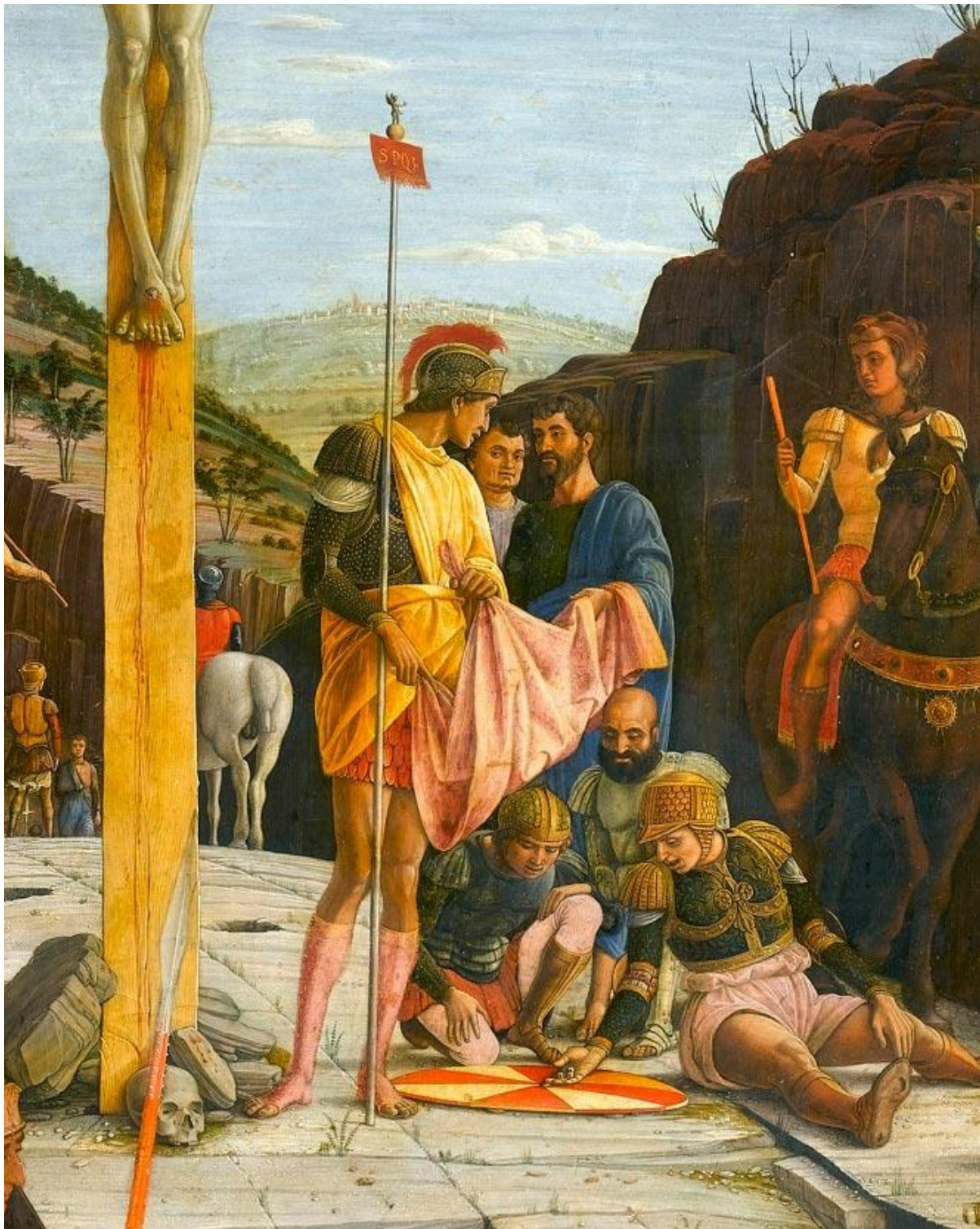


Talkabout

MARCH 2024

St. John Fisher Parish Magazine



Cover: A detail from 'The Crucifixion' (1450s) by Andrea Mantegna shows the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments - learn more about this subject and artist on pages 7 and 15 in this edition.

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

SUNDAY 2ND JUNE 2024

talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk



Full colour PDF of *Talkabout* is available on the parish website - www.stjohnfishermerton.co.uk



WELCOME

CHRIST IS TRULY ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!



Dear brothers and sisters,

I welcome you to the greatest feast of our redemption. We celebrate this glorious mystery of our Lord's resurrection with love and joy, to remind ourselves that our penitential Lenten journey of 40 days treading the paths of love, mercy and hope marked out by Christ for us is not in vain. The painful passion and dramatic death of Jesus on the cross is not in vain. He is our Paschal light today and for all ages, whose flame brings light out of darkness, the flame that casts his radiance upon all.

The celebration of his resurrection (Easter) defines our faith.

"Christ...gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil, according to the will of the Father" (Gal 1:3-4). Through his suffering, death, and resurrection he overcame evil and death and ignited hope and joy in the hearts of us all. He not only demonstrated his power over death but also God's faithfulness to His word. Christ is risen from death; he lives among us! His name now is "the Living One". Death has no more power over him (Rom 6:9). This message has a powerful and deeper meaning. His resurrection message is that our sins have been forgiven, and we're eternally secure and alive in Christ. Heaven is going to be our eternal homeland. Those who believe in Christ will live forever. Since Christ rose from the dead, we can face tomorrow with assurance and perfect peace.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, Christ invites us to share and celebrate his Easter that liberates us, and to meditate upon his love for us, and the entire humanity, and to bear witness of his love to the world. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Christ has laid down his life for us. He loved the church and gave himself up for her (Eph 5:25); He is the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me (Gal 2:20). This is what Easter is.

We are invited this Easter to open our hearts to the risen Christ and receive his true love and compassion. Christ our true love is risen. The tomb is empty. True love empties the tomb; true love eliminates death; true love rolls away stones, rocks, and obstacles; true love liberates; true love brings war violence, and adversity to an end; true love transforms people; true love gives life to the dying, and so on. As we celebrate Christ's compassion, mercy, forgiveness, kindness, grace, and love this Easter, may we as a parish community and family share God's gift of love with everyone,

especially, our families, neighbours, and young people who are seeking true love. Let it flow from our hearts! Let us like Christ, be the love that could make people see the meaning of life again this Easter!

With the message of Pope Francis: "Let us make haste to surmount our conflicts and divisions, and to open our hearts to those in greatest need. Let us hasten to pursue paths of peace and fraternity." Today let us believe and profess: "Christ is truly risen from the dead!" (cf. Sequence). If, as one of the ancient Fathers once wrote, "the greatest sin is not to believe in the power of the resurrection" (SAINT ISAAC OF NINEVEH, Sermones Ascetici, I, 5), today let us believe and profess: We believe in you, Lord Jesus. We believe that, with you, hope is reborn and the journey continues. May you, the Lord of life, encourage us on our journey and repeat to us, as you did to the disciples on the evening of Easter: "Peace be with you! Peace be with you! Peace be with you!" (Jn 19:21).

(Pope Francis)

Happy Easter to all

Fr. Joseph

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR

All those recently Baptised

Sophie Killerby
Maisie Russell
Heidi Coyne
Arthur Coyne
Ellis Chatfield
Isla Forbes
Sophie Forbes
Logan Russell



Jack Cameron-Hann
Francesca Cameron-Hann

All those recently called home to Heaven

Carmel Ball
Kate Colthup
Joyce Dee
Neville King
Bridie Fitzgerald
Kevin McGrath
Margaret Galligan



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

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AT ST JOHN FISHER

Sunday 24th March: Palm Sunday

Mass will begin with the blessing of palms

Holy Mass: 8.00am, 9.30am (Family),
11.00am (Sung) and 6.30pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 4.00pm

Evening Prayer of the Church 4:45pm

Stations of the Cross: 7.30pm

Monday 25th March

Holy Mass: 6.45am and 9.00am

Confessions: 9.30 - 10.30am

Lenten Talk: 7.30pm (*Parish Hall*)

Tuesday 26th March

Holy Mass: 6.45am and 9am

Confessions: 9.30 - 10.30am

Wednesday 27th March

No Confessions today

Holy Mass: 6.45am and 9.00am

Stations of the Cross: 7.30pm

Thursday 28th March: Maundy Thursday

Confessions: 9.30 - 10.30am

Lenten Lunch (*Parish Hall*)

Holy Mass: 5pm for Children and Senior Citizens

Mass of the Lord's Supper: 8.00pm

Watching and praying until 11.30pm

Night Prayer of the Church: 11.00pm

Friday 29th March: Good Friday

Solemn day of fasting and abstinence

Service of the Passion at 11.00am

(Children mime the Passion)

Passion of the Lord: 3.00pm

Confessions after the 11am and 3.00pm Services

Stations of the Cross: 7.30pm

with veneration of the Cross

Saturday 30th March: Holy Saturday

No Masses at 9am or 6pm

Confessions: 9.30 - 10.30am

The Easter Vigil: 8.00pm

(The First Mass of Easter)

Sunday 31st March: Easter Sunday

Holy Mass: 8am, 9.30am (Family),

11am (Sung) and 6.30pm

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

AT ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL

Archbishop Wilson will celebrate Holy Week and Easter Liturgies at St George's Cathedral in 2024. All are welcome to join him and the Cathedral Clergy to mark the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. A schedule of services is listed on the Diocesan website www.rcsouthwark.co.uk, alongside opportunities for Adoration, the Sacrament of Confession and the Children's Stations of the Cross.



MASS FOR MIGRANTS

Celebrate the vibrancy and diversity of our migrant communities.

Rejoicing in all those who live and work across London

at the **MASS FOR MIGRANTS** on
Monday 6th May 2024

All are welcome to join and give thanks
at St George's Cathedral, London SE1 7HY

Keep an eye on the Diocesan website
www.rcsouthwark.co.uk for further details.

The Great Big Green Week 2024

8th - 16th June

The Great Big Green Week is a nationwide celebration of action on climate change, taking place across the UK from 8th to 16th June 2024. Sponsored by the Climate Coalition 130 members bring together media groups, organisations, institutions, societies, businesses, people from all walks of life to challenge government to take serious action to tackle the effects of climate change.

www.greatbiggreenweek.com

**THE GREAT
BIG GREEN
WEEK**

PARISHIONERS RECEIVE PAPAL BLESSINGS

Sean Deane celebrated his 90th birthday on the 16th February and Margaret Redding celebrated her 80th Birthday on Monday 19th February.

Both parishioners were presented with Papal Blessings in Church as a thank you for their contribution to our parish. Some of Margaret's fellow volunteers also arranged a special surprise lunch for her in the parish hall.

Melissa Russell



What an amazing surprise for our dad, Sean Deane, this morning. At the end of Mass, the Fathers presented him with a Papal Blessing on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

Many parishioners very kindly brought cards over to him too. Dad commented with good humour, "Anyone can make it to 90 if they wait long enough!"

A great start to our celebrations, even if it is Lent!

Martin Deane

PARKING NEAR THE CHURCH

Please remember to be considerate of our neighbours when parking your car for Mass.

**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.

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

PARISH ALPHA YOUTH COURSE

December 2023-February 2024

Pope Francis's initiative to hold a Synod to consider active participation and communication in the Church so as to spread the good news of the Gospel and be a Missionary Church led to parishes worldwide considering this topic. At our own meetings in St John Fisher parish two years ago in preparation for the Synod, we discerned that one of the groups of parishioners most in need was our youth, particularly those who had received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The parish believed that putting a post-confirmation programme in place to keep up the momentum once the children had been confirmed so that they experienced a sense of belonging in the parish and felt actively encouraged to continue exploring their faith would be beneficial. The aim and vision of the programme would be to create a vibrant, active section of the parish community which the children felt part of and could contribute to.

To begin with the parish planned an Alpha Youth Course which started in December last year to coincide with the completion of the confirmation programme in November. The Alpha Youth series is created by Alpha "to help create a space that is engaging and dynamic for teenagers wanting to ask questions and share opinions." A typical meeting comprises: initially, making the children feel welcome when a light meal is provided; the course content itself which is provided in a video lasting about thirty minutes during which sets of questions are raised for the children to explore the big issues round their faith; division into smaller groups to discuss the questions; and finally some fun when the children can relax and enjoy themselves. A bit like a more advanced level of Youth Club perhaps and certainly no question that they should feel in a classroom situation.



In a document entitled "Why Alpha in a Catholic Context?" it is pointed out that Alpha "is not intended to be used for catechesis but for evangelisation designed to proclaim the good news of the gospel" just as Jesus did to his disciples. The document goes on to say that

"if powered by prayer and run with authentic hospitality and openness to the Holy Spirit, Alpha works as over 162 Catholic parishes across the country can testify."

The course was free as the parish applied for and was granted an award from the Archdiocesan Appeal Fund. And a great team was put together to run the course including the course leader, Elly Keevil, an RE teacher experienced in delivering Alpha, Ann Bennett, Rozz Jorge, Julie Wilkinson, and Magdalen Spooner, the course co-ordinator.

The young people who attended joined enthusiastically in the team games we played, enjoyed the meals the host volunteers provided and engaged with the material, giving careful consideration to the questions raised and providing thoughtful answers. At the end of the course they were asked how they would describe Alpha in three words. Examples of their responses are as follows: "fun, educational and helpful"; "creative, fun and interesting"; "peaceful, journey and heart-warming"; "fun, better understanding about God and peaceful"; and "educational, inspiring and engaging".

When asked the question "What have you learnt from the course?" typical replies from the children were as follows: "I have learnt about God and how he impacts our everyday life"; "Always to believe and go back to God during hard times and also to always help others to learn more about God"; and "This course helped me to explore aspects and questions in my faith that I had not even thought about and I feel helped strengthen my relationship with God. It was also really lovely to connect with people from all different walks of life and gain their outlooks on situations".

The young people would now like to continue meeting as a group. They would also be prepared to be involved on a more formal basis in a parish youth team that supports and helps the parish by, for example, welcoming at Mass, serving at Mass, playing an instrument or singing at Mass, helping to organise a youth Mass, or youth bible study.

This outcome and positive feedback from the children goes a long way towards fulfilling the original aim and vision of the post-confirmation programme, providing some encouragement for the future development of it. And Pope Francis might be pleased by how his initiative is moving forwards at grass roots level in St John Fisher parish!

Magdalen Spooner

ASK THE CLERGY:

"WHY DID THE ROMAN SOLDIERS CAST LOTS FOR JESUS' CLOTHES AT THE CRUCIFIXION?"

The Roman soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothes at the crucifixion because it was a common practice among them to divide the spoils of war or execution. The casting of lots for Jesus' clothes took place within the context of His crucifixion. The four passion narratives mentioned this very incident. Jesus was stripped of his clothes before he was crucified, and the soldiers decided to divide them among themselves by casting lots, or throwing dice, to determine who would get which item of clothing. This was a way for the soldiers to claim a share of the spoils and to assert their dominance over the condemned person.

The three synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us: *"And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots"* (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34).



Roman soldiers resolving who will have Christ's robe in a 14th century painting by Andrea Vanni

From the Old Testament, we read that casting lots were used to decide a matter by chance (1 Samuel 14:42; Numbers 26:55). It was even clearer in the New Testament when the Apostles wanted to choose a disciple to replace Judas Iscariot. It reads: *"And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles"* (Acts 1:26).

Who were the Roman Soldiers? The Roman soldiers in the New Testament had many duties besides active service in military conquest. They policed the streets when there were dangers of rioting. They were heavily reinforced during the Jewish festivals when huge crowds of excitable people filled the city to overflowing. They also stood guard on prisoners, acting as escorts to those who were being moved. They were always present at the execution of criminals, both to prevent a last-minute rescue and to carry out the actual execution.

These aforementioned explanations showed why the

soldiers were present at the passion (suffering and death) of Christ. This was because Jesus was perceived as a criminal, an enemy of the state, and having been sentenced to death, the soldiers duly carried out the execution.

The Gospel according to John reads, *"When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it'"* (John 19:23-25). St. John the Evangelist expanded the tradition that the soldiers divided Jesus' clothes as written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke into a double action of dividing the clothes and then casting lots for the seamless tunic. This double action is then presented as the fulfilment of the Scripture as written in Psalm 22:18, *"They divide my clothes among themselves and for my clothing they cast lots"*.

So, dividing the clothes was one of the many things that happened during the Passion (suffering, death, and burial) of Jesus. The clothes of Jesus became the property of the soldiers who carried out the execution. What happened to Jesus is in fulfilment of Psalm 22:18, one of the Psalms of the innocently suffering righteous one. Therefore, the action of the soldiers had been viewed as the fulfilment of Psalm 22 in the life of Jesus.

In conclusion, the Gospel writers see Jesus' suffering and death as the climax of His mission, the final fulfilment of God's purpose. His suffering was 'for us and for our salvation'. By His death, He paid the full penalty for 'the sins of the world', once and for all. In Jesus' own words, recorded in the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper, His body was broken and His blood was shed to make a 'new covenant' between human beings and God. By His death He gave His life, He gave everything even His clothes to us. By His death, He reconciled us to God making possible the free gift of eternal life.

Fr. Francis Nonyelu

THE APOSTLES - PHILIP, JAMES, JUDAS & MATTHIAS



The Last Supper mosaic by Giacomo Raffaelli, (a life sized copy of da Vinci's The Last Supper) commissioned by Napoleon I in 1809

ST PHILIP

(Feast Day: 3 May)



Philip was born in Bethsaida, in Galilee. When he was called by Jesus himself, he was more than likely already a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1: 43). It was two days after the baptism of Jesus when Philip was

called with the simple request *"Follow me"*. The previous day, Andrew and Peter had heard John the Baptist point out Jesus with the words, *"Look here is the Lamb of God"* (v36). They also were from Galilee and followed Jesus. In the meantime Philip called Nathaniel to come and meet Jesus claiming he had found the one Moses wrote about. When Nathaniel discovered Jesus knew about him before their meeting he declared him *"The Son of God, the King of Israel"* (John 1:43-51).

It is in St. John's Gospel where we learn most of what we know about Philip. There are three main episodes where Philip speaks and reveals how hard it was for the Apostles to learn and understand who Jesus was and what his mission and teaching was about.

The first instance is where we find Philip having a brief dialogue with Jesus before the miracle of the loaves and fishes (John 6: 5-8). Jesus was testing his faith and that of Andrew and Simon Peter who were named as there. We could think of many lessons to take from this episode, firstly to have faith in God who is always there for us, secondly to persevere in our efforts to help ourselves and others, thirdly to never give up but like

the Apostles who collected the left overs we should be there for those in need. As Pope Francis would remind us, go to the marginalised, the poor and neglected. Dwelling on the story we might find our own pathway to God like the people who recognised him as *"the one to come"*.

The second occasion we find Philip centre stage is when some Hellenistic Jews asked Philip to introduce them to Jesus (John 12:20-26). Philip got Andrew to join him and when they went to Jesus he spoke about life bearing fruit, *"those who love their life will lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life"* (v25). So we learn to put God first and all else will fall into place. In other words we learn to value the goods of this world in the light of eternity.

The third and final revelation was shortly before the Passion. Jesus was instructing the Apostles about the Way and how by knowing Jesus they would know the Father. Philip asks *"Lord show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied"*. Jesus' reply is very revealing, and one we can continue to dwell on for a long time. Jesus replied *"have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"*. But the most telling is when Jesus says *"Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me"*. Though the Holy Spirit is not mentioned this surely is a revelation of the Trinity.

There is no further mention of Philip in the New Testament beyond his listing of the Apostles awaiting the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room According to tradition Philip preached in Greece, Syria and Asia-Minor. He

died in 80AD in Hieropolis, Turkey and is buried in the Basilica of the Twelve Apostles. He was martyred under Emperor Domitian by being crucified upside down.

We must not mix up St. Philip the Apostle with Philip the deacon referred to in the Acts chapter 8.

ST JAMES THE LESSER

(Feast Day: 3 May)



St. James, son of Alphaeus, was born in Galilee. He was known as the brother of Jesus because his mother Mary was either the sister or maybe a close relative of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and according to Jewish tradition, it was the custom therefore for James to be called the brother of

Jesus. James the younger was not related to James the brother of John. So we have two Apostles among the twelve called James.

After the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, James the younger, and Apostle, remained in Jerusalem and became a distinguished member of the early Christian Community. It is said he was regarded as a "pillar" of the community and that St. Paul consulted him regarding the Gospel. According to tradition he was the first bishop of Jerusalem and was present at the first Council of Jerusalem. There in Jerusalem the Apostles gathered to settle the matter which divided the early Christians, that Gentile Christians should "be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses" according to some Pharisees (Acts 15:5). After much discussion the decision was made that Gentiles need not be circumcised (Acts 15: 19-20). Even though James was highly esteemed and was named "James the Just" the Jews in Jerusalem turned on him and he was martyred for the Faith in the Spring of 62AD. This was authenticated by the historians Eusebius and Hegesippus.

Tradition has always recognised James as the author of the Epistle that bears his name. It was judged based on language, style and the teachings of the Epistle which revealed its author as a Jew who was familiar with the Old Testament and a Christian thoroughly grounded in the teaching of the Gospel. Evidence from the early Fathers and Church Councils have confirmed its authenticity and canonicity. No exact date is known about when this Epistle was written. Some say 49AD others 57-58AD or even 60-62AD. The letter looks as though James is thinking mainly of encouraging all Christians, not just Jewish Christians and is strong on teaching about the Faith. James is often called the Lesser, Minor or the younger.

JUDAS ISCARIOT



We can distinguish Judas from the other Apostle Judas Thaddeus by his title, Iscariot. Judas Iscariot was born in Kerieth, Judea, in 3BC. The name Judas (loudas) is the Greek form for Judah and in Hebrew it

means "praised", a name often found in the Old and New Testaments. An honourable name that has become associated with a dark and treacherous story at the time when Jesus most needed his Apostles to be honest, dedicated and true to Him and his cause. Because Judas was a fairly common name even among the twelve, the surname is the distinguishing factor. Iscariot is known in Hebrew as a man from Kerieth (or Carioth) a city in Judea (Joshua 15:25). There may have been some resentment or lack of sympathy from the other Apostles as they were all Galilean and Judas appears to have been a loner.

There can be no doubt that Jesus called Judas to be his disciple as he did the other eleven. We are reminded of this in the Gospel of John, when Jesus said "Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil" (John 6: 70-71). He was referring to Judas son of Simon Iscariot who was to betray him. We know him as the treasurer and he is often portrayed with a bag of coins in art, the most notable being in the pictures of the Last Supper where he leans towards Jesus holding his money bag. It seems Judas was light fingered where the accounts were concerned and had been called a thief.

When Jesus came to Bethany and Mary anointed his feet with an expensive spikenard of oil, Judas objected that the money it cost should be given to the poor. St John records that Judas had no interest in the poor but that he was a "thief" and used to steal from the common purse (John 12: 3-6).

But the most tragic part of Judas' life was the final betrayal. It must have been greed that made Judas accept thirty pieces of silver offered by the chief priests for the betrayal of Jesus. A paltry sum for any life but especially one who reflected only good, love, compassion and forgiveness. Yet Judas could not have learned who Jesus really was and though repenting and handing back the thirty pieces of silver, his despair led him to hang himself (Matt 27: 3-5). So his death is recorded as in Jerusalem. To this day the expression "being a Judas" is used to signify a traitor or a thief.

ST MATTHIAS - THE 13TH APOSTLE

(Feast Day: 14 May)



We find the story of St. Matthias in the first chapter of the Acts. He was born in Judea and his name means "gift of God". He was with Jesus since his baptism by John and was a witness to Christ's resurrection according to St. Peter in Acts and he remained with Jesus until his ascension. He was one of the seventy two disciples sent out by Jesus to preach the Good News. He is believed to have preached in Cappadocia, Jerusalem, the shores of the Caspian Sea in modern day Turkey and also Ethiopia. How he died is difficult to pin down but according to tradition he was martyred in Jerusalem by stoning and then beheaded in 80AD.

The first act the Apostles needed to do after the Ascension of Jesus, was to choose someone to replace Judas. In spite of all the dangers facing them, they chose to concentrate on finding a twelfth Apostle. Important for them but why? Twelve was a very important number for the Chosen People as it was the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. Therefore, if the

New Israel was to be from the Apostles of Jesus it must have twelve Apostles.

The main requirement for Peter was that the new Apostle must, like Andrew, James and John, have been a disciple from the very beginning starting with his baptism by John until the Ascension. The main reason for this is simple. The new Apostle must be a witness to Jesus' Resurrection. He must have followed Jesus and stayed with him in spite of dangers from his enemies and believed in him, especially when he spoke of the cross and of eating his body, at which many others walked away. Two men fitted Peter's criteria, Matthias and Joseph called Barsabbas. But who would have the heart to witness to the Resurrection. The Apostles knew that only the Lord would know. So after prayer and contemplation, they followed Peter's suggestion and cast lots to discover God's will and the lot fell to Matthias (Acts 1: 23-26). Now the group was complete and they awaited in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Again according to old tradition St. Matthias' Feast Day is said to be the luckiest day of the year, because Matthias was the Saint chosen by lot to replace Judas Iscariot.

Teresa Pollard

MOTHERS' PRAYERS



Mothers' Prayers is a prayer group for all women – all those who have a mother's heart, who wish to pray for their children, grandchildren, or for any children. Each week we meet, and using a special booklet pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance, sing and listen to a short reading from scripture. On a table we have a cross, a bible, candles and a small dish at the foot of the cross. Following the initial prayers, we each place the names of our children, written on small discs of paper into the dish. This symbolises the handing over of our children and their problems into the Lord's care. At these meetings, mothers may share with each other in a personal way, knowing that everything they say will be kept confidential.

We also pray for other children, both individuals and groups. We have a special notebook in which we write the names of other children for whom we have been asked or wish to pray. We cannot hand them over to the Lord in the same way as we hand over our own children. After the meeting the bowl of names and the notebook are placed by the Holy Family statue, leaving our children in the care of Jesus.

Mothers' Prayers was started in England in 1995. It has now spread to over eighty countries throughout the

world. We join our prayers with all these other mothers, and know that they are praying for our children, just as we are praying for theirs.

Many of us feel that our prayers have been answered with improvements in children's health, well-being and happiness. As mothers we too feel blessed by sharing our concerns in a Christian and confidential way.

Here at St John Fisher, we meet at 9.30 on a Friday morning. All are welcome to join us, whether just occasionally or on a more regular basis. If you cannot join us but would like us to pray for your child, do write their name in the notebook by the Holy Family statue and we will pray for them.

OUR PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, we come before you as mothers,
wanting you to bless our children,
and all children throughout the world.*

*We thank you for our children -
they are a precious gift to us.
Help us, always to remember this,
especially when they are in difficulties*

*Lord, they live in a troubled world -
a world that does not always acknowledge you,
a world that may sometimes cause them
to be laughed at if they admit to belief in you.*

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.

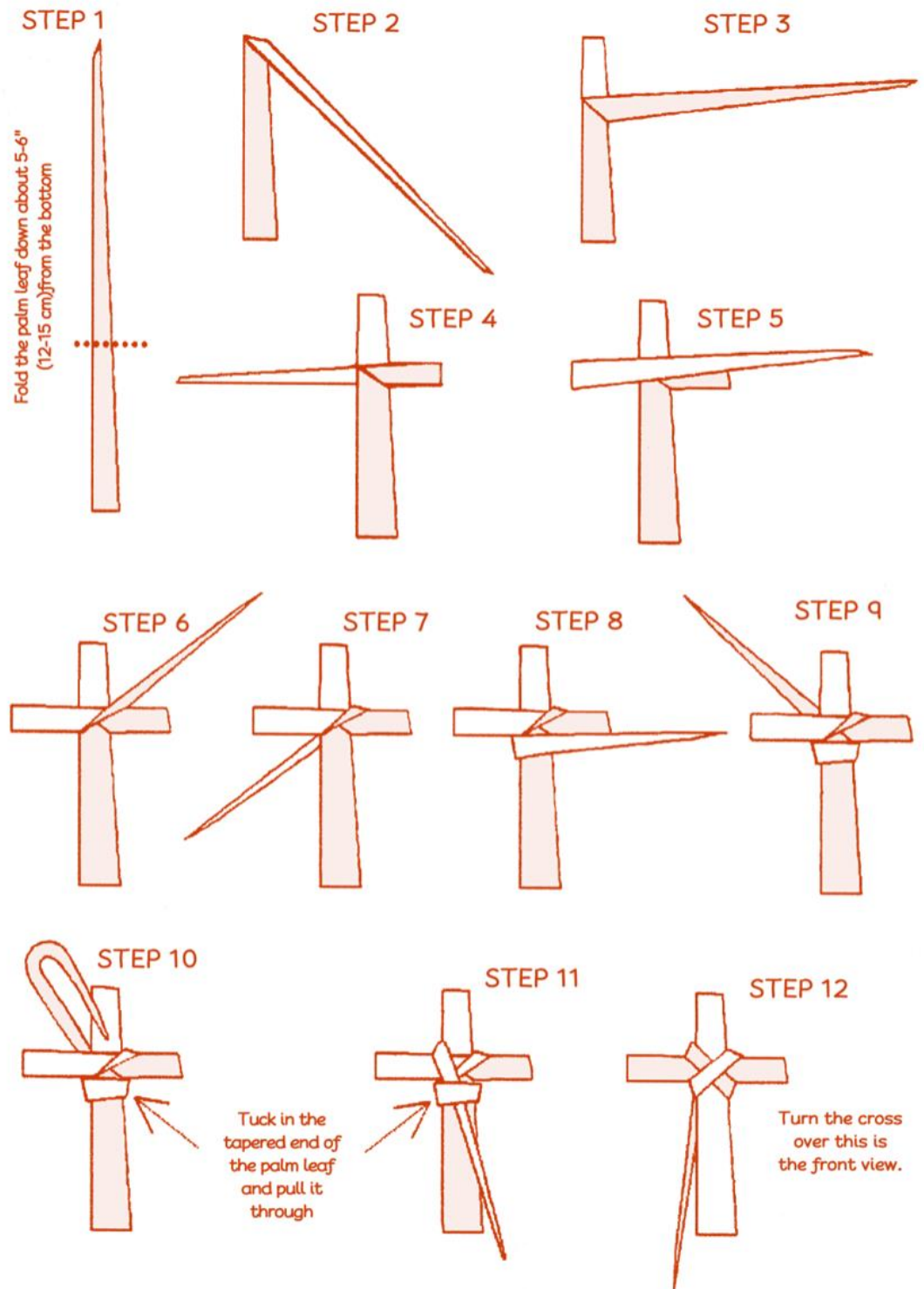
Steps 6-9

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.





JUSTICE & PEACE IN ST JOHN FISHER PARISH



JUSTICE & PEACE ETHICAL SUGGESTIONS

April:

Plant Herb Seeds



May:

No Mow May



June:

Save Water -
Use a Water Butt

STAMP COLLECTION

A reminder that there is a box at the back of the church for your used regular and Christmas 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

6th/7th April

Wimbledon Foodbank

They need:

- Sugar
- Shampoo
- Jam
- Biscuits
- UHT Milk
- Cereals



4th/5th May

Christian Care

They would appreciate:

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



1st/2nd June

Faith in Action

They would appreciate:

- Packed lunch items:
 - Cereal Bars and Protein Bars,
 - Multi-packs of Crisps
 - Multi-packs of small Juice Cartons
- Sugar
- Small ring-pull tins of Sardines or Mackerel fillets,
- Tins of Corned Beef
- Tins of Sweetcorn
- Jars of Peanut Butter





WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

(A women led, Global, Ecumenical Movement)



FRIDAY 1ST MARCH 2024

'I beg you, bear with one another in love'

"The theme of our service this year is from Ephesians 4: 1 – 6. "I beg you, bear with one another in love." The service was written by a group of Palestinian Christian women before the current conflict and deals with their own personal experiences. Their hope was to encourage and inspire other women around the world to bear with one another in troubled times. As has often happened before, this year's service has been overtaken by a tragic set of events.



We offer this service, believing that we are called to support the Christian women who created it and we invite all those taking part to listen prayerfully to their voices. We pray with world leaders, relief workers, medical teams and all those praying about the situation, for an end to the killing, and for the wisdom to build a lasting peace."

WDP Statement for World Day of Prayer

Here in Wimbledon more than 60 people from a range of local Christian Churches gathered at St Mark's Church to celebrate this service, led by Wimbledon Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

The Service shared stories which illuminate the experiences of three Palestinian Christian women, from three different generations. The olive tree, a symbol of Palestine, represented the three generations of women, through its trunk, branches and leaves. As we entered, each person was given a bookmark with olive leaf symbols on it.

The first woman, **Eleonor**, the trunk of the olive tree, was a member of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Holy Land. Her great-grandfather established St. George's Orthodox Church, which remained in existence until the 'Nakba' in 1948, when her family was forced to flee and become refugees, hoping to return soon to their original home and St George's Church. That never happened. She says she learned from her parents' example to co-exist with others even when life is harsh and difficult.

The second woman, **Lina**, lost her Aunt Shireen, a famous journalist who was killed in Jenin. Aunt Shireen was like the branch of an olive tree, resisting the strong winds that threatened her experience. Many people did not know her aunt was a Christian. Her faith led her to bear with all in love despite differences in faith traditions. She stood with all who were being harmed. Lina believes she can gain strength from her aunt's memory to continue telling the truth and working towards reconciliation.



The third woman **Sara** was born and raised in Jerusalem as a Lutheran Christian. In 1948 her grandparents were forced from their home in Jaffa and became refugees in Jordan. Her grandmother kept their keys with the hope of return; a hope that is passed on through the generations. She feels nourished by the love of her ancestors and believes their love is what makes her flourish like the leaf on an olive tree.

All the women asked us to pray for women everywhere, for the world and for those in need. We prayed especially for women who are abused and suffer violence, for refugees, the homeless, those grieving in their country, and also beyond.

Although the stories came from Palestinian women, and therefore had a special poignancy today, we were invited to see the universal message to bear with injustice, inequality, discrimination and violence. Given the focus of news at this present time, this was an opportunity for all of us to show prayerful solidarity with people suffering due to conflict. 'Bearing with one another in love' is desperately needed at this time of war.

After singing the hymn "Put peace into each other's hands," we were invited to reflect on this invitation. Putting peace into each other's hands requires not just yearning for something but actively doing something. We can feel vulnerable when we offer peace, we may be rebuffed. And can we accept peace when it is offered to us, perhaps by someone different from us. We reflected on the difficulty of loving those who are not fair and loving to us. As a token of sharing the Peace of Christ, we exchanged the olive token we had been given with our neighbour.

It was an exceptionally thoughtful and moving service and I'm sure we all came away with resolutions to live more tolerantly and lovingly.

After the service we shared Palestinian style refreshments of pitta bread, hummus, olives and fruit juice with members of the various other Churches present.

We thank the Quakers, and St Mark's Church for their hospitality, and the committee of the World Day of Prayer and women of Palestine for such a beautiful service.

Julie Sheahan



ST JOHN FISHER ALTAR SERVERS

On Boxing Day, the Feast of St Stephen, four of our newer Servers, Kathryn Jennings, Osborne Honrada, Dawid Syiud-Crispin and Heidi Bermingham were enrolled by Fr Francis assisted by Fr Joseph and Deacon Tom into the Guild of St Stephen for Altar Servers. Each received their Bronze Medal, Certificate of Enrolment and Guild Handbook.

Joshua Brierly received a Certificate for serving for 5 years as a member of the Guild and Elizabeth Nwobu was presented with the Silver Medal for serving on our Sanctuary for 10 years.

Athena Geremia was our Reader and during Mass all the Servers recited the Guild Prayer offering to serve with "reverence and understanding for the glory of God, the service of his church and my own eternal salvation."

St Stephen - Pray for Us.

Robert Roy



GUILD OF ST STEPHEN

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.

THE SOLDIERS CAST LOTS FOR JESUS' CLOTHING - FROM 'THE CRUCIFIXION' BY ANDREA MANTEGNA

The painting by Andrea Mantegna reflects the style and interests of the artist. It certainly does not illustrate the reality of how we picture the last moments of Jesus' Passion. The crucifixion was situated outside the walls of Jerusalem near the local dump, very different to the streamlined paved surroundings of Mantegna's painting, so symmetrical and organised and yet with symbolism that awakens our imagination and our need to find meaning. Our eyes are drawn to the figure in the centre where Jesus hangs on the cross and then to wander around the groups and individuals each with their own intention or responsibility.

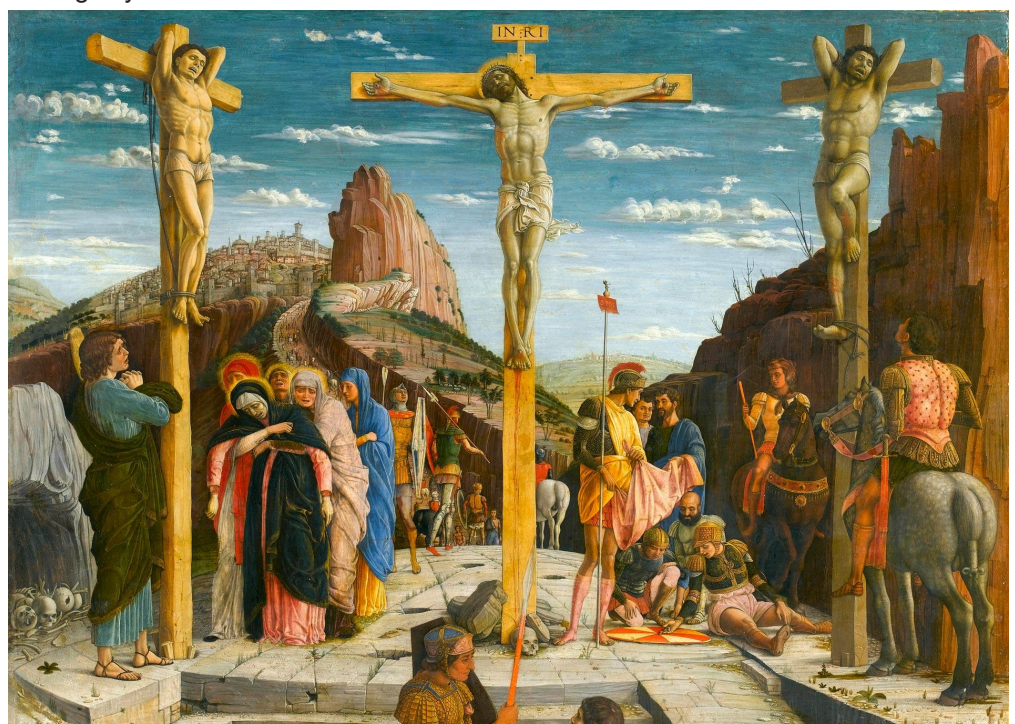
This painting is the centre piece for the predellas (horizontal panels) used in front of the high altar in the Church of San Zeno in Verona, Italy. Mantegna was only twenty six when he received this commission. He started his career at a very early age and needed his older brother to sign for him for his earliest commissions because he was too young. The three crosses in this scene are the centre piece laid out symmetrically on a paved area and with Jerusalem in the background. This pattern continues throughout the picture. We see on the bottom right hand corner the soldier on horseback overseeing the gruesome situation while on the left the corresponding person is the grieving Apostle John. Mary, and the cluster of women supporting her in her agony, on the left are balanced by the group of indifferent soldiers casting lots for Jesus' tunic on the right (Luke: 23:34-35).

The casual inattention of the Roman executioners towards the extreme suffering and grisly torture of Jesus on the cross, contrasts with the grief so obvious among the women and St. John. The exception to this contrast are the two soldiers, one on horseback and the other standing behind the women, on guard no doubt to avoid any trouble. The thief on Jesus' left looks severely contorted in agony, lying in the shadows and with his head turned away from Jesus. On the other side of Jesus is the repentant thief to whom Jesus turns with words of salvation "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42-43).

The account of the soldiers casting lots for Jesus tunic is found in all four Gospels, (Matt 27: 35-36; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19: 23-24). John extends his account by identifying it with the prophecy in Psalm 22:18. In Mantegna's painting John's reference to the Psalm is highlighted by the standing soldier holding the tunic up clearly while the other three throw dice on a wheel of red and yellow triangular patterns. Scripture tells us nothing about casting lots so the illustration must be from Mantegna's imagination and how he saw the biblical event. Casting lots must be an accepted way of selection as we see how Matthias was chosen (Acts 1:24-26).

The Artist

Mantegna was born near Padua about 1431-1506. He worked for a local artist, Squarcione. Believing his talents were being exploited, the young artist broke their agreement and in 1453 he married into the rival Venetian family of the Bellinis. Mantegna worked in Padua, Verona and Venice before then moving to Mantua in 1448 where he spent the rest of his life. His technique was that of an imitation of classical sculpture where he used pale skin tones with deep shadows, creating sharp chiselled stone like figures to emphasise in his portraiture the sharp edges of the body, its muscles and sinews. He was known for his rigorous attention to detail and he became the leading Northern Italian mainland painter of the 15th. Century. His work was framed by Roman architecture to organise his compositions as in the soldiers casting lots.



He was possibly from humble origins but reached enough fame to be knighted in 1484, a rare honour for an artist. He had an interest in the antique and this drew him into friendship with humanist scholars in 1464. He bridged the Early and High Renaissance periods and his work illustrates the character of the era, contrasts between humanism and martial aggression, piety and profiteering. Mantegna was influenced by Giovanni Bellini's work after marriage into the family

and this introduced a softer colour palette which he emulated to balance the sculptural qualities of his work.

There is one question we might ask ourselves, does the casting of lots by the soldiers create a distraction for us from the more important events shown in this great religious work of art?

Teresa Pollard

EULOGIES

John Davis (RIP)

John was a devoted and supportive husband, father and grandfather. He always had a ready welcoming smile, with a kind word for those who most needed it. His generous spirit meant he was ready to help at all times and did not hesitate when asked, to join the RCIA team and also the Confirmation catechetical team. At the end even when he was in pain he was still his gentle self with his lovely smile thinking of others. He was an answer to God's call to Stewardship, putting himself at the service of others. May he rest in peace.



Mary Yeats (RIP)

Mary was the most inspirational, kindest and generous mum you could ever have wanted. For us, as her children, she has shown us how to have good relationships within our family. She met our father in her teenage years, as he was strumming away on the bass guitar in a local youth club in Pimlico. The strength of their marriage has been an inspiration to all of us, as they recently celebrated 50 years of marriage. They married in St Mary's Church, Cadogan Street in Chelsea and soon welcomed five children. With us all now having had children we have no idea how she managed with five!



Michael Dooley (RIP)

Michael was first of all a great and dedicated family man. He devoted himself, with his wife Catherine, to the successful upbringing of their four children. Michael's devotion went beyond the family to embrace our community. He was part of the Baptism course. He was also governor of St. Catherine's School and many have happy and lasting memories of his wonderful lighting outside the school for fireworks night with an enormous bonfire. He did not spare himself in the aftermath and was foremost in the cleaning up department. He was always on call to deal with electrical problems in the church and presbytery and responded with a friendly smile to any need big or small. A great example to us of what Stewardship is all about. God reward his work on earth and may he rest in peace.



We moved to Norway and back again and both our parents supported us all through university. Moving on, she was delighted to see us in happy relationships, one after another, and as we navigated through adulthood and parenthood, continued to be our greatest supporter. She loved her twelve grandchildren and showed her affection for them with sleepovers, making crafts, buying them chocolate buttons, and taking them on days out, passing on her love for life.

One area of passion for mum was birds. She could often be found feeding the crows on Wimbledon Common, the birds recognising her and swooping down for the bread she brought. She loved the loud seagulls in Richmond Park and was able to throw the bread up into the air, which the gulls would catch. We will continue to do this in memory of her.

We as her children are incredibly proud of our mum and we owe her everything for all the love she gave us. Rest in peace mum. You will be very missed.

Mike, Nick, Catherine, Steve and Teresa

FR MATTHIAS' FAREWELL PARTY

How do we define "friend" and "pastor" which are words that aptly define Father Matthias. First, we can look at the quote from the mediaeval mystic, Julian of Norwich, "all shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well". Once we knew we were in the hands of Father Matthias we knew all would be well and that we had a true friend and pastor.

Aelred of Rievaulx whose feast it was recently, defined friendship as agreement on all things sacred and profane accompanied by good will and love. That means loving a friend for his own sake and not for anything that will accrue to you from the relationship. A good friend actually is someone who thinks you are a good egg even though he may think you are slightly cracked!

No medicine is more valuable, none more efficacious, none better suited to the care of our lives than a friend to whom we may turn to for consolation in time of trouble and with whom we may share happiness in time of joy. Does this not sound like our former parish priest?

Father Matthias, we wish you luck and many blessings in your new adventure, you will be missed. You made a difference here: we will miss your positive attitude and your smile. You leave I hope, with a sense of accomplishment and a sense of pride for what you have

done during your years here. Life is a journey, and it was good news we met you on the way.

Farewell too little and too lately known whom we began to think and call our own. When we come to say goodbyes, they are not forever. Goodbyes simply mean "I will miss you until we meet again". I will not say goodbye my friend for you and I will meet again. Goodbye is only for tonight, not forever.

People might forget what you said, people may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel! Matthias means gift from God so say no more!

Now, I would ask that all of you, if you are comfortably able to rise, to do so now and show your appreciation for all that Father Matthias has done for us.

(Then followed a standing ovation)

Paul Spooner





The Scout section continues to thrive with an average of 25 Scouts at our Wednesday evening meetings. Activities are predominantly based on teamwork and life skills, but still having fun. Teamwork covers a multitude of activities from paintballing at a District event; to making pancakes from scratch (no "just add water" mixtures with our Scouts); to deciding on the best type of biscuit based on appearance, taste, breakability and of course "dunkability". The Biscoff biscuit won, with the humble Digestive coming last.



All activities are supported by parent helpers which helps keep the section going. So, a big THANK YOU to all of you that sign up. Parent helpers often learn skills as well as the Scouts, so it's never a waste of time.

We are still looking for adults to become leaders with us. You don't need to have a child with us, just the time to volunteer to give children new skills and a sense of purpose.

During Mass on 25th February, Father Francis kindly blessed our new scout flag. The flag is used every week, at the start and end of each meeting, and also plays an important role during each scout investiture. As with the flags in all sections, it is also used during church parades and the district St. George's Day and Remembrance Parades. We hope that this flag will last as long as the previous one, and will be a symbol to all Scouts through the 5th Morden Troop of their responsibilities, and their membership of World Scouting.

Tracy Sterlini
Group Lead Volunteer



*" The deep roots never doubt
that Spring will come."*

Marty Rubin

YOUR SCOUT GROUP NEEDS YOU!



The 5th Morden Scout Group, involving our Beaver Colony, Cub Pack and Scout Troop, as with all scout groups across the country, is run by a team of un-paid volunteers. These amazing adults give up some of their time to run weekly activities, day trips, camps and other fun, friendly and fulfilling events for the benefit of our young people. Many of them have families of their own and other commitments, and most work, but they all appreciate the importance of scouting. We work together in teams, drawing on individuals' strengths, and together aim to produce amazing opportunities for all scouts.

Every Scout Group has a Trustee Board which is another team of volunteers who work together to make sure Scouts is run safely and legally. Without a Trustee Board we cannot have a Scout Group. We meet once a term.

Our Scout Group has been one of the most active in the District for many years, and has had a fantastic group of parents and/or parishioners over those years, that have supported either as a leader or a trustee. However, their children have all grown up and moved on, and we are now in need of some new volunteers to move the Group forward, or we run the real risk of closure.

If you feel you can help inspire the next generation and would like to know more about becoming a leader, or have some skills you think we would benefit from, e.g. craft creator, activity planner, simple accounting, please get in touch. In particular, we are looking for urgent and immediate help with our cub pack (8-10.5yo) and scout troop (10.5-14.5yo)

Or you may feel you have specific skills that you could offer on our Board of Trustees e.g. health and safety related, auditor, organisational, communication, fundraising, leadership.

In either case please get in touch with our Group Lead, Tracy Sterlini, via email fifthmordengsl@gmail.com

Will you be part of the next generation of the 5th Morden Scout Group?

Could you, and a group of your friends, be the next inspiring adults for our young people? Join together, and start to make an impact. No experience necessary. Training is provided.

Volunteering can be a brilliant way to boost your mental wellbeing. It's a great feeling knowing you're helping

young people get skills for life, and you might even learn a lot about yourself along the way.

Scouting can make you feel good in other ways too. You'll

- Make friends and meet people
- Try new things and challenge yourself
- Get outdoors and get stuck in
- Positively impact your community
- Make memories that'll last a lifetime

We appreciate any time you can spare.

Tracy Sterlini
Group Lead Volunteer

The Scout Symbol

The Scout symbol is often known as the arrowhead or fleur-de-lis, but the origins of one of the world's best known icons can be confusing.

The symbol's name changes depending on the country, with some preferring the name arrowhead to fleur-de-lis (with its traditional royal connections). Others call it the fleur-de-lis, due to the arrowheads military connections.

In the first edition of 'Scouting for Boys', published in 1908, Robert Baden-Powell referred to the Scout's Badge as an arrowhead. Following criticisms that the symbol was too militaristic, Baden-Powell renamed the symbol after the heraldic fleur-de-lis, a stylised lily symbolic of peace and purity.



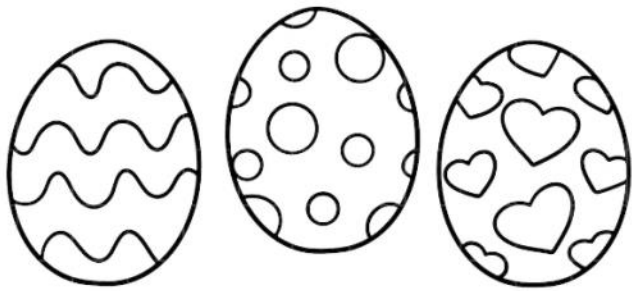
Baden Powell said 'The Scout's badge is the arrowhead, which shows the north on a map or on the compass. It's the badge of the scout in the army because he shows the way: so to a peace Scout shows the way in doing his duty and helping others.' In 1909, special additions were made to it to the design to make it unique to Scouts, included the addition of two stars.



In May 2018, a new Scout brand was introduced for UK Scouts, including a new, simplified fleur-de-lis, designed to be more visible when used at a smaller size, such as when seen on phones and other devices in the digital age.

EASTER EGGS

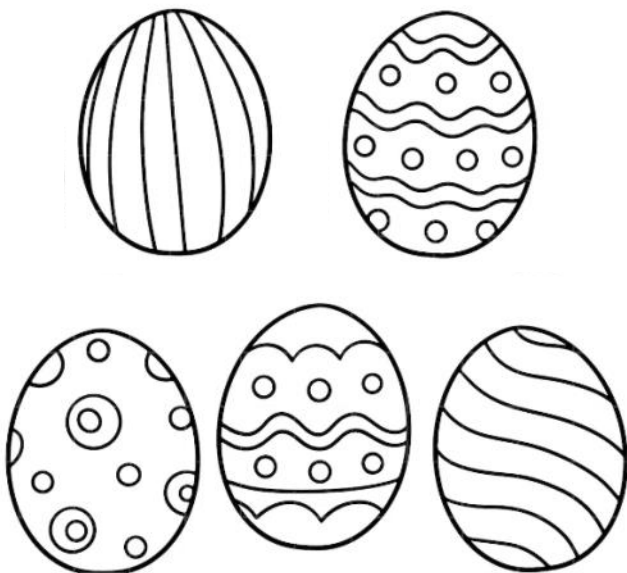
(MOSTLY THE NON-CHOCOLATE VARIETY!)



EGGS-ELLENT EGG ACTIVITIES

Here are some ideas for craft activities, which are suitable for younger children too:

- Make some Easter Cards (older children can try pop-up designs)
- Design an easy picture Easter Bingo sheet and get the family to cross them off as you reveal different Easter items
- Cut out paper egg shapes and let your children unleash their creativity
- Make an Easter Egg garland (with your decorated paper egg shapes or your Holy Week Eggs) to decorate the house
- Design an Easter-themed placemat and colour it in to be used at Easter lunch
- Have an egg & spoon race
- Draw your family on eggs using coloured pencils (one face/person per egg) and boil them for a fun breakfast on Easter Sunday



HOLY WEEK EGGS

Cut out 8 large egg shapes and write the day of the week across the top, starting and ending with Sunday.

Then on each day of Holy Week you can draw the following picture and read the passage from the Bible:

PALM SUNDAY:

Jesus on a donkey
(Matthew 21: 6-11)

MONDAY:

Jesus at the Temple
(Mark 11: 15-18)

TUESDAY:

Jesus teaching people
(Matthew 25)

WEDNESDAY:

A woman anoints Jesus' head with oil
(Mark 14: 3-9)

THURSDAY:

Wine and bread (The Last Supper)
(Luke 22:14-20)

GOOD FRIDAY:

A wooden cross or crown of thorns
(Matthew 26:59-75)

SATURDAY:

A tomb with a large stone in front
(Matthew 27: 55-61)

EASTER SUNDAY:

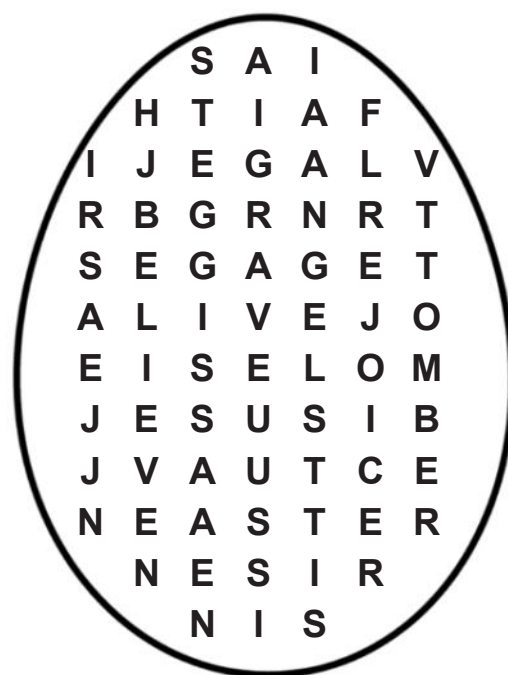
Jesus outside the empty tomb
(John 20: 1-18)



8 CRACKING EASTER EGG FACTS

1. Decorated eggshells from Ukraine are called *pysanka* which means to 'write'.
2. The Egg Dance is an Easter tradition in Germany - eggs are put on the floor and people dance around them trying not to break any.
3. Easter Eggs are traditionally dyed red in Greece to represent Christ's blood. - the earliest coloured eggs were dyed with flower petals, juices and onion skins.
4. Traditional chocolate Easter Eggs have a raised, bumpy texture to their surface, a little like crocodile skin. This texture was first created in Germany and was originally developed to help hide any imperfections, on the egg's surface.
5. Crème Eggs were first sold by Cadbury's in 1923, and they now make over 1.5 million every day!
6. Eggs were one of the foods Christians were not allowed to eat during Lent, so an egg on Easter Sunday became a treat for all to enjoy!
7. Two-yolk eggs are said to be a sign of good fortune.
8. The tradition of egg rolling tradition goes back hundreds of years and the objective is to see which egg can go furthest without breaking. The world's most famous egg roll takes place on the White House lawn in the USA on Easter Monday.

WORDSEARCH



ALIVE
ANGEL
BELIEVE
EASTER

FAITH
GRAVE
JESUS
REJOICE

RISEN
SIN
TOMB

What is an Easter egg's least favourite day?

Fry-day

What do you call a mischievous egg?

A practical yolker

Why did the Easter egg hide?

It was a little chicken



PRAYERS FOR PEACE IN ISRAEL & PALESTINE

God of justice and compassion,

We cry out to you for the people of Gaza,
particularly for the children.

We pray for an unequivocal ceasefire
and the resumption of aid and food deliveries.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We give thanks for the release of hostages
and continue to pray for those still in captivity.
We pray that those released may find healing and the
restoration of hope in the months ahead.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for a safe and prosperous tomorrow for
Palestinians and Israelis, a future of equal rights for all
and an end to the occupation.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves, that we may resist hatred,
stand for justice, and open ourselves to be channels of
your peace.

We ask all of this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Embrace the Middle East



*'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called
children of God.'* Matthew 5.9

Lord Jesus,
who walked the land you made holy
and blessed those who made peace;
look with compassion
on the people of your land today,
Jew and Muslim and Christian,
Israeli and Palestinian.
May peace come for all with justice,
may war cease and all live in harmony,
and be the children of the one God
who you made known,
now and always.

The Very Rev Andrew Nunn

Christ, Prince of Peace,

hear our prayer and lament,
for our suffering sisters and brothers.
Our hearts are heavy as we witness lives torn apart,
as we see the faces of frightened children
and hear the pleas of those without water or food.

We pray for the dead and the grieving,
for the injured and the afraid.

We pray for courage and perseverance,
for those working for healing and to bring aid.

We pray for world leaders,
that they may strive for a just and lasting peace.

God of new beginnings,
in your ways are compassion and hope.
Open our hearts to dialogue and understanding.

Lead us all to answer your call
to become peacemakers
today, and all the days of our life.

Amen.

CAFOD



Let us pray with one heart and one soul -
Lord come to our aid, grant us peace,
teach us peace,
guide our steps in the way of peace.

Open our eyes and our hearts and give us the
courage to say:
Never again war. Lord Hear Us.

May the weapons be stopped: they will never lead to
peace, and may the conflict not widen!

Enough! Enough, brothers!

In Gaza, let the wounded be rescued immediately,
let civilians be protected, let far more humanitarian aid
be allowed to reach that stricken population.

May the hostages be freed,
including the elderly and children.

Every human being, Christian, Jewish, Muslim,
of any people or religion,
every human being is sacred, is precious in the eyes
of God and has the right to live in peace.

Let us not lose hope:
let us pray and work tirelessly so that the sense of
humanity may prevail over hardness of heart.

Pope Francis

PEACE AND JUSTICE IN THE HOLY LAND

Jesus was born in Palestine, in Bethlehem, to a family based in Nazareth and ministered within Galilee and Jerusalem. From the beginning he was no stranger to human suffering. Soon after his birth he fled the massacre of the innocents and was forced to become a refugee in Egypt. He was harassed by the powerful of his day and was ultimately unjustly sentenced to death and crucified. His ministry took him to the blind, the lepers, the poor, women and the ostracized. Jesus challenged the unjust socioeconomic and religious structures of his day, and his ministry touched all segments of society regardless of ethnic backgrounds.

Today the church continues to exist in the midst of suffering and a broken world. At times the church has shown solidarity with the oppressed while at other times it has been silent or complicit in their oppression.

We must all have seen the photographs and film coverage of Gaza and heard the testimony of Palestinians, doctors, aid workers, journalists and others living under the Israeli bombardment. At the time of writing over 30,000 Palestinians have been killed, most of whom are women and children. It is without doubt the greatest episode of human suffering this century.

There were no Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem or anywhere in Palestine last year.

We are also awaiting judgement at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on two cases concerning Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. The court has already found there to be a "plausible case" for genocide but we await the final decision. Separately, there is a United Nations case concerning the legality of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, which many countries including Ireland and South Africa consider to be illegal under international law.

While our politicians debate whether, and when, there should be a ceasefire, Palestinian church leaders have been calling for solidarity with Palestinian Christians, many of whom have been killed by Israel. These include the bombing on 19 October of the Church of St Porphyrius, the world's third oldest church, killing at least 18 people and the killing of two Palestinian women who had taken refuge in the Holy Family Catholic church in Gaza City by an Israeli sniper on 16 December. The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said the two women were "shot in cold blood" while Pope Francis condemned the murder during his weekly Sunday homily.



Meanwhile, in the West Bank (supposedly under the control of the Palestinian Authority), which has been under Israeli Occupation since 1967 there have been more killings. Last year, prior to the events of 7 October over 240 Palestinians had been killed by Israeli army or armed settlers - over 40 of these were children. Since then Defence for Children International – Palestine (DCIP) reported over 100 children have been killed by mid- February.

In October, Leaders of the Palestinian Christian community also sent an open letter to Western church leaders and theologians in which they challenged "western theologians and church leaders who have voiced uncritical support for Israel and [called on] them to repent and change".

Unfortunately, these appeals have been completely ignored.

We cannot in all consciousness ignore what is happening in the Holy Land today. The Gospel implores us to stand with the oppressed – not only in words but also in actions. Here at St John Fisher we prayed for Peace and Justice in Palestine at our Peace Service on 1 January. We also displayed posters and information in the church narthex over the Christmas period and will be looking to raise awareness and support Palestinians in the coming months. I ask you to provide support in whatever way you can. Only by taking action can we affect positive change.



Declan Hickey



A MESSAGE FROM KERRY SMART

CEO OF THE CHARITY *LIFE*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like if the humanity of the unborn was officially recognised?

In February, the BBC reported that parents who lose a baby before 24 weeks of pregnancy in England can now receive a certificate in recognition of their loss. One mother who lost two pregnancies said, "Regardless of how long you're pregnant for, it's still a baby you've lost ..."

A spokesperson for the Miscarriage Association reiterated how distressing the loss of a baby can be: *"For many, if not most people, even the earliest of losses can be deeply distressing, both emotionally and physically."*

Society recognises what *Life* has always said

It is so important to recognise, officially, the worth of an unborn child. *Life's* work is founded on the principle that all people are special and equal. Regardless of how long you're pregnant for, it's still a baby. And a pregnancy loss - be it through miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion - can be deeply distressing. Together, we've been saying this for more than 50 years. It was true then, and it's true now.

***Life's* approach is more right, and important, than ever**

If pregnancy loss through abortion can be so distressing, why do women still seek abortion? From counselling hundreds of thousands of women in our history, here's surprising truth #1: Most women who agonise over an abortion decision aren't asking themselves, "Is it a baby?" Instead, they're asking themselves, "How can I have this baby ... without destroying my life?"

The things that will destroy their life? Financial, relational, emotional, and social pressures that make her think she can't flourish as a person if she has this child.

Society wants pregnancy support to be fully and widely available

Now for surprising truth #2: As *Life* co-founder Professor Jack Scarisbrick MBE so wisely noted, sometimes a pregnancy - particularly if unintended - can initially seem like a disaster or even a death.

Abortion is chosen in an attempt to reverse the apparent disaster. But if we can come alongside women in support of their pregnancy in a caring, compassionate way, we can help them see that the pregnancy is not the threat to them that it might at first seem.

We can help deal with the difficult circumstances that make them feel unable to welcome this child into the world. We can make it possible for them to move into motherhood and avoid the pain of pregnancy loss through abortion.

***Life's* approach saves lives**

The *Life* Way is a compassionate way, grounded in the value of the unborn child and in solidarity with the pregnant woman. And it works. Just today I am writing my quarterly report to our Board of Trustees. It shows that, in the last nine months, an estimated 653 abortion-considering women freely decided to continue their pregnancies to term after using *Life's* services ... the services your support so generously provides.

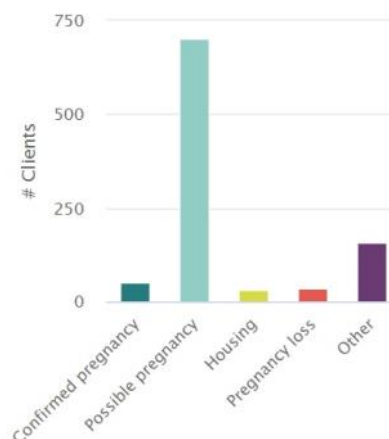
The *Life* Way works. Thanks for being a part of *Life*.

Best wishes,

Kerry Smart
LIFE Chief Executive

HOW LIFE MADE A DIFFERENCE (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2023)

Life is a UK pregnancy support charity creating a world where no one faces pregnancy or pregnancy loss alone. We do this through our listening, housing, practical, and educational services.



In October, November and December 978 people used *Life's* free pregnancy listening service. Whatever their emotions - from fear to joy, from uncertainty to courage - *Life* provides support by listening to their individual situation and helping them along their pregnancy journey. The chart shows clients' presenting needs. 'Other' includes contraception, fertility, and practical support.

THE YEAR OF PRAYER

PREPARING FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025

In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year “Pilgrims of Hope” - 2024 has been designated as a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. With its focus on the Our Father, it presents us with a great opportunity to go back to the basics of prayer.



The Year of Prayer began on the first Sunday of Advent (3rd Dec 2023). Pope Francis desires to see the Our Father become the “life programme” of every disciple, and to prepare for the Jubilee Year through a deeper devotion to prayer!

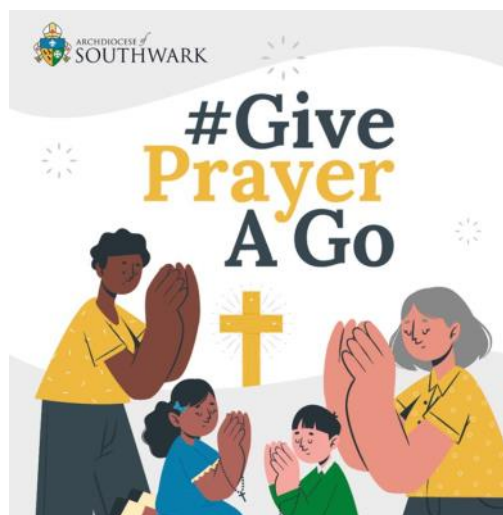
Every Catholic is encouraged to reflect on their prayer life: what we pray, how we pray, and why we pray. This is for two reasons: 1. To encourage us to deepen our own prayer life and love of God; 2. To help at least one other person to pray during the Year of Prayer.

#GivePrayerAGo Campaign

To mark the New Year and the Year of Prayer, as designated by the Holy Father, the Archdiocese of Southwark is encouraging people to #GivePrayerAGo through an online campaign.

The activities are varied and include:

- sharing testimonies of prayer, from how prayer has helped people overcome difficult situations to how prayer has enriched their lives.
- helping people overcome perceived barriers to prayer, by showing the various ways you can welcome Christ into your hearts.
- giving people ideas, resources and tips to pray. From quotes from Saints to simple steps to follow to turn your mind to the Lord Jesus.



- advertising prayer events across the Archdiocese, highlighting prayer groups, adoration and the rosary. As well as explaining what it all means!

Prayer makes you powerful, it is strength for the weak. That is why the illustrations of the campaign show enlarged hands. By opening our hearts to the Lord Jesus, we become strong.

Ways to get involved

The best way to get involved is to simply #GivePrayerAGo. Pray as much as you can, let Christ into your hearts and rejoice in His mercy.

If you don't know where to start, why not follow the advice of Archbishop John and begin by saying the Our Father – the prayer the Lord Jesus taught us – when you wake up and before you go to sleep.

Share what prayer means to you

The Diocese would love to hear your own personal stories of prayer at www.rcsouthwark.co.uk Let them know what prayer means to you, the difference it has made to your life and how you let Christ into your heart. You can also share videos or stories on social media using the hashtag #GivePrayerAGo.

Write your own prayers

Write your own prayers and share them with us! This is a wonderful way to deepen your prayer life. Giving you the chance to pray to the Lord Jesus, but also helping others too. You can write a prayer on anything – from being anxious at work, or worried about exams to praying for a family member to get better.

Prayer is your way of speaking to Christ. So write what comes to your heart and share! If you're looking for inspiration on what to write, you could:

- give thanks to Christ for someone you love or something you are grateful for.
- praise the Lord Jesus for all He has done for you and others – let's adore and glorify Him together!
- share the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus, asking Him to continue to help you and others in their lives.
- ask the Lord Jesus for support or help, put your worries and hopes on Him.
- seek forgiveness and ask for His mercy.



NEWS FROM ST JOHN FISHER PRIMARY SCHOOL



After a restful and relaxing Christmas, the children made a positive start to the new year and the new term. In our first morning assembly in January, we discussed new years resolutions. I am sure many of us embarked on new projects, promises or plans as a way of marking the beginning of 2024, and we have tried our best to keep to these good intentions. One particular intention that we have been discussing as a school is linked to a very important 'challenge' that Pope Francis has set us during 2024. Towards the end of last year the Pope announced that 2024 will be the **'Year of Prayer'** and there is a particular focus during this year on the *Our Father*. Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 used actions to understand the meaning of the prayer and shared this enthusiastically in assembly. One resolution we can all make is to take time to pray; a resource that is free, mobile and will undoubtedly improve our wellbeing in 2024.



Catholic Social Teaching Mascots

Also in January, in another fantastic assembly led by Year 3 St Nicholas class, we were reminded of the power of words and how, by choosing our words carefully, we can 'build' people up, filling them with positivity. As part of the assembly we revisited three of the Catholic Social Teaching mascots:



- Luc the deer (Human Dignity - *Everyone is Special*);
- Daisy the dove (Promoting Peace - *Being Peacemakers*); and
- Shristi the sun bear (Solidarity - *Showing we Care*).

These mascots are an excellent way for children to know, understand and remember the roles we all have to play in thinking of others, not just ourselves.

Change is Coming Concert

Excitement is building amongst our Year 5 pupils and staff as they prepare to showcase their musical talents at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday 11 March, when 1,250 pupils from twenty-two Merton schools will join together to sing as part of Merton Music Foundation's music extravaganza 'Change is Coming'. This is the eighth concert that Merton Music Foundation has staged at the Royal Albert Hall since 2007 and marks a triumphant return to the hall, after concerts planned for 2021 and 2022 were cancelled due to Covid.

We are delighted that after a successful bid placed back at the beginning of the academic year, we were chosen as one of the schools to represent the borough at what we know will be a magnificent occasion for pupils, staff and parents/carers. Year 5 have been busy preparing for the event with rehearsals. The children sound amazing and we eagerly await the BIG event.



Fr Matthias Visit

In January, we were delighted to welcome Fr. Matthias back to the school during his visit from Uganda. He celebrated a beautiful Mass alongside St Teresa class, and in his homily he spoke about his work in the

schools in Uganda and explained how he has told those children all about the wonderful community at St John Fisher school. We presented Fr. Matthias with a book of prayers to carry back with him to Uganda.



Season of Lent

During the half term week the season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday, with a day of prayer and fasting and, when we returned to school after the break, we prepared both as individuals and as a school community for our journey through the Lenten season.

St. James class led a beautifully prepared class Mass to help us in marking the start of our Lenten season here in school. During his homily, Fr Francis talked to the children about the importance of the three aspects of Lent: Prayer, Fasting and Alms giving. These three pillars of Lent help us to develop a closer relationship with God.

As individuals we may choose to observe these pillars in different ways; possibly through making a Lenten promise to curb our chocolate or crisps habit (fasting) and use the monies saved to support others (almsgiving).

As a school community we are marking these pillars through an increased focus on prayer (including a parent prayer group running at school during the season of Lent) and through collecting for our chosen Lenten charity—the Catholic Children's Society.

My Voice Matters

After the half term break, we celebrated Children's Mental Health Week. The theme was My Voice Matters - about empowering children by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. St Francis class reminded everyone in assembly that we all have voices and should use them to talk to those who trust. We can also talk to God at anytime and anywhere.

We had a busy week with all the children taking part in different activities - playing games, creating artwork



and making videos to help them share their important opinions with each other. We thought about all the things that matter to us, whether in our own private life or out in the big, wide world.

On the Friday, everyone was encouraged to celebrate Dress to Express Day - wearing an outfit that made us feel great, because every one of us matters, and we all deserve to feel amazing!

World Thinking Day

World Thinking Day is a day of international friendship which has been celebrated since 1926. February 22nd was chosen as it was the birthday of both Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout Movement, and Olave Baden-Powell, his wife who was World Chief Guide. In recognition of this special day it was lovely to see so many of our pupils who are members of the Scouting and Guiding movements in their uniforms.



As I write, the children are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day and the PTFA Spring Disco - which will round off a very busy, if short, term here at St John Fisher.

We wish you all a very happy Easter!

**Ms Janine Kenna,
Headteacher**



WHO INVENTED THE FIRST HOT CROSS BUN?

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first definitive printed reference to hot cross buns comes from 1733 in *Poor Robin's Almanac*:

*"Good Friday comes this Month,
The old woman runs.*

With one or two a Penny hot cross Buns."

However, Thomas Roccliffe, a 14th-century English monk, is widely credited as making the very first hot cross bun. Although the Ancient Greeks, Romans and Saxons all baked a type of bun to mark the changing seasons, it was Brother Roccliffe who made the Alban Bun in 1361. Although the original recipe of this bun originating from St Albans remains a closely guarded secret, the main ingredients are simply flour, eggs, yeast, currants and spices.

A sweet, fruity bake bearing a cross (cut into the top with a knife) the buns were given to the local poor on Good Friday. This Easter treat so pleased the recipients that word soon spread, and efforts were made across the country to imitate them.

Spiced buns were banned when the English broke ties with the Catholic Church in the 16th century. However, by 1592, Queen Elizabeth I relented and granted permission for commercial bakers to produce the buns for funerals, Christmas, and Easter. Otherwise, they could be baked in homes.



The English continued to enjoy their hot cross buns. In 1664, Samuel Pepys, the celebrated diarist, enjoyed a hearty "Lenten supper" of buns washed down with ales, and in 1783 Dr Johnson breakfasted sensibly on Good Friday with "tea without milk, and ... a cross bun to prevent Faintness".

*'Hot-cross-buns; one-a-penny, two-a-penny buns;
one-a-penny, two-a-penny,
hot-cross-buns!'*

So cried out the bun sellers in Georgian London, to win themselves customers on Good Friday morning.

By the 18th century, hot cross buns were commonly being eaten on Good Friday to mark the end of Lent. The Chelsea Bun-House on Pimlico road, near Sloane Square, famous for Chelsea buns and patronised by royalty, was the largest producer of hot cross buns, and remained so for over a century until it closed in 1839.



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.

EASYFUNDRAISING

St John Fisher RC Church is 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



FRIDAY FARE

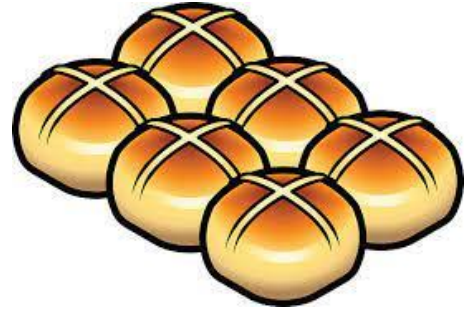
HOT CROSS BUNS



Hot cross buns are traditionally eaten over Easter to symbolise the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday on the cross.

Bun Ingredients:

- 7g (1½ tsp) Dried Yeast
- 300ml Full-fat Milk
- 500g Strong White Bread Flour (plus extra for work surface)
- 75g Golden Caster Sugar
- 2 tsp Mixed Spice Powder
- 1 tsp Ground Cinnamon
- 2 tsp Salt
- 40g Butter (melted)
- 1 Egg (whisked)
- 120g Sultanas
- 50g Dried Apricot
- 1 Apple (peeled, cored & finely chopped)
- 1 tsp Butter, for greasing the bowl



'Cross' Ingredients:

- 80g Plain flour
- 80ml Water
- 1 tsp Lemon Extract

Glaze Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp Maple Syrup or 3 tbsp Apricot Jam
- 2 tsp Water
- 2 tsp Mixed Spice Powder

Method:

1. Warm-up the milk slightly (shouldn't be hot) in a pan or microwave and add the dried yeast sachet. Leave aside for the yeast to activate.
2. In a separate large mixing bowl add the flour, sugar, mixed spice, cinnamon, and salt. Stir together and create a well in which to add your wet ingredients.
3. Add the melted butter, whisked egg, yeast and milk into the middle.
4. Mix together with a spoon or with your hands until you have a very wet and sticky dough! This is normal and there is no need to add more flour.
5. Flour a clean work surface and knead the dough by holding it with one hand and stretching it with the heel of the other hand. Knead for 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic.
6. It will pick up some flour from the surface but ultimately, the kneading action will remove the stickiness.
7. Flatten down and add a handful of dried fruit fold, knead and repeat until fruit is well mixed in.
8. 1st Proof - Lightly grease a bowl and place kneaded dough in. Cover with a damp tea towel or oiled cling film and leave in a warm place to double in size, for between 1 and 2 hours.
9. Knock the air out of dough and divide into 12 even pieces. Smooth each piece into a round bun shape.
10. 2nd Proof - Line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper and place buns, leaving a small gap between each. Cover with damp towel and proof until doubled in size, for about 1 hour.
11. Towards the end of the 2nd proof, preheat oven to 180°C Fan / 200°C / 400°F
12. For the Cross - Mix together the flour, water and lemon extract, into a very thick paste.
13. Put the paste into a piping bag and pipe crosses on each bun.
14. Bake in the oven at 200°C (400°F) for 15-20 minutes.
15. Remove the hot cross buns from the oven. Makeup a simple glaze using maple syrup (or apricot jam) and water and spread on whilst buns are still warm.
16. Best enjoyed straight away whilst warm - cut open and spread on a generous amount of butter!

PRAYER INTENTIONS

THE RIGHT USE OF THE MEDIA

"Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation" is the message of the Gospel on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord - and offers the starting point for understanding the right use of the media. The day is established by the Pontifical Council for Social Communications and each year there is message from the Holy Father. Last year, the Pope's message was on Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication.

On World Communications Day we are asked to keep those who work in the media in our prayers. The Catholic Communications Network (CNN) is the media office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and it supports the church through promoting the Gospel through the media on current issues.

The media is a powerful and influential voice in our society - whether it be TV, radio, print or social - and we can pray during Easter for:

- The people behind the profession - for the personal and professional challenges they face working as journalists, writers, directors and producers
- Local, regional, national and social media - that they will give a voice to the voiceless and be held to account
- The truth to be proclaimed - to disprove misinformation, rumours, and misconceptions

Prayer for the Right Use of the Media

*Father of light,
from whom every good gift comes,
send your Spirit into our lives
with the power of a mighty wind,
and by the flame of your wisdom
open the horizons of our minds.*

*Loosen our tongues to sing your praise
in words beyond the power of speech,
for without your Spirit
men and women could never raise
their voice in words of peace
or announce the truth that is Jesus the Lord..*

Amen.

CYCLE OF PRAYER

In the Cycle of Prayer, the liturgical year has been divided into six periods; three of these being the principal liturgical seasons of Advent/Christmas; Lent and Easter and the other three periods being divisions of Ordinary Time (namely Winter, Summer and Autumn).

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.

Easter

New Members of the Church

Human Work

*especially on St Joseph the Worker
(Wednesday 1 May)*

Vocations

*especially on World Day of Prayer for
Vocations (Sunday 21 April)*

Survivors of Abuse

especially on Tuesday 30th April

The Right Use of the Media

*especially on World Communications Day
(Sunday 12th May)*

The Church

especially at Pentecost (Sunday 19th May)

Ordinary Time: Summer

A Deeper Understanding between Christians & Jews

Those who Suffer Persecution

Oppression & Denial of Human Rights

Europe

Human Life

*especially on Day for Life
(Sunday 16th June)*

Seafarers

*especially on Sea Sunday
(Sunday 14th July)*



www.liturgyoffice.org.uk

LITURGICAL CALENDAR FOR 2024-25

Calendar of Feasts and Fasts

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord	Sun.	24 March 2024
Maundy Thursday	Thu.	28 March
Good Friday **	Fri.	29 March
Easter Sunday	Sun.	31 March
The Annunciation of the Lord	Mon.	8 April
Saint George, Protector of England	Tue.	23 April
The Ascension of Our Lord	Thu.	9 May
The Feast of Pentecost, Whit Sunday	Sun.	19 May
Mary, Mother of the Church	Mon.	20 May
Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest Feast	Thu.	23 May
The Most Holy Trinity	Sun.	26 May
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ	Sun.	2 June
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus	Fri.	7 June
Immaculate Heart of Blessed Virgin Mary	Sat.	17 June
Saint John Fisher & Saint Thomas More	Sat.	22 June
The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist	Mon.	24 June
Saint Peter and Saint Paul, apostles	Sun.	30 June
The Transfiguration of Our Lord	Tue.	6 August
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Thu.	15 August
All Saints	Fri.	1 November
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe	Sun.	24 November
First Sunday of Advent (Sunday Cycle: C)	Sun.	1 December
The Nativity of Our Lord - Christmas Day	Wed.	25 December
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	Sun.	29 December
Mary, Mother of God	Wed.	1 January 2025
The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ	Sun.	5 January
The Baptism of Our Lord	Mon.	12 January
The Presentation of Our Lord (Candlemas)	Sun.	2 February
Ash Wednesday **	Wed.	5 March
Saint Joseph	Wed.	19 March

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

** Days of Fasting and Abstinence.

THE POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR 2024



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 the Role of Women

We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognized in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.

MAY

For the Formation of Religious & Seminarians

We pray that religious women and men, and seminarians, grow in their own vocations through their human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, leading them to be credible witnesses to the Gospel.

JUNE

For Migrants Fleeing their Homes

We pray that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys full of danger and violence, find welcome and new opportunities in the countries that receive them.



Rome & Assisi from £990

Rome is a unique centre of Christianity and culture as well as a noisy bustling metropolis with all the trappings of a modern capital. Assisi is a uniquely preserved 13th century Umbrian hill town, home to St. Francis, the "apostle of the poor".

Departure Dates 2024 : 24 June, 14 Oct, 18 Nov

Krakow & Częstochowa / 9 Sept / 6 Days / £790

Lourdes - Fatima - SD Compostela

Highlights : Lisieux [St Therese], Lisbon [St. Anthony]
Tours [St. Martin] Santiago de Compostela [St. James]
Chapel of the Miraculous Medal [Paris - Rue du Bac]

Departure Date : 12 - 22 Aug 2024 [11 Days] from £1290

Spiritual Leader : TBA [St. Joseph's Church, Wembley]

Group Leader : Varghese Stansilaus [07944 276 225]

Lourdes Pilgrimages from £490

Lourdes is a heaven on earth. Our pilgrims return each year to experience the Blessed moments with Our Lady. While in Lourdes, you are invited to join in prayer at the Adoration, Rosary at the Grotto, Reconciliation, Procession etc...

Departure Dates 2024 : 28 March (Easter), 24 May,
26 July, 13 Aug (Assumption), 4 Oct (Rosary Week)

Give us a ring for other destinations on **0780 737 5061**



**ST. PETER'S
Pilgrimages**

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St. Peter's Pilgrimages Ltd - Diamond House, 179 Lower Richmond Road, Richmond, Surrey.
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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
pipnlindsay@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.

We aim to please!

Prices (per issue)

Quarter Page	£15
Half Page	£23
Full Page	
(inside)	£30
(back cover)	£38

TALKABOUT PARISH MAGAZINE - 2024 DATES

Deadline for submitting items (talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk or to the Parish Office)	Sunday 2 June.	Sunday 1 Sept.	Sunday 24 Nov
Distribution Weekend	22 & 23 June	21 & 22 Sept.	14 & 15 Sept



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

SUNDAY 2ND JUNE 2024

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!

The *Talkabout* Editorial Team welcome contributions to the magazine from our Parishioners.

You can submit news or other articles by email at talkabout@blueyonder.co.uk or via the Parish Office in the Presbytery.

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:
20 minutes before and after
9.30am Sunday Mass**

- 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.



Christian CARE Needs YOU!

Christian CARE, with its 60 volunteers supporting around 100 families a year, is among the charities in Merton reaching out to people in need. It differs from the other groups in 2 ways: first the volunteers support families for a long time and so build deep relationships, and secondly we are multi-focused, with 5 Projects and an Office, so can offer wide-ranging care



We support children and teenagers throughout the year, remembering birthdays, and arranging an outing, a party and Falcon activity camp places. We are concerned for their parents who struggle to provide clothes and school uniform among other essentials. We are seeking a

Children's & Families' Activities Coordinator

to lead the team responsible for this much-appreciated and very rewarding work.

Through our Children's and Families' Activities Project with its opportunities for outings, Falcon Activity Camps, family holidays, Polka Theatre experiences, and presents at Christmas and birthday to encourage creativity and family togetherness, we try to bring enrichment into children's lives.

We are looking for a volunteer to lead the strong team of four and coordinate the activities. This would involve a morning/ afternoon two days a month and planning time at home. Could it be you?



To find out more go to:

www.christiancaremerton.org.uk/volunteering

or contact the CARE Coordinator on
gillian.thick@christiancaremerton.org.uk
or 07932 628 840

CAFOD ETHICAL EASTER GIFTS



World Gifts for Easter

From Easter eggs and crosses to bees and chickens, CAFOD have plenty of Egg-citing and ethical World Gifts perfect for you to choose from that help to support people living in poverty.

Unique Gifts

CAFOD's range of virtual charity gifts will delight your friends and family.

Each gift you buy comes with a beautifully illustrated gift card for you to pass on to your loved one, which describes the difference it will make to communities living in developing countries.

www.worldgifts.cafod.org.uk





St John Fisher *Catholic Primary School*



Together we grow in God's love.
Learning to be the best we can be.

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



- Children aged 3—11 years
- Strong academic performance profile
- Outstanding behaviour and strong community ethos
- Nurturing the needs of individuals
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- Large school site and extensive grounds

St. John Fisher is the popular, over subscribed primary school serving the parish and wider community.

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 want to relax, chat and play Bingo?

We offer all these activities, together with tea, coffee, cakes
and prizes for the winners.

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



- Plumbing, Heating and Gas Services
- Installations
- Maintenance
- Breakdown
- Landlord's CP12's
- Power Flushing



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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	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>	
Guild of Our Lady	Parish children (Year 5 & above)	Monday evening	Day Chapel	-	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>	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	Guide23Rain- bow2sjf@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>	Guide23Rain- bow2sjf@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>	fifthmordengsl@gmail.com
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



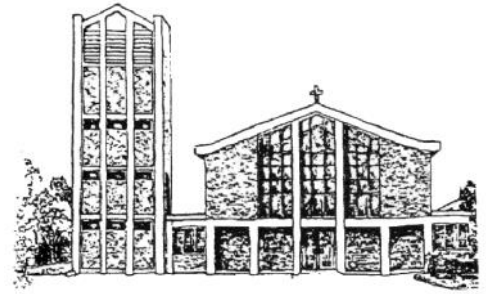
Parish Admin.
Fr Francis
Nonyelu



Assist. Priest
Fr Joseph
Edem



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: 20 minutes before & after the 9.30am
Sunday Mass

ST JOHN FISHER PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Fr Francis
• President

Deacon Tom
• Ex-Officio
• Apostolate

Paul Spooner
• Chairman

Peter Nash
• Deputy Chair

Collette Farley
• Secretary

Fr Joseph
• Ex-Officio



Claire Brierly
• St. John Fisher
Primary School

Michael Calnan
• Elected Member

Sean Deane
• St. Vincent de Paul

Pippa Lindsay
• Toddlers Group

Sandra Malveiro
• Elected Member



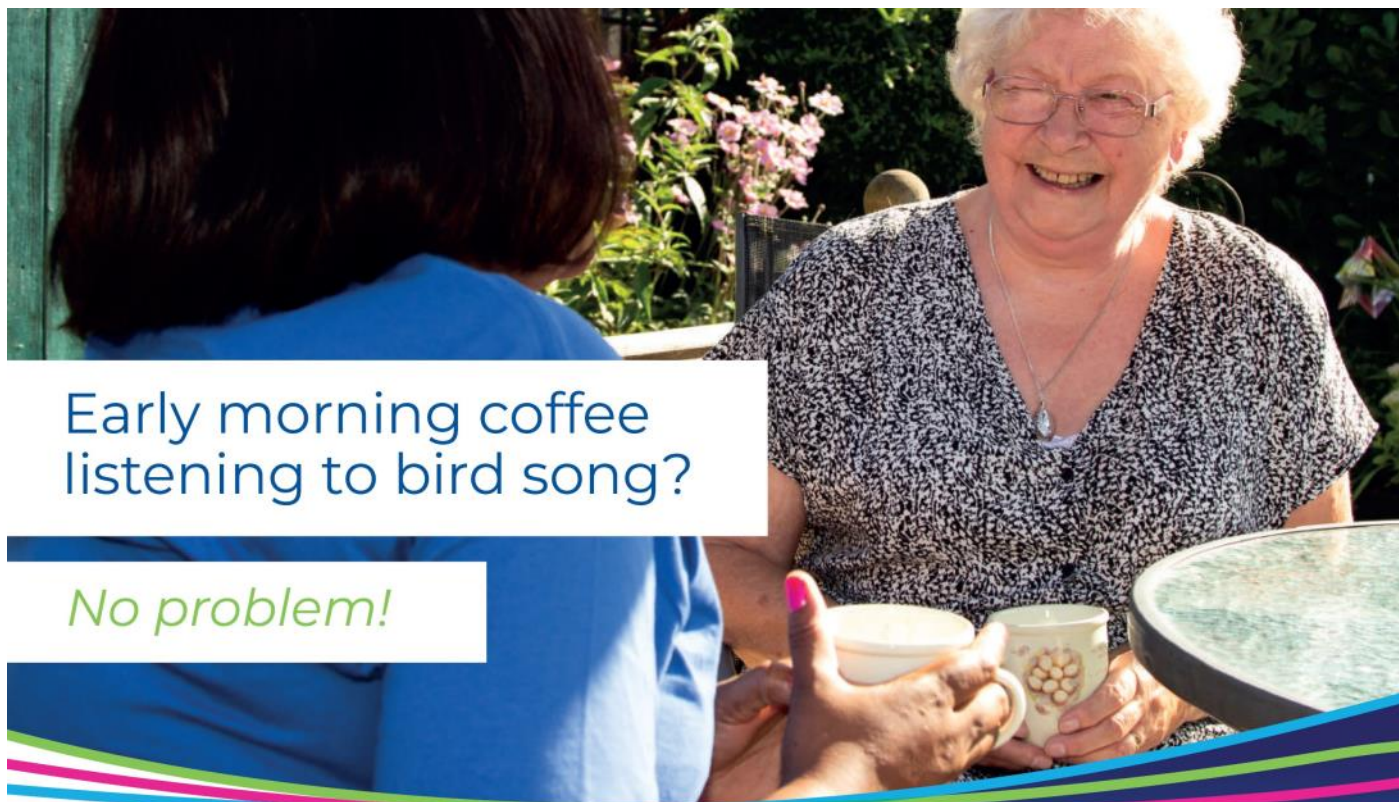
Ursula O'Byrne
• Safeguarding

Margaret Redding
• Uniform Groups

Rob Roy
• Elected Member

Ann Vaz
• Elected Member





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