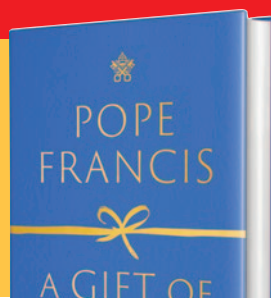




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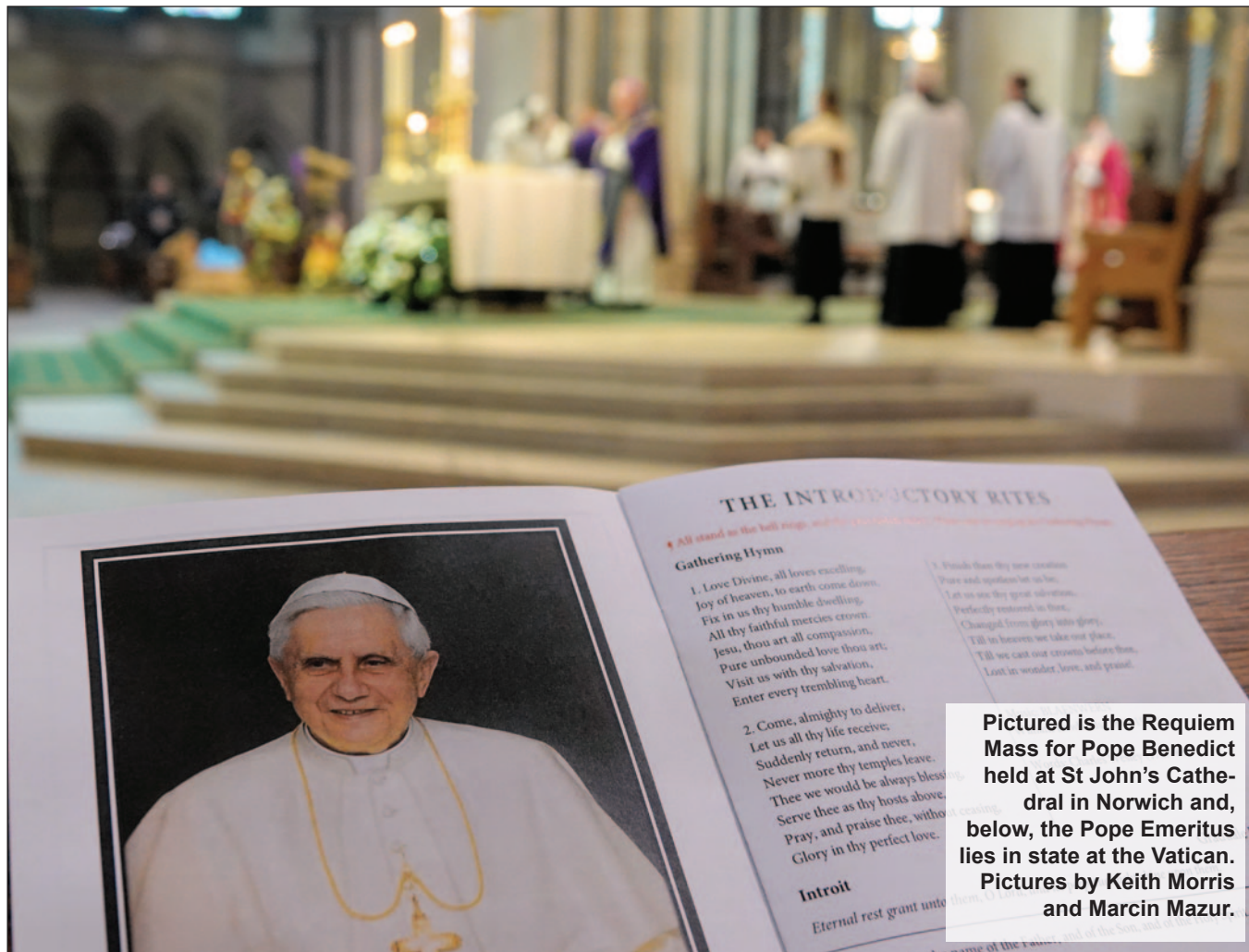
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**Pictured is the Requiem Mass for Pope Benedict held at St John's Cathedral in Norwich and, below, the Pope Emeritus lies in state at the Vatican. Pictures by Keith Morris and Marcin Mazur.**

# Tributes paid to Pope Benedict

**A Requiem Mass for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was held at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on January 2, while he lay in state in the Vatican, following Benedict's death on December 31.**

■ A congregation of around 150 heard Bishop Peter Collins pay tribute to Pope Benedict in his homily at the 12 noon Requiem Mass.

“Joseph Ratzinger was nurtured by the authenticity of faith, hope and love that was embedded within his loving and courageous Catholic family. He was a man whose natural demeanour was characterised by courteous gentility and with a gener-



osity of spirit he sought always to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit,” said Bishop Peter.

“His faithful allegiance to providential grace guided his vocational path,

leading him to the priesthood, to the episcopate and to the papacy.”

“He was a man endowed with an intelligence that prompted searching enquiry, that enabled honest and precise analysis and that provided a foundation for the creative integration of faith and reason,” said Bishop Peter.

Pope Emeritus Benedict lay in state at the Vatican until his funeral on Thursday January 5.

Solemn Vespers was celebrated at St John's Cathedral on Wednesday January 4 with ecumenical and civic representatives in attendance – see report on the right.

A picture gallery of the Requiem Mass at St John's Cathedral can be seen at: [flic.kr/s/aHBqjAmAXC](http://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAmAXC). Main picture by Keith Morris.

## Solemn Vespers for Benedict XVI

■ Ecumenical guests and civil dignitaries joined Bishop Peter Collins to celebrate Solemn Vespers at St John's Cathedral for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on January 4, the day before his funeral in Rome.

At the start of his homily Bishop Peter welcomed his ecumenical guests including Graham Usher, the Bishop of Norwich. The guests joined Fr Alan Hodgson, the Dean, and Fr Michael Smith in the sanctuary for the celebration of Solemn Vespers.

Bishop Peter also welcomed the civil dignitaries in the congregation including Caroline Jarrold, High Sheriff of Norwich.

In the homily, Bishop Peter said he was still awaiting the erection of bookshelves at Bishop's House. “Over these past days, since the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, I have longed all the more to gain access to my library. Joseph Ratzinger's writings have undoubtedly been whispering to me, agitating for release.”

Bishop Peter recalled that Joseph Ratzinger would many times have had this same experience of boxing up his library as he travelled to different academic positions across Germany. Just four years later there was to be yet another move, this time to Rome to become Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

“The theologian was well equipped to become a theological guardian,” commented Bishop Peter. “Joseph Ratzinger had always sought to be of service to the authenticity of truth, the truth of Jesus Christ that cannot be compromised nor relativised.”

The Bishop noted that in every home that Joseph Ratzinger occupied a piano could be found and the air reverberated with the sound of Mozart, perhaps the closest human expression of ‘celestial’ music. “Across the pages of Joseph Ratzinger's immense theological repertoire, one can hear the striving for harmony, for the eternal truth is forever expansive and creative.”

Following his election to the chair of St Peter, at the Mass celebrating the inauguration of his papacy, Pope Benedict XVI declared that “the Gospel remains forever new, and the Church remains forever young.” Bishop Peter noted that “this was the authentic voice of Joseph Ratzinger. As successor of St Peter, Pope Benedict XVI reminded us constantly that the strands of human existence are meant to be held together in that harmony which is fashioned and secured by the redemptive sacrifice and triumph of Jesus Christ.”

He concluded: “The beauty of human theological imagination and expression is not fantastical, not deceptive, but is real and true. By faith and reason Joseph Ratzinger strove to depict this beauty, this reality, this eternal truth. His arduous labours, his faithful ministry, bore abundant fruit. Well done good and faithful servant.

“Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.”



## Asylum-seekers are welcomed in Wisbech

■ Wisbech Catholic parishioner Sean Finlay and friends have extended a warm welcome to asylum seekers living in the town's historic Rose and Crown Hotel.

Wisbech, like a number of towns, has been selected to host asylum seekers as they await a chance to present their case to be recognised as refugees and begin the road towards a permanent home in the UK.

The Rose and Crown is an iconic historic coaching inn in the centre of town and was recently bought by an Egyptian-owned hotel chain. All intoxicating drinks were cleared from the shelves and very recently it has become a home for 20 mainly young men and their minds.

Sean, who is Chair of Wisbech Interfaith Forum, said: "These people came over in small boats, from maybe Afghanistan, Syria or Iraq. It has been extremely difficult to gain information on the plans for the residents and the building. A small number of us have sought to learn if the young men have needs that are not currently being met. At present they are fed and housed and given £8 per week for other needs. They can go out in the community.

"Locals cannot visit them or take them out. However if we meet them in the street we can interact! We have managed to establish that they are in urgent need of winter clothing, footwear socks, underwear etc. It's important to make it clear that with the relatively small numbers involved a large-scale clothing operation is not called for.

"Our efforts have been addressed to letting them know that people care and want to befriend them. It appears that recreational opportunities are very limited. The Rosmini Centre has now donated a table tennis table, some basketballs and footballs and also provides a safe place for the asylum seekers to join the local Muslim community for their Friday prayers.

"The local initiative is being led by a consortium of Wisbech Interfaith, with Quakers, Anglicans, the local trades council and concerned members of the public all involved.

**Catholic East Anglia**

Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

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Articles and photographs for the next edition are very welcome and should be sent to the editor, ideally via email, by Monday February 6.

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■ Bishop Peter Collins has hosted Diocese of East Anglia seminarians from as far away as Rome and Birmingham in his first Mass and lunch with them since being ordained as Bishop of East Anglia in mid December.

The seminarians were joined by Director of Vocations Fr Pat Cleary and Assistant Vocations Director Fr Padraig Hawkins for Mass at Our Lady of the Annunciation in Poring-

land on December 29, followed by lunch.

Pictured above, before the lunch, were from the left, Fr Padraig Hawkins, Mark Dunning, Matthew Allen, Guy Cranfield, Peter Ho, Fr Pat Cleary, Bishop Peter, Rev Bienn Carlo Manuntag, Anthony Asomugha and Dr Anthony Reilly. Not present were seminarians Rev Mark Ashwood, Benjamin Barnett and Dominic Nyathi.

## Alive in Faith donation feeds people in Ukraine

**A £50,000 donation from the Diocesan Alive in Faith Fund is being used by Caritas Ukraine to bring food to housebound residents in Kharkiv, Ukraine.**

■ As a Caritas member agency for England and Wales, CAFOD has been working to fund various strands of the humanitarian response in Poland, Romania, Moldova and within Ukraine itself through its Caritas partners.

One of those projects run by Caritas partner, Depaul Ukraine, is helping the housebound in Kharkiv, the second largest city in Ukraine. This city lies only 25 miles from the Russian border and so has been subject to siege and intense shelling.

One of the Caritas volunteers in Kharkiv is Viktoria, who uses a bike for the distributions.

"I work in IT and could easily get a job abroad," writes the 35-year-old Viktoria, "but I have many relatives here in Kharkiv who need attention and care. I would not be able to take them all out of Ukraine, and I also do not want to leave them without support."

Before the conflict, Viktoria would regularly attend cycling races around Europe. Now she cycles across Kharkiv delivering food to older people and those with disabilities who cannot leave their homes.

"Doing this kind of work in a team is a great relief for me. I spent the first two weeks of the war sitting in my bathroom while the city was bombed. Being alone during that time with my two cats was almost unbearable. Over time, I started to gain the courage to leave my home by bicycle to go to the grocery store or pharmacy."

Viktoria is part of a team of volunteer cyclists whose support is a lifeline for housebound people in Kharkiv. Depaul Ukraine works tirelessly to ensure food baskets



■ St Joseph's Church in St Neots has been offering free English lessons to Ukrainians who are living locally. This has since expanded to include others who are learning English, with about 10 attending every week. On Monday December 19, the group celebrated with a Christmas party (pictured above), including traditional English Christmas treats as well as food provided by the learners.

reach 700 people on a regular basis.

"One day," says Viktoria, "I saw an Instagram post with a call for bicycle volunteers and was very happy, because it opened up an opportunity to finally feel useful and needed. This is my city and my country. I just want to be here, that is all."

Alongside the Kharkiv project, CAFOD has provided aid in the form of food, drinking

water, sanitary supplies like nappies and hand sanitiser, blankets and warm clothes, shelter and safety for families displaced internally and beyond Ukraine's borders. It has also recently started providing a funding mechanism for pharmacists in the UK to be able to distribute much needed medicines and equipment to doctors, pharmacies and hospitals in Ukraine.



Pope Francis presides at the funeral of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and, below, a much earlier visit by the former Pope to Fatima Pictures by Marcin Mazur.



# Joy as Benedict's visit to UK recalled

**Bishop Peter Collins has paid a personal tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who died on December 31, aged 95.**

■ News of the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has saddened the Universal Church and the entire world. Since his resignation from the Papacy in February 2013, Benedict XVI had been resident in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery within the grounds of the Vatican. His entire life was dedicated to Christ and his Church.

Joseph Ratzinger was baptised on the day of his birth, April 16, 1927, at Marktl am Inn, Bavaria, near the border with Austria. In 1943, aged just 16, Joseph was conscripted into the German Army. In 1945 he entered seminary formation and was ordained to the priesthood, together with his brother Georg, on June 29, 1951. For the next 25 years, alongside pastoral responsibilities, he dedicated himself to university teaching and academic research. Joseph Ratzinger will be remembered and honoured as one of the great theologians of the twentieth century.

Pope St Paul VI appointed Professor Ratzinger as Archbishop of Munich in 1977, and he became a Cardinal in the same year. Pope St John Paul II appointed him as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1981. Cardinal Ratzinger remained in this post until the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005.

Many attempted falsely to depict Cardinal Ratzinger as some kind of harsh enforcer. Whilst he was duty-bound to robustly defend the theological integrity and rational coherence of the Church's



teaching, Cardinal Ratzinger always fulfilled his responsibilities with calm exactitude and a most caring courtesy.

As Dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Ratzinger was Celebrant at the funeral of Pope John Paul II. Just a few days later, on April 19, 2005, his fellow cardinals elected him as the 265th succes-

sor of St Peter and he remained as Supreme Pontiff until February 2013.

In the midst of our sadness, it is with joy that we recall the Papal Visit to the United Kingdom undertaken by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010. We remember the impact of his words as he addressed parliamentarians under the ancient beams of Westminster Hall, speaking of the legitimate role of religion within the public square and the contribution of faith in service to the common good of humanity.

I was privileged to be present at Westminster Cathedral when Pope Benedict celebrated Mass, during which he blessed a newly erected mosaic of St David. Together with so many others, I then travelled from London to Birmingham to join Pope Benedict for the celebration of Mass in Cofton Park during which he beatified the great nineteenth century English theologian, Cardinal John Henry Newman – later canonised as a Saint by Pope Francis.

It is worthy of note that Cardinal Ratzinger visited the Diocese of East Anglia in 1988, coming to deliver the annual Fisher Lecture at the Catholic Chaplaincy in Cambridge. The title of his address was 'Consumer Materialism and Christian Hope'. When the chaplaincy was raising funds for a new chapel in 2005, Ratzinger, by then Pope, sent a donation of £2,000 from his own pocket.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI lived his life to the full in Christ. Through the union of faith and reason, Joseph Ratzinger explored the depths of Divine Revelation and has helped us all to navigate our own journey through the wondrous expanse of God's providential love. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

## news in brief

### Beryl retires after 25 years

■ Beryl Stock (pictured) retired as Shop Manager at St John's Cathedral Narthex in October after 25 years dedicated service. She has seen many changes over the years, with the shop changing and growing under her skilful direction. Beryl started as a volunteer and took on more and more responsibility, with an ever-increasing space and stock. She is greatly missed by her colleagues, volunteers and parishioners who have come to know Beryl as a friend said general manager Charley Purves.



### New church book

■ A new book is in preparation on East Anglia's medieval churches, which comprehensively catalogues over 1200 images of saints and angels on the region's surviving rood screens with professional photography throughout. The text of the book is by Michael Hodges, with a foreword by Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes. Find out more, and subscribe to receive a copy when the book is published this summer: [anthonyeyre.com/product/the-golden-legend/](http://anthonyeyre.com/product/the-golden-legend/)

### Nativity creation

■ St Philip Howard parishioner Francesco Connola has spent many hours creating a large and intricate Nativity scene in the Cambridge church, reports Fr Philip John. "This year's beautiful scene has not only the figures of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and the Kings. It has a full townscape. Set on a hill, we have the different houses lit up from the inside and a working fountain. The artist's wonderful imagination brings to life the central truth of the Nativity – that God became a human being in a real, but ordinary place in which all of us can recognise ourselves."

### Free concert

■ Singer and guitarist Gila Margolin will be giving a free spring concert for peace and reconciliation at St Anthony's Catholic Church, 29 Wells Road, Fakenham, NR21 9EG on February 15. Gila will sing her favourite selection of songs of the 60s, Jewish and Scottish music. The concert starts at 12 noon and is free with a retiring collection for The Little Sisters of Joy.

### Catenian dinner

■ The highlight of the December 8 meeting of Norwich Circle of the Catenian Association held at the George Hotel was a talk by two UEA students about the University's Catholic Association. Carmen Esono Ada supervises musical aspects and Jamie O'Neon is vice president.



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### Be part of our global network.

The Catenian Association welcomes new members to our international social network of Catholic men committed to friendship, family and Faith.

Our local Circles are active throughout the U.K., Ireland, Australia, Malta, India, Bangladesh, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Our U.K. Circles raised over £250,000 in the past year for local charities as well as supporting the Association's two in-house charities; the Benevolent Fund which supports members and their families and the Bursary Fund which sponsors young persons in projects contributing to wider society at home and abroad.

Our Circles meet monthly and arrange activities both for members and their families, including meals together, barbecues, picnics, theatre visits, music and sporting events.

Golf societies throughout the Association join together in a National Golf Championship week every year and the Catenian Caravan and Camping Fellowship have a popular range of special events

**Join us today and make friendships for life!**

To find your local Circle please contact our provincial membership Officer Paul Thompson on [p\\_s\\_thompson9@hotmail.com](mailto:p_s_thompson9@hotmail.com)

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# What weights should you drop?

In this month's Voice of Hope series Fr Alvan Ibeh looks at what weights we might let go of in this new year.



■ I welcome you, dear friends, to this month's Voice of Hope series and may I congratulate you for making it to the New Year of 2023. No matter how hard, rough and tough the 2022 flight was, the most important thing is that we all made it to the end. We all landed safely by the grace of God.

I wish to remind you once again that it was not all about you, but as the scripture says, 'it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning, great is his faithfulness' (Lamentations 3:22-24), and as Romans 9:16 says, 'It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy'.

So that we were able to see the end of the 2022 flight and have already boarded another

flight (flight 2023), we give God all the glory, and we decree and declare that we all shall live to see the end of this flight, but it will not see our end, Amen and Amen.

Remember that every airplane has its capacity, and excess weight can be hazardous and even lead to the airplane crashing. I watched a documentary the other day on how planes are being built, and I discovered that even the type of paint used on airplanes could add more weight to the aircraft, which won't be suitable for it. So a particular kind of paint is used to avoid unnecessarily putting more weight on the airplane.

What am I trying to say here? We must be mindful of what we carry over from the previous flight to the new one. The capacity of each airplane varies, so you don't carry anything that was a weight in your life in the previous year into the New Year. This may be an excess weight for your new flight and may lead to unnecessary struggles in the New Year. Some give up so quickly because they decided to carry over things they would have let go of, something they would have dealt with and then carry on with life.

Living in the past is a choice we consciously or unconsciously make. That I decided to carry over the grudge I have against someone from 2022 to 2023 is a choice I have made. I could also let it go and not carry it over to enjoy my peace of mind in the New Year.

Each year has its weight, and carrying over the weight of the previous year will be inten-

tionally over-labouring ourselves. When this happens, we see that even at the beginning of a New Year, we are already struggling with many things because while others are only living in the present, we are still in the past and trying to meet up with the present.

Whatever happened last year, especially the not-so-good experiences we had, has become a weight we must let go of to move forward at the right pace we are supposed to in this New Year. Can you imagine yourself running with a heavy load at your back? This can be one of the most difficult things you would want to do. Running will be challenging, but once you let go of that weight, you will immediately see how easy things become.

Hebrews 12: 1 says, 'Therefore since such a great cloud of witnesses surrounds us, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us'.

Pause now and ask yourself, 'What are the weights that I have carried over into this year that I need to drop now it is still early?' So the things that constitute weights in our lives that we need to work on this year may include apathy towards God, pride, worry, anger, materialism, hatred, unforgiveness, etc.

We shall be looking at these things in our next article, so don't miss to grab the next edition of our newspaper and send some copies to your family and friends. May this year be a year of over-flowing blessings for us all. Until the next edition, may God bless us and His face shine on us all. Amen.

# Bishop's first Midnight Mass

At his first Midnight Mass at St John's Cathedral, Bishop Peter Collins placed a statue of the infant Jesus in the crib to symbolise our welcome of the Christ Child.

■ After a service of carols at 11.30pm, Master of Music Daniel Justin had sung a Proclamation of the Birth of Christ, which was followed by reflective silence. At midnight Bishop Peter and the clergy processed down the nave to the altar steps as the congregation sang *Adeste Fideles*.

During the penultimate verse of the carol, the Bishop uncovered a statue of the infant Jesus. Fr Alan Hodgson, the Dean, held it aloft for everyone to see, and processed with it to the crib, where Bishop Peter placed it in the manger.

The Bishop opened his homily by reminding the congregation how the Diocese was blessed by being spiritually twinned with the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and how the Nazareth of England at Walsingham was an umbilical link to the Holy Family, no more so than at Christmas.

He then recalled the journey of the Holy Family to Bethlehem for the census, which led him to think of his own episcopal ordination, when journalists had sought his commentary on the results of the most recent UK census, when less than half of the population identified as Christians.

"Many who are celebrating Christmas with us," he said, "are not actually celebrating the Incarnation of the Divine Word of God.... Many members of our own families, many in our local communities, many across our nation and beyond are as confined by ignor-



ance and captured by fear as were the first shepherds...

"If we are to be effective evangelisers, we must first calm the fears of the world and address the ignorance of the multitude regarding the essential and integral relationship between faith and reason."

Bishop Peter then recalled his childhood performance in a nativity play when he had played Joseph, "with blond curls, believe it or not". Although his family was terrified that he would only whisper his lines, he proclaimed in

a loud voice: "My name is Joseph, and this is my wife, Mary." The family rose to their feet and applauded before being brought under control by the teachers.

"When our beloved children perform in their nativity plays," he said, "we need them and their parents to know exactly what is being depicted.... If the people that walk in darkness are to see a great light, if those who live in the land of deep shadow are to be set free from all oppression, then they will need to hear from our lips that new song of hope."



# Peterborough church foodhub gets boost

The Foodhub at St Luke's church in Orton Malborne, Peterborough, has been boosted by the completion of the church extension, giving the team more room to work in plus Christmas donations. Organiser Joan Wayland reports.

■ Since autumn 2021 volunteers at St Luke's have been providing emergency food each Friday for local families in need.

Since the completion of the church building work in October, the Foodhub environment is now unrecognisable. The picking and packing now takes place in the church porch. The Foodhub has its own dedicated cupboard space and our volunteers and visiting families chat, share tea, coffee and biscuits around two large tables in the now spacious new meeting room. It is often not possible to distinguish between volunteers and visiting families as the laughter and chatter create a very friendly atmosphere.

A form has been designed to allow our visiting families to select a certain number of items, so visiting families have the dignity of choosing what they want and will eat, rather than being given food they neither want nor need. From visiting other providers of emergency food, the form has been redesigned to help with managing expectations.

Parishioners continue to be gener-



Pictured at St Luke's are, left to right, volunteers Judith Williams, Margaret Barker, Fr Jeffrey Downie and Joan Wayland.

ous both with cash and food donations. A recent ecumenical Advent Carol Service raised over £200 for the Foodhub and Churches Together in the Ortons have agreed to give food donated to their individual parishes to St Luke's Foodhub. However, with increasing numbers attending the Foodhub more donations of food and money are required to keep the service sustainable. The Foodhub currently provides essential items to about 20 families per week.

Parents and children at the new

Catholic Primary School, St John Henry Newman, kindly collected food by way of thanksgiving at harvest time and operated a "reverse Advent Calendar"; a similar collection of food was arranged at St Luke's and the generosity of everyone concerned was amazing.

Due to the kindness of parishioners and other churches in Orton we were able to provide our visiting families with some extra treats over the Christmas period. We look forward to serving our local families in need during the New Year.

## Chance to win Pope's book

■ Pope Francis' bestselling book *A Gift of Joy and Hope*, has been published in the UK by Hodder Faith and readers have the chance to win a free copy.

First published in Italy at the end of 2020, at the height of lockdown, *A Gift of Joy and Hope* (The Gift of a Smile in Italian) is Pope Francis' bestselling book there.

In response to the devastating loss the world faced during the pandemic, His Holiness was inspired to write a book to help people find hope and meaning. The book is filled with thoughts and reflections on how to cope with the world we're currently in, from the anxieties of the age to the importance of nature.

*A Gift of Joy and Hope* encourages readers to look outside themselves and trust that joy and hope are still possible.

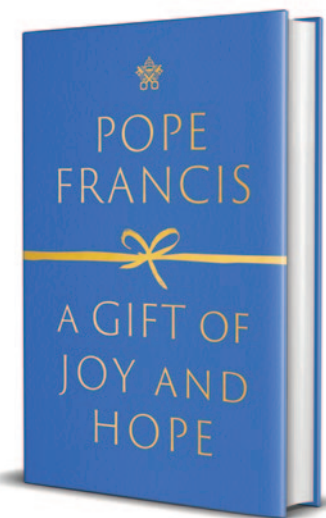
Pope Francis writes:

"We must stop orbiting only around ourselves and the disappointments of the past, unmet dreams and the many bad things that have happened in our lives. So very often we tend to keep revolving around and around our own problems. We have to leave this attitude behind and move forward by accepting the greatest and truest reality of life: Jesus lives, Jesus loves me. I can do something for others. This is the greatest reality – beautiful, positive and bright. This is the u-turn we need to make... we need to go from if to yes."

To have a chance of winning a hard-back copy of the book simply email your name and address to [keith.morris@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:keith.morris@rcdea.org.uk) or send it to Keith Morris, Pear Tree Farmhouse, Wymondham Road, Wrenningham, Norwich, NR16 1AT, with your answer to this question. What is the title of the book version published in Italy.

The closing date for entries is February 28.

*A Gift of Joy and Hope*, published by Hodder Faith, costs £16.99 (hardback).



## Planting dreams and inspiring trust

Deacon Huw Williams, from the Diocese of East Anglia Synod team, explains that the purpose of the Synodal Way is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust and bind up wounds, according to Pope Francis.

■ As the Continental Phase of the Synod gets under way, we need to remember that synodality was the way of the early Church. It was, and is, a dynamic 'learning by doing' process.

"We recall that the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands," said Pope Francis.

It is important to understand the 'Document for the Continental Stage' (DCS), not as a document to be amended, corrected or enlarged in view of the universal stage, but as a true guide for an ongoing discernment, the fruit of listening to the People of God.

As such the participants in the continental assemblies should adequately represent the variety of the People of God: bishops, priests, deacons, men and women religious, laymen and laywomen.

The continental phase will conclude by the end of March 2023, but the conclusion of the continental stage does not mean the conclusion of the synodal process of the People of God that began with the consultation in our Diocese.

Our journeying together can thus become the foundation for how we participate in Church as the whole of the People of God. We need to continue discussing and listening and discerning what the Holy Spirit is calling each and every one of us to do. There is no deadline or time limit.

Look out for the publication 'Walking Together' that presents all the interventions of Pope Francis during his pontificate on the theme of Synodality.

The book is about the dimension of listening and participation in the life of the Church that the Pontiff considers essential for the mission of the Church in the present time. The texts retrace Francis' entire pontificate, showing how reflection and argumentation on the importance of synodality are a constitutive feature of the pontiff's thought and magisterium – soon to be published in English.

Feedback is welcome at: [synodalway@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:synodalway@rcdea.org.uk)

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**2023** £2.50



## Annual report shows a positive picture for Diocese of East Anglia

■ The Annual Report and Accounts of the Diocese of East Anglia have been published online and show that with churches reopening, but Covid precautions still in place, church attendance and provision of the Sacraments recovered strongly in the course of 2021.

The number of baptisms was up 81%, the number of marriages more than doubled and total in-person Mass attendance rose by over a third to 12,611.

■ **Statistics:** Although churches were reopened during 2021, Covid precautions remained in place and the Sunday Mass obligation was not imposed during the year. Nevertheless, active church attendance and provision of the Sacraments recovered strongly in the course of the year, with the number of baptisms up 81%, and the number of marriages more than doubling year-on-year. Total in-person Mass attendance rose by over a third to 12,611.

The total Catholic population in the area covered by the Diocese is estimated to be some 140,000.

The significant contribution provided by volunteers is recognised with an estimated 1900 volunteers taking on roles such as catechists, stewards, parish treasurers, committee members, flower arrangers and lay ministers.

At the start of 2021, there were 94 active priests, 28 active permanent deacons, 8 seminarians in training and 3 students for the permanent diaconate.

■ **Financial Performance:** The total income of the Diocese increased from £6.08m to £6.38m during the year. Total expenditure for the Diocese also increased, from £6.06m in 2020 to £6.3m in 2021.

Unrestricted parochial income was £4.97m (2020: £4.3m), with £4.2m (2020: £3.8m), from donations, legacies and grants. Total parochial costs were £3.93m (2020: £3.4m).

At 31 December 2021, the Diocese's reserves, including parishes, stood at £34.7m. Of this, £5m is restricted to particular uses and £3.5m has been designated by the Trustees for certain specific purposes.

Of the remaining reserves, parochial funds amount to £22.9m, of which £14.4m is represented by fixed assets in the form of churches and other property.

General reserves at the Diocese increased from £3.37m to £3.38m.

You can read the full report and accounts at: [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk)

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# Bishop Alan's ti

**Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes reflected on 27 years of ministry, a few days before he ordained his successor as Bishop of East Anglia in mid December. Speaking to BBC Radio Suffolk and BBC Radio Norfolk, here is what he said.**

■ “Some of my fondest memories are the visits to parishes and schools, where I’ve met our students. They’ve been wonderful moments. You receive so much pleasure. You give so much, but you get many returns.

“It’s the people I will miss most. It will be different, but when a Catholic bishop retires, he still goes on working. But I will be under the new bishop, and he’ll be asking me to do things. I can’t just make decisions on my own. That’s a good thing.

“During the last nine years the biggest challenge has been bringing the diocese to a greater sense of unity, because we are so scattered, right across Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Peterborough. It’s a very big area.

“But it’s happened and I think that people feel more part of the diocesan family. Another big challenge of course was Covid. It was like nothing else we’ve ever experienced. And particularly those first few months when we were forced to close our churches. That was very difficult, but our priests were absolutely wonderful in how they responded to people’s needs.

“I started off in the Catholic Church as a curate in Kensington High Street for two years. Then as a parish priest down in Chelsea. Then I was made vicar general for the Diocese of Westminster, which is a huge area right the way to the end of Hertfordshire.

“Then I was appointed an auxiliary bishop by Pope John Paul II. And then I was appointed to East Anglia nine and half years ago. It was a tremendous privilege.

“Over the past 27 years I’ve met each of the popes several times. It’s fantastic, you know you’re in the presence of a holy person. They’re so encouraging. When I was first made a bishop in the September, I had to go to what they called the ‘baby bishops’ classes’ in Rome and we met the Pope individually there.

“Two weeks later I went back with all the bishops of England and Wales. We had to go on our five-year visit to Rome and all met



On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (December 8), Bishop Alan Hopes celebrated his farewell Mass at Our Lady's Shrine in Walsingham as Bishop of East Anglia.

Bishop Alan had the privilege of wearing the restored chasuble, worn by His Eminence Cardinal Francis Bourne of Westminster, on the momentous day, Sunday August 19, 1934, when he led the First National Pilgrimage to Walsingham for 400 years.

The Rector, at the beginning of

Mass, welcomed Bishop Alan with gratitude for his love and service of Our Lady's Shrine over his years as Bishop of East Anglia. The Rector also welcomed Bishop Elect, Canon Peter Collins with the assurance of prayers from Our Lady's Shrine.

Bishop Alan began Holy Mass by proclaiming the great doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and continued this proclamation throughout his homily.

At the end of Mass he drew

the Pope again. It was an extraordinary thing. We also met Pope John Paul II just before he died. It was Pope Francis who appointed me to East Anglia in 2013.

“I was an Anglican minister at one stage. The vocation comes from there really. All I can say is that it was a persistent call to serve God in this way. Even when for a little while I thought ‘No, this can’t be right’ and I was going to train as a teacher, this voice persistently said, ‘You must discern your vocation and see where this takes you.’

“So I did, and then made this journey through to the Catholic Church in the 1990s, which is where I found real fulfilment.

“The most important thing was that I really wanted to be united with the Church which was founded by Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago and be united to Peter the Apostle, who we believe is embodied in each Pope. And it was that sense of authority and unity which I was looking for. I couldn’t find that in my latter days in the Church of England.



# me to reflect



attention to the uniqueness of this celebration. He expressed his gratitude to all at Our Lady's Shrine, who over the years, had made him so welcome, especially during his nine and a half years as Bishop. Most of all he asked for prayers, saying that he was almost overwhelmed with gratitude and emotion.

"It is with great fondness that we wish dear Bishop Alan a well-deserved, restful, long and peaceful retirement," writes Antonia Moffat from the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham.

"It was extraordinary to have all together an outgoing Bishop, his successor Bishop

Elect Peter Collins, and also Bishop Elect Philip Moger, who on February 21 will receive his episcopal ordination as an Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Southwark."

There were some precious moments in the Slipper Chapel before Our Lady of Walsingham when Bishop Alan did as he has always done – entrusted all to Our Lady of Walsingham, the past, the present and the future.

*Pictured above from left to right are Bishop Elect Peter Collins, Bishop Alan Hopes and Bishop Elect Philip Moger.*

"But I'm so grateful to the Church of England and the priests that I knew in those days because they helped my faith to grow and to discern my way forward into the priesthood.

"Pope Francis has set us on what they call the Synodal Pathway, which is trying to involve as many people as possible in decisions within the parishes and within the dioceses. And I think that's an excellent way forward.

"I think the most important

thing is that the Church is always changing, but the Gospel it proclaims is always the same. The structures need to change and are changing always, but the Gospel remains the same and that is what we must proclaim to people. We're finding that so many young people are now discovering the real message in the Gospel and an encounter with Jesus Christ, and I think we just have to remain firm.

"It's a huge privilege that I

was able to ordain Peter Collins as my successor. My words of advice for him are, just be yourself, and be a jolly good shepherd of the people God has given you.

"At his installation, I think I will feel two things. I shall be really happy and joyful for my successor because he's got a wonderful diocese to take on and I shall be happy and joyful for myself because I'm now 79 years old and I think I'm looking forward to a bit of retirement and rest."

## Fr Peter takes over at North Walsham

**Fr Peter Raj, who is originally from Goa in India, has taken over as Parish Priest of Sacred Heart North Walsham.**

■ The Catholic community in North Walsham, which is linked with St John of the Cross, Aylsham and St Helen, Hoveton, had of course been saddened by the announcement of Fr James Walsh's retirement.

But since the parish has recently seen an influx of Indians and their families coming to work locally, many of them Catholics, it would seem a happy coincidence that Fr Peter is himself from India, from Margao, Goa, on the west coast of that great sub-continent.

When he arrived and took up his duties in the three churches there was an immediate response from parishioners of welcoming warmth. The community could see from the very start of his ministry that he offered an extraordinary clarity of the Gospel message, together with an energetic and total dedication.

"We are indeed a very happy parish," writes Antonia Martínez, "agog at the innovations Fr Peter so quickly has in mind to bring about, in order to reach as many as he can, both old and young, with the love of our Lord."

Fr Peter is fairly new to this country. Having visited family living here in the UK when on holiday on a number of occasions, he felt the call to dedicate his life to the people of East Anglia, leaving behind his family, friends, culture and comforts. He served as an assistant priest at Our Lady and the English Martyrs, Cambridge for 20 months. Bishop Alan then appointed and installed him as the parish priest of St Mark's Church, Ipswich; but after a year he was asked to take on the



responsibility of St Mary's Parish with the coming of the Carmelite Community to St Mark's Church. He faithfully carried out his pastoral duties at St Mary's Church, Ipswich, for the last three years.

"At the Sacred Heart we have been extremely blessed with our different pastors," writes Antonia. "Now, with the commencement of Fr Peter's time with us, hopefully for many years, the parish can look forward to further enlightenment in our faith from his spiritual fervour and energy."

## Cambridge Choral Director

**Salary** £13,000 pa (plus mileage)

**Location** Cambridge and the surrounding area

**Accountable** to Diocesan Director of Music

**Hours** 20 hours per week, permanent contract

**Holidays** 28 days per year

**Start date** 1st September 2023 (or sooner)

The Diocese of East Anglia seeks to appoint an outstanding Choral Director to assist the Diocesan Director of Music in the delivery of the Diocesan Schools Singing Programme in Cambridge and the surrounding area, and to continue the development of Sacred Music in the Diocese by establishing an after-school choir in Cambridge.

### Responsibilities

■ To develop singing in schools through the delivery of high quality weekly curriculum-time singing sessions.

■ To establish, recruit and direct an after-school choir in Cambridge.

■ To provide CPD to teachers, allowing a supported integration from the weekly Schools Singing Programme sessions into everyday school life.

■ To foster links between schools and parishes, liaising with clergy to facilitate singing opportunities in parishes for after-school choirs.

For an informal discussion about the post, please contact Daniel Justin, Master of Music: [daniel.justin@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:daniel.justin@rcdea.org.uk)

To apply for this post, visit [www.rcdea.org.uk/vacancies](https://www.rcdea.org.uk/vacancies)

The closing date is Friday February 17, at 12 noon.





## SCHOOLS NEWS



### Lowestoft pupils spreading Christmas cheer

■ Pupils and staff at St Mary's RC Primary School in Lowestoft have been spreading kindness and love throughout the community to families which are struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Head of School, Ewa Parker, said: "Our school set into action to support the local food bank and instead of '12 Days of Christmas' we organised the '12 Crates for Christmas'. For 12 days, children, parents and school staff brought into school a variety of food or personal care products. Some families even remembered about animals and donated some animal food too!

"We are very grateful for all the efforts of our school community, as we know the donated food and items will spread a little more joy and love to those in need this Christmas. Our school's Mini Vinnies and the staff have more ideas to support the local community, so expect to hear more in the future from us."

Pictured above are St Mary's Mini Vinnies.



## Bishop Alan opens new nursery

■ Bishop Alan Hopes, the Mayor of Felixstowe, together with the Religious of Jesus and Mary, nursery staff and old friends, has celebrated the opening of the Little JeM's Nursery in the town.

"We need to turn the clock back to 2020, the Year of Covid," explained Carol Charles. "The nursery in our Convent, which had many years ago been run by the Religious of Jesus and Mary, and was now being run by Mrs Nora Bloomer, closed. As a community and in the spirit of the order, we began to look to the future. Although the community is an older one, we decided that rather than look inward, we would once again seek how best we might serve the wider community."

There was a desire to see Catholic education return to Felixstowe, even in a very small nursery. There was an obvious growing need for nurseries in Felixstowe, and this encouraged us to discern if this was indeed the way forward. The community contacted the local council, which informed them that many nurseries had now closed, and that was enough.

The community wanted to do a little more to encourage young people to follow the teaching of Pope Francis in *Laudato si*; to really engage with the environment and climate. It wanted to build a nursery with a near zero carbon footprint, with plenty of outside space for the children to explore coupled with sustainable heating and natural wooden

floors. The nursery is not for profit. It aims to support those who might not normally be able to attend such a nursery.

The nursery was finally opened on October 7. It had started in January 2022 with five small children and finished the academic year with 20 children. It started again in September with 24 children and more will be joining in January.

"We thank God," writes Carol, "for giving us the vision, the insight and the determination to be able to establish and promote this wonderful new venture."

**Pictured above is Bishop Alan Hopes cutting the ribbon of the nursery in Felixstowe.**

# CAFOD announces its first Big Lent Walk

**Lent begins on February 22, and CAFOD is inviting schools, parishes and individuals to lace up their shoes in faith for the Big Lent Walk.**

■ "Excitement is building with dozens of groups and schools already signing up," says Monica Conmee, CAFOD's Head of Education. "We've seen a lot of energy building over the last couple of years for walking challenges, and children and young people in many of the schools we speak to are just raring to go."

CAFOD launched the Walk for Water in Lent 2021 during lockdowns in England and Wales. It raised £750,000 for vital water projects in some of the most drought-stricken regions of the world and a Walk Against Hunger followed in Lent 2022. During Lent 2023 CAFOD will be running its first Big Lent Walk.

England and Wales's newest Catholic school, St John Henry Newman Primary



School in Peterborough, is planning to take part. Headteacher Mark Cooper said: "We are looking forward to taking part in the Big Lent Walk. The children are excited to contributing to this and are very much looking forward to walking around our local school community. This will be the biggest opportu-

nity so far for our brand-new school to put our faith into action and support CAFOD. I am really pleased that we can be part of this."

Jane Crone, CAFOD's representative in the Diocese of East Anglia, responded: "It's fantastic to hear that England and Wales's newest Catholic School is joining the fight to end global poverty by taking part in this year's Big Lent Walk."

"Individuals, parishes and schools are welcome to take part, when and where they choose over 40 days. It's a great way of enjoying the natural world and an opportunity for

prayer and reflection while at the same time standing in solidarity with people living in poverty."

Find out more and sign up online at [walk.cafod.org.uk](http://walk.cafod.org.uk)

**Pictured are children from St John Henry Newman Primary School.**

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## YOUTH MATTERS

# Youth let faith light shine

■ The Diocesan Youth Service started the year with a bang with their special candle-light Mass for young people, followed by hot dogs, a bonfire and fireworks.

Bishop Peter Collins celebrated the Mass, joined by Fr Luke Goymour (Chaplain to the Youth Service) and Fr Andrew Eburne (Poringland Parish Priest and Chaplain to UEA). Music was provided by a group ably led by Alex Savage (Lay Chaplain at Notre Dame High School).

Over 100 young people joined the celebration: children and teenagers with their families, many of the 'Ignite Lite' volunteers, the full-time Ignite team, as well as the monthly youth ministry prayer group.

During Mass, people were invited to place a candle at the foot of the altar as a sign of recommitting themselves to the Lord, and then as they left to go into the Bishop's garden, everyone was given a glow stick – a reminder to let the light of our faith keep on shining. It was cold but the bonfire warmed everyone up as they ate hot dogs and watched the fireworks.

The event also had a collection of items for the 'Welcome Rucksack Appeal' that supports children who are refugees and asylum seekers in Norwich.

Hamish MacQueen, Director of Youth Service said: "It was great to be back running this event again as we hadn't been able to do it for the past three years because of the pandemic. Thanks to everyone who made it possible, especially Daniel Anderson and the catering and logistics volunteers."



Pictured are volunteers serving hot dogs after the Youth Mass.

## World Youth Day group's 20-mile walk

**Five young people from Bury St Edmunds completed a 20-mile walk on one of the coldest days of 2022 to help raise funds so that they can attend World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, this summer.**

■ On Saturday December 3, in sub-zero temperatures, a group of five young people received a blessing from St Edmund King and Martyr parish priest Fr David Bagstaff on the church steps at 8.30am as they were about to set off on foot to try to reach Clare Priory by dusk.

Clotilde and Kirsten (15), Adam (16) and Oscar and Luc (17) are hoping to be part of the diocesan group which will attend World Youth Day, a special event for 16-35 year-olds hosted by Pope Francis, this summer in Lisbon, Portugal. Hence this sponsored walk to raise funds towards the cost of what they know will be an unforgettable experience!

Luc's mother Aude Wallace, from St Edmund King and Martyr parish, said: "The walk itself, was around 20 miles and ended up being quite a challenge as that particular Saturday turned out to be one of the coldest days of the year. The temperature never quite reached 0 celsius during their walk! But with a little help from some warm scarves, hats and gloves and hot flasks of soup, as well as a little encouragement from their fellow parishioner Michael who accompanied them, they made it to Clare Priory in a little less than seven hours."

If you would like to sponsor these young people, you can donate by clicking this link, they will be very grateful!

[www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/worldyouthdaystedmundsparish?](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/worldyouthdaystedmundsparish?)





## OBITUARIES

# Deacon and pilgrim leader

**Suffolk Deacon Clive Brooks, a former Lourdes pilgrimage director and London policeman, has died at the age of 86, friend Deacon John Morrill pays tribute.**

■ Clive Brooks (31 May 1936 – 21 December 2022) spent his early years under the shadow of war, bombed out of his family home at the age of four and left with no possession other than a blanket.

His mother, with her three children under five, were taken in by ‘an angel behind the blue door’ who shared what little she had with them. Difficult days followed but her selfless kindness guided him throughout his life.

After an East End childhood, he served in the RAF for three years as a dog-handler and a sharp-shooter, and it was then that he met Mary whom he married at the age of 20.

When he left the RAF he joined the Metropolitan Police where he served for 30 eventful years. His beat included the street in which the Kray twins, their brother Charlie and their formidable mum Violet, operated. He later sat between Ronnie and Reggie during their sentencing for murder. And, heavily armed and in body armour, he escorted them into court during the trial at a time when the intelligence was that the Mafia had picked up a contract to spring them in an armed raid. None of this appears to have fazed him.



As retirement beckoned, and already fully engaged in SVP and youth work in his parish, he felt a calling to the diaconate and the Bishop of Brentwood sent him to the fledgling formation programme at St John's Seminary in Womersley.

He and Mary were looking for a place in the Essex countryside but they fell in love with a house in East Bergholt just over the Stour in Suffolk, so he was given a free transfer from Brentwood to East Anglia. He was ordained in June 1992 and served with equal distinction for another 30 years, mainly in the parish of St Mark's Ipswich, with a short spell in St Mary Magdalen Ipswich.

For several years he was a wonderful director of the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes where he was much loved. To everything he did in life he brought dig-

nity, modesty, integrity, loyalty and order. To watch him walking, as he had for so many years on the beat, with a slow, relentless, purposeful gait, was to witness to his whole way of life. He was a meticulous planner, he was calm under pressure, he had an absolute commitment to others more than to himself.

He and Mary became very active in a group of third order Franciscans and his charisms were deeply Franciscan. Clive was a natural deacon, committed to serving God and neighbour with calm discipline. A senior nurse at Ipswich Hospital singled him out (along with two revered pastoral priests) as the most outstanding of hospital chaplains. Although he could look stern, his smile was radiant and spoke of a man at peace with himself.

He handled Mary's final illness and his bereavement 11 years ago with the same stoicism with which he faced his own long final battle with cancer and he died, as he had wanted, at home, supported by his family (two sons, three grandchildren, one great grandson) and by those friends who he had himself supported over the years.

His Requiem Mass will be St Mark's church at Ipswich at 10am on January 25, followed by a private burial in East Bergholt.

His sacred visibility as a deacon has inspired many others to greater service of God in imitation of Christ the servant.

Stalwart of All Souls Peterborough, reader, minister of Holy Communion and former Head of Maths, Michael Christopher Norton, has died at 94.

■ Michael was born in Blackpool, Lancashire, on August 6, 1928 and his family later moved to Leeds. During the Second World War he was evacuated to a boarding school in the Yorkshire Dales and developed a love of boxing. In the early post war years he went to Denmark to help build a youth hostel.

On August 20, 1958, he married Helen Mary Sharpe at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Leeds and they were together for 55 years. She was a Community Midwife and Michael assisted with transport and carried heavy equipment such as the oxygen bottles. They had five children and by 2022 there were 12 grandchildren and three great grandchildren, a number of which attended the funeral.

Michael had kitchen skills and visitors were always well fed. Invariably there was Grace before meals. At Christmas Michael would dress up as Santa and there was a family photograph. He was proud he had established a dynasty of some 20 descendants. In 1967 the family moved to Peterborough where Michael was Head of Mathematics at Stanground School.

Michael was committed to All Souls Parish and due to his great faith was involved in the church and its wider church family. He was a reader, minister of Holy Communion, helped in the sacristy and was involved in choir camps.

Michael retired from teaching in 1987 and Helen died in 2013. In his later years he was seen regularly at daily Mass and leading morning prayers. He had a very loud voice and led the singing but was not always in tune!

Michael was into modern technology and possessed great IT skills. He had DVDs, was into social media and mastered smart phones and other gadgets. In his last few years he used crutches and a wheelchair. Peter Waszak, All Souls Honorary Archivist added: “Michael had an interest in the church archives and was able to assist me with his photography stills and equipment.



## Fr Peter's homilies continue to inspire

**In 2023, many parishes will listen to homilies which draw on the sermon notes that Cambridge Catholic priest and author Fr Peter Edwards produced for Redemptorist Publications in the months before his sudden death on December 18.**

■ From 1997 until 2021, Fr Peter was assistant priest at St Philip Howard Church in Cambridge. Though working full-time right up until his death, he was able to devote time and energy to the liturgical, spiritual, and social life of the parish. His own homilies were appreciated as insightful and thought-provoking.

Fr Philip John, his parish priest, writes: “Peter was a model for persistence and willpower. He wasn't ready to give up anything because of his illness. He always tried to maintain the priestly koinonia in the deanery and was a good example for keeping relationships.”

Peter was born in Barking, Essex in 1959 and brought up in Hornchurch. He read Theology at St Hild and St Bede College, Durham University. While an Anglican ordinand at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, he met his wife, Gill, with whom he had three daughters, Zoe, Lucy, and Maria. Peter's faith and his



family were central to his life; he was immensely proud of his girls and their achievements.

Having been ordained in the Church of England and serving as an Anglican priest for 10 years in three different parishes, Peter followed his strong conviction to join the Roman Catholic Church in 1994, with no certainty that he would be ordained priest. He and his wife and young daughters gave up the security of their home in Suffolk and moved to Cambridge to be received into the Catholic communion. They became part of the congregation of OLEM in Cambridge until Peter was ordained priest in 1997, after which Fr Peter took up his role as assistant priest at St Philip Howard.

Though his condition, muscular dys-

trophy, gradually affected his mobility and, eventually, required him to use a wheelchair, he was determined to continue with family, social and church activities as much as he could. He said Mass regularly including saying the weekly Saturday evening Mass up until the start of the pandemic. Indeed, his muscular dystrophy gave him a deep understanding and empathy with his parishioners who had their own health difficulties and challenges.

In his personal life, Peter had a passion for live music and often travelled the country attending concerts. The Cambridge Folk Festival was a highlight of his year and he could always be found soaking up the atmosphere at Cherry Hinton Hall, rain or shine! He also loved watching sport, especially rugby and cricket. Whenever he could, he enjoyed attending international matches at Twickenham. These were interests which bonded him with parishioners of all ages, and he developed lifelong friendships within the parish.

The parish and the Diocese extend their heartfelt condolences to Gill, Zoe, Lucy, and Maria, as well as to his mother, Patricia, and sister, Elizabeth, and its sincere gratitude for all that Fr Peter contributed over many years.

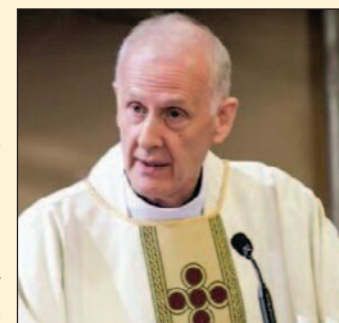
There will be a memorial mass for Fr Peter at St Philip Howard Church in Cambridge on Tuesday February 14 at 7pm.

**Former priest at Clare Priory, Fr Paul Graham OSA, died unexpectedly in Rome on Sunday December 11.**

■ At the time of his death, Fr Paul was Assistant General of the Order of St Augustine, residing in Rome, with responsibility for the Provinces of Northern Europe.

Fr Paul served as Provincial of the Province of England and Scotland for three terms 1997-2001, 2001-05, and 2013-17. He shared fully in the Augustinian ideal of community life, serving as prior and or parish priest in the Augustinian communities in Hammer-smith, Harborne Birmingham, Edinburgh, Hoxton and Clare Priory where he served from 1993 to 2001.

Fr Paul began his religious life at Clare in 1971; he made his Solemn Profession and was ordained priest in 1976. On Sunday December 11 Paul had completed his early stint at a local soup kitchen and was taken ill as he prepared to celebrate Mass. He was aged 75.





Bishop Peter Collins blesses the congregation at the start of his first Sunday Mass at St John's Cathedral. More pictures at: [flic.kr/s/aHBqjAJEHZ](https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAJEHZ)



# Bishop Peter's first Mass at St John's Cathedral

**Mgr Eugène Harkness, The Chancellor, and Fr Alan Hodgson, The Dean, welcomed Bishop Peter Collins to his first Sunday Mass at St John's Cathedral.**

■ At the start of the Mass, on Sunday December 18, Bishop Peter entered through the West Door of the Cathedral and knelt to pray for a short while. He then kissed a crucifix and blessed those near the door with Holy Water before processing up the main aisle as the *Ecce Sacerdos* was sung.

After reaching the Sanctuary, Bishop Peter venerated and incensed the altar before the Liturgy of the Word began.

In his homily Bishop Peter first thanked Mgr Harkness and the entire diocesan family for the welcome which they have extended to him. He then spoke of the struggle we all face to transform conceptual truth into a personal reality.

"Though a dream," he said, "Joseph is addressed most personally by God. He is informed – regarding God's intent. He is challenged – regarding his own decision. He is invited – to change his mind."

"Joseph knew the prophecy of

Isaiah so well... The Maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a Son...

"It is one thing to know the words. It is another thing to accept the message... and take it home – home to the heart of who we are – home to where we become capable of changing our minds."

"Saint Paul was a man who changed his mind – Paul describes himself... as 'a Servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through His prophets in the Scriptures."

"These words hold particular relevance for me today as I formally take possession of my cathedral church as your Bishop – as a successor of the Apostles who is now charged with the fullness of the apostolic mission. 'I invoke these other words of St Paul: 'To all you who are God's beloved – not in Rome but in East Anglia – called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.'

"As we enter the last

stage of our Advent pilgrimage, let us invoke the words of the Psalmist – let the Lord enter, let the Lord come into our hearts, let the Lord come to change our minds, to change our lives."

"God is not distant – He is with us – He is Emmanuel."

After the Mass, Bishop Peter, Mgr Harkness and Canon Hodgson returned to the West Door to greet members of the congregation.



## International crib charity festival

■ A two-day festival featuring scores of cribs from all round the world was held at St Felix Catholic Church, Felixstowe, and raised £660 in aid of seafarers' charity Stella Maris.

Parishioners and local people were asked to bring in their cribs with a note explaining how they acquired them and what memories they evoked – and almost 100 cribs were contributed.

Many church-goers at St Felix have international connections, so various parts of the globe were represented.

Julian Wong, local port chaplain for Stella Maris, attended to thank organisers who were headed by parishioner Barbara Lamberton.

The mayor of Felixstowe, Sharon Harkin, also visited the festival.

Stella Maris, originally Glasgow Apostleship of the Sea, was formed in 1920 to support seafarers in need. Today, it is the largest ship-visiting network in the world, offering practical and pastoral support, information and a friend in times of need.

Fr John Barnes, parish priest, said: "There was an amazing variety of cribs on show. Many people worked hard to make the festival the success it deserves to be."

Pictured above at the crib festival are from the left, Fr John Barnes, Sharon Harkin and Barbara Lamberton. Picture by Fiona Badcock.

## RACHEL'S VINEYARD

Healing the trauma of abortion,  
one weekend at a time

**March 17 – 19th 2023**

**Weekend retreat, North Norfolk**

Rachel's Vineyard offers healing weekend retreats for those experiencing trauma after an abortion.

The weekends offer a supportive, confidential and non-judgemental environment where women and men can deal with painful post-abortion emotions.

It's a time to experience God's love and compassion on a profound level and to begin to rebuild one's life.

Do contact the Norfolk team: [sona@rachelsvineyard.org.uk](mailto:sona@rachelsvineyard.org.uk) Marie: 07860 845658

Registered Charity No: 1191428

UK website: [rachelsvineyard.org.uk](https://rachelsvineyard.org.uk)



# Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese

■ Every year Cambourne Indian Club goes around the town carolling and raising funds for a local charity. This year, on Saturday December 10, they were collecting for Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge which is busier than ever supporting the homeless.

Mel Ward, from Saint John Fisher, said: "We like to coordinate the end of their public singing with the end of our 5pm Mass and much fun was had listening to joyful Malayalam carols and singing together (pictured right).

"Our children relished the lively percussion and some international and more local Christmas fare was shared afterwards. Thanks as always to Annie and Seb, Giju and Shaju and all our Indian friends and neighbours who bring such happiness and hope to our parish and raised much needed funds with such fun!"



■ In November the parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation, Poringland, enjoyed a celebration of St Martin's Day. St Martin's celebrations are quite common in Europe, but less well-known in this country. In his homily at Mass, Fr Andrew Eburne reminded parishioners that in former times Advent was 40 days long, and was preceded by a feast on St Martin's Day – rather as "Pancake Day" or "Mardi Gras" leads into Lent.

He suggested two ways in which we could learn from our Catholic brothers and sisters of the past. One was that they were a bit better at fasting than we are, with a longer Advent. The second, was that they were also a bit better at feasting than we are, and they knew that every holy day was also a holiday and to be treated as such.

The feast of St Martin is often associated with lantern processions, so Mass at Poringland was candlelit, and followed by a parish feast in the Poringland Conference Centre.

■ St Philip Howard church in Cambridge celebrated the contribution of its altar servers as usual on St Stephen's Day, December 26. Despite many families being away over Christmas, 21 servers attended the mass.

At the mass, medals for diligent service were blessed and handed out by Fr Philip John. Ailyn Antony received a silver medal for 10 years of service. Bella Barrameda, Paolo Fiato, Jeremiah Josy and Aaron Lareza received bronze medals.

Four servers were enrolled as members of the Guild of St Stephen. A further seven were due to be enrolled on January 8 and two more will receive bronze medals. The servers are ably guided by Zac Desruisseaux and Oliver Marks, both of whom feature in the photograph, right.

