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Bishop Peter Collins with the sacred oils during the Chrism Mass.

# Diocese gathers for Chrism Mass

**St John's Cathedral in Norwich was filled with almost 800 clergy and laity on April 4 for the annual Chrism Mass for the Diocese of East Anglia celebrated, for the first time, by Bishop Peter Collins. Keith Morris reports.**

■ The annual Mass at which the sacred oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick and the oil of Chrism were blessed and distributed, saw the largest attendance since before the Covid-19 pandemic with coaches arriving from parishes across the Diocese.

In his homily, Bishop Peter said: "Today we celebrate the sacramental life

of holy Mother Church. Today we celebrate the sanctification of God's holy people. Today we gather to celebrate our Catholic identity.

"There is no confusion here regarding our identity, there is no confusion here regarding our mission. The power and strength of these declarations are not built upon the foundations of human hubris. We know ourselves and understand our mission because we are an anointed people.

Bishop Peter went on to say: "Today I celebrate this Chrism Mass for the first time as your bishop. With great joy I address the entire Diocesan family: our Catechumens and the Elect; all those who are baptised and are preparing to complete their Christian initiation; all those who are striving for continuing conversion within the full sacramental life of the Church.

"Together we rejoice in the call to uni-

versal holiness and generous service," he said.

"As the sacred oils are presented for blessing and consecration, let us pray earnestly for all who will receive a sacramental anointing over the coming year of our glorious salvation.

"Those who are to be baptised; those who are to be confirmed; those who are to be ordained; those who are sick and those who are preparing for the final journey of death.

"As the anointed people of God, we rejoice that we know our identity and understand our mission."

Afterwards the congregation were invited to enjoy hot cross buns and tea in the Narthex and the sunny Cathedral gardens.

You can watch a recording of Chrism Mass at: [www.youtube.com/@rcdea](https://www.youtube.com/@rcdea)

You can see a Flickr gallery of the Chrism Mass at: [flic.kr/s/aHBqjAyyvr](https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAyyvr)



Pictured above are King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla. Picture by Chris Jackson.

## Bishop Peter calls for royal prayers

■ Bishop Peter Collins has called upon the East Anglia Catholic community to pray for the intentions and wellbeing of the Sovereign as His Majesty prepares for his Coronation on Saturday May 6.

Bishop Peter has echoed a similar call from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. He said: "I was honoured and delighted to accompany Cardinal Vincent Nichols to Buckingham Palace for the presentation of Loyal Addresses. As we all prepare for the ceremonial and festivities of the coronation let us be united in keeping the sovereign at the heart of our prayer. God Save the King."

The suggested format is as follows:

■ A Triduum of Prayer (from Wednesday May 3 to Friday May 5) for the King's intentions as he prepares to assume the fulness of his responsibility. The format can be decided by each parish/community.

■ On the evening of Friday May 5, a Mass for the intentions of His Majesty should be celebrated.

■ On Sunday May 7, the day after the Coronation, the Prayer of the Faithful should include a Petition of Intercession for the King.

■ Domine salvum fac (in English or Latin) and/or the National Anthem should be sung at the end of Mass.

## Bishop Peter's engagements

- **April 29 & 30, Sat/Sun:** Ignite Festival – Sacred Heart School, Swaffham
- **May 1, Mon:** Diocesan Pilgrimage – 12 noon - 4.30pm, Walsingham
- **May 9, Tue:** Confirmation Mass – 7pm at St Peter and All Souls Peterborough
- **May 11, Thu:** Confirmation Mass - 7pm St Edmunds, Bungay
- **May 12, Fri:** Confirmation Mass – 7pm St Pancras Ipswich combined with Patronal Feast of St Pancras.
- **May 13, Sat:** Bishop's Council for Laity – 10.30am Poringland
- **May 15, Mon:** Confirmation Mass - 7pm, St George's, Norwich
- **May 16, Tue:** Bishop's Council – 10.30am at Poringland
- **May 18, Thu:** The Ascension of the Lord – 7pm Mass at St John's Cathedral
- **May 19, Fri:** Meeting Little Sisters of Jesus – 3pm at Walsingham
- **May 20, Sat:** Visit to HMP Highpoint with Alan McMahon
- **May 23, Tue:** Confirmation Mass – 6.30pm at St Mary's Ipswich
- **May 25, Thu:** Council of Priests – Plenary - 12 noon, Newmarket
- **May 25, Thu:** Confirmation Mass – 7pm, St Etheldreda, Ely
- **May 26, Fri:** Mass at Inter-church school – 3pm at St Bede's Cambridge
- **May 27, Sat:** Mass of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre – 9am in Ely
- **May 28, Sun:** Confirmation Mass – 11am and 3pm, St John's Cathedral
- **May 30, Tue:** Diocesan Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham – 12 noon at the National Catholic Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

[www.rcdea.org.uk/bishop-peter-collins/bishops-diary/](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/bishop-peter-collins/bishops-diary/)

**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 Tuesday May 9.

Diocese website: [www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk)

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■ Bishop Peter Collins celebrated Mass for 50 students at the University of East Anglia Catholic Chaplaincy recently, with their Chaplain Fr Andrew Eburne and Assistant Chaplain Sr Teresa Weight.

In his homily Bishop Peter encouraged the students both in the practice of their faith and in their academic work, reminding them that Jesus Christ should be at the heart of all that they studied.

After Mass the Bishop and students enjoyed a Chaplaincy feast, with home-cooked dishes from the many nations represented within the community.

# Cambourne Catholics celebrate many cultures

**The Catholic community of Cambourne, south west of Cambridge celebrated Easter in a number of cultural traditions, embracing its Irish, Indian and Polish members, reports Mel Ward.**

■ One of the great treasures of our faith is its universality – being inclusive, all-embracing and inviting. The 50-plus villages that form our parish near Cambridge are as diverse as any other with many coming to work in 'silicon fen' our universities or hospitals and many other businesses.

Many of us too, are children and grandchildren of immigrants from the last century and beyond and are proud of our heritage and our international Catholic traditions. The richness of culture brings colour and refreshing insights to our faith and fellowship, our communities and celebration. As Catholic churches we can find true unity, welcome and belonging by sharing our experience and expressions of our faith. Our Saint John Fisher community does its best to enjoy this gift to the full!

For our St Patrick's party we decorated the hall and had a bring-and-share meal. Lorretta Peck shared videos of her talented family in Ireland and Niamh, who is fourth in the world for her age group, danced a slip jig. There were traditional tunes on the banjo and we spoke about St Brigid, now rightfully alongside Patrick as patron Saint of Ireland. Joe Caprani gave a hilarious rendition of Frank



The St Patrick's party in Cambourne.

O'Connor's short story 'The First Confession'.

On Maundy Thursday, after Mass of the Lord's Supper, we celebrated Pesaha appam with our Kerala parishioners. Flat, firm, rice cakes made from rice batter without yeast were shared. This is an ancient practice celebrated by the Kerala Syro Malabar Christians.

The ceremony is said to have roots in ancient Jewish practices and possibly a very early Judeo Christian community in Kerala. Liz, Christy, Annie, Giju, Shaju and others made us all very welcome as always.

On Holy Saturday afternoon, St John Fisher hosted a well-attended Swieconka for our Polish friends. Fr John Minh

blessed the baskets of Easter food and we helped to make folk feel welcome with Easter gift bags for the children and young people and cake and refreshments served by students Mimi and Ana. We had run an all-age Easter craft session after Mass on Palm Sunday and Kasia's decorated eggs and some of our flower arrangements made by Silvia and Marissa adorned the occasion.

As many know St John Fisher Church has no permanent church building of our own and Fr John serves us faithfully and daily from a good distance at Sawston.

But we try to make and use what opportunities we can for outreach, for friendship, faith and fellowship and a lot of fun!

# Sr Catherine makes her First Profession

■ After almost three years of formation as a postulant, then as a novice within the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham, Sr Catherine Williams COLW made her First Profession of Vows in a private Mass in the Church of the Annunciation, Walsingham on March 25.

Religious profession is where the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are made as one offers themselves in their entirety as a gift to God. These vows are then 'renewed' every year until one makes their Perpetual Profession (Final Vows) or discerns that God is calling them elsewhere.

Sr Catherine said: "My First Profession was an incredibly joy-filled moment, the culmination and fruit of much prayer and love and support from my community, family and friends. My sisters in community put so much work in to make it a special day, from an absolutely fabulous ice cream bar and a magnificent cake to decorating the church with an abundance of beautiful flowers.

"First Profession in COLW marks the start of a new stage in living religious life, not just in taking the title 'Sister' but also in undertaking more work at the service of the Church. I was very aware that in giving my life to Jesus in this way, I am also giving my life in love and service of his body: the Church, each and every person whom, by their baptism, are a part of this body.

"First Profession also marks the beginning of a greater involvement in the apostolate of the community so if you would every like us to visit your parish, school or lead a retreat for you, do get in touch! Know that you are in my prayers and please do keep me in yours, said Sr Catherine.

You can keep up-to-date with the latest



information about the community and its work in the Diocese and beyond on its website: [www.walsinghamcommunity.org](http://www.walsinghamcommunity.org)

Pictured above is Sr Catherine Williams (second left) with the other sisters of COLW.

## news in brief

### Bishop Peter's Marriage Mass invite to couples

■ Bishop Peter Collins is inviting all married couples in the Diocese of East Anglia to join him at the annual Marriage Celebration Mass on Saturday June 3 at 11.30am at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist.

All married couples and their families are welcome! Those couples who are celebrating significant anniversaries (one year, five years and every multiple of five years thereafter, or individual years from 60 years onwards) will receive a certificate from the Bishop and the chance to have their picture taken with him.

If you would like to register for a certificate please visit the website [www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-mass-registration/](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-mass-registration/) or contact the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator, Dr Antonia Braithwaite, on [mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk).

Attendees are welcome to enjoy tea and cake in the Cathedral Narthex Hall and gardens after Mass.

Photographs of couples with Bishop Peter will be available online after the day.

### Work of sisters will continue

■ The Sisters of the Community of our Lady of Walsingham have announced that they are leaving the Dowry House Retreat Centre in Walsingham after ten years, but they will continue to work with the National Shrine at particular events being held there.

The Community of Our Lady of Walsingham has been serving in Walsingham for over ten years; initially by helping at the Shrine at weekends and major pilgrimages and, since 2016, by running retreats and hosting pilgrims at Dowry House Retreat on behalf of the Walsingham Trust.

Bishop Peter Collins, on behalf of the Walsingham Trust, said: "The COLW sisters will continue to work with the Shrine at future events, while being based in their mother house in Dereham, rather than at Dowry House. Their ministry at the Shrine continues to be highly valued."

Sr Camilla Oberding, from COLW, said: "It has been a fruitful ministry and one which we have enjoyed immensely.

"Whilst saddened by the thought of leaving Walsingham, we know that, 'in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose' (Rom 8:28).

"We trust that God, in his loving Providence, has arranged that we should all be based at our formation house in Dereham for the time being. This will give us time to focus on the formation of our new members, the accompaniment of more candidates and to expand other areas of mission.

"We assure all staff, villagers and pilgrims of our prayers, especially during this time of transition as the Shrine awaits a new rector."

# Greyfriars to leave Shrine after six years

**The Greyfriars have announced that they are leaving the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham at the end of July after six years.**

■ The Greyfriars (Order of Friars Minor Conventual of Great Britain and Ireland), moved to Walsingham in 2017.

In a statement, Fr Maximilian M Martin OFM Conv, Provincial Custos, said: "Due to a number of significant and pressing issues, it has become impossible for us to continue our presence at the Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham for the time being. We will be bringing our current ministry and presence at the Shrine to a conclusion by July 31.

Despite the ministry at Walsingham being valued by us all, our ministerial and personnel needs at other locations within our Custody, has determined the need for our withdrawal from Walsingham. In other words, we did not decide to leave Walsingham but rather other circumstances and urgent needs within our wider Order and amongst the people we

serve in those locations, made this decision for us.

"Our presence at the National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham has been, since our commencement there in 2017, a time of great blessing, for us as an Order and clearly from the feedback we receive, for many pilgrims and the wider church in general.

"We have deeply appreciated the opportunity to minister at the National Shrine. It has been such a tremendous privilege for us to play our small part in the work and life of this most blessed and special place. Change always comes along with a degree of anxiety and concern for the future.

Bishop Peter Collins said: "I wish to express my heartfelt sadness upon hearing the news, whilst fully understanding the pressures faced by the Custos. On behalf of the Diocese of East Anglia, I give thanks to almighty God for the ministerial service rendered by the Friars Minor Conventual since their arrival in 2017. The moment of their return constituted a restoration of a Franciscan footprint that had been absent for centuries.

"I am grateful to the Provincial Custos for allowing Fr James Mary to remain at the Shrine until the end of July, fulfilling the role of Acting Rector. I thank Fr James Mary for his personal willingness to undertake this important task. The Walsingham Trust, the Diocese of East Anglia and the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales are actively seeking to appoint a new rector for the shrine as soon as possible. I ask the Catholic community, local and national, to pray earnestly in support of this process.

"We entrust ourselves to the care and intercession of our Lady of Walsingham. The National Shrine is securely embedded beneath the mantle of our blessed Mother. As we pass through a period of transition, we confidently proclaim our trust in the providential guidance of God's wisdom and grace. In the full communion of our Catholic faith, let us ensure that we remain focused upon the great mission of welcoming pilgrims to Walsingham. We will always be sustained in faith, hope and charity if we are allegiant to our veneration of our blessed Lady."

Read the latest Diocese  
of East Anglia news at  
[www.rcdea.org.uk](http://www.rcdea.org.uk)

### Our Lady of Fidelity



The church needs religious sisters URGENTLY to bring Christ to others by a life of prayer and service lived in the community of Ignation spirituality. Daily Mass is the centre of community life. By wearing the religious habit we are witnesses of the consecrated way of life.

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# Do people see Jesus in you?

Do people  
see Jesus  
in you,  
asks Fr  
Alvan Ibeh  
in his  
latest  
Voice of  
Hope  
series.



■ In our last article, we looked at having Jesus as our best friend, and I hope you have made that quality decision to have Him as your only trusted friend.

As for me, he is the only friend I can trust with every detail of my life. But claiming him to be our friend is not all that it is. We should be able to point Him out to others without being ashamed of what they should think or say about us. A friend should be someone you are proud to introduce to others as a friend.

The question at this point is this: how often do you, as a Christian, talk to others about this particular friend of yours? Is your friendship with Him only known to you and not to anyone else? Are you bold enough to talk to your friends and family about your relationship with Him, or do you prefer to keep it private so that you don't upset them? Do we value our relationships with others more than we value our relationship with God? What answers do you have for these questions?

Our relationship with Jesus as a friend is a

special one, so special that He transforms us completely so that everything about us becomes Christlike. When we enter this unique intimacy with Christ, we no longer live for ourselves, but Christ lives in us. When our brother St. Paul finally understood this, it radically changed his life, and he declared thus: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

This is the transformation I am talking about. When we embrace this intimate relationship with Christ, He influences us such that, unconsciously or consciously, our attitude and behaviour reflect Him. Those who did not meet Jesus but heard about Him saw Him in the lives of His friends. This becomes true of the saying, Show me your friend, and I will tell you who you are, and Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend"

This is what happened to the friends of Jesus in the Bible that made people call them Christians for the first time in the city of Antioch (Acts 11:26). This was because they saw the life of Jesus reflected in their behaviour and attitude towards each other and others that encountered them.

Today, we all claim to be friends of Jesus, but the question is, "Do people see Jesus in us?" Those who do not believe in Jesus Christ but are aware that we are Christians, encounter Him through us when they come into contact with us and then have the desire to know Him. Do people meet us and feel

they have met Jesus because of how we speak to them, help them, and welcome them? Do they mistake us for Jesus? Or do they leave us regretting ever meeting us?

There is a story of a 16-year-old girl who a salesman helped after some other salesmen accidentally kicked over a table that held a display of the apples she was selling. They all rushed off to catch their flight, but only one stopped to help this girl, even without knowing she was blind.

At the end of that encounter, as he was walking away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, "Mister... He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued... "Are you Jesus?" The young man smiled and slowly made his way to catch a later flight with that question burning and bouncing about in his soul.

Remember to be a friend of Jesus is not just by mere words, but is seen in our commitment to love others as Christ has loved us; "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another".

As we continue to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, let us ask ourselves this crucial question: "Am I like Jesus?" Do people mistake me for Jesus?" I pray that when people see us, they will see Jesus in us. I pray that in all we say and do, we will spread the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14). May God give us His grace to become a true reflection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in this world of ours. Amen.

# Chance to join sailing pilgrim

Parishioners across East Anglia have the chance to be part of an exciting yet prayerful round-Britain sailing pilgrimage which begins on Saturday April 29.

■ British sailor Russ Fairman will embark on the ten-week round Britain sailing pilgrimage. Russ is a passionate supporter of Catholic charity Stella Maris (formerly known as Apostleship of the Sea) and aims to raise funds and awareness for the work of the charity, which exists to provide spiritual and practical support to seafarers, fishers and their families.

The pilgrimage will stop at 50 ports and holy sites along the way, including The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, planned for Thursday May 11.

The boat crew will process into Walsingham, and Mass will be held late afternoon, followed by a gathering and evening meal for everyone.

Crew change stopovers have been scheduled at Wells-next-the-Sea and King's Lynn, giving parishioners a chance to meet Russ and the crew and also join the boat as crew should they wish to.

Russ said: "Through this endeavour, we can hopefully raise further the profile of Stella Maris and the wonderful work it does in helping the people of the sea."

The pilgrimage will celebrate Stella Maris' 100 years of service and offers a unique opportunity for parishioners and

Sailor Russ Fairman.



Stella Maris supporters across the Diocese to join as crew members, and experience one leg of the journey firsthand.

People can also get involved by attending gatherings, which will provide a platform to learn more about the work of Stella Maris, meet the crew, and participate in community events.

For more information about the sailing pilgrimage and how to volunteer to be part of the crew, please contact Russ at

[sailing.pilgrimages@gmail.com](mailto:sailing.pilgrimages@gmail.com) or through the website: [sailingpilgrimages.co.uk/stella-maris/](http://sailingpilgrimages.co.uk/stella-maris/)

No previous sailing experience is necessary, just a reasonable level of agility and fitness.

Volunteers crewing on the boat can get involved in as much or as little of the sailing operations as they wish.

For more information about the port gatherings and how to attend one of them, please contact [info@stellamarismail.org](mailto:info@stellamarismail.org)



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# SVP initiative to help parishes set up a group

■ On March 4, Al Perna and the Sacred Heart and St Oswald's SVP conference hosted an information session for parishes wishing to start or restart an SVP conference.

A very interesting afternoon was had, with prayers, discussion and refreshments provided by the SVP members.

The session was attended by Jon Cornwall,

National Membership Director, and Joan Wall, East Anglia Central Council President.

All parishes, or groups, in East Anglia Diocese are encouraged to develop an SVP conference and existing conferences can ask for support from Joan, Jon and the National Office. SVP can help with combatting loneliness and poverty and facilitate stewardship.

A new conference recently said: "We have been prompted to set up a conference to ensure that nobody has to be indispensable: many people in the parish already help those in need or who are vulnerable in some way, so the Conference will provide a safety net for them so that those whom they help can always be sure of the support that they need,

regardless of the circumstances of the individuals around them. We also felt that having an SVP Conference in the parish would demonstrate our commitment to Catholic Social Teaching."

For further information, please contact Joan Wall [presidente06@svp.org.uk](mailto:presidente06@svp.org.uk) or ring 07510 359845.



■ Radio Maria England welcomed the Men of St Joseph and a men's group that attend Blackfriars in Cambridge recently. The event was to celebrate Candlemas together, and the Men of St Joseph spoke live on the radio with their own powerful personal testimony of how they came into

being. "Mass was celebrated together," said Jason Moore, "and the evening included a talk from The Men of St Joseph, which was followed by a shared meal together at the studio. The evening showed the togetherness of Catholics and especially of Catholic men in Cambridge."

## Bishop to lead Lourdes pilgrims

**Bishop Peter Collins will lead this year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes as part of the wider Catholic Association.**

■ The annual pilgrimage takes place this year from August 18 to 25, and the flight will be from Stansted Airport. This will be a medically supported pilgrimage for the first time since 2019 and all the traditional activities will be taking place in Lourdes. Bishop Peter will in fact be leading the whole Catholic Association Pilgrimage.

All facilities are re-opened and assisted pilgrims, who are most welcome, can stay in the Accueil (Hospital). A number of heavily subsidised places are available, both for assisted pilgrims and nurses. "We need helpers and those who come as pilgrims," said Deacon Huw Williams, who is organising the pilgrimage.

The hotel for the East Anglian contingent is the same as last year (the Elisio) and the cost is the same as last year – just

under £1000 for all travel once you get to Stansted, full board (excellent food) but with a £245 supplement for a single as against a double or twin-bedded room.

"We hope to have our diocesan Mass up at the church in Bartrès," said Deacon Huw, "where Bernadette lived as a baby and as a young teenager, until just before the meetings with Our Lady in the Grotto. And it will be celebrated by our Bishop."

"I hope that we will be able to give some support to those unable to meet the full costs of the pilgrimage."

If that is your situation, please contact Deacon Huw who will treat all inquiries in confidence. "Let's make this a special time in a very special place," he said. "Book soon!"

There is a lot of detail on the pilgrimage at: <https://www.tangney-tours.com/pilgrimages/lourdes/catholic-association>.

For more information and guidance, you can contact Deacon Huw Williams on [huw.williams@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:huw.williams@rcdea.org.uk), 07399 163 718, St Felix' Church Princess Way, CB9 9BP.

### news in brief

■ Good Friday in Peterborough saw the largest turn out of Churches Together in Central Peterborough for some 10 years. The eight churches draw in people from all over the city and all denominations of Christians. The event was rounded off with coffee and hot cross buns at St John The Baptist Church.

"There are four Catholic churches in the city of Peterborough," explains Pat Bedford, "St Peter and All Souls in the city centre with Our Lady of Lourdes in the east of the city, St Oswald to the north of the city and St Luke south of the river. All were represented at the Walk of Witness on Good Friday."

"The other Christian churches in the city outnumber the Catholic turnout, but it was just great to see a large number of us all wanting to bear witness to the saving power of Jesus without making any references to how many were from each denomination. We were led by Rev Michael Moore from St Mary's Anglican Church and we all sang and prayed together. It was very refreshing."

■ As part of their Lenten programme, St Mary's Thetford had a Lent talk in the parish hall. The talk was entitled "Can we be Friends with God?"

Fr Bob Eccles of the Cambridge Dominicans explored the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas who says that charity (love) is best described as friendship. The talk inspired a hearty discussion.



**12 Noon – Regina Caeli & Crowning of the Statue**

Friday Market (outside the Parish Church in the Village)  
followed by a Rosary Procession to the Basilica  
led by the Parish of King's Lynn

**2pm – Service of Reconciliation & Confessions**

Chapel of Reconciliation & around the Crosses

**3pm – Pontifical Mass** with Bishop Peter Collins

# Easter week is marked

## Palm Sunday

■ The people of St John's Cathedral enjoyed a rich and colourful celebration of the Palm Sunday liturgy as Bishop Peter Collins joined them for the first time.

The celebration began among the spring flowers of the Cathedral garden, where Bishop Peter blessed palm crosses with holy water. There was then a reading of the entry into Jerusalem from St Matthew's Gospel before the people acted it out in public witness, processing in a windy walk down Unthank Road.

Entering the Cathedral, the large congregation filled the building and listened to the long reading of the Passion according to St Matthew, read in parts with Bishop Peter speaking the words of Jesus.

In his homily, Bishop Peter said: "Today we bear witness to how quickly the mood can change from acclamation to condemnation... There is speculation in the air. Some voices demand nothing more than a shallow performance, for some can only perceive a miracle as some kind of spectacle."

"The vast majority have no real grasp of who Jesus really is. Even his closest companions have not fully grasped the reality of who He is and what He is about to accomplish."

Bishop Peter then encouraged the people to pray earnestly and consistently through Holy Week. "If there is no established pattern to our daily prayer," he said, "let us rectify the failing. As the prophet Isaiah proclaims: each morning He wakes me, to listen like a disciple."

"There is much for us to learn, and time is short. Listen then to the Sacred Scriptures, listen to every detail of what He unfolds."

The Bishop then turned to the painful theme of betrayal: "We should all feel threatened by the realisation that betrayal is but a short sequence of decisions away. Evil builds its momentum slowly. A man, captured by pride and greed, a man who grasped just thirty silver pieces, betrayed the one whose state was divine."

Finally, Bishop Peter cast a look at the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed that the Father's will would be done. "Thus, Jesus embraces every one of us through the ages, from the dawn of time to the end of time."



Stories and pictures by Eldred Willey and Keith Morris. To see full picture galleries of every Mass visit: [flickr.com/photos/diocesefeastanglia](http://flickr.com/photos/diocesefeastanglia)

## Good Friday

■ St John's Cathedral was packed on Good Friday as the people formed a seemingly endless queue which moved forward to kiss the wood of the Cross.

The Good Friday liturgy began as the clergy, with Bishop Peter at the rear, silently processed into the Cathedral and prostrated themselves before the altar.

The clergy then read in three parts the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John, while the people stood to listen.

In his homily and before the people kissed the Cross, Bishop Peter focussed on the kinds of kisses which had been given to Jesus. "The imprint of betrayal provided by the kiss of Judas," he said, "is replaced by the imprint of fidelity provided by the kiss of Mary."

He then introduced the act of veneration, when the people would "behold and embrace the wood of the Cross on which hung the salvation of the world".

This embrace should "become an expression of daily remembrance and a witness of lifelong allegiance".

Bishop Peter then appealed to the people to give generously in the offering, which was going towards the upkeep of the Holy Places and towards the suffering Church, particularly in Syria and Turkey in the aftermath of the earthquake. He announced the upcoming visit this summer of the Cardinal Patriarch of Baghdad, head of the Chaldean Church, which has suffered greatly from persecution in recent years.

The homily was followed by the veneration of the Cross, where people were invited to genuflect and then kiss any part of the wood of the crucifix. Altar servers took turns in holding and wiping the crucifix, as there were so many people coming up.

The long service ended with Holy Communion and the people dispersed in reverent silence.



# at St John's Cathedral



## Easter Vigil

■ Seven Catechumens and four Candidates entered full communion with the Church at an atmospheric candlelit Easter Vigil at St John's Cathedral.

Cathedral staff had woven together an extensive and beautiful liturgy, which began with the lighting of the new fire outside the West Door. With the people gathered around, Bishop Peter Collins cut a cross into the pascal candle with a stylus. The candle was artistically prepared by Deacon Bienn Carlo, who also held it for Bishop Peter.

He then made the Greek letter Alpha above the cross and the letter Omega below and inserted five grains of incense into the candle in the form of a cross to represent the wounds of Christ. Lighting the pascal candle from the new fire, he led the people into the darkened Cathedral, which gradually filled with light as the people lit each other's candles.

Daniel Justin, Master of Music at the Cathedral, was at his most powerful singing the Exultet. There followed the long series of Easter readings in the candlelight, from Genesis through Exodus, Ezekiel and Romans, interspersed with music

from the choir, before the Gospel reading.

"Tonight, we rejoice to proclaim that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead," said Bishop Peter in his homily. "Through our sacramental journey we embrace the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord."

Addressing those joining the Church, he added: "You have long considered your decisions that have brought you to this night. You do not know all that awaits you, yet you faithfully place your trust in the risen Lord."

Jesus, he said, will offer reassurance and sustenance but this is always followed by an instruction: "We are called to the personal pilgrimage of holiness so that we can become capable of being sent on mission to evangelise the world. Dear Candidates, the Lord is calling you now. Step forward and answer the call."

After the litany of the saints, Bishop Peter proceeded to bless the water of baptism by dipping into it the pascal candle. He then baptised the seven Catechumens and conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on both the Catechumens and the four Candidates, anointing them with Chrism oil. These then joined the people in the celebration of the Eucharist, bringing them into full sacramental communion with the Church.



## Maundy Thursday

■ The Mass of the Lord's Supper was celebrated by Bishop Peter Collins at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on Maundy Thursday, where he ceremonially washed the feet of 12 parishioners.

In the presence of a congregation of around 350 people, Bishop Peter said in his homily: "We know well the image of the Last Supper painted by Leonardo da Vinci. We behold Jesus assembled with his apostles in the upper room.

All who were present at the Last Supper believed they knew the framework of the feast, whereas in reality a new scenario is being painted, explained Bishop Peter.

"Although the rituals of the meal seem the same as ever, the content of the meal is about to become something radically different. In the upper room, Jesus declares that the

hour has finally come for him to pass from this world to the Father. The companions of Jesus cannot yet comprehend this passage, this new Passover.

"When Jesus rises from the table and washes the feet of his disciples, his companions are bewildered and reluctant. 'They knew he was washing their feet but they did not know that he was in fact demonstrating that he would soon be laying down his life. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands,' said Bishop Peter.

After his homily, Bishop Peter knelt to wash, dry and kiss the feet of a dozen parishioners, following the example of Jesus, at the Last Supper.

After Holy Communion, the Bishop led a procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament to a tabernacle in the Sunken Chapel in the Cathedral where it remained, while being watched, until midnight, as a reminder of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

## SCHOOLS NEWS

# Notre Dame students put faith into fundraising action



■ After seeing the devastating images of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, students at Notre Dame High School decided to take action.

They launched an appeal at the end of their Ash Wednesday Service encouraging students to bring in a donation. Two days later the Y11 Prefects did a bucket collection during morning registration and collected £750 in less than 15 minutes.

This inspired a group of Y10 students in their RE lesson to ask if they could

organise a cake sale.

According to Mrs Sharif, Head of RE, this was “a brilliant way for the school community to embody the teachings of the Bible and help those around us in need”.

To promote the appeal, students designed posters and a slideshow explaining how emergency relief teams are supporting the victims of the earthquake. This resulted in an amazing response from students and staff who baked an impressive selection of cakes. Within minutes of

starting the sale, every cake had been bought and £150 had been raised.

As Lola in Y10 was buying her cake she summed up the appeal calling it “a brilliant and effective way to raise awareness”. In addition, £1000 is now on its way via CAFOD to provide emergency shelter, clean water, food, warm blankets and winter kits.

**Pictured left are Notre Dame students enjoying cakes from the fundraising drive.**

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**Pictured are Bishop Peter with guests, teachers and children at St Louis academy.**

# Bishop opens new school teaching hub

**Children from St Louis Catholic Academy in Newmarket were thrilled to welcome Bishop Peter Collins to bless recently completed teaching hub the Mustard Seed Kitchen.**

■ The Bishop visited on March 20 and the parish welcomed children to celebrate Mass with him before returning to school. “Our team of altar servers excelled in serving at the Mass,” said Sue Blakeley, Headteacher at St Louis Catholic Academy. “They were introduced to some new duties, including holding the Bishop’s hat and crosier.

“Daniel Justin, our choir leader from the Cathedral of St John the Baptist where he is Master of Music, led our school choir who performed parts of a new Mass that he has

composed. Parishioners and parents were excited to welcome Bishop Peter to Newmarket for the first time and to attend the Mass celebrated by the Bishop and supported by Fr Simon Blakesley, the school link governor from the Our Lady of Walsingham MAT Trust Board, and Deacon James Hurst.”

In 2021, Mr Bill Gredley, a local businessman kindly gifted the school £12,000 towards developing a teaching kitchen, intervention space and nurture facility. That was match funded by the Alive in Faith grant overseen by Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes. The school PTA secured £1,000 from Tesco towards cooking equipment too and Governors agreed to make up the final cost to push the build over the line through use of some contingency funding.

The new space fitted in a former PE storage area will be used to teach Design and

Technology. “We will host after school clubs for Young Carers and Pupil premium learners,” said Sue Blakeley, “provide opportunities for parents to cook alongside children and improve food preparation facilities for PTA fundraisers. As a healthy school, we are always looking to provide advice to families to make healthy choices and we hope that this will be a great place to educate in a supportive way. Our first classes start after Easter with Chatty Chefs, a nurture group that builds resilience and confidence.”

The school chaplains enjoyed a buffet lunch with Bishop Peter and found out about his move from Wales to East Anglia. After lunch, children took the special guest for a tour of the school where each class met and chatted with him. The school looks forward to welcoming Bishop Peter to St Louis in future years.

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## YOUTH MATTERS



St Luke's Peterborough hosted the first World Youth Day preparation meeting on February 12. St Luke's has the largest WYD group going on the pilgrimage to Lisbon this summer.

There was an International Youth Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter Collins, his first visit to Peterborough. Afterwards there was a time for lunch and for pilgrims to mingle. This was followed by a talk and presentation by Hamish MacQueen and Fr Pablo. Excitement is rising as we get closer to WYD 2023 Lisbon.

# Weekend of transformation

**Sophie Pereira from the Ignite Team was among participants at the Transform for Holy Week event which took place recently at Clare Priory.**

■ In all, sixteen 16-35 year-olds joined the event, which ran from Friday March 31 to Sunday April 2. "It was an experience that I won't forget," said one of the participants.

"For myself it was an evening of prayer ministry and close encounter with the Eucharist that was one of the highlights of the weekend," said Sophie. "It was a very moving and transformative service for many, and an experience not previously had by the young adults."

"The chance to witness different styles of prayer, often not offered in their normal parish, is something that the Transform retreat aims to offer young people. It provides an opportunity for young adults to delve deeper into their faith and discover new aspects of Catholicism that they may not have known existed or had a chance to experience."

The evening was made even better by an informal music gig by the band 'Revelation' with some snacks and a time for the retreatants to socialise, have fun and discuss the events of the day.

Another highlight of the event was a

thought-provoking talk delivered by Bishop Peter Collins all about contemplating the events of Holy Week and ways we can prepare ourselves for it. Participants were tasked by the Bishop to imagine themselves in situations occurring during Holy Week, whether anonymous among the crowds or as one of Jesus' closest followers; allowing themselves to understand and try to relate to the events happening.

In addition to the activities of the retreat, the young adults had the opportunity to explore the beautiful surroundings of Clare Priory. It is the oldest Augustinian Priory in England, dating back to the 1200s and it's not a surprise that people continue to use the Priory as a place of quiet prayer and retreat. The beautiful surroundings and abundance of wildlife make it a perfect place for retreat from the daily stresses of life. The retreatants also had the opportunity to join in the daily life of the friars, including morning and evening prayer and meals.

"The Transform retreat aimed to expose our young adults to many different aspects of our faith," said Sophie, "from the daily life of Friars to an evening of prayer ministry. Our retreatants left with a changed attitude towards many parts of their faith, and a changed attitude towards opportunities for young adults within the Diocese. They left the Transform event transformed."



Participants at the Transform event at Clare Priory.

## Communications Officer

**The Diocese of East Anglia needs an experienced part-time Communications Officer to help provide an effective communications service to the bishop, diocesan departments, clergy and parishes across Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.**



The Communications Officer will produce engaging and accurate news stories about the work of the diocese for use in its monthly newspaper, website and weekly e-newsletter.

The officer will be required to take pictures at diocesan events. Other roles include posting stories online and helping to manage our social media channels.

Other tasks include dealing with media enquiries, deputizing for the Communications Director and helping to compile information for our website and annual directory.

For a candidate with experience, there is the opportunity to record and edit regular YouTube messages from Bishop Peter and to help train volunteer communications champions across the diocese.

### Desirable experience includes:

- Writing and editing news stories
- Taking and editing digital pictures.
- Managing and posting content to social media channels.
- Uploading content onto a website
- Producing press releases and dealing with media enquiries
- Using text and photo editing software as well as Microsoft Office.
- Proof reading skills
- Video recording and editing skills would be an advantage.

This is a flexible, home-based, role and you will be required to travel across the diocese to cover key events, many of which are in or around Norwich.

**Salary:** negotiable, according to experience.

**Benefits:** Five weeks of paid holiday, sick pay, travel and some home-working expenses.

To discuss this post, please contact Director of Communications Keith Morris at [keith.morris@rdea.org.uk](mailto:keith.morris@rdea.org.uk) or ring 07712 787762. More details at [www.rdea.org.uk](http://www.rdea.org.uk)

Apply with a covering letter, CV and examples or links to published work (pictures and/or stories) to: [keith.morris@rdea.org.uk](mailto:keith.morris@rdea.org.uk)

Closing date for applications: **May 12.**

## news in brief

### Retreat for men at Walsingham

■ Fr Anil Zachery will be the speaker at a retreat for men being organised at Walsingham by the Marriage and Family Life Commission.

The retreat will take place on Saturday June 10 at the Catholic National Shrine in Walsingham, with a cost of £12.50. The title is 'Being the man God has called you to be.'

Fr Anil will discuss our mission and vocation as we journey here on earth to our heavenly home. The day starts at 10.15am and there will be a walk along the Holy Mile from 3pm.

You can book tickets at: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/being-the-man](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/being-the-man)

For more details please contact Antonia Braithwaite the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator on [mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)

### A letter to the King

■ St Mary's in Thetford has written a letter to Buckingham Palace upon the occasion of HM Charles III's Coronation.

In the letter, the parish community express their heartfelt good wishes and prayers for their majesties for the occasion and wish them all the best and happiness for the future.

Fr Pat Cleary, parish priest and Paul Gilbert, Chairman of the parish council worked closely together in the wording and as such felt that it was great that something could be sent from a small parish to mark the historic event next month.

Many of the community of Thetford remember the visit of the then Prince Charles to Thetford in 1999 and thought it would be great way to bring the past back to the present.

### Easter ecumenism

■ On Easter Day the village of Acle demonstrated ecumenism at its best when a cross-section of members of the Catholic, Methodist and Church of England communities gathered to celebrate the Resurrection.

They were led by Rev Peter Glanville, Rev Andrew King and Rev Martin Greenland, and assembled at 5.45am outside the 12th century church of St Mary's in Fishley, a short walk from the village, to celebrate their traditional annual service.

It commenced with prayers and hymns inside the candlelit church. The congregation then processed outside where further hymns were sung and prayers recited. Finally, all stood in a circle as bread and wine were distributed. Then a rousing rendition of the hymn 'Jesus Christ is risen today' was performed.

### Cantonese Masses

■ Canon Hoan Minh Nguyen will be celebrating a regular Mass in Cantonese at Our Lady of Lourdes, 135 High Street, Sawston CB22 3HJ at 2pm on Saturdays.

Coming dates are: May 20, Jun 10, Jul 15, Aug 19, Sep 16, Oct 14, Nov 18, Dec 16. The Masses will be followed by tea and an opportunity to mingle. More details from [cantonmassea@gmail.com](mailto:cantonmassea@gmail.com)

# Hoveton couples celebrate

**Two Catholic couples from Norfolk overcame the vagaries of hard winters to get to their weddings, and many decades later are celebrating God's and each other's faithfulness.**

■ Nick Walmsley from St Helen's Hoveton writes: "It must be something of a record for one parish to have two couples celebrating a Golden and a Platinum Wedding Anniversary in the same week. But that is what happened at the parish Mass at St Helen's Catholic Church, Hoveton on Saturday February 25."

Duncan and Mary Edmonds were married at the Catholic Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Wells-next-the-Sea in February 1963 during the legendary hard winter which made getting to the church difficult, many of the local roads having been closed by snow drifts. Two years later they moved to Stalham on the Norfolk Broads and after attending Mass at several local churches migrated to St Helen's in Hoveton which was then in the care of St George's Parish, Sprowston, under Fr Tony Rogers.



Michael and Elaine Haughton were married at St Alban's Catholic Church in St Annes-on-Sea in the Fylde, hard by Blackpool Airport. Again, the weather in February 1973 was much as it had been 10 years before, and Elaine recalls cancelled trains and other travel difficulties, but both of them got to the church on time. They moved to Norfolk and arrived at St Helen's in the early 1990s. Their son Steven was a very

capable altar server at St Helen's, and, like the Edmonds, they are active in the thriving community there.

Pictured above left to right: Mary Edmonds and Dr Duncan Edmonds, celebrating 60 years of marriage; Elaine Haughton and Michael Haughton, celebrating 50 years; Fr Peter Raj, Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Parish North Walsham in which St Helen's is situated. Image: Jenny Haughton.

## Pope honoured outstanding layman

■ **Anthony Potter, who passed away in January, made a mark through his service in both civic and church life in Norfolk over the last 60 years.**

The highlight in a Catholic context came in 2004, when both Anthony and Joyce Potter received the Benemerenti award from the Pope, in recognition for their selfless devotion to the Church. This took place especially in the Diocese of East Anglia.

"Joseph, who died on January 8, is remembered for his tireless work in Costessey for St Augustine's Voluntary Aided Primary School," writes his son, Christopher Potter. "He was Foundation Governor from 1967 to 2001, Vice-Chairman from 1992 to 1995 and Chairman from 1995 to 2001. One of his achievements was to preserve a footpath (with public right of way) connecting St Augustine's School with the Church of Our Lady and St Walstan. If he had not intervened, this once-rural way which kept pupils safe would have been lost in the midst of a modern housing development."

Joseph was born in Birmingham in 1926, the first of seven children, to Louis and Catharina Potter. He was educated at the English Martyrs and St Philip's Grammar School, both in Birmingham. Next, he went to Cotton College, north Staffordshire, followed by Oscott College where he received training for the priesthood lasting four years. In



October 1948 (in his own words) his 'theological studies came to an end'.

Following two brief jobs he made his lifelong career in local government, starting on in July 1949 on an annual salary of £260. His early career was spent in the West Midlands where he met his future wife, Joyce Veronica (nee) Wilson at a Catholic parish bazaar. They were married on July 2, 1955.

In late 1963 he took up a post with Norfolk County Council Highways Department. He moved earlier than the rest of the family in order to find a suitable house. Whilst search-

ing, he stayed with an old college friend, Fr Manley, who was parish priest at West Earham, Norwich.

Though Anthony retired professionally as Chief Administrative Officer in 1987 he was always active throughout his life on behalf of the Church. Anthony was a member of the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council, Norwich Centre 1968-99; counsellor, 1968-90; secretary, 1972-90; chairman, 1990-93 and trustee, 1992-99.

He was also a member of the East Anglia Diocesan Social Welfare Commission, 1988-96 and Norwich LIFE treasurer, 1989-96. He was always interested in the education provided by the Catholic Church; his own family for two generations being involved, for which he was justly proud. His grandparents raised enough money to build a school in Birmingham ahead of a church in the same grounds.

Over the years Anthony keenly maintained a display of CTS booklets; he was probably inspired by several relatives who were active members of The Catholic Evidence Guild.

He is succeeded by his wife Joyce of 67 years, five children (his third born having predeceased him by eight days), 16 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

"Anthony never failed in his commitment to charity work," said Christopher, "and getting the balance right between his prayer life and the practical concerns of the day."



Pictured is Fr Michael Stack.  
Picture by Con McHugh.



# Power in prayer for sick says hospital chaplain

A Norfolk Catholic hospital chaplain, who two years ago survived his own three-month hospital battle with Covid-19, has written a new book about the power of praying with and for the sick. **Keith Morris reports.**

■ Fr Michael Stack spent more than five weeks in critical care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn in 2020, due to Covid-19.

He "died" twice and was on a ventilator for three weeks before he miraculously pulled through, astonishing the medical team with his recovery.

He is full of praise for the doctors and nurses – but he also drew strength from being visited and prayed for by Catholic priest Fr Gordon Adam and Baptist hospital chaplain Rev Lee Gilbert.

Fr Michael himself has spent 25 years as a hospital chaplain and is now National Chaplain to the Association of Catholic Nurses of England & Wales (ACNEW). He knows the vital role chaplains can play for many patients and about the healing power of prayerful companionship with the sick and dying. He feels the experience has only strengthened his faith.

Within a short time of arriving in Norfolk for a holiday from Coventry, Fr Michael had developed a bad cough and started hallucinating. He was admitted by ambulance to hospital.

"I was on a ventilator for 21 days and 36 days in critical care," said Fr Michael. "I don't remember much because I was completely medicated – a blessing in disguise."

Fr Michael had a tracheostomy to help his breathing and he had to learn to walk again after his 10-week hospital stay.

Prayers were said around the world for

him as he lay unconscious with the most severe form of the virus in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Fr Gordon Adam, Assistant Priest at King's Lynn Catholic Parish, saw Fr Michael at least twice and said: "In hospital during the pandemic, especially with routine visiting in the hospital being prohibited, the work of chaplains to help people practice their faith while experiencing serious health problems becomes more important than ever. In the most extreme cases it is spiritual 'critical care' to help someone facing death know that their sins are absolved so that they can be at ease with God."

On Easter Sunday, Baptist hospital chaplain Rev Lee Gilbert received a call from critical care nurses asking him to say some prayers for a Catholic priest who was under their care. Lee used Facetime with the nurses holding an iPad near to Fr Michael.

"Whilst I had no idea as to whether Fr Michael could hear me or not, I knew that God could hear me and afterwards I spoke to Fr Michael's sister and told her what I had done and I believe it gave her a great deal of comfort when she herself could not come into the hospital."

"Slowly but surely Fr Michael's health improved and he was transferred to a ward where I could go and have a face-to-face conversation and we reflected together on his journey through Covid-19 and through the hospital."

So what did Fr Michael, now living in Thetford, learn from his own close encounter with death in hospital? "I have become aware again that we rely on others. It is the prayers offered, the support given to my family. It is the nurses and doctors in our NHS who by their care save lives – many lives. My gratitude is to the many life-savers and nursing staff who used their gifts to help me. Thank you."

[www.catholicnurses.org.uk](http://www.catholicnurses.org.uk)

**Fr Michael recalls a dozen of his own experiences as a hospital chaplain in his new short booklet *Reflections by a Retired Hospital Chaplain*.**

■ Among the episodes are a family throwing an 80th birthday party for dementia-sufferer Nina. The almost constant blank stare on her face lifted briefly when she tasted her favourite banana cake and a forgotten taste came back.

Teenager Zoe, suffered from Sickle Cell, which caused her great pain. "As we prayed together Zoe stopped crying and said thank you for listening to me. Listening to those who are sick is very important," said Fr Michael. "We can give some answers, but most times silence and simply being there helps."

Blind D-Day and Korea war veteran Tommy was also a double leg amputee. One day when Fr Michael went to visit, only one of Tommy's prosthetic legs was beside his bed – the other was missing. The nurses started a search and found it in the ward bathroom. Fr Michael regularly wheeled Tommy to the Chapel Mass on Sunday and would then describe the chapel, altar and stained glass windows.

Talking to Polish former world war two pilot Boleslaw, he told Fr Michael about his role in over 80 bombings missions. "I contributed to so many deaths," said Boleslaw. Fr Michael replied: "But you helped to bring the war to an end." With tears in his eyes, Fr Michael said the prayer of Absolution (forgiveness) over Boleslaw. Afterwards Boleslaw said he felt different for their time together.

Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, writes: "I am grateful to Fr Michael for his thoughtful and welcome contribution to our reflections on the experience of the pandemic. The 12 episodes from his own extensive experience of ministering to the sick, including his own encounter with Covid-19, help us to realise how much we rely on the care of others at such moments when we are unable to look after ourselves and the importance of prayer."

*Reflections by a Retired Hospital Chaplain* is available from Fr Michael for £5 from [michael.stack3@gmail.com](mailto:michael.stack3@gmail.com) or the bookshop at the Catholic National Shrine in Walsingham, all proceeds to ACNEW.



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# Easter and Lent in parishes around the Diocese

■ On Palm Sunday, the parish of Our Lady and St Charles Borromeo in Wisbech was delighted to be enriched by members of the Lithuanian Community. Following the Mass, the children were invited to engage in craft work and completed the decorating of the garden in preparation for Easter.

There was a wonderful feast laid on and the parishioners enjoyed the cultural enrichment that the Lithuanians bring to the congregation. The parish includes many members from various parts of Eastern Europe and beyond. For example, on Holy Thursday members of the Syro-Malabar community led the Stations of the Cross in the evening before Mass and the Polish Community provided a service for the Blessing of the Eggs on Holy Saturday Morning.



■ On Good Friday morning, bright and early, in beautiful sunshine, the Easter message was proclaimed loud and clear in the centre of Ipswich, through hymns, Scripture reading and prayers.

The ecumenical group of participants started at the Methodist church, passed near two Anglican churches and St Pancras Catholic Church, concluding with refreshments in the URC Church. Representatives from each of those churches were present.

"It's a privilege to be able to proclaim the message of Easter from the town hall steps," said Jean Johnson. "Our sad first stop was at the place in the town centre where a young man was stabbed and killed some weeks ago, in the middle of the afternoon, by two local youngsters."

"Our numbers are no match for those we had pre Covid, but the Christian message rang out loud and clear. We are all determined to recruit more next year."



■ Parishioners from St Joseph's in St Neots celebrated the solemnity of their parish patron with a Mass on March 20. Following the Mass, parishioners enjoyed szegedin goulash, a traditional Slovak dish provided by Fr Tibor Borovský, the parish priest.

■ At St Michael's in Huntingdon, the Wednesday coffee morning attendees all decided to fast during Lent from biscuits, cakes and snacks, but carried on meeting for a chat and a hot drink. The number varies from 4 to a maximum of 12, reports Fr Philip Shryane, and provides a good service for our community.

"We all enjoy the chance for a chat and a catch up about life and our parish," he says. "On the Wednesday of Easter week we broke our fast and enjoyed some lovely sweets and biscuits. One of our regulars, Brian, used to live in Malta and asked his daughter to make us a traditional Maltese Figolla, a pastry filled with sweet marzipan filling, given as an Easter gift in Malta; it was a lovely treat and very much enjoyed." This is a regular event in the parish and newcomers are always welcome, we meet after 9.30 Mass on Wednesday mornings.



■ At St Felix in Felixstowe, Fr John Barnes says: "Each Easter Eve our Polish population bring their traditional Easter Baskets to be blessed. They contain bread, meats, and eggs, which are all symbolic - the Bread of life, the Lamb of God, and the Resurrection. There was a good attendance for the service."

