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750 attend school Mass with Bishop Peter – page 8



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The East Anglia pilgrims with Bishop Peter Collins at the start of their Camino at Valenca on the Portugal/Spain border. Picture by Keith Morris. For a full picture gallery visit: www.flickr.com/photos/dioceseofeastanglia/



Young pilgrims finish joyous Camino walk

A challenging but rewarding Diocese of East Anglia youth Camino following the Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela in NW Spain ended joyously on Sunday July 28. Keith Morris reports.

■ Around 30 mostly young pilgrims, led impressively by Bishop Peter Collins, walked 120km from the Portugal/Spain border at Valenca, following the Portuguese Way route north into Spain over six days.

The group walked through pretty villages and cities, including Pontevedra, Redondela and Padron and along winding mountain paths and through shady meadows in temperatures up to 35C.

Staying mostly in youth hostels, the group also enjoyed evening meals

together and celebrated Morning Prayer and Mass each evening in diverse settings from a cathedral, parish church, youth hostel and Michelin starred restaurant.

On the Saturday, the group walked the final 24km into Santiago de Compostela and then gathered together in the square in front of the famous Cathedral of St James to cheers from all around.

The following day the pilgrims returned to the cathedral, where Bishop Peter was the celebrant at the 12 noon Pilgrim Mass which was full to overflowing with pilgrims from all over the world.

The group then went to the Pilgrim Office to get a final stamp in their Pilgrim Passport and a certificate of achievement for walking at least 100km.

Despite no walking training, Bishop Peter impressively finished the entire walk, much to the amazement of his fellow pilgrims who knew how much effort he had put in under the burning sun.

Speaking in the cathedral afterwards, Bishop Peter said: "I am very pleased to have completed the Camino and it has been a wonderful six days of journeying from Valenca to Santiago.

"Our group has bound together and shared much. It has been hard work – and at the end of the first day everyone thought I was going to collapse, but I managed to keep going, which was a great blessing.

"But every day has brought many fruits, lots of encounters, lots of sacramental engagement and following the apostolic path to Santiago. Despite the pain in the feet and other parts of the body, joy is truly the defining ingredient. Sharing life with others on a pilgrim way brings many insights, many reflections, much prayer and great blessing.

"It has been a privilege talking and listening to our young people who have been very open, engaged and engaging.

■ story continued on centre pages.

Clerical moves set to take place across the diocese

■ Bishop Peter Collins has announced the following clerical appointments across the Diocese of East Anglia, to take effect from September.

Canon Simon Blakesley has been appointed as Parish Priest of both St Edmund's, Bungay, and St Benet's, Beccles, moving from St Laurence in Cambridge.

Fr Simon Davies (right) has successfully completed his licentiate in Canon Law in Ottawa, Canada and will soon assume responsibilities in support of the Diocesan Tribunal and Chancellery. He will also soon be appointed to a pastoral position.



Fr Michael Smith has been appointed as Parish Priest of St Felix's, Felixstowe, moving from St John's Cathedral in Norwich.

Fr Mark Ashwood has been appointed as Assistant Priest at St John's Cathedral, Norwich, moving from Bury St Edmunds.

Fr Anthony Asomugha (right) has been appointed as Assistant Priest at St Edmund's, Bury St Edmunds, after his ordination in May.



Fr Anthony Arockiam has been appointed as Priest-in-Charge at Our Lady and St John the Evangelist, Sudbury, moving from St Thomas of Canterbury in Brandon.

Fr Anil Zachary has been appointed as Priest-in-Charge at St Thomas of Canterbury, Brandon, moving from Bury St Edmunds.

Bishop Peter said: "These appointments become operational on Sunday September 22 and I am grateful to these priests for their willingness to take up new pastoral responsibilities. A number of other appointments will need to be made in the near future and I will notify the Diocese as soon as I am able to confirm details."

Cathedral joins science and faith project

■ St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich is one of seven churches across England and Wales to share funding of £70,000 to explore the relationship between science and faith through the church engagement programme, Scientists in Congregations

The awardees have each received grants of up to £10,000 to deliver a project over the next year. Building on the expertise of scientists in their congregations, the churches will host a range of outreach and educational activities focusing on topics from clinical trials to creation care, with the aim of showing how engaging with science can lead to a deeper experience of faith.

Scientists in Congregations is an ecumenical programme, run by Equipping Christian Leadership in an Age of Science (ECLAS).

The team at St John's in Norwich have been awarded a grant for a project that aims to help Catholics who work in the life sciences (defined as Medicine, Biology, Genetics, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Neuroscience, and Biotechnology) to explain their Catholic beliefs in an increasingly challenging work environment.

Entitled 'Human Dignity' and Moral Decision-making in the Life Sciences' the project will be run by Dr Richard Maguire, the Heritage and Learning Officer at the Cathedral, and Professor George Lomonosoff from the John Innes Centre, Norwich, whose work focuses on the molecular biology of viruses and their use in bio- and nanotechnology.

Dr Maguire said: "We are excited and grateful to have received this grant from ECLAS. The project aims to empower the many medical and scientific professionals in our congregation, and also professionals in other Christian congregations, along with those from other faith traditions and none, who share our belief in human dignity."

Catholic EastAnglia

Newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

EDITOR: Keith Morris
tel: 07712 787762
Pear Tree Farmhouse,
Wymondham Road,
Wreningham, Norwich,
NR16 1AT.
keith.morris@rcdea.org.uk



Articles and photographs for the next edition are very welcome and should be sent to the editor, ideally via email, by Monday September 9.

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Cantonese Chaplaincy is a pioneer



■ The Diocese of East Anglia Cantonese Chaplaincy came of age at a special Mass at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on Saturday June 29, reports Dominic Chung.

The Cantonese community came away from the cathedral with springs in their steps, reinvigorated on their journey of faith. With Bishop Peter Collins' encouragement and blessing, and under the care of Canon John Minh, the East Anglia Cantonese Chaplaincy is up and running in the glorification of God. We have been 27 months or so in the making, and the Bishop enabled us to come of age. That is the key takeaway of the day.

The Diocese of East Anglia launched the first Cantonese Chaplaincy in the country, on the day that the Bishops Conference of England and Wales agreed to endorse a network of Hong Kong Cantonese Catholic chaplaincies

or communities.

How fitting it was that on the Solemnity of SS Peter and Paul we were sent forth to be missionaries, to evangelize not just amongst the Cantonese communities but to reach out to all those who are from diverse cultural background and of other nationalities. To quote from the Bishop's homily: "We communicate with each other through Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father and with the Holy Spirit to communicate with us all."

Over 120 Catholics, Cantonese and local parishioners alike, gathered at the St John the Baptist Cathedral. They came mostly from Cambridge, but a large contingent live in the Norwich area. We had Hong Kong Catholics from Birmingham, Manchester, from Loughborough and from London. Friends from Milton Keynes and Bedford who regularly support us came to

Norwich to celebrate the occasion with us also. Diverse yet one as Bishop Peter said in his homily. We joined the Bishop for a Pontifical Mass to celebrate the Solemn Feast of SS Peter and Paul Apostles.

The Mass was bilingual, but it felt like 80% in Cantonese. Bishop Peter prayed a substantial part of the Ordo in Cantonese. That took the congregation by pleasant surprise and drew enthusiastic applause towards the end. I suspect it would stay in our hearts and minds for a long, long time. His generous pastoral care and attention knew no bounds.

I would say, as a novice, unlike Canon John Minh who is now an old hand at celebrating Cantonese rites and Mass, Bishop Peter executed the prayers with aplomb. He even chanted the Memorial Acclamation in Cantonese.

FEPOW memorial service

Wymondham's 'Living Memorial' Church held its annual Ecumenical Memorial service for FEPOW & Civilian Internees in the Far East during WW2 on Sunday May 12, Peter Wiseman, Hon Archivist FEPOW Church, reports.

■ Led by Fr Denis Gallagher, Parish Priest, and the Anglican FEPOW Chaplain Rev Pauline Simpson BEM, we were honoured to have Lt Col Ian Lonsdale DL, Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk in attendance.

We welcomed Jane Flower, a FEPOW historian, as our speaker. As the daughter of a FEPOW, she had acquired many insights to inform her poignant address. What a powerful reflection and insight of a story so similar, but so different, to many other FEPOWs' stories.

Wreath laying took place in the FEPOW Memorial side-chapel. As custodians of the former Civilian Internees organisation's Standard, it was laid in the side chapel beforehand.

Lt Col Lonsdale laid the sovereign's wreath on behalf of His Majesty King Charles III. Two young people, another Scout and a Cub-Scout of the parish, then



The annual FEPOW memorial service at Our Lady & St Thomas of Canterbury in Wymondham.

followed, laying the parish wreath.

Another 13 wreaths were laid, amongst them the Netherlands was once again represented, and there was also a wreath on behalf of the Special Operations Executive (Far East) for the first time.

Lastly, two young girls of the Parish completed the ceremony: one laid a wreath on behalf of all seafarers. The other girl then sprinkled poppy petals over the dark blue cloth for the Hell-ships POWs and all lost at sea with no known grave.

As befits tradition, the FEPOW prayer heralded the Last Post; Silence; Reveille and Kohima Epitaph. Peter Wiseman concluded the commemoration with an epilogue.

After the final blessing by Fr Denis, two verses of the National Anthem were then sung to end what had been a moving service of remembrance. The 80-strong congregation were invited to afternoon tea in the parish hall provided by members of Wymondham Section of the Catholic Women's League.

Bishop Peter Collins cuts his 40th anniversary cake with volunteers at St John's Cathedral. For a full picture gallery visit: www.flickr.com/photos/diocesofeastanglia/



Bishop Peter marks 40 years as a priest

Bishop Peter Collins marked the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on Sunday July 14, by celebrating Mass in St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich in front of a large congregation including friends and parishioners from his former parish in Cardiff. Keith Morris reports.

■ The ceremony was led by Bishop Peter Collins, with Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes, also in attendance. Many other clergy members, family, friends, and parishioners joined in the celebration.

The St John's Cathedral choir were joined by the Bradford Catholic Youth Choir and Huddersfield Catholic Youth choir, who were visiting from the Diocese of Leeds and by the choir of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Costessey for the 40th anniversary celebration.

Following six years at the Royal English College, Valladolid, Spain, Bishop Peter was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Cardiff on July 14, 1984.

He served as an Assistant Priest in the Metropolitan Cathedral of St David, Cardiff, from 1984-86 and in Bridgend from 1986-88. He returned to Spain for post-graduate study before taking up his appointment as Vice Rector at the Royal English College, serving there from 1989-94.

Upon his return to the Archdiocese, he was appointed as Parish Priest of Chep-

■ A large congregation of parishioners, friends and clergy from all over the diocese gathered at Our Lady & the English Martyrs, Cambridge on June 10, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Priestly Ordination of Mgr Eugene Harkness, Eleventh Rector of the parish, Diocesan Chancellor and Provost of the Cathedral Chapter.

Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes, Fr Paul Keane, Catholic Chaplain to the University of Cambridge, and friars of the Dominican Order attended the Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving. Mgr Eugene was the Principal Celebrant with 27 priests concelebrating. The preacher was Fr Padraig Hawkins, Parish Priest of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Lowestoft. During his homily, Fr Padraig referred to his own vocation which was fostered and encouraged when he was an altar boy at St Philip Howard during the time when Mgr Eugene was Parish Priest.

The Mass was a Votive of St Margaret of Scotland and sung by members of the Choir of Our Lady & the English Martyrs, to William Byrd's 'Mass for Four Voices' which was sung at Mgr Eugene's Priestly

stow and Caldicot. In 2001, he became Dean of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Cardiff, serving there for the next 18 years. In 2019, he moved to the next-door parishes of St Mary of the Angels, Canton and Holy Family, Fairwater.

Bishop Peter was appointed Bishop of East Anglia on October 11, 2022 and ordained as the fifth Bishop of East Anglia on December 14, 2022 at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich by his predecessor Bishop Alan Hopes.

Paying tribute, Cathedral Dean, Fr



ordination at the hands of Bishop Alan Clark in the same church in 1984.

A joyful parish party followed the Mass which included dishes from a wide variety of countries representing the vast cultural diversity of the parish. Mgr Eugene thanked all present for their prayers, kindness and generosity before cutting the celebration cake.

Alan Hodgson, said: "I want to say two things. Firstly, congratulations on reaching 40 years of dedicated and honourable service in the ministry. And secondly, thank you for all of those 40 years from the mountains of Wales to the flatlands of East Anglia. We are extremely honoured and privileged to have you as our bishop."

Bishop Peter said: "On this day, my memories go back 40 years and they are as clear as if it were yesterday. Thank you all for your warm wishes."



St John's server is honoured after 30 years

■ Veteran St John the Baptist Cathedral altar server Geoffrey Sword was presented with a Diocesan Medal on Sunday July 14 by Bishop Peter Collins to mark over 30 years of service.

Geoffrey arrived in Norwich in 1980 and was a regular attender at the Cathedral. He first started helping by clearing the Sanctuary and, after several weeks, was asked to serve.

He became a regular attender and served whenever he could, especially after he retired, when he served almost every day he was there.

Bishop Peter said: "Geoffrey was always willing and conscientious whatever role he was asked to carry out. After over 30 years serving, he finally retired at his final Mass on St Stephen's Day 2023.

"Geoffrey is also an excellent artist and one of his sketches of the cathedral adorns Cathedral House. When not serving in the Sanctuary, Geoffrey could often be found serving in the cathedral bookshop or volunteering in the Narthex café."

Pictured above is Geoffrey Sword with his Diocesan Medal and certificate.

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■ Around 40 altar servers from across the Diocese of East Anglia gathered at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich on Saturday July 20 for a special Mass celebrated in their honour by Bishop Peter Collins.

Altar servers young and old, and their families and supporters, came from Cambridge, Peterborough, Thetford, Costessey, Norwich and other locations on the Votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist.

During his homily, Bishop Peter spoke directly to the altar servers present who were gathered around him: "As the priests undertake their sacred duty, as you gather around the altar you also play an essential

part in helping others find their way to the altar both physically and also spiritually where they will find the very Body and Blood of Christ.

"They have to be helped to perceive what is happening, to behold it, to accept and proclaim what is happening. You must also first understand yourselves what is taking place on the sacred altar and who is it who comes to us.

"You, through words and your actions, through the quality of your example in your devotedness, through your attentiveness, you play a great part in your own reverence and leading others to their reverence, to

rejoice in what we are privileged to receive from the altar of sacrifice. This is the place where Christ is encountered and where Christ comes to us.

"You play an essential part in the work of the church. I thank you for your great service in your different parishes."

A barbecue was enjoyed afterwards in the Cathedral Narthex and gardens.

See a video recording of the Mass at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVNtafzwhKc

To see a full picture gallery visit: www.flickr.com/photos/dioceseofeastanglia/

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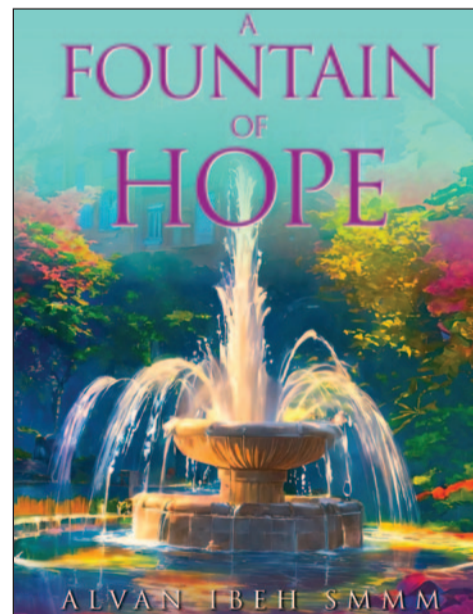
There are so many religious practices that can be found in different parts of the world through which people believe that they can find whatever they are looking for says Fr Alvan Ibeh in his regular Voice of Hope column.



■ We are living in a world filled with diverse beliefs and countless paths to spiritual fulfilment. This makes it therefore important to note that the decision to follow Jesus, remains one of personal choice rather than compulsion. This foundational aspect of Christianity underscores the importance of free will, love and personal conviction in the journey of faith.

The concept of free will has always being at the core of our Christian teachings. God created us and gave us free will to always make choices. We were created with the ability to choose. Our first parents, Adam and Eve were, in the garden of Eden, given the freedom to obey or disobey God's command, setting the precedent for the importance of choice in human life.

We see this very principle carried through to the New Testament, where Jesus invites



people to follow Him but never imposes his will on anyone.

Let us look at Mathew 16:24. In this passage, Jesus said to his disciples; "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". The "if" Jesus used in this statement, implies an invitation, not a demand. There is no sign of forcefulness or compulsion involved. He only said, "if", meaning, 'if you make up your mind, if you have made the choice, then this is what you will have to do'. The decision to follow Christ is a voluntary act of love and devotion, not an obligation forced upon us.

This is even the more reason why we

shouldn't see going to Mass on Sundays as an obligation because the church has taught us that. It should be a choice we have made from conviction and love for God. Don't come to Mass because the church said that day is a Holy day of obligation, come to Mass because you love God. For anyone who has deep love and hunger for the things of God, every day becomes a Holy day of obligation.

This voluntary aspect of our Christian vocation is crucial because it aligns with the nature of God, who desires a genuine relationship with His followers, not one born out of coercion. Jesus Himself modelled the principal of voluntary discipleship throughout his ministry. He engaged with people from all walks of life, offering them the message of the kingdom of God, but he never once forced anyone to follow him. He wants us to follow Him out of conviction and not compulsion. That is the reason why He asked his disciples in Matthew 16:15, "But what about you, who do you say I am?"

We can only be convinced about something we know very clearly. Our following Jesus can only be out of love and conviction, when we know Him personally. The path of following Jesus is characterized by an invitation to experience and respond to God's love, which cannot be authentically embraced unless it is chosen freely. So, what do you think? Are you following Jesus out of conviction or out of compulsion? Until the next edition, remain blessed.

■ If you have not seen my new book yet, just go to www.thegreatbritishbookshop.com search for "A fountain of hope" or you can also buy it on Amazon. Shalom.



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Canon link between two cathedrals

■ The bond between Norfolk's two cathedrals has been strengthened as the Dean of St John the Baptist Cathedral became an ecumenical canon of Norwich Anglican Cathedral on June 30.

The Bishop of Norwich has appointed Catholic Dean Fr Alan Hodgson, as a new ecumenical canon of the Anglican cathedral and he was welcomed at Evensong at 3.30pm, watched by Bishop Peter Collins.

Fr Alan said he was both humbled, delighted and amazed to be asked. "Since first meeting Bishop Graham and Dean Andrew, I have had a respect and admiration for them and the work they do in our city and county – I was just amazed that they offered me this privilege," he said.

He hopes to foster closer ties between the clergy and congregations of the two cathedrals and said: "Both cathedrals are dramatic and beautiful buildings – I hope that, over the years, I will feel as at home in the Anglican cathedral as I do in our own cathedral.

"We are often seen together at civic functions as well as events in the city and I believe that this serves as a good witness to the good working relationship that we enjoy."

Bishop Graham said: "I am delighted to be able to appoint Fr Alan Hodgson and Ginnie Edgecombe as canons of Norwich Cathedral. "Both are devoted to the work of God in our region and will be a blessing to the cathedral and diocese."

The Dean of Norwich, the Very Rev Andrew Braddock



welcomed the appointment of the two lay canons saying: "I am delighted to welcome Ginnie Edgecombe and Fr Alan Hodgson into the College of Canons. Ginnie brings broad experience of the diocese and county, including as a trustee for the charity YANA working with those in agriculture and other rural businesses affected by stress and depression. The appointment of Fr Alan, the Dean of St John's Catholic Cathedral, as an ecumenical canon, will further strengthen the ties between Norwich's two cathedrals."

Pictured above are, from the left, Bishop Peter Collins, Dean Andrew Braddock, Virginia Edgecombe, Fr Alan Hodgson and Bishop Graham Usher. Pictures by Bill Smith/Norwich Cathedral.

The Parish of The Sacred Heart and St Oswald in Peterborough celebrated the arrival of the relics of St Jacinta and St Francesco, and the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima with a vibrant two-day event featuring a procession and open air Mass. Tom Kilgallen reports.



Visit of Fatima relics

■ On the Vigil of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, members of the Parish joined in prayer and witness with a 24-hour rosary.

This was followed by a procession on Sunday June 30, from St Oswald's to the Sacred Heart School, where 500 people took part in an open air Mass in honour of Our Lady of Fatima.

The Parish was joined in prayer over these two days by members of neighbouring parishes, as well as from outside Peterborough, including from the London Filipino Kapatiran Prayer Group.

The procession started after Sunday Mass at St Oswald's. About 140 people took part in the procession led by the cross, the altar servers, and children carrying the flags of many nations, representing the diverse cultures represented in the Parish. The colourful flags

were followed by the relics and the statue of Our Lady of Fatima borne aloft.

As the procession crossed a busy roadway, over a bridge to reach the footpaths, it made a wonderful and joyous spectacle, the flags flying, the cross glinting in the sun, the statue of Our Lady carried high, and all the faithful following, singing the Ave Maria and reciting the rosary.

There was a memorable ecumenical moment along the way when some parishioners from the Anglican Church of the Holy Spirit came out with their Vicar to welcome the procession and share their blessings.

Part way through the procession, we all paused to listen to and be moved by a member of the East Timor Community, who offered a beautiful poem in her native language, in front of the statue,

welcoming and honouring Our Lady. At the end of the eulogy, the East Timor community scattered petals over and in front of Our Lady.

After a little longer than planned, we all arrived at the Sacred Heart School where in all, there were about 500 members of the Parish joining together in a sung Mass, in the open air.

The cheerful choir led the congregation in worship with accompanying guitar and violin.

After Mass, people were invited to honour the relics. Some very welcome food was available at the end for those taking part.

The Parish of the Sacred Heart and St Oswald's was able to give witness to Our Lady of Fatima's message of praying the rosary for peace in our world today.

news in brief



Diocese appoints property manager

■ The Diocese of East Anglia has appointed a new property manager for all non-heritage properties and its property investment portfolio.

James Bibby (pictured above), originally from the North West, has worked for a number of years in estate and property management for institutional landowners (United Utilities and the Canal and River Trust) with diverse portfolios ranging from agricultural land and woodland to investment and operational properties.

James said: "In my new role I will be taking on the management of the Diocesan investment portfolio which includes commercial properties, residential lets and farmland. I will be helping to develop Diocesan estate strategies and policies and be the point of contact for the Parishes for all non-heritage property related matters."

St Bede's pilgrims

■ 150 students from St Bede's Inter-Church School in Cambridge took part in the annual Bede Trail Pilgrimage to the North-East earlier in July.

They travelled north with 15 staff to walk in the footsteps of their patron saint in a pilgrimage which marked the end of their first year in the school. They visited St Bede's home in Jarrow, which is now supported by a wonderful Anglo-Saxon museum and, having dressed as monks, they prayed in St Paul's Church and visited the monastic ruins.

The next day, they travelled up to Holy Island (Lindisfarne), worshipping in both the Catholic and Anglican churches and playing in Bamburgh sand dunes before escaping the wind and rain with a fish and chips supper in Seahouses. The pilgrimage reached its destination on the final morning with a visit to Durham Cathedral and prayers around St Bede's tomb.

Strawberry tea

■ Costessey Union of Catholic Mothers held a Strawberry Tea on June 22 at Our Lady & St Walstans. Approximately 45 people attended, and we raised £20.58 for our charity – Shelter Box.

Bishop Peter's engagements

- **Sept 1, Sun:** Bishop to attend the Dowry of Mary Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady, Walsingham.
- **Sept 3, Tues:** Bishop to Montana Care Home to celebrate Mass at 11:00 and for the Conferral of a Diocesan Medal on the Home.
- **Sept 7, Sat:** Bishop to March for Life UK in London.
- **Sept 8, Sun:** Bishop to celebrate Mass at St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodbridge at 11:00.
- **Sept 8, Sun:** Bishop to attend The Ecumenical Guild of Our Lady of Grace of Ipswich annual pilgrimage walk through Ipswich at 15:00.
- **Sept 10, Tues:** Bishop to visit the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham in Dereham.
- **Sept 11, Wed:** Bishop to attend Chapter of Canons Meeting at the Cathedral at 12:00.
- **Sept 12, Thurs:** Bishop to attend the Diocesan Schools' Commission Meeting at 10:45 in Poringland.
- **Sept 13 – 15, Fri – Sun:** Parish Visitation – St Luke's, Peterborough
- **Sept 13, Fri:** Bishop to visit St John Henry Newman School in Peterborough
- **Sept 14, Sat:** Bishop to attend National Eucharistic Congress being held at Oscott College, Birmingham.
- **Sept 15, Sun:** Bishop to celebrate Mass at St Luke's, Peterborough, at 09:00 and 10:30 and preach at the 12:00 Mass.
- **Sept 16, Mon:** Bishop's Council at 11:00 in Poringland.
- **Sept 18, Wed:** Bishop to attend a Meeting for the Department of Dialogue & Unity in London.
- **Sept 19, Thurs:** Annual Meeting of the Retired Priests with Mass at 11:30 followed by Lunch in Poringland.
- **Sept 19, Thurs:** Bishop to attend the Diocesan Youth Commission Meeting at 18:30 in Poringland.
- **Sept 20, Fri:** Bishop to the Walsingham Trustees Meeting.
- **Sept 21, Sat:** Bishop to Ordination to the Priesthood of Deacon John Morrill at St John's Cathedral at 11:30.
- **Sept 24, Tues:** Bishop and Andy Stone to visit St Mary's School, Cambridge from 09:00
- **Sept 26, Thurs:** Bishop to Diocesan Board of Trustees Meeting at 10:30, Poringland.
- **Sept 27, Fri:** Bishop to celebrate All Schools Mass at the Cathedral at 12:00.
- **Sept 28, Sat:** Bishop to Diocesan Commission for Dialogue & Unity at 11:00, Poringland.
- **Sept 28-30, Sat & Sun:** Bishop to St Michael the Archangel, Huntingdon for the Vigil Mass at 18:00 and to Celebrate Masses on Sunday.
- **Sept 30, Mon:** Bishop to visit St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Norwich from 09:30 and celebrate Mass with the children and staff.
- **Oct 1, Tues:** Bishop to attend Churches Together in Cambridgeshire Meeting in Ely at 18:00.
- **Oct 2, Wed:** Bishop to celebrate Mass for the Consecrated in the Diocese, 12:00.
- **Oct 3, Thurs:** Bishop to attend Diocesan Liturgy Commission Meeting held in Poringland at 11:00.

Joyful East Angl



The East Anglia pilgrims with Bishop Peter at the end of the Camino outside the famous Cathedral of St James in Santiago de Compostela. Pictures by Keith Morris. For a full picture gallery visit: www.flickr.com/photos/dioceseofeastanglia/

A challenging but rewarding Diocese of East Anglia youth Camino following the Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela in NW Spain ended joyously on Sunday July 28. Keith Morris reports.

■ story continued from front page.

"They have opened their hearts to possibilities, they are truly searching and they have gained much from the sharing one with another along the way, as have I," said Bishop Peter. "We also talked to many international pilgrims along the way in wonderful joyful encounters."

"It was a special joy to celebrate in Spanish at a parish church and at the Cathedral of St James in Santiago, which was full to overflowing and the whole world was there – Europe, North America, South America, Africa and Asia – truly the apostolic church congregated in

celebration of its faith – and a joyful thing it is to behold."

Youth Services Director, Hamish MacQueen, who had organised the entire trip, said: "They have been an absolutely amazing group and I feel moved by a real sense of journeying together, everyone looking after and supporting each other."

"There were a lot of conversations and discussions amongst pilgrims and questions asked and answered. Deep questions about what to do next in life, maybe a calling or vocation. I know that for many young people, having the opportunity to walk alongside and speak to a priest or bishop at length is such a unusual opportunity to have and I know that has been very much valued."

"It has been wonderful and I know people have come closer to God through it."

The young pilgrims were accompanied by Fr Peter Wagnanski, Deacon Huw Williams, Rebecca Bretherton and Vanessa Potter in the support car and Rob and

Pam Smith.

The youngest pilgrim was 17-year-old Clotilde D'Mello, who was also the official first aider and put her St John's Ambulance training impressively into effect when one pilgrim collapsed from heat-stroke and had to visit a local hospital and then when numerous blisters appeared.

Since 2013, an estimated 200,000 pilgrims have walked a Camino each year following in a growing tradition which goes back over 1000 years to the ninth century.

According to legend, the remains of Saint James, one of Jesus's original 12 disciples, were carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain, where he was buried in what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela

See a full picture gallery of the East Anglia Camino at: www.flickr.com/photos/dioceseofeastanglia/

Watch videos from East Anglia pilgrims, including Bishop Peter at: www.facebook.com/CatholicEastAnglia.





ia Camino

Diocesan women's retreat day

■ "Called to More: Finding God in the hidden things of daily life" is the theme of a Diocese of East Anglia Retreat Day For Women to be run by the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham in Newmarket in October.

Organiser Antonia Braithwaite said: "Christ often chooses to act in hiddenness. He, who possesses 'all power in heaven and on earth' (Mt 28:18), 'empties Himself' (Phil 2:7) that we might know the greatness of His love. Every detail of your life matters, and He desires to share every moment of it with you.

"This Diocesan Retreat Day for Women run by the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham will provide you with tools to open yourself even more to the reality of this in your life."

It will take place on Saturday October 12 at Our Lady Immaculate & St Etheldreda Newmarket Church, CB8 8LT.

Booking is essential; please contact Antonia Braithwaite to book a place and for more details: mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk



Cathedral graduation for Ignite Youth Team

The end of a year spent working as part of the Ignite Youth Team was marked with a "graduation" Mass at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on June 30, for Ignite team members Alex Thanickal and Adam Dodd.

Narthex. They were joined by their family, friends, and those who had supported them throughout the year, all catered for by the wonderful Narthex staff. It was a delightful occasion to mark the end of a fantastic year.

Pictured above are Ignite Team members Adam Dodd and Alex Thanickal with Bishop Peter Collins at the graduation Mass.

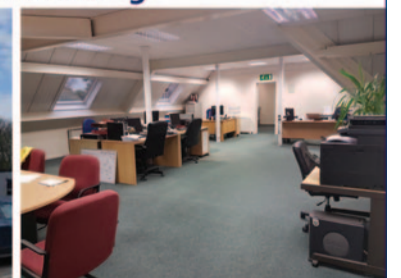


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■ To give thanks for the past year of service by Ignite, Bishop Peter celebrated the 11am Mass at the Cathedral, also celebrating the Solemnity of St Peter and St Paul. During the Mass, he awarded Adam and Alex a Certificate of the Catholic Mission, recognising their achievements over the past year.

In his homily, Bishop Peter spoke about the work of St Peter and St Paul, how they had spread the seed of the Gospel, encapsulating the essence of what the Ignite team strives to do.

After the Mass, Ignite team members enjoyed lunch in the

EDUCATION MATTERS

750 at school Mass with Bishop



Bishop Peter Collins visited St Alban's High School in Ipswich for the first time on July 18 and was given a tour and celebrated a Mass, attended by 750 students.

■ On his arrival, Bishop Peter was warmly greeted by Mr Baker, Headteacher, Paul Gilbert, Lay School Chaplain, members of the trust and governing body, and two Year 10 students, Isaac Hawke and Tammy Akinbile, who took the Bishop on a tour of the school.

During the tour, Bishop Peter visited a number of lessons, including a Spanish class where he was able to converse with the students and teacher in Spanish. One of the students remarked on how fluent the Bishop was in Spanish, and he explained that he had lived in Spain for a number of years both for his training as a priest and as a vice rector of a seminary.

Once the tour of the school was complete, he also remarked on the prayer garden at the side of the school chapel, noting that it was a good space for staff and students to come and reflect and to pray. Bishop Peter also said that the Catholic life in the school is important to the school's identity, which is something the whole school should be proud of.

The high point of the visit was the whole school Mass where over 750 students had assembled. Bishop Peter was the main celebrant and was assisted by a number of local clergy.



During the homily, Bishop Peter paid tribute to Fr John Barnes and Fr Tony Rogers as they are retiring. Bishop Peter explained to the students that Fr Tony was highly influential as a governor of St Alban's for many years and that Fr John had served across the diocese for many years, most recently as parish priest of Felixstowe and dean of the Ipswich Deanery. They were both presented with cards from the staff.

Mr Baker was invited up to speak for the school, and he too paid tribute to the immense support Fr Tony has given to the school. He also paid tribute to a number of staff who were leaving the school to pursue new ventures, and the Bishop echoed his

words, thanking the members of staff for the service they had given to the school over the years.

Bishop Peter said, "This is my first visit to the school, and I hope there will be many more visits over the coming years. It is a great school and one that is welcoming, and I thank Mr Baker and his staff for all the work they do for the young people."

Paul Gilbert said, "It was a great delight to be able to welcome the Bishop to the school and to see the interaction between staff, students and the Bishop. It was a great day. We could not have wished for a better end to what has been a busy term within the school."



Plans for new school building

■ The Swaffham community has been consulted on plans for a new school building at Sacred Heart VA Primary, with local residents given a chance to look at the plans and talk to the builders, the school and the Diocese, before the plans are submitted for planning permission.

Helen Bates, Assistant Director of Diocesan Schools, said: "This is a very exciting milestone in the school rebuilding project. It is the culmination of two years of intensive design work and we believe it will provide an attractive and much more usable building and site for the school. The new school building will be at the front of the site facing Sporle Road which will provide much better site security, with the playing fields at the back. The only existing building that will remain is the sports hall which will be available out of normal school hours for community use.

"The new building will be built first so that the school can continue to operate in its existing buildings. The school will then move to the new building to allow the old buildings to be demolished. It is estimated that construction will take up to 18 months."

Pictured above is a drawing of the new school buildings, by CPMG Architects

■ Ipswich educators Rebekah Aldous and Julie Iannelli from St Pancras Catholic Primary School have been recognised with a Silver Award for Early Years Team of the Year in the Pearson National Teaching Awards.

Selected from thousands of nominees, the win highlights the remarkable impact they have on shaping the lives of the young people in their care.

Lucille Martin, Headteacher said: "Rebekah and Julie have been our dedicated Early Years Team at St Pancras for over a decade now. Our EYFS team does not just teach; they nurture. They understand that every child is unique, with their own strengths, challenges, and dreams. They create safe and nurturing environments where children feel valued, encouraged, and empowered to explore, experiment, and learn at their own pace.

"Their relentless enthusiasm and energy would leave most people exhausted but Rebekah and Julie thrive on seeing the day-to-day development and progress of the children. They exude joy and our children come skipping into school ready for their day. You could not ask for a better Early Years team and we are thrilled that they have named as Silver Award winners."

Rebekah Aldous and Julie Iannelli are two of 102 deserving teachers, lecturers, leaders, support staff and institutions named as



silver winners in this year's awards. They will now be in the running for the coveted Gold Award, which will be announced at a prestigious awards ceremony later in the year.

Pictured above are, from the left, headteacher Lucille Martin, Mrs Julie Iannelli and Miss Rebekah Aldous.

Holy trinity of Catholic mayors

Three large East Anglian cities have recently elected Catholic councillors as their mayors to make up a holy trinity of civic leaders in Cambridge, Norwich and Peterborough.

■ Councillor Marco Cereste was elected as Peterborough City Council's first citizen at its annual meeting of on May 30, joining Catholic Cllr Baiju Thittala as the new Mayor of Cambridge and St John's Cathedral parishioner and shop supervisor Cllr Vivien Thomas as Lord Mayor of Norwich.

Marco and wife and Mayoress Maddalena, attend Sacred Heart and St Oswalds on Lincoln Road in the city and they were guests of honour recently at the Catholic One Mass at Peterborough Cathedral when all the city parishes joined together to celebrate Mass.

Marco said afterwards: "I am very private about my faith, but I find comfort in it in difficult times and it keeps me sane."

The Mayor's chosen charities that he will support over the next 12 months are Anna's Hope, Cambridgeshire Children's Hospital and the Salvation Army.

Cllr Marco is believed to be the first person of Italian ethnicity to be elected mayor of a British city, and he said: "I am absolutely delighted to be elected as Mayor of Peterborough and really looking forward to the unique challenge ahead. I aim to get heavily involved with our amazing communities and attend a wide range of activities and events over the coming year.

"The position of Mayor is critical to fostering a welcoming and friendly culture in the city, and it's an honour to contribute to this long-standing tradition."

Cllr Marco arrived in England in 1953 on Coronation Day and went on to have a 25-year-long career with the NHS. He has been a councillor for 20 years, with six of those years spent as leader of the council and the last six years as a ward councillor for Hampton Vale.

He was Chair of the Italian Community Association for 40 years, with the Italian government awarding him three major honours: in 2001 he was awarded the rank of "Cavaliere" (Italian Knight) and in 2002 he was awarded the rank of "Cavaliere Ufficiale" (Officer Knight) both in the Order of Merit. More recently he was awarded one of Italy's highest honours La Stella Doro Della Solidarieta Italiana, First Class.

■ St John's Cathedral parishioner and shop supervisor Vivien Thomas has been welcomed in as Lord Mayor of Norwich for the civic year 2024-25.

Along with the new Sheriff of Norwich Sirajul Islam she was sworn in at a formal ceremony at City Hall on Tuesday May 21 attended by the Dean of the Cathedral, the Cathedral Manager and a shop volunteer.

First elected in 2010, Lord Mayor Cllr Vivien Thomas says she became involved in politics to make a difference to the lives of people in the city. During the ceremony, she said what a "privilege" it had been to serve them as a councillor and that it will be an "honour" to represent them as Lord Mayor.

Vivien moved to Norwich 17 years ago with her husband Vaughan (a fellow Norwich City Labour cllr and previous Mayor of Norwich in 2019) and their family and soon made St



Pictured above are Cllr Marco and Maddalena Cereste with Bishop Peter Collins at the One Mass in Peterborough Cathedral.

Pictured below is the new Mayor of Cambridge, Cllr Baiju Thittala, with his family and Fr Simon Blakesley, at his election.



Pictured above: Lord Mayor Cllr Vivien Thomas (right) and Sheriff of Norwich Sirajul Islam. Picture courtesy of Norwich City Council.

John's their parish. Vivien has been a volunteer in the shop for many years and in 2023 took on the role of Shop Supervisor.

Vivien has worked in schools and with young people in the city and understands the struggles faced in this area. At the ceremony she talked about the importance of closing the gap for those facing "stark inequalities" including people struggling with housing, poverty, and social isolation.

Vivien and Sirajul have chosen The Benjamin Foundation as the civic charity for this year. Supporting children, young people and families, the charity supports over 3,000 individuals across Norfolk and Suffolk.

■ Catholic Cllr Baiju Thittala was elected as the new Mayor of Cambridge for the municipal year 2024-2025 at Cambridge City Council's annual council meeting on May 23

and Fr Simon Blakesley was invited to be his chaplain.

Baiju lives close to St Laurence's Church and moved to England 20 years ago from India. He is the first mayor of Cambridge to come from the subcontinent. He is married with three children and works a solicitor who takes a keen interest in the needs of the homeless who are drawn into the criminal justice system.

His chosen charities included Cambridge Street Aid which tries to break the homelessness cycle.

Cllr Thittala said: "In 2018 I was elected to represent East Chesterton in the by-election, becoming one of only a handful of first-generation people from a minority ethnic background to be a councillor in the history of Cambridge City Council.

"Since then, I have continued to campaign

to build a fairer society, whether in my role as Lead Councillor for Equalities, or my ongoing commitment to supporting my community, as a way of repaying the support I received myself when I first arrived here from Kerala. "Having experienced homelessness myself, I can better understand the pain, sorrows, sufferings, and agonies of the people who are homeless.

"Even in my professional practice, I have seen people going to prison because they are homeless, inspiring the choice of Street Aid as one of my mayoral charities.

"The new world-class Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital has the potential to lead the way on detecting and treating cancer. The charity which raises funds to support the hospital is predominantly led by local immigrants, inspiring my second choice for mayoral charity."

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Carmelites and Claretians

Disalced Carmelites (ODC)

■ The Order of the Disalced Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (Latin: Ordo Disalceatorum Carmelitarum - ODC). Disalced means 'without shoes', which indicates the reformed ie more strict religious life observance.

The Carmelite Order originated during the time of the crusades, when a group of pilgrims and ex-crusaders decided to remain in the Holy Land, living as hermits in one of the valleys of the Carmel range. They saw themselves as spiritual successors of the prophet Elijah, while the first chapel they built was dedicated to Mary, who has always occupied a special prominence in the Order.

Around 1213 the hermits asked St Albert Avogadro, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1149-1214), for a Rule, and were given a simple formula for a life of constant prayer and solitude lived with community support.

It took 250 years before women were



In his 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 Claretian Missionaries and the Disalced Carmelites.

Pictured from left to right, top row: Sr Teresa, Sr Kay Elizabeth, Sr Elizabeth Ruth, Sr Deborah, Sr Maria Joseph; middle row: Sr Paula, Sr Anna, Sr Stephanie (Prioress), Sr Eleanor, Sr Penelope; bottom row: Sr Angela, Sr Veronica, Sr Shelagh, Sr Diane, Jennifer (postulant), Sr Sarah. Missing from the picture are Sr Nicola and Sr Marian.

admitted to the Order, and it was St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) who devised the pattern of contemplative life that is followed today. She did not write for specially gifted women, but for women who, with all their faults and failings, would

make it their aim to live solely for God after the example of those first hermits.

Teresa blended a strong and loving family-style community life with a hermit spirit of solitude, adapted to the women of her time. She wanted her nuns to be

freely given as their gift to the Diocese, the Church and the World of today.

The convent consists now of 17 sisters and one postulant, who is in preparation to join the community.

women totally given to prayer, but whose human growth matched their spiritual capacity. Moreover, she wanted them to help one another in the process. "In this house" she writes, "all must be friends, all helped, valued and loved."

With Teresa's contemplative spirit and her human warmth, Carmelites live in small vibrant communities, totally given to the apostolate of prayer. At Quidenham in Norfolk they sing the Divine Office daily, as well as having two hours of personal prayer and time for spiritual reading. Of course, this is balanced with work in the house, as well as making greeting cards, soap, and having joyful daily community recreation. It is a simple, prayerful lifestyle, where there is the opportunity to develop their gifts. And it is a life of great peace and joy – the vocation of a life of prayer, accepted from the Lord and

Claretian Missionaries (CMF)

■ The Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (in Latin: Congregatio Missionariorum Filiorum Immaculati Cordis Beatae Mariae Virginis) were founded by St Abp Anthony Mary Claret (1807-1870) in the seminary in Vic near Barcelona, Spain, on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 16 July 1849.

Claret had been thinking for a long time about preparing priests to proclaim the Gospel and bring together a group of priests who shared his vision to accomplish the work he could not do alone.

Through his missionary work in Catalonia and the Canary Islands he was convinced that people needed to be evangelized and there were not enough priests who were sufficiently prepared or zealous enough for this mission.

Pope Pius IX officially recognized the Congregation in 1865. Their brothers and priests today are part of a worldwide Congregation of over 3000 missionaries in 68 countries.



Pictured from left to right are: Fr Jim Kennedy, Fr Paul Smyth and Fr Jude Arinze.

Following their Founder, the Claretians expanded their ministries throughout the world. In 1902 they went to the USA and in 1912 came to England.

Following Christian tradition, their spirituality is embedded in the Word of God and the Eucharist. Marian-devotion is faithful Claretian identity and the

commitment to undertake the Work of God. The Claretians missionaries mutually support one another in serving those in need.

In the UK, they live in three places. Since 1912, they have run the parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Hayes, Diocese of Westminster, offering services to Spanish speaking immigrants in the London area. Since 1956, they have been in the Diocese of East Anglia and run the Claret Centre, Retreat and Conference Centre in Buckden Towers, St Neots, Cambs, and serve in the parish of St Hugh of Lincoln in Buckden which covers a large area. The Parish is part of the Buckden Churches Together. Members of the community supply different parishes in the area when needed and also serve two prisons in Cambs.

In 1997 the Claretians took over the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual parish of St Joseph, Leyton in Brentwood diocese.

The Community of Buckden is represented by Fr Jim Kennedy CMF (Superior), Fr Paul Smyth SMF as the Director of the Claret Centre and the Parish Priest of St Hugh's, and Fr Jude Arinze CMF.

Bishop Peter thanks retiring priests

■ Bishop Peter Collins has expressed his most heartfelt appreciation for three long-standing diocesan clergy who are set to retire this autumn.

He writes: “Canon John Barnes, now 79 years of age, was received into full communion with the Catholic Church in 1994, having ministered for 30 years in the Church of England. He was ordained on October 7, 1995, and has served the faithful of East Anglia as Parish Priest of Bury St Edmunds, Dereham, and Felixstowe. He has also given great service as a dean, a member of both the Historic Churches Committee and the Liturgy Commission. He was appointed an Honorary Canon of the Cathedral Chapter in 2022.

“Fr Andrew Neate, now 82 years of age, offered long service in the Diocese as a permanent deacon, being ordained on June 29, 1996, serving in Huntington, OLEM, and Cromer. Following the passing of his dear wife Margaret, Fr Andrew was ordained to the priesthood on September 19, 2020, and has since been serving the parish in Fakenham.

“Fr Peter Brett, who has just celebrated his 83rd birthday, was ordained on January 9, 1966, for the Redemptorists. Initial ministry in London and Liverpool was followed by a time in South Africa. We were grateful to receive Fr Peter into East Anglia in 2000, and he was incardinated as a priest of the Diocese a year later. Fr Peter oversaw the merger of the parishes of Sacred Heart and St Oswald's in Peterborough before being appointed to Sudbury with Hadleigh in 2008.

“They have each served the Church with great fidelity and generosity in a multiplicity of scenarios. We offer them the assurance of our prayers and wish them a long and happy retirement.”

Worship invitation

■ St Peter's Church, Gorleston, has issued an invitation to an Evening of Praise and Worship on September 7.

The evening starts at 6pm and features live music from worship band 'Singles for Christ', a talk given by Fr Alvan Ibeh SMMM, Adoration and prayer ministry.

The theme of the night is 'In His presence, Great things happen!'

All are invited to come and be blessed in the presence of The Lord, say organisers. St Peter's can be found on Lowestoft Road in Gorleston, NR31 6SQ.

Craft and a chat

■ Chatterbox is a new weekly opportunity to come together for craft and chat, tea and talk at Our Lady of Refuge Church on the edge of Cromer.

Chatterbox is open to everyone and will run from 2pm to 4pm every Wednesday, starting on August 7.

David Burns, from the church, said, “Chatterbox is open to all, men and woman alike, and is a chance to meet new friends in faith. We look forward to seeing as many there as possible”

Our Lady of Refuge is located at 147 Overstrand Road, NR27 OJH.

Visit ourladyandstjoseph.info

Fr John retires after 50 years as a clergyman

Ghost story writer, biographer and magazine columnist, Canon John Barnes, who is about to retire after 10 years as parish priest at St Felix RC Church in Felixstowe and more than 50 years as a clergyman, is a natural communicator. John Conlon reports.

■ Somehow, amid a hectic schedule caring for his flock at various churches over the decades, Fr John has found time to write a number of books, which include a powerful memoir about his conversion 30 years ago from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism (Cana Revisited), a volume of spine-chilling supernatural tales (Ghost Stories of a Norfolk Parson) and a biography of Anglican priest George Ratcliffe Woodward, who had East Anglian connections and wrote the lyrics for the carol “Ding Dong Merrily on High”.

Latterly, Fr John has been a popular columnist for the free magazines in Felixstowe, producing articles that have been admired across the religious spectrum.

Fr John, who will turn 80 next year, is looking forward to a new era in his life and admits he has been feeling tired. Unlike many men who retire in their sixties, he has continued to work, partly as a result of a lack of younger priests coming through.

He will leave in early September and move to his small cottage by the quayside in Wells-next-the-Sea to enjoy hobbies of sketching, walking and reading.

“To my parishioners I say thank you for your kindness and good humour and putting up with me. I have done my best to serve but am aware of my failings,” says Fr John, who believes his yet to be announced successor could be the last full-time parish priest in Felixstowe for quite a while.

Fr John was born into a strongly Anglican family in Chester and after his degree from the University of Wales and an MA from Durham he spent a year teaching at a prep school in the Malvern Hills, which helped boost his abilities as a public speaker.

He then trained in Oxford to be an Anglican cleric and served in Newcastle upon Tyne and at St Asaph Cathedral in north Wales. His next appointment was as vicar of Walsingham where he remained for 12 years before being named as vicar of Wymondham where his relationship with the Church of England began to fray. The ordination of women was a major stumbling block.

He recalls: There were great changes in the Church of England at the time which were not justified by the Gospels. I realised that the Church founded by Jesus should have Peter's successor at



Fr John Barnes is retiring.

its head. I came to realise that Roman Catholicism was the most authentic manifestation of Christianity, the Rolls-Royce, if you like.”

“I grew up in an intensely Anglican family but had always been interested in Roman Catholicism without knowing much about it. I believe the Holy Spirit was at work and I was drawn towards

the faith. Thankfully, there was no bad feeling at Wymondham Abbey when I left!”

In 1994, after a short spell at a Catholic seminary, he was appointed as curate in Lowestoft before moving as parish priest for five years to Bury St Edmunds and then 13 years in Dereham, transferring to Felixstowe in 2014.

Fr John says: “I have been very happy. In most parishes there are usually one or two difficult parishioners but here there have been none! I love the [Grade II listed] church building and my ‘coffin-shaped’ house. I will miss the town.” He will also miss the prisoners at Hollesley Bay and Warren Hill jails where he has been a regular visitor to say Mass.

He believes the main challenges facing the Church are to enthuse the faithful, encourage lapsed Catholics to have a change of heart and then to increase evangelisation. But it is now up to his successors to tackle those challenges while he takes a well deserved rest.

“I am just as enthusiastic being a Catholic as I was 30 years ago. It is wonderful being a priest. I love it,” he says.



Fr Andrew's bucket list walk

■ Parish Priest of St Anthony's in Fakenham, Fr Andrew Neate, and parishioners embarked on a walk from Fakenham to the Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham on June 16.

One of the activities on Fr Andrew's bucket list has always been to walk from Fakenham to Our Lady's Shrine. In honour of St Anthony Of Padua, whose Feast day fell on June 13, he fulfilled this wish with some 20 members of the congregation.

Following morning Mass, some 10 parishioners set out on foot on that very well worn route to Walsingham – blessed by what turned out to be excellent walking weather. Stopping on route both at West Barsham and North Barsham, and negotiating many cars, the group arrived in record time.

Following a brief 'refreshment break', more parishioners joined for a period of prayer including the rosary and a visit to the Slipper Chapel.

Pictured above is Fr Andrew with some of the parishioners in front of the Slipper Chapel.

Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese



■ A Radio Maria England Youth group from St John Fisher Cambourne and St Mary's Catholic School in Cambridge have been sharing their broadcast and media skills with young people from other dioceses, Mel Ward reports.

The Radio Maria England Youth (RMEY) team visited The Briars, Nottingham Diocese Youth Service retreat centre in Crich near Matlock in May.

Ashish now studying medicine at Imperial College London, Maryam studying music at Pembroke College Cambridge, Alfie in Year 13 at Hills Rd Sixth Form and Upe in Year 11 at St Mary's Cambridge took a day off studying to help teach various diocesan youth teams about their skills and successes.

They shared their story of embracing media to bring the gospel to youth of all ages – especially during lockdown when we were all trying to find

creative, cheerful and compassionate ways to be church.

Their audience loved the TikToks such as 'Wednesday Word' which shared short, but thoughtful punchy reflections upon scripture as it spoke to them in their daily lives and memes which prompted the kind of imaginative consideration of aspects of our faith we might too easily take for granted, like mini parables!

Their adaptability and enthusiasm were greatly appreciated by their audience who are giving a year or so of their lives to serve the church in youth ministry.

After a hearty lunch and basketball and banter, the crew led a practical workshop which enabled teams to produce and present parts of an RMEY special about 'Meeting Change' and focused on areas such as the challenges of adolescence, moving country and answering God's call.

■ Fr Peter Raj and the parishioners of St Helen's church in Hoveton are delighted with the installation of a life-saving defibrillator. Sourced from the charity Heart 2 Heart and generously funded by an anonymous donor, the defibrillator is a vital asset for the benefit of the parish and the local community.

The picture below shows parishioners, from the left, Chris Conrad, Elaine Houghton, Fr Peter Raj, David Tully, Sheila Blasket, Mary Tully and Jane Pagani.



■ The Knights of St Columba (Council 518 & East Anglia Prov Council 27) have presented prizes to the winners of its youth photo competition at Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Nicholas churches in Lowestoft.

The Easter winners were: KS2 Altar Candles: 1st – Venancio da Costa – age 10, 2nd – Graciela da Costa (8).

KS2 Backdrop: 1st – Graciela da Costa (8), 2nd – Venancio da Costa (10).

KS3 – Altar Candles: 1st – Joysshan Johnson (12), 2nd – Noela da Costa (13)

KS3 – Backdrop: 1st -Joysshan Johnson (12), 2nd – Noela da Costa (13)

KS4 – Altar Candles: 1st – Paolo Anderson (15)

KS4 – Backdrop: 1st – Paolo Anderson (15)

Pictured below are Bros Brooks, Slaughter and Wickard with Noela, Venancio and Graciela da Costa, A Wilczynski and J Johnson.



■ Rev Canon John Minh, parish priest at Sawston and Cambourne parishes, marked the 25th anniversary of his ordination by celebrating morning Mass at St Ives on Wednesday July 10, reports Ellen Kemp.

St Ives has been without a priest in charge since June 10 and Fr John has

organised supply priests for Sunday masses at Sacred Heart until the end of August. In addition he celebrates Mass on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Parishioners (pictured above with Fr John), are immensely thankful for his pastoral care and support during this difficult time.



■ The Quiet Garden at The Sacred Heart of Jesus in Ramsay buzzed with activity on Sunday, July 14 reports Eilish Storey. The Open Day was a chance to celebrate the way the garden supports wildlife, with signs pointing out the various habitats, and how they are beneficial. Visitors commented on the peaceful atmosphere, and took advantage of the seating to quietly enjoy the wide range of plants and listen to the bird song.

Ramsay RiverCare had information about water management and volunteering to keep our rivers rubbish free. PECT had energy advice, which many found useful. The print-making activity proved popular with adults as well as children and lovely prints of leaves were made to take home. Everyone enjoyed the delicious refreshments on offer and thanks to everyone who made the Open Day such a success.