

Talkabout

MARCH 2023

St. John Fisher Parish Magazine



Cover: The photograph was taken in July 2013 at Bishop Tripp's Diamond Jubilee Mass - beside him stand Deacon Fred Carter and Canon Colm Acton - three of our wonderful clergy who have all been recently called home to Heaven.

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WELCOME

Dear Parishioners and all readers of *Talkabout*,

I welcome you to this edition of the *Talkabout* Magazine, the first in the calendar year 2023. It is a year which we as a Parish Community started on a sad note after bidding farewell to Canon Colm Acton who died at the beginning of December 2022. Sadly, it was not long after his funeral on 29th December 2022 that we lost Deacon Fred Carter who died on the 9th of January 2023. Both Canon Acton and Deacon Fred will be remembered for their many years of dedicated service to our Parish. Through their ministry, they touched lives of many people here in our Parish and beyond. May God grant them a just reward for all their work.

In a few weeks' time from now we shall celebrate Easter the feast of the Lord's resurrection. It is a feast which reminds us of the glorious future for which we Christians are destined. When Jesus died and rose from the dead, he opened the gates of heaven for us. Heaven is our destiny and our permanent home. This is the faith that consoles us in moments of bereavement. We believe that one day we shall be reunited with all our dear departed loved ones.

Our time on earth is deemed as a preparation for the life of heaven. Through the annual observance of Lent, we renew our love and commitment to God and to our Christian faith which are essential in preparing for the eternal destiny. Lent is often compared to spring cleaning, a time when we search the wardrobe of our lives and hearts to remove all unimportant and unhelpful things, any weaknesses or selfish attitudes that keep us away from God. May God bless our Lenten observances and help us through the Lenten disciplines to commit ourselves more fully to the values of God's Kingdom

Fr. Matthias

Deadline for articles to be included
in the next edition of *Talkabout*
must be with the Editorial Team before

SUNDAY 4TH JUNE

talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk



Full colour PDF of the
latest *Talkabout* is available
on the parish website:

www.stjohnfishermerton.co.uk

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR

All those recently Baptised

George Sothinathan
Charlie Fawcett
Noah Crane
Eliza Crane
Thiago Hosking
Grayson Hughes
Angel Hever
Hudson Humphrey
Lily Hamilton

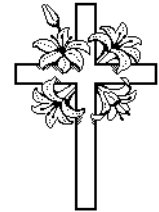


The Easter Catechumens and all those preparing for their First Holy Communion

All those recently called home to Heaven

Deacon Fred Carter
Romie Cordeiro
Karen Cummins
Mary Trower
Maria Moncado
Audrey Soosaipillai
Edward Brennan
Brenda Muggeridge

Philomena Canavan
Michael Glynn



*Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.*

PARKING NEAR THE CHURCH



Please remember to be considerate of our neighbours when parking your car for Mass at the weekends and over the Easter period.

Do not obstruct driveways or park on grass verges.

Please also keep the church entrance clear and refrain from parking by the church wall alongside. In an emergency an ambulance will need to get around the car park. Thank you.



NEW WINDOWS IN THE CHURCH HALL

New windows were installed in the parish hall the week before Christmas.

We applied for a grant from the National Lottery last July with the help of the Diocesan Fundraising department. Then received an email in early September to let us know the good news:

"Congratulations, we're going to fund your idea. We're really happy to tell you we will be funding your project following your application for National Lottery Awards for All."

This means The National Lottery Community Fund is giving St John Fisher RC Church £10,000 to help your community thrive."

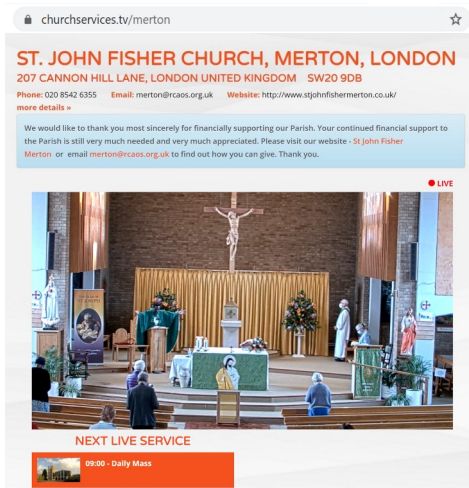
The project was completed on Christmas Eve and you can see the improvement with these before and after photos!

We hope that the new windows will save us on heating bills and be a lot less draughty than the old ones!

Melissa Russell



CHURCHSERVICES.TV



REGULAR WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday	9:00 am	Daily Mass
Saturday	9:00 am	Daily Mass
	6.00 pm	Saturday Vigil Mass
Sunday	8:00 am	Sunday Mass
	9.30 am	Sunday Mass
	11.00am	Sunday Mass
	6.30pm	Sunday Mass

WHAT DO EGGS HAVE TO DO WITH EASTER?

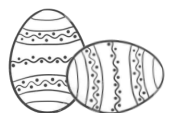
Eggs were viewed as symbols of regeneration by pre-Christian pagans, symbolising the regeneration that comes each spring. From a Christian viewpoint, Easter eggs are said to represent the Resurrection of Jesus on the third day after his Crucifixion and his emergence from the tomb.

Traditionally eggs were forbidden during Lent, so it was usual to eat up all the eggs on the day before Ash Wednesday, which established the tradition of Pancake Day.

Dying and decorating eggs for Easter is a tradition that has been around for centuries. In the Eastern Orthodox churches, eggs are painted red to symbolize the blood that Jesus shed at his crucifixion.

Chocolate eggs first appeared at the French royal court in the early 18th century. The first chocolate Easter Eggs in Britain were made by Fry's in 1873, followed by Cadbury's two years later.

How many Easter Eggs can you find hidden in this edition of Talkabout?



HOW TO MAKE A CROSS WITH YOUR PALM

Every year on Palm Sunday we receive palm fronds which have been blessed as part of our Palm Sunday liturgy. You can create a special family tradition of your own by making these blessed palms into an art activity to be cherished by your family for years to come.

The Palm Cross can act as a year-round reminder of the original Palm Sunday when Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem as the King.

Step 1

Hold the palm by the root end and measuring about 5 inches bend the top over.

Step 2

Measure approx. 1 inch of palm from the first bend, and begin to make the cross-bar section by bending the palm diagonally across to one side.

Steps 3-5

You now form the cross-bar by putting a bend in the palm 2 inches from the centre piece, and then running the palm onto the other side of the centre piece by a matching 2 inches, then bend the palm back to the centre.

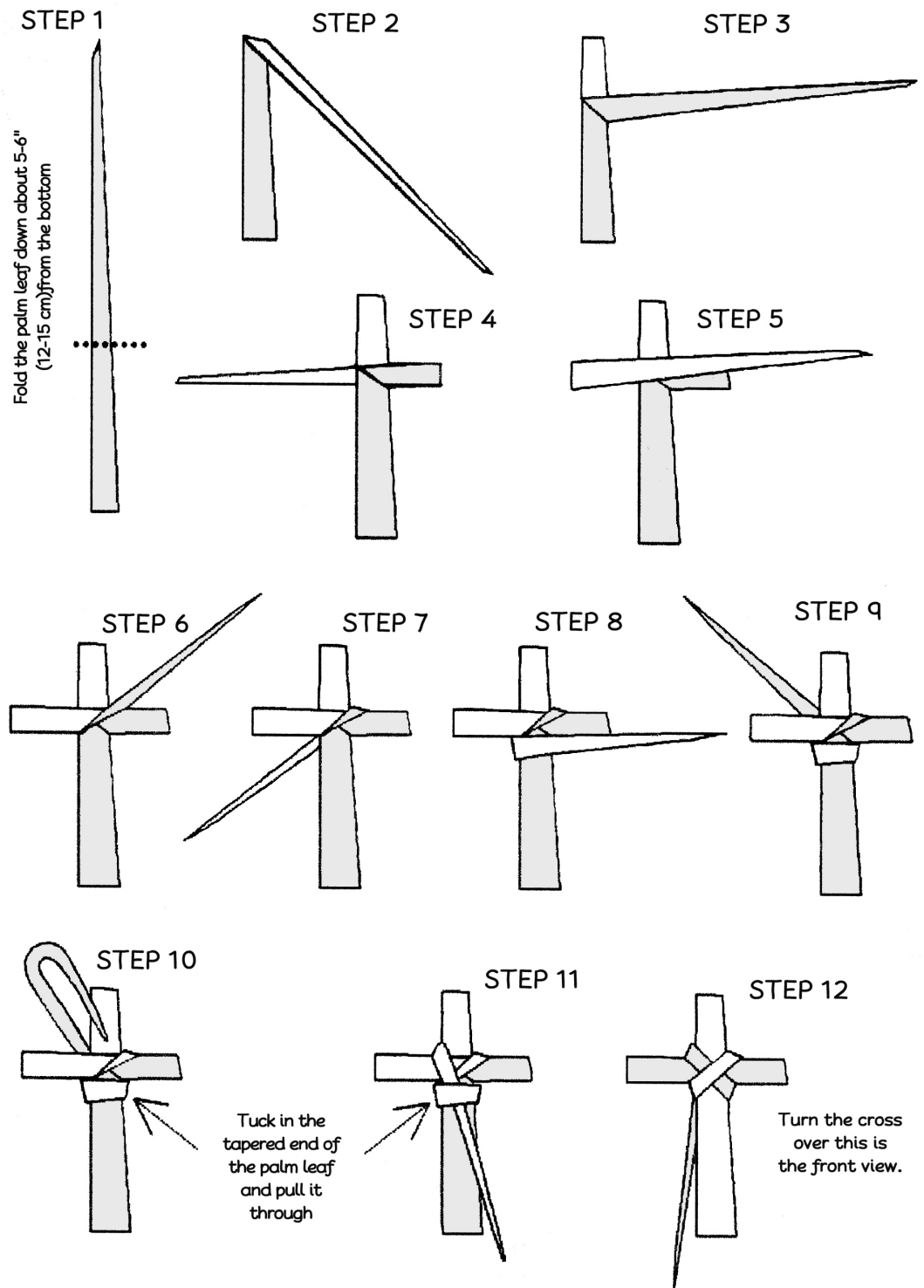
Steps 6-9

You will now have formed a cross shape, but will undoubtedly have a long tapering piece of palm left over. This is wound round the cross in a crisscross style to secure the cross-bar to the main piece of the stem.

Steps 10-12

Fold the very end of the palm at the back of the cross, tucking it in securely to the fold to avoid it unravelling.

To make your centre section of cross allow 6-8 inches of palm before making your first bend but ensure the palm is long enough to make the finished product symmetrical.



GUILD OF ST STEPHEN

Back in November, five youngsters began training to become Altar Servers. Three of them Heidi Bermingham, Kathryn Jennings and Roisin Maunsell began serving for the first time on the weekend before Christmas. Two of the five were unwell at the time but they have now served their first Masses. Dawid Syiud-Crispin and Osborne Honrada.

At present we currently have thirty two Servers, and are slowly getting back to Pre-Covid levels.

On Boxing Day (the Feast of St Stephen) two of our Servers Kaosi Matheson and Henry Brierly who began serving last summer, were enrolled into the Guild of St Stephen by Fr Matthias assisted by Fr Francis and Deacon Tom at the 10am Mass. Three Silver medals were awarded to Tamara Chandler, Fran Mautadin and Athena Geremia as they have been members of the Guild for over ten years. And seven certificates were presented to Rhys McCarthy, Kisholee Mautadin-Marin, Callum Laker, Anna Maria Newman, Oliver Brierly and Andrei Geremia who have served for at least five years. Some had served for much longer but the presentation of their certificates was delayed due to Lockdown.

Our Servers were truly magnificent at the Vigil and Requiem Masses for Canon Acton. I felt he would have been very proud of them all. They were very professional and carried out their tasks without any fuss and simply got on with the job. No easy task when you consider that we had twenty seven Priests and Deacons on our Sanctuary for the Requiem Mass.

In February, we said goodbye to Deacon Fred, a great supporter of our Servers always showing encouragement to us all. Before Fred was ordained Deacon he was the parish MC.

At Mass on Sunday evening 29th January Fr Pontian presented Nyah Felix with her 5 year Guild of St Stephen certificate and at the 6.30 Mass on the following Sunday Cydney Felix was presented with her certificate by Fr Francis.

On Saturday 18th February, in the Day Chapel Fr Matthias enrolled Charles Mariaxavier into the Guild of St Stephen. At the same time, his brother Jenistan was awarded his 5 year certificate.



Practices for the next group of new Servers will be held in the autumn.

St Stephen: Pray for our Servers.

Robert Roy



If you are in Year 4 or above and would like to train to become an Altar Server - please speak to one of the clergy.

It is a wonderful opportunity to serve God and have responsibility during Mass.

ASK THE CLERGY:

"WHY DID JESUS CURSE THE FIG TREE?"

To begin with, it is worth noting that the episode of Jesus cursing the barren fig tree is found in two different gospel accounts, in **Matthew 21:18-22**, and in **Mark 11:12-14**. The slight difference between these two accounts is that, while Matthew records the cursing and the withering of the fig tree all in one account and includes it after the account of Jesus cleansing the Temple of the money changers, Mark explains that it actually took place over two days, with Jesus cursing the fig tree the first day on the way to cleanse the Temple, and the disciples seeing the tree withered on the second day when they were again going to Jerusalem from Bethany.

This difference does not, however, affect the meaning of this event which can be grasped by analysing its chronological setting and in understanding that the fig tree is often used symbolically in the Scriptures to represent Israel. Chronologically, Jesus had just arrived at Jerusalem amid great fanfare and great expectations, but then proceeds to cleanse the Temple and curse the barren fig tree. Both had a significance as to the spiritual condition of Israel. With his cleansing of the Temple and his criticism of the worship that was going on there (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17), Jesus was effectively denouncing Israel's worship of God. With the cursing of the fig tree, he was symbolically denouncing Israel as a nation, and in a sense even denouncing his unfruitful disciples, people who profess to be Christians but have no evidence of a relationship with God.

The presence of a fruitful fig tree was considered to be a symbol of blessing and prosperity for the nation of Israel. Likewise, the absence or death of a fig tree would symbolize judgment and rejection. Symbolically, the fig tree in this episode represented the spiritual deadness of Israel, who while very religious outwardly with all the sacrifices and ceremonies, were spiritually barren because of their sins. By cleansing the Temple and cursing the fig tree, causing it to wither and die, Jesus was pronouncing his coming judgment of Israel and demonstrating his power to carry it out. It also teaches the principle that religious profession and observance are not enough to guarantee salvation, unless there is the fruit of genuine salvation evidenced in the life of the person. James would later echo this truth when he wrote that **"faith without works is dead"** (James 2:26).

The lesson of the fig tree is that we should bear spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-23), not just give an appearance of religiosity. God judges fruitlessness and expects that those who have a relationship with Him will "bear much fruit" (John 15:5-8).



Fr. Matthias

WHY I WANT TO BE A SERVER

My name is Roisin, I would like to be an Altar Server because I would like to be close to God and serve him in his footsteps. And do as he did serving his community.

Roisin Maunsell

I want to be an Altar Server to serve Jesus Christ.

Osborne Honrada



I would like to be an Altar Server so that I can help out more in Church and be closer to God.

Heidi Bermingham

I would like to be an Altar Server because I promised Father I would be one just like my brother.

Kathryn Jennings

NEWS FROM THE BROWNIES

This term the Brownies have been following a 'Be Well' theme. So far they have learnt all about first aid, participated in a session on self defence, made a visit to Wimbledon Fire Station and welcomed a visitor from cat protection. I also had an evening off when two of the Brownies ran the unit meeting as part of their Gold Award.

We also welcomed some new girls this term who made their promise in a lovely ceremony (involving, of course, jumping over the toadstool).

Coming up we have a mindfulness session and a leavers celebration as we bid farewell to our older Brownies who are ready for new challenges.



Brown Owl



NEWS FROM THE CUBS



5th Morden Cubs have had a busy year with a jam-packed programme!

We have been on two sleepaway camps – one in the winter and one in the spring. The cubs have enjoyed many other outings and events such as chess competitions, paintballing, trampolining, caving, the communicator badge day, football competitions, sports days, and many more. We are delighted that we have brought back church parade this year and our cubs really enjoy and take pride in taking part in this monthly event.



The cubs put on a Christmas show in December and it was our first show in 3 years! They made sketches by themselves and performed these to the parents earning their entertainer badge in the process.

They have been busy working on their community impact badge where they cleaned, cut, and reorganised the church garden in the summer; we plan to do this again in the upcoming summer. We have worked hard to earn many badges this year, earning chef, international, hobby, community impact, emergency aid, communicator, pioneer badges and many, many more.

We look forward to another successful year at 5th Morden Cubs!

Akela





EASTER CUSTOMS



Easter is a holiday we celebrate throughout the world. Many celebrations are traditions based on religious rituals that Christian-based faiths use to prepare us through Lent and Holy Week to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. There are such a variety of customs throughout the world that we can only select a few here to look at.

In **Ireland** preparation for Easter starts with Ash Wednesday following the tradition of prayer and sacrifice which do not have to be very exacting but small efforts such as refraining from something we love or enjoy are the usual practise. Customs are very similar as those found in the UK and other countries such as the egg hunts and hot cross buns in Holy Week. Parades are joyous events accompanied by lively bands cheered on by the crowds as they pass through the towns and cities. Chocolates and delicious cakes are part of the Easter celebration while church bells ring and there is an abundance of music and singing for the Easter services. Joy after the sparse and simple times of Lent.

Customs in the **UK** during the Easter season may appear to have died out but we still retain the Christian roots of this very important feast. Like Christmas however there is the commercialisation of Easter eggs and hot cross buns. Now we can get the latter all year round as the public love the spicy buns. There are no reminders of their link with a Good Friday treat after the Lenten fast. However, both Good Friday and Easter Sunday are bank holidays and shops are closed on this Sunday. Easter eggs, the symbol of new life, are hidden to create fun for children to find. Church services are well attended and children's liturgy bring to mind the true meaning of this wonderful reminder of our salvation through the passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. For adults, the Easter vigil is a profound reminder that Jesus is our light to the world.



There are at least two unique events performed on Good Friday in London. One a cultural tradition held at the Royal Albert Hall since 1876, where the Royal Choral Society performs Handel's *Messiah*. The other is *The Passion of Jesus Christ* which has been performed for several years now in Trafalgar Square by Wintershall. After a two year break due to covid, this year there are two free performances on the 7th. April 2023 at 12 noon and 3.15 pm. They are open air and have been extremely popular. Early arrival is very important. There have been up to 20,000 viewers in the past and around 100 actors. For those who cannot attend in person the performances will be live streamed on the Wintershall Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/Wintershallplay

In **Spain**, Semana Santa (Holy Week) is observed each of the seven days in nearly every town and village in Spain. These days are marked by elaborate religious processions often depicting scenes from the bible. Those taking part in these processions are dressed in costumes or hooded robes and accompanied often by live music. Some of the best celebrations and most well known are to be found in Seville, Granada, Valladolid and Zamora. Treats to be found during these days are torrija (a kind of French toast) and a variety of cakes.

Like Spain, in **France** there are many Easter customs stemming from Catholic traditions and is usually more religious than Easter in the UK. One lovely tradition is the rule that stops the bells from ringing before Easter time. Children are told that the bells have flown to Rome to be blessed by the Pope. On Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of Jesus, the bells fly back to France loaded with sweets, dropping them as they fly into gardens for the children to find. Once the bells return they ring joyfully again for the Resurrection morning.

Teresa Pollard

BEAUTIFUL CHURCH DECORATIONS



Parishioners may have noticed that our altar display was featured on the front cover of February's *The Guide*, which is the local resident's magazine for those living in the Cannon Hill and West Barnes area.

Kate Colthup hand makes all our amazing decorations herself, and we are very grateful and lucky to have such a talented lady. The parish office receives many lovely comments about her embroidered creations:

"Altar wall display nativity is absolutely beautiful. Could someone let me know where it was purchased from I'd like to do something similar for our church In Surrey?"

"I zoomed in to your Mass this morning and would like to thank whoever made the splendid hanging with the Dove of Peace featuring so greatly. It is very striking!"

There are lots of lovely comments on the parish Facebook page too.

"Magnificent! A credit to Kate and her team."

"Very nice decoration this year, well done to the people that help."

"Beautiful!"

"I've always wondered if they make all of these themselves? Such great decorations year on year"

Thank you, Kate.

Melissa Russell
Parish Secretary



THE CYMFED FLAME CONGRESS 2023

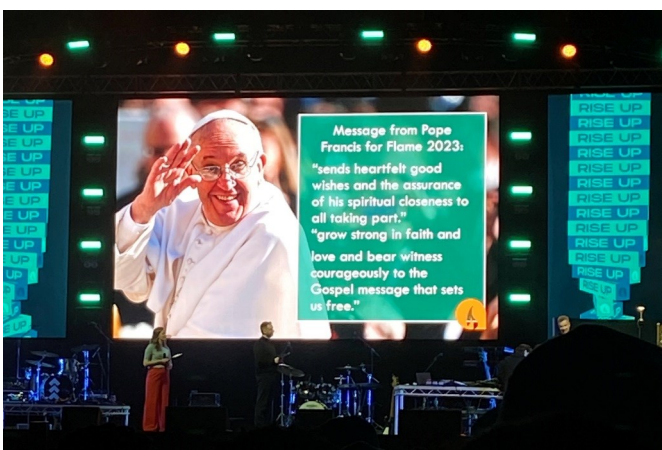
SATURDAY 4TH MARCH

On Saturday 4th March, the largest Catholic youth gathering in England & Wales, the Flame Congress, returned to London for the first time since the pandemic. It was organised by CYMFed, which is the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation, working with the Bishops Conference, and promotes youth ministry on a national level in the UK.

Kaosi Matheson (a Year 11 student) and I (RE teacher) are both Altar Servers in our parish here at St. John Fisher, and joined 8,000 others at Wembley Arena for a day of prayer, worship & celebration of the Catholic faith amongst young people. Little did we know, Fr. Francis was also in attendance!



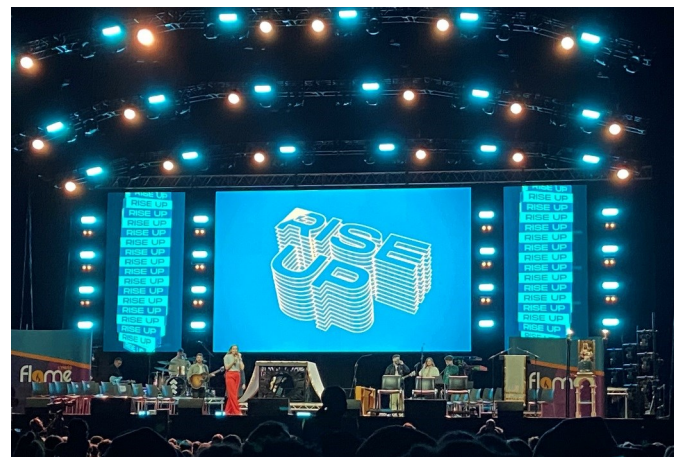
The theme of Flame 2023 was 'Rise Up!' which is derived from the Gospel of Luke 1:39, "Mary arose and went with haste". This biblical phrase opens the account of the Visitation (Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth following the Annunciation). Mary's free assent through her "yes" to God, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), teaches us as young Catholics to look to Mary as a model of courage in listening and fulfilling God's will.



The Flame Congress was an invitation to young people to arise, just as Mary did, and bear witness to the beautiful adventure that is our Catholic faith.

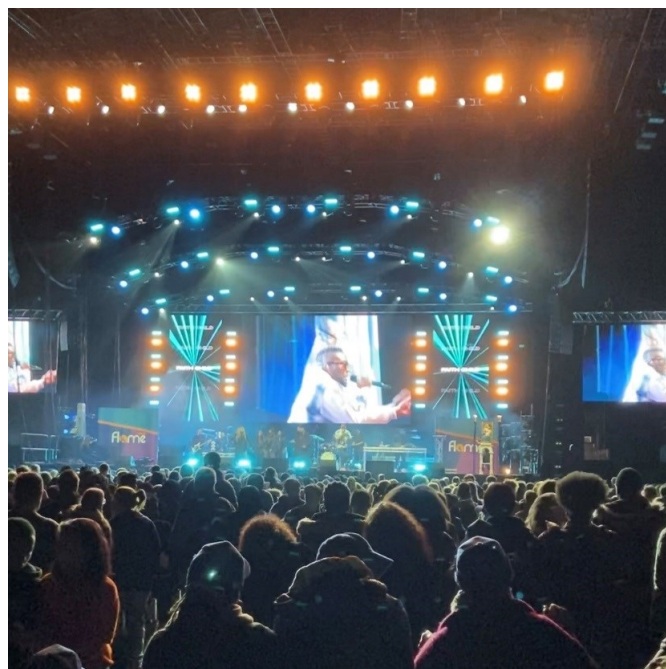
The congress began with music from One Hope Project and throughout the day, there were musical performances from award-winning artists such as Guvna B, Premier Gospel Radio, Faith Child and Adeniké. The atmosphere was electric as a sea of lights from phone torches illuminated the arena. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (Archbishop of Manila and a Pro-prefect in the Vatican's Dicastery of Evangelisation) remarked, "I believe this is what heaven will look like!"

We also heard from a high-calibre of speakers such as Jenny Garzón Saavedra, who is a youth worker in the Colombian Amazon and works with a CAFOD partner, FUNVIPAS (a social outreach team of the local diocese) to support children and young people to improve where they live. Robert Bilott, a US lawyer specialising in environmental protection who received the Right Livelihood Award for his decades of work on behalf of people injured by chemical contamination, shared his story which was the inspiration for the 2019 motion picture, *Dark Waters*, starring Mark Ruffalo.



Also present was the Archbishop of Perth, Timothy Costelloe (the president of the Australian bishops' conference and a Salesian of Don Bosco) who voiced that the Church needs the energy, enthusiasm and restlessness of its youth, "help rebuild the Church so that it doesn't fall into ruins".

One of the highlights of the day for me was the talk from Cardinal Tagle who asked us to reflect on the seemingly normal but extraordinary individuals who have nourished our lives, "Who are the angels sent to you by God?" He suggested that God sends "angels" to



all of us, in the form of key people we come into contact with throughout the course of our lives. Immediately, one person came to mind. Like so many parishioners at St. John Fisher, Canon Acton played an instrumental role in the formation of my faith. In my adolescent years, as many of my peers distanced themselves from the Church, my faith activated. Through being called to various lay ministries by both Canon Acton and Sister Catherine, my faith was enriched and I began to discover God's plan for my life and discern my vocation in becoming a RE teacher. Cardinal Tagle's speech served as a reminder to be God's presence to others and to become "angels" for one another in order for people's hearts & lives to be transformed.

The day drew to a close with the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols. The arena fell silent and the prayerful stillness was palpable as the monstrance was placed on the altar and we were reminded of Blessed Carlo Acutis' love & devotion for the Eucharist, "The Eucharist is the Highway to Heaven". The opportunity for silent prayer was a chance for 8,000 young people to have a truly personal encounter with the Lord.

Kaosi has provided her reflections on the day below:

Flame was such a thrilling experience! It was honestly so fun and encouraging to see a community of young people like me gathered together to celebrate their faith. The energy in the arena was so lively and there was not a dull moment! The day was jam-packed with so many interesting things, different inspirational speeches and loads of energetic songs. My favourite performance was from Guvna B as he got the crowd up and active while rapping his worship songs - it was such a vibe!

I think it's really important for the youth to celebrate their faith collectively like this because it keeps the Church alive. Overall, I found the Flame congress to be really enjoyable and I really recommend it for anyone as it is a great opportunity to 'rise up' and actively take part in our faith. I would definitely consider going again in 2025!

CYMFED chair, Fr Dominic Howarth concluded the Congress by declaring, "This is Church as you have never seen it before or been it before, but this is Church." It was a reminder to us all that the Church is by no means an archaic institution which is stuck in the past, but She is very much alive through the energy, restlessness and enthusiasm of Her youth. As young people, we must *rise up* and fight injustice; *rise up* to overcome tough personal circumstances, *rise up* as young leaders in our Parish and schools, and *rise up* ready to share the hope, joy and generosity and love of Jesus Christ.

**Talissa Pothunnah
& Kaosi Matheson**

***"The great gift of Easter is hope
- Christian hope which makes
us have that confidence in God,
in his ultimate triumph, and in
his goodness and love, which
nothing can shake."***



Cardinal Basil Hume

FRUIT IN THE BIBLE

The word “fruit” itself is used over 60 times in the New Testament. The original Greek word *karpos* is used in the Bible both literally and figuratively.

Most of the references to “fruit” are meant figuratively, referring to the results of something, like “fruits of your labour.” For example, in Matthew 13:23:

“But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

In this parable, fruit is a metaphor for salvation, in the form of a person who hears the calling and reaps many, many times what they sow.

Each fruit mentioned in the Bible holds different meanings and roles in the narrative.

GRAPES

Grapes and grape by-products are the most-mentioned plant in the Bible. To grow grapes, you need to prune the vines (e.g. Isaiah 5:6 and John 15:2) Interestingly, the Greek word for “prune” is the same for “cleanse,” likely pointing to how cleansing is the key to growth. Just as grapes grow when pruned, a person needs to cleanse or “prune” themselves to remove sin and grow in Christ.

FIGS

Figs and fig trees are mentioned in many passages of the Bible because of their importance in biblical times. Many mentions of figs were made in the Bible. For example, 1 Kings 4:25:

“During Solomon’s lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree.”

Another notable appearance of the fig tree is found in the story of Jesus cursing the fig tree in the Gospels. Here, the fig tree symbolizes Israel - Jesus rebuked the Jews who have not accepted Him as Messiah. *(Please read Fr Matthias’ article on page 7 for more details.)*

OLIVES

In biblical times, olives were often used as food, oil, and material for soap. Genesis 8:10-11 describes how the olive branch became a symbol of peace, when Noah’s raven returned with an olive leaf, signifying that the flood was over.

POMEGRANATES

Pomegranates have a special meaning in Jewish tradition because the fruit is said to have 613 seeds, the same number of commandments in the Torah (the Hebrew Bible). Pomegranate fruit are often eaten on Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) representing knowledge and wisdom.



DATES

People in biblical times used the date tree for many purposes. They ate its fruit, weaved its leaves into baskets, turned its trunks into structures, and fermented its sap to make wine. The date palm tree itself is often used in the Bible to symbolize peace, victory, and fertility.

APPLES

Bible translations use the idiom “apple of my eye” in several passages (e.g. Proverbs 7:2 and Psalm 17:8.) The phrase comes from a Hebrew expression that means “little man of his eye” and refers to the tiny reflection of yourself that you can see in the pupil of other people’s eyes. The phrase “apple of my eye” probably developed because of early English translations of the Bible - the Anglo-Saxon word “rappel” meant both “apple” and “pupil”.

Also, everyone is familiar with the apple as being the forbidden fruit that Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden. However, it is worth noting that “apples” in the Bible refer to four different Hebrew words: tappuah, ‘iyshown, babah, and bath. It’s possible that early Latin translations of the Bible introduced apples into the narrative and became the forbidden fruit because, in Latin, malum means “evil” while malus means “apple.” This means that apples, as we know them, may not even be mentioned directly in the Bible.



THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

St Paul the Apostle in his Epistle to the Galatians (Galatians 5: 22-23) defined the concept of the "Fruit of the Holy Spirit." There are nine fruits or must-have attributes for a person living in accordance with the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit (not Fruits of the Spirit) is a "singular plurality" or we might say a "collective singular."



©Christa Hamrick

THE REVEREND CANON COLM ACTON

(28 OCTOBER 1933-3 DECEMBER 2022)

The following is an abbreviated version of the Obituary published by the Diocese

Columbanus (Colm) Acton was born on 28th October 1933 in Belmont, Miltown, Co Galway. He was the youngest son of Michael and Kate Acton and one of twelve children. He had two older brothers who were also priests: Michael (Fr Mick) who was a missionary in the Philippines for 27 years and Sean who was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Colm was educated at the local National School and then attended secondary school at St Jarlath's College, Tuam, Co Galway. During this time he became aware of a call to serve the church as a priest and so in 1953, following the completion of his secondary school education, Colm was accepted for training for the priesthood and entered St Patrick's College, Carlow in 1953 and was ordained to the priesthood in Carlow on 6th June 1958 for the Diocese of Southwark.

Colm served:

- as an assistant priest in the parish of St Augustine, Tunbridge Wells for a year.
- as part of the clergy staff at St. George's Cathedral for 11 years where he worked in the Cathedral parish as well as at St Thomas Hospital as part of the chaplaincy team.
- as an assistant priest in the parish of St Teresa's, Morden where he was for a year.
- in the parish of Paddock Wood and Pembury for 3 years.

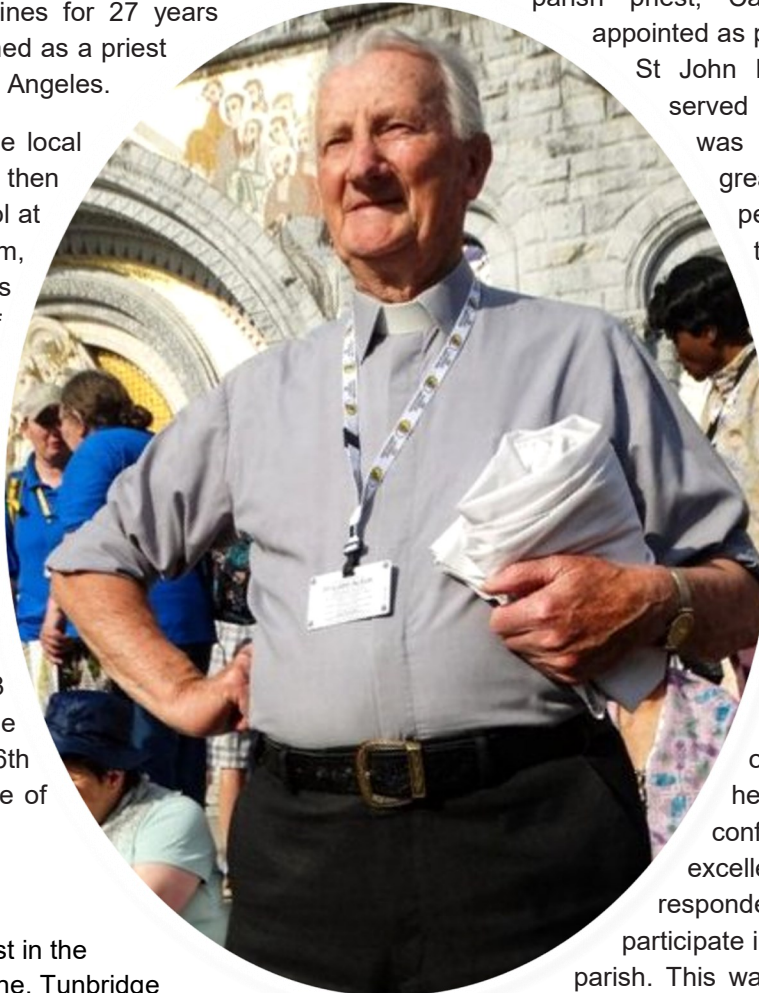
In December 1974, Colm took up his first appointment as a parish priest in the parish of St James the Great, Peckham Rye. He served in the parish for almost 7 years and is remembered as a devoted and caring pastor, always willing to be at the service of the parishioners. He was a popular and well respected member of the deanery clergy and in May 1981, he was appointed as the Dean for the Cathedral Deanery. He

also served as a member of the Southwark Metropolitan Tribunal, as a Defender of the Bond and later as a Judge on the Southwark Appeal Tribunal.

In October 1981 following the sudden death of the parish priest, Canon O'Donnell, he was appointed as parish priest of the parish of St John Fisher, Merton, where he served for the next 34 years. He was a true pastor and had a great gift for remembering people's names and used it to great effect in his pastoral work in the parish and schools. He would stand outside the church after Mass to greet people by name, enquiring about family members who may be ill, away at college, bereaved or getting married, etc. People knew that they mattered to him, and that he was always there to help in time of need, and felt sure that he would respect their confidences. He was an excellent organiser. People responded readily to his invitation to participate in the life and mission of the parish. This was evident in every area of parish life. Liturgical ministries, scripture and prayer groups and the vibrant social life of the parish flourished, as did the parish outreach.

He was a shrewd and practical parish priest and a great administrator. He was hard working and the parish was highly organised and, over his many years there it ran like a "well-oiled machine." He produced the weekly parish newsletter (The Fishermen's Herald) by himself every week. All done without any fuss or bother and apparently effortlessly but, in fact, the fruit of his steady, faithful and dedicated pastoral ministry. He was always calm, unruffled and in control.

During his time as parish priest he was an assiduous visitor of the homes of his parishioners and because of these regular home visits he knew his parishioners very well. He also held a regular weekly parish surgery where any parishioner could pop in to see him in the





presbytery without an appointment. He was always kept busy and followed up each visit with prompt and immediate action. He was a true pastor who knew his sheep and he was a 'rock' they could rely on and be supported by his pastoral wisdom and insight.

In a visitation report of April 1988, Bishop Tripp wrote "This is a remarkable parish. The sacramental preparation and the catechetical work is admirable.....it has the feel of a cathedral. Everyone is given space to do their own thing while making space for others. There is plenty of prayer and love in the parish, most of this is due to the example of Canon Acton".

In his 34 years in the Merton deanery Colm was also a wonderful friend and colleague to the clergy who served with him in the parish. He was also very supportive of his brother priests and deacons who worked alongside him in the deanery. Colm was appointed as Dean of the Merton Deanery in May 1983 and was to serve in that role until December 2004.

He was appointed as an Honorary Canon of the Cathedral in April 1991 and then as a Chapter Canon in November 1995. He resigned from the Chapter having reached the canonical age of 75 in 2008.

He was highly respected in the Diocese and this led in 1995 to him been elected to be the Chairman of the Council of Priests. He served in this role until 2003 and continued as a member of the Council of Priests until 2008.

He was proud of his Irish roots and was an avid follower of Gaelic football. He was also a keen golfer and on his day off each week he enjoyed spending time with other clergy playing golf. He was regarded highly as a golfer not only in the diocese but nationally when he competed in national clergy golf tournaments.

He celebrated his Silver Jubilee of Ordination in 1983, his ruby Jubilee in 1998 and his Golden Jubilee in 2008, all during his time as parish priest in Merton.

In 2016, having reached the age of 83, Canon Acton felt the time was now right for him to retire from the parish. In his letter to Archbishop Peter he wrote "I suggest I retire on the 31st March 2016 which will be after Easter. This will be a very big change for me as I

have been here for over 34 years. I would be grateful for your prayers at this time. I thank God for the many happy and fruitful years here in St. John Fisher and in the diocese. I am hugely grateful for your support and the support and kindness of the people"

In his response Archbishop Peter wrote accepting his plans for retirement. In his letter he said "May I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your 34 years of pastoral and sacramental ministry in St. John Fisher parish, a remarkable feat of perseverance and wonderful priestly dedication in fulfilling the vocation the Good Lord gave you all those years ago. May God bless you for it."

Following his retirement he moved into a house in the parish and continued to be available for supply work in the deanery. In 2018 he celebrated his Diamond Jubilee of Ordination and attended the gathering of priests at Palazzola in Rome, meeting Pope Francis and celebrating Mass in St Peter's during their stay.

His health began to give cause for concern in 2022 and in the autumn he was obliged to move into St Teresa's Nursing home in Wimbledon where he stayed until his death on Saturday 3rd December 2022.

He once told a fellow priest that he found it hard to pray for himself but that he always prayed for the people especially those in need. He reflected daily on the psalms and the scriptures for Mass. This was very evident during his illness. He was a man whose mind and heart were shaped by the scriptures.

He served the diocese and the church he loved and in doing so brought people closer to the Lord whom he loved and who loved him. As a priest he was faithful to the promises he made on his ordination day in Ireland all those years ago, promises he lived out each and every day. For him the Mass, his office and praying for the people he was called to serve was central to his life.

Canon Colm Acton, faithful servant of the Lord, priest of the Archdiocese of Southwark died on 3rd December 2022 aged 89 and in the 64th year of his priesthood.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.



EULOGY FOR THE RIGHT REVEREND CANON COLM ACTON

It's my great honour and privilege to say a few words on this sad occasion that closes a chapter on a golden era of our Parish.

I first met Canon Acton in 1982 when my wife Rita introduced us. I wasn't a Catholic at the time and our brief conversation offered no hint that 40 years later he would ask me to speak at his funeral.

I suspect The Lord may have smiled when only He knew that our first and brief conversation would spring back to life one day, to begin a new and totally unexpected journey.

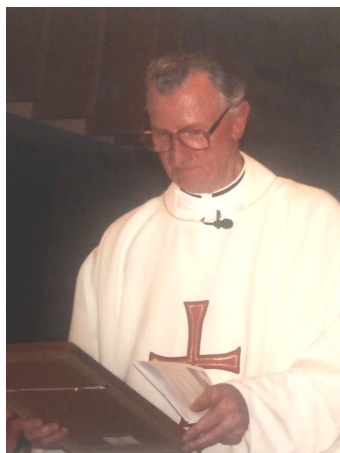
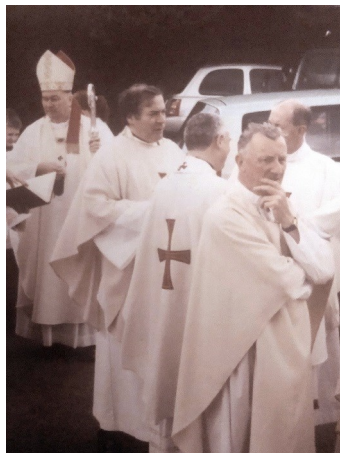
Indeed, 13 years were to pass before I arrived at the convent in Mostyn Rd for an RCIA course and Sr. Catherine introduced me to the Canon. I was more than a little surprised that he recalled our meeting of those many years before.

As if being blessed with more than a fair share of intelligence wasn't enough, Canon Acton was further blessed with the memory of an elephant - as I'm sure many of you came to know.

And so began an enduring friendship as I learned about the Catholic Faith and about a highly respected and much - loved priest who took a genuine interest in people and in the world around him.

He loved sport and those who knew him from his days in Galway, still remember that he excelled in Gaelic football, and some of you will know that he played golf to a high standard until well into his retirement. He was a keen supporter of Wimbledon Football Club and he'd often be seen at their home matches chatting with friends and parishioners over a bevy at half-time.

Last summer I was delighted, when finally he took an interest in cricket - even if it was only T20! You can imagine his delight when Ireland beat England in the recent World Cup - the only country to do so! Regrettably, I could never persuade him



that Test Match cricket was actually the pinnacle of the game, but he wasn't convinced. "What? After 5 days and it still could be a draw?"

And then with a despairing shrug of his shoulders, he added "What's the point?" With that dismissal, I had to concede that my great friend was unlikely to ever be a supporter of Test Match Cricket.

As with many latecomers to the Church, Canon Acton welcomed my desire for knowledge, with patience and kindness, and my respect and affection for him increased over the years as he helped so many of us to grow in our Catholic faith.

His friendliness and encouragement was the glue that united our Parish. For him, it was important to know every Parishioner by name and to get to know something about them. His warmth, sincerity and humour made people feel at ease, welcomed and valued.

He was a very humble man who dismissed any credit for himself, by passing the praise to the assistant clergy, the saintly Sr. Catherine or others who helped to run the Parish so proficiently.

Since he arrived as our Parish Priest in 1981, the world has changed in many ways. During this time, the Church has been led by 3 Popes, each of whom introduced fresh ideas to meet the challenges of an ever changing and increasingly secular and dangerous world. A world that each year sadly draws further away from our Catholic values.

As a result, the life of a priest became progressively more difficult. But Canon Acton would embrace change in his measured way that exuded calmness and wisdom. Anyone bringing a problem to him was warmly welcomed, offered advice and was reminded that God is always with us, ready to listen, to help, to encourage and to forgive.

I once asked the Canon how best I might respond to the various arguments that



reject the Catholic dogma of The Immaculate Conception. He simply asked me 'Do you believe in God?' 'Of course I do' I replied. Then he asked, 'Do you believe that God can do the impossible?'

I could only answer with a smile, because in our hearts we know, that each and every miracle in the Bible, plainly shows us, that 'with God nothing is impossible'.

But, as the Canon would say It all comes down to our faith!

As we now live out our tomorrows without Canon Acton, many of us will acknowledge that we became better people for having known him. We shall fondly recall his many qualities that made him such a special priest and faithful friend.

So we thank God for the life and the legacy of Canon Colm who for 64 years a Priest gently taught that no-one is beyond the reach of God's love and forgiveness,

and that loving God helps us to love one another as Jesus commanded us.

Finally, on behalf of everyone here today, may I say 'Thank you my dear friend, farewell until we meet again'. In the meantime, pray for us, as in love, you are welcomed into the Joys of Heaven with those cherished words; 'Well done Colm, my good and faithful servant.' Amen

Roger Furbear



CANON ACTON'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PARISH OF ST JOHN FISHER

Deacon Tom reflects below on the debt that the parish owes to Canon Colm for his 34 years of dedicated service as parish priest.

Canon Colm Acton arrived in this parish in the same year (1981) as I did although I was here for a few months while Canon O'Donnell was still parish priest. Reflecting on his 34 plus years here, the tremendous debt that the parish and we as parishioners owe to Canon Colm quickly becomes apparent.

When he arrived, the church was fairly basic and bare in its structure. The Sanctuary had still not been permanently re-ordered to reflect the requirements of the Second Vatican Council. Canon quickly went about turning the Sanctuary into the bright, open and spiritual space that it is now.

But his work went well beyond that.

The enclosed room that existed then to the right of the Sanctuary and which was referred to as the 'children's chapel' was removed as the Canon rightly considered that it was divisive to separate the children from the rest of the parish.

He commissioned the two mosaics which now adorn the back walls to either side of the Sanctuary.

He replaced the elderly and uncomfortable pews by the lighter coloured and much more comfortable ones we now have.

He ended the practice of having Masses in three separate centres, with the need every week to call on a visiting priest to cope, again arguing correctly that it divided the parish and prevented people getting to know their fellow parishioners.

Later, he commissioned the beautiful stained glass windows which now adorn the Church. Much thought and planning went into the themes depicted in each.

His work was not confined to the Church. He renovated the church hall. While there is only so much that can be done to an old building like it, it is now a much more inviting place and a great asset to the life and work of the parish.

And in the midst of all this the presbytery suffered severe subsidence. The Canon and his assistant priest had to move out for something like 9 months while the remedial work was done.

Church buildings are one thing. But what really matters in any parish is its people and the way in which they are welcomed and involved in its life.



Those who knew him will testify to how well the Canon related to his parishioners. He always had time to talk to and listen to people, to help them with any difficulties and to comfort and sympathise with them.

One thing on which people often comment was his ability to remember names. I am bad at it. But we coped by me describing people by where they sit in church – it is helpful that people tend to sit in the same places each week – and him saying 'Oh, you mean so and so' as he would tell me their names.

The Canon also sought to encourage people when they approached him with ideas or plans. I had personal experience of this when I approached him about possibly becoming a deacon – he was helpful and supportive then and throughout my formation. I am grateful to him.

I recall too that he was enthusiastic when Brenda Gunn approached him with her ideas for a regular parish magazine, which turned into the high quality 'Talkabout'.

One thing he was firm about however was that, if people had good ideas, it was for them to make them work. They could not expect that he would do everything for them. The diligent and efficient *Talkabout* editorial team are an example of parishioners successfully pursuing the original idea.

And finally there are the children of the parish, who are the lifeblood of the Church's future. I was Chair of Governors at St John Fisher School for many years and I know that the Canon was enormously supportive of the school, visiting it almost every week and celebrating Mass there regularly.

Outside his parish work, the Canon was an avid follower of Gaelic football and a season ticket holder at AFC Wimbledon. He enjoyed visits to the horse racing. But above all, on his weekly Wednesday day off he was a very keen and accomplished golfer.

After his retirement, he continued to live in the parish and help out both in the parish and deanery by stepping in to celebrate Mass when a replacement was needed and until his declining health made it impossible for him to continue. In retirement, he also conducted a considerable number of funerals for

friends and parishioners who knew him well.

We in St John Fisher owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for all he did over more than 34 years as parish priest. He left his successors a thriving and welcoming parish.

He bore his final illness with bravery and without complaint despite the suffering it brought. We pray that God has welcomed him into the happiness of eternal life that he deserves.

Deacon Tom Kavanagh



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT)

FRIDAY 3RD MARCH 2023

"I HAVE HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAITH"

Every year, on the first Friday in March it is uplifting to attend a prayer service and know that for 36 hours, around the globe, people are using the same service and saying the same prayers. Beginning in Western Samoa and travelling to New Zealand, and ever west the service reached Martin Way Methodist Church, Merton at 10.30 am, and then continued west via the Americas to finish in American Samoa 38 hours later.

This year the service was written by women of Taiwan, a country that has for many years been caught in a superpower struggle. It has been isolated internationally for decades and only 13 of the 193 UN member states have recognized Taiwan as a sovereign country.

Our service began with a slide show showing the beauty of the country, its birds such as the Mikado pheasant and flowers such as the orchids.



Based on a reading from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians beginning "I have heard of your faith.." we were invited to meditate on the hardship and persecution suffered by Christians in many parts of the world and their need for prayer and encouragement, particularly mutual encouragement within the Christian community.

Representatives from different Churches read letters of encouragement to people in Taiwan suffering various problems such as discrimination against women, difficulty in pursuing education, abuse, working in hospitals during the pandemic and problems of the environment. We prayed for each of these.

O Holy Spirit, may you grant people in Taiwan the strength and wisdom to cope with an uncertain future. We trust you to help Taiwan to be a blessing in the world.

As always the service ended with the hymn: *The day Thou gavest, Lord, has ended*, the words seeming exceptionally poignant:

As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.



THE REVEREND DEACON FREDERICK CARTER

(17 MAY 1927- 9 JANUARY 2023)

Frederick Alfred Carter was born on 17th May 1927 and baptised on 27th May 1927 at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. He was confirmed at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Brompton Oratory on 29th November 1936. He was educated at Salesian College, Battersea and was evacuated to the Salesian College in Cowley as part of his secondary education.

Upon leaving school he trained as a photographic technician and was employed as a press photographer. He worked for a national newspaper until he took redundancy in 1986

Fred was married to his wife Patricia at the church of St Thomas, Fulham on 16th June 1951. They had five children.

Fred was always an active member of his local parishes and in 1952 he joined the Knights of St Columba, becoming Provincial Grand Knight of the Surrey Province. His great interest was in the promotion of faith with young people and he was involved with youth activities promoted and organised by the Knights of St Columba, and the diocese and Fred was a member of the Diocesan Youth Chaplaincy support group in its early days.

Fred was also an active member of the parish of St John Fisher, Merton and for many years served as a member of the parish advisory committee and was the leader of the RCIA Group. He served as parish Master of Ceremonies and was responsible for training scores of altar servers. Following his Diaconate ordination he continued his involvement with the parish altar servers in a supportive role.

Fred was also passionate about the pastoral care for the sick and disabled members of the parish and was secretary for many years of the Deanery Fellowship arranging spiritual and social events for them in the deanery. He also served as a member of the Southwark

Diocesan Fellowship committee and accompanied them on pilgrimages to Rome, where they met the Holy Father, and Lourdes.

It was during this time, after prayer and discernment, Fred felt the call to serve the church as an ordained minister and applied to the diocese to be accepted as a candidate

for the Permanent Diaconate. With the support of this wife, Patricia, and the encouragement and support of Father John O'Toole, who was the assistant priest in the Merton parish at the time, Fred applied, and following the usual selection process, was accepted as a candidate by Archbishop Michael Bowen in 1988. In a letter of support written to Archbishop Michael in May 1988, Bishop Howard Tripp wrote that "Mr Carter is very active in the Merton parish and a popular person. He is also a prayerful and good man and I have no hesitation in recommending that he be accepted as a candidate for training for the

Permanent Diaconate. He commenced his training in 1988 and following the required period of study he received the call to ordination and was ordained along with nine other men at St. George's Cathedral, Southwark on 27th July 1991.

One of those nine was the late Deacon John O'Donovan who was ordained for the same deanery in the neighbouring parish of St Teresa's, Morden. Writing about their formation journey Fred wrote in 1988, "*John O'Donovan and I began to travel together to Womersley for our study days. We both distinctly remembered our first lecture. It was on Jansenism and we wondered what we had let ourselves in for!*

Our journeys to and from Saint John's seminary were opportunities for us to support each other and John's practice homilies at Streatham Hill, under the guidance of Fr Michael Murphy, were always an inspiration. We



were ordained together in Saint George's Cathedral on 27th July 1991"

Following his ordination Deacon Fred was appointed to serve as a deacon in the Merton Deanery and appointed to the parish of St. John Fisher, Merton.

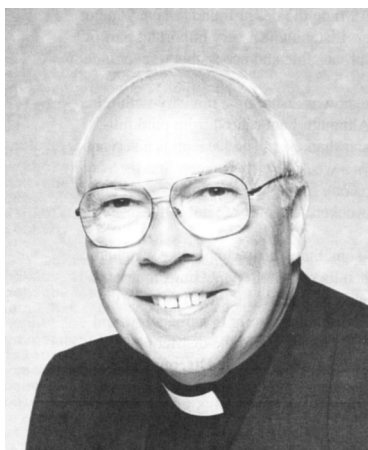
Here began almost 30 years of diaconal ministry to the people of the parish of St. John Fisher and to the Catholic community in the Merton Deanery. He served as Chaplain to Province 35 of the Knights of St Columba. In the parish, he was engaged in the Sacramental preparation programmes, was a regular visitor to the sick and housebound, celebrated Holy Hours and Adoration in the church, preached at Masses and celebrated Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals. He was a popular member of the deanery clergy and attended meetings and clergy gatherings across the diocese.

He was a great support to the clergy who served at St John Fisher over the years, most notably to Canon Colm Acton, his parish priest for over 34 years. Those clergy included for a number of years the retired auxiliary Bishop for the South West Area, Bishop Howard Tripp who described himself as the honorary curate at St John Fisher, Merton.

Fred's knowledge of the parish and its people was a great witness to his love and dedication for the community he felt called to serve and a wonderful source of wisdom to the clergy who came to work in St John Fisher parish.

Fred celebrated his Silver Jubilee of ordination in 2016 with celebrations in his home parish but also attending the Mass for Jubilarians celebrated by Archbishop Peter Smith in the St George's Cathedral, along with those members of his ordination year.

Towards the later years of his life Fred was dogged with ill health and mobility issues. He carried on to the best of his ability but in March 2021 he felt compelled to write to Archbishop John Wilson to request, that, having reached the age of 93 he had begun to think that now would be a good time to consider



retiring from his role as a deacon in the parish. He wrote that *"this has been a difficult decision for me to make since my ordination in July 1991, my life has been a very happy one... My life has been so memorable and happy and I have received such love and support from my family and parishioners. To the Lord God, I give thanks for the many blessings that he has given to me"*

In his response Archbishop John wrote *"You dear Fred, have been so generous that after thirty years of ministry you now write to me at the age of 93. I am so glad to read that these years of ministry have been happy one's for you; nonetheless please know the comfort and happiness you will have brought to so many too. I hope that as you reflect on these past years of active ministry, you will accept with joy and gratitude the love the Lord Jesus feels for you, expressed in the way that He poured out that same love in your life and ministry, as you generously gave to people what you yourself had received as a gift."*

Fred spent the remaining years of his life at home, cared for and looked after by his devoted wife Pat and his family. The final few months of his life Fred's witness took on that of suffering in union with the Lord he loved and served so faithfully. He died a few weeks after his beloved parish priest, Canon Acton and two months after the Bishop he had worked alongside and supported for so many years, Bishop Howard Tripp. A few days before Deacon Fred's death one of his ordination year, Deacon James Burleigh, a fellow Salesians' past pupil at Battersea whom he was ordained with also went to his eternal reward.

Deacon Frederick Carter, faithful husband, father and grandfather, Deacon of the Church, died on the 9th January 2023 aged 95 years and in the 31st year of his diaconate.

May he Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

JUSTICE & PEACE

ETHICAL SUGGESTIONS



April:

Buy Fairtrade eggs and chocolate for Easter

May:

No Mow May - leave all or part of your lawn unmown to encourage wildlife



June:

Reduce detergent, use an ecoegg (available from *Robert Dyas* and *Lakeland*)



STAMP COLLECTION

A reminder that there is a box at the back of the church for your used postage stamps.

These stamps are passed to the *Jesuit Missions Stamp Group* who meet monthly to sort the stamps. They are then sold to a dealer and the proceeds used to fund *Jesuit Missions* projects. This raises a considerable sum for the Missions.

Thank you for your donations!



FOOD COLLECTIONS

Feeding Families in Need

First weekend each month (after all Masses)

The following charities are very grateful for your generous donations:

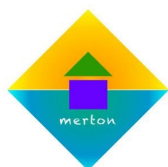
More people than ever are now being fed by charities

1st/2nd April

Faith in Action

They would appreciate:

- Packed lunch items:
 - * Cereal bars & Protein bars
 - * Multi-pack of Crisps
 - * Multi-pack of small juice cartons
- Cans of Sardines & Mackerel fillets with a ring-pull opening
- Tins of Corned beef
- Sugar
- Jars of Jam
- Jars of Peanut Butter



6th/7th May

Wimbledon Foodbank

They need:

- Sugar
- Biscuits
- UHT Milk
- Jam
- Toiletries



3rd/4th June

Christian Care

They would appreciate:

- Cereals
- Biscuits
- Crisps
- Cooking Oil
- Tins of Fish/Meat
- Tins of Fruit
- Toiletries



mary's meals

a simple solution to world hunger

Mary's Meals would like to invite you to collect all your **foreign currency** no matter how old or obscure. The week before Easter there will be special envelopes at the back of church for you to take home and put all your foreign coins and notes into. Clear out your drawers and have a look under the sofa. Currently the charity feeds over 2.4 million young children one good meal every day in their place of education – by giving **Mary's Meals** your foreign coins and notes you can help feed the next hungry child.



Talk to friends and neighbours, maybe they have spare foreign coins/notes as well? We know that over the years foreign coins and notes end up in all sorts of odd places so please hunt high and low; remember we'll also gladly take UK coins/notes that aren't legal tender anymore.

Mary's Meals is a no-frills charity committed to spending 93p in every £1 received on its charitable activities. We feed over 2.4 million young children one good meal every day in their place of education. We feed children for only 10p per meal so a little goes a long way. **Mary's Meals** provides meals in over 18 countries. Because of our low costs we can do this for as little as £19.15 per child per year! Envelopes will be collected the weekend of Sunday 16th April. Let's hope for a bumper collection.



EASYFUNDRAISING

St John Fisher RC Church is now registered with easyfundraising.org.uk

Over 4,000 shops and sites will now donate to us for FREE every time you use **easyfundraising** to shop with them.



easyfundraising
feel good shopping

£34M
Raised

Help us raise
FREE funds
every time you
shop online



You Shop - Retailers Donate - For Free

MOTHERS' PRAYERS



This parish prayer group meets on
Fridays
at 9.30-10.00am
in the Day Chapel.

Please come along and pray for your child,
children or grandchildren.

Anyone who wishes to attend
is most welcome.

*There is a notebook to the right of the
Holy Family statue for you to add the
child/grandchild's name that you wish
the group to pray for.*



FRIENDS OF LIFE NEWS



Sharing the real story about Life's services with the words of Cassie, one of the women Life has helped:

CASSIE'S STORY

"I became pregnant through a short-lived, abusive, and coercive relationship. Only a couple of months in and the pregnancy had become too much. With my head in a spin, I decided that the only way out for me was to terminate my pregnancy.

I searched high and low online for answers to my conflicting questions, which led me to *Life*. I felt dread and hopelessness at every avenue but decided to give them a call regardless.

This one call changed everything for me. I spoke with one of the *Life* listeners for as long as I needed. She listened, she let me cry, and she let me discuss every dark corner of my mind. In return I received empowerment, encouragement, and warmth from her. I felt understood from every angle and she gave me things to do to tackle my overwhelming fears.

After this call, I was able to rationalise my thoughts better. With more sessions the scary thoughts of 'what if ...?', 'I won't be able to give this child a good life', and 'I can't do this' started to slowly break away and I could finally see a more harmonious way forwards with my pregnancy.

The obstacles throughout my pregnancy weren't always easy. But *Life* were constantly on hand to offer me further support and to ease my situational worries even down to helping me with nursery items.

Three years later and I am now a mother to the most beautiful little boy. Our lives are positive and bright. He is by far the greatest gift I could have ever been given and he has definitely aided my healing journey in every way. The unborn child who I once feared has now grown into my most precious treasure.

I would urge anyone who is struggling, feeling confused, or worried to please give *Life* a call and just like me, receive a warm and friendly listening ear, without any judgment."



PREGNANCY MATTERS

Accompanying women on their pregnancy journey is a privilege and a responsibility. It can be one of the most emotional times of someone's life. As *Life* co-founder Professor Jack Scarisbrick MBE so wisely noted, a pregnancy – particularly if unintended and even in a happy relationship – can seem like a disaster or even a death.

In our experience and in many studies into the decision-making of pregnant women, psychological safety is essential for her to make the transition to assuming the role of mother of her child. Once motherhood or birth motherhood are chosen, abortion self-evidently isn't chosen.

That psychological safety only happens when the client trusts *Life*. This is why we feel it's vital to operate our services to the highest standards:

- We're transparent that we don't refer for abortions;
- We comply with ASA and Google advertising guidance;
- We're associate members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP);
- We're a centre of excellence delivering counselling training;
- We were awarded the Trusted Charity Mark Level 1 in recognition of our excellence.

Operating services at high standards that other people can appreciate is one way we can be trustworthy and hence able to accompany women - 178,834 in the last 2.5 years - on their pregnancy journey.

Our primary goal with all of our pregnancy support services is to reduce demand for abortion and to therefore reduce the abortion rate. As Cassie's story shows, our services are doing so.

Our unique mix of trusted services is how we're creating a world where every human is valued and where families and communities accept unplanned pregnancies. I'm incredibly proud of what we're able to achieve together. Thank you for being a valued partner with us on our journey.

Text-to-Talk:
07860077339

National helpline:
0808 802 5433

**LOCAL FRIENDS OF LIFE GROUP
LONDON 10 BRIDGES WALK 2023**

We will be participating in the famous London 10 Bridges Walk again this summer on **Sunday 25th June 2023**, and we shall be looking for walkers and sponsors.



10 **BRIDGES OF LONDON** **CHARITY WALK**

2023

TO PARTICIPATE AS A WALKER OR AS A SPONSOR, **CONTACT THERESE AT: dwalker@visuals.plus.com or 07984515947**

2pm Sunday 25th June

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE WALK

SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF LONDON, THE WALK IS 5.5 MILES AND TAKES 2-3 HOURS
STARTING ON THE NORTH SIDE OF TOWER BRIDGE
AND MOVES WESTWARDS, CROSSING THE RIVER TEN TIMES,
FINISHING ON THE NORTH SIDE OF LAMBETH BRIDGE.

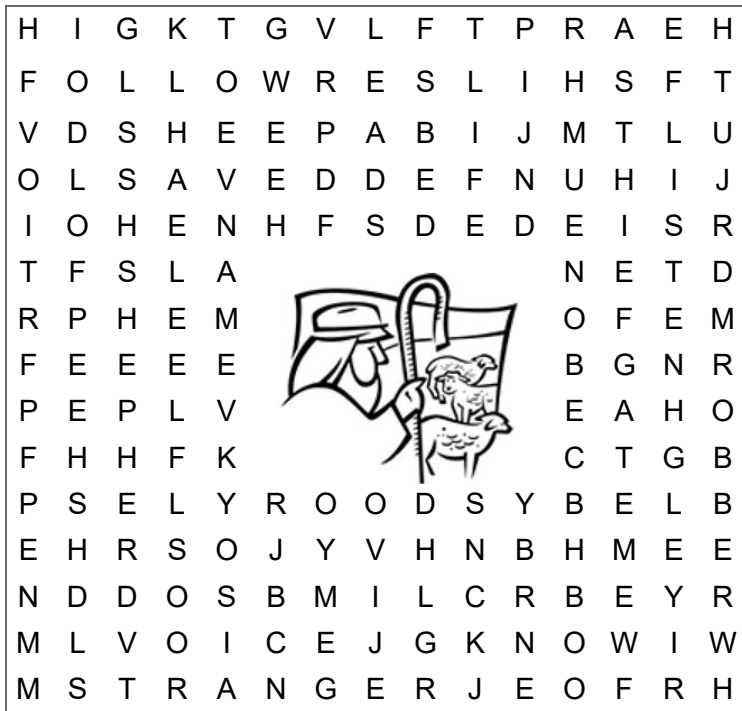


Life is the trading name of LIFE 2009, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, no. 06786752 and registered national charity no. 1128355 in England and Wales and no. SCO41329 in Scotland.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

CHILDREN'S PAGES

WORD SEARCH



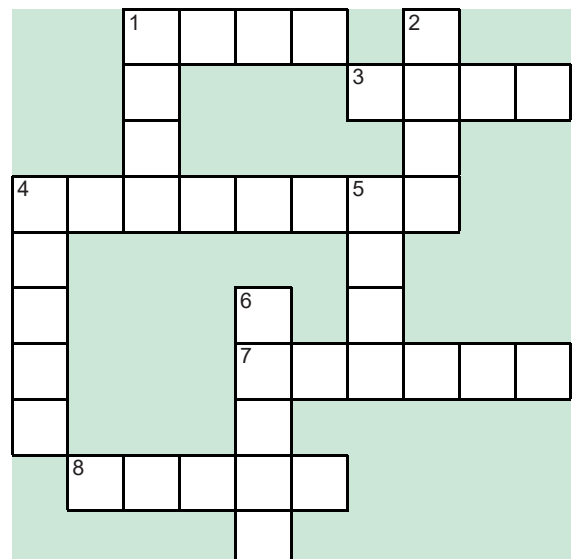
CLIMBS	HEAR	NAME	SHEEPFOLD
DOOR	KNOW	PEN	SHEPHERD
FLEE	LEADS	ROBBER	STRANGER
FOLLOW	LIFE	SAVED	THIEF
GATE	LISTEN	SHEEP	VOICE

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber, but he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens; the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

(John 10: 1-5)

CROSSWORD

Solution on Page 30



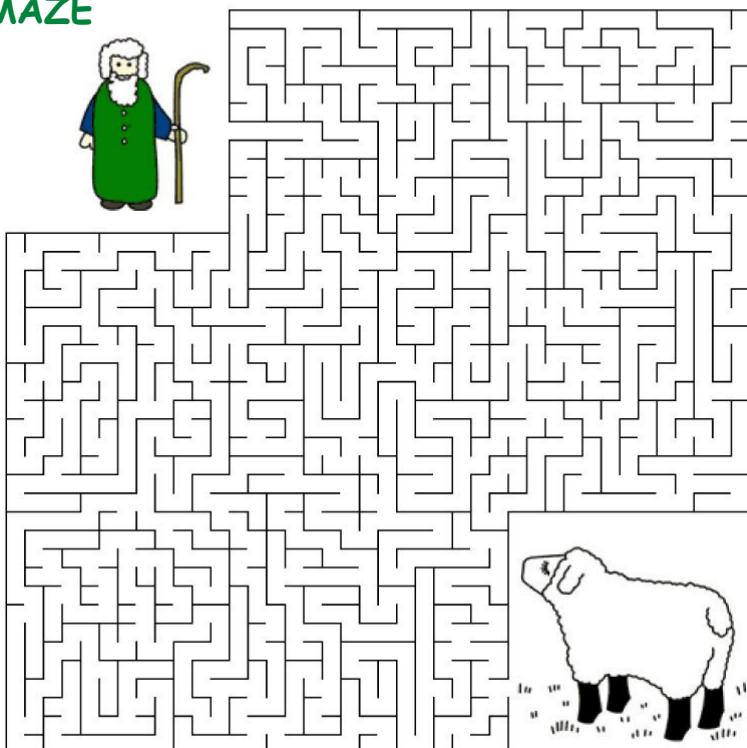
Across

- 1 The period from birth to death
- 3 A wild animal that hunts in a pack
- 4 One who takes care of the sheep
- 7 To hear or pay attention
- 8 What we use to speak

Down

- 1 A strong feeling of affection
- 2 The opposite of bad
- 4 Woolly animals, similar to goats
- 5 Goes faster than walking
- 6 A group of sheep herded together

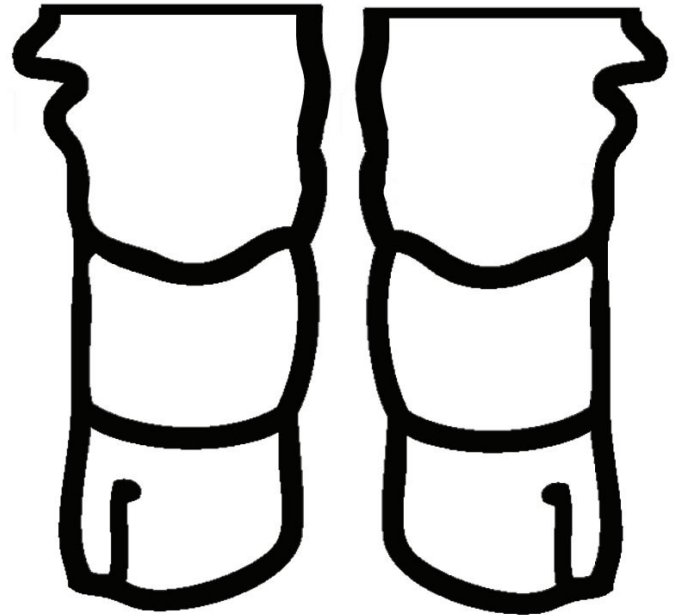
MAZE



CRAFT ACTIVITY

Create your own sheep from a paper plate

1. Copy the sheep's head and two pairs of legs on to white card.
2. Colour and cut out the face and legs of the sheep.
3. Cover the paper plate with cottonwool balls.
4. Glue the head onto the paper plate.
5. Finally glue the legs onto the paper plate. Make sure the back legs are slightly higher than the ones in front.



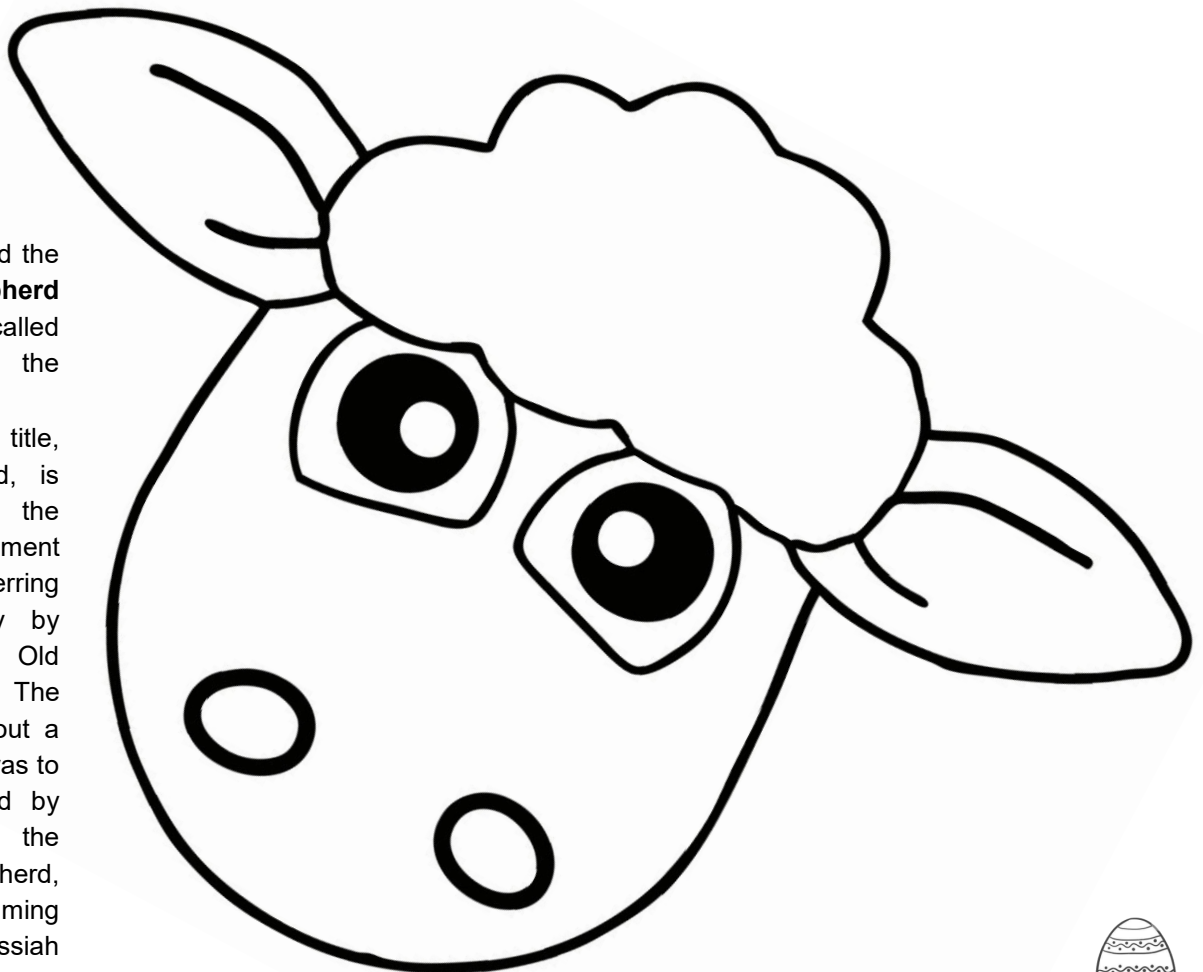
"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

"I am the good shepherd;
I know my own and my own know me."

(John 10: 11,14)

Jesus was called the **Good Shepherd** because he called himself this in the Gospel of John.

Although the title, Good Shepherd, is only found in the New Testament Jesus was referring to a prophecy by Ezekiel in the Old Testament. The prophecy is about a shepherd who was to come later, and by calling himself the good shepherd, Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah that the scriptures had foretold.



POPE BENEDICT XVI

(16 APRIL 1927 - 31 DEC 2022)

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Joseph Ratzinger, who died on 31 December aged 95, was regarded as one of the most influential figures in the Catholic Church at the turn of this century. He will probably be remembered as much for his departure from office (his papal abdication was the first in nearly 600 years) as for his own term as Pope. Pope Benedict told a gathering of cardinals on 13 February 2013 that his eight years at the helm of the Roman Catholic Church would end at the end of the month, and even Vatican officials were shocked. The announcement was greeted with confusion and consternation at first, because he spoke in Latin.

"My strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to the papacy."

Yet, an option previously considered unthinkable by many suddenly appeared reasonable and even far-sighted. Benedict was in ill health and had been advised by his doctors not to travel outside Europe. In addition, the dual scandals of widespread clerical child abuse, on the one hand, and growing evidence of its widespread concealment, on the other, had taken a heavy toll on the Church's credibility.

HIS EARLY YEARS

Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger was born in Marktl am Inn, a small town in Bavaria in April 1927 and grew up during Germany's Nazi regime. As a teenager he disliked sports, but legally was obliged to enrol in the Hitler Youth (although he never attended meetings), and at the age of 16 was drafted into the German anti-aircraft corps.

After deserting in 1945, as the Allies swept into Germany, he spent some time in a prison camp near the City of Ulm, after which he entered the seminary.

PRIESTHOOD

He was ordained into the priesthood in Munich in June 1951, at the age of 24. Ratzinger gained a doctorate, began teaching theology and served as an expert at the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the 1960s.

He supported the reforming current of the ecumenical council but felt that the Council's reforms were being distorted by revolutionary activists. He was appointed Archbishop of Munich in 1977, and was made a cardinal soon after. His tenure in Munich would be overshadowed years later by a report which accused him of mishandling four abuse cases.

Then in 1981 he was summoned to Rome by Pope John Paul II to serve as prefect (head) of the Roman Curia's CDF (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith). His role at the CDF was as Pope John Paul II's doctrinal czar for over 20 years. He had reservations over the direction that the church was taking, and led a conservative backlash against the reforming impulses of the Second Vatican Council and against social justice movements like liberation theology. He campaigned against moral relativism and secularism, and launched investigations inside the church of theologians who strayed from conservative doctrine or practice. His actions made him a controversial figure among progressive Catholics who called him "Panzer Cardinal" and "God's Rottweiler".

PAPAL ELECTION

He was the only cardinal to vote in the two conclaves in 1978, and the one in 2005 following the death of the first Polish pope in history, John Paul, after a 26-year reign. After four ballots, he was elected at this conclave as Benedict XVI, the first German pope. He had not sought the office of Pope and at the age of 78 had been hoping to retire to Bavaria and write books!



POPE BENEDICT'S PONTIFICATE

His seven-year pontificate was marked by a series of crises. The media repeatedly accused Benedict of covering up abuse while an archbishop in Germany and as a prefect in Rome. He met abuse survivors during his foreign visits and sent a landmark letter to Irish Catholics in 2010, acknowledging that some abuse survivors "find it difficult even to enter the doors of a church after all that has occurred."

In 2006, another crisis occurred when he made a speech at a German University citing a Byzantine emperor's criticism of Mohammed. The speech was reported as though Benedict had endorsed the remark and Muslims erupted in protest from Indonesia to Jordan. Soon after, Benedict made a conciliatory visit to Turkey, pausing for a moment of reflection in Istanbul's Blue Mosque alongside an Islamic cleric.

Pope Benedict made a number of far-reaching decisions on the church's liturgy and on ecumenism:

- His 2007 *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* acknowledged priests' right to offer Mass using the Roman Missal of 1962 (in Latin)
- His 2009 apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, enabled groups of Anglicans to enter into full communion with Rome while preserving elements of their patrimony
- He visited countries including Australia, Brazil, and Benin. In a six-day visit to the USA in 2008, he addressed the UN, prayed at Ground Zero, and visited the White House
- He beatified more than 800 people, including Cardinal John Henry Newman
- He canonized 45 people, and proclaimed St. Hildegard of Bingen and St. John of Avila Doctors of the Church.
- He published three encyclicals: *Deus caritas est*, on love; *Spe salvi*, on hope; and *Caritas in Veritate*, on charity. His fourth, *Lumen fidei*, was left unfinished and completed by his successor Pope Francis.

Benedict had spent his life before becoming Pope, defending the faith from outside forces, but he would see his tenure as pope undone partly by the Roman Curia (the Holy See's bureaucracy). His former butler leaked a series of documents to the Italian media accusing the Roman Curia and the Vatican bank of corruption and mismanagement. The "Vati-Leaks" scandal led to the jailing of his butler and undermined Benedict's efforts to reform the Vatican's finances.

POPE EMERITUS

Benedict resigned at the age of 85 and an Argentine Cardinal (Jorge Mario Bergoglio) followed him as Pope

Francis. Benedict created a new title for himself "Pope Emeritus" and kept the distinctive white cassock and papal name. "*It was a difficult decision,*" he told an Italian newspaper about his resignation in 2021. "*But I made it in full awareness, and I think I did the right thing. Some of my somewhat 'fanatical' friends are still angry. They haven't accepted my choice. ... They don't want to believe in a consciously made decision.*"

When Benedict resigned he was not expected to live long, but he did not entirely disappear from the world stage. He attended the canonizations of both John Paul II and John XXIII, and he collaborated with journalist Peter Seewalk on a fourth book entitled "Last Testament", and on a German autobiography.

He did not escape the long shadow cast by the clergy sexual abuse scandal. The crisis that had unfolded while he was at the peak of influence in Rome, in the 1990s and early 2000s, was one he repeatedly minimized even as, behind the scenes, he became aware of the depth and breadth of the abuses. He always blamed the secular world for the scandals, rather than pointing to the church's clerical culture or the responsibility of bishops who did nothing.

This came back to haunt the Pope Emeritus in early 2022, when a report was issued on historical abuses in Munich (where he was archbishop from 1977 to 1982), showing how he had personally failed to take action against abusive priests in four instances. Rather than accept any personal responsibility, Benedict (and his personal aide and team of lawyers, who by that point were speaking for the frail former pontiff) issued a forceful defence and, under public pressure, a generalized apology for mistakes that were made.

However, for the most part, Benedict maintained a wall of silence, passing out his days quietly at a converted monastery in the shadow of St Peter's Basilica, inside the Vatican.

His long-time personal secretary said that Benedict himself was surprised by his longevity, once saying: "*I would never have believed that the last stretch of the journey that would take me from the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery to the gates of heaven with St. Peter would be so long.*"

O Lord,
support us all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen,
and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.
Then, Lord, in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last.
Amen.

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

In recent years, sign language has experienced a surge of interest. Rose Ayling-Ellis, an English actress, became the first deaf contestant on BBC's *Strictly Come Dancing* in 2021 - and the film *Coda*, about a teenager who is the only hearing member of a deaf family, won best picture at last year's Oscars.

Now another project is under way, with the Bible being translated into British Sign Language (BSL).

A Deaf person's understanding of the Bible relies upon the subjective reading of individual interpreters - their understanding of the stories and words on any given day. On another day or with or a different interpreter, the Bible stories may be signed slightly differently and convey a slightly different meaning.

The BSL Bible Translation Project is trying to correct this problem. A team of Christian volunteers are working with historical and biblical experts to translate the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew texts into a BSL video version where the signing will not change. It will be the first translation project that is not affiliated to any specific church or denomination so it can be widely accepted by mainstream Christian denominations and churches

The project has involved about 20 people, from theological experts to BSL linguists, interpreters and presenters, at a cost of about £1,000 a day - all from

sponsorship. The project's aim is to strike a balance between scholarly interpretations of the texts while ensuring that the translation is accessible, accurate and looks natural in BSL.

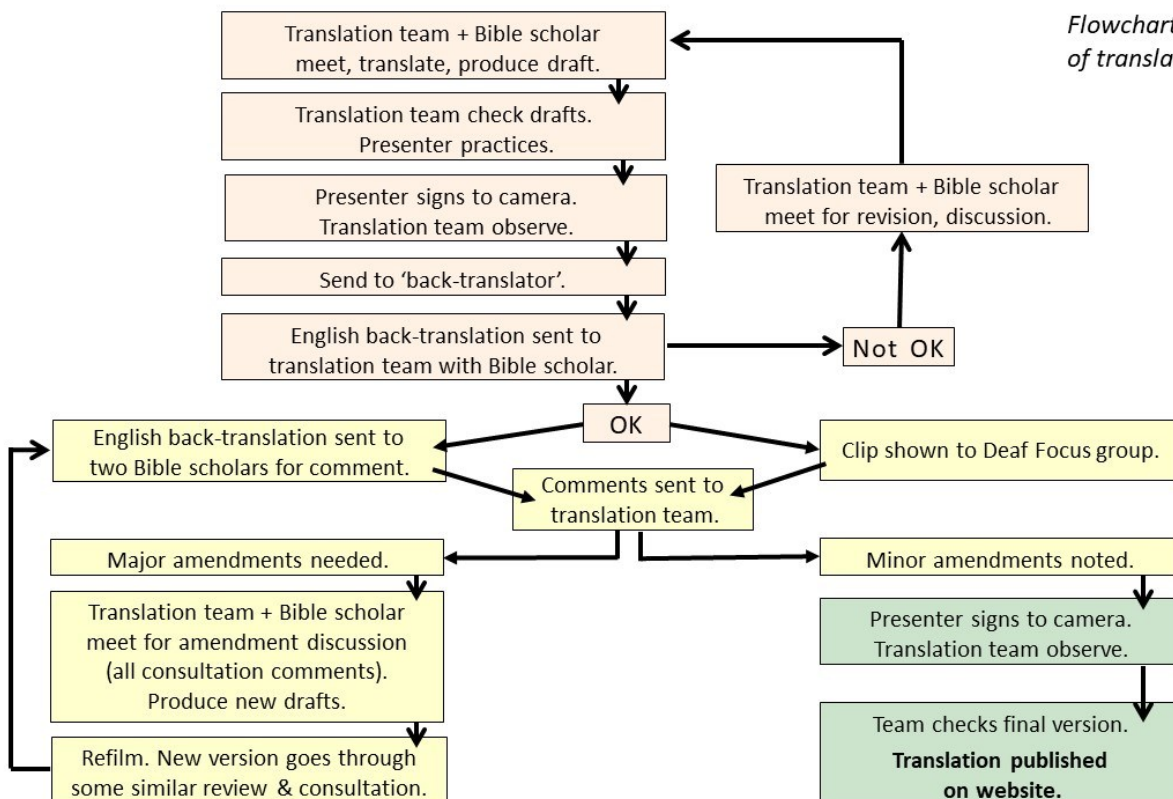
The team has so far translated Mark's Gospel and has begun working on parts of Genesis, both of which are available on the project's website at www.bslbible.org.uk

However, it isn't straightforward as there are many versions of the Bible in English - because translators rarely agree on how to express the meaning of the original texts. Also, signing is often considered the "dynamic interpretation" of language, meaning it is used to convey thought-for-thought rather than word-for-word. It focuses on feelings and nouns, rather than conjunctions such as "for", "and" or "but".

While the BSL Bible Translation Project does not currently have a deadline for completion, a similar project to translate the Bible into American Sign Language took 40 years.



Flowchart of the process of translation & checking





FRIDAY FARE



FIG CAKE

Combine a vanilla and almond sponge with soft, squidgy fig halves with sugar and marsala, and create a cake that goes perfectly with a nice cup of tea!

Ingredients:

- 8 figs, halved lengthways
- 3 tbsp caster sugar
- 4 tbsp marsala
- 200g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for the tin
- 200g soft light brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- 125g self-raising flour
- 75g ground almonds
- 1 tsp baking powder

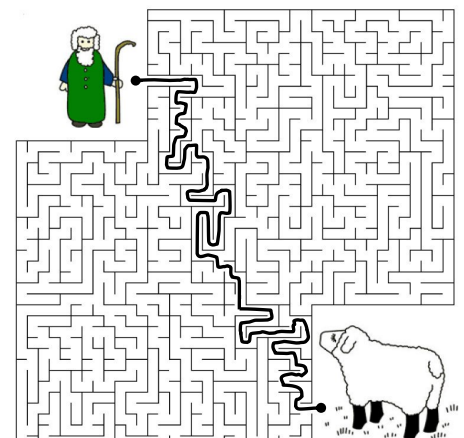
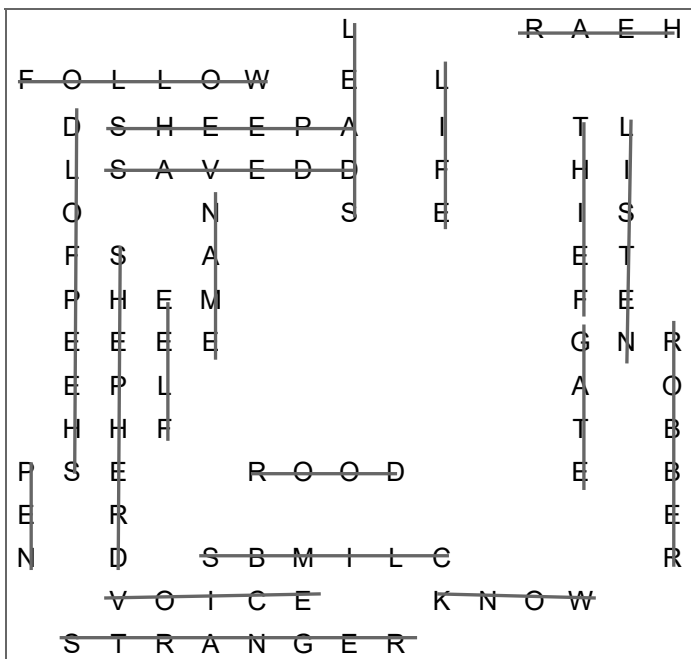


Method:

1. Heat the oven to 180°C / 160C fan / Gas Mark 4.
2. Butter and line a 20cm springform cake tin.
3. Put the figs into a bowl with 2 tbsp of the caster sugar and marsala, and mix well. Leave for 15 mins .
4. Put the softened butter into a bowl with the brown sugar and use electric beaters to whisk until really light and fluffy.
5. Crack in the eggs, whisking really well between each addition, then stir in the vanilla, flour, almonds, baking powder and ½ tsp of fine sea salt, until a smooth batter forms .
6. Scatter the bottom of the tin with the remaining caster sugar and then arrange the fig halves, cut-side down.
7. Pour the batter into the prepared tin. Bake for 1 hr until golden, risen and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.
8. Cool in the tin for 10 mins, then flip onto a cake plate and remove the tin.
9. Pour over any remaining marsala syrup and leave to cool until warm, then cut into slices and serve with a cup of tea.



GOOD SHEPHERD PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



PRAYER INTENTIONS VOCATIONS

The World Day of Prayer for Priestly and Religious Vocations is held each year on the Fourth Sunday of Easter. The purpose of this day is to publicly fulfil the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2).

During the season of Easter, we pray especially for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, may those whom God chooses be open to his call. We also pray for all people who follow God's call, that they may they find fulfilment in the life they have chosen.

Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd in the Gospel of John read on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, in each of the three years. This is why this day is also liturgically known as **Good Shepherd Sunday**. The Good Shepherd who has come so that people may have life to the full, the one who lays down his life for his sheep, the one who knows his sheep — they recognise his voice.

PAPAL MESSAGE

According to a proverb from the Far East, "a wise person, looking at the egg can see an eagle; looking at the seed he glimpses a great tree; looking at the sinner he glimpses a saint". That is how God looks at us: in each of us, he sees a certain potential, at times unbeknownst to ourselves, and throughout our lives he works tirelessly so that we can place this potential at the service of the common good. Vocation arises in this way, thanks to the art of the divine Sculptor who uses his "hands" to make us go forth from ourselves and become the masterpiece that we are called to be. The word of God, which frees us from self-absorption, is especially able to purify, enlighten and recreate us. Let us listen to that word, in order to become ever more open to the vocation that God entrusts to us!

Pope Francis
World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 2022

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Father,
in your plan for our salvation
you provide shepherds for your people.

Fill your Church with the spirit of
courage and love.
Raise up worthy ministers of your altars
and ardent but gentle servants of the
Gospel.



Roman Missal

CYCLE OF PRAYER

In the Cycle of Prayer, the liturgical year has been divided into six periods. Please pray for the intentions stated - not only on a particular day, not only at Mass, but throughout the period, especially in your own private prayers.

Lent	Candidates for the Sacraments <i>especially on the Sundays of Lent</i> Women <i>especially on Women's World Day of Prayer (Friday 3rd March)</i> The Needy & Hungry of the World <i>especially on Lent Fast Day (Friday 24th February)</i> Survivors of Sexual Abuse <i>especially on Friday of 5th Week of Lent (Friday 31st March)</i> Penitents & Wanderers
	New Members of the Church Vocations <i>Especially on World Day of Prayer for Vocations (Sunday 30th April)</i> Human Work <i>especially on Feast Day of St Joseph the Worker (1st May)</i> Right Use of the Media <i>especially on World Communications Day (Sunday 21st May)</i> The Church <i>especially on Pentecost (Sunday 28th May)</i>
	A Deeper Understanding between Christians and Jews Those Who Suffer Persecution, Oppression and Denial of Human Rights <i>this intention is inspired by the Feast of St John Fisher and St Thomas More (22 June)</i> Human Life <i>especially on the Day for Life Day (Friday 18th June)</i> Europe Seafarers

Ordinary Time: Summer



www.liturgyoffice.org.uk

LITURGICAL CALENDAR FOR 2023-24

Calendar of Feasts and Fasts

**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
& WALES

The Annunciation of the Lord	Sat.	25 March 2023
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord	Sun.	2 April
Maundy Thursday	Thu.	6 April
Good Friday **	Fri.	7 April
Easter Sunday	Sun.	9 April
Saint George, Protector of England	Mon.	24 April
The Ascension of Our Lord	Thu.	18 May
The Feast of Pentecost, Whit Sunday	Sun.	28 May
Mary, Mother of the Church	Mon.	29 May
The Most Holy Trinity	Sun.	4 June
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ	Sun.	11 June
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus	Fri.	16 June
Immaculate Heart of Blessed Virgin Mary	Sat.	17 June
Saint John Fisher & Saint Thomas More	Thu.	22 June
The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist	Sat.	24 June
Saint Peter and Saint Paul, apostles	Thu.	29 June
The Transfiguration of Our Lord	Sun.	6 August
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Tue.	15 August
All Saints	Wed.	1 November
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe	Sun.	26 November
First Sunday of Advent (Sunday Cycle: A)	Sun.	3 December
The Nativity of Our Lord - Christmas Day	Mon.	25 December
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	Sun.	31 December
The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God	Mon.	1 January 2024
The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ	Sun.	7 January
The Baptism of Our Lord	Mon.	8 January
The Presentation of Our Lord (Candlemas)	Fri.	2 February
Ash Wednesday **	Wed.	14 February
Saint Joseph	Tue.	19 March

Bold entries above denote Holydays of Obligation (and every Sunday too).

** Days of Fasting and Abstinence.

THE POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR 2023



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network
APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

*The intentions are keys to live our faith in daily life, joining action to our prayers.
Each intention presents a challenge that gives purpose to the month.*

APRIL

For a Culture of Peace & Non-Violence

We pray for the spread of peace and non-violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens.

MAY

For Church Movements & Groups

We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelization each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.

JUNE

For the Abolition of Torture

We pray that the international community may commit in a concrete way to ensuring the abolition of torture and guarantee support to victims and their families.

ST JOHN FISHER PARISH HALL HIRE

Our parish hall is now available to hire at times when it is not being used by our parish activities.

**Are you looking for a space to host your child's birthday party
or family get together?**

**Do you know a group that is looking for a space during a weekday for a
dance/fitness/music class?**

The hall is available for private hire during weekdays (apart from Thursday) and during the day on Saturday (10.30am to 5pm) and Sunday (1.30 to 5.30pm).

Our parish hall is *not* available for hire in the evenings.

**If you would like to book our hall, please visit
www.lowcosthalls.co.uk/location/merton-church-hall
or call the booking management company,
Praetorium, on 01372 457651
for more information**

£40 per hour

(Reduced rates will be offered for regular bookings)

*Please do not contact the Parish Office with hire enquiries
unless the event relates to a parish event or group (bereavement included).*

ST. JOHN FISHER CHURCH REPOSITORY & BOOKSHOP

Open:

*Before and after 9 am Mass
most weekdays*

*On Sundays between
8.30 to 9.30am
and
10.30 to 11am*

- All occasion cards
- Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation items available
- We also stock adult Prayer books in foreign languages and children's Prayer books in Polish



*The Church Repository will gladly receive your
spare gift bags and no-longer needed
greetings cards.*

*The cards are recycled into handmade unique
cards and sold in aid of the Lullaby Trust
and cot death charities.*

We have a few for sale in the Gift Shop.

We want to grow as a charity to be ready to meet the needs of families struggling with hardships in our community particularly in 2023. We can offer you exciting and rewarding volunteering opportunities which can really make a difference in the lives of children and families



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

"Mummy, are we poor?"

A 6 year old is already feeling that she is different from her friends at school. Christian CARE is offering YOU an exciting volunteering role where you can make a real difference....

Children's and Families Activities Coordinator

Do you have a heart for children? Do you have the vision to develop the work our team already does through carefully chosen birthday presents, outings, Polka Theatre workshops, activity camps and holidays to give these youngsters new opportunities and to help them know that they are special?

To find out more go to:

www.christiancaremerton.org.uk/volunteering

or phone the CARE Coordinator on:

07932 628840



Deputy CARE Coordinator

This is a new post and the successful candidate will share the work of our CARE Coordinator in leading the organisation once they have a thorough understanding of the charity's operations. This will be gained by shadowing the CARE Coordinator in the first instance. The CARE Coordinator is responsible for identifying and implementing the decision making of the Board of Trustees and overseeing the work carried out within the charity under the umbrella of six projects: Baby, Children's & Household, Befrienders, Children's and Families' Activities, Family Support, Furniture, and Office. The Coordinators of these projects meet 6 times a year to review work done and plan future work..

Although run by Christians, CCA is working to assist people in need in the London Borough of Merton, regardless of race or religion. Christian Care is run entirely by volunteers.

It is anticipated that the role should take up to the equivalent of 2 days a week. Outside training would be provided as necessary for the successful candidate.

If you are interested in finding out more about the role please contact:

Jane Savill (Chair) jane.savill@christiancaremerton.org.uk

or

Gillian Thick (CARE Coordinator)

gillian.thick@christiancaremerton.org.uk

phone: 07932 628840.

Do you have good quality furniture you could donate to a good cause? Contact the Christian CARE Furniture Project!

We are particularly in need of

- strong wooden bed frames
- chests of drawers
- manageable wardrobes
- modestly sized sofas with fire labels
- compact dining tables and chairs



For more information see: www.christiancaremerton.org.uk/Projects

Email offers to christiancaremerton@gmail.com attaching photo and measurements



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Learning to be the best we can be.

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The very best start in education—for pupils, parents and staff



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Staff, parents and governors work together to offer all pupils a high quality education centred on Christ and with gospel values at its core

We would be delighted to welcome you to our wonderful school.

Please visit the school website or contact the school office for details.

St John Fisher RC Primary School

Grand Drive

West Wimbledon

London SW20 9NA

Telephone: 020 8540 2637

Email: school@st-johnfisher.merton.sch.uk

Website: www.st-johnfisher.merton.sch.uk

St John Fisher
Senior Citizens Club

**Are you free
on Thursdays
1–3 pm?**

Do you and your friends like playing card games?

Are you good at words and like playing Scrabble?

Or do you just want to relax, chat and play Bingo?

We offer all these activities, together with tea, coffee, cakes and sandwiches.



**So, why not come along
to the Church Hall –
you will be sure
of a warm welcome.**



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020 8286 3293



215863



ST. JOHN FISHER PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

Thursdays (term time only)
9.30 - 11.30 am in the Parish Hall

The Parent and Toddler Group invite pre-school children and their parents to come along and create new friendships within our church community.

£3 admission (includes refreshments and a new craft activity each week). Admission is limited to 30 children to ensure a fun and safe environment.



Any questions?
Please contact Pippa at
piplindsay@gmail.com

To advertise in TALKABOUT

Please contact:

Marina Bowyer

020 8542 1349

talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk

Speak to Marina about what you would like worded or illustrated in your advert.

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Full Page	
(inside)	£30
(back cover)	£38

TALKABOUT PARISH MAGAZINE - 2023 DATES

Deadline for submitting items (talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk or to the Parish Office)	Sunday 4 June	Sunday 3 Sept.	Sunday 3 Sept.
Distribution Weekend	24 & 25 June	23 & 24 Sept.	16 & 17 Dec.



Deadline for articles to be included in the next edition of *Talkabout* must be with the Editorial Team before

SUNDAY 4TH JUNE 2023

talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE:

The Readers' Rota, Eucharistic Ministers Rota and Collection Counters Rota are not being published at present.



Coffee, tea, squash & biscuits are served in the Hall after 9:30am and 11:00am Mass each Sunday.

Everyone welcome!

" A true friend is someone who thinks you're a good egg, even if you're cracked."

Bernard Meltzer



Ursuline Preparatory School Wimbledon

A Roman Catholic Independent Preparatory School
for Girls aged 4 to 11 and a Coeducational Pre-School



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Claremont Fan Court*
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Epsom College
Godolphin & Latimer
Kingston Grammar School*
Lady Eleanor Holles*
Marymount
Notre Dame*
Putney High
St John's Leatherhead
Surbiton High School
Sutton High School*
Tiffin Girls School
Wallington
Wimbledon High School

* indicates scholarships offered
41% achieved scholarships

Year 4 places available for September 2023

Benefit from exceptional KS2 teaching in a nurturing environment
which will propel your daughter into the best secondary schools.

Please join our Open Event on

Wednesday 26th April 2023, 9.30am

Sign up at: www.ursulineprep.org/admissions/open-events or
scan QR code



PARISH GROUPS

	Who for?	When?	Where?	Run by?	Contact Details?
Altar Servers	Parishioners (post-First Holy Communion)			Robert Roy	raroysms@gmail.com
Choir 11am Mass	Church Choir	Practice: Tuesday 3.00-4.30pm	Church Choir Loft	<i>To be advised</i>	
Music Group 9.30am Mass	Singers and Musicians		Family Mass	Volunteer Needed	
Guild of Our Lady	Parish children (Year 5 & above)	Monday evening	Day Chapel	Kate Colthup	merton@rcaos.org.uk
Justice & Peace Group	Parishioners	Once a month	Venue varies	J&P Team	sjf.justiceandpeace@gmail.com
Over 60s Club	Parishioners	Thursday 1.00-3.00pm	Parish Hall	Kathleen Healy, Julia Doherty & Margaret Redding	margaretredding11@hotmail.com
RCIA	Anyone wishing to learn more about Catholicism	Tuesday 8.00pm	<i>To be advised</i>	Kate Colthup & Miriam Davis	merton@rcaos.org.uk
Readers	Please speak to the Clergy if you would like to read	Mass	Church	Clergy	207 Cannon Hill Lane merton@rcaos.org.uk
SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society)	Needy parishioners	Help available as needed	By arrangement	SVP Team	Sean Deane 020 8715 7972
Talkabout	Parishioners	Editorial Team meet quarterly	Venue varies	Editorial Team	talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk
Teams of Our Lady	Parish Families	Each Team meets monthly	Homes of members	<i>To be advised</i>	
Toddler Group	Children (birth - 4 yrs)	Thursday Term Time 9.30-11.30am	Parish Hall	Pippa Lindsay	pipnlindsay@gmail.com
Youth Group	Parish children (Year 6 & above)	Alt. Friday 7.30– 9.30pm	Parish Hall	Rosslynne Jorge, Tanya Coyne & Jovita	youthclub.stjohnfisher@gmail.com

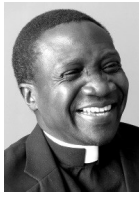
UNIFORM GROUPS

Uniform Groups Coordinator: Margaret Redding margaretredding11@hotmail.com

Rainbows	Girls (5 - 7 yrs)	Monday 4.15-5.15pm	Parish Hall	Sandy Brown	san.brown8@outlook.com
Brownies	Girls (6 - 9 yrs)	Monday 5.30-7.15pm	Parish Hall	Andrea Brandwood <i>Brown Owl</i>	Brownowl3rdMorden@ outlook.com
Guides	Girls (10 - 14 yrs)	Tuesday 6.00-7.40pm	Parish Hall	Sandy Brown <i>Guide Leader</i>	san.brown8@outlook.com
Beavers	Boys & Girls (6 - 8 yrs)	Friday 5.45-7.15pm	Parish Hall	}	
Cubs	Boys & Girls (8 - 10½ yrs)	Wednesday 6.00-7.30pm	Parish Hall	} Tracy Sterlini } <i>Group Scout Leader</i>	
Scouts	Boys & Girls (10½ - 14 yrs)	Wednesday 7.30-9.30pm	Parish Hall	}	
Explorers	Boys & Girls (14 - 19 yrs)	Tuesday 7.45-9.30pm	Parish Hall	Tom Carter & Andy Newman <i>ESLs</i>	dtjambo@yahoo.co.uk

PARISH DETAILS

ST JOHN FISHER PARISH



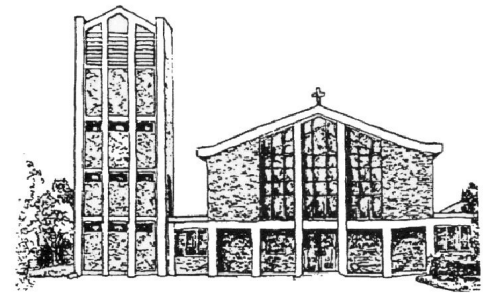
Parish Admin.
Fr Matthias
Kizito



Assist. Priest
Fr Francis
Nonyelu



Deacon
Tom
Kavanagh



Address: The Presbytery
207 Cannon Hill Lane
Merton, London SW20 9DB

Telephone: 020 8542 6355

E-mail: merton@rcaos.org.uk
talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk.

Website: www.stjohnfishermerton.co.uk

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/
StJohnFisherParishMerton/

Parish Secretary: Melissa Russell
9am - 2.00pm Monday & Thursday

Baptism: 3:00 pm First Sunday of the month
by prior arrangement

Reconciliation: Saturday 9:30 - 10:30 am
in the Hall

Mass Times:

Weekdays: 9:00 am

First Fridays: 8:00 pm

Holydays: 6:00 pm (Vigil), 9:00 am & 7.30 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am & 6:00 pm (Vigil)

Sunday: 8:00 am

9:30 am (Family Mass)

11:00 am (Sung Mass)

6:30 pm

Repository: Weekdays - before and after 9 am
Mass most weekdays.
Sundays - between 8.30 to 9.30am
and 10.30 to 11am.

ST JOHN FISHER PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Fr Matthias
• President

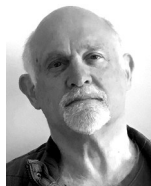
Deacon Tom
• Ex-Officio
• Apostolate

Paul Spooner
• Chairman

Peter Nash
• Deputy Chair

Collette Farley
• Secretary

Fr Francis
• Ex-Officio



Claire Brierley
• St. John Fisher
Primary School

Michael Calnan
• Elected Member

Sean Deane
• St. Vincent de Paul

Pippa Lindsay
• Toddlers Group

Sandra Malveiro
• Elected Member



Ursula O'Byrne
• Safeguarding

Margaret Redding
• Uniform Groups

Rob Roy
• Elected Member

Ann Vaz
• Elected Member



