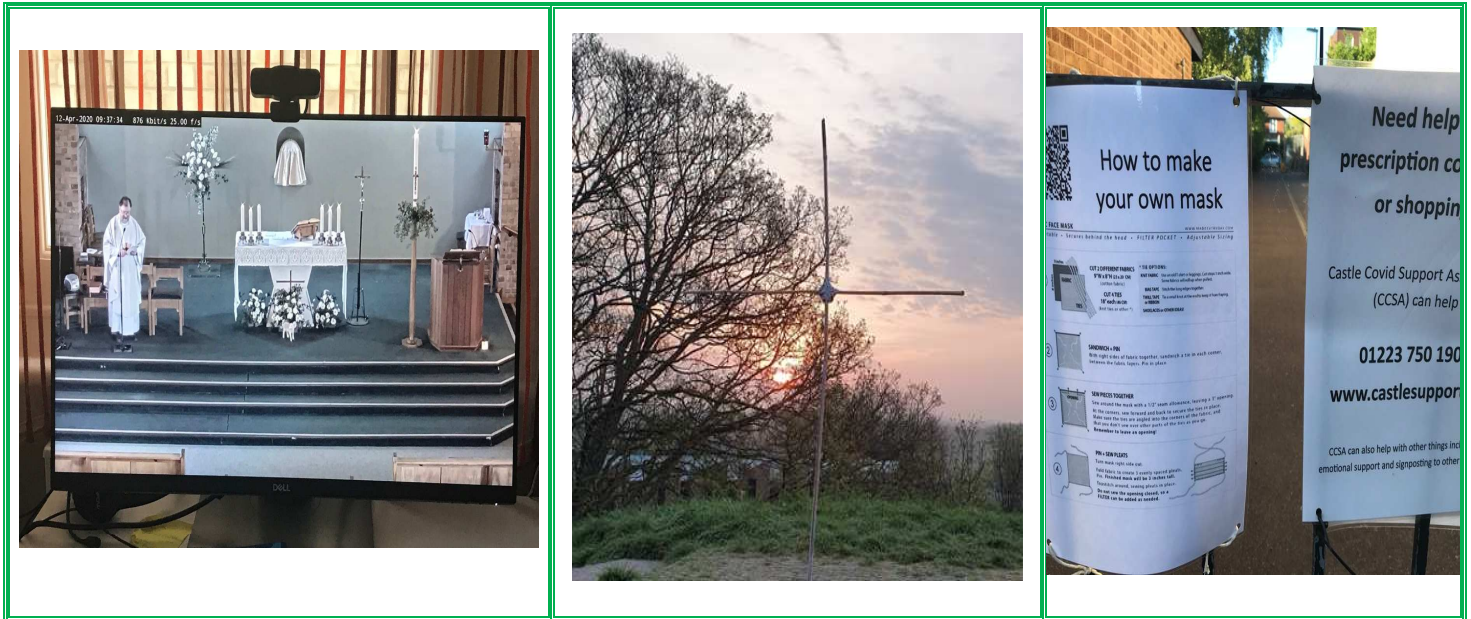


The Pilgrim

St Laurence's Parish Magazine, June Edition 2020



Unprecedented Times

Contents

Editorial with A Memento from Joe Tucker for Fr Bob's 80 th Birthday	1	Housing & Feeding our Homeless during Covid19	16-17
Features and Opinions		Where do the funds go?	17-18
Lockdown!	2	Lockdown Poetry	18
Unprecedented Times	2-3	Parish Organisations & Activities	
Cardinal Points – Death & Divinity	3-5	CAFOD appeal	19-20
Homily: By His wounds we are healed	5-6	A message from CAFOD in East Anglia	20-21
After the deluge	6	SVP update	21
St Theodora the Empress	7-8	Summary of Parish Open Meeting	22-23
History repeats itself	8-9	Returning to church discussion doc	24
The Creed: treasure of our soul	9-10	Radio Maria England news & updates	25
Shortage of priests	10-12	Ablaze Mass	26
Christ – the servant of all who suffer	12-13	Reviews	
Webinar Basics	13	Book review – The Warning	27
Personal Stories and Experiences		Tailpiece	
Have Faith even during an emergency	14	The Party that wasn't	28
Holy Week @ Home	15-16	Biblical Challenge	28

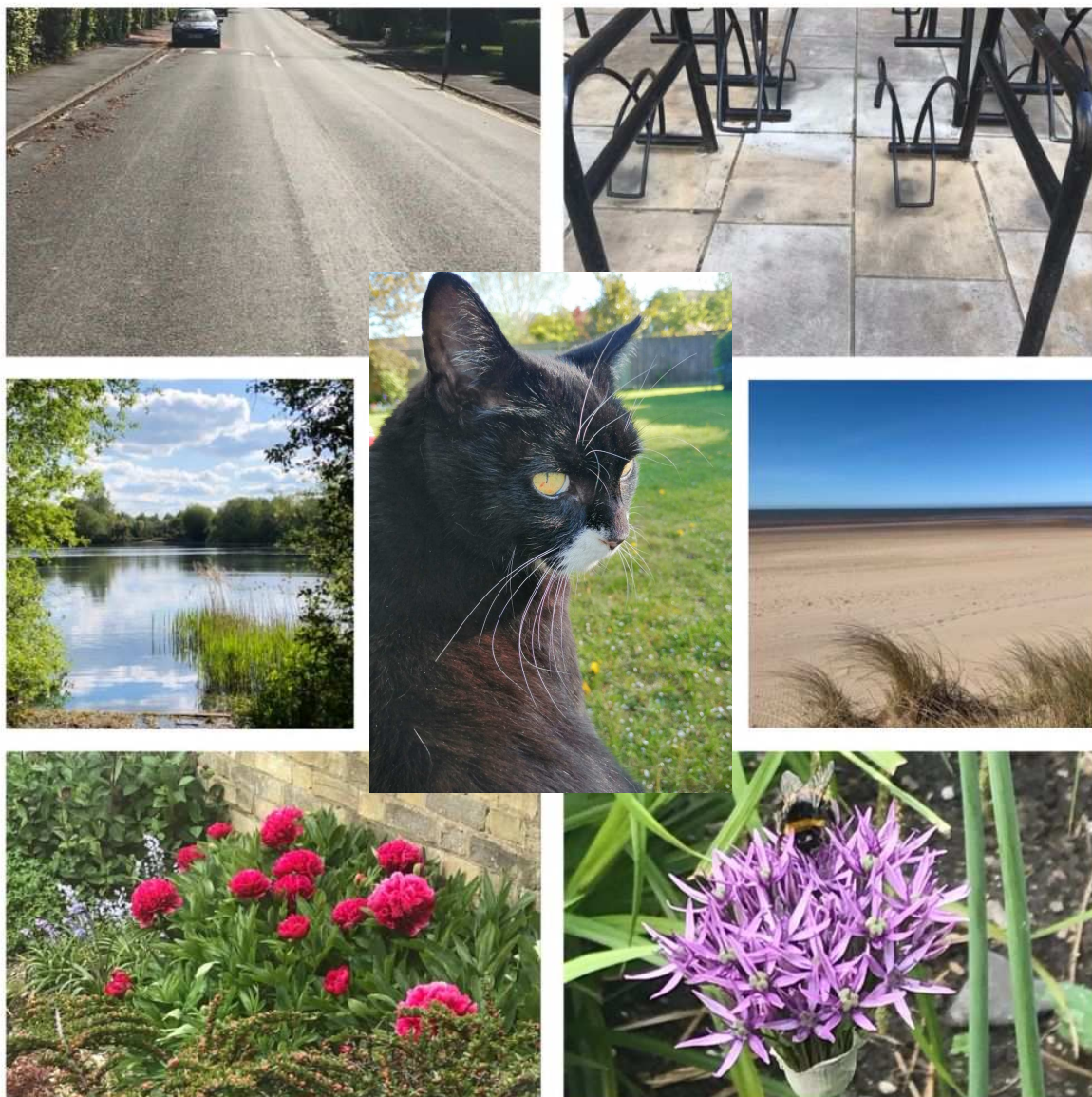
The production team: Editors: Nora Darby, Sarah Sykes; Sub-editors: Alex Dias, Carol Williams, Susan O'Brien, Nora Darby; Commissioning Editor: Nora Darby; Cover: Leonie Isaacson; Proofreaders: Caroline O'Donnell & Sarah Sykes; Layout (preparation for printing): Sarah Sykes, Nora Darby.

The deadline for the next edition is

7 August 2020 for publication on 5/6 September

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

Scenes of East Anglia taken during lockdown



Editorial

Nora Darby

The Lent edition of Pilgrim saw the end of our world as we knew it. Covid19 entered our lives and everything changed.

15th March was the last Sunday Mass with a congregation, then 23rd March came and we were in lockdown, everything closed including our Church. Life has continued with the aid of social media, going to Masses via livestreaming, but it is difficult to keep up with day to day events. We would like to tell you of a few significant ones, sad and happy which occurred during this time.

During this time, we have lost some of our congregation, among them a couple of well-known faces: Kate d'Armada, a popular parishioner and teacher at St Laurence's school died too young, after a long-fought illness, on the 16th March. Because of the circumstances, the funeral and burial were for family only, RIP. Another long-time parishioner and Parish Treasurer, Linda McIntyre died after a long illness. Linda was cremated on the 16th April, RIP. There will be Memorial Masses for her and for Kate when our Church is once more fully open and we can all be together to remember them. Others have also died during this time and we ask for your prayers for all of them.

Another very familiar face, Pat Cook, Parish secretary for many years retired at the end of February, life at St Laurence's will not be the same without Pat in the office. Again because of lockdown, there has been no publicity and we will have to wait until we can say thank you and wish her happy retirement. Bishop Alan has promised to say a Thanksgiving Mass.

Our two priests have had momentous dates in their lives but no celebrations allowed. Fr Bob celebrated his 80th birthday on the 4th May. His planned party has had to be postponed but will happen ASAP. Fr Simon celebrated 30 years since his Ordination on 2nd June 1990. Maybe another excuse for more celebrating when the present situation is ended?

A memento from Joe Tucker for Fr Bob's 80th birthday:

This year we observe with delight
A new decade for our man in white.
May you move through the gears
For many more years
And your sermons be witty and bright.



Finally, special thanks to Martin Avery for ensuring choir and readers can be heard during the services. He has coordinated singers, musicians and readers making individual recordings at home and copied them onto CDs which can be used by Fr Simon and Fr Bob during Mass. Thanks also to the Tech Group for enabling us to livestream from our homes. Many people have mentioned how much they have appreciated hearing the different contributions reminding them that we are still gathered as a community.

Features and Opinions

Lockdown!

Fr Bob Eccles OP

I think you may know that our novices start their Dominican journey here in Cambridge, where they meet figures from the story of the religious life, from the earliest pioneers. One such is Anthony, sometimes called Abba Anthony or Anthony the Abbot, *abba* meaning father, the father of all monks. His friend Athanasius, also a remarkable figure, wrote his biography that would become a medieval best-seller and inspire scary artists like Hieronymus Bosch. You can buy it in Penguin as a paperback even today (*Early Christian Writers*). It tells how young Anthony having lost his parents came into church one day and when he heard the gospel being read, he realized the Lord was speaking to him: "Go sell what you have and give to the poor and come, follow me." And so he did, on the spot. Just at that time there was a brief let-up in the popular hobby of persecuting Christians. He couldn't be a martyr. So he thought he'd try being a hermit instead. He found a tomb cave in the Egyptian desert and shut himself up to fast and pray and weave baskets, as you do in deserts, to get a sort of living.

This was very foolhardy and dangerous because he was at once beset by a hundred temptations – in his fourth-century terms by a hundred *tempters*; hideous demons. Hieronymus Bosch much later was to paint horrible pictures of them, some of them with their nasty faces poking rudely out of their bottoms. But Anthony did not give up his Christian warfare. He remained steadfast in prayer and contemplation of the Word of God and the reciting of the psalms and intercessory prayer and every useful occupation. Until the demons were quite worn out.

After a long time, some of his old friends came to look him up; they were worried. And this was an interesting moment – they feared they'd find him driven crazy by solitude or wasted away and haggard beyond recognition. But no, when they knocked at the tomb Anthony came out 'with an aura of holiness as though he had emerged from some divine sanctuary' (wrote Athanasius), 'and they were stunned by the beauty of his countenance and the dignity of his body'. Calm and well-balanced, he spoke such wonderful words. 'His speech brought comfort to those who grieved, instructed the ignorant, reconciled those who were angry and persuaded everyone that nothing should be valued higher than the love of Christ.' He had won through.

This story has its modern equivalents! Suddenly, the world appears to be full of hermits, lots and lots of Anthonys and Antoniettas who are staying at home and weaving their baskets, or whatever. What happens when

we look them up? Skype them? Phone them? Nudge them on Facebook? In Brussels and Singapore and Provence, or in Kendal Way even. Perhaps they will have gone dotty or potty. Or cross because the churches are shut or hopping mad without sacraments. Or dying of *ennui* with only grumpy Catholic papers to read.

In fact, it hasn't been like that, not at all. This person has time to read neglected good books and say morning and evening prayer with the Church and go to Mass with the Holy Father; this one has planned and cooked meals for so many homeless. These others are caring for neighbours. The artists are painting and the musicians making music and the gardeners garden. Concerts break out on pavements and inventive meals are being cooked from whatever scraps there are in the larder. People are talking who didn't talk before. Old friendships are renewed, new sympathies emerge. The sick and those caring for them surrounded by prayer. Little treats planned and loving messages sent. Strangers don't seem strange anymore.

There is a holy impatience with so much that is wrong with the world and a desire to mend things somehow; the Holy Father's Easter call for conversion finds an echo with people. When the Easter flame was lit, didn't the Church pray to the Lord to scatter the darkness of our hearts and minds? But we are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song. Our homes are our churches now. Was it us St Paul wrote about long ago in his letter to the Romans? 'Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship or distress or peril or the sword? In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him who loved us.'

Unprecedented Times

Sue Price

I don't know about anyone else, but that phrase is just beginning to grate a little. However, I must accept that we really are in 'times', which are creating opportunities as well as anxieties, space for reflection and stillness, as well as making the most of the outside activity allowed. At Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, in common with all institutes of higher education, there are the anxieties about what lies ahead and how things will be in the future. Everything will be different; we know that and have to work with it. But it has also given us tremendous opportunities. We moved all our teaching online for this term, becoming experts with Zoom, online breakout rooms, and admitting people into the virtual meeting. We have discovered talents for uploading videos and presentations that we never knew we had and found ways of sharing prayer together online too.

Do look at our [website](#) for forthcoming events, blogs and video clips that might be of interest to you. Dr Melanie-Prejean Sullivan is leading two workshops on the Eucharist – 18th June and 9th July. These are likely to be online and promise to be very interactive and relevant in the midst of what we are experiencing now. For further details email mbitadm@hermes.cam.ac.uk.

Knowing that everything will be different gives us an opportunity to think, reflect, and learn differently to then be able to understand differently. Understanding differently can then enable us to act differently. One of the results of the lockdown is that I am hearing from several people how they want to act differently once the lockdown is over. Our courses for the next academic year will, we hope, give people a chance to do just that: think and understand differently to then act differently. The Catholic Theology and Practice Modules – a learning space for Catholic women begin with a module on Liturgy: ‘Called to Participate’. When we first started planning this COVID-19 wasn’t on the agenda. How we have participated through social media in the Liturgy, and what this has meant for us, will be the starting point for the course as we look at the current situation (who knows where it will be by September), consider some of the historical influences on the Liturgy and seek to understand how we are all called to live out our baptismal vocation to be prophet, priest and king through our participation in the Liturgy. More details of all the courses for next year are on our website, along with details about the Margaret Beaufort Certificate, the MA courses that are available and other events that may be of interest. Do get in touch if you would like to find out more.

Sue Price, Pastoral Outreach Coordinator, Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology email: sep56@cam.ac.uk

Cardinal Points – Death and Divinity

Ronald Haynes

‘Jesus wept’ is often cited as the shortest passage in the Christian Bible, at least in English and a few other languages. In the context of this brief verse (John 11:35), we see Jesus responding to the love and sorrow of the community around Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus, who had just died. We see being expressed both the human compassion and communal love of Jesus, together with the divine grace and action of Jesus as the divine Christ. Pope Leo the Great referenced this passage to help illustrate these two natures of Jesus: ‘In His humanity Jesus wept for Lazarus; in His divinity he raised him from the dead.’

During times of crisis and uncertainty, such as we experience amidst the outbreak of new and highly contagious diseases, it is unsurprising that in our efforts to protect ourselves and others we may also find a crisis of confidence and a number of mental health challenges. Soaring rates of infection and reports of so many people suffering, as well as dying, and our continued inability to fully understand or effectively end the outbreak is a sharp reminder of our mortality. In the face of our physical fragility, it is no wonder that through the ages people have sought, explored and put faith in a narrative greater than our perhaps three-score and 10 or four-score years (as per Psalm 90). Paraphrasing a Notre Dame University theologian, John Dunne, ‘what we seek is not so much a life after death, but a life present to us now that survives death’.

Centuries earlier the venerable and similarly named John Donne, poet and Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral, wrote meditations during nearly a month of isolation, while recovering from the serious infection which was sweeping London at the time. He reminded us indelibly of the Gospel message of being fundamentally united with each other: ‘No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main ... any man’s death diminishes me ... therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.’ In the same work (Meditation 17) Donne concludes that ‘Tribulation is treasure in the nature of it ... if by this consideration of another’s danger, I take mine own into contemplation, and so secure myself, by making my recourse to my God, who is our only security.’

While pestilence, like war, prompts many of us to reflect more on matters both mortal and immortal, it bears reiterating some transformative thoughts from the Scriptures and the early Church which provide astounding insight to address our condition. In the first book of Genesis, we hear that God created the heavens, the earth, and all the creatures of the earth, finishing with humans who are made in the *Imago Dei* – in God’s image and likeness – and male and female God made

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE MODULES - A LEARNING SPACE FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN

MODULES FOR 2020/2021

Four weeks, meeting every Thursday Afternoon. £180 per module

8th - 29th October 2020
Called to participate - exploring the Liturgy
Led by Ged Mchale and Sue Price

5th - 26th November 2020
Introduction to the Christian Mystics
Led by Dr Louise Nelstrop

21st Jan - 11th February 2021
Catholic Morality: Its ups and Downs
Led by Dr Anna Abrams and Dr Liam Hayes

18th Feb - 11th March
Faith in Art: transcendence and embodiment
Led by Dr Adrienne Dengerink

29th April - 20th May
Catherine Keller: Process, Relation and Entanglement
Led by Dr Férida Stone-Davis

More details on our website:
<http://www.margaretbeaufort.cam.ac.uk/margaret-beaufort-certificate/>

to apply: email mbitadm@hermes.cam.ac.uk




them (us). What does this mean, for each of us, for all of us? Considering again the Incarnation, of God becoming human in the person of Jesus, we have other guides into these related mysteries.

The new Catholic Catechism combines insights about why ‘The Word became flesh’ - so that ‘we might know God’s love’, ‘to be our model of holiness’, and ‘to make us “partakers of the divine nature”’. In the second century, Bishop Irenaeus wrote that God had ‘become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself’ and added that it was necessary ‘that what was mortal should be conquered and swallowed up by immortality, and the corruptible by incorruptibility, and that man should be made after the image and likeness of God.’

St Athanasius, writing in the fourth century, stated profoundly and succinctly that: ‘God became human in order that humanity might become divine.’ This transcendent revelation has many related names and concepts, including divinization, theosis, and sanctification, and was a key concern for many of the early Church leaders. Athanasius famously opposed his compatriot Arius’ attempts to remove belief in the divinity of Jesus from the Church’s core understanding. To help settle the dispute, along with Scripture, teaching and theological debate, Athanasius sought out his friend Anthony (the Great) to ask him to travel from his monastic desert life in order to provide testimony informed by his life of prayer and personal experience of God. The dispute was settled, and the Creed was updated (incorporated into the one we pray regularly).

This ancient and persistent belief, that God became human so that humans could become divine, is not one that is easy to dismiss. Even more, it is not something that seems either fully irrational or entirely given to rational argument – something very different from establishing whether the Earth revolves around the Sun or whether life regularly develops from simpler forms into more complex ones. Instead, such a belief is perhaps something like love, which is relational, and we might say is beyond the rational.

As was the case for Athanasius and Anthony, such relational matters rely not entirely on interpretations of ancient texts, but very much also on the insight provided by the living Spirit or partner in this love. This combination and the extensive agreement of testimony, provided by those who share the insights from this relational reality, can be very compelling. The invitation to join them is of course liberally shared for any to consider and, if they choose, to accept.

Meister Eckhart, the medieval mystical theologian, fellow Dominican and contemporary of Aquinas, paraphrases Augustine to provide a powerfully personal take on the Creed (Jesus as ‘eternally begotten of the

Father’) and what the Incarnation might mean for us: ‘Here, in time, we are celebrating the eternal birth which God the Father bore and bears unceasingly in eternity, because this same birth is now born in time, in human nature. St Augustine says, “What does it avail me that this birth is always happening, if it does not happen in me? That it should happen in me is what matters.”’ (Sermon 1, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, Translated by Maurice O’C Walshe, Crossroads Herder New York, republished 2009.)

Similarly, it is fair and imperative to consider how such profound beliefs affect the lives and actions of those who are connected with the Christian communities which profess them (for example, in the Creed). The 19th-century atheist philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche declared: “I might believe in the Redeemer if his followers looked more redeemed.”, and similarly provided the challenge: “Show me that you are redeemed, and I will believe in your Redeemer.”. As one sermonist noted, ‘it remains one of the most damaging criticisms of Christianity’.

By contrast, the phrase ‘see how these Christians love one another’ has served both to identify and to highlight the key commitment for the Church from its earliest days, and ever since. It is similarly significant to consider implications of the potential for continued community implicit in the resurrection of Lazarus and others, especially in Jesus’ own resurrection, and in the wider belief we profess in the ‘Communion of Saints’. From the early days of Christianity, there has been this firm belief not only in eternal life, but in a practical continuation of the personal communication which comprises a community, and that is contained in the key phrase regularly affirmed from the Apostles’ Creed – the Communion of Saints. The idea is that those who have ‘gone before us marked with the sign of faith’ will continue to be available to provide (and receive) support, and in some way may remain active in each other’s lives.

In these beliefs, death is neither the end nor the limitation of life, nor necessarily a bad thing, as it was often thought to be. From a much, much larger sense of community, one which spans across eternity, many can regularly seek help from spiritual relatives and exemplary guides with whom we can relate, whether from namesake or patron saints, or from the remarkable examples of those whose lives or experiences witness some similarities to our own. Certain Buddhist groups seem to hold a somewhat similar belief that there are noble guides, known as Bodhisattvas, who are otherwise ready to return to the Oneness from which all life originates, and yet acting out of compassion will delay their own release in order to help others along the path to enlightenment.

These examples are attempts to better understand how we might believe that love and life are stronger than death. Yet these somewhat poetic ideas raise larger questions about whether death is as final as it may seem in the popular imagination, and whether love may have any limits. If love is the most powerful force in the universe – and that would seem to be what so many people and traditions do believe – then it may well be boundless and beyond measure, as well as perhaps beyond general means of fully understanding it.

Talking about love is difficult, and perhaps for some a little dangerous, because when taken seriously it draws us in – it calls us to such a deep transformation of the heart, and to do so involves so much of us. When we consider exemplary lives, such as our favourite saints, we find lives of love which both inspire and raise questions which may be difficult to answer – which may even take a lifetime to clarify, and which are passed on across many lifetimes, generations even, and seemingly have no limit. As the most basic of our lessons, initially experienced at an early age, love has a kind of ageless aspect – and our attempts to define or describe it continue to prove to be inexhaustible. We fill volumes with our prose and verse and analysis of the perennial nature of love ... and it seems we have been doing so since soon after we learned to communicate and write.

So what is it that is so odd about love, and which calls us to care beyond our usual limits – which seems to point to a limitless reality and a limitless Divinity? This latter point is a key, in that the three major world religions which are connected by Abraham (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – the Abrahamic faiths) have for millennia affirmed to the world that they believe that God is love. To ask whether love has limits is, for many, the same as asking if God has limits. Whatever your answer, love continues to spark ever-engaging questions.

It is a particular insight of Christian belief that while we are created as individuals, eternally blessed with unique talents and gifts, these gifts are intended to be shared with others as part of building up and living as the loving and eternal community we are called to be – and both individual and communal realities are inextricable aspects of our identity across eternity. The Lord's prayer contains both praise and petition, requests for sustenance and reconciliation, and something of a commitment to help realise God's kingdom on earth ('Thy kingdom come') and God's will be carried out ('Thy will be done').

It seems challenging to juggle our individual call and the call of oneness and unity, with God and others, however many of our guides present us with a vision of ennobled individuals forming and being formed by the virtuous circles of community. It is in John's Gospel that we have Jesus reminding us that we will be known

as his followers by our love for one another (John 13:35), and St Paul uniquely responds to the ancient puzzle of the One and the Many with the insightful model of the Mystical Body – such that we though many are one (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 12:14:27).

One of the more touching and engaging Scriptural passages which succinctly summarises much of the combination of the call to love and good action and spirituality is from Micah 6:8:

'He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?'

Nancy Mairs, an American Catholic essayist, humorously reworks this and related points about the call to live a life in tune with the Divine, one which we might think would survive death and be exemplary especially in such times of crisis as we find ourselves:

"That's what we're here for: to make the world new. We know what to do: seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly, treat every person as though she were yourself. These are not complicated instructions. It's much harder to decipher the instructions for putting together a tricycle than it is to understand these."

Homily: By His wounds we are healed

Second Sunday of Easter, John 20: 19-31

Fr Simon Blakesley

As you may recall from the potted biography that I distributed when I first arrived in the Parish, my first appointment as a curate was at St. George's in Sprowston in Norwich, a church which had been re-ordered in the mid-eighties by Fr Tony Rogers. If you have been there you will know that on the cross above the altar there is the figure of the Risen Christ, almost flying towards us like 'Superman' in glorious robes. This is surely a sound theology of 'death and resurrection', but I always worried about the fact that there was no evident sign of his crucifixion wounds in his risen corpus.

When I mentioned this concern to Paul Jarvis, a wonderful character and parish stalwart of many years, he said to me: "Don't worry, they're healing nicely..."

I was never convinced by his reassurance and believed that the Gospel that we have just heard tells us that the Lord's wounds still have a work to do even though he is risen from the dead, conqueror of death and sin. Where is the logic in the Lord, in his risen body which can pass through locked doors and the walls of unbelief, keeping these awful wounds of barbaric cruelty and

actually showing them off, rather than almost automatically healing them in an instant of risen restoration?

It appears that the pattern of the Lord's death was, and is, a carefully invited revelation of our deepest human suffering. St Peter, in his first letter, insists that it is 'By His wounds you have been healed...'. And we know that the Lord, even when He was being nailed to the cross, prayed "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing..." It is as if the Lord is saying from the cross, "This is your pain, this is your deepest suffering, and I am here with you". The French philosopher, Paul Claudel, said, "Christ did not come to do away with suffering, or to explain it, but to fill it with his presence".

St Thomas has surely raised the odds by insisting on the all too graphic description of what he wants to do. Put his finger in the holes the nails made, and his hand into his side. The wound made with a cruel thrust – voom! – probably after the Lord's death with the spear, was a massive rent through his liver and further up into his heart and pleural cavity so that blood and water spurted out; plenty big enough to receive a grown man's hand. These wounds were there, in the upper room, on show for a reason and as a revelation of a deep mystery.

We are not really brave enough to represent the full graphic horror of the crucifixion; our churches are not filled with Grunewald images of the tortured corpus of the Lord and we prefer to keep the wounds of His Passion discreet so as not to be thought of as too bloodthirsty or to upset the children. Yet in one of our most popular Communion hymns we sing, "Deep in thy wounds Lord, hide and shelter me..." as if we know that the Lord is offering a place of psychological safety for those who are open to comprehend the 'folly of the cross'.

The Lord doesn't hold back in revealing the signs of His Passion; he worked hard to achieve the pattern of this death and in the resurrection he is blatant in revealing to us that this is the same body that hung upon the cross. The Lord's wounds are open, gaping, for a reason and they will not be fully closed until the last human heart has been healed.

After the Deluge

Fr Joe Inguanez, Malta

We are experiencing what is perhaps the greatest tragedy in human history. Science fiction literature has come to haunt us with harsh reality. However, we are not attacked by aliens but by the unintended or intended consequences of human actions. The world has been

globalised by disaster, reaching blindly, hundreds of thousands without distinction of class, status or power.

Tragic facts show that we are still scientifically inadequate, economically fragile, and socially weak. Thus, Covid-19 is challenging the arrogance of power, science, and egoism.

Hopefully, humanity, without knowing when and how, will win this battle. As a believer, we add, with the help of a loving God. This virus has shown what Pope Francis said: 'that we are not living at the change of an age, but in an age of change.'. However, many are claiming that after Covid-19 society will be different. Those who are arguing in this manner might be living the 'future of an illusion', once mistakenly attributed to religion.

In Genesis we find a description of a deluge which resulted from human wickedness. Leaving aside the exegetical theological aspects of this story, after this deluge, a new generation was born living at peace with God and with itself. But for how long? History shows us that culture is very slow to change; there is a sort of inertia which induces us to keep away from conversion that is a radical change.

One may ask: have we learnt from history? Cain's murder of his brother Abel has consistently repeated itself. When it comes to battles and wars, can we possibly refer to the 'last' war? On the 8th May we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. This expression was true when Churchill uttered it. However, it was soon followed by a Cold War dividing Western and Eastern Europe. The history of the rest of the world is so much dotted with wars that it is too long to narrate. The term 'New World Order' has become a political and diplomatic chimera.

Hence dare we hope that the borderless Coronavirus will bring humanity to its senses! It is clear that humanity has created its golden calf – the religion of matter and the empirical. It is our duty as Catholics to look to the Crucified Christ for the world's salvation. We should not be shocked if we are ridiculed for this. This is what our Crucified Saviour was subjected to.

However, as disciples – which means students – of the Crucified Christ, we are called to take part in his salvific mission. As we confront Covid-19, we should feel and cry as He did in the Garden of Gethsemane. This should resonate in the heart of every Christian. It is in our search for the will of God that we will be able to read the signs of our times. It would be a disaster if we do not do this, because that would mean that the salt has lost its taste.

Saint Theodora the Empress: champion of women's rights

John Sykes

St Theodora was born in 500 CE in the Eastern Roman Empire. Her exact place of birth is disputed as being either Syria (Michael the Syrian), Cyprus (Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos) or Paphlagonia (George Codinus), by historians writing in the 12th–14th centuries. Her father, Acacius, was a bear trainer. Her mother was a dancer and an actress; employment in these professions during this period would often include exposing oneself on stage and offering sexual services off stage. Theodora was four when her father died and at an early age followed her sister, Komito's, example and began working in a brothel in Constantinople. Later, she began performing on stage and became well-known for her prurient portrayal of the dance *Leda and the Swan*, which portrays the conception of Helen of Troy. During this time, she met Antonina, the future wife of Belisarius (arguably one of the greatest generals in Roman history, known for reconquering a large part of the West after the fall of Rome), who would later become a prominent member of the women's court founded by Theodora.

At age 16, Theodora left this life behind to become the companion of a Syrian official called Hecebulos and travelled with him to North Africa. She stayed with him there for four years; however, while making their return to Constantinople he mistreated and abandoned her in Alexandria, Egypt. Whilst living in Alexandria, she met the Coptic Patriarch Timothy III, found Christ and became an adherent of Miaphysite Christianity.

From there she travelled to Antioch, where through a dancer named Macedonia, she met her future emperor and husband, St Justinian I. Justinian soon sought to marry Theodora. However, this was impossible because of laws instituted by St Constantine (the first Christian emperor), prohibiting anyone of senatorial rank from marrying an actress (this restriction still exists for priests in Canon Law). In 525 CE, Emperor Justin I (Justinian's uncle) repealed this law. Theodora converted to Chalcedonian Christianity and they were married. Theodora had a daughter already (whose father is unknown) however, Justinian treated the daughter and the daughter's son as fully legitimate.

Two years later, Justinian succeeded to the throne and Theodora became Empress of the Eastern Roman Empire. As Empress, Theodora was unique in her power and influence. Her counsel became invaluable to Justinian. So much so that she shared in his plans and political strategies and took part in state councils. Justinian even went so far as to refer to her as his 'partner in my deliberations'. She founded the women's court, formed her own official entourage and even had

her own imperial seal. She was the first Eastern Roman Empress to have coins minted in her name and was often present when Justinian held court and even held court independently when he was unwell. She was given responsibility over his imperial seal, implying that she had the right to perusal and consent before documents were considered to be valid and legal.

In 532 CE, one of the most pivotal moments in the reign of Saints Justinian and Theodora took place: the Nika Riots. In Eastern Rome at the time, there were two major rival political factions – the Blues and the Greens (based on chariot racing teams). In January 532 CE, they started a riot during a chariot race in the hippodrome caused by grievances about certain actions of Justinian and Theodora. Many public buildings were set on fire and the rioters declared Hypatius (the nephew of Emperor Anastasius I [491-518 CE]) as the new emperor. Justinian and his officials began preparations to flee Constantinople. However, at a meeting of the government council Theodora spoke against leaving the palace. Arguing the importance of dying as an emperor rather than living in exile or hiding, exclaiming, "royal purple is the noblest shroud". Through her impassioned speech, she was able to dissuade the entire council from their plan to run, including St Justinian himself. Justinian then ordered his loyal troops, led by Belisarius and Mundus, to attack the demonstrators, killing over 30,000 rebels. Hypatius desperately tried to claim that he was made emperor against his will, but he was put to death at the insistence of Theodora. Justinian never forgot that it was Theodora who saved his throne.

After the Nika riots, Justinian and Theodora endeavoured to rebuild and reform Constantinople. Their projects transformed Constantinople into the most splendid city the world had seen in centuries. They built aqueducts, bridges and more than 25 churches, including the greatest church, the Hagia Sophia, the epitome of Byzantine architecture and one of the architectural wonders of the world. Through their careful supervision, they were also able to significantly reduce bureaucratic corruption.

Perhaps Theodora's greatest legacy, however, is her participation in Justinian's spiritual and legal reforms. In *Novel 8.1* (part of the code of law for the Eastern Roman Empire, 535 CE), anti-corruption legislation is directly attributed to her. Theodora devoted a lot of time and effort into helping underprivileged women. She was known for, 'buying girls who had been sold into prostitution, freeing them, and providing for their future'. She closed many brothels and made pimping a criminal offence. She founded a monastery called the Metanoia (Repentance) where the ex-prostitutes could support themselves. John Malalas (491–578 CE) wrote that she, 'Freed the girls from the yoke of their wretched slavery'. Then, a century later, John of Nikiu wrote about the positive impact of Theodora's actions,

claiming that Theodora, ‘put an end to the prostitution of women’.

Theodora influenced heavily Justinian’s legislation for women’s rights including improving the rights of women in divorce and property ownership, instituting the death penalty for rape, forbidding the murder of unwanted children, giving mothers’ guardianship rights over their children, and forbidding the killing of an adulterous wife. Procopius (500-565 CE) writes that Theodora was naturally inclined to help women in misfortune and championed the wives’ causes when their husbands charged them with adultery.

Despite her conversion to Chalcedonian Christianity, Theodora had great sympathy towards the Miaphysite churches and often advocated for them that they may one day rejoin communion with the Church. This contrasted with Justinian’s much more hardline approach of suppression. As a result of this she has often been accused of fostering heresy and undermining the unity of Christendom. She founded several monasteries across the Eastern Roman Empire and provided shelter for Miaphysite leaders who were at risk of violence from Orthodox Catholic Christians, for example, during the violent revolt in Antioch led by Patriarch St Ephraim of Antioch leading to the expulsion of eight Miaphysite bishops.

Theodora died from breast cancer on 28th June 548 CE at the age of 48. Justinian wept bitterly at her funeral and her body was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. Justinian and Theodora are depicted in mosaics that still exist in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy which were completed one year before her death.

After Theodora’s death, Justinian’s stance on Miaphysite Christians softened. From then on, he worked to try and re-establish communion between the Orthodox Catholic Church and the Miaphysite Churches and he committed to protecting Miaphysite refugees. Many academics argue that, if not for the influence of Theodora, many Middle Eastern Christian communities such as the Syriacs and the Copts would no longer exist today.

St Theodora the Empress is venerated by the Orthodox Church, the Eastern Catholics and the Oriental Orthodox Church. Her feast day is the 14th of November and her major shrine is in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople.

History repeats itself

Serga Collett

Covid19 – just the word has a terrifying effect on people. People scatter as you walk along the street, and although today is VE day, there is not much rejoicing in the small village where I live.

Covid19 – there seems to be hardly any other news! We have never known a time like it in our lifetime and that is probably what makes it so terrible to us, a generation that has grown up in peace and with a wonderful healthcare system that takes care of us. And that is particularly why, I think, we find it so frightening, so terrible.

As a child, I remember being shut in my room (yes in solitary confinement – that was how you coped with illness). You stayed in bed until you were better, whether it was measles, German measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, chickenpox or mumps: at the time they were a ritual, almost a rite of passage of being a child. At the same time, Mum had TB and Dad had jaundice (he was also a diabetic – he, I would guess, would now be classified as ‘vulnerable’). But, nurse me through all my illnesses they did, and I am thankful to emerge a reasonably ‘healthy’ adult. And yes, we were lucky; people did die from these illnesses whilst children nowadays are largely protected by vaccination. Today, as I write, we mark the 75th anniversary of a war in which families, whichever side you were on, all lost loved ones – a terrible, terrible experience. And this only a short time after the First World War, a war thought to have ended all wars, and with Spanish flu hot on its heels in 1918/19.

Just forty years earlier (1889 – 1890) in yet another flu epidemic – the Russian flu wiped out one million people, and prior to that there were, of course, the various cholera pandemics. (Indeed the Wikipedia summary of 19th century pandemics makes sobering reading!).

What is a fact is that throughout all these life/world changing events, the loss of life was horrific and the suffering unimaginable.

These wonderful words, written by Catherine O’Meara in March this year, remind me that yes these are terrible times but we must learn from them.

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested

And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.

And now that I have stopped racing from place to place, trying to catch my own tail, I am finding that I do 'listen' more deeply – to nature, to birdsong, to other people (it is a joy, in its own right, seeing each other even if it is only by 'Zoom').

And yes, I have time to dream new dreams and make new choices, create new ways of living, now that we 'know' that we can and do make a difference to the world, because we have proved WE CAN HEAL THE WORLD!

The Creed: treasure of our soul

John Conlon

This summer, my wider family will be gathering to attend a baptism, the joyous ancient ceremony where a new Christian is welcomed into the Church. And, as has happened at such ceremonies for more than 2,000 years, we will all recite the Apostles' Creed (from the Latin 'credo', meaning 'I believe'), the profession, or symbol, of our faith. But why the Apostles' Creed (AC) and not the Nicene Creed (NC) that we say regularly at Mass? And why are there two Creeds?

The AC has been traced by tradition back to the time of the Twelve who wanted to help ensure the main principles of belief were passed down from one generation to the next. The formulation had to be concise enough to learn easily at a time when many people were illiterate. Its recital was a way of

identifying oneself as a Christian amid a majority of pagans. A form of it was used from the first days of Christianity at baptisms. It is believed St Peter had a strong influence on the wording of the AC, based on studies of his speeches in the Acts of the Apostles. Let us remind ourselves of the AC (below):

"I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

St Cyril of Jerusalem said this of the AC: "This summary of faith encompassed in a few words the whole knowledge of the true religion contained in the Old and New Testaments." And St Ambrose added his own view: "This creed is the spiritual seal, our heart's meditation and an ever-present guardian; it is, unquestionably, the treasure of our soul."

In response to the needs of different eras, amended versions began to appear, including the Athanasian Creed and professions of faith of certain Councils, such as Toledo, Lateran, Lyons and Trent. There were also symbols of Popes, including the "Credo of the People of God" of Paul VI. But two Creeds have attained special status in the Church: the AC and the NC.

The AC is the ancient baptismal symbol of the Church of Rome. The NC has its authority from the first two ecumenical councils (Nicea in 325 AD and Constantinople in 381 AD). The NC, as approved in amplified form at the Council of Constantinople, is the profession of the Christian faith common to the Catholic Church, to all the Eastern Churches separated from Rome, and to most of the Protestant denominations.

Now we come to the reason why we have an expanded form of the AC. The Council of Nicea (in modern-day Turkey) was held to debate the heresy of Arius, which we call Arianism. The heresy centred on the divinity of Christ.

Arius described the Son as a second, or inferior God. God alone was without beginning, unoriginate; the Son was originated, and once had not existed. All that has origin must begin to be, he said. Arianism denies that the Son is of one essence, nature, or substance with God; He is not consubstantial with the Father, and therefore not like him, or equal in dignity, or co-eternal, or within the real sphere of deity. Arius said the Logos

that St John exalts is an attribute, reason, belonging to the divine nature, not a person distinct from another, and therefore is a Son merely in figure of speech.

Against Arius was the belief that in the New Testament and in Church teaching Jesus of Nazareth appears as the Son of God. This name he took to himself (Matthew 11:27; John 10:36), while the Fourth Gospel declares him to be the Word (Logos), who in the beginning was with God and was God, by whom all things were made. A similar doctrine is laid down by St Paul, in his Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. It is reiterated in the letters of Ignatius, and accounts for Pliny's observation that Christians in their assemblies chanted a hymn to Christ as God. Pliny was Roman governor of Bithynia and Pontus (now in modern Turkey). He wrote a letter to Emperor Trajan around 112 AD asking for advice on dealing with the early Christian community. The letter is the first pagan account to refer to Christianity.

The Council of Nicea condemned the Arius doctrine. Later, at the Council of Constantinople, the Church again affirmed its condemnation. The NC was expanded to define the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The NC, officially entitled the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol, was introduced into the Mass about the year 500. The mighty clash of beliefs, Unitarianism versus Trinitarianism, continues to this day: Judaism and Islam would fall into the former category, while Catholicism and most mainstream Protestant Churches belong to the latter.

The following is a literal translation of the Greek text of the Constantinopolitan form, the brackets indicating the words altered or added in the Western liturgical form in present use:

“We believe (I believe) in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages. (God of God) light of light, true God of true God. Begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven. And was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary and was made man; was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried; and the third day rose again according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And (I believe) in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father (and the Son), who together with the Father and the Son is to be adored and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We confess (I confess) one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for (I look for)

the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.”

The original text of the NC ended at the phrase, “And in the Holy Ghost”.

So, next time you are invited to a baptism, remember you are part of a tradition dating back to the Apostles who devised a short creed to memorise in the hope the faith would be passed on forever. Their words have survived to this day and really are the “treasure of our soul”.

Shortage of Priests: What can we do about it?

Dick Wilson

For some years there has been an awareness in the British Isles that established parishes have a gradually falling number of Catholic priests. From the 16th century Reformation to the middle of the 20th century, the Catholic Church built up its members by faithfulness to a persecuted Church and was rewarded by priests to serve them. A regular pattern was that of a priest who once came to me when I was ill in hospital in London. He went to a seminary in his teens, was ordained for an English diocese, and became a bishop, retiring to his family in Ireland. But whether Catholics were English, Irish, or from other countries, there were priests.

Who employs a priest? Most priests are ‘regular’ or ‘diocesan’ priests meaning that their immediate employer is the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese they live in, and the name of the diocese is the designation of a geographical area like East Anglia or Northampton.

We need a bit of word chasing here. The Greek word *presbys* means ‘old’, and *presbyteros* means ‘older’ or ‘someone who is elder’. The poet John Milton said with scorn for both bishops and presbyters: “New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large!” The same word, but more letters. *Sacerdotis* another Latin word for any priest, like Jewish priests in the Latin Bible, the Vulgate, so called because it was *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, published to all. Fifteen hundred years later it was concealed in Latin so that we ordinary Catholics couldn’t read it and get odd ideas.

Do we really need more priests to replace those lost? The word in Greek that translates as ‘older’, or ‘elder’, can also mean, quite early in Greek, ‘senior’. So a parish priest is responsible, under the bishop, for what goes on in the assembly of Christians that is his part of the diocese. The parish priest leads worship usually and at Mass it is he who consecrates the bread and wine for up

to three Masses, and preaches a prepared sermon on Sunday, or perhaps at two or three places inside the parish in an extensive area. A priest has to see that common worship, rites and music are well performed and attractive. Priests are the agents of the Church, formally and informally, in helping Catholics to live according to the Church's order and the gospel. Inside the church the parish priest accompanies parishioners at *rites de passage*, that is, the celebration in the presence of God of significant events in the course of their lives like christenings, weddings and funerals, or as they say, hatches, matches and dispatches.

What about outside the church? A parish priest should keep his congregation aware and well informed about things that Catholics are expected to believe, and about any important changes in our worship, such as the revised Missal or the change from Latin to English. It is a real and taxing job.

What does society think of Catholic priests? Priests, like the ministers of Protestant churches, have a standing in society and are recognised as representatives of Christianity to the public. In the past, higher education in England consisted of a few universities and technical schools. The professional skills of doctors, lawyers, clergy and a few others were acquired on the job, qualifications granted by the profession itself (letters after your name, or a dog collar). Catholic priests shared the respect given to clergy of the Church of England and other Protestant denominations. Nowadays such qualifications are numerous, and graduates have a wide range of jobs to try for.

What is the situation in the East Anglia Diocese? The Diocesan Yearbook for 2009 listed 85 Diocesan priests for the previous year. This means the priests belonging directly to this Diocese, of whom 11 were retired. In 2017 there were 66, of whom seven were retired. But the only new Diocesan priests in this period were a small number of convert priests from the Church of England. Since then, the 2018 Yearbook had on record nine men looking to be ordained in the next five years. Of course, there will be retirements and deaths. Overall, this is quite a drop in the number of priests. On the other hand, the Dominican House, and other priests in Cambridge to study, mask the fall in priests, and help with Sunday Masses. This is true of other dioceses where there is a Catholic training seminar or universities when priests come to study. I don't think we have yet undergone the sad experience of the mother-in-law of John Conlon. John told us in the July 2019 edition of *The Pilgrim* that at the church she attends in the north of England, there is now only one priest available for one Mass per week. Also, it is obvious that the laity are almost entirely responsible for the other activities of the church, like the school, and get-togethers for school-age young people, adult men

and women and old people, music and various study groups.

Which priests are married? The great majority of Roman Catholic priests are not married, apart from some convert priests. Also, there are churches, in the Middle East and Ethiopia, which have rejoined the Roman Catholic Church, leaving separated churches but retaining their ancient liturgy or the rules of the Eastern Orthodox Church, in which parish priests in general are married. For the first 1,000 years, married priests were common, but because the monastery became one of the dominant units of church administration in Western Europe in the so-called Dark Ages, the married priest was elbowed out. It was taken as natural in all but the Roman Catholic Church that a priest or minister (a Protestant priest) may be married. Priests could be married men from the very beginning of the Church, as the New Testament records. We read in Mark 1.30–31: 'Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straight away. Peter went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her.' At Timothy 3.2 the *episkopos*, literally 'overseer', is translated as the 'presiding elder' in the Catholic Jerusalem Bible. It is the word that gives us 'bishop' in English but is translated in the King James Bible as 'the bishop'. The Bible here says he should be 'the husband of one wife'. This is usually taken to mean 'not widowed' rather than 'not a bigamist'!

What else would deter a call to the priesthood? It is obvious that the requirement to renounce marriage and family deters young men from feeling called to the priesthood. All the more, when they see the success of Reformation Churches, both established state Churches like the Church of England, Lutheran Churches, the Orthodox Churches of Greece and the Middle East and dissenters like Methodists, do not display greater or less holiness than the others. The effect of this is that potential priests back off from an organisation in which managers have a job description seemingly based on that of the Roman legions, whose soldiers could not marry till they were demobbed. It suits some well, especially those coming forward in middle life, who bring wide-ranging experience. But they are not as many as they were. The self-regard and secrecy of the Church in dealing with child abuse must also have led men who might otherwise have felt called to the priesthood to want nothing to do with it.

How can any candidate for the priesthood use the Bible to teach what we believe when it contains so much myth? Also, there is the question of what you teach. The Bible contains a narrative of the creation of the world and the establishment of the nation of Israel. There is one cursory mention of Israel well before 1,000 years BCE, but there is no mention of the Judges, David and Solomon outside the Bible. Many would regard much

of what is in the Bible as not history but myth. A young man wondering if he might be called to the priesthood, might find it hard to reconcile his science and modern history with the way another age used myth.

What shall we do about priests and marriage? Our Parish had a discussion last year about priests being married, and there was considerable feeling that there should be no restriction on marriage for priests. No other Christian Church insists on it.

Secondly, the congregations of Catholic parishes in England are made up of educated people, lifetime Catholics and firm converts. We should ordain priests from these, with due training (but not four, five or six years!) and lead the offering in the Mass, but also to teach and to preach, and for any other pastoral work agreed with them. They could be volunteers, not salaried, or paid part-time. Whether we would want to call them assistant priests, or senior elders, or something else, can wait. Whether they are responsible directly to the bishop, or to the parish priest, can likewise wait. Sometimes there are monks. There are several other models. I was received into the Roman Catholic Church in a little rural parish near Carlisle manned by two Benedictine monks from Buckfast in Devonshire, who also helped a Benedictine nunnery nearby, and a private church school with two teachers, rather like old village schools.

One thing is certain. If we continue that our priests are celibate, full-time, lifelong, and without any mutual employment agreement, men will not take the job up, and the church will disappear.

A final point. In many modern societies, there is a strong demand from Catholics for women to have the same equality they have in many professions. I agree strongly, but this must not be seen simply as a handy source of priests. It needs women to bring forward this demand, simply as their right, and the rest of us to support them.

Christ – the servant of all who suffer

Michael Allan

Coronavirus and Covid-19 are names none of us will ever forget. We have had our fill of death, disease and fear (and lockdown). Dearly loved ones from our Parish have died – and not just from Covid-19, but other diseases as well. We miss them all. Grief and sadness is sharp for many. The terrible, bitter reality of suffering and death has been overwhelming and inescapable – and it cannot bear any easy answers.

We believe Christ is the answer. God's answer. But this is certainly no easy answer. Indeed it sometimes seems like no answer at all, or one we struggle to understand or accept. Jesus' disciples were horrified by it:

'Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"'(Matthew 16:22)

But it did happen, in a humiliating and public way. Suffering, illness and death are not usually as public as they have been these last few months. Mostly it is a private affair: a lonely watching, waiting and suffering.

'Blessed are those servants whom the master finds watching when he comes; truly I tell you, he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them.'(Luke 12:37)

People who suffer – and those who care for them – are also watching and waiting. Perhaps watching through the night, in misery and worry, waiting for morning to come, for pain or distress to ease. Even without knowing it, they are watching in the darkness for the Lord; for the Lord who will come and serve them. The Lord is also watching and suffering with them in that darkness. His wounds are their wounds; their wounds are his. His broken, pierced body is theirs; their broken, failing and suffering bodies, minds and spirits are his. Here in the darkness the Divine and the all too human embrace and are one.

Through his wounds we are healed: all who are wounded – which is all of us at some time or other – may find refuge in Christ, inside the wounded and crucified Lord, the one in whom all can find their home. Although the darkness at times overwhelms us, a light will come in the dark night, a new fire, a new birth. We – and all the loved ones we miss so much – shall be reborn from within Christ, our tender mother:

'We wake up inside Christ's body
Where all our body all over,
Every most hidden part of it,
Is realised in joy as Christ,
And Christ makes us utterly real.
And everything that is hurt, everything
That seemed to us dark, harsh, shameful,
Maimed, ugly, irreparably damaged
Is in Christ transformed.
And in Christ, recognised as whole, as lovely,
And radiant in Christ's light,
We awaken as the beloved
In every last part of our body.'

(Hymn 15, Symeon the New Theologian, 949–1022 CE)

This is the crucified God, who emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. The Creator of all has come down to kneel before us and wash our feet, to wipe away all tears, to bind up all wounds, to be one with us in disease and in death. By this mystery we have joined him in death, and have gone into the tomb with him:

‘When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father’s glory, we too might live a new life. If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection.’(Romans 6:3-5)

Do we believe this? Do we believe Christ is the answer? We try to, but often we fail.

Lord, we believe; help our unbelief.



Christ, the victor over death, having broken the gates of hell, pulls Eve and Adam out of their tombs. (Chora Church, Istanbul.) Photo by Till Niermann.

This file is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) license.

Webinar Basics – Using Jitsi Meet

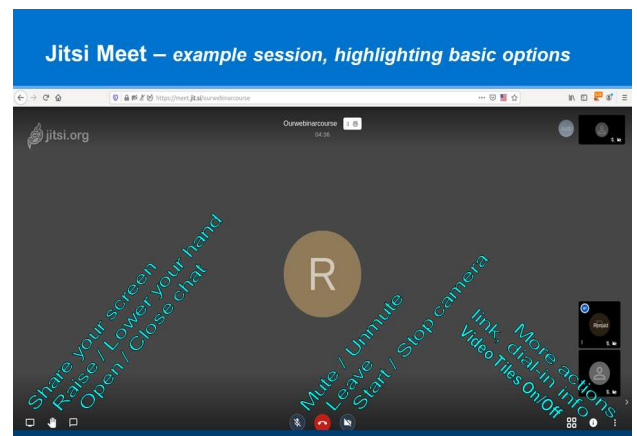
Ron Haynes

Jitsi Meet <<https://meet.jit.si/>> describes itself as a "Secure, fully-featured, and completely free video conferencing ... solution that you can use all day, every day, for free - with no account needed."

First time use:

1. View: *Using Jitsi: A free, no-registration video conferencing site* - <https://youtu.be/s--nQFtnfbM>
2. To get started, pick and use a modern web browser (e.g. Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Apple Safari, Opera)

3. Either search for “Jitsi Meet” (e.g. via DuckDuckGo.com, or Google), and select: <https://meet.jit.si> or type (in the address box at the top of the browser): <https://meet.jit.si> (and press Enter)
4. Once on the Jitsi Meet page, create a ‘virtual room’ in which to meet by typing a unique name (e.g. *special to you, unlikely to be copied*) in the “**Start a new meeting**” box (e.g. *merlin-blue-mandrake*):
5. Once created, you will be taken to the new ‘virtual room’ (e.g. <https://meet.jit.si/merlin-blue-mandrake>)
6. You will be asked to enable the use of your camera and microphone (*accept these, so you can interact*)
7. Once in your ‘virtual room’, you will see a screen (*briefly highlighted to explain features*) similar to:



Future use, and inviting others:

8. You can leave and return to the ‘virtual room’ anytime, using the unique link (e.g. <https://meet.jit.si/merlin-blue-mandrake>)
9. The ‘room’ is ‘open’ always, and most meetings scheduled (e.g. *mail the unique link, with a date/time*)

Additional / Alternate Resources

- **Zoom** – has a restricted free service (one Host license, up to 100 participants, 40 minute limit/meeting) <https://zoom.us/pricing>
- **Skype** – has a restricted free service (free calls online, no sign ups or downloads, up to 50 participants) <https://www.skype.com/en/free-conference-call>

Personal Stories and Experiences

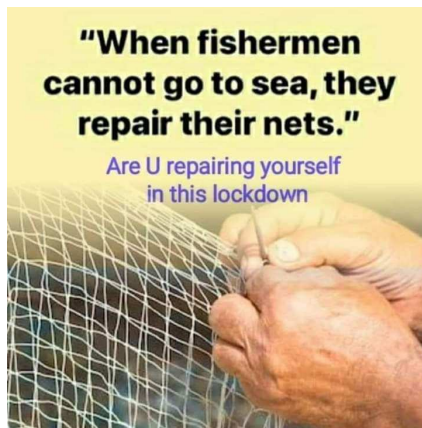
Have Faith even during an emergency

Fr Johane Nguluwe

As I landed at our airport in Harare on 6th February, there wasn't much fuss about Covid-19. We were simply subjected to a temperature check and then let go. Only a few, whose trips had originated or passed near China, were asked to leave their residential addresses in Zimbabwe.

Since then, the scenario has changed completely especially with an initial lockdown of three weeks that has now seen an addition of two weeks to it.

The image below captures aptly what I have seen at Saints Peter and Paul, the parish of my new assignment.



While the initial lockdown had very stringent measures that included a travel ban, I was very free in and around the parish yard. There were vast amounts of manual work that needed doing. So I busied myself over these for a good four weeks. Apart from these, there was plenty of time to pray and get to sort this, that or the other concerning my spiritual life, lots of time to reflect on where I have come from and where I hope to be going with my ministry especially after the Covid-19 pandemic.

While Bill Gates and other world-renowned persons paint a grim picture regarding the numbers that are likely to die in Africa from Covid-19, this projection is not uppermost in our people's minds. There is an unwavering trust and faith in GOD, who has in the past come to His people's aid and will surely do so now and in the future.

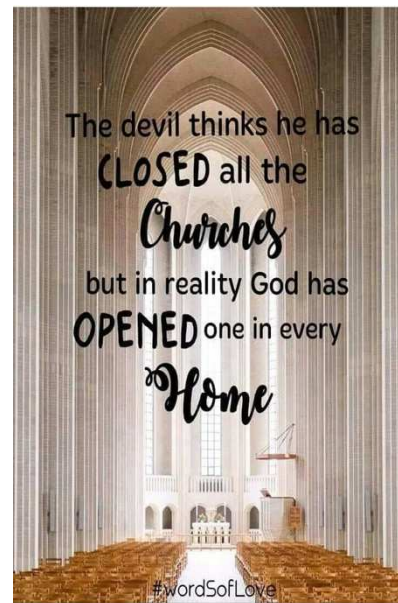
Therefore, they are not wallowing in self-pity but arming themselves as best they can with herbal remedies that others, elsewhere on the globe, claim to be both a preventative and cure for Covid-19. The African ladies wearing masks in the picture appear to be staring at Covid-19 and asking: 'where is your sting?'

as they vie with one another to make and present cloth masks and matching head gear that will attract the most clients! Yet, on a serious note, such activities should help boost rather than lower the immune system and preparedness to take on Covid-19 as and when it strikes.



Disability Arts and Culture Project, Zimbabwe
<https://twitter.com/DACPzw>

Before Covid, for our people, especially those in urban parishes, very little effort would be put in place to prepare for liturgical celebrations, whether be Sunday or weekday. The priest and the choir would play their parts as was usual and to be expected.



With the Covid pandemic and its associated lockdown, parish families were suddenly turned into home churches with the parent(s) and their children and other occupants, taking turns to lead, liturgical services. I have heard many stories of how some were innovative in order to make the services as exciting

as possible. I want to guess that the church will have a new look as and when we re-congregate as a parish once we are done with Covid-19!

We appear as a nation to have eased into phase one of lifting up the lockdown in style and confidence especially as the Government has encouraged us to put something, homemade or exotic to cover our mouths and noses as we leave our houses to do business with others. It's my daily prayer and hope that Africa, with her meagre resources and medical expertise, will be spared the onslaught of this virus.

Holy Week @ Home

Nora Darby

We had all been aware since the beginning of 2020 that there was an epidemic of a new virus in China, a particularly virulent one which was given the name Covid-19 and also known as Coronavirus. What we didn't expect was that it would spread, and in a very deadly way, and that by February it was in the UK.

Wednesday, 26th February, was Ash Wednesday the beginning of Lent. We all went to Mass to receive the blessed Ashes and everything was relatively normal. Plans had been made of what was to happen during Lent, Stations of the Cross, house Masses and an Ablaze Mass among other things.

The following two weeks passed with an ever-growing awareness of Covid-19 and how serious it was. Then the Government announced we were to avoid body contact; we were already hand washing at every move we made. On the 14th March, I went to the 6pm Vigil Mass as usual, but it was different, there was no Holy Water in the fonts, no shaking hands at the Sign of Peace and at Communion the Host was not allowed to be given by mouth, only in the hand.

The situation then changed rapidly, on the 21st March I was again at 6pm Mass but there were no parishioners just myself and Charles Nisbet, we were there to read the lessons with Fr Simon saying Mass. It was all very strange.

The next week the Government announced Lockdown! Everything came to a halt and all churches were closed and we had to 'Stay Home'. Fortunately, at St Laurence's livestreaming had been installed, initially it was for parishioners unable to get to the church, to join into a Virtual Mass, but now we could all join in!

29th March was a very special day, but I will talk about that later; a separate issue.

5th April and it is Palm Sunday, the start of Holy Week and we are not there. Fr Bob and Fr Simon are celebrating the various Masses alone and we are unable to receive our palms though Fr Simon did leave the blessed palms outside the presbytery for us to pick up. Holy week followed by Easter for me is the most important time of the Church's year, something I look forward to; to be part of the Triduum and all it means but this year was so different.

Maundy Thursday, evening Mass, Fr Bob assisted by Fr Simon, I am streaming via my laptop at home. It was a lovely service but no Holy Oils and no washing of feet.

Good Friday 3pm, and time for the Celebration of the Passion of Our Lord. Usually our church is packed with people sometimes standing outside, therefore a very long service so many waiting to venerate the Crucifix after the procession to the altar. Not this year! The crucifix is on the altar and there is Fr Simon reading The Passion of Our Lord alone at the lectern. As always it was very moving but for me sitting, also alone, at home even more so this year.

Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil. Normally we would start outside lighting the Paschal candle and then into the church for the Mass. As this could not be it would be Fr Simon. So, he and Martin Avery decided we would have music and readings for the Vigil. The music group sang, played solo at home and recorded for Martin to merge into a CD. Readers were asked and those chosen were given a reading to record and send to Martin for another CD. I was very happy to be given one of the readings. It sounds simple but for Martin to do this was anything but. Frances Stafford had gone into the church to do some beautiful flower arrangements which complemented an altar no longer in mourning. It was lovely to hear familiar voices singing and reading, if I closed my eyes it was to be back inside St Laurence's not sitting alone at my laptop!

Lockdown goes on, but from home I go to Mass and say the prayer of St Alphonsus until I am able to receive the Blessed Sacrament again. Fr Simon and Fr Bob continue to say Mass for all of us, the choir is singing and from the beginning of May there are once more readers thanks to Martin. I look forward to reading the first lesson on the Feast of Corpus Christi. Before that we can look forward to the Ascension and to Pentecost. Someday, hopefully not too far away and with God's help, we will be able to return to our normal life and to St Laurence's.

Earlier I mentioned Sunday 29th March and that it was such a special day.

It was to be the day that England was to be rededicated as the *Dowry of Mary*. I think by now most of you will know that in 1381 Richard II made the first dedication in Westminster Abbey as he sought the protection of Our Lady in times of great political turmoil. England then received the title 'Mary's Dowry'. The rededication has been a topic for a long time and finally in 2017 the Bishops' Conference decided on Sunday 29th the nearest Sunday to The Annunciation. Every Diocese had been notified and a booklet 'BEHOLD', a Briefing Paper, was available.

The rededication was to be fulfilled by a communal act of prayer across the country through The Angelus Promise (ideally at 12noon) and The Act of Entrustment. Mass would be celebrated at Walsingham the Catholic Holy Shrine followed by a procession of

Our Lady's statue to The Holy House where the rededication would take place.

I was so looking forward to being part of it. Coming from a long Marian tradition at home and at my convent school, Our Lady was an important part of my life. Came the day and due to Covid-19 we were in Lockdown.

The rededication took place as a very quiet ceremony in Cathedrals and churches throughout the country often with a lone priest on the altar. Radio Maria the English Catholic radio station broadcast the Mass from Walsingham and I, among many others, was able to join in the livestreaming there. Mass was celebrated by Mgr John Armitage, Rector of the Shrine and there were, I think, four acolytes assisting him. The rededication took place before the start of the Pilgrim Mass at 12noon, the time of The Angelus. To be there was a wonderful and uplifting experience to be remembered always, even though in reality I was once again alone – 'Staying Home'.



Image taken from the Rededication Mass streamed live from Walsingham, 29th March 2020, 12noon

It was estimated 530,000 people throughout England and the rest of the world took part in the rededication. You can see the recorded ceremony by going to the Walsingham website.

Housing and feeding our homeless during the Covid 19 pandemic

Petra Tucker

Once again, Cambridge Churches Homeless Project ran a much-needed winter shelter from 1st Dec to the end of March, thanks to the usual mix of seasoned and newbie volunteers, all keen to offer their time and skills. This year we occasionally struggled to provide the 4 "overnight" volunteers per night, so perhaps people might think about this role for next time. Help comes in many forms – one parishioner wasn't able to volunteer for a specific role, but each time I did a lead cook duty she gave me some freshly baked biscuits for the guests to have with their hot drinks before supper was served.

As Covid-19 hit the headlines, we as trustees wondered how we could keep the shelter going until 31st March. The guests were vulnerable not just because some of the church accommodation is less spacious but also because many of our guests have underlying health issues.

Government advice on 15th March (avoid all non-essential travel and contact with others etc.) led to many volunteers going into self-isolation and all churches closing, but we were able to keep going thanks to the generosity of St Paul's Church, which has a large church hall so spacing the sleeping bags was easy – it also meant that we could leave the kit out and ask each guest to use the same space each night thereby cutting down some infection risk.

Before our guests arrived, a thorough clean of door handles, table tops etc. was carried out with alcohol spray. Then we checked the guests' temperature when they arrived at the project and supervised handwashing. We spaced the dining tables further apart, allowed only 4 seats per table and served food directly to the tables, with kitchen staff remaining in the kitchen. Social distancing and extra safety measures are hard to enforce for guests who arrive in a poor state, but happily we had no guests show symptoms of Covid-19.

On the 27th March we said goodbye to our guests as they were given rooms in hotels in Cambridge, since the government ordered local councils to house their homeless. When it became clear that food and drink was not part of the deal, two groups geared into action immediately – Wintercomfort for the homeless providing food at the weekends and The Salvation Army on Mill Road covering Monday to Friday.

At the time of writing this article, I am involved in food preparation at The Salvation Army, as part of a team who make a hot meal for 90 people. Most of the food comes from Food Share so planning of the meals depends largely on what has been delivered.



Jan Mott – Community Manager Salvation Army
Major Leanne Cordner – Leader of The Cambridge Citadel



Petra taking the meat off 150 spare ribs!

We have had a run of spare ribs and chicken breasts; one day I cubed 30lbs of very cold turkey breasts. We start at 9am and by 11.30am serve the meals (plus puddings) into foil containers. These are delivered to the hotels in hot boxes at around midday, together with bags which another team fill with a drink, fruit, crisps, cake, breakfast bar and sandwiches.

After the hot meal has been served, we pause for breath and eat a socially distanced shared meal in the hall that is used to make food parcels. The team at The Salvation Army is led by Majors Martin and Leanne Cordner who are the leaders of the Cambridge Citadel. Alongside Leanne, Jan Mott, Community Manager, co-ordinates the food buying and procuring. Jan, in normal times, is the co-ordinator of the Salvation Army programme that runs each week. The staff from the Salvation Army shop instead of being furloughed are working at the centre. I work alongside their shop manager Charmaine each day.

The atmosphere is very friendly and everyone works hard. I enjoy it as it is a way that people from different churches can work together plus I get to cook lots of food! As to what the CCHP night shelter will look like at the end of this year – who knows. The trustees expect there will be many new requirements which will shape the kind of night shelter that CCHP will be able to run.

Where do the funds go?

Sr Pat Robb (written in 1994)

“How do I know my donation reaches those in most need?” How I wish I had a pound for each time I have heard that question; a pound to use ‘for those in need’. But it is a valid question. We hear, over and over again,

of corruption within aid agencies both at home and abroad. BAD NEWS. Always bad news. The papers, especially the tabloids, love bad news to splash over the front pages. I have, many times, witnessed corruption, have seen vast sums of money administered inefficiently but, in spite of all this, the greater percentage of what you give DOES reach those most needy of our brothers and sisters.

I want, during these few minutes to tell you some GOOD NEWS; some examples of aid helping, nay even saving lives.

Let me tell you the story of Manuel.

Manuel was about 18 months old when I met him. The seventh child of a poor family in Mocambique, a town in Mozambique. Like all poor families the ongoing civil war, compounded by two years of drought, had left the family hungry, sick and without hope. The anti-government rebels had raided their village and taken everything of value; chickens, goats, blankets, cooking pots and the very little grain they had harvested. But also, they had broken into the nearby clinic and stolen all the drugs and equipment. This little area of Mocambique was without any external help.

Manuel and his family were not alone in their plight, but Manuel sticks out in my mind because of his mother. She arrived at our makeshift health post, a tired, frightened, thin woman, with Manuel trying to suck on one empty breast. The eyes of this woman were haunting, hopeless. We were obviously her last resort. By her side a child with matchstick legs, runny eyes and bloated belly hung onto a bit of rag that once upon a time might have been a skirt. But it was Manuel that was in greatest need; his skin hung off him in dry folds, his eyes sunken into his head appeared large, his belly bloated, his skin covered with sores, his ribs sticking out. When put on the scales he was, at 18 months, smaller than an average newborn baby. Hopeless. NO.

But it was a struggle to save Manuel, and it is a struggle to save the thousands like him.

Manuel responded to treatment. Slowly flesh covered his bones, his sores were healed, he began to crawl then walk.

Manuel’s mother? Well that really was the excellent news. During our sessions together it transpired that she had had 7 children, 5 of whom had died in infancy and 3 of those had died in the local hospital. Her faith in western medicine was at its lowest ebb and she really did come to us when all traditional help had failed. That mother recovered WITH her child. Not only nutritionally, but in her spirit. She became one of our greatest allies, persuading other mothers to come for help, following carefully the instructions for cooking

the local foods and the lessons on hygiene. What is more, she AND her husband came to the discussion on agricultural methods and the distribution of seed.

When the civil war ended and the rains came, the families could get back to normal with your help. Let us look at how Manuel and his family were helped.

To begin with a team of ex-patriate and six local helpers. Transport. Cooking pots, feeding equipment, teaching aids. Medicines, vitamins, soap, food, blankets, clothes. Seed. A new bore hole to provide the area with clean water. Repairs to the clinic. Erection of a school. Agricultural projects, forestation, women's sewing groups. The list is endless.

Where does your money go? It goes where you want it to go. My advice is that you choose carefully an agency that has people working at grassroots to ensure that YOUR money goes to people like Manuel and his mother to improve their standard of life. You may want to choose education, or health, or agriculture. Whatever. It is up to you.

As a postscript I would like to say that I saw this family three years after the start of treatment and they really do fit the phrase: 'and they all lived happily ever after.'

Lockdown Poetry

I Stayed Inside

By Chioma Ubajaka

I stayed inside as I was told,
To keep the virus under control.
I saw such horror slowly unfold,
My life may have to be on hold.

I stayed inside and watched the
news,
As numbers climbed, my heart was
bruised.

I prayed for mercy and
breakthroughs,
Please God, come to our rescue.

My Child, have I not told thee?
This is the answer to your plea.
I have no time you once told me,
To grow and be all you could be.

Time is yours, now you're free.
Use the gifts I gave you with glee.
This is the time, you must agree,
To build that life you asked of me.

So sit in Child, make lots of tea,
Leave my dear world all to me.
Earth, heavens, man and sea,
Nothing's new, I hold the key.

I stayed inside and took a breath,
I took stock of all my wealth.
Friends, family, life and health;
Gifts to cherish until death.

I stayed inside, time slowed down,
Let all go, spread love around.
I worked on me and built my crown,
Peace and praise were my sound.

I stayed inside, a cure was found,
The walls of quarantine came down.
I stepped outside; life turned around
I gave thanks for this Lockdown.



Lockdown

Josephine Cullum

I sit at home and wonder
When this awful virus will end,
I hope it won't be too long
Or I'll go round the bend.

I know we must be careful
And stay so far apart
But it is very difficult
And really hurts our heart.

The sun just keeps on shining.
The birds sing in the sky.
And I know that somehow
We will all get by.

I know that God is with us
In everything we do.
So he will always help us
And make sure we get through.

When once more we are together
To show each other love
I know that we must thank
The dear Lord who is above.

Parish Organisations and Activities

CAFOD appeal

Serga Collett

Love is HIS Word



Last week, the director general of the World Health Organisation (Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus) said: **“History will judge all of us, not only on whether we got through the pandemic but by the lessons we have learnt and the actions we took.”**

The selflessness of our NHS heroes, our shopkeepers, our refuse collectors, indeed all frontline workers is without doubt, outstanding, incredible – words fail me, to describe how valiant I think they have been and I am sure history will surely sing their glories.

Love is his word, love is his way! One significant result of this terrible pandemic is the love shown by most people towards each other, it restores my belief in human nature to witness the kindnesses that are apparent in every neighbourhood – the reaching out to the vulnerable, the sick etc – helpfulness, kind words and smiles are everyday occurrences in every community.

Love is his sign, love is his news! So many heroic acts and signs of goodwill and solidarity have also resulted in the media reporting ‘good news’... (at the time of writing) £32 million raised by Colonel Tom Moore for the NHS, 750,000 applications of volunteer support to the NHS ... and many, many more ways of demonstrating our ‘love’.

Love is his name, love is his law! But we must not let it end there! Whilst it is not easy for us to social distance from each other, at least we can! Imagine, being told to socially distance when you can't. In many refugee camps this is the case. Or if you are told, you are risking your health by living with all your brothers/sisters/family in a slum. Imagine if you can't wash your hands because you have NO running water. We think it is hard that we have to queue to buy food in Tesco and that some stocks are limited, imagine if there was no food. Yet this is the reality for many, many people.

In other countries, for example, Zimbabwe, lockdown has meant that people there, as here, are confined to

their homes, the difference being that there is no social safety net, there are no furlough schemes. It is a question ‘working or not eating’, an impossible choice. 80% of people work in the informal work sector, now there is no source of income for them. Indeed, people are more worried about where the next meal is coming from, than the coronavirus. Zimbabwe was close to economic collapse before the coronavirus, ravaged by droughts and extreme weather conditions and this is the case in many of the developing countries.

SO WE MUST DO SOMETHING! I believe that if we really believe that **Love is His Name**, then we must act out **His Law!** It is our duty to help!

But what can we do?

Please pray for our brothers and sisters! You can livestream Masses from the CAFOD website, use the CAFOD coronavirus prayers or light a virtual candle on the website. A prayer you may wish to pray for yourself or others in need is printed below *.

Sign CAFOD’s new petition to the Prime Minister asking the government to put the needs of the most vulnerable first, asking him to make sure that any vaccine developed with UK public money is made available to everyone regardless of their income or where in the world they live.

- Provide urgent financial and technical support to help developing countries cope with this crisis.
- Cancel all debt payments by developing countries due in 2020 so that they can spend money on much needed healthcare rather than debt repayments.
- Put plans in place to rebuild a fairer, more just society after the crisis so that the world’s most vulnerable people can live in dignity and to restore our common home for future generations.

Pope Francis calls us to act: “May the risen Jesus grant hope to all the poor, to those living on the peripheries, to refugees and the homeless. May these, the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters living in the cities and peripheries of every part of the world, not be abandoned.”

And of course, last but not least you can **donate to the CAFOD Coronavirus Appeal** (unfortunately due to the fact that Mass was very badly attended during our Lent appeal – the Cambridge Half Marathon and the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, donations this year were down by 1/3 in our Parish! If you did not have an opportunity to donate, please, please, please may I ask you to do so now.)

What could your donation buy:

- £6 could buy a hygiene pack for a family
- £52 can provide a farmer tools and seeds
- £372 can pay for a coronavirus awareness TV discussion

Please go online to **CAFOD.org.uk** TODAY and give what you can spare. Every penny will make a difference!

What is CAFOD doing:

CAFOD work with local experts, ready to help those in need prevent the spread of the virus and protect lives by:

- Delivering food to where it is needed most
- Improving hygiene, handwashing and sanitation at the community and household level.
- Producing radio messages, posters and leaflets in local languages on risks and prevention.
- Training community volunteers to carry out awareness campaigns.

CAFOD is already on the ground working alongside Rohingya and Syrian refugees and works with many 'local experts' who are rooted in the communities and are a trusted presence there. CAFOD is part of Caritas Internationalis, the global Church Aid Network, which has a local presence in 165 countries. Together they make up one of the largest aid networks in the world and together have substantial technical knowledge in WASH – water, hygiene and sanitation, essential for disease control, essential in these times.

And finally, back to the Director General of the World Health Organisation "The antidote to this pandemic is national unity and global solidarity. **Together we will defeat Covid19!**"

And there you have it: **Love is His Word!**

*A beautiful prayer both for yourself and those elsewhere in the world is Saint Patrick's Breastplate; there is no reason why you can't adapt it to the needs of others:

Christ with me, (them)
 Christ before me, (them)
 Christ behind me, (them)
 Christ in me, (them)
 Christ beneath me, (them)
 Christ above me, (them)
 Christ on my right, (their)
 Christ on my left, (their)
 Christ when I lie down,(they)
 Christ when I sit down, (they)
 Christ when I arise, (they)
 Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
 (them)
 Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
 (them)
 Christ in every eye that sees me, (them)
 Christ in every ear that hears me. (them)

A message from CAFOD in East Anglia

Jane Crone

Over the last few uncertain and difficult weeks we have all had to learn how to live and work in new and different ways due to a constantly changing new reality.

CAFOD staff are working from home, using technology to keep in touch with colleagues and with volunteers in parishes and schools. Rather than pulling us apart the experience has drawn us together, focusing our minds on how interconnected we are as a global community and the needs of our common home. We are more than ever united in love and compassion for others.

On 30th April CAFOD launched a Coronavirus Appeal. Fragile healthcare systems, lack of clean water, unreliable food supplies and the impossibility of social distancing means that the world's poorest communities are most vulnerable to the effects of coronavirus. For the first time CAFOD is responding to an emergency overseas, while the same emergency is taking place in the UK. We are appealing for donations, aware that many of our supporters and parishes are experiencing economic uncertainties of their own and community fundraising events are extremely difficult to organise.

CAFOD's partners in the field are also finding ways to adapt to a new reality. Handwashing and sanitation facilities in communities and households are already being improved. Faith groups are using their networks to share hygiene messages through radio stations and producing posters on infection prevention in local dialects. We are receiving requests for PPE and hear concerns about rising food prices and food shortages.

In the words of Kayode, our representative in Sierra Leone.



'I know this is a very worrying time for everyone around the world, including in the UK. But I have to tell you, we are much more worried than you. I am

sorry to say that, we really do not have the health system to support this kind of pandemic. People are saying they have two choices – they go out to work and die of COVID-19, or they stay at home and die of hunger. CAFOD volunteers and supporters have never failed to work alongside us in our times of greatest need. Your prayers and donations keep hope alive. We will not cease to thank you, from deep within our hearts, for all that you are doing'.

If you would like to hear the rest of Kayode's talk and other talks from CAFOD staff see the volunteer section

of our website. We also have an [online petition](#) asking the government to ensure that vaccines and technical support are shared with developing countries, debt payments by developing countries due in 2020 are cancelled and plans are made to create a more just society.

At the launch of the emergency appeal CAFOD's Director, Christine Allen said,

“The potential scale of the pandemic across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East – as well as among refugee and displaced populations in places such as Syria, South Sudan and the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh – is truly frightening.

“We have a narrow window of opportunity to reach communities with the basics for life – food and clean water, and the messages they need on how best to keep safe. Donations have never been more urgent, providing steadfast support to those who are in greatest need”.



Please do consider giving CAFOD what you can spare through our website or your parish collection. The effects of coronavirus on developing countries could be devastating. The UN's World Food Programme has said that a quarter of a billion people may

be pushed into famine if swift action is not taken to provide food and humanitarian aid.

Above all please remember our vulnerable brothers and sisters in your prayers over the coming months, perhaps using some of the prayer resources on [CAFOD's website](#).

SVP Update

Catharine Warren

Your Parish SVP is still 'open for business' during the COVID19 lockdown, so do contact us if you, or someone you know, would like to have a chat, needs any shopping or help with any difficulty.

Thank you to the people who have contacted SVP offering to help during the current crisis. We have more helpers than requests for help at the moment, so please do not hesitate to contact SVP if you need anything. You can call me on 07421 253100 or email: svp@saintlaurence.org.uk

Thank you also for your contributions to the SVP Maundy Thursday collection of approximately £120. Like last year this will be shared between two projects: the SVP Sudan and South Sudan appeal and the SVP's new house 'St Vincent's' in Sheringham, for people who are homeless. As our church was closed on Maundy Thursday, the collection was much lower than last year when £676 was given. However, it's not too late if you would like to support these causes. There are more details about the projects and how to donate by bank transfer, on the SVP page on the Parish website.

Since 2019 the Parish Tech Group has been busy working to help people, unable to get to church, to view Sunday Mass using livestreaming. This is even more useful now we all need livestreaming to take part in Mass. Currently several donated laptops have been made ready. If you have the internet at home but need a laptop, or help to access the Parish livestreaming, please contact SVP and we will coordinate with the Tech Group to help you stay connected with Parish life. If you do not have the internet at home, you can also follow Mass and other prayer services on DAB radio by tuning to: Radio Maria England (Band 11C 220.352 MHz). Let SVP know if you, or someone you know, would like a DAB radio, as SVP and the Tech Group are looking to get hold of a few DAB radios to be able to meet this need.

During the lockdown SVP members continue to come together in a fortnightly meeting on Zoom. We pray for parishioners in need and those recently deceased. Though not visiting people at home, members are still able to offer ongoing support and we can respond to new requests. Recently this has included:

- Keeping in telephone contact with people, particularly people we would normally visit.
- Helping a family moving house, to obtain furniture and white goods, from Emmaus and The Besom in Histon and Impington. (Besom provides a bridge between those who want to give time, money, things or skills and those who are in need)
- Issuing a foodbank voucher to a family in need. Two SVP members are now registered with the Cambridge Foodbank to issue 'code only vouchers' by telephone.
- Delivering a large number of donated items to three delighted families, thanks to a generous donation of three carloads.

We are continuing to consider innovative ways to help people, despite the current restrictions and of course if you have any thoughts about this, please do get in touch with us.

Summary of Parish Open Meeting

20th May 2020 conducted via Zoom
34-41 participants over the course of the meeting
including Fr Simon, Deacon Geoff, Stephen Warde
(chair), Sarah Sykes (Minutes)

The Chair thanked Martin Avery for hosting the meeting.

Online Liturgy

Fr Simon summarised the ongoing Liturgies taking place online. The timetable of Masses continues as before lockdown except 8am and 9.30am merged into one a 9am Mass. This has proved popular with livestream attendance overtaking the 11am Mass. He also summarised the extra Liturgy taking place over the livestream:

9am Morning Prayer
12noon Angelus, plus news items
6pm Evening Prayer
7pm Rosary for the month of May

Fr Simon then thanked Ginny Russell for typing up his weekday and Sunday sermons which he hoped to make available on the website at a future date as a resource for the Parish.

Parish Finance and Admin

James Dore, Co-Treasurer, gave a finance presentation covering the current state of the Parish finances and the effect that lockdown will have on the forthcoming year's finances.

Full details can be found on the website, [Open Meetings](#)

A plea for those who can and who haven't already done so to consider setting up a regular standing order, and if you are a UK taxpayer, please also complete a gift aid declaration. (contact [Jim Scally](#))

Fr Simon, followed up James' mention of changes in the Parish Office, by explaining that Pat Cook had retired just before lockdown, but it was planned to have a farewell social gathering and Mass with the Bishop at some point in the future in recognition and thanks for many years of hard work. The Chair also added thanks on behalf of the Parish.

Sanctuary Plans – brief update

Fr Simon confirmed that the plans for the changes to the Sanctuary had been sent to the Diocese, and that there were a number of concerns from the Bishop, Fr Bob and the Parish. He explained that the Diocese has appointed a Cambridge-based consultant architect, who is also

currently the retained architect for St Paul's Cathedral, London.

However, plans are on hold for the moment until we have a clearer idea of the financial situation. The Chair reported that the feedback on the plans via a survey form had begun shortly before lockdown. The form is now available online through the [Parish website](#). Comments are still welcome through this medium and all responses will be collated and go forward to the meeting (originally planned for this month) to discuss the Sanctuary plans, when we are able to hold this.

Re-opening the church – discussion

The Chair shared an open document with starting points for discussion which had been made available ahead of the Meeting. He asked for people's thoughts on these suggestions and encouraged people to continue to add to the discussion after the meeting. The document was split into sections. It was emphasised that this is merely a starting point for discussion, not a time for final decisions. Please see p.24 for summary of suggestions discussed in the meeting.

Parish communication and support

Parish communications are currently shared via: Mass announcements, online newsletter updated every week (send notices to office@saintlaurence.org.uk), Parish Facebook page. We also have a new 'keep-in-touch' email list and available to sign up on the website (keeping in touch tab) to receive a weekly email highlighting what's happening in the Parish and any additional news needing to be circulated between Newsletters.

Open Discussion: SVP are keeping in contact with people by phone. We should be reaching as much of our Parish community as possible whether they are online or not. Thanks to a large donation of laptops which were received before lockdown, the Tech Group have been able to distribute to those who need them. More laptop or tablet donations are welcomed and may be given to families who are home schooling multiple children. It seems that some people, including children, are enjoying accessing Mass online, appreciating the lack of distraction and direct focus with the priest on the altar.

Suggestions: Parish chat/befriending group – phone a coordinators number and leave a message and someone calls back for a chat. Set up a Parish WhatsApp group. Pen friends/letter writing, circulating the newsletter, 'keep in touch' email and sermon by post. Put a recording of Mass on to a laptop and circulate the laptop for people to watch the recording bypassing the need for internet access. Ronald Haynes also suggested that it is possible to share at least the audio of Mass over a phone

call and said the Tech Group would be happy to help groups who want to trial phone meet-ups. Could also consider a bulk texting service to send out updates and notes to catch people who have a phone but no computer. Social and group meeting online which can be joined via phone too. The Parish is diverse and spread out could local groups be formed to support each other?

If anyone (2-3 people) has the time and ability to move forward any of these ideas, please get in contact either through SVP : crigluk@yahoo.co.uk

Updates on Parish Groups & Activities

School – Veronica Harvey, co-head: the school closed nine weeks ago on 23rd March. It is semi-open for keyworkers children. Teachers are working on a rota basis going into school three days in every four weeks and Heads are going in on alternate weeks. They are enjoying having this time with children to work on more creative activities. They made a VE day video, have been writing letters to old peoples' homes in the community, keeping in contact with parents and children. A risk assessment plan is being worked on in anticipation of re-opening for Reception, Yr 1 and Yr 6 children. She will take the possibility of Mass being celebrated on the school field back to the Academy Trust. She would also enquire whether the school could donate any laptops to the Tech Group for distribution in the Parish.

Head of Governors, Mary-Jane O'Sullivan, also added thanks on behalf of all the Governors for the hard work and positivity of the staff.

Communion: Fr Simon said we are looking at the possibility of allowing children to make their First Holy Communion throughout the autumn, in small groups of up to four families on a Saturday or Sunday. We have 60 children waiting, which means there would be roughly 15 celebrations taking place over several months.

Confirmation & Youth: Helena reported that Confirmation candidates receive invites to all Ablaze Masses which have continued as usual through lockdown using Zoom. They have also been helping with the production of children's plays on Radio Maria England. CAFOD children's liturgy is being used by many and the Ignite team produced Ignite@Home. There is currently no new date for the Confirmation celebration. The Youth team are providing support where needed and reports that the 'domestic church' has strengthened and grown through bringing Mass into the home.

CAFOD update – as well as children's liturgy, CAFOD have been streaming Mass. Headquarters is

closed and many staff furloughed, though staff on the ground in the poorest countries are still working hard. Donations are needed to support this work. Our Parish project Hands on Columbia, which launched in January this year, has had to come to a halt for now. Serga proposed that once the church re-opens that we extend the project and the Meeting agreed.

Our LiveSimply award is due for renewal. Ideas which we as a Parish could follow through either at a Parish level or an individual level at home are welcomed. Serga gave a few examples such as add a LiveSimply prayer at Mass every week and asked for more suggestions.

Covid-19 crisis: if you are able to contribute to the Coronavirus Appeal on the CAFOD website, the appeal details will be in this weekend's newsletter.

SVP update – Catharine reported to the meeting that the SVP group continues to meet fortnightly via Zoom. They are keeping in contact with people mainly by phone and still open to requests for help. They are issuing foodbank vouchers via the computer and phone. They have had more offers to help than requests for help, if anyone you know would benefit from help please find our contact details on the Parish website. They plan to compile a list of people not online who would like a paper copy of *The Pilgrim* and include a greeting from the Parish with information about other ongoing support for example.

Pilgrim magazine – Nora Darby, co-editor, thanked the people who had contributed articles for the forthcoming June edition. In the main it will be published as an electronic edition. There is a Pilgrim mailing list, so if you would like to receive a pdf version by email, please put in a request at pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk. The magazine will also be available to be read and downloaded from the Parish website under The Pilgrim menu tab. If you are unable to access the internet, a few paper copies will be produced and posted on request via the same email address or via the SVP.

Date of next meeting

We normally meet four times a year but, because of the unusual circumstances at this time, we will hold one-hour meetings monthly for the next few months. We are likely to meet again w/c 15th June and w/c 13th July. Once definite dates have been agreed, details will be circulated. Please let the Chair know if you want something added to the agenda or if there are any potential date clashes during the above proposed weeks by emailing openmeetings@saintlaurence.org.uk. Feedback about the experience of the Open Meeting on Zoom would also be welcome to the same address.

St Laurence's discussion document on returning to church – Version 2, 28 May 2020

Some of the actions that we might take are outlined below. These will be updated as we gather more input and begin to make firm decisions. Please do share your thoughts and ideas with us – in future meetings or by emailing openmeetings@saintlaurence.org.uk. – making it a shared Parish effort. Items in *italics* below have been modified since Version 1 of this document, following the Open Meeting discussions and other input. **Nothing is yet decided; these are ideas to encourage discussion.**

Opening the church for private prayer

- This is likely to be one of the first things we are permitted to do – we must have social distancing and measures to reduce risk of virus spread (see below) in place before doing this.
- *In this and all decisions to further open the church we must act in coordination with other churches in Cambridge.*

Changing our use of spaces

- While social distancing measures are required, we are likely to need to restrict Masses to the church, rather than also using the school.
- If numbers for gatherings inside are restricted, we could consider having some services or social gatherings outside (garden or car park) with appropriate distancing. *At our May open meeting we also undertook to investigate possible future use of the schoolfield.*

Dealing with restricted numbers at Mass

- There is likely to be a restriction on the number of people we can accommodate in Church.
- We could (temporarily) add additional Masses (e.g., Sunday evening) to help.
- We may need to find ways to 'ration' attendance, e.g. by surname (A-H attend first week, I- M second week, N-Z the third week). *Points to be mindful of in implementing this include that people may attend in family or other groups with different surnames.*
- Other suggestions for 'rationing' attendance are welcome.
- We could have systems to 'sign up' for specific Masses – but would need to ensure these do not penalise people without online access.
- Encourage ongoing use of Mass streaming service for those unable to attend each Sunday.
- Acknowledge that attending Sunday Mass is not obligatory under these circumstances – parishioners could also fulfil their obligation by attending a weekday Mass. *Look at extra Masses during the week outside working hours to facilitate this.*
- Have a 'steward' system to ensure we do not exceed max numbers allowed at any Mass.
 - Restrict the maximum number attending from any one family and ask families to organise their own rotas for Mass-going.

Social distancing in and around church

- Close off every other pew; implement a maximum number per pew.

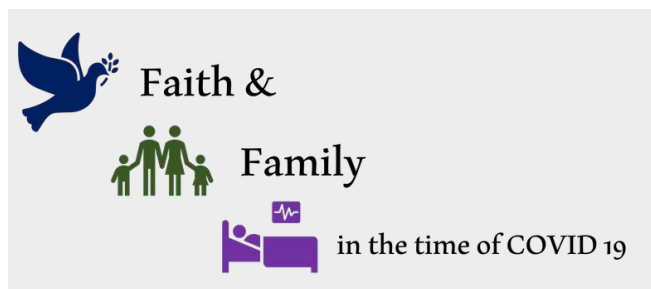
- Remove the chairs in the side aisles.
- Operate a one-way system in church: e.g. walk down the central aisle and up the side aisle
- Come in through the Porch – exit via the Narthex.
- Ask people to go straight to the next available pew on arrival, not 'sit where you want'.
- Close off alternate 'lanes' in the car park to avoid risk of needing to touch other cars.
- No Children's Liturgy until it can be safely held – consider alternative support (e.g., directing to online resources that can be printed and brought along; incorporating a prayer or reading involving children into Masses; a Mass specifically for families with smaller children).
- No after Mass coffee/tea or use of the kitchen until this can be done safely.

Reduce risk of spread via surfaces

- Request parishioners to stay at home if they feel unwell.
- Paid cleaner to wipe down pews and door handles, in addition to normal duties, each weekday morning.
- Volunteer parishioners to wipe down pews, door handles etc before each weekend Mass.
- Hand sanitiser available on entering the church.
- No hymn sheets, Mass books, printed newsletters or distribution of any other materials in the porch/narthex.
- No holy water.
- Communion by host only, by hand only. *Wearing of gloves is an option but felt not to be necessary if handwashing immediately before distribution of communion is maintained.*
- *The suggestion that the communion host to be set out by priest in front of altar under a self-serve system was not supported at the Open Meeting – concerns that it changed the nature of receiving Communion and is unnecessary, as long as handwashing protocols are maintained.*
- *Consider the queuing system for Communion – it may better enable social distancing to have those distributing move through the church.*
- No personal contact at sign of peace.
- *Limit communal singing (risk of virus transmission when breathing in/out is heightened).*
- Will need to reconsider (or disable) operation of parking system during the week – *minimise use and ensure cleaning between use of keypads in church.*

Radio Maria England's Faith and Family in the Time of COVID 19

Genevieve Wedgbury



I had been doing some interviews with Fr Sam for Radio Maria. Once we were in lockdown, this was organised by Helena Judd via Zoom, which is how I got to meet her! She asked me if I would be happy to interview families about their experiences coping with lockdown. I am a real people-person; I love talking to people, and I find their experiences and insights, particularly when it comes to faith, fascinating. So, I was very happy to comply! Helena sent me her production proposal and this was the first time I saw the name of the series: Faith & Family in the time of Covid-19.

Doing the series made me reflect on my experience of lockdown; am I thriving? How is God drawing me to Himself during this time?

I was struck by the humility, faith and resilience of our interviewees. We spoke to families juggling work and home-schooling children, dealing with bereavement, and still managing to keep an incredible, inspiring perspective, and good humour! It was very clear in every case how central their faith was in giving them both strength and courage to keep pressing on.

I was interested in knowing more about how this faith was fed and manifested? It became clear that the daily Masses online were incredibly important in keeping people connected to their faith. Even the children appreciated the stillness and time for reflection it afforded. We also heard of testimonies where God had clearly met their needs – even providing loo roll!

I think every family mentioned the blessing of spending more quality time together, being more connected to one another, and to God. But, they also spoke of the challenges of lockdown, from sharing a small space together, to being apart from loved ones when we want to be with them most.

A highlight of the series was interviewing my sister! She is a key worker in fresh produce, and it was delightful hearing her express her faith.

Every time I hear a testimony I am so encouraged and challenged to reach higher in my own relationship with God. I hope and pray the series will be a blessing to you all!

Please [check out the programme](#) for further details. Broadcasts on Tuesdays at 8pm, Thursdays at 11am, and Saturdays at 2am.

St Laurence Parishioners featured in the series so far has been Helena – Youth leader, Chioma – First Holy Communion leader, Gail – Ablaze coordinator and Sandy – RME volunteer.

If you are interested in being interviewed – Please email Helena@plai-theatre.org

Genevieve Wedgbury is a volunteer for Radio Maria England, and has been presenting the 'Faith and Family in the time of Covid-19' series, which is airing now!

More RME updates – Helena Judd

Radio Maria England – Family and Culture Programming

Radio Maria England has been building its own original programming and has featured many of the voices of St Laurence's in Cambridge. The Confirmation candidates have helped voice plays. Families have shared their stories. Parishioners follow along with the daily rosary.

Please do take some time to look at the programme schedule: <https://radiomariaengland.uk/programme/>. If you would like to be more involved and lend your voice – please email Helena@plai-theatre.org.

CAFOD's Children's Liturgy

Every Sunday, young children can still have the experience of being a part of Children's Liturgy. The CAFOD Children's Liturgy Team has done an amazing job with their virtual lessons. Lasting 30 minutes in length, the group of leaders and their children share the gospel and how the gospel impacts them. Music and colouring sheets are also provided!

If online Mass leaves the kids falling asleep – check this out! It has helped my family immensely! <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy>

You can also tune into a session on Radio Maria England, Sundays at 10.45am.

Ablaze Mass is Live and 'Zooming'

Every first Sunday of the month, at 5pm you can count on the Ablaze Mass to use Zoom to bring St Laurence's parishioners together. Live music, singers, a variety of readers and a homily for all ages. For June – we'll be working on having a Fun 'Pizza night' after the Mass as well to catch up with parishioners. If you would like the Zoom details for the Ablaze Mass – please email the Parish Office and we will get you added to the list. Many thanks and God bless from the Ablaze Team!

ABLAZE Mass



1st Sunday of the month.....usually!

Sunday 7th June, 5pm

from St Laurence's Church

**A Joyful, lively and upbeat Worship for Youth and
the Young at Heart**

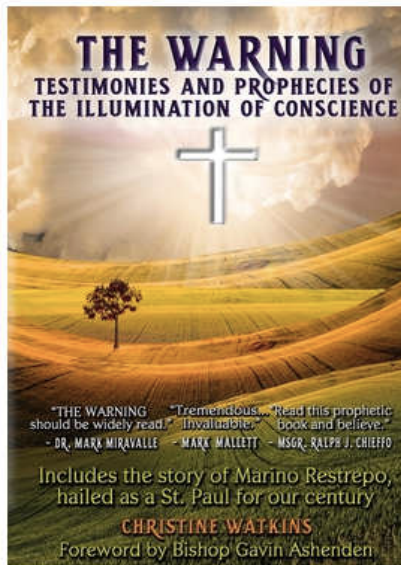
Currently online via livestream

**Or contact us via helena@plai-theatre.org and
you could join us by ZOOM!**

REVIEWS

Book Review

Sarah Sykes



The Warning by Christine Watkins
Published 2019, Queen of Peace Media
ISBN-13: 978-1-947701-09-0

This book brings together prophecies and testimonies about a forthcoming event called the 'Illumination of Conscience'.

The book is made up of two sections. The first records the prophecies about this warning, starting with St Edmund Campion, SJ, England (1540-1581); two Popes; St Faustina, Apostle of Divine Mercy; Our Lady and her apparitions at Garabandal, Spain; Matthew Kelly founder of Dynamic Catholic and others. We read about what they have been told by God about this event. The second section continues with testimonies from people who have already experienced this Illumination.

Watkins builds an impressive body of witness and prophecy about an event which it is said is likely to occur in our lifetime.

What is an Illumination of Conscience? It is an act of mercy from God for our World which is going in the wrong direction. Our conscience has gone dark, people aren't being taught what is right or wrong but, in fact, are being taught the opposite. It will be a worldwide moment in which every person on earth will see their soul the way God sees it in the light of their sin.

The book shares in great detail what will happen. But here is an outline:

All light from the sun will be extinguished, the moon will not shine, the stars will not shine, it will be pitch black. Suddenly two celestial bodies will collide and produce a massive light, Jesus will appear in the sky on the cross in a glorified state and from the holes of his wounds in his hands, feet and side rays of light will light up the earth brighter than day, wherever you are on the Earth. At this moment everyone's souls will be pierced by the Divine light of truth. Every person will be alone with his or her conscience in that moment and everything will stop. Everything will be fixed in time and for 5-15 minutes people will see all of their sins – both sins of omission and sins of commission – and the repercussions of those sins. They will feel what it would be like should they die at that moment and they will know where they are supposed to go whether it be heaven, purgatory or hell. For those who would go to purgatory they will feel the pain of their sin and they will know what they have to correct. For those very close to God they will see those small things that they need to perfect in order to have union with God, and for the ones who would go to hell they will burn and will experience Satan.

We have heard through the generations that the end is nigh, people have thought time and time again that they are living in the end times, so will we experience the Warning?

According to Luz de Maria de Bonilla, in July 2019, St Michael the Archangel declared to her that this is the generation that will experience the great act of Divine mercy – the Warning.

I recommend this book. Give it a read, judge for yourself whether God is sending the prophets of our age to warn us, and find out what happens after we have experienced the Warning. You know, it never hurts to be prepared. Like the bridesmaids we need to have oil in our lamps (Matt.25) and to have our souls prepared as best we can for whenever we encounter Jesus again.

Tailpiece

The Party that wasn't

Dick Wilson

One of our sixth form class in Carlisle Grammar School used to share his father's little football pool entry every week. This was, or is, I'm not sure, a way of gambling a small sum every week. You guessed the result of various combinations of football matches in the premier leagues, paid a small sum for a postal order for as many guesses as you make, and posted the form supplied to the promoter. Over the years millions of people took part, and the odds were calculated in such a way that many people won something every week, a small number won a larger sum, and a substantial sum was paid back each week as winnings to one person or a few. I think my father spent a shilling a week. He once won £25, and nothing thereafter. It livened up Saturday teatime, when the BBC broadcast the Saturday football results on the wireless (radio to you) and you checked them against your entry. You enjoyed the fun of gambling a small amount with very little enticement to risk a large sum. Often a whole family filled in the form, a line for each person. Alan came into school on Monday morning, and foolishly announced that he had won £450 on the football pool, a large sum at the time.

One of us said: "I wonder if he's going to have a party."
"No, I don't see why."
My friend Reginald Hill said: "There could be a party, though."
"What do you mean?"
"Well, we invite everybody, but we don't tell Alan."
"Who is going to get the food and so on?"
"Nobody."
"Ah..."

So the plot was hatched. We invited everybody in our class if we knew the address, by name, adding 'and friend' and so doubling the numbers! The named invitation, as from Alan, was on a printed card, for a party at 6.30pm on the day after the next, 1st April (!) 1953, at Alan's house – 'to celebrate his win.' They were filled in by someone's brother, sworn to secrecy, so that we could not be identified. Of course, the invitations could not go out until that same day, but they looked the very thing, very real.

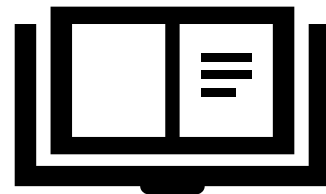
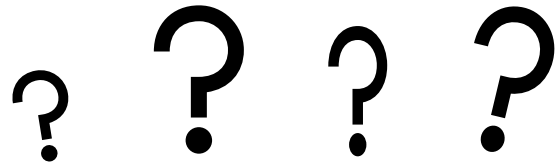
It was also the last day of term, and a Wednesday, when Reg and I were supposed to be on the sports field and would not be missed. Reg and I took half the relevant addresses, and each cycled round Carlisle delivering them, between 2 and 3.30pm.

The first inkling Alan had of his apparent hospitality was about 5.30pm, when someone waved across the

street to Alan and shouted: "See you at the party!" "What party?" And Alan and his family could only wonder what was going on.

They turned up. Reg and I naturally came with invitations addressed to ourselves, a few minutes after 6.30pm, and joined the sizable crowd outside Alan's house, trying to puzzle out who had sent the invitations and Alan denying all knowledge. His mother said, "I don't like them kind of jokes." Reg had addressed a last-minute envelope in his own rambling handwriting and had to suffer the comment, "This one was done by somebody illiterate."

The crowd broke up. We were actually rumbled, because Reg had been seen delivering an invitation, but that was days into the Easter holiday. The general feeling was that of a classmate: "I was very disappointed. I washed my feet specially to come."



Biblical Challenge

Can you find the names of sixteen books of the Bible hidden in the paragraph below? Answers on the inner cover. No cheating now!

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so that she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now.

Some Regular Events

The Parishioners Open Meeting (formerly the Parish Forum) is where **ALL** parishioners can come together to discuss and debate Parish matters and decide when and where things need to be done. The Agenda is planned in advance and the meeting is led by the chairperson and Parish Priest.

The next meeting has been scheduled for the 16th of June at 7.30pm. It will be held online as a Zoom meeting and should not last any longer than an hour. To register your request to be sent the Zoom Link, please e-mail Stephen Warde at openmeetings@saintlaurence.org.uk.

You can raise a topic at the meeting but it helps if you send a short note before the meeting, again, to Stephen Warde at openmeetings@saintlaurence.org.uk, which can then be added to the agenda.

The Pilgrim by Email

During this lockdown period, the Pilgrim magazine will be published online only. You can receive a pdf version by email. If you are not already on the distribution list, send a request to pilgrim@saintlaurence.org.uk.

Paper Pilgrim copies: Do you know anyone who might appreciate a copy of Pilgrim at this time but does not have online access? Send their contact details to the Pilgrim email address.

Pilgrim on the Web

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

ABLAZE

The St Laurence Youth Mass is known as Ablaze. The Ablaze Mass is designed to encourage our youth to build their confidence in running the Mass for the benefit of us all. It is a vibrant and fun Mass. During lockdown, Ablaze is still being held approximately once a month, online. We encourage young readers, Eucharistic Ministers, budding musicians of all ages and the only requirement is enthusiasm for God. If you are looking for 'perfection' you won't find it here, so if you fancy it, pluck up your courage and join in.

Biblical Challenge Answer

I once made a **remark** about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a **fluke**). It kept people looking so hard for the **facts** and for others it was a **revelation**. Some were in a **jam**, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the **truth** finally struck home to **numbers** of readers. To others it was a real **job**. We want it to be a **most** fascinating few moments for you. **Yes**, **there** will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require **judges** to help them. I will quickly admit it **usually** takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud **lamentations** when it is found. A little lady says **she brews** a cup of tea so that she can concentrate better. See how well you can **compete**. Relax now.

Gift Aid makes your donation worth more

Jim Scally

This scheme allows a parishioner who is a taxpayer to increase their donations without further cost to themselves. We can reclaim a further 25p for every £1 you donate under Gift Aid. You must have signed a Declaration Form. Want to know more?

Contact the Parish Office or e-mail: giftaid@saintlaurence.org.uk

A new way of giving during lockdown

If you used to contribute to the weekly collection in cash, please consider setting up a standing order, or make individual one-off payments via bank transfer as your donation to the church.

The details: a/c name: St Laurences Church, sort code: 09-01-53, a/c no: 14255486

If you already Gift Aid your contribution, please identify any payment by quoting your envelope number.

ST LAURENCE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

91 Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1XB

Tel/Fax: 01223 704640

Email: office@saintlaurence.org.uk

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

Parish Priest:

Fr Simon Blakesley
07946 390060

simon.blakesley@rcdea.org.uk

Assistant Priest:

Fr Bob Eccles O.P.
01223 741265

robert.eccles@english.op.org

Deacon:

Rev. Dr Geoffrey Cook
01223 351650

Secretary:

Sede vacante
01223 704640

office@saintlaurence.org.uk

Treasurer:

James Dore
07980 467534

treasurer@saintlaurence.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinator:

Petra Tucker

01223 704640 (messages)

safeguarding@saintlaurence.org.uk

Mass Times – all Masses currently online only

Saturday 9.30am
6pm Vigil Mass (sung)

Sunday 9am
11am

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.30am

Wed, Fri 12.30pm

Check the weekly newsletter for changes to the above times

St Laurence's School

Heads of School
Address

Mrs Veronica Harvey & Mrs Elizabeth Bennett
St Laurence's School
Arbury Road
Cambridge
CB4 2JX

Telephone

01223 712227

Email

office@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk

Website

www.stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk