter Warlock, or Philip Heseltine, was a complete, you might almost say raving, unbeliever. Not only non-Christian, but positively anti-Christian.

Born, unusually, in the Savoy Hotel in 1896, he had both English and Welsh heritage and spent much of his life in Wales. An early enthusiast for Delius, who encouraged him to persevere with his music, he left Eton early and dropped out of both Oxford and London universities. Somehow he managed to escape serving in the 1914 - 1918 war and took jobs as a music critic. Moving to Ireland (to avoid conscription) in 1916, he became fascinated by Celtic languages and culture, and, more worryingly, by the occult, 'the science vulgarly described as Black Magic', as he described it.

By Carlo Dolci, 16th century



And there is a gentle sadness for the Holy Child's peace and comfort, which we know will not last. The Word has become flesh. Temporary, breakable, ultimately mortal flesh. Needing warmth and protection. Doomed to die. The key of D minor and the unusual 6/2 time signature combine with

Already, by all accounts, he was a depressed and unsettled individual. He chose to publish as Peter Warlock rather than under his own name because, under his own name, he had angered an influential music publisher. There is much else to tell, but not enough room here.

Continued on page 9

He wrote, composed, and lived in an artistic commune situated conveniently opposite a pub in Eynsford, Kent. He moved back to Wales, then to London. Increasingly, he became more depressed. In 1930, just three years after his success with 'Bethlehem Down', he was asked to produce a re-arrangement of it for keyboard and solo baritone voice. With some effort I tracked this down, and you can hear it on YouTube as 'Bethlehem Down (Peter Warlock) Voice and Piano'. I have to say, I found the piano part distinctly shivery, but see what you think.



By Lorenzo Lotto, 15th century

The baritone Arnold Dowbiggin, who was to perform it, received the manuscript of the new arrangement on December 17th 1930. On that same day, Warlock's girl friend returned to his flat to find that he had gassed himself. His penultimate act, though, was of consideration for another living creature; before he turned on the gas, he shut his cat out of the room. He was thirty-four years old. And here is the other thing. How did this young man, with so much early promise but whose mind was prey to dark moods and darker forces, and who ultimately destroyed himself in every sense

of that phrase - how did this unhappy man make this beautiful piece of music, deeply loved by Christian believers? Of course, he was setting someone else's words. But from my personal experience of doing this very thing, a composer would really struggle setting a lyric with which they had no empathy at all. I know little of Bruce Blunt; he is described as 'poet, wine merchant and bon viveur', and seems to have had a cheerier outlook on life than poor Warlock. He, at the very least, could be moved by the beauty of a starry winter night to pen a lovely, luminous Christmas lyric. And something, some tiny thing,

stirred the soul and skill of Peter Warlock to answer with the setting he created for Blunt's words. We can only be grateful. Peter Warlock wrote other music, songs and short instrumental pieces, all well worth getting to know. Including, oddly, settings of sacred text. Listen to his much heartier 'Benedicamus Domino' (YouTube again). Or his spirited 'Capriol Suite', a piece for string ensemble based on a collection of 16th century dances, which is a personal favourite of mine. And wonder, somewhat sadly, at the spark of divine creativity that can, in the darkest and most difficult of human lives, still give off its tiny light.



Peter Warlock 1894-1930

Bethlehem Down by Bruce Blunt

*'When He is King we will give him the King's gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes', said the young girl to Joseph,
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.
Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.
When He is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.
Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep Him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.*



By Gerard David, 14th century

Monday book club

By Brian Price



Father Joseph returned to us for this meeting and approved of our decision to opt for the comfy sofas. Charlotte kindly supplied us with teas and coffees and biscuits and so we were nicely set up for a pleasant evening of friendly conversation, with a little bit of religion thrown in for good measure. We managed to set a new record for these meetings because we were still nattering after two hours. The book was 'All Glorious Within' by Bruce Marshall, the story of Fr. Smith, a Scottish priest, from 1908 until 1942. I find it difficult to be objective here because this was one of the best books that I have ever read. In fact, I read it twice, the second time to make notes for the meeting.

I finished up with 14 pages of notes and though I was using only a small format notebook, it still suggests that there was a lot in the book. We all enjoyed the book, which was perhaps why we were happy to keep talking about it. Bruce Marshall, or, to give him his full title, Lieutenant Colonel Claude Cunningham Bruce Marshall, is an interesting person in his own right. He was born in 1899. In 1914, he joined the army as a private and by 1918 he had become a lieutenant. He was taken prisoner just before the end of WWI and had a leg amputated. In peacetime he worked as an auditor. During WWII he became a captain in Intelligence, supporting the French Resistance; he also found time to write 'All Glorious Within', which was published in 1944.

Bruce Marshall became a Catholic in 1917 and that was a courageous act in Scotland, where hostility to Catholics was commonplace. Fr. Smith himself notices 'the blobs of hating faces ... strung along the outer railings' before he is knocked unconscious by a sharp stone thrown at him. Essentially the book is the story of four priests, Fr. Smith himself, the Bishop, Fr. Bonnyboat and Mgr. O'Duffy. They are 'men with old faces and young eyes, butchers, bakers and candlestick makers stilled into priests'. In addition there are a number of other characters. We briefly meet the old sailor to whom Fr.

Smith gives the last rites, though Fr. Smith had been 'long enough a priest to bear a grudge against sinners always choosing to die at awkward moments'; in this case Sunday lunchtime when Fr. Smith had cycled 20 miles to say 2 masses in different parishes. Joseph Scott who is baptised in an early chapter of the book, becomes a priest and finally, at the end of the book, a bishop. Elvira Santo, baptised on the same day as Joseph Scott, who later becomes a Hollywood actress but makes frequent gifts to Fr. Smith's parish and returns to serve in the ATS when WWII breaks out. Also, Angus McNab, whose story is truly tragic though perhaps no more tragic than that of his wife, Annie Rooney.

Fr. Smith is the one who thinks a lot about the Church and its real purpose in a Scotland where Catholics were usually amongst the poorest in society. I suspect his views are very close to those of Bruce Marshall himself. He is, perhaps, a little naive at times and the Bishop describes him as a poet. He is also brave, going into No Man's Land to give men the last rites, though he never achieves his secret desire to win a medal. Fr. Bonnyboat (perfect name for a Scottish priest) was a liturgical scholar who "knew exactly how a Benedictine abbot should sing Pontifical High Mass on a double of the second class in the presence of Cardinal Archbishop of the Ambrosian rite".

Fr. Smith is no a great shakes at liturgy and is not best pleased when he returns from the war to find his parish is now run by Fr. Bonnyboat. Relations between them are frosty at times but eventually Fr. Smith realises that 'Fr. Bonnyboat was as eager as himself about the Lord's cause, only in a different way'. The Bishop is a relatively young man at the start of the book, 'because the Pope liked having young bishops in that part of Scotland, where the parishes were scattered'. His role is to manage his diocese as best he can. When Fr. Smith goes to be an army chaplain, Fr. Bonnyboat had to take over his parish because the parish needed a priest and he cannot be simply shoved aside to

make way for Fr. Smith because he has done a good job. As the Bishop explains, 'My decision has been prompted by considerations of the good of the diocese as a whole'. And so to Mgr. O'Duffy, my favourite character. 'A great clumsy slice of a man who had known all about God's mercy.' He explains what he expects at confession thus, 'cut out the [waffle] because I'm in a hurry to get home for my dinner...and it's no use confessing that you stole a rope if you forget to mention that there was a horse tied to the other end of it'.

His funeral attracts a massive crowd, people of all faiths and professions (including less sa-voury ones), 'weeping and snivelling and snottering in their shawls because they would never again hear the voice of Patrick Ignatius O'Duffy telling them they would burnlike faggots if they didn't come to Mass on Sunday'. Is there a message in this book? Our discussions suggested that there are many but I shall content myself with just one. At the start of the book, Fr. Smith is celebrating Mass in the fruit market. Over the years, a proper church is built and it is finally completed in 1942, only to be destroyed by an incendiary bomb. Shortly afterwards, Fr. Smith dies with these last words, 'Don't forget to let them know there'll be Mass in the fruit market on Sunday'. The Church goes on.

Editor's note: other books by Bruce Marshall:

- Father Malachy's Miracle
- The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith
- A Thread of Scarlet



Bruce Marshall 1899-1987

An interview with Theresa Cleary



Where do you come from, Ipswich or further afield?

I was born in Ipswich and baptised here at St Pancras by Canon Peacock.

Mum and Dad (who met in the choir at St Pancras) were married in 1939 and their banns were read out at the 11am Mass on Sunday 3rd September, the same day that war was declared. Dad would often recount with a smile that when everyone came out of Mass upset about the war, it looked as if they were upset that he and Mum were getting married! I was born the following year in November 1940. Naturally Dad had to play his part in the war effort, so he was away for the first few years of my life. Subsequently my parents had four more children, and I have one sister (now deceased) and three brothers. One of my brothers, Father Pat Cleary, will be known to many at St Pancras.

How long have you been a parishioner of St Pancras and why is it special to you?

From birth, really, up until the time St Mary Magdalen church was built and we started to go there as it was nearer to our house. I came back to St Pancras as an adult in 1988 and I've been here ever since. St Pancras is special to me because our family connections go back so many years.

Tell us a few things about yourself that your fellow parishioners may not know ...

I've never had a passport and never been out of the country! That might seem a regret to some but not to me. While I've always taken an interest in other countries, I've never felt the desire to leave Blighty! I have 6 nieces and nephews and 14 great-nieces and great-nephews!

Tell us about your working life ...

I trained as a teacher at Digby Stuart College in Roehampton and taught in Ipswich schools for 20 years, at St Pancras, St Mark's and Castle Hill. In 1981, I decided I wanted a change, so I put an advert in the Universe newspaper and found a post as housekeeper to Canon Hemming at The Immaculate Conception church in Epping. I was sorry to leave Ipswich but returned in 1988 when he died.

After my return, I worked in the care sector before setting up my own business teaching piano, Maths and English to children, which saw me through to my retirement in 2000. I've also had a few 'jobs' here at St Pancras. In 1990, Father Leeder asked me to play the organ at the 9.30 Sunday Mass, and in 1991, he asked me to teach at the Saturday catechism class which I did until 2016. Then in 2005, he asked me to do the collection counting. I'm pleased to say that I'm still doing 2 out of 3 jobs to this day!

What are your hobbies/interests?

I have a great love of music, inherited from my Dad, who arranged for me to have piano lessons as a child. I went to the Proms every year from 1961 up to and including 2019, so 59 years running. I was hoping to make it 60 but public concerts were cancelled in 2020 due to Covid so I was unable to travel to London that year. I was a member of the Ipswich Bach Choir for 19 years from 1961 to 1980. Recently I've become interested in genealogy and, together with my brother Joe, I've begun tracing our family tree. This has involved trips to St Mary's Cemetery in Kensal Green Cemetery, London checking out deceased Clearys! I love watching EWTN especially The World Over with Raymond Arroyo. I also take a keen interest in the fortunes of Ipswich Town. My brother Pete and his family are season ticket holders, and they travel from Norwich to watch the home matches then come to me for tea afterwards.

Where have you enjoyed going on holiday?

I've been lucky enough to visit my brother, Father Pat, wherever he has lived including Thetford, Lowestoft, St Neot's, Cambridge, and Wymondham. All lovely parts of the country.

What was the last book you read?

The Path to Rome, a selection of people's journeys to the Catholic Faith, compiled by Father Dwight Longenecker.

Who is your favourite Saint and why?

I have two. One is St John Vianney; I became interested in him after reading his biography. My other favourite is St Thérèse of Lisieux; I loved reading about her family and her 'little way' spirituality.

What is your favourite prayer?

I think I'd say it's the Hail Holy Queen. I also love reading and listening to the Easter Sequence, Victimae Paschali Laudes.

What is your proudest achievement?

The fact that, by the grace of God, I've always kept the Faith. (Ed: Bravo Theresa!)

In memory of John Sales

By Theresa Cleary

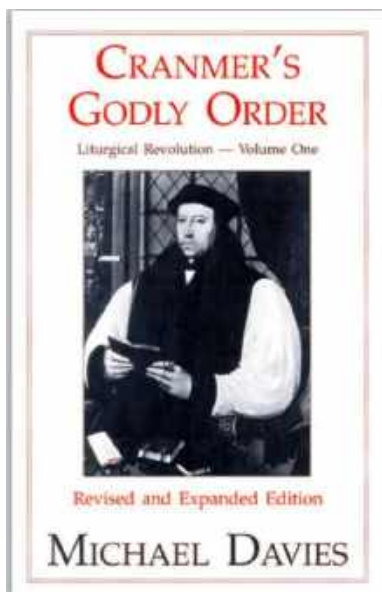
I was very interested to read in the last issue of the magazine the article on John Sales, submitted by his son Joseph. Many of us remember John serving on the altar, particularly at the 11am Mass on Sundays in Father Leeder's time. John also took a turn in watching before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on Saturdays and he was a great help to me as the First Holy Communion catechist: he would come over to St Pancras' sacristy one Saturday morning each year and show children the vestments and vessels used at Holy Mass, a task he was well able to perform given his time working in the sacristy of Westminster cathedral in his younger days.

He gave the children a dummy run of receiving an unconsecrated altar bread on their tongues, so that they would know what to expect and therefore be able to give their full attention to Our Lord within them on their First Holy communion day. John also attended and served when necessary, the Traditional Latin Masses celebrated by Father Leeder at St Pancras and by Father Frost at St Mary Magdalen's. All this showed a generosity of spirit given that John lived in Colchester and did not have a car; it meant a train journey with a walk either end.

Joseph described how he and his father were in Ipswich one day and discovered St Pancras by chance to their joy, given the traditional feel to the church. I had not known this and I contacted Joseph to see if he remembered when it was. Bingo! Joseph kept a diary and found that it was 16th September 2003. This was just fourteen months before I met John for the first time, which is a story of umpteen co-incidences. Let me begin with an author whom you may have heard, Michael Davies.

Back in the late 1960s/early 1970s when things began to turn in the church, Michael was a deputy head of a Catholic primary school and very disturbed by the way religious education in RC schools was going, as was I. He began doing much research and issued pamphlets and books on how the beliefs of the RC church were being watered down, replaced or ignored by modern catechetical material. I cannot remember how

it started but I must have written to him as I too was teaching in Catholic schools and this was the start of many letters back and forward between him and me on this disturbing topic. I joined the Latin Mass Society in the late 1960s and got to meet Michael at the AGMs and Masses in Westminster cathedral and other London churches and meeting venues. I even got to visit him and his dear wife Maria at his home in South East London when Maria was pregnant with their fourth child. As time went on, Michael wrote more and more including the trilogy of 'Cranmen's Godly order', 'Pope John's Council and Pope Paul's New Mass', three major works of several hundred pages, full of well researched facts and yet totally readable; You may intend to read a few pages and without realising it you will have covered thirty of forty.



I pay tribute to Maria who must have been a great support to him with the family and other home tasks, allowing him the freedom to do his research and to write. I am told that many a Catholic disillusioned with the changes kept in the church as a result of reading his books. Michael became president of Una Voce body eventually. This is a body of traditional societies such as our Latin Mass Society and other similar European societies. This position gave him the chance to meet Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, who was then Prefect of



Mr & Mrs Sales at their daughter's wedding

the congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. So, we come to the early 2000s. By Christmas 2003, Michael had contracted an incurable cancer and mentioned the fact on his Christmas cards of which I was a recipient. At the Latin Mass Society AGM and Mass in the summer of 2004, as I came out of Westminster cathedral at the end a voice said, 'hello Theresa.' I looked and there was Michael but by then it was hard to recognise him, so much had the cancer affected him. That was the last time I saw him. He died on 25th September 2004 but I did not get to know until I received a communication from the Latin Mass Society in mid November. There was to be a Traditional Latin Mass for Michael at St. James' church, Spanish Place, London, on Saturday 20th November 2004.

Of course, how could I not go, but I had three commitments to settle and only under a week to get cover. The three were the First Communion class in St. Pancras' hall in the morning, my 3 to 4pm watching time before the Blessed Sacrament and thirdly, the fact that I still had my mother to care for at that time (she died on 12th February 2005). I cannot remember the order in which I solved the problems, all of which depended on people being free at such short notice.



Mr & Mrs Sales, May 2009

Continued on page 13

Eileen Dickinson used to cover for my watching if I could not and thank God she was able to fill in for me on 20th November 2004. My brother Joe was fortunately free and could see to our mother's midday meal. The hardest one was to get a stand-in for the First Holy Communion group. Mrs Ward did cover for me sometimes but it looked like she could not cover for me that Saturday. Friday 19th November came and I rang my Latin Mass friend, Mary Skinner, to say I would not be able to go. Then, at the last minute, Mrs Ward was able to do the class, and I was free to head for London.

As I got to St. James' church, Mary Skinner was outside and said 'I thought you weren't able to come.', so I told her the good news of the late arrangement. So, we attended this most beautiful Mass for the repose of Michael Davies' soul, which included a heartfelt message from Cardinal Ratzinger in praise of Michael. (This was only five months before he became the pope.) Afterwards, there was a gathering in the hall beneath the church. Mary and I managed to get a cup of tea and a place at the table amidst the big crowds of people, many of whom were standing. Mary was the end

of the table and I was next to her, and after a short while someone who knew her came along and they started chatting. I just sat still and vaguely began to notice the people sitting at the table opposite me. Two men were talking and I heard the one on right opposite me say to the other one that he lived in Colchester. So, when there was a lull in the conversation, I chipped in with 'I'm just up the road in Ipswich'. The Colchester man was very interested and said that his wife had gone to the Ipswich convent school and when I asked her name, he said 'Teresa Lazell', and I said I knew her!

She was three years below me but it was not a big school so I knew her and the fact that she came from Felixstowe. So that is how I met John Sales, after a myriad of obstacles which had fallen one by one. I told John how good things were in Ipswich with Father Leeder at St. Pancras and this resulted in his coming over and being part of the parish as described. As his son Joseph said, the seed was sown when they had wandered into St. Pancras in September 2003. I got to meet Teresa again as she sometimes came over with John. Her brother Tony still lives in Fe-

lixstowe. Sadly John's health began to fail and he rang me when I was staying with my brother, Father Pat Cleary, in Wymondham at the end of August 2020 to say he was terminally ill. He died on 13th September 2020 and sadly Teresa died on 20th February 2021, so poor Joseph lost both parents within a few months of each other. May they rest in peace and may God reward them for their labouring in their corner of God's vineyard, an expression beloved of Cardinal Ratzinger /Pope Benedict XVI.



Choosing my patron saint

By Paul Shilling

When choosing my patron saint in preparation for my confirmation last April, there had to be one specific link. Birds. I have a great affiliation and affection for these wonderful creatures. They invoke both wonderment and great joy as I watch them socialising and performing great aerial acts. There were a number of candidates, some relatively unknown. The most recognisable is St Francis of Assisi. He was known to preach to birds in the trees in the 13th century. Another is St Milburga of Wenlock, who had great control over birds.

St Gall of Ireland is the patron saint of turkeys, chickens and other birds. I was, however, drawn to another saint, St Tryphon. Saint Tryphon was born at Campsada in Phrygia (now Turkey), and as a boy took care of geese. His name is derived from the Greek τρυφή (tryphē) meaning 'softness, delicacy'. He acquired fame as a healer, especially of animals, and is considered one of the Holy Unmer-

cenaries, particularly invoked on farms. During the Decian persecution he was taken to Nicaea about the year 250 and was tortured in a horrible manner. He was beheaded with a sword after he had converted the heathen prefect Licinius. Fabulous stories are interwoven with his hagiography. His feast day is on 1 February [O.S. 14 February] in both the Eastern Orthodox Church and (now) in the Roman Catholic Church. He is greatly venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church, in which he is also the patron saint of gardeners and winegrowers.

In Serbia, North Macedonia and Bulgaria, St Tryphon is celebrated by vine growers. The celebrations are a fertility rite intended to encourage the growth of the vines, and it is also thought that human infertility can be cured on this day. Many Greeks continue this celebration and have special customs every year. In Russia, Tryphon is venerated as a patron of birds. In Russian icons of the



saint, he is often shown holding a falcon, a reference to a miracle attributed to his intercession. Prayers attributed to him are used against infestations of rodents and locusts. One such prayer appears in the Great Euchologion. Saint Tryphon is often depicted with a merlin on hand as he was traditionally venerated by Moscow hunters. St Tryphon is venerated in Eastern Europe. He is the protector saint of the town of Kotor in Montenegro and one of the patron saints of Moscow. The Cathedral of Saint Tryphon in Kotor is dedicated to him. There are a plethora of obscure saints that have been forgotten since the birth of Christianity. I am determined that St Tryphon will not be one of them!

Woofs and waggy greetings to everyone!

By Alex Smith and Jessie

Dad says Christmas is coming. I wonder where it's coming from? I look for it every day. But I do know it's the time when Dad gets the unreal tree out and hangs coloured balls on it. Of course, we still go to the park for a morning trot. It's a bit chilly brrrr. But Dad makes sure I wear my coat. Some of my K9 friends have trousers. 'Would you like some, Jessie?' Mmmm, they might look rather fetching but then my legs would get mixed up trying to put them on. At Maison Jessie I am now in complete control. I can even carry off the frying pan. The other day Dad had bacon and egg, yummy! 'Is nothing safe from you Jessie?' said Dad.

Well, don't humans say practice makes perfect? My next target is some-thing called an air fryer. With my genius and super stealth I'm unstoppable. This year we are going to Grandad's. I am very excited. Grandad's house doesn't have stairs, it's called a bungalow'. Better pack Jessie'. That's easy, a blanket, water, my squeaky toy and of course I wear my coat all the time. Dad brings the treats. I wonder if Grandad has a biscuit tin? A few custard creams would

be just pawsome, it is the season of goodwill, isn't it? The first day I read a lot. That means checking all the new and exciting smells. The kitchen is the best. I lift my nose to catch the delicious aromas floating in the air- butter, cheese honey-yummy. Oh dear, Grandad burnt the toast again! Next best place is the garden, I love it when Dad opens the door and then I'm outside. I wander around sniffing every leaf and piece of grass I can reach. Woe to anyone who invades my territory! Luckily all is well but last time we visited a man came to the fence. Hair standing on end I was instantly en garde!

'Don't worry Jessie, it's my neighbour,' said Grandad. Well how was I to know. My first job is to defend the pack at all times. While we are away we shall visit a place called Sheringham. I have been there before. Dad tells me a man called Scira landed there long ago. He sailed across the sea in a wooden ship with a sail. The sea is big and disappears into the sky. I would not like that. Meanwhile, relaxing in my oh so comfy armchair, I think about journeys to different places. Dad has told me that Mary and Joseph had to travel a long



way and their baby was born far from home in a town called Bethlehem. I know that is the Christmas story, I am a literary lurcher after all. So at this holy time, my quiz has to be all about the wonders of Christmas.



Reading suggestion, 'Have no Fear' by John Lennox

By Tilly Rampley

I think the title of this book 'Have No Fear: Being Salt and Light Even When It's Costly', perfectly captures what this book is all about! It's a concise yet powerful reminder of the message within. As Christians, most of us face mounting pressure to remain silent and are told that our beliefs, at best, are outdated, and at worst, harmful. Fear can easily lead us to stay quiet. Yet, the Christian faith was never intended to be a private matter. Jesus calls His followers to share the life-transforming good news with everyone, no matter the cost. While we might feel far from living out this confident and evangelistic calling, John Lennox reassures us that any of us can become an effective witness for the Gospel. He argues that it is possible to stand firm against societal pressures and, in doing so, discover a deeper joy and strength in our Christian walk. I have been following John Lennox's debates and podcasts for many years and have always found his books fascinating. I believe this is one of his shortest works (76 pages), but it's no less impactful for its brevity, and I found it thoroughly enjoyable, and recommended it to a friend who was going through a challenging time while living in a foreign country. Later, she told me



how much the book helped her to cope with her difficult situation, providing encouragement and comfort when she needed it most.

About the author:

John Lennox, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University (emeritus), is an internationally renowned speaker on the interface of science, philosophy and religion. He regularly teaches at many academic institutions, is Senior Fellow with the Trinity Forum and has written a series of books exploring the relationship between science and Christianity. He is President of OCCA The Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics.

(From <https://www.johnlennox.org/about>)

The St. Pancras' Holy Year Posada

By Father Joseph

The Holy Father's chosen theme for the Holy Year is the theological virtue of hope which, he reminds us, is no 'naïve optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life' (Spes non confundit, no. 24). As part of our observance of this Holy Year we place our hope - the anchor of our souls (Heb 6:19) - in Almighty God by consecrating the households of our parish to the Holy Family as our statue of the Holy Family passes around the parish in what is known as a posada (from the Spanish word for inn or lodging, which in turn comes from the Mediæval Latin pausare, to halt, and from which we get our English word, pause).

Each week, a different individual or family will take our statue of the Holy Family from the church to their home, pray the Holy Year Posada Prayer each day the statue is with them, and then return the statue to St Pancras the following weekend ready for another household to play host. Our intention is that, in the course of this Holy Year, the families and households of our parish may grow in holiness and be sanctified, and become

beacons of hope and grace in a world so desperately in need of both. But why choose a statue of the Holy Family for the Holy Year? First, in the three figures of the Holy Family we have a reflection - a mirror image - of the Blessed Trinity Itself. The Holy Family places before our eyes a model of the Three Persons in One God whom we worship and adore day by day in all our prayers, thoughts, words, and deeds. Second, the image of the Holy Family holds before us the sinless beauty of the Immaculate Virgin Mother of our God, the strength and virtue of her Most Chaste Spouse, St Joseph, and the Incarnate Godhead that has become Man for us so that we might be redeemed from sin, and from the consequences of our separation from God, and raised up to a participation in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

And third, the image of the Holy Family shows us a perfect model of what our households and homes should be. Just as the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Joseph held Our Lord at the centre of their lives, so



we, especially in this Holy Year, should keep Our Lord Jesus Christ as the source and goal, the beginning and end - the Alpha and Omega - of all that we think, and do, and say, holding Him at the heart of our Catholic homes. If you would like to play host to the statue, please sign the list at the back of the church. Copies of the prayer will be freely available throughout the year.

Handmade rosaries on the beautiful feast of the Immaculate Conception

By Rosa Patten

Most people, when given five minutes of spare time, will be naturally drawn to a pastime that gives them a sense of enjoyment, such as reading, sewing, baking cakes, knitting, painting and so forth. For me, when I have a spare moment, I tend towards making things. I find it satisfying when from a skein of yarn, a jumper is made, or from a round of beads and cord, a rosary is created. I seem to be forever amazed how one thing can be worked to create something else. I am quite a practically inclined person, and I tend to show my care, kindness and love through practical demonstrations and thus it makes sense to me that when I make things, I like them to serve a purpose- a cardigan for a baby to wear; a cowl for a friend; a knitted hat for Maria Giuseppina to wear when she was born; a rosary to meditate on and pray with and so on. When it comes to making rosaries, what I enjoy the most is that from

some beads and cord, I can create something which will be used for a good purpose- it will inspire me up to God in prayers; it will lead me into humble submission to God with my petitions; and it will encourage me to meditate on the life of Jesus. There are different ways to make a rosary: with cord; using wire chain; or eye pins. I prefer using cord and I like using wooden beads. There is a lovely naturalness with using wooden beads. I have created several rosaries now and I have set up an Etsy shop called Mantilla Rose, where among other things I make, I can sell the rosaries, and have a place to direct my creative pastime. On seeing some rosaries, Father Joseph kindly allowed me to have a table at the back of the Church on a Sunday during Advent. Providentially, it happened that the Sunday which was picked was the 8th December the beautiful feast of the Immaculate



Conception! I was amazed that all but one rosary was bought. I was left truly grateful to those who bought one and the lovely feedback I received. As someone who likes to make things, it is lovely to hear comments but when it comes to the rosaries I make, the main thing is that it gives me joy in the thought that the very rosaries I made, with my God given hands, will be used by someone to pray, meditate and to be inspired towards God, Himself.

A tribute to Jan Patrick (30/07/1937-20/09/2024)

By Theresa Cleary



Christmas 2003, St. Pancras parish hall

As we launched the previous edition of the parish magazine, news came of the death of Jan Patrick. Jan was such a faithful member of our parish family at St. Pancras, and she will be greatly missed. A convert to the Catholic church, she took her faith seriously, quietly attending Mass and the sacraments and other devotions, but it did not stop there. Jan had taught at a special education school and she put her wonderful gifts with children at the service of the parish by being one of the teachers at the Saturday classes for children at non-Catholic schools which were held in the hall for many years, in Jan's case close on thirty years, for which she was awarded the Diocesan medal.

The classes usually consisted of four groups, according to age, including the First Confession and First Holy Communion group, and Jan was the co-ordinator, ordering the worksheets for the children, organising the many processions and crowning of Our Lady's statue, introducing the Advent wreath followed by the service of carols and readings at the end of the term, seeing to notices for parents, besides teaching her own group. Special mention must be made of the Christmas party for the children. Any primary aged children who came to St. Pancras were welcome, not just the Saturday ones. The children and teachers would attend the Saturday morning Mass, then repair to the hall for some fantastic party games.

There could be fifty or sixty excited children but Jan was a genius at leading good old fashioned games such as musical chairs, statues, and a run-around game when your character in a story was mentioned, all bringing enjoyment to the children while being perfectly handled. The party would finish with the food and then each child would go home with a wrapped Christmas present which Jan would have bought and wrapped beforehand. On the day of the First Holy Communion, Jan would have prepared the older children who would be reading at the Mass and she would sit with them, helping to steward the children on that side of the church.

Jan herself was an excellent reader at Mass, with a good clear measured delivery. She was one of the brass polishers (in fact she was still on the rota at the time of her death), and at special times, e.g. Easter, she would give the sacristy lamp an exquisite shine. For some years she did the secretarial side of the National Association of Catholic Families and she loyally provided the Thursday soup lunches in the hall on the second Thursday of the month for many years for the Ipswich Life Group, also contributing to their other fund raising efforts. When Jan's 80th birthday was approaching in 2017, her husband David organised a surprise party for her at Kesgrave community centre on a Sunday afternoon.

Besides all her church friends and extended family, there were people from her wide range of interests. Jan loved singing and dancing and had been in the Co.op Juniors. Keeping it a secret was a massive effort with so many people involved but it nearly came off until the morning of the party when we were in St. Pancras' hall for coffee: Father Leeder said to Jan 'I'm sorry I can't come to your party this afternoon', Luckily it was not too much of a spoilt surprise as Jan's face showed when David ushered her in to a packed Kesgrave community hall! Perhaps we can look more closely at Jan's character. All this work she did for the church was carried out with the utmost sense of service and no hint of bragging.

I can honestly say that, as I was a Saturday teacher for twenty five years and in Ipswich Life group, so I saw Jan at close quarters. She would always show concern for others and help with visits, lifts or in other ways. She and David had run a B&B for a while and her clients were glad to come back time and again and were sad when she gave up. She and David had Jan's mother living with them in a 'granny flat' for a while and in recent years Jan had cared devotedly for David after he suffered two strokes. I'd like to finish with the Saturday teachers. With Jan a close bond existed amongst us. We would celebrate each one's significant birthday with a meal or coffee, and so it was rather lovely that on Thursday 12th September 2024 all four of us happened to be at the 12.15 Mass. Although we did not know it, that was the last time Jan was at Mass. She was already not well and went home to rest. The following Tuesday she was admitted to the Critical Care Unit suffering from pneumonia and died on Friday evening 20th September. How fitting that Father Joseph should be there to give Jan the Last rites of Holy Mother church before she left this world. May dear Jan rest in peace and enjoy the reward of a life so well lived.



18th May 1997

Top left: Theresa Cleary, Father Leeder, Doreen Batley and Jan Patrick

Alex and Jessie's

QUIZ!



1. What gifts did the three kings give to Jesus?

2. Can you name Hans Anderson's (Christmas) fairy tale?

3. Now 4 questions on The Christmas Carol. Who wrote the book?

4. What is Scrooge's first name?



5. Which character says: 'God bless us everyone'

6. How many ghosts visit Scrooge in total?



7. Which country donates the Christmas tree seen in Trafalgar Square?

8. Who wrote the poem turned carol 'In the bleak Midwinter' ?

9. Where is the oldest Christmas market in the world?

10. What does holly represent?



11. When do the 12 days of Christmas start?

12. How many reindeer does Fr.Christmas have?

13. Can you name them?



14. Which king gave alms to a poor man on the 'Feast of Stephen'?

15. What is the origin of the word Christmas?

16. What does the word advent mean?

17. Who wrote the words for the carol Silent Night?

18. But do you know the story behind the carol?

19. Which country is the official home of Fr.Christmas?



20. Who was the real St.Nicholas?

21. In which country did the tradition of celebrating Christmas begin?

22. Who wrote the poem 'The Journey of the Magi'?

23. What were the names of the three kings?

24. Who composed the music for the Nutcracker ballet?

25. Can you complete the second line of this well known poem?

Not a creature was stirring 'not even a mouse'.



Answers on page 25



Our parish magazine goes from strength to strength with each quarterly edition enjoying articles from new contributors. Poems, essays, recollections, recipes, gardening tips, quizzes, and articles on historical, religious, and travel topics galore fill the pages every time.

At St Pancras we are determined to keep the magazine free at the point of delivery but to do this we must start to cover our costs. So we would like to ask you to consider becoming a **PARISH MAGAZINE SPONSOR** by taking out an annual subscription of just £20 by Standing Order (or £25 if you would like us to post the magazine to you). This way, you can be sure you get your copy, which will be reserved for you, and, at the same time, your generosity will help to ensure the continued success of this popular read. In addition, Sponsors will be included in the monthly Mass for Benefactors of the Parish.

To become a Sponsor simply make out a Standing Order to the parish using the bank details below, then complete the form at the bottom of this page and return it to Fr Joseph. (You can, of course, cancel your standing order at any time, but please let us know.) Thank you for your time and generosity.

Bank: Barclays Bank **Account name:** St Pancras Catholic Church
Account number: 00775843 **Sort code:** 20-44-51



Yes, I should like to become a **PARISH MAGAZINE SPONSOR** and have my copy reserved for me each quarter, and to be included in the monthly Mass for Benefactors of the Parish. (Please tick the relevant box.)

- Please reserve my copy for me. £20 per annum.
- Please post my copy to me. £25 per annum.

Name: (please print)

Signature:

Address: (print clearly)

.....
.....

Tel. number:

E-mail:



Gardening News

By Peggy Ayers



I am always planning ahead with regard to what I am going to grow at home and on the allotment. I had almost given up on the over-wintering broad beans and was thrilled when I spotted them coming through in early December. In January I will make a start with tomatoes - this year the outside ones started off better than the ones in the greenhouse but luckily they caught up. I still have a shoe box full of tomatoes which I put in there when they were green but have now turned red. Earlier I made green tomatoes chutney but am giving it time to mature. I haven't made it for a very long time but remember eating it on bread and butter instead of jam because it was so nice.

Herbs

I am considering which herbs to grow. I already have sage and rosemary towards the back of a flowerbed as they bush up and can be rather large if not kept under control. Towards the front I have chives which look like mini alliums. I find these useful in so many ways, such as ordinary salads, potato salads, omelettes even egg sandwiches. I chop the chives into short pieces, also use their purple flowers. Another permanent herb is marjoram or oregano - again at the front of a bed leaving enough room for it to spread. It makes really good ground cover and the bees absolutely love the flowers. Again a versatile herb which is good for

pasta dishes, pizzas etc. Thyme seems to like my garden and I find small plants in unexpected places. I love mint with new potatoes but make sure that it is grown in a pot rather than the ground as it can spread a lot. Years ago I grew apple mint but haven't been able to find it recently. I will keep on looking though! I didn't do very well with parsley this year but the seed I planted looks as though it could produce a bumper harvest in 2025 and hopefully seed itself ready for next year. I will also try to collect some of the seed. I like to toss new potatoes in butter and parsley. Also love parsley in sauces and omelettes.

My daughter in law makes very good pesto using parsley instead of basil. A packet of basil seed will go a long way if sown at different times during the season. Something I have not grown for a while is coriander, and I will definitely be doing that this year. I love the flavour and the smell of it. Great in carrot and coriander soup or in a salad. Easy to save seeds too, lemon balm, part of the mint family and my favourite herb for making a refreshing tea. Just put a few leaves in a mug or teapot if you want more and cover with boiling water leave to stand for a few minutes and stir. The leaves can be dried and used throughout the year. Mint can also be used in the same way.

Nettles are also supposed to make a good tea but I have never tried it. Many herbs can be harvested and dried for use through the winter when fresh herbs are not available. Simply tie them up with string and hang to dry away from damp. When dry store in jam jars. There are some happy blackbirds in the garden at the moment as I have a few apples left which now need eating so am gradually cutting them up and putting them out for the birds. Talking of herbs and apples reminded me of the time I put ground coriander in an apple pie instead of cinnamon. It tasted surprisingly good.



Nutella and cognac coffee cocktail

Selected by Tilly Rampley

Ingredients:

- 80g croissant, chopped
- 240ml cognac
- 50g Nutella
- 25g demerara sugar
- 200ml hot coffee
- 200g double cream to serve
- Toasted coconut flakes to serve

Method:

Blend croissant and cognac until smooth, freeze for 2 hours, then strain through a fine sieve or coffee filter. Warm Nutella, sugar, and 25ml water until dissolved, then cool. For the cocktail, combine 50ml croissant cognac, 25ml Nutella syrup, and 50ml hot coffee. Float double cream on top and garnish with toasted coconut flakes.



Angels at Mass

By Anne Abbott

When we go to Mass, it is not just us, the servers and the priest who are present, but there is also an invisible world, which includes our own guardian angels and the many angels who adore God present in the Tabernacle. Christian Tradition has always said that innumerable angels assist at Mass. St Mechtilde (in English, Matilda), who lived in Thuringia in the 13th century as a Benedictine nun, said in her Revelations, 'The Book of Special Grace', that three thousand angels from the Choir of Thrones devoutly attend every Tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. This is in an 'empty' church, where you might think no one is present! We must not chatter or make too much noise in church where the angels constantly adore. And as regards the Holy Mass and when it is being celebrated, St Bridget of Sweden (1303-1373) said, 'One day when I was assisting at the Holy Sacrifice, I saw an immense number of Holy Angels descend and gather around the altar, contemplating the priest. They sang heavenly canticles that ravished my heart.'

Heaven itself seemed to be contemplating the Great Sacrifice. And yet we poor mortals, blind and miserable creatures, assist at Mass with so little love, relish and respect! Yes, at Mass we are praying with thousands of God's adoring angels! We must give it all the attention it deserves. St Catherine of Siena said that once while praying in the church, she turned her head out of curiosity and her Guardian Angel gave her such a severe look for her disrespect in the presence of the Most Holy that she was shocked and did penance for several days. We too should try to keep our minds on God and not pay attention to any noisy distractions around us! At Calvary, there was a lot of noise, shouting and distractions of every kind, yet Our Lady and St John kept their eyes on Jesus dying on the Cross. The Mass is but a re-enactment of the sacrifice of Calvary to which we are invited and are sprinkled with the Precious Blood of Jesus which is like a most magnificent and beautiful robe for our souls. The angels are full of awe and reverence, yet the Holy sacrifice was instituted for us poor humans and not for the angels who have no need of redemption.



By Luca Giordano, 16th century

They adore the Holy Eucharist and bow down even before us, too, when we have received the precious Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ present in Holy Communion. One could almost say that the angels 'envy' us because we have the great privilege of being able to receive God Himself in Holy Communion. They help us to adore and receive Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament with as much love and reverence as possible. St Thomas calls it the 'Bread of Angels' because of their adoration and reverence, but only we who are material beings can receive it in a material way. If only we had such love, adoration and reverence as the angels have! Since they are so ready to help us, let us pray to the Holy Angels for help when we receive Holy Communion. The angels also have great respect for the priests who become 'other Christs' and say the words of consecration at the Mass. Bishop St Francis de Sales (1567-1622) had ordained a young man as priest and asked him why he hesitated to go through a door.

The newly ordained said that he often saw his guardian angel go before him on his right side, but now the angel would not longer go before him but follow him on his left side, since he had received the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Next time we are in church, let us think of St Mechtilde's 'three thousand angels' and St Bridget's 'immense number of angels' and let us be filled with awe and reverence in the presence of Our Lord who is there for us. Let us think too, that even one Mass heard with devotion will shorten our time in Purgatory and lead us more quickly to Heaven.

Standing orders:

Please consider making your donations as a standing order instead of in cash, to:

St Pancras Catholic Church, Barclays Bank

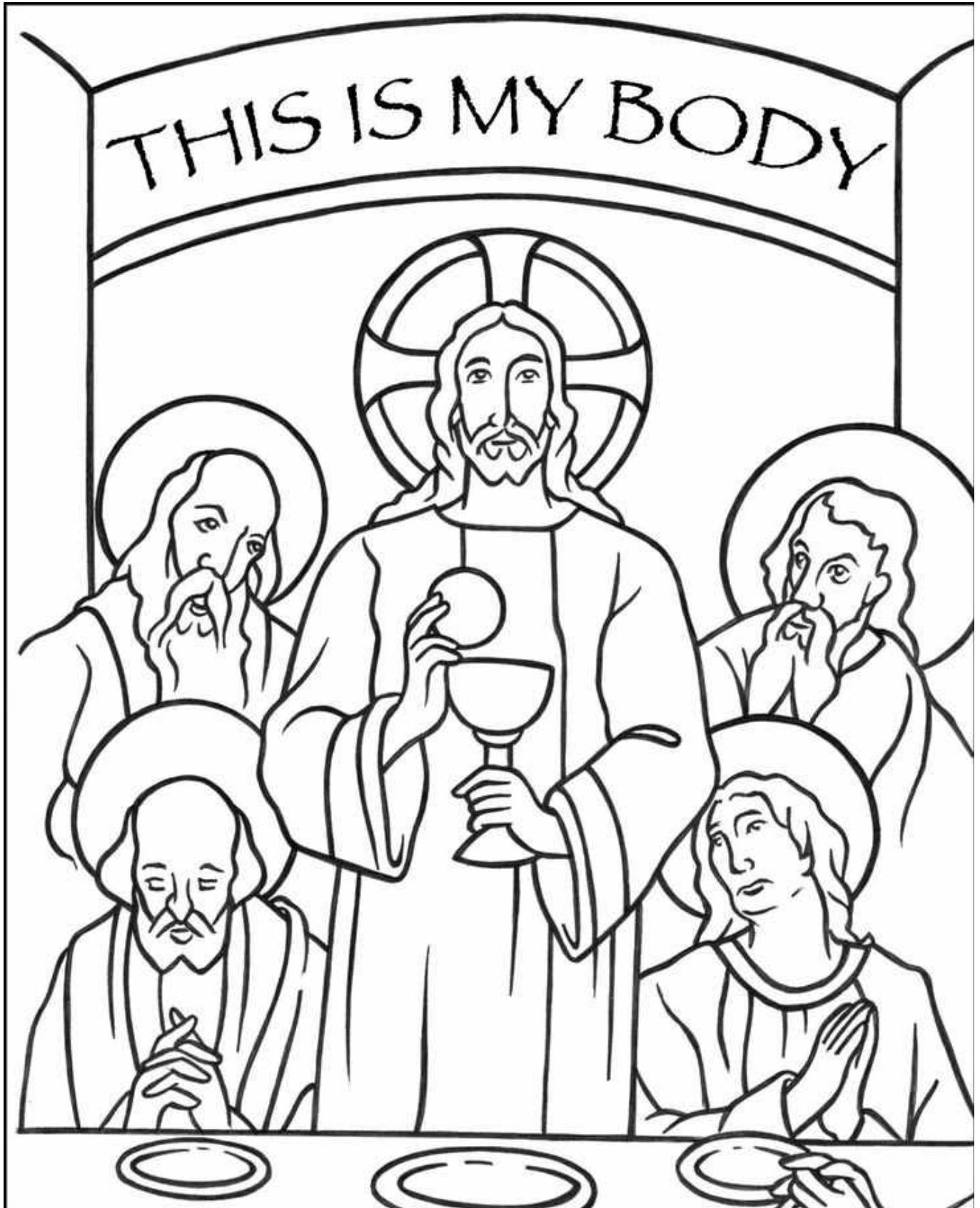
Account number: 00775843

Sort code: 20-44-51



Children's corner

Colour in the picture below





VOTIVE CANDLE WRAP

Color the wrap below. Cut along the dotted line. Place glue on the overlap area and wrap your candle.

Saint Francis of Assisi

Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument
of Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me
sow love; Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are
born to Eternal Life.

- Amen.



© www.TheCatholicKid.com

*** Overlap Area - Glue Stick Over Shaded Area ***

Apostles/Disciples word



Word List:



- Andrew
- James
- Judas
- Philip
- Thomas
- Peter
- Simon
- Thaddaeus
- John
- Batholomew
- Matthew



A tale for Christmas

By Brian Price

For some reason, Christmas has become synonymous with ghost stories, and I felt this was the appropriate season for my little tale. I hope that it will not prove too predictable for you, dear readers. Surely, M.R. James has introduced us to every possible scenario concerning 'ghosts and ghoulies and things that go bump in the night', so I cannot guarantee something new! You may have a sense that you have read it all before, and feel tempted to turn the page to find a more interesting article. For myself, I could not turn a page because I was actually living the nightmare and the fact that similar nightmares had been experienced, or at least imagined before, did not make it any less terrifying.

If you skip my tale because you do not wish to be troubled by the idea that there are unexplained and terrifying mysteries in our world, I should not blame you. However, do not dismiss my words as some feeble attempt to frighten you as a form of amusement. It was real, and it happened to me. Tom, Dick, Harry and I had been friends since our early 20s, accountants having things in common that the rest of humanity finds totally incomprehensible. One year someone (I no longer remember who), suggested a short 'boys only' break just before the festive season and we just decided to get together every year after that; I suspect our long-suffering families were glad to be rid of us for a few days because no one ever objected.

The hotel was my choice, as you may have gathered, I am rather a fan of the ghostliness and a hotel with its own alleged ghost seemed too good an opportunity to pass up. On our first visit, our host told us the grisly story of the young bride murdered by a jealous husband and then walled up in a cellar so that the crime would go undetected. Renovations years later led to the discovery of the skeletal remains. Despite a proper burial, the poor woman's spirit was restless and she had haunted the hotel ever since. A nice story but totally predictable. Of course, there was never any sign of an actual ghost whenever we stayed at the hotel. There were

creakings, because the hotel was an old building and the brisk Yorkshire wind provided its fair share of howling. One year, there was a power failure and a couple of hours of candlelight yielded an incredible number of sightings of a ghostly figure. However, we never did see a ghost until...well let me continue with my tale. The atmosphere was different that year, however, something had changed and not in a good way. 'Why do we keep coming to this godforsaken place?' grumbled Tom. 'For a break. I like getting away.' 'OK, but why here?' 'To meet the phantom lady, of course.' Tom laughed. 'I've never let any other woman stand me up as often as she has'.

'It is a nice hotel though', Dick chimed in. 'I agree', said Harry. 'I like the improvements they've made. Reception is definitely lighter, less gloomy. It used to have a definite feel of 'Abandon hope all ye who enter here'. 'Not sure about that massive digital clock thing though. It's not even showing the correct time'. 'What do you mean?' I asked. 'Well', replied Tom. 'It shows the time and the date. What year is it?' '2024, of course', I said. 'Leap Year and all that nonsense'. 'So why does the clock say 2025?' 'Hmm,' muttered Dick, who had been looking out of the window. 'What was your journey up here like?' 'Awful' replied Tom. 'Snow all the way. Wasn't sure I'd even make it in one piece'. 'So, where's the snow now? I can't see any on the ground'.

'Sudden thaw I suppose'. 'But it's frosty out there. It's just that there's no snow. Snow can't melt in a couple of hours on a frosty day'. 'OK, I admit that's odd. Anyway, let's get some drinks in. Harry, it's your shout. And tell them about that stupid clock while you're about it'. Harry strode off to the bar but he returned a couple of minutes later but without any drinks. 'Well that was damned rude, I must say', he said.



'Well didn't you say something?' 'Of course, I did. Didn't seem to hear me either'. 'Well I certainly heard you', said Dick. 'You were practically shouting'. 'I was shouting. But she ignored me as did everyone else in the bar'. We stared at each other for a few moments. No one wanted to be the first to speak, to give voice to the most awful thought. Perhaps the clock was not wrong. Perhaps it was 2025, which meant we had lost a year of our lives. The weather had changed in a way that was impossible in a couple of hours but perfectly possible in a year. We were invisible to all the people in the hotel; we proved that by trying to speak to them and we were always ignored. Something had happened the previous year and that something, whatever it had been, had changed us forever. At this point, dear reader, you will have worked out what we had become; ironic really, given my personal enthusiasm for ghost stories.

Now I have to make a small confession. I have written this tale in the past tense, which suggests that this terrible thing happened but is now over. The truth is that it is not over, that it will never be over. For Tom, Dick, Harry and myself this is our present and our future.

A call to returning Catholics

By Father Joseph



One of the great sadnesses in many families and parishes is the falling away from the practice of the Faith of our loved ones and friends. In 2024 we offered a Rosary Crusade to Our Lady of Ipswich of 3,500 rosaries for the return to the Faith of those who no longer practised, including those whom we know personally. Now we need to apply those prayers and make practical attempts to encourage people to return to the practice of the Faith. First, continue to pray for those who no longer practice their Faith. Prayer is always the first resort in any undertaking, not the last! Second, do not be shy, embarrassed, or ashamed of living the Catholic life of virtue to the full, not imposing it upon others but showing them – in the way that you live – the beauty and the goodness of what Christ has given to you.

Third, ‘sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts, being ready always to satisfy every one that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you’ (1 Peter 3:15). In other words, learn more about the Catholic Faith and be ready to answer other people’s questions about it. Fourth, and this is the hardest bit, be prepared to raise the awkward question! Ask them why they do not practise, or, better still, just invite them to come along and see. Invite them to join you at Mass one Sunday or weekday, or to come along to any of the many other services and devotions that we have at St Pancras (or elsewhere) throughout the year. Or invite them to come along to any talks or

spiritual exercises or retreats, either here at St Pancras or elsewhere. Of particular interest may be occasional events or special services, such as a parish retreat or recollection, a catechetical talk, or any Mass during the year where something out of the ordinary is offered, such as at Candlemas, or on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, or at the May or Corpus Christi processions, or on any of the special feasts of Our Lady or the saints, or any of the several extra blessings given at St Pancras at the end of Mass on various occasions throughout the year (such as the Blessing of Throats on the feast of St Blaise on 3rd February, the blessing of St Anthony’s Bread on 13th June, the blessing of Oranges on the feast of St Nicholas on 6th December, and so on).

Or invite them to join you in any of the charitable works that you already do, for example if you help with a night shelter, or soup run, or serving in a charity shop, or other venture of some kind. Remind them that coming along once does not commit them to a life-long attendance, and that they may choose to engage as much or as little as they wish. In addition, a special leaflet will be available during the Holy Year to encourage people to think once more about the practice of the Faith which may be handed out or left with your family members or friends. Prayer is the most important thing and is the first resort, but we must be practical too.

If you are a returning Catholic or thinking about returning...

If you have not been to church for a while, perhaps the Holy Year of 2025 might be a good time to pop in again? During this Holy Year we are all called to listen to Christ knocking at the door of our hearts, and the extra graces and blessings being poured down upon the Church and the world this year might be just what we need to help us open that door and let Him in once more. Why not just pop into church and light a candle or say a prayer, or just sit and be quiet? Or come along to a Sunday or weekday Mass? At St Pancras, there are many things going on each week throughout the year.

Why not take a newsletter from the back of the church to see what’s going on? Or even consider coming along to the Sacrament of Confession? If you have not been for a while, priests are usually quite good at helping people who are hesitant for whatever reason. You will find here only God’s tender and merciful love.

Answers to Alex and Jessie’s quiz:

- 1) Gold, frankincense, myrrh.
- 2) The Snow Queen.
- 3) Charles Dickens.
- 4) Ebenezer.
- 5) Tiny Tim.
- 6) 4 including Jacob Marley.
- 7) Norway.
- 8) Christina Rossetti.
- 9) Dresden, Germany, the Striezel Markt.
- 10) Jesus Christ’s crown of thorns.
- 11) 25th December.
- 12) 9
- 13) Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and Rudolph.
- 14) Good king Wenceslaus.
- 15) The word comes from the phrase Cristes maesse meaning Christ’s Mass.
- 16) It implies a time of watchfulness and waiting, from the latin advenio to arrive.
- 17) Fr Joseph Mohr, an Austrian priest.
- 18) The organ in the church was broken so Fr Joseph wrote the lyrics and gave them to the organist Franz Gruber to compose a simple melody for guitar accompaniment.
- 19) Lapland in North Finland.
- 20) A 4th century Christian bishop of Myra in the Roman empire noted for his works of charity.
- 21) Rome, Italy, around 336AD, but it did not become a major Christian festival until the 9th century.
- 22) T.S. Eliot
- 23) Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar
- 24) Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- 25) ‘T’was the night before Christmas, when all through the house.

Sacraments and Sacramentals

By Father Joseph



Saint John The Evangelist, by Alonso Cano, 16th century

In the last quarter of 2024 several traditional sacramental blessings have been revived at St Pancras, each with its own prayer to God and each with its own blessing bestowed upon His people. These blessings are known as sacramentals. The Seven Sacraments confer sanctifying grace immediately, and simply by virtue of the action of the priest who confers them. We say that grace is bestowed in the Seven Sacraments *ex opere operato* ('from the work worked'). In other words, the conferring of God's grace depends solely on the Sacraments being administered according to the form and matter prescribed by the Catholic Church (that is, according to the rituals, words, and gestures laid down by the Church) and so long as they are administered by a validly ordained Catholic priest.

The priest himself may be a rogue or the greatest sinner around, but God does not withhold His grace just because His minister is not a saint. After all, if that were the case how many of us would ever have received God's grace in the Sacraments! A sacramental is similar to a sacrament in some ways but is different in some important respects. First, a sacramental is a particular prayer or blessing recognised and approved by the Church. (Priests cannot go around making up their own!) Second, a sacramental does not confer grace *ex opere operato*. In other words, grace is not given just because certain words are said or certain gestures performed. Instead, the particular object is blessed and sanctified so that the use of that object by someone with a rightly disposed heart confers God's blessing.

For example, a scapular may be blessed and sanctified but it is only as the wearer wears the scapular with a properly disposed heart and with the right intention, and as he or she undertakes any devotions or actions associated with the scapular, that God's blessing is actually poured down upon the wearer of the scapular. In each case, a sacramental bestows a specific blessing according to the prayer that was used at the time that the object (statue or scapular and so forth) was blessed. If the prayer of blessing

prayed for protection, then God's protection is given; if the prayer of blessing prayed for health of the throat and for protection of diseases to the throat (as with the Blessing of Throats on the feast of St Blaise on 3rd February) then that is the specific blessing given by God through that object (in the case of the blessing of throats, through the touch of the wax candles that have been blessed). In this way, God's blessings are a little bit like water: the same water may be used for drinking, washing, or swimming in. It's the same water, but it accomplishes different ends depending on the use it is put to. So with God's sanctifying grace in the Seven Sacraments and with His blessings poured out through the use of sacramentals.

At St Pancras we have revived the practice of several different sacramentals recently. On the feast of the Most Holy Rosary, on 7th October, we blessed roses and prayed that the roses themselves may 'receive so powerful a blessing that in those houses and hospitals to which they are taken the sick may be healed, and that from those places where they are kept the powers of evil may flee in fear and terror, nor may they presume again to disturb Thy servants.' On 31st October, just before the feast of All Hallows (All Saints) and the Commemoration of the Holy Souls (1st and 2nd November) we blessed soul cakes.

The present-day custom of trick-or-treating on Hallowe'en is a modern day corruption of an ancient, mediæval practice of children going around the houses of the village and promising to pray for the souls of anyone who had died from that household, and in return they were given a soul cake. There are many recipes for soul cakes on the internet these days: they are a form of short-bread biscuit. When we blessed these at the end of October we prayed that 'we who partake of their goodness may be moved by the blessing You impart to them to call to mind and pray for the souls of the faithful departed in whose memory these confections have been baked.' Every time we ate a soul cake, we were called upon to pray for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.



Advent blessing

'A sacramental is similar to a sacrament in some ways but is different in some important respects. First, a sacramental is a particular prayer or blessing recognised and approved by the Church.'

On the feast of St Nicholas on 6 th December we blessed oranges. An odd thing to bless, you might think, but the oranges have become symbols of the little gold coins (or, in some versions of the story small bags of gold coins), left by St Nicholas in the shoes (or in some versions, down the chimneys) of three impoverished girls whose father did not have enough funds to raise dowries for them all, and who would almost certainly have ended up living lives of sin and shame instead.

On this occasion, we prayed ‘that we who partake of their goodness may be moved by the blessing You impart to them to call to mind the needs of those less fortunate than ourselves and be so stirred in thought as to act in deed on their behalf.’ Just a week later, on the feast of St Lucy on 13 th December, we had the Blessing of Eyes and Prayers for Healthy Eyesight, similar to the blessing of throats on the feast of St Blaise. St Lucy suffered her eyes to be put out as part of the torture that preceded her martyrdom. As a result, she is often depicted as carrying a silver platter bearing two eyes. Whereas we laid roses on a white cloth at the front of the church during Mass on 7 th October, and placed oranges in a basket on 6 th December, we did not ask people to place their eyes on a silver platter at the front of the church on this day!

However, following the prayer, everyone at Mass was sprinkled with holy water as part of the blessing, during which we prayed that ‘we may be preserved from all harm to our bodily sight, and restored to an ever great light of faith in the depth of our souls, that we may walk through this land of shadows under Thy protecting hand and come, at the last, to the light of Thy eternal glory in heaven.’ And finally, two days after Christmas, on the feast of St John the Apostle and Evangelist, on 27 th December, we had the blessing of wine. St John is said to have survived an attempt on his life when someone poisoned his cup of wine which he drank without ill effect.

This, in turn, is thought to be a reference to Christ’s prophecy that he and his brother, St James, would indeed drink the chalice that He, the Saviour, was destined to drink (Mt 20:23). Whereas this is a clear reference to Christ’s Passion, and whereas St James was indeed martyred, St John was not put to death.



Blessing of the soul cakes
31st October 2024

However, the attempt on his life by poisoning, and his exile to the Greek island of Patmos (where he received the visions that make up the Book of the Apocalypse) are deemed to have been St John’s passion. On this day, then, bottles of wine brought by members of the congregation were blessed, and we prayed that ‘as the blessed John drank the poisoned potion with no ill effects, so may all who today drink this blessed wine in his honour be delivered from poisoning and be kept free from all harm to mind and body, and as they offer themselves to you, body and soul, may they obtain pardon of all their sins.’

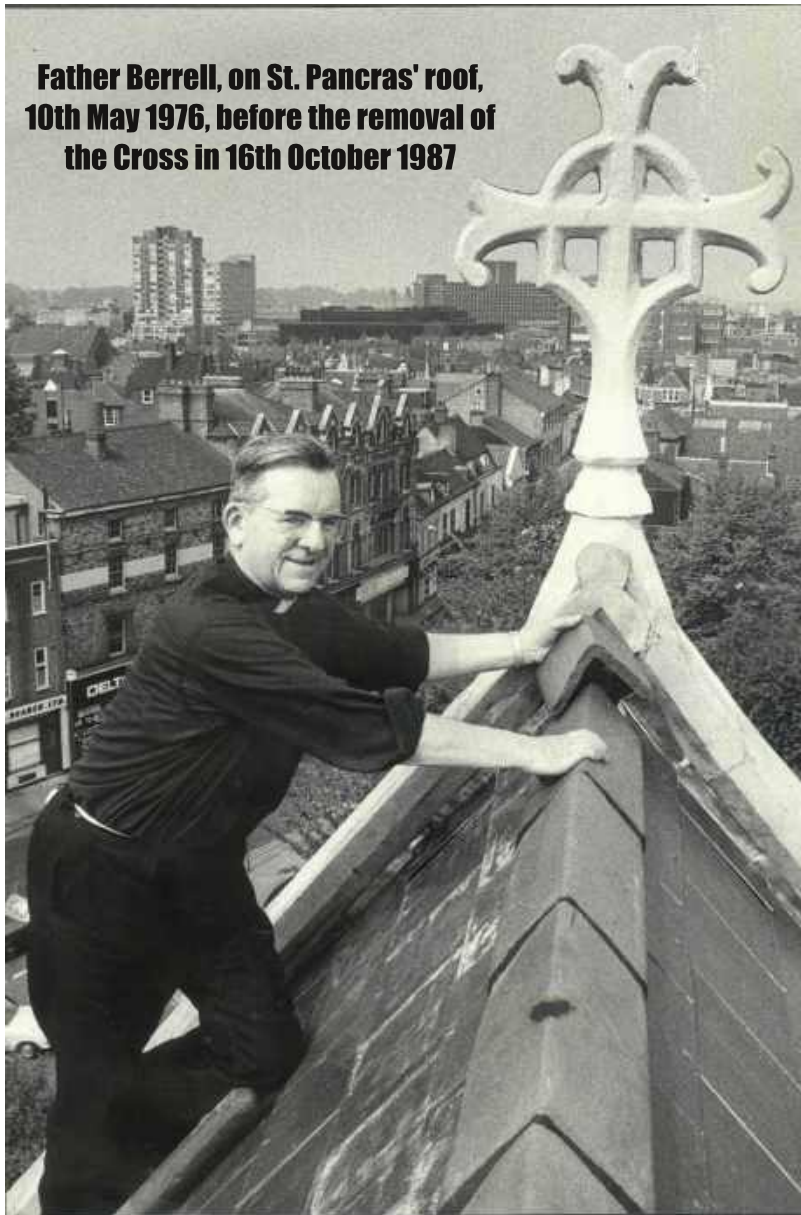
The prayer of blessing added the supplication that this blessed wine ‘may be a health-giving medicine to all who use it; and grant by Your grace that all who taste of it may enjoy bodily and spiritual health in calling on your holy name.’ Most of us probably do not live in fear of being poisoned, but the reference is also to the poison of sin!

‘The conferring of God’s grace depends solely on the Sacraments being administered according to the form and matter prescribed by the Catholic Church.’



Blessing of roses, St Pancras, 7th October 2024

From the archive



St. Pancras Catholic Church, Ipswich
Development Fund N^o 1442
Registered under the Lotteries & Gaming Act, 1963

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW

25 ATTRACTIVE PRIZES INCLUDING

1 Case (12 Bottles) of Claret 1 Bottle of Whisky
1 Turkey, Sherry, Port, Tin of Toffees, Chocolates, Chicken

To be drawn on Saturday, 10th December 1977, at 4 p.m.
in the Church Hall

Promoter: Rev. A. G. BERRELL, 1 Orwell Place, Ipswich Tickets 10p

Anglia Printing Works, Foundation Street, Ipswich