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Pictured is Bishop Peter Collins stirring the holy oils at the Chrism Mass at St John's Cathedral in Norwich. See a full picture gallery at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBjd2L>

Fr Pat recalls life as a missionary

■ Thetford parish priest Fr Patrick Cleary served for ten years with the Missionary Society of St James the Apostle, first in Bolivia and then in Boston, New England. He has reflected on his decade of service in the Society's latest newsletter.

Fr Pat recalls a cholera outbreak in Santa Cruz, Bolivia in the early 1990s:

"Many poor people were dying since the price of medicines was beyond their means. In one single day, I had seven families come to the parish house looking for Baptism for their babies who were gravely ill with cholera. Some had died before even arriving at the parish.



"After Baptizing one boy I asked the family to take him to the hospital in town, which the German government had established to offer free treatment for cholera victims. The boy died enroute to the hospital. So, the next day, I went to their home (a one-room shack) to celebrate the funeral. His grave was dug on the edge of the jungle.

"After the service and burial, I could see that the mother was very sick so I got her and her husband into the car and I started driving to the local hospital in the city. The only comment from her husband, in this grave situation, was to ask whether the hospital would charge him for his wife's care. I realized in that moment, that for the world's poor, life was livable on a day-by-day basis; there were no safety nets, and no health care or insurance for moments of tragedy or extreme need. This poor woman died on the way to the hospital. Earlier that same day, another mother back in the parish had told me, 'maybe my child will die and God will give me a healthy one next time'. These are words I could never have expected to hear."

Fr Pat also recalls visiting Cuba for a visit by Pope John-Paul II's when he got the chance to shake hands with Fidel Castro.

Visit: www.socstjames.com

Bishop Peter leads annual Chrism Mass

Bishop Peter Collins led the annual Chrism Mass in Norwich, attended by hundreds, emphasising our baptismal calling and the sacredness of the holy oils. Joshua Clovis reports.

■ In a significant ceremony on March 26, Bishop Peter Collins, the Bishop of East Anglia, led the annual Chrism Mass, attended by hundreds of clergy and laity from right across the diocese, gathered within the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich.

This celebration witnessed the blessing and distribution of the sacred oils – the Oil of Catechumens, the Oil of the Sick, and the Oil of Chrism.

In his homily, Bishop Peter delved into the essence of our baptismal calling, he

said: "In his 'Passover', Christ opened our access to the fountain of grace through baptism. Through our baptism, the foundation sacrament, we become an anointed people, a holy people."

He then went on to say: "Michelangelo's painting of the Creation of Man on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel leaves a space between the finger of the Creator and the finger of the creature. In Christ, Creation is brought to completion in the Redemption. What is unfulfilled in us is united to what is accomplished in Christ.

"In Christ, the words of the prophet Isaiah are fulfilled: 'The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me.' In Christ, we are drawn into a purposeful mission: 'To bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken, to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison, comfort to all those who mourn.'"

Addressing the clergy present, Bishop Peter underscored their sacred duties:

"Priests are charged with nurturing a love for their bishop made manifest in faithful and generous obedience... My brothers, fidelity and obedience are fruits of humility."

He also elaborated on the significance of the holy oils: "The pre-baptismal anointing with the Oil of Catechumens signifies a cleansing and a strengthening... The post-baptismal anointing with Sacred Chrism, and its further reception in the Sacrament of Confirmation, enables the full 'Profession' of the faith of the Church... The anointing with Sacred Chrism at ordination is truly a sign of consecration, an intimacy shared through the bishop with Christ the High Priest... For those who are seriously ill there is the Anointing of the Sick, the healing touch that is imparted through an anointing on the forehead and hands."

Following the Mass, people were invited to the Cathedral Narthex and gardens to enjoy hot cross buns.



New book explores the challenges of a living faith

■ Norfolk Catholic author, Anita Dowling (pictured above), has written a new book, *Living in Truth*, which explores some of the challenges facing Christians in an increasingly de-Christianised society.

Anita says: "Truth can mean many different things in today's world. For the Christian, *Living in Truth*, means living as Christ would do, if he were you. In our times it has become particularly difficult, especially with regard to marriage and the right to life. Until recently, Western social norms and Christian teaching agreed. Today that is no longer the case and that has influenced many of the ideas we take for granted as well as current legislation."

With examples from a range of practical situations, Anita explores the many practical challenges facing Christians today and in the future.

The book is available in hardback, softback and as an e-book via amazon.co.uk at £9.99, £5.99 and £3.99.

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 May 7.

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Clare Priory to celebrate 30th annual Craft Fair

■ Clare Priory is set to host its 30th annual Craft Fair, marking a significant moment for one of Suffolk's favourite summer gatherings. Scheduled for July 13 and 14, this volunteer-led fundraiser is set against the historic backdrop of the 13th-century Augustinian Priory in Clare.

Launched in 1993, the Clare Priory Craft Fair has grown into possibly East Anglia's largest craft event, attracting around 5,000 visitors each year. With a two-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2024 fair marks a significant milestone, showcasing 150 craft stalls in the picturesque grounds near Clare Country Park and the Norman Castle ruins.

The fair is celebrated for its high-quality offerings, authenticity, and the welcoming atmosphere created by its organisers and

participants. Feedback from last year's event highlighted the fair's exceptional organisation, with crafters and visitors alike praising its unmatched friendliness, organisation, and overall experience.

Organised entirely by volunteers from the Clare Priory congregation, the event directs all profits to local charities and the maintenance of the historic priory and its parish. Bernard Rushton, the event organiser, said: "We are so very pleased to be launching the process of delivering our 30th Craft Fair. Every single one in the past has been a super success and we are all looking forward to repeating this in July with our great team of dedicated volunteers and helpers, without whom it would not be possible."

In addition to showcasing genuine craft

exhibitors, the 2024 fair will feature music, children's entertainment, and refreshments, including the ever-popular beer tent. Parish Priest, Fr George Donaghy OSA said: "Once more we bring a bit of fun and razzamatazz to the normally tranquil surroundings of Clare Priory. I love it and I know it's a great hit with our parishioners, crafters and visitors alike. Long may it continue."

Clare Priory, a centre for prayer, retreat, and home to the parish of Our Mother of Good Counsel, continues to blend historical significance with contemporary festivity through its annual Craft Fair. As bookings for crafters open in March, the event is set to once again celebrate craftsmanship, community, and charity in the historic heart of Suffolk.



East Anglia deacons attend annual retreat

The Diocese of East Anglia's permanent deacons met for their annual retreat in Walsingham, focusing on divine friendship, with discussions led by Fr Alban McCoy and Bishop Peter Collins.

■ The Diocese of East Anglia's permanent deacons congregated for their annual retreat in Walsingham, from March 15 to

March 17. The retreat, focusing on the theme of friendship with God, as outlined in John 15:15, was directed by Fr Alban McCoy OFM, the former Dean of St Edmund's College, Cambridge, particularly drawing upon the works of St Thomas Aquinas.

Deacons attending the retreat came from various parts of the Diocese, including Peterborough, King's Lynn, Haverhill and Gorleston.

Many of the deacons are in full-time work, while others have significant pastoral duties, such as serving as prison

chaplains. The weekend provided a structured opportunity for reflection on their faith and to draw inspiration for everyday service in family, work and in parishes in the Diocese. It also allowed for the sharing of experiences and challenges among the deacons.

The gathering was also an opportunity to formally meet with Bishop Peter, offering the deacons a chance to discuss the current challenges facing the Diocese.

Pictured above is Bishop Peter, Fr Alban, and the deacons.



Bishop meets St John Fisher school students

Students from St John Fisher Catholic High School, Peterborough, share their experiences of a visit they enjoyed from Bishop Peter Collins and Diocesan Schools' Service Director Dr Andy Stone on March 5. Lay chaplain Rowena Goodfellow reports.

■ It was a lovely day for the visit, which began with a tour of the school, followed by Mass in our chapel led by Bishop Peter and concelebrated with Fr Karol from St Peter and All Souls. Our Chaplaincy Ambassadors, some of our SJF Champions and the Sixth form Leadership were present and have shared their experience of the day.

Claudia in year 12 said: "The Mass was really beautiful which included readings and singing from the choir and from everyone involved." Zina in year 8 added: "Everyone was respectful." Adam in year 10 continued: "The Bishop's homily was particularly impactful as he spoke of the importance of wholeheartedness."

The Mass was followed by photographs and an "Ask the Bishop" session. Bishop Peter thoughtfully answered questions about his role, including being God's servant, faith and reason in unison, the importance of dialogue with people of faith and our daily journey with God walking with us and accompanying us at all stages.

Kimora in year 8 said: "The questions were a great opportunity to find out more about what it is like to be a bishop." Some of the questions were around Bishop Peter's role. Ebenzer in year 10 remembers: "He told us his inspiration 'was not fame but serving God whole-heartedly' he also conveyed a gravitas that I have never seen before." And Claudia in year 12 continued: "We learnt many things including the process of how Bishop Peter got elected, and how it felt to leave his home country – Wales. Overall, it was a great experience, and I was glad to be a part of it."

The responsibility of being bishop was also noted: "It was a pleasure to meet the bishop and hear about all the work he does within our diocese... it was an honour to share Mass with him and have an interesting discussion, asking him all



Above, Bishop Peter Collins with students in the chapel at St John Fisher High School and, left, after blessing the new school fitness centre.

about his roles and duties as bishop," said Sean from Year 12. The students recognised the importance of the day, with Jasmin in year 12 saying: "It was refreshing, which is surprising as I was expecting it to be quite daunting, since he plays a very important role for the church. However, he was very down-to-earth and was happy to answer all of our questions." And Iris in year 10 said: "I got to know the bishop more and we felt inspired by his journey."

Some students were delighted to receive "humorous answers from Bishop Peter" – Nathasha Year 10 – and Ellie in year 9 said: "It was a 'delight to be a part of... it was something that will be remembered.'"

Our links with our local parish continue to flourish and we are blessed to have such strong pastoral links with our Priest Chaplain Fr Karol. Our grateful thanks to all involved including the readers and Chris year 13 for playing the piano and Mrs Pearson for leading the music. Andre in year 12 said: "I really enjoyed the piano and violin music that was played."

Later, Bishop Peter blessed the Fitness Centre, our newest building. Emmanuel in year 7, who was present during the blessing said: "My meeting with the bishop was both exciting and breathtaking as I had never met the bishop. Although it was thrilling, I was also a bit overwhelmed."

Tinofara in year 8 summed up her experience of the day: "Meeting the bishop was an amazing experience and one which I will never forget... it was a very joyful day."

More photos at: stjohnfisherschool.org.uk

news in brief

Invite to join May pilgrimage

■ The annual Diocese of East Anglia Pilgrimage will take place on Bank Holiday Monday, May 6 and parishioners and clergy from across the diocese are welcome to attend.

The pilgrimage will begin with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church of the Annunciation, Friday Market, until 11.45am. At 12 noon there will be the Regina Caeli and the Crowning of the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham by Bishop Peter Collins in Friday Market.

Pilgrimage director, Fr Peter Rollings, said: "The procession will then make its way down the Holy Mile to the Shrine reciting the Rosary and singing hymns. East Anglia is one of the few processions allowed to use the Holy Mile – all others go along the Pilgrim Way on the route of the old railway. Parishes are encouraged to bring their parish banners which will then be displayed outside the Chapel of Reconciliation.

"On arrival there will be a brief Penitential Service and the opportunity for Confessions at the Crosses around the meadow. There is then a break for lunch and private visits to the Shrine in the Slipper Chapel. At 3pm, Bishop Peter will celebrate Pontifical Mass which will conclude the pilgrimage.

"Coach organisers should arrange to drop off the walking pilgrims at the coach park in the village and then take the non-walkers to the Slipper Chapel where the coaches will be parked.

"It is hoped that the Diocesan Pilgrimage will be a powerful moment in this Year of Prayer which Pope Francis has asked for in preparation for the Year of Jubilee next year, said Fr Peter.



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Marriage Mass

■ The Diocese of East Anglia's annual Marriage Celebration Mass will take place on Saturday June 1, starting at 11.30am, at St John's Cathedral in Norwich.

All married couples and their families are welcome! Those couples celebrating significant anniversaries are invited to fill in the online booking form and so have their names read out during Mass, and receive a certificate. Certificates are for one year, five years and every multiple of five, until 60 years, then every individual year after 60 years).

The Mass will include a renewal of Marriage Vows for all couples, and there will also be a photographer present to take family/couple photos with the bishop. After the Mass there will be tea, coffee and cake. There is no charge for the day but donations are welcome.

To book a place please fill in the booking form at: www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-mass-registration/

For all enquiries contact: Dr Antonia Braithwaite mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk

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There is power in the name of Jesus

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has given Christians a living hope, confirmed His identity as a true Messiah and given meaning to our beliefs, says Fr Alvan Ibeh in the latest of the Voice of Hope series.

■ At Easter we rejoice greatly as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Easter reminds us that God is a faithful Father who is always true to His words. Imagine what would have happened if, after promising to resurrect on the third day, nothing happened eventually.

I guess by now, we won't be proud to call ourselves Christians because everyone will believe that we have a God who disappointments. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ has given us Christians a living hope, confirmed His identity as a true Messiah and has given meaning to our beliefs (and if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless, 1 Cor 15:14).

It was when it became clear to them that Jesus has truly been resurrected, that the

apostles became convinced in the power that is in the name of their Master. St Paul confirms this when he wrote, "therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:9-10). They now believed what Jesus told them earlier, "whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13-14).

Believing in this power, they were able to perform their first miracle without Jesus physically present with them in Acts 3:1-10. In Acts 3:6, Peter said to the crippled beggar, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth walk". Immediately, the man was healed by the power in the name of Jesus. "In the name of Jesus Christ" means "by the authority of Jesus Christ". The apostles were doing this healing through the Holy Spirit's power, not their own. They knew there is power in the name of Jesus and they made use of it. The name of Jesus Christ is so powerful that it does not just make miracles happen, it is also powerful enough to save us from our

sins: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

As Christians, we have been given the same authority to use the name of Jesus Christ and it will work for us just as it did for the apostles. But the question is, "Do we even know that we have such authority?" Are you aware that you can actually pray for a sick person in the name of Jesus and the person will be healed? Do you know that instead of complaining, you can actually rebuke that problem facing you in the name of Jesus and it will give way? Remember, it is not just praying in the name of Jesus, but believing that whatever you are asking in the powerful name of Jesus, it will be granted. Have you asked yourself why we always end our prayers by saying "through Christ our Lord" or "In Jesus' name?"

There is power in the name of Jesus, even the devil is aware of it and we who are God's children should not be ignorant of it, because we can't believe in what we are unaware of. Wishing you God's blessings and don't forget to follow me on social media @voice of hope

The Diocese of East Anglia held its third Commissioning Mass for the Listening and Prayer Ministry in February, during which Bishop Peter Collins commissioned another seven Helpers to join the current team, bringing the number up to 15 Helpers. Antonia Braithwaite reports.



East Anglia Listening and Prayer Ministry grows

■ These volunteers have spent over a year undergoing an extensive training programme in basic counselling skills and prayer ministry, and will now be available to meet with people in need either face-to-face or on Zoom.

During the Mass in Poringland, Bishop Peter reflected on Jesus washing the feet of His disciples in the upper room on the night before he died. Our Lord "lays aside" his outer robe, ties a towel around his waist, pours water into a basin and begins to wash the disciples' feet, wipes them with the towel and then says "I have given you an example that you

might follow."

This example and command lies at the heart of the Listening and Prayer Ministry, and should be ever-present in the mind of the Helpers as they minister to people in need.

This ministry was launched in our Diocese in summer 2022 and since then it has been busy meeting with people in need throughout East Anglia. The aim of the sessions is to both help people in need to feel a sense of being healed and strengthened by the prayer ministry and led closer to Christ. Also to more clearly identify their current difficulties so that they

can decide what steps, if any, they wish to take next. If appropriate, Helpers also signpost to external sources of help, and also sources of help within the Church.

If you would like to contact the Listening and Prayer Ministry please go to: www.rcdea.org.uk/diocesan-listening-and-prayer-ministry/

For more information contact the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator, Dr Antonia Braithwaite mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk

Pictured above is Bishop Peter with the Helpers at the third Commissioning Mass for the Listening and Prayer Ministry.

Papal Nuncio visits Cambridge

The historic Our Lady and the English Martyrs Church in Cambridge recently hosted a significant event as His Excellency Archbishop Savio Hon SDB, Papal Nuncio to Malta and Libya, conducted a Lunar New Year Thanksgiving Mass, uniting the Hong Kong community in a vibrant celebration of faith and cultural heritage. Elizabeth Lam and Dominic Chung report.

■ As is his practice for at least the past decade, Archbishop Savio visits the Hong Kong communities in some UK cities during the Lunar New Year season. He last visited Cambridge on January 29, 2023. He had carried such fond memories of Cambridge in general and the liturgical arrangement of OLEM, that he specifically asked the Cantonese Community within the East Anglia Diocese to make appropriate arrangements for his pastoral visit once again.

The small planning team could not go public with his intention for some days because protocol and etiquette dictate that Archbishop Savio must first consult with Bishop Peter Collins.

Finally, the day of February 24 dawned, the 15th day of the Lunar New Year – akin to the Octave of Christmas and Easter – and the whole Cantonese community, together with the OLEM family, rejoiced in glorifying and thanking God for the opportunity of celebrating a solemn, New Year Thanksgiving Mass in Cantonese. A young Hong Kong born organ scholar came up from the London Oratory to accompany the Mass, thanks to the encouragement of Nigel Kerry, Director of Music.

Even though we were in Lent, with dispensation, the liturgical colour was in red which the Archbishop explained that, not only was it on cultural grounds, it more importantly symbolised the Fire of the Holy Spirit. It also represented the blood shed by martyrs; on his pectoral cross is embedded a fragment of a relic of a martyr of China.

We chanted the Gloria and the crescendo hit the roof (in Cantonese: 天主在天受光榮).

During his lively homily, Archbishop Savio reminded us that we are not the only person on earth whom God has made in His image and to be mindful that we are all part of the body of Christ.

He playfully drove home the key point that when Jesus Christ knocks on the door of our hearts, though we might be tempted to rhetorically ask “who is there?”, we must not however doubt that it is Christ who is knocking. He can and does appear, and appeal to us in myriad forms. Getting to know thyself is important but getting to know Jesus is crucial. That



Archbishop Savio Hon SDB, centre, with Deacon Gianluca Savini and the Hong Kong community at Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Cambridge.

way, we will never fall prey to the devil.

The Archbishop reminded us that, because we are one Body in Christ, we must not be tempted to divide the Church along language or geographic lines. Throughout the celebration, he pointedly used English, Cantonese (the dialect common in Hong Kong) and Mandarin in the Proper part of the Mass.

After the Mass, we retired to the Parish Centre where old friends and new acquaintances wished each other a happy new year of the Dragon over traditional treats and drinks. We can now safely say that the Cantonese community have made an “old friend” in His Excellency.

As we parted company with each other and went on our own sweet ways, ringing joyously in our ears was the verse of a song with which the Archbishop ended his homily: “Many things about tomorrow I do not seem to understand. But I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand!”

With optimism and trust in God, here is to the Year of the Dragon.



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Bishop Peter's engagements

- **May 3, Fri:** Bishop to visit St Edmund's Primary School, Bury St Edmunds – 10:00 Mass and then visit with children and staff
- **May 3, Fri:** Bishop's visit to St Joseph's Primary School, Sudbury – 13:30 Bishop to visit with children and staff
- **May 4, Sat:** Bishop to Caritas Steering Committee Meeting, 11:00 Poringland
- **May 4-5:** Bishop to join Ignite Youth Festival at the St Benedict's School, Bury St Edmunds
- **May 6, Mon (Bank Holiday):** Bishop to lead the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham, 12:00 to 16:30
- **May 7, Tues:** Bishop's Council Meeting, Poringland 11:00
- **May 7, Tues:** Bishop to Confirmation Mass at Walsingham for the parish at Wells-next-the-Sea
- **May 9, Thurs:** Bishop to St Mary's College Oscott for the Conferral of Candidacy for Peter Ho and Anthony Reilly at 16:45
- **May 11, Sat:** Bishop to Ely Cathedral for the Annual Mass of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre at 10:30
- **May 12, Sun:** Bishop to celebrate Mass and preach at St Edmunds College, Cambridge at 10:30
- **May 13, Mon:** Bishop to Confirmation Mass for St Pancras
- **May 14, Tues:** Bishop to the Guild Chapel, Stratford Upon Avon, to celebrate Mass for the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre
- **May 15, Wed:** Bishop to St Pancras, Ipswich to bless the new statue of Our Lady of Ipswich on the feast of Our Lady of Grace Ipswich
- **May 16, Thurs:** Bishop Peter to visit Notre Dame High School, Norwich 09:30
- **May 16, Thurs:** Bishop to attend Farewell of Fr Kevin Smith, the Priest Administrator of the Anglican Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham at 18:30
- **May 17, Fri:** Bishop to Diocesan School's Service Commission Meeting in Poringland at 10:45
- **May 18, Sat:** Bishop to ordain the Rev Anthony Asomugha to the Priesthood.
- **May 19, Sun:** Pentecost: Solemn Pontifical Masses with Confirmations at the Cathedral
- **May 19, Sun:** Pentecost: Bishop to UEA Evening Mass, to receive students into the Church.
- **May 20, Mon:** Bishop to Confirmation Mass at Our Lady & St Walstan, Costessey
- **May 21, Tues:** Bishop to Diocesan Liturgy Commission Meeting at 11:00 to be held in Poringland
- **May 21, Tues:** Bishop to Confirmation Mass at St Felix, Felixstowe
- **May 22, Wed:** Bishop to celebrate Mass at St Clare's, Framlingham and to present a Diocesan Medal to Deacon Mike Vipond
- **May 23, Thurs:** Annual Celebration of Priesthood in Poringland with Mass at 12:15 followed by lunch
- **May 23, Thurs:** Bishop to host the Norfolk & Waveney Church Leaders Meeting at 16:00 in Poringland
- **May 24 – 26, Fri – Sun:** Parish Visitation – St Peter the Apostle, Gorleston

Easter celebrated acro



Palm Sunday

■ Bishop Peter Collins led the Palm Sunday (March 24) celebrations at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich, marking the start of Holy Week with a procession of all the clergy and faithful, from the Cathedral Gardens into the cathedral itself, and a homily addressing global crises and the significance of personal choices amidst chaos.

The long account of the Passion of Christ according to St Mark was read.

In his homily, Bishop Peter delivered a reflective message on the onset of Holy Week. He expressed: "We come to the gateway of Holy Week. We have walked from the garden to the cathedral, and those few steps represent our willingness to follow Jesus to Jerusalem and beyond. This is the week that we record, the week that captures the breadth of cosmic history and the breadth of every human life."

Highlighting the nature of suffering and the need for Christ's redeeming grace, Bishop Peter drew attention to various global crises: "A family is coming to terms with two of its members

suffering from cancer... 130 odd people have died as a result of attending a concert in Moscow... Russia itself, of course, is showing its aggression towards its neighbour... we are all most conscious of what has, and is, unfolding in Gaza."

He then shared a touching moment: "During this past week, I held in my arms a two-month-old child, the first child of one of my servers at my former cathedral, who with his wife is forming a family together now, in love, in the midst of a world in chaos. To hold in one's arms the glory of a human life, what a treasure, what a joy!"

In concluding his homily, Bishop Peter said: "But in this week, we must choose our stance. We must choose where we will stand. We must choose where we behold truth, and whether we are contemplating the cosmic scale of human history as it unfolds in any one week, or whether we are contemplating the complexity of the lives of those around us, or the complexity of our own life. There is nowhere else to go other than to Christ if we are at all to comprehend what unfolds. This is the week of choice and decision."

See a picture gallery at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBj4qM>

ss East Anglia



Maundy Thursday Mass

■ The Mass of the Lord's Supper was celebrated by Bishop Peter Collins at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on Maundy Thursday, March 28, where he ceremonially washed the feet of 12 parishioners.

In the presence of a congregation of over 400 people, Bishop Peter said in his homily:

"At the Last Supper Jesus draws together the threads of his public ministry, his entire teaching and all his works, and unites it all to what is about to unfold.

"At the Last Supper, through the apostles, Jesus entrusts the holy eucharist to us.

"At the Last Supper, through the apostles, Jesus imparts the essence of his teaching to us.

"At the Last Supper Jesus showed us how perfect His love was when He began to wash His disciples' feet.

"Jesus said to the apostles – at the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand. If I, the Lord and master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example.

"We spend a lifetime struggling to understand, struggling to adopt this example.

"Here and now is the time for us to embrace the example.

"Here and now is the time for us to embrace the mission.

"Do this in remembrance of me – says the Lord," 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.

See a full picture gallery at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBj87C>

Chance to join the Lourdes pilgrimage

Each year in August, the Diocese of East Anglia joins with the Catholic Association on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. In 2024 it is from August 23 to 30 and bookings are now open at operator Tangney Tours.

■ The Pilgrimage provides a unique opportunity to gather in Lourdes, to pray and journey together in faith. It is a time to stand apart from the rigours of life and seek the peace, healing, and grace which a pilgrimage experience can afford.

The East Anglian Pilgrims are being advised to stay at the Hotel Eliseo and the following are included in the price

Return air-fares – to Lourdes

1 checked baggage weighing 20kg and 1 piece of hand luggage.

7 days in Lourdes

Hotel transfers

Full pilgrimage programme

Details at: www.tangney-tours.com/tours-and-pilgrimages/diocese-ca-stn/

■ **Assisted Pilgrims:** Our assisted pilgrims can choose to stay in either a hotel with some basic support given by volunteer helpers (such as wheelchair assistance in getting around town or to services), or in the Accueil Marie St Frai, where medical and personal care is provided. Our assisted pilgrims are very much at the heart of our pilgrimage, and we welcome anyone interested in coming to this beautiful place in the picturesque Pyrenees.

■ **Helpers wanted:** Almost every major pilgrimage to Lourdes has a Hospitalité organisation of some sort and most – like the Catholic Association – consists of the following types of volunteer helpers: Nurses; Doctors; Chaplains; Healthcare professionals (physiotherapists etc.); Handmaids (female non-medical helpers); Brancardiers, or 'Brancs' (male non-medical helpers)

The minimum age for helping is 17 and there is no maximum age. If you are aged 17-25, you can be a part of the Young Helpers' Group (a supervised group staying in a separate hotel).

For those helpers with children, the CA offers the Helpers Children's Programme (HCP).

Details: www.catholicassociation.co.uk

■ **Financial Assistance:** For pilgrims who might otherwise find the cost too high, the trustees of the Catholic Association have again agreed to fund part of the cost of the pilgrimage from charitable funds.

To that end, 80 places booked through Tangney Tours are available at a fixed price of £500 for assisted pilgrims, helpers, nurses and others.

Pilgrims from East Anglia may also contact Dcn Huw Williams (Diocesan Director for East Anglia) for further information and financial assistance:

E-mail: huw.williams@rcdea.org.uk

Mobile: 07399 163 718



Easter baskets

■ A traditional Polish Easter basket blessings (Swieconka) took place at **St Mary's Parish in Thetford** on Holy Saturday, March 30, with over 220 people in attendance.

Due to the large number of people present, a second round of blessings was

needed on baskets which took place outside the entrance to the parish church (pictured above).

Fr Pat Cleary, parish priest was astounded by how well the service was supported as the baskets filled the entire sanctuary of the church and more.

For the first time in the parish, the reading and biddings prayers were said in Polish which made it extra special for all who

attended.

Never before has the church been so packed that people were waiting out on the street.

"It was a marvellous occasion that so many came with lovely baskets and something that this parish will continue to do each year on Holy Saturday," said Fr Pat.

Pictures by Helvi Moore and Paul Gilbert.



Happy 80th birthday to Bishop Alan



■ Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes celebrated his 80th birthday at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich on March 19, the Feast of St Joseph.

The celebration Mass, presided over by Bishop Alan, was attended by Bishop Peter Collins, alongside clergy, religious, and lay people from across the diocese.

In his welcoming remarks, Bishop Alan drew a parallel between his life and that of St Joseph, acknowledging the blessings and challenges that come with age and leadership. "As I begin my 8th

decade, I feel that I have much in common with St Joseph," he said, "so that's quite a good thing to celebrate on this day. However, unlike St Joseph, who had to cope with so many challenges and an unknown future in his old age, I've been granted time to enjoy the true delights of a happy retirement."

He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to celebrate this significant moment, "Bishop Peter, I'm so grateful to you for giving this old man an opportunity to continue to celebrate my significant

birthday with you all here today in the cathedral."

He continued: "I'm offering Mass today for you, Bishop Peter, and for all the priests and clergy, and the people and religious of the diocese, in thanksgiving to God for His many blessings."

At the end of Mass, Bishop Peter offered his heartfelt birthday wishes: "Dear Bishop Alan, on behalf of the Diocesan family, those here present and those who are praying across every parish for you today, we wish you a very happy

birthday. Your birthday, of course, fell on St Patrick's Day. An anomaly, really, for a most quintessential Englishman," said Bishop Peter, adding, "But we are delighted that you are with us on this glorious feast of Joseph. Your four score years bear abundant testimony to the glory of your own personal faith. And there is such ample evidence of the fruitfulness of your ministry as an Anglican and as a Catholic."

The celebration continued after Mass, as clergy and parishioners shared a meal.

Appeal to fulfil dying wish of Norfolk charity founder

Congolese refugee and founder of the Bridge Plus+ project in Norfolk, Gervais Kouloungou, died on March 19 and his family are crowdfunding to fulfil his wish to be buried in the Congo. Helen Baldry reports.

■ Gervais fled to Norwich 20 years ago with his young daughters as a refugee due to war in Ivory Coast and Congo. Gervais was a Catholic and attended St John's Cathedral on Unthank Road. He was a member of the church parish council representing minority voices and also worked for the British Red Cross and taught at UEA.

Unfortunately, Gervais contracted Covid-19 in December 2021 whilst on a business trip to Paris, and never recovered. It had a devastating impact on his body and neurological condition, and he remained in hospital for the past two years. His children have been travelling over regularly to Paris, at a devastating financial and emotional cost to them.

Gervais died on March 19 at the age of

St John's Cathedral parishioner and charity founder Gervais Kouloungou.



55 after contracting a kidney infection. He leaves behind three daughters in Norwich, the youngest of which is only four years old. One of his wishes was to be buried in the Congo, and so his family have decided to crowdfund to support



with the cost of flying his body from Paris to the Congo, as well as flying out his mum, father, and two of his daughters to attend his funeral there.

The total cost of this is estimated at 20,000 Euros.

Gervais' daughter Thesia describes her father as, "A wonderful father, son, friend and kind soul, who spread love and happiness everywhere he went. Always laughing and smiling, bringing people

together and lifting people up by his happy demeanour and generosity of time and spirit."

Gervais contributed significantly to the Norwich community, particularly to those from ethnic minority backgrounds. Writing in BME Voices magazine Gervais said, "I found the church to be one thing people will look for when they move to settle in a new place. I think the church plays a very important role in people's lives and it is one thing that continues to play a traditional role in fostering understanding and tolerance."

In 2012, Gervais and his friend and colleague Pa Musa launched a voluntary organization in Norwich called The Bridge Plus+ (www.bridge-plus.org.uk).

Led by people with lived experience, the Bridge Plus+ offers information, advice and advocacy support to people from ethnic minority and migrant backgrounds.

Gervais' family has appealed to the kindness of the Norfolk community to support their appeal for a man who touched the lives of many.

www.gofundme.com/f/in-memory-of-gervais-funeral-and-repatriation-aid

Why do adults become Catholics?

With a background of an increasingly secular society, why do some adults still decide to join the Catholic Church? A new report by the Diocese of East Anglia Commission for the New Evangelisation throws some light on the matter. Lead researcher, Philip Kemp, reports.

■ Most people will be aware of declining attendance at regular religious services and increasing numbers of those who do not identify with any religious faith in an increasingly secular society. Yet there are many adults who do choose to join the Catholic Church.

The Diocese of East Anglia Commission for the New Evangelisation recently carried out a research study to explore why adults decided to become Catholics and whether there are any lessons for evangelisation. Ten individuals (five male and five female) from across a broad range of parishes were interviewed in depth and the interviews were then systematically analysed to identify common themes which appeared to inform participants' journeys into the Catholic Church.

There were six key interrelated themes identified. Interviewees experienced a spiritual restlessness, including already committed Christians in another denomination. It was accompanied by a deliberate quest for this to be resolved and was often a very protracted process over a number of years.

Their quest was intellectually driven. Participants were highly proactive in their quest to find a spiritual home and in the process acquired impressive knowledge about Catholicism. They drew heavily on YouTube channel speakers for their spiritual formation.

Intellectual rationales were insufficient on

Bishop Peter Collins baptises a new Catholic at the Easter Vigil at St John's Cathedral in Norwich.



their own. Intellectual drivers interacted with affective experiences. At various points in the process of becoming a Catholic, participants experienced particular moments of being profoundly moved in a deep spiritual sense, for example, through Holy Mass or Adoration services, which acted as catalysts.

Participants' gravitation towards the Catholic Church followed an incremental process whereby serial illuminations provided heightened appreciation of Catholic beliefs and practices. This often involved de-mystification of pre-existing prejudices or misunderstandings.

The discovery of reverence in Catholic practices was a central illuminating experience which had a profound impact, including among those who had previously been committed Christians from a non-Catholic denomination.

The journey to the Catholic Church was largely a self-initiated process. However, having eventually decided to become a Catholic, key end-stage facilitators, often but not exclu-

sively a parish priest, played a crucial role in drawing individuals in and facilitating the sacramental steps for formal entry to the Church.

One interviewee said: "Everything I was

hearing made sense. I was listening to lots of testimonies.... It was just beginning to build up and I just, I still had, lots of questions. I still was not sure about Mary, purgatory, or praying to the saints, things like that. But I was growing and I couldn't stop, I just couldn't stop listening and reading and at the same time I felt drawn to the Catholic Church."

Analysis of the interviews in this study suggests that the process for an adult deciding to become a Catholic is largely self-initiated, protracted, complex and multi-dimensional. There were no sudden conversions.

Similarly, there was no single decision or single event that provided overwhelming grounds for joining the Catholic Church. Rather there appears to be an incremental process of increasing understanding and insights, a series of spiritually rich experiences, and timely significant relationship encounters. All of these factors have a cumulative effect over an extended period of time. These findings indicate a number of areas of consideration and challenge which might help inform evangelisation strategies and practices.

Read the full report at: www.rcdea.org.uk/why-adults-become-catholics-report/

Live – in Community Worker

Opportunities in the Ipswich Community
Life sharing can be life changing

Considering how to use your gap year before university? Just graduated and unsure what's next? Contemplating a career break?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, then sharing your life in L'Arche alongside people who have a learning disability might just be the thing for you!

It's a great way to do something impactful and make a positive difference in someone's life. And as well as learning some key life-skills, sharing your life in L'Arche could change your whole outlook on the world too.



What's involved?

As a Live-In Community Worker, you will be making your home in a L'Arche house, alongside people who have a learning disability.

You'll be building relationships of mutuality, community and spirituality, enabling people we support to be independent within a network of relationships and friendships. And where appropriate, you'll be helping L'Arche Support Workers who are employed to provide ongoing care and support to people with learning disabilities.

Living in a L'Arche Community is an intense experience that requires a big commitment. It asks you to immerse yourself in a lively community and to slow down at the same time. It brings routine and the unexpected.

As a Community Worker, you will be provided with full board and lodging, as well as a monthly allowance. You'll live in an alternative, inclusive model of society whilst gaining a deep understanding of social care in UK today. You'll develop deep, meaningful connections with individuals, and also have a community for life.

Read about Danny's experience of living in L'Arche, and watch the video below to see what L'Arche Live-Ins love about the role. Go to: <https://www.larche.org.uk/dannys-gap-year>

Who can apply?

You can! You don't need previous experience in social care to apply to L'Arche – we just ask that you are friendly, inquisitive, empathetic and committed. The rest we'll train you on.

Apply online at:
<https://larches.livevacancies.co.uk/#/applicant/2>



■ Two Sisters of The Congregation of Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy (DMMM) working in England, visited Bishop Peter Collins at the White House in Poringland on March 18 to introduce their congregation, accompanied by Fr Anthony Nwankwo.

Religious community series

Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion (OSB)

■ The Sisters are also known as the Grace and Compassion Benedictines. The Congregation was founded in 1959 by Mary Sunniva Garson (1921 - 2007).

In 1954, there were many lonely people living in appalling conditions in Brighton. A house for the aged and frail was opened by Mary, assisted by Catholic lay women, who continued to provide care and accommodation for the elderly and needy during the next five years.

In 1959, prompted by their growth in spirituality, the desire for stability and the strength gained from a dedicated community life, upon the advice of the Archbishop of Southwark, the Rt Rev Cyril Cowderoy, this group of lay women established a new religious congregation.

On September 15, 1992, the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, Rt Rev Cormac Murphy O'Connor, recognised it as a diocesan Congregation. In 1992, the Congregation was admitted into full association with the Benedictine Confederation by the Abbot Primate Rt Rev Victor Damertzt, and remains under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

The charism of the Congregation is love of God and compassion for the elderly, sick, the needy and the unloved. They take



In a series about the Religious Congregations living and working in the Diocese of East Anglia, Fr Karol Porczak MS, Vicar for the Religious, introduces two more communities – the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion (OSB) and the Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy (SMMM).

Pictured from top left are: Sr Jothi, Sr Angela, Sr Rachel, Sr Thaya (Superior), Sr Jacinta, Sr Felsi, bottom, Sr Julie, Sr Shincy.

as their example Mary, the Mother of God, who at the Annunciation accepted God's will and welcomed His Son into Her care. The Sisters accept whatever God wants, endeavouring to be loving and compassionate in the service of God and our neighbour.

The Congregation is divided into four regions: England, Africa, India and Sri Lanka. The total number of sisters is 199 (167 perpetually professed, 21 junior sisters and 11 novices). At present, most of their

candidates come from Kenya and Uganda.

The Community of the Montana, in Bury St Edmunds, is represented by eight sisters: Sr Thaya Moses OSB (Superior), Sr Jacintha Aruldass OSB, Sr Angela Fernando OSB, Sr Felsi Anthrias OSB, Sr Rachel Asirvatham OSB, Sr Jothi Antony OSB, Sr Shincy John OSB and Sr Julie John Bosco OSB. Sr Thaya is also the Assistant in the General Council of the Congregation and the Montana Care Home manager.

Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy (SMMM)

■ The Congregation of Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy is an indigenous religious congregation founded in Nigeria, in 1970, by Bishop Anthony Gogo Nwedo (1912-2000), a former member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit Fathers (CSSp). It is a missionary congregation of priests and brothers, and the first native religious congregation for men founded in Africa, by an African, for a worldwide mission.

The priest members of the Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy teach in schools and minister in parishes, while members who are brothers make sacred vestments, teach in schools, teach doctrine in parishes and care for the sick and needy.

The Congregation enjoys the charism of bearing witness to the Mercy of God, following in the footsteps of Christ the Merciful Saviour and Mary our Mother of Mercy. This mercy is expressed in compassion, forgiveness and kindness, as



Pictured, from the left, are: Fr Anthony Nwankwo SMMM, Fr Alvan Ibeh SMMM (Superior), Fr Desmond Agomuo SMMM

exemplified by our Divine Master Jesus Christ, in the following exemplary scriptural reference: "At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in a hill country of Judea" (Luke 1:39).

The spirit of the Congregation is that of charity, humility, prayer, penance and abandonment to the will of God.

Since its inception in 1970, the Congregation, like the biblical mustard seed, has been growing steadily from strength to strength. Now there are 304 professed members, including 221 priests and 77

seminarians. In addition, there are 18 novices, 18 postulants and a great number of aspirants.

Many of their members work in Nigeria and other African countries namely, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Ghana. Some work beyond Africa as missionaries in the following countries: Canada, the USA, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the Philippines.

The Congregation arrived in East Anglia in 2014, and has worked in Cambridge and Bury St Edmunds. Currently, they are three of them working in our Diocese: Fr Anthony Nwankwo SMMM (priest-in-charge, Great Yarmouth and Gorleston), Fr Alvan Ibeh SMMM (Superior of the Community and Assistant Priest at St Peter's in Gorleston) and Fr Desmond Agomuo SMMM (Assistant Priest at St Mary's in Great Yarmouth) where they provide pastoral care and chaplaincy in the hospital and the school.

Faith in the Home: living our Catholic faith each day

Saying Grace before meals is a firm Catholic tradition, but if your family has never done this, or has fallen out of the habit of it, now is a good time to start, suggests Marriage & Family Life Co-ordinator, Antonia Braithwaite, in her Faith in the Home column.

■ Food on the table, let's dig in!

We can have a tendency to assume that the good things in our life are the result of our own efforts, and we forget that all the things that allow us to put food on the table, such as our talents and opportunities and good health, are all gifts from God as well.

The word "grace" refers to a very short prayer of thanksgiving offered before a meal, and sometimes afterwards as well.

Praying before meals is a firm Catholic tradition, but if your family has never done this, or has fallen out of the habit of it, now is a good time to start!

Pausing for just a moment before we eat, and raising our hearts and minds to God is a simple, but powerful, act. We acknowledge that we have the food before us thanks to His love and we remind ourselves that it is He who provides for our daily needs and we express our gratitude for these blessings.

Many families pray the following grace before meals, which has ancient Catholic origins, originating from the Gelasian Sacramentary in the 8th century;

In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen

In the past many Catholics regularly prayed a Grace prayer after meals as well. Although this is not common these days, it is a practice well worth revising.

While the Grace before meals asks God for His blessing, Grace after meals is a prayer of thanksgiving for all of the good things that God has given us, as well as a prayer of intercession for those who have helped us and an opportunity to call to mind all those who have died and to pray for their souls.

The traditional phrasing for a Catholic Grace after meals prayer:

We give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for all thy benefits, Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to reward with eternal life, all those who do us good for Thy name's sake. Amen.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Vatican II Reflections: Church and the Modern World

In preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025, Pope Francis encouraged a return to the documents of Vatican II, refreshing awareness of the fruits of that Council. To encourage your own study of those documents, Fr Peter Wygnański here concludes a short series of articles about the four major constitutions.

Reflecting on the Constitutions of Vatican II: 3 – Gaudium et Spes, The Church and the Modern World.

■ I will be forever grateful that, shortly before the pandemic, I had the chance to see my grandmother one last time. As we digested a breakfast worthy of Polish hospitality, she said something striking: “I feel like I have been living in a time machine.” She explained how, as a child, she never would have imagined one day talking ‘face-to-face’ with her children thousands of miles away, on video calls.

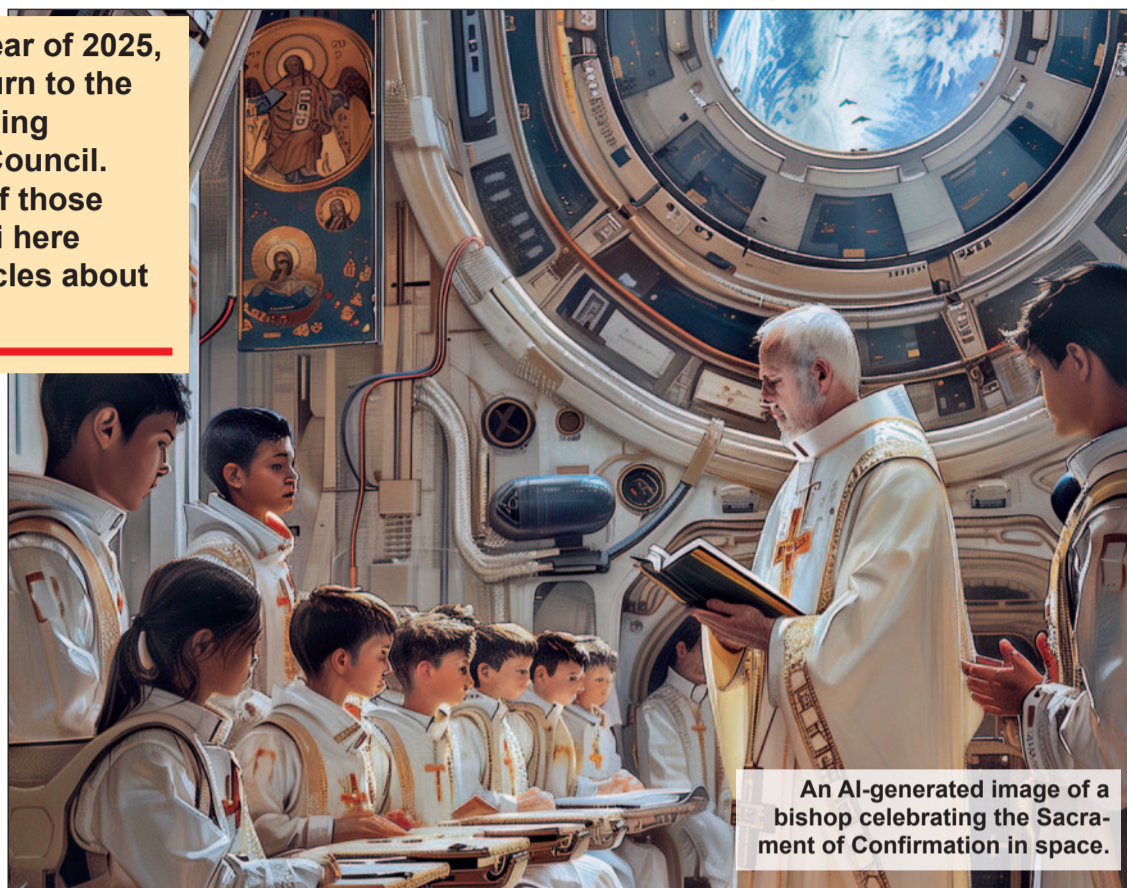
Her grandparents lived and died in a world that would not have seemed that much changed. My grandmother however had seen the new reach of humanity’s triumphs and tragedies, and passed away in a world unlike the one she was born into.

Development has always been happening but, for the first time, it now happens so fast that it can be seen. When I get a new phone, I expect it to be more powerful, to be able to do new things. Through an Artificial Intelligence programme on my latest upgrade, I “made” the image accompanying this article during a simpler breakfast than the one I enjoyed with my grandmother. I simply typed “imagine a bishop doing a confirmation in space” and the image before you was instantly generated. To have such capability at my fingertips was unimaginable in my childhood, let alone my grandmother’s.

We have realised that our world is dynamic. It appears that nothing simply ‘is’ anymore, but always ‘becoming’ (§5), and so the final constitution of Vatican II asked how the Church can speak to this new, dynamic, world. The bishops taking part in the council wanted to end with something that would make a real difference, to help believers spread the Gospel amongst the hostile spirit of the modern age.

Pope Benedict XVI, who assisted at the council as a young priest, explains that the bishops realised the Church could no longer rely on the old ways of reaching out to those outside it, as these could no longer bridge the gulf between the Church and contemporary society. A ‘positive step into the new era’ was needed so that Jesus Christ could again become the guiding star, finding new ways to express that Christ is, and always will be, the answer to the new questions that weigh on the human heart, in a way that would be meaningful ‘beyond the narrow circle of believers’. (See Ratzinger, Theological Highlights of Vatican II, 224)

The joys and the hopes (Gaudium et Spes), the griefs and the anxieties of this age are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. (§1)



An AI-generated image of a bishop celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation in space.

With this opening statement the Council acknowledged that humanity is now almost overwhelmed by its own power and questions where the world is headed and what our role in the universe really is. (§2)

The gift of Gaudium et Spes is understanding the double grace of sharing in struggles that face a humanity which extends its power in every direction but without always succeeding in subjecting it to its own welfare. (§4)

Christ’s followers can ‘both’ be God’s own hands to heal and support those struggling in the world, ‘and’ communicate the Gospel message by doing so. The power of God is powerfully revealed when, in Christ’s name, people live in deep joy, the injustice of poverty and hunger is overcome, the chains of new forms of social and psychological slavery are broken (§4), the dignity of the human person is respected, the beautiful calling to marriage and family life is generously lived out (§§46-52), and economics and politics (§§63-76) guide all peoples along the path of lasting peace and justice. (§§77-91)

When belief in God is misunderstood as a superstition which entraps believers in the past (§19), the best answer to the uncertainties of an ever-changing world is to let that world be transformed by the power of God’s love.

This core message can help correct any misunderstanding of Gaudium et Spes as a manifesto for a ‘new’ Church, that has broken away from its past and Tradition and therefore giving licence to ‘update’ teachings so that the Catholic faith can be ‘relevant’ in the modern world. Vatican II never wavered from the belief that only Christ can shed light on the mystery of the human experience and help us reach truly human solutions to the problems of our time. (§10)

Only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of humanity take on light, Christ fully revealing man to man himself and making his supreme calling clear. (§22)

Another way to put this is that Gaudium et Spes can only be understood

heard through God’s speaking to us, known through Scripture and Tradition which we carefully preserve, (Dei Verbum), whose voice has called us together into the family of the Church to live in holiness (Lumen Gentium), and to worship God in spirit and truth, joining ourselves to God’s gift of himself for us (Sacrosanctum Concilium).

60 years after its publication, the challenges to which Gaudium et Spes responds have only become greater, and our role can only be to come closer still to the light of Christ. We ‘can’ share the hope of our unbelieving brothers and sisters for a better world, but in sharing that hope we do not forget that a better society is a more human one, and only Christ offers the true answer to our human condition.

Let us then tirelessly work for the common good of all people so that a world that has forgotten His light can see it anew and be transformed by His love. This is how the Church will continue to announce the good news of the Gospel in an ever-changing world, and in the unimaginable future that awaits.

Recalling the earlier articles of this series: the Church’s only answer to the challenges of our time is the Word of God, Christ himself, which we have

in the light of the other constitutions of Vatican II.

Recalling the earlier articles of this series: the Church’s only answer to the challenges of our time is the Word of God, Christ himself, which we have




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Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese



■ A brand new Catholic Mothers Group was launched at St Pancras, Ipswich, recently. At the first meeting, mums were able to meet other Catholic mums for coffee and a chat, and then join in a catechetical discussion about Lent and Passiontide before popping into church to say a few prayers and light a candle.

The second half of the meeting took the form of a craft workshop, led by Rosa Patten, where mums and children together made their own Easter tombs from clay ready to be decorated at home later. It is planned that the group will meet monthly for the five Cs: coffee, cake, chat, catechism and chaos.

Pictured left are mums and toddlers at the newly-formed Catholic Mothers Group at St Pancras. Picture credit: Rosa Patten.



■ On Good Friday, March 29, about 60 members of the four Christian churches in Sawston came together for its Procession of Witness through the village starting at Sawston Free church and finishing at St Mary's with hot cross buns and hot drinks.

Fr John Minh said: "As we walked through the village, we followed a life-sized cross carried by a member of each church in turn. We stopped at various points outside the shops where we listened to the Passion according to St Mark finishing with a prayer and hymn. This is a very moving procession and a great witness of our joint solidarity and friendship with our Christian brothers and sisters here in Sawston," said Fr John.



■ The East Anglia Province 27 Winners of the KSC 2023 Nativity Scene Painting Competition received their awards of certificates, cash prizes and copies of their entries at school before half term. Entries were received from the Catholic Primary Schools of St Mary's at Lowestoft (pictured above), St Mary & St Peter Gorleston, St Edmund's Bungay (Group A) and St Augustine's Costessey, Norwich, (Group B) (pictured right).

Five youngsters in the Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Lowestoft also received awards for their Christmas photo winning entries and are entering the Easter Digital Photo competition in March with photo opportunities being offered by Lowestoft Knights at church after Mass, by permission of the Parish Priest.

To obtain information about KSC Youth Competitions please contact Bro. Christopher Brooks, Past Provincial Grand Knight Tel: (01502) 563208 or email: christopher-brooks631@gmail.com

