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Bishop Peter Collins meeting Pope Francis in January 2025. Picture courtesy of Vatican Media.

Bishop pays tribute to Pope Francis

The Diocese of East Anglia joins the entire Catholic world in mourning the death of Pope Francis, who passed away peacefully at the age of 88. His Holiness died just one day after making a surprise appearance at St Peter's Basilica for Easter Sunday, where he greeted thousands of pilgrims in what would become his final public blessing.

Charlie Bohan-Hurst reports.

■ News of the Pope's death sent shockwaves throughout the global Church, as the faithful had only recently rejoiced at seeing him once again on the balcony in Rome. Though he had been increasingly frail in recent months and had been hospitalised earlier this year, many still held hope for his recovery. The suddenness of his passing, following so closely after the celebration of

the Resurrection, has deepened the sense of loss for Catholics around the world.

Bishop Peter Collins issued the following tribute in response to the news:

"It is with great sadness that we have received news of the death of Pope Francis. Even though we were fully aware of his continuing frailty in the aftermath of his recent hospitalisation, it was a deep shock to the whole Church and to the entire world to hear that the Holy Father had died just a day after appearing to the crowds at St Peter's on Easter Sunday.

Having celebrated the glorious day of resurrection, Pope Francis has been called home to the Father's house. Pope Francis was elected to the Chair of St Peter on 13 March 2013, and we give thanks to almighty God for his service as Bishop of Rome and Pastor of the Universal Church.

The Holy Father chose the name Francis, being inspired by the humble simplicity and the all-embracing compassion of the great saint of Assisi. Pope Francis repeatedly focussed his own ministry on the needs of the poor, the vulnerable, the outcasts. We give thanks for the example he provided of

willing and generous service unto the end of his life. His ministry reminded us all that we are called to serve rather than be served.

We entrust the Holy Father to the grace and mercy of almighty God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.
Amen."

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 17 December 1936, was the first Jesuit Pope, the first from the Americas, and the first non-European pontiff in more than 1,200 years. He made vows in the Society of Jesus on 12 March 1960, was ordained a priest on 13 December 1969, and later consecrated as a bishop on 27 June 1992.

His rise through the ranks of the Church was marked by humility, pastoral care, and a deep commitment to social justice. Appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1997 and installed as Archbishop the following year, he was created a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II on 21 February 2001.

Upon his election as the 266th Pope on 13 March 2013, he chose the name Francis,

■ story continued on page two.

Chrism Mass fills Cathedral

■ On Tuesday 15 April, the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich was filled to capacity as clergy and parishioners from across the Diocese of East Anglia gathered for the annual Chrism Mass.

Led by Bishop Peter Collins, and celebrated by nearly every priest of the diocese, the liturgy offered a powerful expression of the unity and mission of the local Church. The Cathedral was bustling with life and filled to the rafters — a visible witness to the vitality of faith in East Anglia.

The Gospel reading for the Mass was taken from Luke 4:16–21, in which Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, proclaims: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me." A particularly resonant choice, as the Chrism Mass celebrates both the ministerial priesthood and the Church's sacramental life — especially through the blessing of the holy oils.

In his homily, Bishop Peter reflected on the deep tradition of proclamation, service and mission that underpins the Church. He thanked his brother priests for their "service to Word and Sacrament," their commitment to "faith, hope and charity," and their "willingness to speak aloud, to preach and to prophesy."

The priests of the diocese then stood to renew the promises they made at ordination; a solemn and moving moment.

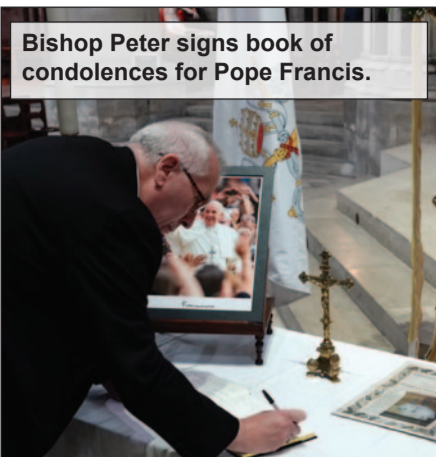
The blessing of the holy oils followed a procession of three deacons who brought the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Sacred Chrism from the Cathedral's west end to the sanctuary. The Oil of the Sick was blessed before Communion; the Oil of Catechumens and the Sacred Chrism were blessed and consecrated following Communion. During the consecration of the Chrism, Bishop Peter added the perfumed balsam to the oil and breathed the Sign of the Cross three times over the opening of the vessel, invoking the Holy Spirit upon it.

Before the final blessing, Bishop Peter gave heartfelt thanks to Fr Alan Hodgson, Cathedral Dean, and his team of volunteers for their generous contributions. He also thanked David Grealy, Director of Music, and the choir for their role in the celebration.

Bishop Alan Hopes was warmly thanked for his support during Bishop Peter's recent illness. Bishop Peter also welcomed Fr Teodoro, Father General of the Adorno Fathers, who has signed a formal agreement establishing the Congregation's presence in the diocese. Fr Teodoro was present at the Mass, joined by Fr Robin Joseph and Fr Alex Sunny, the newly appointed Parish Priest and Assistant Priest at St Laurence's, Cambridge.

Following the Mass, the Cathedral café hosted refreshments including hot cross buns, with many parishioners staying to enjoy the sunshine and fellowship.

Bishop Peter signs book of condolences for Pope Francis.



Pope Francis RIP

■ **story continued from page one.**

reflecting his deep admiration for Saint Francis of Assisi and his emphasis on care for the poor and the environment. His papacy was marked by his gentle leadership, his strong calls for peace and dialogue, and his groundbreaking encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which called for urgent global action on climate change.

He was also an advocate for a more inclusive Church, frequently speaking out on issues affecting migrants, the marginalised, and those living in poverty. Under his leadership, the Vatican saw efforts to reform Church governance, improve transparency, and address the wounds of clerical abuse. His consistent message was one of mercy, compassion, and simplicity.

Pope Francis died on 21 April 2025, just weeks after celebrating the twelfth anniversary of his election and his twelfth Easter as Pope. He was the spiritual leader of more than 1.3 billion Catholics worldwide and leaves behind a profound legacy of service and reform.

His official titles included: *Successor of the Apostle Peter, Vicar of Christ, Bishop of Rome, Servant of the Servants of God, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, and Sovereign of the Vatican City State.*

As the world prepares for his funeral and the election of a new Pope, Catholics everywhere are invited to reflect on his legacy and offer prayers of thanksgiving for his life and ministry.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Catholic EastAnglia

Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

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Kate Pereira: new Director of Schools

■ **Bishop Peter Collins has appointed Kate Pereira to succeed Andy Stone as the Diocese of East Anglia's Director of Schools from September 2025.**

Kate is currently Headteacher of St John Fisher Catholic High School in Peterborough, as well as Interim Executive Head of St Thomas More Primary, located on the same site. She has worked in education since 1991, teaching in schools within the dioceses of Westminster, Salford and Northampton before joining the Diocese of East Anglia in 2007.

In addition to her school leadership roles, Kate has served as a member of the Diocesan Schools Commission for five years and is a Section 48 inspector with the Catholic Schools Inspectorate. Her appointment follows an external advertisement and a rigorous selection process.

Kate will act on behalf of Bishop Peter in promoting and safeguarding the Catholic ethos of the Diocese's 28 schools, which serve approximately 11,000 pupils. She will also lead the diocesan schools' team.

Bishop Peter said:

"I thank Andy Stone for his all-too-short service to the Diocese, where he has made a huge positive impact. We are blessed to be able to appoint someone as well-qualified and committed as Kate to succeed him in this crucial post guaranteeing the Catholicity of our schools across East Anglia. She has already contributed so much to Catholic education in our schools themselves, and I know she has much more to give in this new role. I am looking forward to welcoming her to the Curia as the next school year begins."

Kate Pereira said:

"I am delighted to accept this post of Director but equally sad to be leaving my post as Headteacher at St John Fisher Catholic High School, which has been part of my teaching life for a long time and one that I have always enjoyed immensely – and that is in no small part down to the wonderful students and staff, supportive governors, parents, and the local Peterborough community. However, I am very much looking forward to working across the Diocese with



all Catholic schools and our two Diocesan Trusts to ensure that together we provide the best possible Catholic education for all."

Outgoing Director of Schools' Service, Andy Stone, said:

"I have greatly enjoyed the three years I have spent working with our Bishop Peter, the schools' team and colleagues in our wonderful Diocesan schools and trusts. I have made the decision to move back to Yorkshire where I grew up and am delighted that the Diocese has made such an excellent appointment to succeed me."

Night of service and adoration in East Anglia

On the evening of Thursday 17 April 2025, the Cathedral Church of St John the Baptist in Norwich was filled with profound reverence and solemn beauty as the Diocese of East Anglia gathered to commemorate the Maundy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper.

■ The celebration was led by the Bishop Peter Collins and marked the beginning of the Sacred Paschal Triduum.

The Gospel reading for the liturgy was taken from the holy Gospel according to John (John 13:1–15), recounting the moment before the Passover when Jesus, knowing that His hour had come, rose from supper and, in an extraordinary act of humility, began to wash the feet of His disciples. This passage, so rich in meaning, reveals Christ's love "to the end" and sets an example of selfless service that resounds through the centuries.

In his Homily, Bishop Peter reflected on the significance of that moment. He spoke of how Jesus, fully aware of the betrayal already in motion and the immense suffering that lay ahead, did not retreat. "With His hour upon Him," the Bishop said, "Christ proceeded regardless of the consequences. He did not turn away. Instead, He bent down in humility and washed the feet of His disciples. That same act of service, I will now undertake here today."

Immediately following the Homily, the sacred rite of the Washing of the Feet took place. Those members of the faithful who had been chosen came forward and took their seats before the altar. Bishop Peter, removing his chasuble in a gesture of simplicity and humility, moved from person to person. Assisted by his ministers, he poured water over each pair of feet, dried them with a towel, and reverently kissed them.



Bishop Peter Collins washing the feet of the faithful.

It was a moment of deep spiritual resonance — visibly embodying the call to servanthood and love that lies at the heart of the Christian vocation. The stillness in the Cathedral, the attentive silence of the congregation, and the gentle solemnity of the Bishop's actions invited all present to a renewed sense of devotion and discipleship.

As the Mass drew to a close, the focus shifted to the Transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Representing the Lord's journey to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray through the night, the Blessed Sacrament was solemnly processed from the high altar to the Altar of Repose in one of the Cathedral's side chapels.

Led by torchlight and accompanied by the haunting beauty of the hymn 'Pange lingua', the procession moved through the congregation with reverent pace. Upon reaching the place of repose, Bishop Peter placed the

ciborium in the tabernacle, leaving its door open, symbolising the watchfulness of that night. He then placed incense into the thurible and, kneeling, incensed the Blessed Sacrament as the final verses of the hymn were sung.

A period of silent adoration followed. The door to the tabernacle was eventually closed and locked, and the ministers withdrew in silence, leaving the faithful to watch and pray.

All were encouraged to remain for as long as they were able, to be present with the Lord in His hour of need, recalling His words in Gethsemane: "Could you not watch with me one hour?" The Cathedral remained open for silent prayer until Compline (Night Prayer) at 11.45pm, drawing to a close a deeply moving liturgy and marking the beginning of the Church's most sacred days.

Photographs from the Mass can be found on the diocesan website.



Candlelight fills a packed Cathedral.

A celebration of new life at the Cathedral

On the evening of Holy Saturday, 19 April 2025, the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich was filled with a profound sense of reverence and joy as the Diocese of East Anglia came together to celebrate the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night.

■ The Vigil, the most sacred liturgy of the Christian year, was led by Bishop Peter Collins and marked the glorious beginning of Easter.

The liturgy commenced outside the cathedral with the ancient and powerful Service of Light. As darkness fell, the faithful gathered around a blazing fire. Bishop Peter, accompanied by his ministers, approached the flames with the Paschal Candle. In a moving and symbolic act, he blessed the fire and prepared the candle, etching a cross into its wax with a stylus, then marking it with the Greek letters Alpha and Omega – symbols of Christ as the beginning and the end – and the numerals of the current year. He then inserted five grains of incense in the form of a cross, representing the five glorious wounds of Christ, before lighting the Paschal Candle from the blessed fire.

The candle, now the flame of the Risen Christ, was carried in solemn procession into the darkened cathedral by Fr Peter. He

paused three times – at the door, halfway up the nave, and at the sanctuary steps – proclaiming each time, “The Light of Christ, Thanks be to God.” As the light spread from the Paschal Candle throughout the congregation, the cathedral was gradually illuminated with the soft glow of candles held by the faithful – a powerful sign of Christ’s light conquering the darkness.

The Liturgy of the Word followed, rich with the telling of salvation history. Four Old Testament readings, each accompanied by a Psalm, Canticle or Gradual, traced God’s plan from creation to redemption. An epistle from Romans prepared the hearts of the faithful to hear the Gospel of the Resurrection. The Gospel, proclaimed from Luke 24:1–12, told of the women who, visiting the tomb at dawn, found the stone rolled away and were greeted by two men in dazzling garments. The angels declared, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.” Peter’s wonder upon finding the tomb empty mirrored the awe and joy of all who believe in the Risen Lord.

In a moment of deep grace and spiritual renewal, Bishop Peter welcomed those who were to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church. The Sacraments of Initiation were celebrated with reverence and great joy. After the Litany of Saints, Bishop Peter blessed the baptismal water, then turned to the elect with words of encouragement and solemn challenge. They renounced sin and professed their faith before being baptised. Each newly baptised was presented

with a candle lit from the Paschal Candle, a symbol of receiving the light of Christ.

Candidates for reception and confirmation then joined the newly baptised at the sanctuary, where all were anointed with sacred Chrism by the Bishop – a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit and their full incorporation into the Body of Christ. The number of new members welcomed into the Church this Easter Vigil was truly heart-warming and a sign of hope for the future of our diocese.

Following the celebrations of initiation, the entire congregation was invited to renew their baptismal promises. With joyful hearts, all proclaimed their faith anew, rejecting sin and affirming their belief in the Triune God. Bishop Peter then took the aspergillum and, with a spirit of joy and blessing, walked throughout the cathedral, sprinkling the congregation with the newly blessed holy water – a tangible reminder of our own baptismal call.

The Easter Vigil concluded with the Liturgy of the Eucharist, where the newly initiated received Holy Communion for the first time, uniting them fully with Christ and the Church.

This sacred night at St John’s Cathedral was not only a celebration of Christ’s victory over death but a living witness to the transformative power of faith. The warmth and unity of the faithful gathered, the beauty of the liturgy, and the joy of welcoming new members into the Church offered a radiant testament to the light of Christ that shines in our world today.

Photographs from the Vigil can be found on the diocesan website.



Donna Wright: new Safeguarding Administrator

■ The Diocese of East Anglia is pleased to welcome Donna Wright as our new Safeguarding Administrator. Donna takes over the role from Rebecca Bretherton, who has retired after faithfully serving in the post – though Donna hopes we’ll still see plenty of her around.

With a passion for protecting the vulnerable and a deep appreciation for the importance of safeguarding, Donna is excited to join the Diocese Safeguarding team. “I’m really looking forward to carrying on the good work that has already been done and to maintaining the Diocese’s strong reputation in safeguarding,” she says. “Most of all, I’m excited to meet everyone as I begin this journey.”

Donna brings with her a rich and varied background. She trained professionally as a dance teacher at the London College of Dance & Drama, with her first post taking her overseas to Kuwait. After returning to the UK, she continued to teach until starting a family, at which point she moved into more family-friendly roles.

Her career path led her through a variety of roles in industry, commerce, education and eventually into administration and HR. Alongside these professional shifts, Donna found herself consistently involved with safeguarding – both directly and indirectly – especially through her work with children. At one point, she even returned to the classroom, teaching dance and qualifying as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant.

When asked what professional achievement she is most proud of, Donna says: “Juggling work while raising a family. It’s not always easy, but it’s been incredibly rewarding.”

As she begins her new role, Donna is especially eager to embed the importance of safeguarding throughout the Diocese. “It’s something we all need to be aware of – in every place, in every role. It’s about being attentive, noticing what’s going on around us, and acting with kindness and care.”

Outside of work, Donna’s literary tastes range from the classic to the heart-warming – citing 1984 by George Orwell and Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney as her favourites. When asked about hidden talents, she cheekily replied: “None that I will tell you about for publication!”

The best advice she’s ever received? “Be true to yourself and always be kind.”

We warmly welcome Donna into her new role and look forward to the energy, compassion and dedication she brings to safeguarding across our Diocese.

St Edward Deanery Unites for Lenten Station Mass

St Mary's Church, Ipswich, was filled with prayer and joy on Tuesday, 25 March 2025, as parishioners from across the Deanery of St Edward gathered to celebrate the fourth of seven Lenten Station Masses taking place this Lent throughout the Diocese of East Anglia.

Charlie Bohan-Hurst reports.

■ Presided over by the Right Reverend Peter Collins, Bishop of East Anglia, and co-celebrated by clergy from across the deanery, the evening's Mass held particular

significance as it coincided with the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, a key feast in the Church's liturgical calendar.

From 6pm, parishioners were invited to enter into a time of quiet reflection and reconciliation, with the Sacrament of Confession available alongside exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. This period of prayerful preparation paved the way for the 7pm Mass, which was met with a full church and a deep sense of spiritual anticipation.

The celebration of the Annunciation invites the faithful to reflect on the profound mystery of the Incarnation: the moment when the Word became flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As recounted in the Gospel of Luke (1:26–38), the Angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary announces God's plan for salvation. While often seen as a Marian solemnity, the Bishop reminded the

congregation that the Annunciation is fundamentally Christological, as it marks the beginning of Christ's earthly existence.

The Bishop took time during the liturgy to express his gratitude to the faithful for their recent



Bishop Peter Collins celebrating Lenten Station Mass at St Mary's Church.



Bishop Peter Collins collecting soup for the meal after the Mass.

prayers – both for the Holy Father, Pope Francis, who has now been discharged from hospital, and for the Bishop himself, who has made a strong recovery after a period of illness.

The music during the Mass was another highlight of the evening, uplifting and reverent, and helping to elevate the celebration with both solemnity and joy. The choral and instrumental offerings were carefully selected to reflect the Marian and Christological themes of the day, further enriching the liturgical experience for all present.

Following the Mass, the community gathered in the parish hall where an abundant selection of soups and bread rolls awaited, all lovingly prepared by parish volunteers. The atmosphere was warm and welcoming,

as parishioners shared not only food but also stories, laughter, and the companionship of faith.

It was a moment that truly embodied the spirit of Lent – marked by prayer, penitence, and almsgiving, yet also by communion, generosity, and the hope that springs from the Gospel.

As the Diocese continues its pilgrimage through Lent with the remaining three Station Masses, the gathering at St Mary's stood as a shining testament to the vitality and unity of the Deanery of St Edward. Rooted in ancient tradition, the Lenten Station Masses offer the faithful a chance to step away from their individual parishes and unite as one diocesan family, praying together and journeying toward Easter.

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The Power of Persistent Prayer

Fr Alvan Ibeh reflects on the power of persistent prayer in our lives.

■ Prayer is one of the greatest gifts God has given us – a direct way to speak with Him, seek His guidance, and experience His love. Yet, one of the most challenging lessons in our faith journey is learning to pray persistently – to keep praying even when answers don't come straight away.

For every Christian, prayer should be a posture of the heart – something we do continually, regardless of how we feel or whether we see immediate results. It should not be dependent on emotions but rooted in trust and obedience.

I have personally experienced the power of persistent prayer in my own life. There was a time when I was praying for something deeply important. At first, I prayed with great confidence, expecting a quick answer. But as days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, doubt began to creep in. I questioned whether God was even listening.

One night, in frustration, I cried out, "God,



are You even there? Have You forgotten me?" You might ask – is that really prayer? Yes, it absolutely is. Prayer is any conversation we have with God. It's not limited to kneeling in a church; it's the honest dialogue we have with Him – whether we're lying in bed, cooking in the kitchen, sitting at our desk, driving, or anywhere else. It's about acknowledging His presence with us in every moment. I doubted His love for me.

In the quiet of that night, I felt a deep peace, as though God was gently whispering, "I have not forgotten you. Keep trusting me." I was reminded of His promise in Hebrews 13:5: "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

That night changed everything. Though the answer didn't come immediately, I chose to keep trusting Him. And when the answer eventually came, it was greater than I could have imagined. Looking back, I now understand that God was preparing me, strengthening my faith, and aligning my heart with His perfect will. Just because we don't see immediate change doesn't mean God isn't working. Every prayer is heard, and God is moving behind the scenes in ways we cannot always see. Once there is someone praying, there is a God listening – and He acts according to His perfect timing. Since we don't know that timing, we must continue to pray until He comes through.

Do you remember the acronym P.U.S.H.? Pray Until Something Happens.

Why is persistent prayer powerful?

It deepens our faith: The longer we pray, the more we rely on God rather than our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5–6).

It draws us closer to God: Prayer strengthens our relationship with Him and helps us hear His voice more clearly (Jeremiah 29:12–13).

It aligns us with God's will: Persistence in prayer can change us, shaping our desires to reflect God's perfect plan (1 John 5:14).

It prepares us for the answer: Often, God's timing is different from ours because He is preparing us for the blessing (Isaiah 40:31).

If you are praying for something and haven't yet seen the answer, don't lose heart. Keep praying, keep trusting, and keep believing. God is not ignoring you – He is working, even if you cannot yet see it.

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." – 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

Your breakthrough might be just around the corner. Keep knocking, keep seeking, and keep believing – God is always faithful.

My second book *A Fountain of Hope* – Book 2 is now available and Book 1 is still in print as well.

Cathedral hosts Jubilee Mass of the sick & healthcare workers

St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich was filled with reverence and compassion on Saturday 5 April as Bishop Peter Collins celebrated the Jubilee Mass of the Sick and Healthcare Workers, which included the Anointing of the Sick.

Charlie Bohan-Hurst reports.

■ The Mass, a special occasion in the diocesan calendar, brought together the sick, their carers, NHS staff, chaplains, volunteers and parishioners from across East Anglia. The cathedral's sacred space became a place of healing, thanksgiving, and spiritual renewal as Bishop Peter Collins led the congregation in prayer and sacrament.

During his homily, Bishop Peter offered heartfelt gratitude to all healthcare workers, acknowledging their tireless efforts in caring for the sick, researching new treatments, and providing comfort in often difficult circumstances.

"Our health care workers apply their great skills to the provision of healing and support for those who are experiencing the fragilities

of sickness," he said. "We can all rejoice in the advance of the medical sciences but we do so with a clear context. These medical sciences must be placed within the context of the relationship of human beings with their creator and must be forged and fashioned in accordance with the imperatives of the moral order revealed by God."

Bishop Peter also spoke of the profound significance of the Anointing of the Sick – a sacrament of hope and strength.

Many came forward to receive the anointing, supported by clergy and fellow faithful, as the Bishop gently anointed their foreheads and hands with holy oil. The moment was deeply moving, as the cathedral filled with quiet prayer and solemn music.

The Mass served as a poignant reminder of the Church's mission to be a place of healing and sanctuary, especially for those facing illness and those who care for them.

The Jubilee Mass of the Sick and Healthcare Workers was a cherished moment in the life of the diocese – a testament to the enduring bond between faith, healing, and the human spirit.



Bishop Peter Collins anointing the faithful.

Sacred Heart Church hosts defibrillator training

■ Parishioners at Sacred Heart Church in North Walsham, along with local hall users and Christians from neighbouring churches, were recently given the opportunity to gain vital life-saving skills through an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training course.

Due to high demand, the parish ran not one, but two sessions on the same day to ensure everyone could take part. The initiative was organised by parishioner Peter Brander and led by fellow parishioner John Holden, a qualified trainer and assessor with the Royal Life Saving Society and the Swimming Teachers' Association.

The sessions provided hands-on experi-

ence and practical knowledge, demystifying the use of AEDs in emergency situations.

"People are under the illusion that you have to be qualified to use a defib. This is not the case — anyone can use them," explained John Holden. "It doesn't matter who the training provider is. What matters is effective use in an emergency. The use of a defib can make all the difference in a life-or-death situation."

Following the positive response and enthusiasm from attendees, further courses at the church hall are expected in the near future. The parish is proud to help empower the community with the confidence and knowledge to act when it matters most.



Course attendees at Sacred Heart Church. Picture by John Holden.

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Bishop Peter’s engagements

- May**
- **May 3, Sat:** 09:00, Bishop to join Ignite Youth Festival at St Benedict’s School, Bury St Edmunds.
 - **May 4-8, Sun-Thurs:** Bishop to attend the Spring Plenary Assembly of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.
 - **May 10, Sat:** 11:00, Bishop to preside at the Association for Latin in the Liturgy Mass at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich.
 - **May 11, Sun:** 12:00, Bishop to attend the Ecumenical FEPOW Memorial Service in Wymondham.
 - **May 13, Tues:** 11:30, Bishop to celebrate Mass at the Guild Chapel, Stratford Upon Avon for the KHS.
 - **May 15, Thurs:** Bishop to celebrate Mass for the 40th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Prison Chapel of Christ the Redeemer at HMP Wayland.
 - **May 15, Thurs:** 19:00, Bishop to celebrate Confirmation Mass at St Etheldreda, Ely.
 - **May 25, Sun:** 11:00, Bishop to celebrate Confirmation Mass at St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodbridge.
 - **Mar 25, Tues:** 17:30, Bishop to celebrate Solemn Pontifical Mass for the Ascension of the Lord at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich.

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Bishop Peter Collins addresses a full Cathedral on Easter Sunday. Picture by Charlie Bohan-Hurst.

The Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich was filled to the rafters on Easter Sunday, 20 April 2025, as the faithful from across the Diocese of East Anglia gathered to celebrate the glorious Solemn Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord.
Charlie Bohan-Hurst reports.

■ The liturgy, led by Bishop Peter Collins, was a truly joyous and reverent occasion, marking the culmination of the Holy Week journey with the triumphant declaration: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

From the opening strains of the Easter Alleluia, the cathedral resounded with the joy and hope that the Resurrection brings. The Gospel reading, taken from John 20:1–9, recounted the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene, followed by Peter and the beloved disciple. Though bewildered at first, the beloved disciple entered the tomb, saw the linen cloths lying there, and believed. It is this

moment — the dawning realisation that death had been conquered — that lies at the very heart of the Easter mystery.

In his homily, Bishop Peter expressed heartfelt joy at seeing the cathedral so full on this most sacred of days. With a smile, he turned to the Cathedral Dean, Fr Alan Hodgson, and quipped that perhaps an extension to the cathedral might be needed to accommodate the ever-growing number of worshippers. Laughter and warmth filled the space, a testament to the spirit of unity and hope that Easter brings.

Following the homily, the faithful were



Cathedral



Latin Liturgy & Chant for Today's Church

The Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich will host a special day dedicated to the beauty and richness of Latin liturgy and Gregorian chant on Saturday 10 May. Paul Henriksen, Diocesan Representative, Association for Latin Liturgy, provides further details below.

■ This spiritually enriching event, organised in collaboration with the Association for Latin Liturgy, is warmly endorsed by Bishop Peter Collins and Fr Alan Hodgson, Dean of the Cathedral.

The day is an invitation to rediscover the sacred in our liturgical life, focusing particularly on the power of sung prayer in the Mass. Fr Guy Nichols, noted scholar and compiler of the acclaimed *Graduale Parvum*, will lead participants through an accessible and inspiring introduction to chant. Designed for parish use, the *Graduale Parvum* is a valuable resource that allows all members of the faithful to actively participate in the liturgy through traditional chant, regardless of musical background.

Following a welcome with coffee at 10am, Fr Guy, taking time away from his role teaching seminarians at St Mary's College, Oscott, will offer practical guidance on singing the Mass. He will be joined by David Greal, the Cathedral's Director of Music, who will provide organ accompaniment and support for musicians wishing to explore chant further.

At 11.30am, Bishop Peter Collins will celebrate a fully sung Latin Mass in the Ordinary Form, with clergy concelebrating. This will offer a profound opportunity to experience

how Latin and chant together elevate the spiritual depth of the liturgy, fostering a deeper sense of reverence and prayerful engagement.

The afternoon will feature a thought-provoking talk by Fr Peter Wygnanski, the Bishop's Private Secretary and University Chaplain, titled *"Seeing Liturgical Reforms through the Eyes of Generation Z: A Yearning for the Sacred."* Drawing on experiences of Youth Ministry and University Chaplaincy, Fr Peter will explore how younger Catholics are expressing a desire for beauty and the transcendent in worship, often in ways that may surprise older generations.

A highlight of the day will be Vespers and Benediction at 3.30pm in the Cathedral, concluding the event in fittingly prayerful and solemn fashion. Throughout the day, resources and support materials from the Association for Latin Liturgy will be on display in the Narthex, offering practical tools for anyone interested in bringing this vision of sacred liturgy into their own parish.

Mgr Bruce Harbert, a former member of the ICEL translation team for the current Roman Missal, also hopes to be in attendance to speak on the theological and pastoral significance of Latin in the liturgy. As he and others will affirm, Latin – precisely because it is not used in everyday conversation – helps mark out the Mass as something wholly set apart for God.

Lunch is available with prior booking online.

This promises to be a day of inspiration and formation for all who seek to rediscover the richness of the Church's liturgical tradition and its role in drawing hearts to the mystery of God.

Lunch is available with prior booking online. For full details and to register, please visit: <https://latin-liturgy.org/meetings>



invited to renew their baptismal promises. This powerful moment in the liturgy recalls the grace of our own baptism — the renunciation of sin and the profession of faith in the Triune God. With hands held high and voices united, the congregation reaffirmed their belief in the resurrection and the life to come.

Bishop Peter then made his way through the cathedral, joyfully sprinkling the assembly with the newly blessed Holy Water — a symbol of spiritual cleansing and renewal. It was a moving and tangible reminder of the new life we share in Christ.

The Easter Sunday Mass was a fitting and radiant conclusion to Holy Week, which had seen the cathedral and the diocese bustling with prayer, reflection, and sacred celebration. Now, as the tomb stands empty and the light of the Resurrection shines forth, we rejoice together.

Christ is risen indeed — Alleluia!

Sisters of St Louis Wellbeing Hub in Newmarket opened

■ On Friday 21 March 2025, the St Louis Academy community in Newmarket warmly welcomed Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes to celebrate a special Mass, followed by the official blessing and opening of the newly completed Sisters of St Louis Wellbeing Hub.

The occasion was marked with heartfelt celebration, made all the more joyful by the uplifting music led by Director of Music for the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, David Grealy, whose contribution greatly enhanced the singing during the liturgy.

The beautiful new facility has been made possible thanks to an extraordinary gift of £100,000 from the Sisters of St Louis. Their generous donation has funded the creation of a multi-purpose space dedicated to supporting children with social and emotional needs, their families, and the pastoral and specialist teams who work with them.

The Sisters of St Louis Wellbeing Hub provides a confidential counselling space, a calming sensory room, a quiet retreat for support meetings, and a dedicated area for small group therapy sessions. The building is thoughtfully designed to offer a sense of peace and refuge — a place where children can feel safe, supported, and nurtured.

Sister Blathnaid travelled from Dublin to represent her Order and formally hand over the building to the school. She was present to witness Bishop Alan bless the Hub — a deeply meaningful moment

for all involved.

Co-Chairs of Governors, Bethan Byrne and Marc Walker, expressed their delight at being able to add this exceptional pastoral provision to the school's already 'Outstanding' Ofsted-rated Personal Development offering. They, along with the whole school community, are deeply grateful for the Sisters' enduring commitment to the wellbeing of children.

Having served the Newmarket community for many decades, the Sisters of St Louis left a lasting legacy of love and care. Their desire to continue supporting future generations has found its expression in this project — a gift that will bless many lives in the years to come.

The building was designed and constructed by Eco Classrooms and Nurseries, chosen for their strong environmental credentials. With the support of the Diocese — particularly Helen Bates — planning and design were finalised, and work began in November 2024.

Nestled in a quiet courtyard, the Hub is a tranquil space flooded with natural light. A walkway wraps around the building, inviting moments of calm reflection, and wide glazed doors allow the room to open out to the surrounding environment, further enhancing the sense of openness and serenity.

The Sisters of St Louis Wellbeing Hub stands as a lasting testament to the love, vision, and generosity of the Sisters, and will continue their mission of care and compassion for generations to come.



Bishop Peter Collins reveals the Cross.

A Solemn Good Friday Celebration

On Friday 18 April 2025, the Cathedral Church of St John the Baptist in Norwich was filled with reverent silence as the Diocese of East Anglia marked Good Friday with the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord, led by Bishop Peter Collins.

■ The service began with a silent procession of the clergy. As Bishop Peter reached the altar, he prostrated himself, a gesture of profound humility and sorrow. The clergy and congregation knelt in solemn silence, entering into the mystery of Christ's Passion with deep reflection and prayer.

Central to the liturgy was the proclamation of the Gospel: The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. This powerful reading recounts the betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death of Jesus, culminating in His final words from the Cross and the piercing of His side — signs of His total self-giving for humanity.

In his homily, Bishop Peter reflected on the significance of outward expressions of faith, reminding those gathered of the

importance of adoring the cross.

Before the Veneration of the Cross, the solemn intercessions were offered. These prayers encompassed the whole world, invoking God's mercy upon the Church, the Pope, clergy, and faithful; catechumens preparing for baptism; the unity of Christians; the Jewish people; those who do not yet believe in Christ or in God; those in public office; and all who suffer affliction or tribulation.

The Veneration of the Cross then followed, beginning with the showing of the cross. A single wooden cross was brought in procession to the sanctuary and gradually revealed by Bishop Peter.

The reflection deepened as the Bishop approached the cross to venerate it, followed by the clergy. One by one, all present were invited to come forward, genuflect, and kiss any part of the cross. It was a moment of profound intimacy — a personal encounter with God's gift of Himself through the death of His Son.

The atmosphere in the Cathedral was one of deep solemnity. As the faithful stepped forward, many with quiet tears or bowed heads, the silence bore witness to the weight and mystery of Good Friday. The adoration of the cross was not merely symbolic; it was a sacred moment to come face-to-face with the immense love of God

made manifest in Christ crucified.

Following the distribution of Holy Communion, Bishop Peter offered this blessing over the people:

"May abundant blessing, O Lord, we pray, descend upon your people, who have honoured the Death of your Son in the hope of their resurrection: may pardon come, comfort be given, holy faith increase, and everlasting redemption be made secure. Through Christ our Lord."

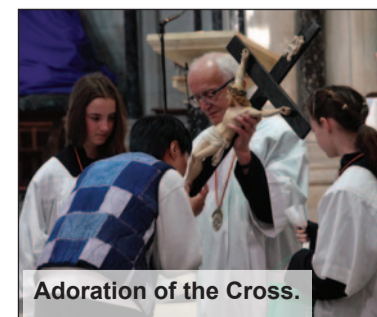
The liturgy concluded in silence, with the Bishop and clergy departing without a recessional hymn.

The faithful were invited to remain in quiet prayer or leave the Cathedral in reverent silence. The celebration left a deep impression on all who attended — a moment of shared sorrow, reverence, and hope as the Church entered into the mystery of Christ's Passion.

Photographs from the Good Friday celebration can be found on the diocesan website.



Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes at the new Wellbeing Hub.



Adoration of the Cross.

Clergy Day of Recollection

Bishop Peter Collins, twenty-seven priests and two permanent deacons gathered at Clare Priory on 3 April for the Diocese of East Anglia's Lent Clergy Day of Recollection.

■ The day was led by Holy Ghost Father Eamonn Mulcahy, a priest currently serving in a parish in Stoke in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

In a series of thought-provoking reflections, Fr Eamonn challenged those present to renew their commitment to ministry, calling them to be priests and deacons formed after the heart and mind of Christ.

Focusing on the moment of Jesus' baptism – when He is affirmed as God's beloved, the one in whom God delights – Fr Eamonn explored how this profound sense of identity shaped Jesus' entire ministry. He encouraged the clergy to reflect on how Jesus' mission was to reveal this same truth to others: that all are beloved of God, and that God delights in each person.

Fr Eamonn reminded the gathering that this understanding led Jesus to the margins of society – to the rejected, the excluded, the put-upon, the disdained, to those who felt anything but loved by God and those whom religious leaders often overlooked. Jesus wasn't a cultic priest, not according to the religious definitions of his time. And yet, his



Clergy gathered after midday Mass celebrated at Clare Priory. Centre: Fr Eamonn Mulcahy CSSp.

life was entirely priestly – and he became the perfect sacrifice.

Several attendees also asked for Fr Eamonn to be invited back for future days of

reflection, recognising the value of his message in helping to renew and inspire the clergy in their vocations.

The Diocese's Lent Clergy Day continues

to be an important opportunity for spiritual nourishment, fraternal support, and personal renewal – and this year's gathering at Clare Priory was no exception.

Bishop welcomes Adorno Fathers

■ On Saturday 29 March, Bishop Peter paid a pastoral visit to St Laurence's Church in Cambridge to celebrate the evening Vigil Mass alongside Fr Robin Mampallithadathil and Fr Alex Vadasseril.

The occasion was marked by a warm and heartfelt welcome extended to the two priests, members of the Clerics Regular Minor – commonly known as the Adorno Fathers – who have recently joined the parish community.

Fr Robin has been serving as Priest in Charge at St Laurence's for the past couple of months, while Fr Alex has just arrived to take up the role of Assistant Priest. Both have already begun making their presence felt in

the life of the parish.

During the Mass, Bishop Peter expressed his sincere gratitude to the two priests for their willingness to serve not only the Parish of St Laurence, but also the wider Diocese of East Anglia. Addressing the congregation, he emphasised the spiritual richness that the Adorno Fathers bring with them, describing their presence as a source of "abundant graces". He also encouraged parishioners to offer their full support to Fr Robin and Fr Alex as they continue to settle in and come to know the community more deeply.

The Vigil Mass was a joyful and prayerful celebration, reflecting the unity and vitality of the parish as it embraces this new chapter in its journey of faith.



Bishop Peter Collins with Fr Robin and Fr Alex.

Remembering Father Tom Fenlon, 1945-2025

■ Father Tom Fenlon, SMA, died peacefully on 23 January 2025 at the age of 79. He served in the Diocese of East Anglia for sixteen years and is fondly remembered by the parish communities he ministered to.

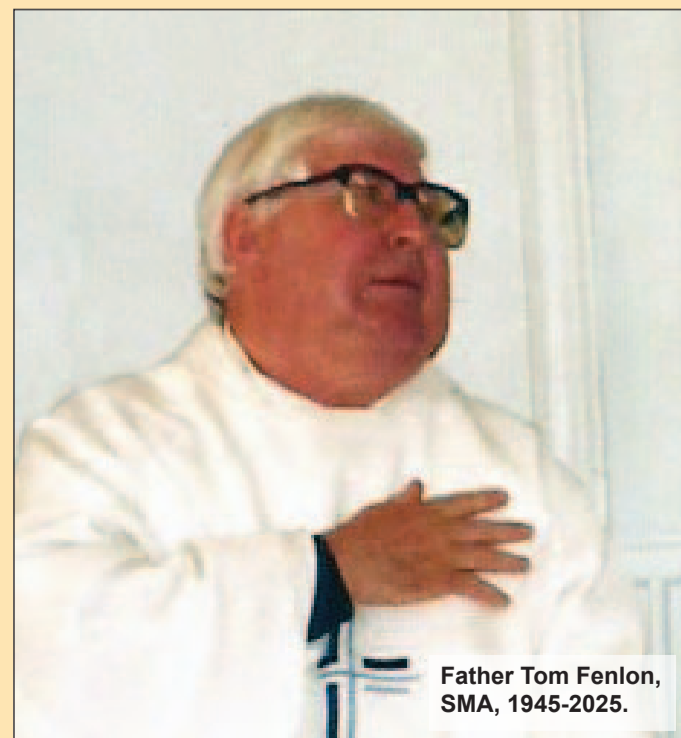
Born in Ireland in 1945, Thomas Fenlon joined the Society of African Missions (SMA) at the age of eighteen and was ordained to the priesthood in 1968. He spent two periods of missionary service in Nigeria, ministering in the Archdiocese of Kaduna between 1969 and 1981. During this time, he also undertook nursing training at Walton Hospital in Liverpool.

Due to ill health, Father Tom returned to Ireland in 1982 for a period of recuperation. He later served as chaplain at the Central Middlesex Hospital in London before coming to the Diocese of East Anglia in 1992. Here, he served at St James's Parish in Ipswich and, from 2002 until his retirement in 2008, he was parish priest of Woodbridge with Framlingham. He is warmly remembered

by parishioners in Ipswich, Woodbridge, and Framlingham for his pastoral care and faithful service.

After retiring to Ireland, Father Tom lived first in Galway and, as his health declined, in Cork. In 2021, he became a resident at St Theresa's Nursing Unit of the Society of African Missions in Blackrock, Cork, where he passed away peacefully.

May he rest in peace.



Father Tom Fenlon, SMA, 1945-2025.

Cathedral welcomes Visit Norwich City Hosts

On Wednesday 26 March, the Cathedral of St John the Baptist welcomed a number of Visit Norwich staff and volunteer City Hosts to see the wonders of the Cathedral.

■ Cathedral Heritage Officer Richard led a guided tour around the exterior of the Cathedral, offering an appreciation of the building's remarkable architecture, before taking visitors inside to experience the scale and grandeur of the interior. The tour also highlighted the Cathedral's historical and spiritual significance, both for the city and for Catholics across the Diocese of East Anglia.

The visit was organised by Bookings and Marketing Coordinator Sarah Miller as part of an ongoing effort to strengthen ties with Visit Norwich. The aim was to provide City Hosts with valuable insights into the Cathedral, equipping them to share accurate and engaging information with visitors to Norwich.

Later in the day, Visit Norwich members were invited to a special networking event at the Cathedral, which included a Hidden Places tour. This unique experience offered access to areas usually closed to the public, such as the Sacristy, the Choristers' tunnel, the concealed room above the Walsingham Chapel, and sections of the roof space.

The tour was followed by a drinks and ca-



Visit Norwich staff and volunteer City Hosts outside the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich.

napés reception in the Narthex, with views over the Cathedral garden. The evening provided a chance for local businesses and organisations to discover some of the Cathedral's lesser-known treasures and to build relationships with like-minded individ-

uals across the city.

Charley Purves, Cathedral Manager, commented:

"In working closely with Visit Norwich, we hope to increase visitor numbers and ensure that those exploring Norwich are aware that

we are one of only nine cities in the UK with two cathedrals. We also aim to help promote this beautiful 'garden quarter' of the city – from Chapelfield Gardens through the Cathedral Garden and on to the Plantation Garden."



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SOS Bus: A lifeline in Newmarket

John Borda, Chair of the SOS Bus CIO and a parishioner at Our Lady Immaculate and St Etheldreda, Newmarket, has been at the heart of a vital community initiative for the past 15 years.

■ The SOS Bus, a converted Dennis Dart, has been operating in Newmarket, primarily on Saturday nights, as a mobile first aid unit and safe space. While its core activity is based on Newmarket's High Street, the bus has also supported events as far afield as Ipswich. After a brief hiatus during the pandemic, it is now back in regular service.

"When I first got involved, Racing Welfare had just acquired the bus," John recalls. "It still had two side doors and hadn't yet been fitted out. My very first meeting was actually on board before it had even been wrapped. I went on to design the original website. Then in 2019, when I learned the project was due to be mothballed, I established a new charity to take it over."

Under John's leadership, the SOS Bus has continued to provide care and a calm space in the town centre. The vehicle includes a first aid room, kitchenette and seating area, as well as a defibrillator, phone charging stations and its own generator for use where mains power is unavailable. It is stocked with water, foil blankets, feminine hygiene prod-

ucts and other essentials.

In 2024 alone, the SOS Bus attended 21 events and supported 161 individuals, 16 of whom required first aid. In Newmarket, the bus is stationed outside the Post Office on the High Street from 9.30pm to approximately 3am, just a short walk from the ARK nightclub.

"We've built a strong working relationship with the club's management and door staff," says John. "They often direct people to us and in some cases even carry them over when help is needed. By helping people sober up in a safe space, we're not only reducing anti-social behaviour, but also easing pressure on local A&E departments and keeping vulnerable individuals out of harm's way. It improves the town's reputation as a safe and welcoming place to enjoy a night

out."

To continue and expand this important work, the SOS Bus is currently looking for more volunteers. These could include general helpers, trained or aspiring first aiders (aged 16+), drivers, or those willing to assist with charity administration. Full training is available.

The team is also seeking corporate sponsorship and grant funding, especially as insurance and operational costs continue to rise. Recent improvements to the vehicle were made possible thanks to a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund.

To get involved or find out more, visit www.sosbus.org.uk, email info@sosbus.org.uk, or follow the team on Facebook and Instagram.



John Borda with the SOS Bus.



Faith in the Home

Mary Gardens

■ **Marriage and Family Life Coordinator, Dr Antonia Braithwaite, highlights the benefits of creating a 'Mary Garden' as a way for families to create a devotional outdoor space dedicated to the Virgin Mary.**

It is a centuries-old Catholic tradition to honour Mary in a special way during the month of May. One beautiful way for families to do this is by creating a Mary Garden in their back garden as a tribute to Our Lady.

A Mary Garden is a devotional outdoor space dedicated to the Virgin Mary, typically featuring a statue of her as the focal point, surrounded by flowers and plants. The tradition of Mary Gardens dates back to medieval Europe when monasteries and churches cultivated gardens filled with flowers associated with Mary.

Many flowers are named after Our Lady, such as: Marigolds (meaning Mary's Gold – the first recorded reference to a flower named for Mary appears in a 14th-century English manuscript).

Rosemary, Lady Tulip, Madonna Lily, Lily of the Valley (also known as Our Lady's Tears).

Other flowers symbolise her virtues and aspects of her life, for example: Lilies (purity), Roses (queenly dignity), Lavender and Thyme (protection and devotion), Violet (modesty), Strawberry (Fruitful Virgin, as it bears both flowers and fruit at the same time).

There are many more! While it can be lovely to choose flowers associated with Mary, any flowers will create a beautiful and prayerful space.

Outdoor statues of Mary can be purchased from Catholic gift shops, or online from retailers such as Amazon, eBay, and Etsy.

A Mary Garden is not only a tribute to Our Lady but also a place of prayer and reflection for the family. Young children often delight in picking flowers for Mary, helping to cultivate a devotion to her in their hearts. In May, families can also celebrate a small "May Crowning" in their garden – another tradition dating back to the Middle Ages – by placing a home-made wreath of flowers on their statue of Mary.

And don't forget to welcome the lady-birds! These tiny creatures were named after Our Lady following a medieval legend: when European farmers prayed for Mary's intercession to save their crops from aphid infestations, flocks of lady-birds arrived, devouring the aphids and saving the harvest.

If you have a Mary Garden and would be happy to share a photo for our collection on the Diocesan website, please send it to Dr Antonia Braithwaite: mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk.

Benjamin Jordan accepted by Bishop Peter as a Seminarian for the Diocese

■ Following a thorough application process that began in October, Bishop Peter is delighted to announce the formal acceptance of Benjamin Jordan, currently in his final year at the University of East Anglia, for formation for the priesthood for the Diocese of East Anglia.

Benjamin, formerly the president of the University Catholic Society, was raised in Beccles, Suffolk. He came to the Catholic Faith through his devoted study of history and has been discerning priesthood during his undergraduate years.

"I am overjoyed to be able to continue this walk with the Lord," Benjamin said. "I appreciate all the work so many people have done to accompany me on this journey."

As we celebrate Benjamin's acceptance, we pray that more men will generously respond to discerning God's call to the Diocesan priesthood.



Bishop Peter Collins with Benjamin Jordan.

Fr Alvan Ibeh releases his second book: A Fountain of Hope Book 2

■ **Fr Desmond Agomuo says A Fountain of Hope Book 2 is a must-read for those seeking hope, strength and spiritual renewal.**

■ A Fountain of Hope: Book 2 is more than just a book, it's a deeply moving and soul-nourishing journey that uplifts, encourages, and strengthens the reader's faith. From the very first page, it's evident that this work is crafted with love, wisdom, and a sincere desire to inspire. Each chapter offers a powerful blend of biblical truths, real-life experiences, and heartfelt reflections that remind us of God's abiding presence - even in our most challenging moments.

One of the most remarkable qualities of this book is its ability to connect with readers on a deeply personal level. Whether you're facing struggles, seeking direction, or simply in need of daily encouragement, A Fountain of Hope: Book 2 meets you right where you are. Fr Alvan skilfully weaves together scriptural teachings with practical insights, making each lesson both relatable and transformative.

The book's structure adds to its impact. Every chapter shares a meaningful story or lesson, accompanied by a relevant biblical passage that reinforces the message. These passages serve as poignant reminders of God's promises, His unwavering love, and His divine plan for our lives. Each chapter concludes with a prayer - a moment of quiet reflection that invites readers to internalise what they've learned and apply it to their own spiritual journey.

Perhaps the book's greatest strength lies in its unwavering message of hope. In a

world often weighed down by uncertainty, stress, and hardship, A Fountain of Hope: Book 2 shines as a beacon of light. It reminds us that, no matter our circumstances, God is always with us. The stories shared highlight resilience, faith, and the transformative power of trusting in God's plan. Readers will come away feeling renewed, inspired, and equipped to press forward with confidence and faith.

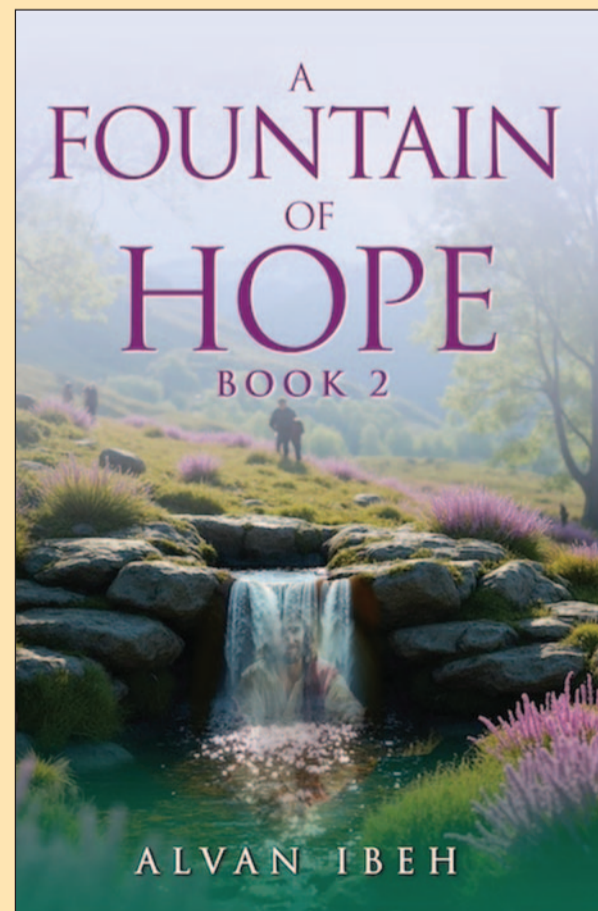
In addition to its spiritual depth, the book is beautifully written. Fr Alvan's voice is warm, engaging, and full of compassion, making the reading experience feel like a heartfelt conversation with a trusted friend or mentor. The prose flows effortlessly, making it easy to absorb the wisdom and grace found in its pages.

I highly recommend A Fountain of Hope: Book 2 to anyone in need of encouragement - whether you're a lifelong believer or just beginning your spiritual journey. It's the kind of book that can be returned to time and time again, offering fresh insight and comfort with each reading. Keep it on your nightstand, share it with loved ones, or gift it to someone who needs a gentle reminder of God's enduring love.

This book truly lives up to its name - it is a fountain of hope. It will lift your spirit, strengthen your faith, and remind you that even in the darkest moments,

God's light is always shining.

A heartfelt, inspiring, and faith-filled read—an absolute treasure for the soul. Both Book 1 and Book 2 are available on Amazon and The Great British Bookshop, or you can contact Fr Alvan via his social media platforms: Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram @voiceofhopefamily.



Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese

■ Palm Sunday, the gateway to Holy Week, was prayerfully marked at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist with a solemn procession and Mass, led by Bishop Peter Collins.

The celebration began in the cathedral garden with the commemoration of the Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. As the faithful gathered in anticipation, the cathedral choir lifted their voices in song to accompany the arrival of the Bishop and ministers. Bishop Peter greeted the congregation warmly and offered a brief address, inviting all present to participate "actively and consciously" in the sacred events of the day.

Holy water was sprinkled over the palms and, through them, the gathered faithful – marking the beginning of the solemn procession.

Following the proclamation of the Gospel according to Luke (19:28–40), the thurifer led the way, followed by the cross, acolytes, servers, choir, ministers and finally the Bishop. The procession circled the exterior of the cathedral before entering through the grand west door, as the choir continued to sing hymns that recalled the joy and hope of Christ's entry into the Holy City.

Once inside, the celebration of the solemn Mass began. The Gospel reading for the day was the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke – a poignant turning point that draws the faithful into the mystery of Christ's suffering and sacrifice.

In his homily, Bishop Peter encouraged all present to embrace Holy Week with a wholehearted commitment. Reflecting on the image of cloaks being laid down before Christ, he spoke of it as a symbol of total self-giving – the offering of one's most valued possessions. "There is no such thing as half-hearted commitment," he reminded the congregation.

The liturgy concluded with the singing of an Antiphon to the Blessed Virgin Mary, bringing the solemn celebration to a peaceful close as the faithful were sent forth into the journey of Holy Week.

Photographs from the Procession and Mass can be found on the diocesan website.



■ Palm Sunday celebrations at Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs in Cambridge.

■ Palm Sunday celebrations at St Felix in Felixstowe.

