

# St Pancras

January 2024



By Jean Baptiste Marie Pierre-17thC

**Free (one per household)**

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'Open my heart, O Lord, to understand Your law and teach me to live according to Your commandments. Let me know Your will and let me devoutly reflect on all Your many blessings so that hereafter I may give to You proper and worthy thanks. I realise and confess that I am utterly unable to give You proper gratitude, even for the smallest of the many blessings You give me. For I am less than the least of all Your gifts. when I think of Your endless generosity, I faint before its magnitude'.

From The Imitation of Christ, chapter 22



## A festive tapestry: unwrapping the charm of our Parish magazine

By Tilly Rampley

As we bask in the warm afterglow of the holiday season, let us take a moment to appreciate the delightful tapestry woven by the contributors of our Parish magazine's Christmas issue. Bursting with captivating articles, engaging activities and heartfelt reflections. Readers are treated to a journey through various and very interesting articles and activities for both children and adults.

I would like to thank you all for your contributions, let this be a reminder that our Parish magazine is a collective effort, and each contribution adds a unique brushstroke to the canvas of our shared experience.

Acknowledging the constraints posed by page limitations, I appreciate everyone's understanding that not all submissions could be included. However, your efforts are cherished, and each piece will be considered for future editions.

Looking ahead, please remember to submit your contributions for the next issue. The cut off date for the upcoming edition is Sunday 17th March. Send your contributions to [matilda79r@gmail.com](mailto:matilda79r@gmail.com)

Yours, Tilly Rampley

**St Pancras Catholic Church is part of the East Anglia Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust.**

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# The Sacred vestments worn by priests at Mass

by Father Joseph

I have been asked several times about the vestments worn by priests at Mass, so here is a brief summery outlining their present use, their historical origin, and their symbolism. In passing, it is interesting to note that the maniple with its prayer about reaping the rewards of one's labours and therefore symbolising service, was dropped from use by the liturgical changes of 1969 whereas the stole, with its prayer about the priest approaching the Sacred Mysteries and therefore symbolising priestly authority and sacramental power, was retained.

By God's command the Jewish priests wore a distinctive garb when they ministered in the Temple. The Bible tells us they were vested in violet and purple, scarlet twice dyed, and fine linen. Gold and precious stones were also used to give the person of the priest that dignity demanded by his exalted office (Ex 28:15).

No special dress was at first prescribed for the Christian priesthood. During the early days the garments worn at the Holy Sacrifice were not dissimilar in form to the clothing of civilians. They were distinguished, however, from profane apparel in richness and beauty of decorations; and of course, their use was restricted to Divine worship.

Secular fashion changed, but the Church clung to the old style. Thus it was that garments once common to all, presently became the privileged dress of the clergy. Faith then saw in each particular vestment a symbol relating to the Passion of Our Lord, and a reminder of some Christian duty.

The priest's vestments may be considered now:

- (a) According to their present use.
- (b) According to their historical origin.

(c) According to their symbolism.

## THE AMICE

The amice is a piece of fine linen in the form of an oblong. The priest places it for a moment on his head, and then allows it to rest upon his shoulders. As he does so he prays: 'Place, O Lord, on my head the helmet of salvation, that so I may resist the assaults of the devil.'

Historical Origin:

A covering for the head and neck worn like a hood. When indoors it was lowered and thrown over the shoulders.

Symbolic Reference:

- (a) The linen cloth that the soldiers put over Our Lord's head; when thus blindfolded He was mockingly asked who struck Him.
- (b) The helmet of Salvation (Eph 6:1).

## THE ALB:

A wide linen robe reaching to the feet and covering the whole body. The word 'Alb' is derived from the Latin, *alba* (vestis understood), or white vestment. The vesting prayer is: 'Make me white, O Lord, and cleanse my heart; that being made white in the Blood of the Lamb I may deserve an eternal reward.'

Historical Origin:

The alb, or tunic, was worn in ancient times by all who enjoyed any dignity. The lace alb is a 17th century development.

Symbolic Reference:

- (a) The garment with which Herod clothed Our Lord.
- (b) Signifies the purity of conscience demanded of God's priest.

## THE CINCTURE:

The cincture, or girdle, is a cord of linen fastened about the waist to confine the alb. The vesting prayer is: 'Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may abide in me.'

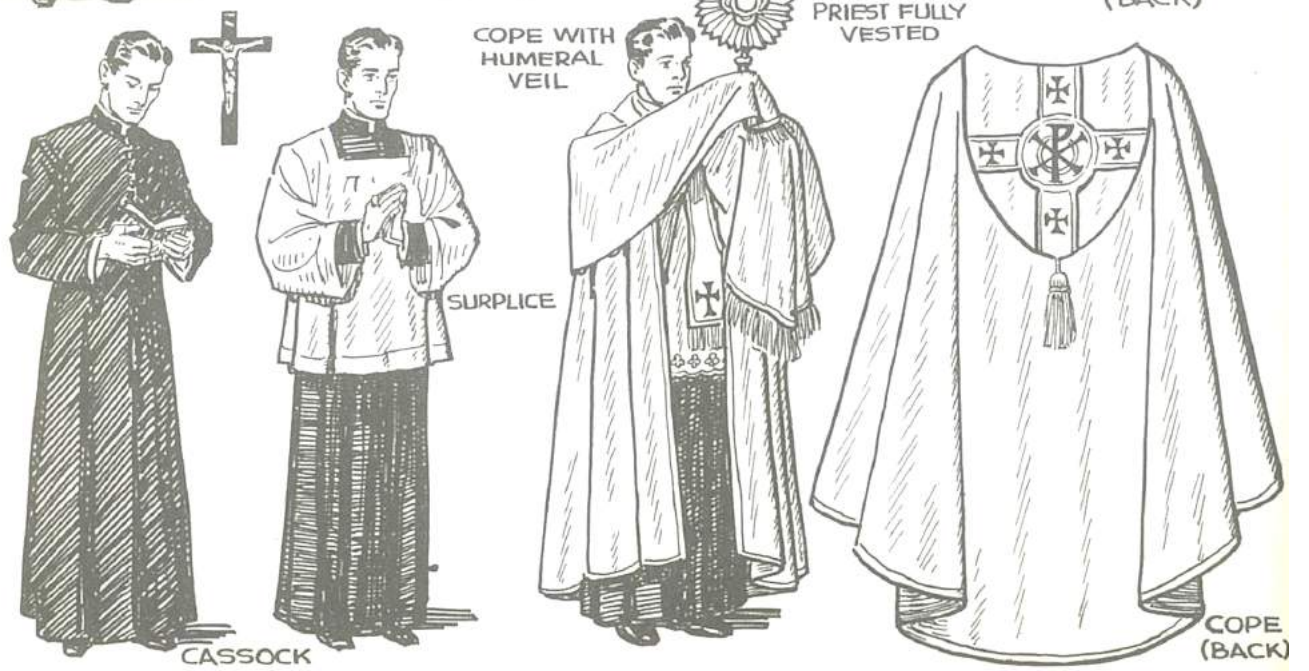
Historical Origin:

Walking and active exertion made it necessary for one to gird up a long garment like the alb. Hence the cincture was an essential article of dress.

Symbolic Reference:

- (a) The cord that bound Our Lord to the pillar when He was being scourged.
- (b) Symbolises modesty, and also readiness for hard work in God's service.







### THE MANIPLE:

A strip of silken cloth worn on the left arm of the priest. The vesting prayer is: 'May I deserve, O Lord, to bear the maniple of weeping and sorrow in order that I may joyfully reap there ward of my labours'.

#### Historical Origin:

Originally a strip of linen worn over the arm. During the long services, and in the intense heat of southern countries its use was frequently necessary to wipe the perspiration from the face and brow.

#### Symbolic Reference:

(a) The rope whereby Our Lord was led, and the chains which bound His sacred hands.

(b) An emblem of the tears of penance, the fatigue of the priestly penance and its joyful reward in Heaven.

### THE STOLE:

A long band of silk of the same width as the maniple, but three times its length. It is worn around the neck and crossed on the breast. The vesting prayer is: 'Restore to me, O Lord, the state of immortality which I lost through the sin of my first parents and, although unworthy to approach Thy Sacred Mysteries, may I deserve nevertheless eternal joy'.

#### Historical Origin:

A kind of neck-piece or kerchief; a part of the dress of the upper classes. It gradually became the distinctive mark of spiritual authority in the higher clerics, viz., the priest and deacon.

#### Symbolic Reference:

(a) The cords with which Jesus was tied. Worn as it is over the shoulders, it reminds us, too, of the Cross Our Lord carried.

(b) A reminder of the Yoke of Christ. The priest's burden is a heavy one, which Christ nevertheless makes sweet and light.

### THE CHASUBLE:

The chasuble is the outer and chief vestment of the priest. It is essentially the Mass vestment and is now exclusively reserved to the priest. The vestment is familiar to all by reason of the Cross usually embroidered on it. The word 'chasuble' is derived from the Latin, *casula*, a little house.

The ancient vestment completely enveloped the priest, and was somewhat like a tent. The vesting prayer is:

'O Lord, Who hast said, My yoke is sweet and My burden light, grant that I may so carry it as to merit Thy grace.

#### Historical Origin:

Imagine a large circular cloth with a hole cut in the center for the head. This will help one to visualise the ancient chasuble, which was an immense cloak, without opening in front, and without sleeves. It was put on over the head and completely enveloped the body.

When it was necessary to use the hands, the garment had to be folded up on each side over the arms. Because of its inconvenience (for two assistants were needed to manipulate it), the vestment was gradually cut and altered until it now has its present shape.

#### Symbolic Reference:

(a) The purple cloak worn by Our Lord when He stood before Pilate.

(b) An emblem of love. When the ordaining bishop gives it to the new priest, he says:

'Receive the priestly garment, for the Lord is powerful to increase in you love and perfection'.

**'Make me white, O Lord, and cleanse my heart; that being made white in the Blood of the Lamb I may deserve an external reward.'**



# Reflections on the Holy Land

By Jean M Johnson

In the weeks since the terrible conflict in the Holy Land began, I have thought, talked and prayed a great deal about the situation. My first visit to the Holy Land was over Christmas in the late 1960s, accompanied a group of Sixth Form girls on an educational cruise.

One lasting memory is of swimming in the Sea of Galilee on Christmas Day. Another, of seeing many soldiers in strategic places, holding guns. But we did not connect the two, there were strange noises that occurred regularly. Eventually, we discovered it was gunfire from fighting on the Golan Heights. This, my earliest experience of Israel, was when there was continuing unrest following on from then recent Six Day War. We also visited somewhere we had not heard of previously: a *kibbutz*. It was presented as an example of community living and was a simple place, all in one building, I think.

Returning early in January, I drove at once from Surry to Lancashire, through snow, to take gifts to my family. My devout grandma was thrilled with a brooch from the Holy Land, and my father with the loan of my [photo]slides, which he proudly showed to various church groups. In the mid 70s I next went with a group from the theology class at the Civic College in Ipswich, in the middle of the summer.

It was the year of the ladybird invasion, and we discovered that we had exported some of the creatures in our luggage! This was an ecumenical group, with an Anglican priest and Fr Dick Wilson, from St Mary's, Woodbridge Road. Memories include swimming in the Dead Sea, which was not a particularly delightful experience, and visiting one possible site of the Mount of the Transfiguration. I remember that because our guide was a Franciscan who was wearing sandals with a big bandage very evident around part of his foot!

Our walk along the Via Dolorosa was a particularly moving experience, as was the time we spent at many of the Holy Places. My last visit was more recent, also with an ecumenical group. We visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the small Catholic section of it, of course, but we also went to the Garden Tomb. Whilst it is probably not the actual site of Christ's tomb, it is a beautiful place and it was a real privilege to be allowed to receive The Holy Eucharist inside this space. However, since the celebrant was not Catholic, those of us who were Catholic were unable to receive Holy Communion.

We met several clergy working in The Holy Land, and one of them told us of very thorough security searches he had experienced at the airport when returning. This reminded me of an earlier visit, when passports still gave your profession: mine said Chemist. They were clearly very suspicious of me, and utterly ransacked my luggage: it turned out that the supposedly dangerous item was a small tile wrapped in bubblewrap!

This reference to chemistry brings me to a recent edition of Chemistry World, a monthly publication which I receive as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry. We have had a few regular updates on the situation for chemistry in Ukraine and the latest publication had a similar review of the situation in the Holy Land.



The Garden Tomb

Chemistry departments in Israel are currently closed. Some foreign national staff have left but others - if they do not need lab access - are working from home. They hope departments will reopen quite soon. Gaza University has been destroyed, along with its laboratories, and there seems little hope of it reopening in the foreseeable future.

Bethlehem University, also in Palestine, is still intact but they cannot obtain even the simplest of chemicals, such as would be found in a school laboratory, so there is little sign of that reopening. To me, this secular perspective emphasises the tragic situation. We must continue to pray for a solution to this terrible conflict.



Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem



# A dish for Our Lady of Ipswich

By Theresa Cleary

When Father Joseph suggested making a dish for Our Lady of Ipswich, in the light of the long tradition of St Pancras pie which is on 12th May; I was interested in taking part. The dish could be savoury or sweet, hot or cold, but it had to be an original recipe; or one invented by a family member.

As someone who slavishly follows recipe in books, I was a little apprehensive about making up one by myself. Luckily Father had given us several weeks before the finished product had to be presented; which gave me time to mull over a few ideas in my head.

I wanted to combine something which our Lady herself would have been familiar with, along with something local to Ipswich/East Anglia. To start with, a reading from the book of Numbers came up at a weekday Mass. Numbers 11:5 gives a list of the foods the Israelites had enjoyed back in Egypt.



How well we remember the fish that Egypt afforded without stint, the cucumber, melons, leeks, onions and garlic! Needless to say, olives would have been plentiful. Our Lord's agony in the Garden was set on mount Olive. Along with this, I have a book 'Everyday life in New Testament times', by A.C Bouquet, and on page 79 I found the following: 'In the time of christ, keeping chicken had become usual'. So, plenty to choose from for Our Lady!

According to the East Anglian Daily Times for 5th August 2023,

East Anglia has a proud agricultural history. As Britain's bread basket, its climate, landscape and soils are ideal for farming. Our region produces more wheat and barley than any other; and two third of England's sugar beet crop, and one third of its potato crop provides the pig and poultry sectors.

Excellent! The poultry part meant something in common with Our Lady's time and our area. And fortunately I remembered in time not to include the pig sector, bearing in mind Our Lord's parable of the prodigal son, St Luke 15:11-32, especially verse 15 and 16. With all this information, I decided to make a savoury dish, hot in a casserole pot as follow:

## Ingredients:

- 6-10 olives
- 1/2 cucumber
- 2 leeks
- 1-2 onions
- 4 (or less) gloves of garlic
- Chicken breasts
- Margarine
- Parsley (fresh or dried)
- Large potatoes (medium slices like roof tiles!)

## For the roux sauce:

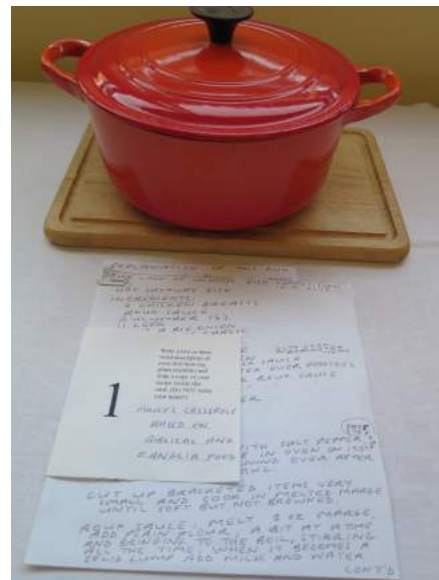
- 50g (2oz) margarine
- Plain flour
- Milk/water
- Salt and freshly milled pepper

## Method:

In a saucepan, cook the sliced vegetables in margarine until soft but not brown. Slice and dry chicken with some kitchen paper, smear with margarine add a little salt and pepper. Preheat the oven and cook at 190 C -gas 5, for 30 minutes.

Tips: turn the chicken breasts over half way through and baste them.

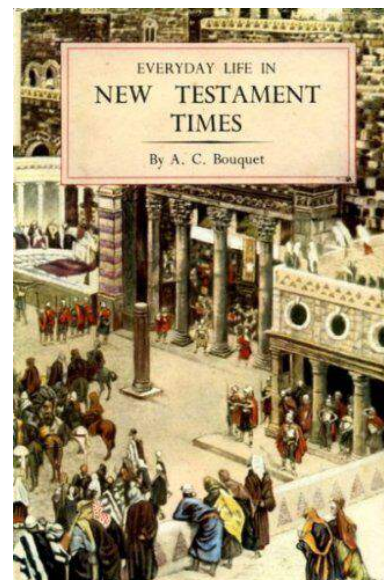
Pour milk/water stirring until the consistency is similar to a medium thickness custard. Add all the cooked vegetables to the sauce,



and stir until they are all well mixed. Cut up the cooked chicken into pieces, but not too small. Add the pieces to other ingredients, transfer to a casserole dish and set aside.

Boil the sliced potatoes for 12 minutes, drain and arrange them over the mixture in the casserole dish. Drizzle melted margarine over and sprinkle with parsley. Put in oven at 150C-gas 2 until piping hot.

As I was working on this recipe, the thought occurred to me that I hope I would not win the competition because the winner would probably have to make it every year for the feast of Our Lady of Ipswich. I got my wish and came in second!



# A prayer by Pope Francis, for the Immaculate conception

Selected by Laura Issacs

O Mary, our Immaculate Mother,  
On your feast day I come to you,  
And I come not alone:  
I bring with me all those entrusted to me,  
In this city of Rome and in the entire world,  
That you may bless them and preserve them from harm.



I bring to you, Mother, children, especially those who are alone, abandoned, and for this reason are tricked and exploited.

I bring to you, Mother, families who carry forward life and society with their daily and hidden efforts; in a special way the families who struggle the most for their many internal and external problems.

I bring to you, Mother, all workers, both men and women, and I entrust to you especially those who, out of need, are forced to work in an unworthy profession and those who have lost work and are unable to find it.

We are in need of your immaculate gaze to rediscover the ability to look upon persons and things with respect and awareness, without egotistical or hypocritical interests.

We are in need of your immaculate heart, to love freely, without secondary aims but seeking the good of the other, with simplicity and sincerity, renouncing masks and tricks.

We are in need of your immaculate hands, to caress with tenderness, to touch the flesh of Jesus in our poor, sick, or despised brethren, to raise up those who have fallen and support those who waver.

We are in need of your immaculate feet, to go toward those who know not how to make the first step, to walk on the paths of those who are lost, to find those who are alone.

We thank you, O Mother, because in showing yourself to us, you free us of all stain of sin; you remind us that what comes first is the grace of God, the love of Jesus who gave his life for us, the strength of the Holy Spirit which renews all things.

Let us not give in to discouragement, but trusting in your constant help, let us engage ourselves fully in renewal of self, of this city and of the entire world.

Pray for us, Holy Mother of God.





# Our Lady of Ipswich Bakewell Tart, with Rose Petal Jam

## By Rosalinda De Pasquale

### Ingredients:

For rose petal jam:

- 500ml rose petals from roses grown in Ipswich (place in a measuring jar until petals level 500ml)
- 500g Jam sugar
- Juice of half a lemon
- 500ml Water
- Short-crust pastry
- Ready-made shortcrust pastry (ready rolled sheets or pastry case) or homemade
- Almond filling
- 100g soft butter
- 100g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 100g ground almonds
- 1 tsp of almond extract
- Fondant icing
- 200g icing sugar
- 1 tsp of rose extract/almond extract
- 3 tbsp water
- Pink food colouring/gel
- Rose leaf for decoration
- Readymade icing in pink and green



### Recipe:

Firstly, make the rose petal jam several days before making the tart. Start, by washing a jam jar with warm soapy water, rinse well and place in the oven at a low heat to dry thoroughly. Place some small saucers/plates in the freezer. In a big pan, add the jam sugar, water and lemon, at a medium heat. Stir often.

Get rose petals ready by ensuring the petals are clean and dirt/insect free! Place in a measuring jug and make it level to the 500ml mark. Add to the water once the jam sugar has completely dissolved. Bring down the heat and stir occasionally, for about 25 minutes. Bring up the heat and stir frequently. Once there are bubbles foaming at the top of the mix, add a spoon of the mixture on one of the saucers/plates that has been taken out of the freezer. If, when you run your finger through the jam, the jam doesn't flood back and there are ripples, then the jam is ready to be put in the jar. If the jam does come around your finger and there are no ripples, then continue to cook and test with another saucer/plate until you see that the jam is setting.



Continued on page 10

Once the jam doesn't flood back and ripples when some is placed on the cold saucer/plate, remove from the heat and leave for a moment. Get the jar that was drying in the oven. Pour the jam inside the jar and close the jar. Leave for about 48 hours to set.



For the shortcrust pastry, homemade or ready-made pastry will work. Pre-heat oven to 200/180 fan. Place the pastry in a lined flan/low round cake tin. Prick the bottom centre with a fork, place baking paper and baking beans on top and blind bake for about 10 minutes. Take out of the oven and carefully remove the beans and baking paper and continue to blind bake for another 5 minutes.

Whilst that pastry cools. In an electric mixer, add the butter and caster sugar, then add the eggs and mix again. Finally, add the ground almonds and almond extract and mix. Once, the pastry has cooled, spoon several spoonfuls of the rose petal jam to cover the bottom part of the pastry casing. Add the almond mixture on top. Bake for about 25 minutes, until brown and skewer comes out clean. Leave to completely cool.



For the fondant icing, sift the icing sugar in a bowl and add ideally rose extract, if not almond extract, and water into a bowl and mix until thick and smooth. Add a few drops of pink food colouring/gel and mix.

Make rose flowers and leaves, using the ready to roll sugar icing, by rolling it out on a smooth dry surface that has some icing sugar dusted on it. Using rose petal cutters and leave cutters, make three roses and several leaves.

Once the tart is completely cool, spread on the fondant icing and arrange in the middle the three roses and surround with some leaves. Leave to set.



## Your questions on the Roman Catholic faith, answered by Father Joseph - Part 1

### How can the Holy Trinity be easily explained to teenagers?

By Barbara Noll

This explanation is best given if there happens to be a set of identical twins in the group. Take one twin and stand him at the front of the class. This is God the Father, perfect in all things.

He is perfect in His self-knowledge and He is perfect in His will (His ability to act). His knowledge is so powerful that when He thinks of something (or, we might say, when He utters a Word) that thought, or that Word, becomes a reality.

So, His perfect self-knowledge becomes a distinct and perfect image of Himself, another Person who is like Him in every particular but is separate from Him. This is the Word of the Father, the Son of God. This is the second identical twin now standing opposite and facing the first twin. However, we must be careful to say that the



Word is begotten, not created. The Word of God is not a creature. There was never a single moment when the Father did not know Himself perfectly and therefore there was never a single moment when He was not begetting the perfect image of Himself whom we call the Word or the Son of God. Father and Son are co-eternal and co-equal.

Now, stand the twins outside on a cold and frosty winter morning. The breath that you can see in the form of clouds of puff is the Holy Spirit being breathed forth from the Father to the Son, and from the Son to the Father. Both the Father and the Son are possessed of life. They breathe forth this life as a gift to each other in an ongoing and eternal act of reciprocal and mutual self-giving. This breath is both the Gift of Life and the Giver of Life, the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, in Hebrew the same word is used for spirit and for breath, ruach.

This is the Blessed Trinity.



# Allotment updates and recipes

By Peggy Ayers (St Pancras' very own gardening expert)



## Allotment updates and planning:

At the moment all I have to harvest on the allotment is Purple sprouting broccoli and one cauliflower. A neighbour gave me 6 cauliflower plants but I didn't hold out much hope for them. Surprisingly I have had 5 reasonable sized caulis to date. The slugs did do some damage but I cut that off and the remaining curds were delicious. Just the one left to go. I have tied the leaves up above its head to protect it a bit.

The broccoli which I planted is called Rudolph and is supposed to be early. Well this year it is! I have already had several spears and they were really tasty. Not all plants have something to harvest on them yet, which I think is good as I want them to go on until March.

At home I have planted garlic in the raised bed where I have previously had strawberries. I bought some from the allotment shop and some from a supermarket. It is not recommended to plant Garlic from the supermarket but it is already showing through, let's hope it survives. Last year I threw all the garlic away as it was so pathetic and shrivelled. Hoping for a better crop next year, well it can't get any worse!

Broad Beans have also been planted and I am crossing my fingers. I found a packet of Meteor peas in my seed box. Now the packet said you can plant them now, so that is what I have done – as an experiment-. My packet of parsnip seeds is in front of me but although the packet says plant at end of February, I will wait until mid March as previous experience has proven this to be a better time in my opinion.

Before I plant, I will try to make sure there are no stones or other obstacles like tree or bush roots as these will cause deformed parsnips. The parsnip gets to one of these obstacles and branches out in various directions sometimes giving many spindly roots to the vegetable which you can't really eat. I am saving the cardboard centres of toilet rolls as they are very good for when I prick out the leeks (variety Mus selburgh); I will do this in February in the greenhouse.

The tubes do get a bit soggy but can still be planted with the leek in it when it reaches a decent size. It is best to plant leeks in quite a wide hole and not firm the soil

round them as we don't want skinny little things. Rain and watering will sort that out naturally. Beans can also be started off in toilet roll centres too and planted into the soil when large enough.

I am about to clear the tomato plants from the greenhouse as I have picked all the green tomatoes and have them in shoe boxes. Usually I have them in the house but this year they are in the garage but I will definitely have to keep an eye on them. Although it is recommended to cut autumn raspberries down in February however a friend has already cut them down for me and disposed of the canes – such a big help!

At home I have taken the geraniums out of the pots and put them in a stacker box (no lid) with some soil and hope they might survive in the greenhouse to be used again next year. Fingers Crossed. Further plans to be made in the New Year. Happy Christmas to everyone. I hope you have enjoyed your gardening and have had some good results.

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## No cook apple and dates chutney

### Ingredients :

- 1 lb block of stoned dates
- 1 lb Cooking apples cored and peeled
- 1 lb onions
- 1 lb Light Muscovado Sugar
- 1 lb sultanas or raisins
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 pint malt vinegar.
- 1 oz pickling spice.

*Tips:* If you use pickling vinegar there is no need for the pickling spice, maybe it would be nice to add some chopped walnuts.

### Method:

- 1) Chop apples, dates, and onions in a food processor or by hand.
- 2) Place in a large bowl with remaining ingredients. If using the spices tie them in a small piece of muslin and add to other ingredients.
- 3) Stir thoroughly. Cover with a tea towel. Leave for 24 hours stirring occasionally.
- 4) Remove muslin bag if used. Bottle in sterilised jars and leave at least 2 weeks.



# Diocesan changes: a response

**Jean M Johnson's response to Richard Staines' article from September issue of the parish magazine**

Since I read the article by Richard Staines in the last magazine I have spent, from time to time, probably several hours thinking around what he wrote. I agree that our diocese is 'far too large, too diffuse and far flung.' The problem is to know what to do about it! It would be wonderful if it could be split, but if you look at other dioceses that cover a similar area you will find that they have a much larger Catholic population.

There just could not be sufficient funds for the structures that would be needed for a second bishop. I lived for years in Birmingham archdiocese which also covers a very wide area, but with a much great Catholic population density. Over the years our number of bishops varied, at some stages we also had Episcopal Vicars.

They were very experienced priests who did visitations and confirmation. This saved the archbishop from long and time consuming journeys but they also had a thorough reporting structure, so the archbishop could see where he needed to visit a parish. I wonder if such an arrangement could help our diocese.

I also recall that Bishop Michael had Saturday talks at different diocesan venues; I went to several, including one in Newmarket.

Like OLEM in Cambridge, this is a large easy to reach church and I think it also has a big car park. Maybe the diocese could identify several churches around the diocese where significant events could be held, so as to involve people far away from Norwich.

My decision to move back permanently to Ipswich was made during the first lockdown. I was alone and isolated and churches were closed. Fortunately, I found a few zoom sessions and also from the contacts I made when I was Suffolk Champion for God who Speaks, I was invited to join zoom Bible studies in north Suffolk and also one organised by parishioners from an Ipswich parish. I streamed things from Aldeburgh and continued to listen to Fr Tony Rogers' reflections on the Sunday Gospel until he went in to hospital.

These things helped to keep me sane! There must still be things from around the diocese that we could stream, if only we knew. Richard mentions Anglican dioceses. I think there are 6 or 7 for our one diocese. When I see all the things the Anglicans are doing, I feel ashamed. I have met the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, who lives in Ipswich, A walk around Ipswich will soon reveal posters about food banks,

top up shops, drop in free coffee or even lunch, and during Lent there was a wide choice of day-time Bible studies. They, and churches of other denominations, have been involved in help for Ukrainians and asylum seekers in our town, from finding them homes, help with English classes, CV writing, finding jobs, as well as activities for the young men who came to our Novotel, and warm clothing as they moved on to other parts of the country. I have been on several inexpensive coach tours, and have visited Catholic churches elsewhere doing similar things; no doubt they are in other parts of our diocese.

Maybe they exist in our deanery, but no one has told us! Fr Joseph does lots of evening talks, but many of us are fearful of going in to town on dark nights. Our deanery has the Vicar General in Aldeburgh and the Dean in Felixstowe, and most of the Catholics in and around Ipswich. Could a future Dean be based in Ipswich and have someone who could coordinate and publish details of deanery and diocesan events? It could be a volunteer but even a paid person would not be much of a burden on parishes. We would be able to strengthen our faith but also could do more to help others. Perhaps then it could be said of us what often used to be sung in Catholic schools, 'They will know we are Christians by our love'.

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## Monday prayer from *Auxilium Christianorum* Selected by Tilly Rampley

In Thy name, Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that Thou cover us, our families, and all of our possessions with Thy love and Thy Most Precious Blood and surround us with Thy heavenly Angels, Saints and the mantle of Our Blessed Mother. Amen.





# St Pancras' Monday book club

**By Brian Price**



I have enjoyed and been very impressed by Richard Osman's 'Thursday Murder Club' series of books, and I have decided to try to emulate this with an article on St Pancras Monday Book Club.

The club meets once every 3 months,- which benefits the slower readers!- to discuss books which are in some ways relevant to Catholicism and to understand what they might teach about the faith. Books such as *The life of St Therese of Lisieux*, the 'Confessions' of St Augustine, the letters of the demon Screwtape, as imagined by the Irish Anglican, C.S. Lewis, a little more unusual.

What have we learned so far ? St Therese led a blameless life in a devoutly Catholic family and at the tender age of 15 she became a nun like 2 of her elder sisters. She sadly died at the age of 24. Some of us did feel that perhaps her childhood should have included a little more in the way of ice creams, donkey

rides and visits to the fair. St Augustine is regarded as a major Western philosopher, not just a Catholic writer, who overflows with fascinating ideas but he does bang on about a juvenile transgression of stealing pears from an orchard; get over yourself, you were just a lad out with your mates!

He was also a man who did not content himself with simple sentences when massive paragraphs were available instead. Screwtape is a senior demon writing to Wormwood, a junior demon who also happens to be his nephew, about the best way to capture the soul of an individual identified only as The Patient. Screwtape focuses on the idea that slow and gentle is the best way to tempt a human soul to Hell.

Spoiler alert! Wormwood fails as the patient dies and finds his way to the arms of the enemy (God to you and me); Wormwood's own

future looks decidedly dodgy. These books have inspired fascinating discussions in which all sorts of interesting issues of theology and belief have been raised. It is wonderful to see how 3 different books have enabled people to look at their faith from many different angles and that is the real purpose of the club. The next meeting, in March, will focus on 'The Mass In Slow Motion' by Ronald Knox, a religious work that makes one chuckle and, occasionally, laugh out loud. I'm looking forward to it.

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## This Little Babe, by Robert Southwell (15th Century)

**Selected by Mim MacMahon**

This little Babe so few days old  
is come to rifle Satan's fold;  
all hell doth at his presence quake  
though he himself for cold do shake;  
for in this weak unarmed wise  
the gates of hell he will surmise.  
With tears he fights and wins the field,  
his naked breast stands for a shield;  
his battering shot are babish cries,  
his arrows looks of weeping eyes,  
his martial ensigns Cold and Need  
and feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.  
His camp is pitchèd in a stall,  
his bulwark but a broken wall;  
the crib his trench, haystacks his stakes;  
of shepherds he his muster makes;  
and thus, as sure his foe to wound,  
the angels' trump alarum sound.  
My soul, with Christ join thou in fight,  
stick to the tents that he hath pight.  
Within his crib is surest ward,  
this little Babe will be thy guard.  
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy,  
then flit not from this heavenly Boy.



**By Franz Christoph Janneck-17th C**

# A ceremony of carols

by Mim MacMahon



During the past autumn I have been lucky enough to be studying this little piece for a concert performance early in December, so, at the time of reading, sadly, you missed the concert! It is the seventh movement of Britten's 'A ceremony of carols', composed in 1942 while he was returning to England by sea, from United States.

'A ceremony of carols' is a choral piece, and exists in two formats: the original, scored for a three-part: children's choir and harp, and an arrangement for a four-part mixed choir, which was made in 1943. I was rehearsing the latter, and in our performance the harp was replaced by a piano, but the impact of the piece remains (at least, it does if you get it right!)

The text of 'This' little babe' is a poem written in the 1590s (and in fear of his life) by the Jesuit martyr, St Robert Southwell, and for the editor's sake I have submitted the poem separately, so you should be able to find it on another page of this magazine. It is fair to say that it contrasts sharply with the rest of 'Ceremony'. Most obviously, the language is different, being Early Modern English, while nearly all of the other poems are in Middle English or Latin, and have a gentle, lyrical feel which is reflected in Britten's musical treatment of them.

'This little babe' is nothing of the kind. The tempo marking is *presto con fuoco*. That's 'fast, with fire!' The music conveys the often shocking imagery of the poem, in which the very vulnerability of the infant Christ is His chief weapon against the powers of hell. Southwell's text makes it clear that Christ's infancy is not passivity, but a radical, one might say defiant, act of provocation against Satan and that 'all hell doth at his presence quake', even while the newborn child seems so helpless. Images of a late 16th century military engagement crowd in, the fa-

miliar Nativity scene turned on its head and becoming the site of a pitched battle against infernal forces. Britten's setting depicts this brilliantly; the *presto con fuoco* never relents, and throughout it gets louder, culminating in a final climax marked by a key change and change of rhythm.

The voice parts have been overlapping, not like a canon or round, but more in the manner of a fugue – the technical term is *stretto* – to give the sense of the noise and chaos of battle. In the final, climactic verse, however, the voices come back together in a rallying cry to the soul to join Christ's forces and 'flit not from this heavenly Boy'. At this point, it would be a very good idea to hear the piece for yourself.



**'all hell doth at his  
presence quake'**

There are several good versions on YouTube; the Choir of Clare College conducted by Graham Ross give a good account of the mixed choir version. It is, as you might suppose, having heard it, a bit of a devil to sing. The Wikipedia article on 'ceremony' suggest that the voice parts were kept simple to suit child performers. Ha ha. My own response is, the writer of the Wiki article never had to start rehearsing it from cold, as a not-so-young chorister among others similar, on a Wednesday in a primary school hall in Trimley St Martin.

Good luck with that one, or, as our conductor said, 'Every man for himself!' And this was having sung it before – but a long, long time ago, and not as an alto. For your own sanity, as a performer, the best plan is to count furiously, and stick to your own part without, if possible, listening to the other parts at all.

In the middle of the action, as it were, nothing around you makes any sense. Hang on for dear life, follow your line doggedly, and pray that you all arrive together at the beginning of the last verse, the words 'My soul, with Christ, join thou in fight' the way the composer intended. By this time, though, you have got your dander up, and, oh, but it's exhilarating. By this time, it's your favourite movement. And when you are done you want to sing it again – when you've got your breath back, that is. Eventually!



# Grey Notions of God

By Richard Staines

'I should like Balls infinitely better,' exclaimed Caroline Bingley, 'if they were carried on in a different manner....It would surely be much more rational if conversation instead of dancing made the order of the day.' 'Much more rational, I dare say,' replied her brother, 'but it would not be near so much near like a Ball.' Jane Austen tells us that the lady was silenced by this reply. And rightly so too: taking terms and making them mean what you want them to mean is not without risks, as Caroline in *Pride and Prejudice* discovers.

Dancing and debating are two very different activities, and there is a place for both. Yet we appear to be living in a time when the use of the signifier 'God' is not infrequently manufactured by people who want it to mean just what they want it to mean: the signified becomes domesticated, subject to individual and often private projections with God re-created with an almost solipsistic do-it-yourself kit.

For many people, especially those who want religion without dogma, the stumbling block is that the unknown God has made Himself known; He has revealed Himself immoral, concrete, historical, practical, and disturbingly specific

terms, for while it is true that such a religion as Catholic Christianity brings us down to earth, it is to make sure that when we do rise to heaven we shall take earth with us.



The heavenly hosts, by Gustav Dore-1899

Learning the mind of Christ - something we do not know instinctively-is a glorious exercise of heart and mind. 'No: God is not an amoral force diffused through the whole universe', write C.S. Lewis, 'to whom suttee and temple prostitution are no more and no less acceptable than building hospitals, carrying out humanitarian aid and teaching children; He is a righteous creator, separate from His creation, who demands of us all justice and mercy.' Unpacking such terms as 'justice' and 'mercy' occupies a whole lifetime, and it can be hard, for it involves regularly learning the mind Christ through prayer, particular teaching, the reception of the sacraments, scriptural study and regular worship, in short living out on a daily basis the joys and obligations of Catholic Christianity so that our rather grey notions about God have to be gradually, almost perhaps imperceptibly, corrected with a painfully precise picture in whose image we have to be recast and remoulded.

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## Relic of the true Cross

By William Newman-Sanders

Father Joseph has been given a relic of the true Cross by Fr. Russell Frost. It is usually placed in front of the monstrance during times of Eucharistic Adoration.

Cynics and doubters do not believe that they are real relics of Christ's Cross because if the claimed ones were all gathered together there would be enough wood to make a forest. Not so.

The Relic in St Pancras consists of two pieces 1/2 mm by 1/3 mm by 5mm. The amount of wood required to have made Christ's cross would have been about 1/4 cubic metre. That would be sufficient to make about 150,000,000 relics the size of the one in St Pancras. It is reasonable to assume that there are not that many claims of Relics Christ's Cross worldwide. The scale next to the relic is about 1 inch or 25 mm



# 'Witness to the Beauty of Holiness'

**Sermon first preached by Fr Joseph in the wake of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Britain in 2010**

Whatever the expectations may have been, we have experienced an out pouring of God's grace both during and following the visit of our Holy Father the Pope. As we re-read his sermons and addresses we can begin to see how much was said, and much still needs to be unpacked as we visit and re-visit the texts.

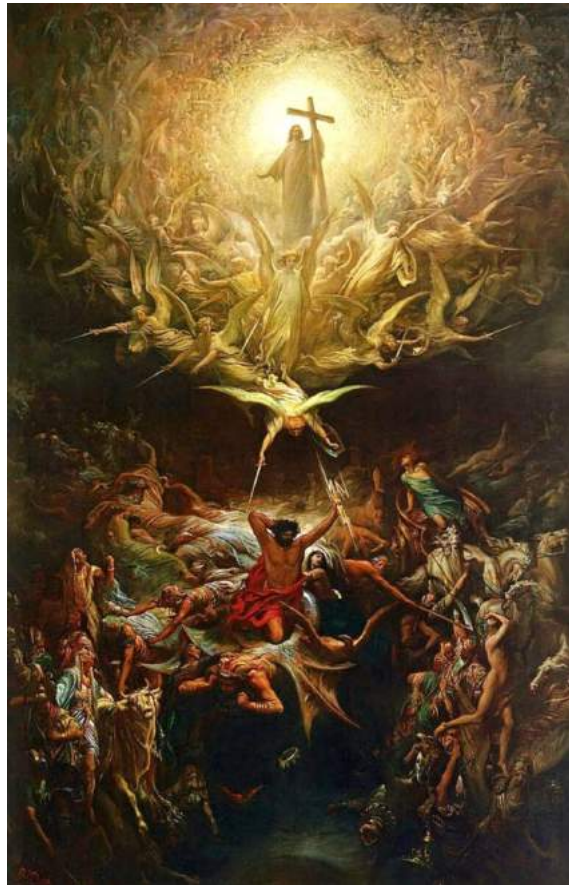
In his address in Westminster Hall, the Pope challenged the idea that the moral principles which underpin our society should be based merely on social consensus. Instead, he taught that we should indeed use our reason to find political solutions to today's problems, but that religion should purify and shed light upon this process.

Religion without reason, he said, will result in sectarianism and fundamentalism; and, conversely reason without religion is likely to fall prey to distortions and to be manipulated by ideology, for example when it fails to take full account of the dignity of the human person.

'Religion, in other words,' continues the Pope, 'is not a problem for legislators to solve, but a vital contributor to the national conversation'. He adds that religion should not be pushed to the margins of society and relegated to the purely private sphere because it has a perfectly legitimate role in the public square.

Because of the success of certain campaigning voices within our society, many people have come to accept the mantra that the supreme moral values for us today are freedom and equality. After all, whatever we believe, surely the most important thing is that we have the freedom to practise our beliefs in a society that regards each person's faith and opinions as of equal value?

Not so says the Church; not so says God. There are higher values even than freedom and equality. As Our Lord Himself says, 'What



**The triumph of Christianity over paganism- G.Dore 1899**

does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?' (Mt 16:26). Indeed, each and every one of the martyrs down the ages preferred to adhere to the Truth and to die rather than to abandon God and thereby gain their earthly freedom. They recognised what we would do well to recognise, that an opinion or doctrine based on falsehood or error does not carry the same weight as an opinion or doctrine based on the Truth revealed by God and taught by His Church.

No, the supreme moral values are not freedom and equality. The supreme moral values are truth and goodness. For the sake of the good ordering of society, and to assist other sinners in their sincere search for the truth, it is right and proper that within public debates we should engage with those who do not believe in the Truth. But our responsibility as Catholics is not to accept these opinions as equally valid alongside that which is true, for that would be to surrender to the tyranny of relativism.

Instead, in public discourse as well as in our own lives, we should strive, as the Pope said in Westminster Cathedral, 'to conform every thought, word and action to Christ, and to work strenuously to defend, unchanging moral truths'. 'How much,' the Pope continued, 'how much contemporary society needs this witness! How much we need, in the Church and in society, witnesses of the beauty of holiness, witnesses of the splendour of truth, witnesses of the joy and freedom born of a living relationship with Christ!'

**'What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?'**



This is what the Pope's visit has given to us, to the Catholics of this country: namely, a delight in the beauty of holiness and the splendour of truth; a renewed confidence in our faith; a renewed sense of the truth of what we uphold and profess; a deeper faith in what we know God has revealed. We can, once again, hold our heads high and refuse to be embarrassed by, or ashamed of, our Faith. We have no longer to feel ourselves driven into the corner by the clamouring sirens of secularism and atheism. Instead, in the wake of our Holy Father's visit to Great Britain, we can take our Faith into the public square, not in order to thrust it down others' throats, but to hold up the banner of our Faith, to give witness to God's beauty and holiness, by what we say and by how we live.

Let us not be afraid to wear symbols of our Faith; let us not hesitate to offer to pray for people with whom we come into contact, even—and especially – if they are non-believers; let us not be embarrassed to make the sign of the Cross when we say grace before meals if we eat out in a restaurant with our non-Catholic friends; let our humble boast always be in the presence of Christ in our lives and in the Blessed Sacrament when, for example we accompany Him during our summer-time Corpus Christi procession.

With a renewed fervour for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, let us ask God for the grace to take our gift of faith out into the world to all those whom we meet, for, in the words of Pope Benedict, the world needs, 'witnesses of the beauty of holiness, witnesses of the splendour of truth.'

**'There are higher values even than freedom and equality.'**

**'let our humble boast always be in the presence of Christ in our lives.'**

# Rosary Crusade

**By Father Joseph**

On Friday, 8th December, the parish of St Pancras in Ipswich launched a rosary crusade to pray for the conversion of souls in Ipswich and beyond. Beginning on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, when the Church celebrates the fact that Our Lady was filled with grace from the moment of her conception, and continuing all the way up to the feast of Our Lady of Ipswich, which is also the feast of Our Lady of Grace, on 15th May 2024, rosaries will be said for this intention by parishioners and visitors alike. Gathered together into a spiritual bouquet, the prayers will be presented to Our Lady in May on the same day that Bishop Peter will come and bless the new statue of Our Lady of Ipswich.

**Pictured: parishioners saying the first rosaries of the crusade before the statue of Our Lady of Ipswich in St Pancras church. (credit: Stephen Griggs).**



# Care of our common home

**Jean Johnson looks at the Biblical passages concerning good stewardship of our planet.**

Two passages in Deuteronomy provided the idea for this article. This, the last book of the Pentateuch, deals with the Covenant and the preparation of the children of Israel to enter the Promised Land, and concludes with the death of Moses. Two sections fascinated me and caused me to write this. I have a considerable library of Biblical commentaries but discovered only one solely on Deuteronomy, and the general commentaries mostly ignored these passages, but I think they are worth a look.

Deut 20:19-20 says that fruit trees should not be cut down. The idea seems to be that the only trees to be cut down for wood to build siege works should be those that do not provide food. I suspect that in recent years many orchards in our country have been cut down because they no longer make enough profit. In our own recent times there have been massive concerns about getting grain needed for many poor African countries out of war torn Ukraine. Overall, I think we can learn from this passage and recent events that God provides us with plants and trees that give us food, and we should treat them with respect.

The other reference is Deut 22:6-7, about chickens and eggs. The young chickens or the eggs could be used to eat, but the mother must remain free. Presumably, she is to be protected so she can bear more offspring. Commentators

called this an ecological insight. When I first went to Uganda, in 2004, I was amazed at what I found in the rural area where I spent most of my time. Charcoal is used for cooking, so trees are cut down, and the charcoal causes more carbon dioxide to be put in to the atmosphere when it is burned during cooking. That is just one problem.

There is no rubbish collection in rural areas, so people burn rubbish, even plastics, causing even more pollution, or the rubbish is put in to landfill. A bit better but not much. I have been very fortunate to have travelled on a holiday where we flew to Manaus in Brazil and then travelled along the River Amazon on a cruise ship and on smaller boats along its tributaries. It was a lovely surprise to see and enter a Catholic church in a remote village. You may know that there are terrible problems with mineral prospectors who cut down forests or people doing the same to keep cattle.

I can understand why our missionaries spend time negotiating for the rights of indigenous people, and why there are urgent calls so stop destroying the Amazon forests, which are an important global means of absorbing carbon dioxide. Pope Francis is well aware of these and many more threats to our environment.

You may know that a sequel to the encyclical *Laudato Si'* called *Laudate Deum*, was published in October. It stresses the efforts made by individuals, and expresses frustration at the lack of interest shown by the powerful. Emissions in the richest countries are many times more than in the poorest ones, yet often they suffer most.

Pope Francis had hoped to meet world leaders at the COP28 Conference in Dubai on 2 December, but his doctors advised that he was not well enough to travel, so a Cardinal read his speech instead. A later agreement, in Paris, was to try to work towards a global temperature rise of no more than 1.5°C. Ideally, the use of fossil fuels should be phased out but efforts to agree to this failed. Even if our cars use petrol or our houses are heated by gas, let us try to make some small changes so as to decrease burning of fossil fuels. Turning down the thermostat by a degree or else occasionally walking, or using the bus, instead of a car, all helps. This is our common home. Let us help to preserve it for future generations.



**Amazon rainforest**



# Call to evangelise

By Bernadette Wood

Far far away, up the A12 to the north, the 64 bus leaves our parish and travels hourly to the wonderful seaside town of Aldeburgh. I went with my daughter Philippa and her husband Stephen, who joined us from Yorkshire for a long weekend (Christmas shopping) winter break.

Oh boy! Did I need my thermals in the icy blast trundling on my mobility scooter, along the promenade, and shingle track up towards Orford Island. The Christmas shopping was very satisfying, along with fine dining and happy warm evenings playing games. It was fun seeing the 64 bus waiting to take people back to Ipswich Cattle Market, via various towns and villages en route.

Do you know this far flung place is the northern most parish in our deanery? There is a lovely church, dedicated to Our Lady and St Peter, at the top of Town steps, on the terrace (effectively the cliff top) overlooking the sea. The Parish priest is Father David Bagstaff, whom I first knew as parish priest at St Mary's Woodbridge Road when my children started school at StMary's.

I think no holiday is complete without a visit to Mass and a welcome from the local church there. These days with Google it is easy to find a MASS nearby. We felt very welcome and the single guitar and two singers led the music, including singing the psalm beautifully. I guess this place fills up to the brim in season, but it felt a bit empty, as did the streets which contain many second homes and holiday lets.

I like Aldeborough, it is great for a few days away or a day trip, which is never complete without a bag of

(the very best) fish n chips, eaten on the beach, oh they are good! I love the old wooden, some derelict, fishing boats on the beach, and the more modern currently used boats which catch to sell in the beach side huts. Sadly the weather was not conducive to fishing so there were no fish on sale while we were there. It feels special, and a link with St Peter, along with Ss Andrew, James and John, who followed Jesus' call to become 'fishers of men'.

Our churches still seem quite empty after Covid, and families, especially with older children seem to be absent. Clearly there is a call to evangelise, and those personal invitations we can all make to 'come to Mass with me' especially in this advent and Christmas season is urgent and the moment opportune. Who will you invite? My daughter who has not been to Mass for years has agreed to bring me to Mass on Christmas day which is thrilling.

Happy Christmas, to you and all your families, Happy Christmas to our own Fr Joseph and all his fellow deanery priests to whom we are so indebted. God bless them and strengthen them in his grace. Our northernmost deanery parish is at 15 the terrace, Aldeburgh, IP15 5HJ, Vigil mass 6pm Sunday Mass 11am and at Leiston 9.15am We are all happily home again, and I have just had my 3rd cycle of my course of chemotherapy, so I will be attending Mass online for a bit, and receiving communion at home thanks to our local minister of Holy communion.

Lots of love to all.



**'Happy Christmas to our own Fr Joseph and all his fellow deanery priests to whom we are so indebted. God bless them and strengthen them in his grace'.**



**'Clearly there is a call to evangelise, and those personal invitations we can all make to 'come to Mass with me' especially in this advent and Christmas season is urgent and the moment opportune'.**

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## Standing Orders

**Please consider making your donations as a standing order instead of in cash.**

**Account name: St Pancras Catholic Church, Barclays Bank.**

**Account number: 00775843 Sort Code: 20-44-51**

# St Pancras' archive

By Annette Green

The word Archive often brings to mind a collection of old documents in a musty library basement which, incidentally, is not the best place to keep them. There are several registers and other archive material kept at St Pancras which help tell the tale of families who have attended our church. For a number of years, Fr Leeder kept them lovingly and safely, if haphazardly, in various rooms throughout the Presbytery: all these rooms were suitable, but one location would have been so much better.

Since the Presbytery has had a significant makeover, Fr Joseph found such a location and these registers, and all other items of interest, are now in a single room. Several years ago, I asked Fr Leeder if a searchable record for Baptisms would be useful and he agreed to allow a digital record to be made from the data in the re-

gisters of all of the baptisms that have taken place at St Pancras. This started the mammoth task of compiling a spreadsheet of the baptisms: there are over 7,300 records.

Most of the registers were kept in the Presbytery but there was some data missing. On investigation, I found 3 of the earliest registers were being held at Suffolk Archives who graciously agreed that they could be relocated to St Pancras, and I was able to complete the task. From register number 1, it was found that the first baptism was on 11 August 1856 and, therefore, celebrated before St Pancras was built.

The purpose of this database is to make it easier to search for a baptism record when, for example, a replacement certificate is requested or, perhaps, as confirmation that a baptism had taken place

prior to a wedding. Sometimes the information provided is misleading as dates are often forgotten. Previously this would have entailed a search of the relevant register - some of these registers are in a very fragile condition.

This database should negate or reduce the need for this. It is a living document which will be updated as new baptisms are celebrated. In the age of family history research, any data that can be searched easily is a valuable tool to finding another piece in the jigsaw of one's past.

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## Reading suggestion

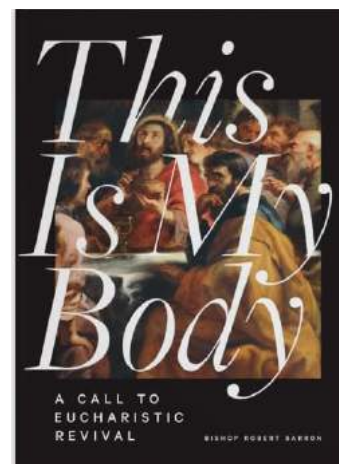
By Tilly Rampley

The book I would like to introduce, is *This is my Body- A Eucharistic revival*, by Bishop Robert Barron, and published by Word on Fire institute. The book was written in response to a survey of Catholics in regard to their belief in the Eucharist. According to the survey, only one third of those questioned believed in the real presence of Jesus 'under the signs or appearances of bread and wine'.

The book consists of three chapters, first chapter to discuss the Eucharist as Sacred meal, with references to The Book of Genesis. The chapter goes on to discuss God's relentless love for his creatures and his 'attempt to restore the fallen creation'. We also read about two Old Testament presentations of the sacred meal.

In the second chapter, you read about Eucharist as Sacrifice. The chapter looks closely at sacrifice in the Old Testament and the themes of covenant and sacrifice. Bishop Barron beautifully goes into details to explain why did Jesus invited his disciples to consume the bread and wine that he had radically identified with his sacrifice.

Chapter three of the book is called: 'If it's a symbol, to Hell with it.' This is reference to Flannery O'Connor's response to the well-known author Mary McCarthy and her husband's remarks about the Eucharist being merely a 'pretty good symbol'.



**When the communicant says 'Amen' and receives the proffered host and chalice, he'd better be prepared to live an eternal life'**

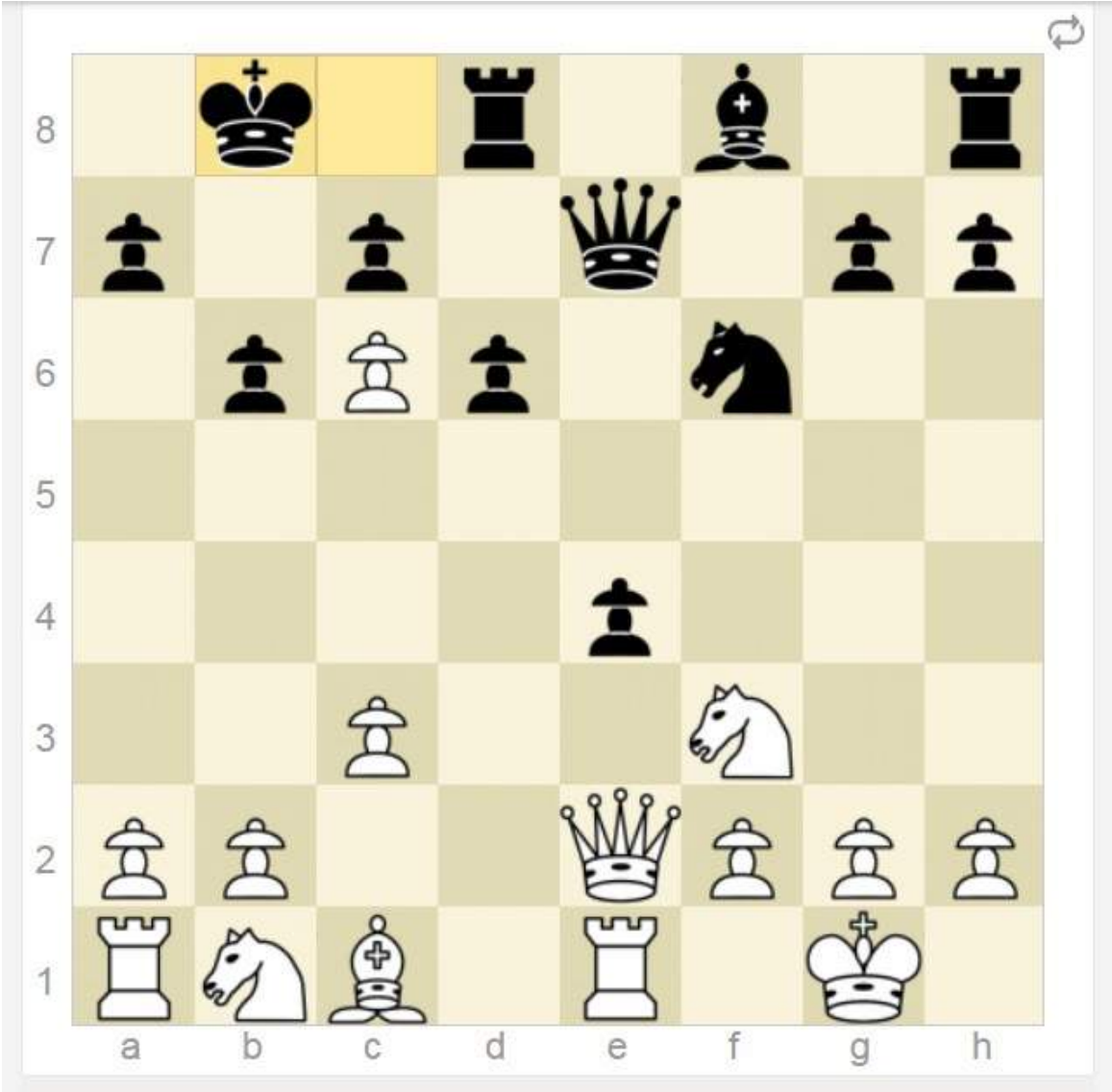


# Chess puzzle

By Denis Bates



White to move. Checkmate in 2 moves by white.



Answers on page: 26

# 'Circles of Ceremony'

## A sermon by Fr Joseph

First preached at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich, Advent 2020

The poet, George Mackay Brown, who died in 1996, spent the whole of his life on his beloved Orkney Islands apart from brief spells of study in Scotland. He became a Catholic as a young man, leaving behind a legacy of strict Presbyterianism. Several of his poems and novels are coloured by his new-found faith. In some, this is well hidden, but in others it is more explicit.

One of his poems, written just two or three years before his death, is a meditation on the nature of time, and is called 'Corpus Christi':

*The young un-named boy of the poem is present when the Apostles are called from their fishing nets, when the wine is being pressed in the vineyard, at the wedding feast in Cana, when the five thousand are fed, he is present at the foot of the Cross with the 'mother of sorrows,' and he stands... to watch (un-regarded) when Corpus Christi was unhooked from the black wave and wrapped, dripping, in the death net.*

In other words, as the Body of Christ is taken down from the Cross. But towards the end of the poem, when the boy has become an old man, the last but one verse reads as follows:

*I know this about time,  
It has set me on a distant shore.  
It has given us history,  
Not the circles of ceremony all men  
ought to rejoice in.*

'The shore' is, of course, a reference to the Sea of Galilee, but more significantly it refers to the journey of life that the boy has been on. He has experienced many things, yet finds himself, at the end of his life, on the same shore on which he was born. On this view, he is not at all sure that time is simply the measure of change, a long line of one event after another trailing all the way back to the beginning, a series of linear



recollections. Instead, he asks, where are the 'circles of ceremony [that] all men ought to rejoice in'? In answer to his own question, the final stanza of the poem reads:

*Today, in a western island, at least  
On a summer morning  
I can kneel at the Mass of Corpus Christi.*

For George Mackay Brown, the modern view of history as a series of events to be analysed and picked apart, based on recollections and memories and archived data, is not what time is really all about. For him, time is about the 'circles of ceremony,' the continual re-visiting of the great supernatural Mysteries over the course of a lifetime. The poem ends with the Corpus Christi – the Body of Christ that the boy had seen: at the wedding feast at Cana, in the fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee, and being taken down from the Cross and wrapped in a shroud – that same Body is being made present once more to the eyes of the old man in the form of the Blessed Sacrament on the feast of Corpus Christi.

Here, in the Mass, in the beautiful ceremonies of the Catholic Church, the sacred mysteries of our Faith are made to transcend our normal understanding of time, and those

events are made sacramentally present before our very eyes. As we revisit each of the Church's feasts and seasons year after year – or perhaps we should say, as the feasts and seasons revisit us – we are made present at those historical events that are being commemorated. When we venerate the Cross on Good Friday and kiss the feet of Our Lord, we are doing more than just putting our lips to a piece of dead wood: we are being made present at the moment when our redemption was accomplished on Calvary.

And in the same way, when we kneel before the crib at Christmas, we are doing more than just kneeling before a collection of little statues and greenery: we are bowing down before the Mystery of the Incarnation which is being made present to us anew, a mystery that is as alive today as it was two thousand years ago.

**'Christmas is not about a collective distant memory, nor about a collective anticipation. We are caught up in the mysteries of the Incarnation and of our salvation here and now!'**

Continued on page 23



In other words, God uses the figures in the crib, and the wood of our crosses here in this church, as means of bringing before us the reality of the mysteries of our salvation, not in exactly the same way, but neither entirely dissimilarly from the way in which He uses water at Baptism, and Bread and Wine in the Holy Eucharist. The objects of devotion which we venerate are quasi-sacramental, in that they bring us into the presence of God and the things of God.

And this is exactly what the Seasons of the Church do too. In this holy season of Advent, we do not merely prepare to recall the first coming of Christ in a manger in Bethlehem, nor do we merely anticipate His second coming at the end of time. Rather, there is a very real, quasi-sacramental, sense in which we are actually participating in the message of John the Baptist – almost as if we were standing on the banks of the River Jordan with the crowds flocking to hear the preacher's words – and we are already, here and now, being caught up in the glory of the Parousia, the end times and the second coming of our King.

Christmas is not about a collective distant memory, nor about a collective anticipation. We are caught up in the mysteries of the Incarnation and of our salvation here and now! How come? Because time, instead of being viewed as a long line of successive events, is more like a spiral which allows us to revisit the same point on a circle but at a different level each time those events come around. As with walking along a spiral, we are drawn more fully into the supernatural reality of those events with each passing year, and are drawn – year by year – up towards their fulfilment in heaven. The Church's feasts are the 'circles of ceremonies' of George Mackay Brown's poem. And he is absolutely right: in these, we ought all to rejoice!



**George Mackay Brown**

**... 'the beautiful ceremonies of the Catholic Church, the sacred mysteries of our Faith are made to transcend our normal understanding of time, and those events are made sacramentally present before our very eyes'.**

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## **Your questions on the Roman Catholic faith, answered by Father Joseph - Part 2**

**How can Purgatory be explained simply? Is this a minute to minute experience until admission to heaven?**

**By Barbara Noll**

Purgatory is a place, or more probably a state of being, where souls which have not reached a state of perfection by the time they come to die are perfected after they die. Purgatory involves both great joy at the prospect of being on the threshold of heaven and great suffering as any remaining imperfections are torn from our souls. But why suffering? All sins are punished, whether in this life or in the next. If we have suffered more in this life than we have sinned – and have offered that suffering up to God as penances – then we will not have to suffer in the next life (in Purgatory).

However, if, when we die, there is still some punishment outstanding then we will have to pay that debt in Purgatory and suffer accordingly. As time is simply the measure of change, and souls in Purgatory are changed from a state of imperfection to a state of perfection, then we must assume that souls in Purgatory experience a sense of time as they are perfected.





God of hope,  
we cling to you,  
for your renew the face of the earth.

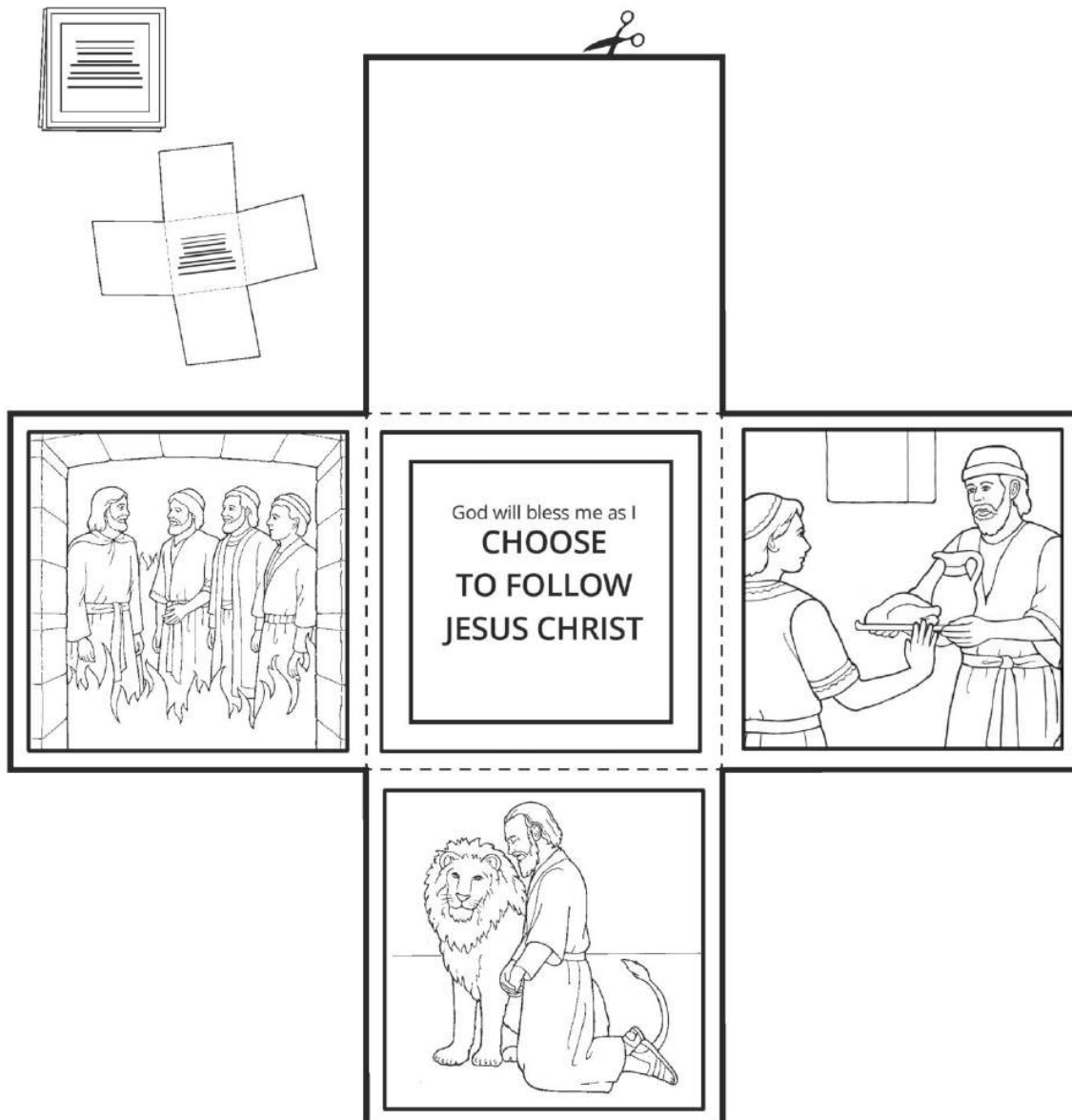
Through the gift of your Son,  
our Lord Jesus,  
we follow you on the path of dawn.

Enlightened by your love and wisdom,  
help us to lead each other  
and all creatures  
back to your open arms.  
Amen.

**Source: CAFOD**

### God will bless me as I choose to follow Jesus Christ (Daniel 1; 3; 6).

Color the pictures that show Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego being blessed for choosing to follow Jesus Christ. In the blank square, draw a picture of one way you can choose to follow Jesus Christ. (You can draw pictures of other ways you can follow Jesus Christ on the back of the squares.) Then cut out the large shape on the solid lines. Fold the pictures to the inside on the dotted lines so the words "God will bless me as I choose to follow Jesus Christ" are on top of the square.





# Millicent Mouse

**By Serena Guo - age 10**  
**Chapter 1**

The Autumn air swooped past as the north wind blew icy cold. The birds' tweets slowed down and the leaves fluttered to the ground. Squeaky was outside, he wore a jacket and a hat but even then, he was shivering. "oooh it is cold!" he gasped. Then Squeaky turned round to see Mr. Blackbird. If you are a gnome or an animal, you will know him very well. He is the postman, or should it be the post bird? He is very friendly; his cheery tweet and distinctive blue hat makes everyone happy.

"Hello Simon," called Mr. Blackbird in the hurricane-like wind, "What are you doing in THIS WEATHER?"

'Well, Boffin said that I need to pick some flowers for Uncle Steven (Boffin's brother) because he's caught a cold. The thing is ...um, err...I can't seem to find any'.

Mr. Blackbird thought carefully and scratched his feathers for a moment. Suddenly, a light bulb appeared above his head. PING! 'Well, I did see some snowdrops in the corner over there'. pointed out Mr. Blackbird. 'Thank you', smiled Squeaky, "now where are you going?" 'I am on my way to deliver this letter to Mrs. Millicent Mouse, do you know where she lives?' asked Mr. Blackbird. Squeaky checked the letter. It said: Mrs. M Mouse, Strawberry Lane, 34, Elmwood edge.

Squeaky finally answered. 'Err...well, it seems to me that she has just moved in because I do NOT recognise the name. But I think she should live right over there' Squeaky pointed accurately(ish).

'Thank you, Simon', said Mr. Blackbird politely. He was about to go when suddenly Squeaky said 'Err ... would it be all right if I came with you? I would like to see if our new neighbours have settled in'. 'Well, I'm sure they won't mind', tweeted Mr. Blackbird. So off they went.

After wading through many fallen leaves, they came to a small grassy hill. Right in the middle there was a little wooden door with big letters saying 'Mrs Mouse!' They stepped up to the door and tapped. Tappitty tap tap tap. (I've made a new word, (Tappitty!)

'Hello, who's there? Squeaked a little high-pitched voice, a bit like Squeaky's, but even squeakier. 'Mr. Blackbird, you have a letter'. The small wooden door opened, creak, and out came a little mouse. How curious! 'Thank you, sirs', said the mouse holding the letter in her furry paws'. It does seem cold outside. Wouldn't you like to come in for a cup of mint tea'? she asked. 'Yes please!' the two little friends sighed with relief as they stepped into the cosy cottage.



At the late hours of the windy afternoon Squeaky came back. Boffin was just washing the leafy dishes but turned around when he saw Squeaky. 'Oh goodness me', exclaimed Boffin 'Where have you been?' Boffin said this sternly but not too strictly'. Sorry Boff-boff' said Squeaky disappointedly, staring at the floor'. I've been to Millicent's'. And then he explained everything to Boffin, who smiled now he understood.

Ten minutes later, Squeaky went to bed, said his prayers and fell fast asleep. 'SQUEEAAK!' Squeaky was woken up by a loud squeak like a mouse. Could it be.... Millicent!?

**See what happens next, in the Easter issue of the Parish magazine.**



# Jessie's latest news!

Woofs and tail waggy greetings, it's that wonderfuf jolly, jingly time again. I love to see lights in windows and smell those tasty treats, yummy! Of course, a stroll in the park is pawsome but it's good to come home and snuggle up in the warm. Did I mention Dad bought me an armchair? He has one too, and calls them 'wing-backs', could that mean a mouthful of feathers?

Although I'm mistress of the house, Dad's chair is forbidden territory. But I'm never daunted! When Dad was out I just had to test it for comfort. All was quiet and I curled up for a delicious nap. Suddenly, roaring, growling and howling blasted my ears and all kinds of animals appeared. Hackles up, I braced myself to face the intruders. No one attacks my home! Just then, Dad came back, he was shocked. 'Jessie you've turned on the tv, it's a wildlife programme!'



It seems I sat on something called a remote. I shall avoid Dad's chair in future. When mum visits, she sometimes sits in my chair. Then I stand and stare with a sorrowful look, head on one side, oh and whining helps. 'Poor Jessie, do you need food or water?' Not at all, when mum gets up, I simply take her place.

The other day, Dad came in carrying a green spiky thing. He calls it a tree but it isn't real. He hangs coloured balls on it. Then he brought in some packages and put them round the tree. I went close for a sniff. 'Nothing you can eat here Jessie'. He must remember the affair of the peanut butter'. Hopes dashed, I settled down in my cosy bed by the French window. I was just in a pleasant doze when Dad said, 'Time for a break, let's go to the Greyhound. I jumped for joy tail wagging furiously.



Alex and Jessie

It is my favourite hostelry, even the name is dog friendly. In winter we go inside. There is a kind of ledge called the bar. I always look for the jar of dog treats on the top. Who can resist my appealing gaze? The man behind the bar gives out drinks to humans. Dad says they are called beers. There are many different kinds with names such as Regatta, Broadside and Ghost Ship – sounds scary. But Dad says they are nautical words as Ipswich is near the sea. Nautical sounds like naughty, the word mum calls me when I pull my chair trick!

It seems that humans like to celebrate Christmas with extra special drinks. I'm sure you can guess the subject of today's quiz? Of course, there's always a bowl of water for K9s!

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## Alma Redemptoris Mater (Dear Mother of our Redeemer)

1669 translation of Marian antiphon, sung in St Pancras during Advent and Christmas season

Selected by Ann Abbott

Thou, the Redeemer's Mother bright,  
gate whereby souls ascend  
to Heaven, thou star that rul'st the sea:  
thy helping hand extend  
to people fall'n, who strive to rise;  
thou who hast brought to light  
thy Father, while wise nature stood  
astonished at the sight,  
Virgin before and after birth,  
taking from Gabriel's speech  
this happy Hail: on sinful souls  
have mercy, we beseech.





# Jessie's drinks quiz



1) Which fictional secret agent likes his vodka martini shaken not stirred?

2) Can you name the fizzy soft drink of the 1950s/60s which had a name meaning crown?



3) How is beer still ordered and measured?

4) According to legend, when and where was tea discovered?

5) On average, how long can humans survive without water?

6) Which country does Tokai come from?



7) Apart from biblical characters, what do these names refer to – Nebuchadnezzar, Jeroboam, Methuselah?



8) Which beverage is still the most popular hot drink in the U.K.?

9) How many fluid ounces in a gallon?

10) Can you name the PM who phased out free milk in schools?

11) According to the song, who spent all his money on whiskey and beer?

12.) How did coca cola get it's name?



13) Traditionally, what drink was issued to sailors in the Royal Navy?

14) Accused of corrupting the youth, which Greek philosopher was forced to drink hemlock?

15) Which sparkling perry is advertised by a small deer?

16) What did Peter Sarsted want to buy on 'this fantastic day'?

17) Which drink is made from fermented honey?

18) What is the official drink at Wimbledon?

19) which celebration, did Jesus turn water into wine?

20) What is the essential ingredient in beer?

21) Who painted The Absinthe Drinker?

22) Which brewery is based in Southwold?

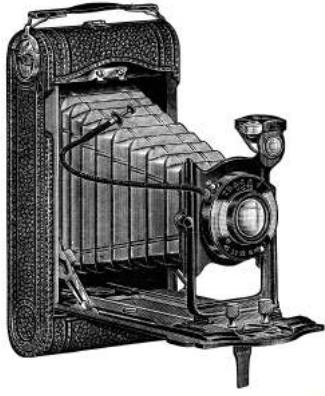
23) What alcoholic drink was supposed to give you strength?

24) Who was the original singer of 'Red, Red, Wine'?

25) Who asked his page to bring 'lesh and wine'?



Answers on page 29



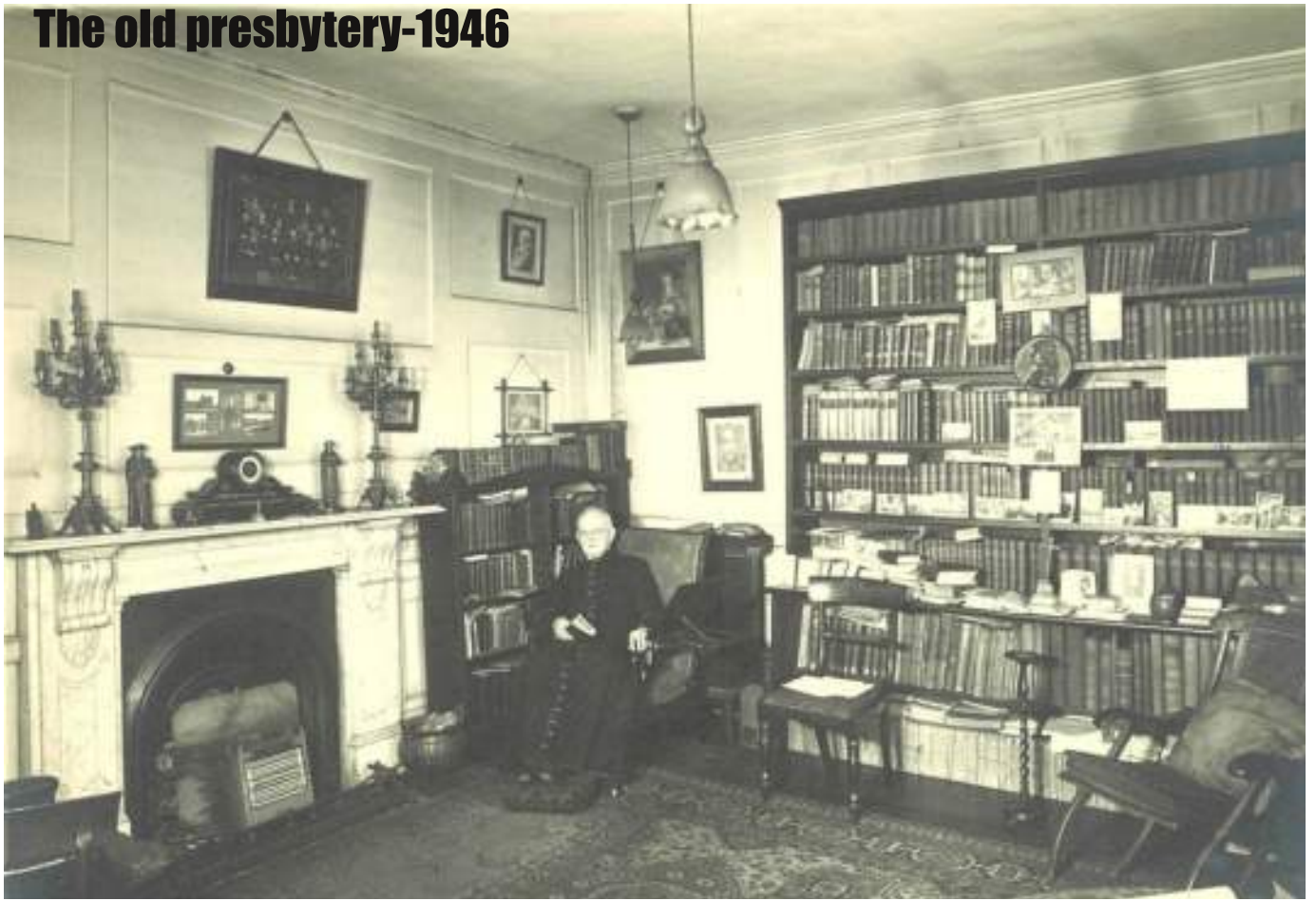
# From the archive

**Official opening of St Albans School, 1967**





## The old presbytery-1946



### Answers to Jessie's quiz:

- 1) James Bond
- 2) Corona
- 3) Imperial pints
- 4) China, 2,737 BC
- 5) 3 days
- 6) Hungary
- 7) Bottle sizes for champagne
- 8) Tea
- 9) 160 (imperial)
- 10) Margaret Thatcher
- 11) the wild rover
- 12) It's original ingredients were cocaine and caffeine
- 13) Grog
- 14) Socrates
- 15) Babycham
- 16) 'one more frozen orange juice'
- 17) Mead
- 18) The Pimms cup
- 19) The wedding at Cana
- 20) Water
- 21) Edgar Degas
- 22) Adnams
- 23) Guinness
- 24) Neil Diamond 1967
- 25) Good King Wenceslas



**Answer to Denis Bates' chess puzzle: Qa6 Ka8 Qb7 checkmate**

# Parish events diary:

## **- Saturday 6th January - Epiphany and Benediction**

**The Gospel of the Magi, the Blessing of Epiphany chalk, a procession to the crib, and concluding with Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Especially geared towards children and families but all welcome. (First Holy Communion children and Confirmation candidates are expected to attend.) Refreshments in the hall afterwards and donations of the traditional Epiphany cake, the Galette des Rois, most welcome!**



## **- Sunday 7th January - The transferred feast of the Epiphany**

**- Monday 15th January - 1st Mothers' Group meeting at 11am. Toddlers welcome. Please join us for the 5 Cs: coffee, cake, conversation, catechism, and chaos.**

**- Wednesday evening talks- Resume on 10th January at 7pm.**

**- Saturday 27th January - Tavern Evening at 7pm**

**- Tuesday 13th February - Shrove Tuesday parish pancake party at 6 pm**

**- Wednesday 14th February - Ash Wednesday**

**- Next book club meeting - Monday 11th March at 7pm, and we will discuss The Mass in Slow Motion by Monsignor Ronald Knox**

**- Saturdays in Lent - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 10:30 am-5:30 pm**

**- Sundays in Lent - Stations of the Cross, at 4:30**

**- Palm Sunday – 24th March**

**- Maundy Thursday – 28th March**

**- Good Friday – 29th March**

**- Polish Blessing of Easter Food – Saturday 30th March**

**- Easter Sunday – 31st March**





# Great Catholic minds

By Tilly Rampley

Blessed Nicolas Steno (*Stenonius*), was a Danish scientist, born New Year's day 1638 in Copenhagen. At 19 years old, Steno went to Copenhagen university to study medicine. Following the completion of his studies, he started travelling to different parts of Europe and met with some prominent scientists who influenced him to expand his studies in different areas of science, in particular in geology, anatomy, paleontology (study of the history of life on earth based on examining fossils) and the study of crystals; with which later on he laid the foundation of the science of crystallography.

While in Amsterdam, he studied human anatomy and discovered the parotid salivary duct, also called Stensen's Duct. In 1665, he went to Florence and was appointed physician to Grand Duke Ferdinand II. Steno found that although quartz crystals differ greatly in physical appearance, they all have the same angles between corresponding faces; this is called Steno's Law. In addition he proposed the revolutionary

idea that fossils are the remains of ancient living organisms and that many rocks are the result of sedimentation.

He is known for being one of the main founders of the science of geology, for his extensive studies of the formation of fossils and rocks. This was long before Darwin, and modern atheists who constantly attempt to promote the idea that studying the formation of fossils etc., is a tool to somehow disprove the existence of God!

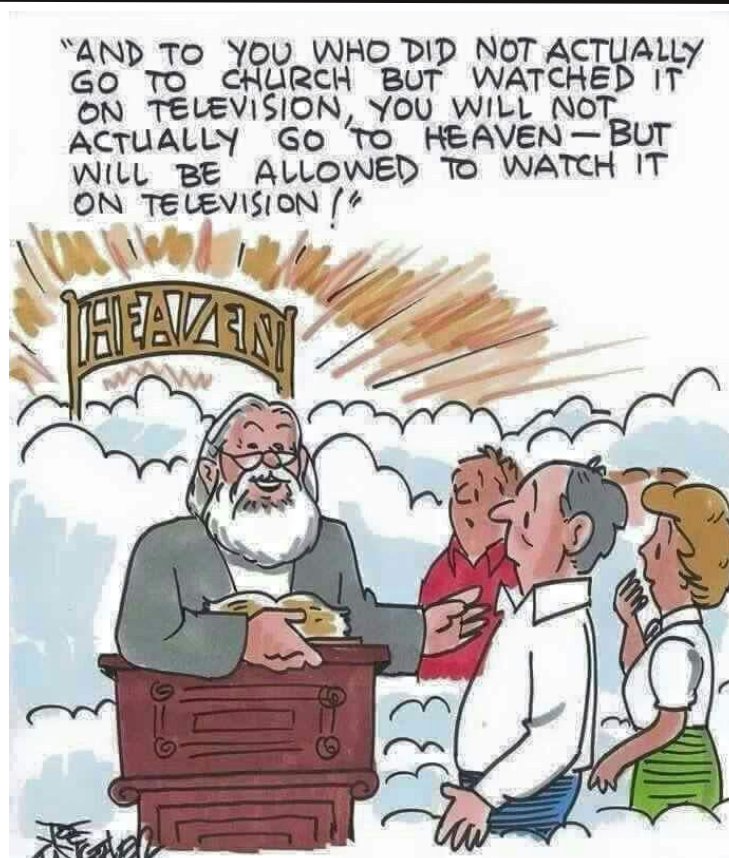
Steno was from a Lutheran family, which probably played a role in his conversion to Catholicism, as he started questioning his family's religious teachings. He converted to Catholicism in 1667 on All Souls day. And in 1675 he decided to become a priest and later he was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Nordic Missions (The Vicariate Apostolic of Northern Germany) and Titular Bishop of Titopolis by Pope Innocent XI.



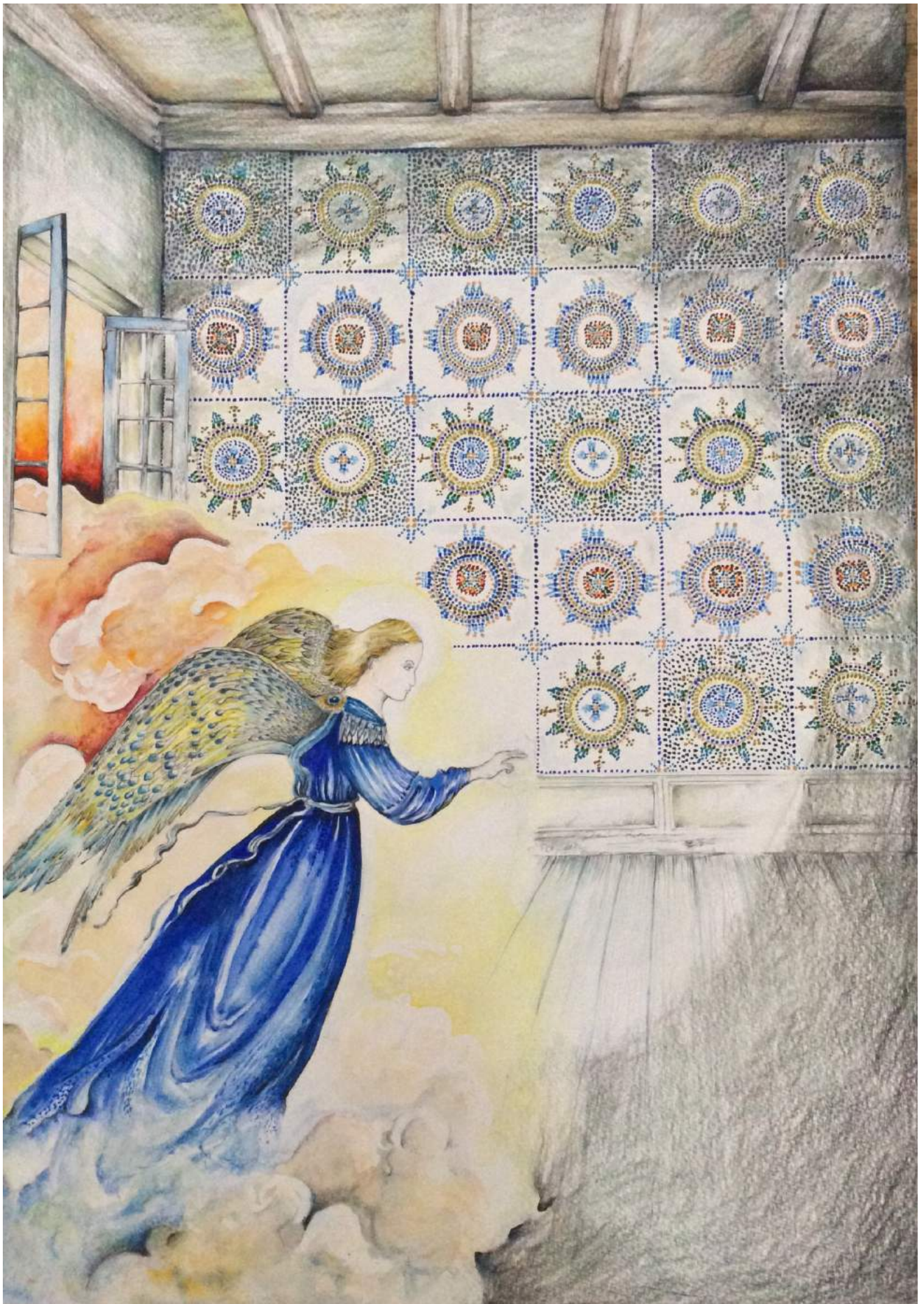
Steno played an active role in the counter-reformation in Northern Germany. He was a devout Catholic who prayed and fasted constantly. In 1988, Pope John Paul II beatified Steno and his feast day is on 5th December.

**'Beautiful is what we see. More beautiful is what we comprehend. Most beautiful is what we do not comprehend'.**

**Nicolas Steno 1638-1686**







**Fear Not- By Sara Hornby (contemporary)**