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The inaugural Caritas East Anglia Festival at St Laurence in Cambridge.



Renowned author and Quidenham Prioress

Quidenham-based Carmelite nun and former Prioress, Sister Rachel Gregory OCD, renowned author of more than a dozen books on prayer and the spiritual life, died on November 10, aged 100. Sister Teresa Keswick ODC gives an appreciation.

■ Sr Rachel (better known to her reading public by her pen name Ruth Burrows), entered the Carmelite Monastery at Mansfield in Derbyshire at the age of 18; for 82 years of her life she was an enclosed Carmelite contemplative nun. As a young prioress of 36, she realised that the small Carmel over which she presided had no realistic future, so she organized an amalgamation with the monastery at Quidenham in Norfolk: a much bigger community in a much bigger house in the countryside, full of potential for expansion. She arrived here in 1960 and stayed.

Although always very proud of being a Yorkshire woman she grew to love her East Anglian surroundings, and would say that the beauty of the Peak District in Derbyshire was often too great: its loveliness was overwhelming and could distract her both from prayer and from work. Rachel ■ **story continued on page ten.**

Caritas East Anglia holds first festival

Caritas in East Anglia celebrated its inaugural deanery festival in Cambridge, with Bishop Peter Collins leading Mass and highlighting the pivotal role of Catholic volunteers. Jane Crone reports.



■ On Saturday November 4, Caritas in East Anglia held its first deanery festival at St Laurence's Church in Cambridge. The day began with Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter, during which he spoke about the role Catholic volunteers play in the life of the church.

At the end of Mass, the Caritas in East Anglia candle was taken through into a church hall filled with stalls showcasing the work of local, national, and inter-

national organisations such as the SVP, food banks, the Cantonese Chaplaincy, the Justice and Peace Group, UCM, and CWL. The team from the Saturday morning St Laurence's coffee hub kindly provided refreshments while stallholders spent time getting to know each other and greeting visitors.

During the day, stallholders and visitors heard from two speakers. A local speaker, Selwyn Image, spoke about setting up Emmaus UK in Cambridge and Margaret Clark spoke about the role the National Board of Catholic Women plays in the life of the church in England

and Wales.

Afterwards, Father John Warrington, Chair of Caritas in East Anglia, said, 'It was great to welcome so many different and diverse organisations and projects to celebrate our first Caritas East Anglia Festival. There was a real buzz in the room after Mass, conversation flowed as old friends met and new friendships were made.'

The speakers provided insight and reflection leading to thoughtful questions and discussion. At the end of the day, prayer and reflection drew us together and helped us give thanks for all that we shared and celebrated, guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.'

The next two Caritas Festivals are on February 24, 2024 at St Mary's Church in Ipswich and May 25, 2024 at St Peter's Church in Gorleston.

For more information on Caritas in East Anglia, see: www.rcdea.org.uk/caritas-east-anglia



Fr Olindo is set to celebrate

■ A 96-year-old East Anglian priest is looking forward to marking an incredible 70 years of ministry in January. Fr Jeffrey Downie reports.

A native of Italy, Fr Olindo Cramaro was born in a small village near Udine on November 3, 1927. Ordained priest for the Society of St Paul on January 24, 1954, after one year he was transferred to Northern Ireland for 3 years.

In 1957, Fr Olindo moved to East Anglia, eventually incardinating into what was then part of the Diocese of Northampton, serving in Norwich and Peterborough. In January 1984, he became parish priest of Southwold, enjoying 20 years of fruitful ministry there before retirement.

In retirement, Fr Olindo returned to Peterborough, settling in Yaxley close to long-time friends Bridget and Roy Day. He continued to remain very active, supporting the local Catholic community, schools and parishes, especially St Luke's, enjoying driving around in his Fiat along with Italian food and wine.

At the age of 96, Fr Olindo takes things a little more quietly now, supporting us with his daily prayers, keeping up with the news and welcoming visits from friends.

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Vibrant Latin Mass in Cambridge

■ Paul Henriksen, East Anglia Diocesan Representative, lauds the inclusive and vibrant nature of contemporary Latin Mass, attracting diverse ages and notably inspiring young altar servers.

"At the OLEM Mass the congregation was of all ages, and the magnificent and predominantly young phalanx of altar servers was an inspiration," recalls Paul Henriksen, East Anglia Diocesan Representative, as he reflects on the vibrant and inclusive nature of the contemporary Latin Mass.

Founded in 1969 amidst the liturgical changes following the Second Vatican Council, the Association for Latin Liturgy has been instrumental in promoting the use of Latin and Gregorian chant in the modern, post-Conciliar Mass, often referred to as the Ordinary Form. Contrary to the Tridentine Rite or Extraordinary Form, the Association's focus remains firmly on the contemporary Mass in Latin.

Paul Henriksen's experiences with youth engagement in the Latin Mass are particularly enlightening. Contrary to pop-



ular belief, the Latin Mass has found a surprising resonance among the younger generation. This was clearly evident during a visit to Saint Mary's University, Twickenham, where students, including those from St Thomas More, Bexleyheath, displayed a deep appreciation for the Latin Mass.

The Association's recent event at OLEM was a remarkable showcase of the richness of the Latin Mass. Mgr Canon Harkness and Nigel Kerry, the Music Director, extended a warm welcome to the Association's members, highlighting the church's exceptional acoustics for Gregorian Chant and polyphony. The Mass,

celebrated by Fr Anton Webb and featuring eminent figures like Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes and Fr Paul Keane, was a splendid display of liturgical music, including William Byrd's Mass for Five Voices and the Graduale Parvum chants.

Paul Henriksen chanted the readings in a mix of English and Latin, contributing to a liturgy that exemplified the grandeur of the post-Conciliar Latin Mass. The day also featured enlightening talks, including one by Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes on active participation in the liturgy, and ended with Vespers and Benediction, celebrated entirely in Latin.

latin-liturgy.org

Diocese appoints David as new Director of Music

The Diocese of East Anglia has appointed a new Director of Music for the diocese and for St John's Cathedral in Norwich.

■ David Grealy, a native of Galway in the west of Ireland, comes to the Diocese of East Anglia from the Diocese of Leeds, where he has been Assistant Organist at Leeds Cathedral as well as a tutor on the diocesan schools' singing and keyboard studies programmes.

David will also be leading the Diocese of East Anglia's Schools Singing Programme, which aims to bring high-quality choral music into the life of Catholic schools up and down the Diocese. "The programme has already been successfully established in the Cambridgeshire part of the Diocese and David will be seeking to expand it.

Welcoming the appointment, Bishop Peter Collins said: "David emerged after a highly competitive process with a very strong field of applicants in which the candidates' skills in liturgical music and in leading adult and children's choirs were put to the test over two days.

"David will be carrying on the tradition of excellent Catholic music-making at St John's Cathedral and leading its choirs. He comes to us from Leeds Cathedral where his high standard of musicianship has been on display, as well as previously at Westminster and in Europe.



David Grealy.

David said: "I am delighted to be taking up the position of Director of Music for the Diocese of East Anglia and St John's Cathedral.

"I look forward to continuing the great work of my predecessor, Daniel Justin, in cultivating a fine tradition of choral, organ and liturgical music and in placing it at the heart of worship in the cathedral community and the wider diocese.

"In the past, I have worked in Catholic dioceses in Ireland, England and Ger-

many – each with its own unique traditions and approach to sacred music – and I very much look forward to bringing this experience to my new role."

David is a graduate of Maynooth University (Ireland) and the Hochschule für Musik, Cologne, and is also a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. He has previously held positions at Westminster Cathedral and St Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Dublin. He will be taking up the post in early January.

■ A parish retreat in Sacred Heart Parish, St Ives (pictured right), was recently held, led by the Diocesan Services Team representing CHARIS. Derek Williams gave two uplifting talks on the theme "Encounter with Christ". The retreat began with Fr Michael Leach, a retired supply priest, celebrating Mass and Adoration and also giving an opportunity for Confession at the conclusion of the retreat.



Cambridge nuns take their vows

Sr Maryjohn Kamps renewed her temporary vows, and Sr Mary Gonçalves FDC made her final vows at OLEM, Cambridge, in a Sacred Liturgy led by Bishop Peter Collins, marking a significant spiritual milestone. Sr Mary Gonçalves reports.

■ God took me from the furthest country, East Timor, and brought me to England with a special plan and mission.

When I arrived in Cambridge in 2007, the church of Our Lady of Assumption and English Martyrs, OLEM, Cambridge, had always been a place where we gathered for Sunday Eucharist, a place where I found rest from my weariness of the everyday labour and a place where I found inner peace in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord.

It was at OLEM where my love for the Eucharist deepened, and I found consolation in the Sacred Heart Chapel. As time passed, my union with Jesus grew stronger and in 2013, my vocation to religious life developed within me. In the same year, I met our sisters and joined them the following year in 2014.

Throughout my journey in religious life, God has always been by my side, guiding, accompanying, and shaping me to be more like Him, with



Pictured, from the left, is Sr Mary Gonçalves, Bishop Peter Collins and Sr Maryjohn Kamps.

the support of the sisters, priests, and my family. He captivated me with His divine beauty, a pure love that a soul cannot resist falling in love with.

God, in His immense goodness, has led me this far and my soul continues to sing

praises to the Almighty for His graciousness to me.

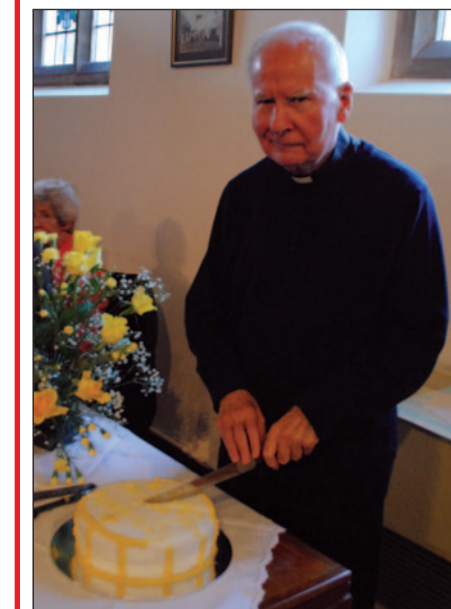
On August 28, the feast of St. Augustine, Sr Maryjohn Kamps renewed her temporary vows and I made my final vows. It was God's providence that I was able to make my final profession in my Parish

home OLEM, where it all began. The Sacred Liturgy was celebrated with great awe by Bishop Peter. The Sacred Liturgy was also joined by Bishop Emeritus Alan Hopes, priests, sisters, family, parishioners, and friends. It was a heartfelt joy for me to know that Christ, Our Lord, was waiting for me at the Altar, ready to welcome me to Himself forever. To give myself to God is my act of thanksgiving to Him, who is my all in all.

During the homily, the Parish Priest, Mgr Harkness, said, "By belonging entirely to God, you belong entirely to His Church, and humbly, in the name of the Church, whom you seek to serve with love and fidelity." These words remind me that my vocation is not all about me but my vocation is above all to serve God and His Church with the spirit of readiness and enthusiasm. It is a happiness and privilege for me to be able to serve and to be a witness to God's people as a Pastoral Assistant at OLEM from September 2023.

With a thankful heart, I praise God for His faithfulness and His infinite love for me. I thank Mother General Maria Dulce Adams for having accepted my request for my final profession and all those who have helped me along my journey with their support and encouragement, the sisters, family, priests, and friends. Please pray for me that I may persevere in my vocation and carry out my duties as a Daughter of Divine Charity with great commitment and dedication.

news in brief



Fr James marks 25th anniversary

■ Retired East Anglian priest Fr James Fyfe has celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination with a Mass, a Papal Blessing and a cake reports Stuart Grant.

Monday November 20, the Feast of St Edmund, saw a very special celebration take place in the Parish of Hunstanton. At mid-day, Mass was celebrated by Fr James Fyfe with the assistance of six fellow priests in honour of the 25th anniversary of his ordination. At the end of the Mass, Fr James was presented with a special Papal Blessing by Fr Michael Stokes to recognise his ministry. Fr James had been Parish Priest at Hunstanton for many years and the local congregation was joined by a number of people from the Parishes of St Ives, OLEM in Cambridge and Wisbech where Fr James had also served before his retirement.

Following the special Mass, all present enjoyed a lovely buffet lunch at the church where Fr James ceremonially cut a special cake made by one of our parishioners to mark this day (pictured above).

Norwich Catenians

■ The highlight of the November meeting of Norwich Circle of the Catenian Association was a visit from Provincial President Peter Dowse accompanied by Director of Province 2, Mike Evans.

The after-dinner speech, delivered by Mike Evans, revolved around the need to recruit more brothers, which is a problem being suffered by many more organisations as men are reluctant to take up the obligations of joining on top of their domestic obligations.

Christ the King

■ To mark the feast of Christ the King, parishioners at St Pancras in Ipswich, spent time before our Eucharistic Lord during the afternoon on Sunday, reports Fr Joseph Welch. Following a solemn Mass at 11am, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed on the altar for worship and adoration throughout the rest of the day until 5pm when 40 or 50 people gathered for Solemn Benediction, which drew the time of Adoration to a close.

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Looking forward to the new year

In his latest Voice of Hope article, Fr Alvan Ibeh looks forward to the new year – 2024.



and am not even sure of how this year will be for me?"

Some people may have already given up hope for the new year judging from what happened to them in the previous year. To some, last year will forever remain the worst year of their lives because they have lost someone dear to them in the course of the year. Come to think of all those who lost their lives in different wars, diseases, accidents, etc.

While I was on my annual leave in Nigeria, I witnessed a series of road accidents in which I am sure a couple of people must have lost their lives. Yes, a lot of people who entered Flight 2023 with us crashed and didn't land safely with us. But we landed safely, notwithstanding the turbulence we experienced in different ways during our individual flights. While I was coming back from Nigeria on board Air France, we had turbulence and it was very scary but we landed safely, to the glory of God.

So my dear friend, we are all privileged to have landed safely and also privileged to have been among those who have boarded the next flight – Flight 2024. It doesn't matter what happened last year, God the chief pilot of this Flight 2024 is saying to you, just put all your trust in me and believe I will take you safely to your desired destination.

He says in Isaiah 43:18-20: "Forgot the former things, do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

All we need to do this year is what Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and He will direct your paths."

I pray that this year will bring overwhelming blessings to us all and a renewed hope for those who have lost hope in life. Let all our focus for the year be on God who is well able to take care of those concerns us. Let us not focus on the past as it doesn't exist anymore and cannot come back to us. The only one thing that we are sure of right now is that we have a faithful God who does not disappoint those who put their trust in Him.

Have a blessed and fulfilling new year my dear friends.

I have released my first music video entitled "Heaven and Earth".

Subscribe and follow me in all my social media platforms to enjoy my music which is meant to bless your heart

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Tiktok: [voice of hope family](#)
YouTube: [Ibeh Alvan \(voice of hope family\)](#)

Parishioners in Bury St Edmunds enjoyed a tasty lunch of stew made with ale on November 18. This was after Mass had been said, to celebrate the feast day of St Edmund which was on November 20, reports Nicola Trask.



East Anglia helps Police celebrate

The Catholic Police Guild celebrated its 100th National Requiem Mass at Westminster Cathedral on Tuesday November 7, with the participation of representatives from the Diocese of East Anglia.



Pictured are Police representatives outside Westminster Cathedral and, below Paul Gilbert (left) with Cardinal Vincent Nichols during part of the Mass. Pictures by Mazur/CBCEW.

His Eminence, Cardinal Vincent Nichols was chief celebrant, with two concelebrating bishops and chaplains from across the country.

As part of the celebration, each Police force in England and Wales was represented by a contingent of officers that formed a guard of honour replicating what occurred at a Requiem Mass in 1939, at the start of the Second World War.

Officers from Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies came to represent the two counties as part of a nationwide representation which included a delegation from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Accompanying those from Norfolk and Suffolk was Paul Gilbert, from St Mary's Theford, who is a volunteer lay chaplain based at Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. He also served during the Mass as Cardinal Nichols' crozier bearer.

"Over 1000 officers were in attendance. It was great that both Norfolk and Suffolk were able to attend to represent the Diocese of East Anglia," said Paul.

At the end of the Mass, a roll honour was announced for officers who have passed away in the last year.

The Catholic Police Guild was formed in 1914 by police from Westminster and in

1923, it became the National Guild for serving and retired officers in England and Wales.



Downham pilgrims visit Lourdes

Thirteen Norfolk pilgrims, led by Father Erico Falcao, embarked on a spiritually enriching week to Lourdes, France, filled with processions, masses, and local discoveries. Godfrey Dennis reports.

On October 9, the pilgrims left for France to visit the site of Our Lady's 18 appearances to Saint Bernadette in a grotto at Lourdes in 1858. The group, led by parish priest Father Erico Falcao, comprised 11 parishioners from St Dominic's Church and two guests from Hunstanton; retired priest Fr Michael Johnstone and Sr Thomas More. Thanks to much preparatory organising by parishioner Frances Stevens, working with Tangney Tours, a programme for the week was arranged, which included daily Mass, the afternoon Blessed Sacrament Procession for the sick, and the evening Torchlight Procession. Mass was said, in various languages, almost continuously at the Grotto site, referred to as The Domaine. Fathers Erico and Michael concelebrated Mass on several occasions, with Fr Erico also assisting in the Blessed Sacrament procession. Father Michael and Sister Thomas More also took part in the afternoon procession, assisted by members of the Parish group.

The programme allowed plenty of time to visit the many chapels, three basilicas, and outdoor Stations of the Cross. It was in the underground Chapel of Saint Joseph that we discovered a statue of a patron saint local to Norfolk, Our Lady of Walsingham. The week proved fascinating and spiritually uplifting for us all.

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Bishop Peter's engagements

- **Dec 17, Sun:** The Third Sunday of Advent - 'O Emmanuel Carol Service, St John's Cathedral, 4pm.
- **Dec 21, Thur:** Curia Christmas lunch, Poringland
- **Dec 22, Fri:** Christmas lunch with Seminarians, Poringland
- **Dec 24, Sun:** Christmas Eve - Solemn Pontifical First Vespers of Christmas, St John's Cathedral, 3.15pm
- **Dec 24, Sun:** Midnight Mass, St John's Cathedral
- **Dec 25, Mon:** HMP Norwich for Christmas Mass

2024

- **Jan 11, Thur:** Bishop and Dr Andy Stone to meet with CES Interschools MAT in Cambridge
- **Jan 12, Fri:** Bishop to Walsingham Planning Meeting
- **Jan 13, Sat:** Caritas Commission, Poringland
- **Jan 16, Tue:** Bishop's Council, Poringland
- **Jan 19, Fri:** Bishop to meet with the Ignite Team, White House, Poringland
- **Jan 20, Sat:** Diocesan Commission for Evangelisation, Poringland
- **Jan 21, Sun:** Churches Together in Felixstowe, Bishop to speak at the CTF Unity Service at the end of Christian Unity Week, St Peter & Paul Church, Felixstowe, 3pm
- **Jan 22-29:** Bishop Peter to Rome for part of the IARCCUM Meeting Jan 22-26 & then to Canterbury from Jan 26-29 for the rest of the meeting
- **Jan 30 & 31:** Bishop to attend the Ecumenical Gathering of Catholic and Anglican Bishops, Norwich
- **Feb 1, Thur:** Bishop to attend the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Department for Dialogue and Unity Meeting, London
- **Feb 2, Fri:** Annual Meeting of Religious and Mass, St John's Cathedral, followed by lunch
- **Feb 3, Sat:** MFL Commission, Poringland, 11am
- **Feb 4, Sun:** Bishop Peter to celebrate Mass and preach at St Edmunds College, Cambridge, 10.30am
- **Feb 8, Thur:** Bishop to attend the Diocesan Liturgy Commission, Poringland, 10am
- **Feb 9, Fri:** Meeting with Andy Stone, the Bishop and Lay Chaplains, Poringland, 10am
- **Feb 10, Sat:** Bishop to the Annual Mass to celebrate Our Lady of Lourdes with Anointing of the Sick, St John's Cathedral
- **Feb 12, Mon:** Bishop to Strategy Day for Walsingham Trustees, Cambridge
- All future dates at: www.rcdea.org.uk/bishop-peter-collins/bishops-diary/

East Timor Cardinal visits East Anglia

His Eminence Cardinal Virgilio do Carmo of East Timor recently visited Catholic communities, churches and schools in Peterborough and Cambridge. Fr Adam Sowa, Clara Jeronimo and Canon John Minh report.

■ There are about 500 East Timorese in Cambridge and the surrounding areas. As the majority of them are Catholics, they actively participate in the local parishes.

To support them in their good works, His Excellency João Paulo Rangel, Ambassador of East Timor to the UK, arranged an official visit for His Eminence Cardinal Virgilio do Carmo of East Timor to the East Timorese communities in the UK. The Cardinal visited them on Wednesday, November 10 in Peterborough at St Peter and All Souls, and on Thursday, November 11, in Cambridge.

■ The Cardinal, accompanied by his personal secretary Fr Julio and the Ambassador, with the attendance of a Cambridge Timorese Community delegation, arrived at St Peter and All Souls on the evening of November 9. Fr Adam Sowa MS (Parish Priest), Celso Oliveira (Chairman), Demitrio Dasilva (Vice-chairman), Clara Jeronimo (Secretary), Joao Carvalho (Treasurer), with members of the East Timorese community, welcomed him.

The delegation was invited to the Atasca Portuguese restaurant. Discussion centred on the proposed plans of the visitation. Then the La Salette Community welcomed His Eminence and his Secretary to stay overnight at St Peter and All Souls Presbytery.

On November 10, at 9.30am, Cardinal Virgilio, Fr Julio, Fr Adam and the Ambassador visited the Catholic Primary School of St Thomas More where they took part in their Remembrance Day. The visit was a happy one and a proud moment for His Eminence to talk about his journey to become the first Cardinal of East Timor. Young Timorese children were also present and many questions were asked. Headteacher Mrs Ann-Marie McElhinney and her staff were thrilled that a Cardinal was able to lead the children in prayer and give them his blessing.

At 10.30am, all the East Timorese community members welcomed and greeted Cardinal Virgilio, Fr Julio and the Ambassador with a welcome East Timorese speech called 'Dadolin' in the Tetum language by Ana Rosa, followed by traditional dances, music and food at St Mark's Hall. During the meeting, the Cardinal took his time to congratulate all the parents who strive to bring their children and families to be living members of our parish. He was also presented with his own portrait (hand-painted by Betinho), which he liked very much.

At 1.30pm, Fr Adam arranged a lavish four-course dinner with His Eminence and invited delegation members, including 16 Peterborough Deanery priests and deacons at the Presbytery of St Peter and All Souls Parish. There, at his invitation, the Cardinal gave a meaningful talk on Synodal Assembly, which was held in Rome in October 2023, and which he attended as a member.

Afterwards, the delegation walked to Peterborough Cathedral where they

received a private tour arranged by Rev Canon Tim Alban Jones.

The high point of the visit was a Pontifical Mass at 6pm, with more than 400 people attending, accompanied by the East Timor St Cecilia Choir of Peterborough.

During his homily, Cardinal Virgilio said: "I know that everyone is busy working, there is not much time to come to the church and pray, but I want to remind you, that like at home, you light a candle in your domestic oratory and sacred space. Similarly here in Peterborough, ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you, to lead you on the right path. So open your hearts with serenity, with your desire to do good in your life, and in your community. Follow the right path!"

At the end of Mass, 13 members of the community received Special Certificates of Recognition for their hard work and dedication to the parish community, signed by His Eminence. In return, Fr Adam presented Him with the Icon of Our Lady of La Salette, and with so much gratitude said: "Come back to us, soon!"

■ On Thursday, November 11, in Cambridge, the Cardinal said Mass and baptised a baby at St Laurence's Church on Milton Road. Although it was a weekday when everybody had to work, about 200 people managed to attend Mass and the reception afterward.

Recently, a member of the East Timor community, Sr Mary Gonçalves FDC, made her Perpetual Profession of Vows (see article on page 3) in the Daughters of Divine Charity Congregation at Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs, in Cambridge city centre. Many East Timorese parishioners are altar servers, readers, and special ministers of Holy Communion in the Cambridge area.

The pastoral tour of the Cardinal helps to strengthen the East Timorese communities in the Diocese of East Anglia, especially in the two main areas of Cambridge and Peterborough. Vina Fernandes, President of the East Timorese Community in Cambridge (ETICC), said, "When God sends a cardinal, it's a visitor from heaven."

A 2024 programme for a 2pm Mass in Tetum at St Laurence's has been proposed: Saturday February 10, Sunday April 21, Saturday June 8, Sunday October 6, Saturday November 2, and Sunday December 29. It is hoped that the new liturgical year will see remarkable growth in the spiritual life of the East Timorese communities in the Diocese.



Main picture, Cardinal Virgilio do Carmo at St Peter and All Souls in Peterborough, left at St Thomas More school in Peterborough and, below at St Laurence's church in Cambridge.



Rejoice but difficult decisions ahead

We can rejoice in how the Diocesan family is progressing, Bishop Peter says in his introduction to the annual report of the Diocesan Trustees, but warns "There will be difficult decisions ahead" as we address our "shared and fundamental duty of evangelisation" in a tough economic climate. Rev Paul Raynes, Director of Operations and Finance, reports.

■ Writing on the anniversary of the announcement of his appointment, the Bishop celebrated rising Mass attendance and increasing participation in the Sacraments during 2022, and said the trend had gained momentum recently. The number of Sunday worshippers in the diocese rose by 30 per cent, while the number of children making their First Holy Communion in 2022 was higher than before the Covid pandemic affected the Church. Baptisms, confirmations, marriages and receptions into the church all increased year-on-year. Vocations also prospered, with three new deacons ordained and 12 Diocesan students in training for the priesthood or permanent diaconate in the course of the year.

The annual report highlights the diversity and dynamism of the Diocese, anchored in its huge and varied geography. The growing population of urban centres such as Cambridge and Peterborough has brought ethnic and cultural variety to our churches and to pilgrimage centres such as Walsingham. The Trustees' report claims that "The Diocese of East Anglia is one of the most inclusive organisations in Britain. And that

is, of course its mission."

East Anglia's 52 parishes mobilised 1,900 volunteers, according to the report. Their work included supporting nine foodbanks and ten Alive in Faith parish projects. The Diocese is also the guardian of an important element of the area's heritage and history, with 42 listed buildings among its churches and presbyteries, including three Grade 1 listed treasures. Its 27 schools nurture over 10,000 children in a Catholic ethos. The school population is also considerably more ethnically and socially diverse than the average.

Despite this picture of growth and flourishing, Bishop Peter nevertheless warns that: "Many challenges remain as we face the future, not least in the financial arena." The Trustee report opens up the Diocese's books and reveals the seriousness of the financial position. Although the offerings of the faithful at Mass are now back to their pre-Covid levels, inflation means that money is worth nearly a third less than it was.

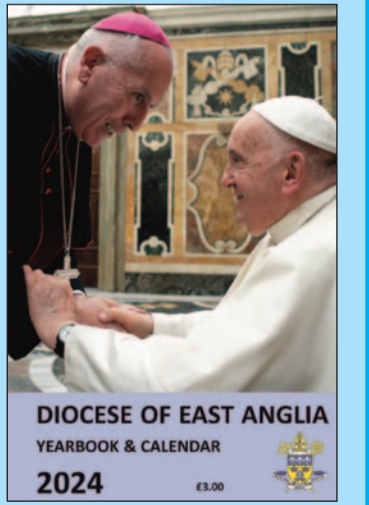
The Diocese is running at an operating loss. Although the financial results are flattered by a revaluation of some properties, "The funding gap between income and expenditure... remains a cause for concern," in the Bishop's words. The Trustees state in their report that they are committed to a deficit reduction plan which "will undoubtedly require some difficult decisions to be taken".

The Trustee report also contains a warm tribute to Bishop Peter to Bishop Alan and his legacy. Refusing to take credit for more than two weeks of the year the document covers, he thanks Bishop Alan for "wise and fruitful leadership", as well as expressing "sincere gratitude" to the members of the Diocesan Board of Trustees.

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YOUTH MATTERS

Bishop meets East Anglia heads

Headteachers from across the Diocese of East Anglia met at the Conference Centre at the White House in Poringland recently for the Autumn Conference hosted by the Diocesan Schools Service.

The day, on Friday November 3, provided the first opportunity for Bishop Peter Collins to meet with all the headteachers from his schools. After opening the conference with prayer, Bishop Peter led the first session focusing on the importance of clarity and confidence in the mission and identity of our Catholic schools. Bishop Peter thanked headteachers for all that they do and all that they give to their school communities and took an interesting range of questions from the floor. The conference continued with



Bishop Peter talks to school headteachers.

presentations and discussion on the theme of racial justice, facilitated by two guest speakers;

Lorraine Prince, Head of Networks at the Church of England and Allana Gay, a headteacher in north

London and founder member of BAMEEd an organisation promoting racial justice in schools.

Director of Schools' Service, Andy Stone, said: "Starting with the theological underpinnings of racial justice and acknowledging the great diversity to be found in our Catholic schools across East Anglia, the day provided a stimulating opportunity to reflect on how we ensure our communities are inclusive and how we celebrate the diversity that helps to make our schools such special places. "Our diocese is wide in geography and we are only able to gather everyone together on a relatively few occasions each year, so the opportunity for fellowship and networking was very welcome. We were grateful too that Bishop Peter was able to celebrate Mass with us before we all enjoyed a lunch together. "It was a stimulating day, with a busy programme and some excellent and thought-provoking discussion. Catholic schools are at the forefront in seeking to be places of welcome for all and we look forward to building on the many strengths our schools already enjoy."

YOUTH MATTERS

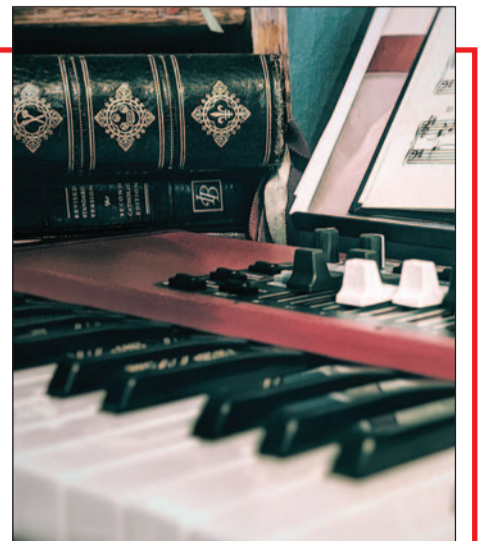
World Youth Day reunion

A reunion for World Youth Day pilgrims who went to Portugal this summer was held in Poringland recently, reports Alexander Thanickal. The evening, on October 21, started in Our Lady of the Annunciation Church in Poringland where there was praise and worship music followed by Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter Collins. The celebrations continued as everybody gathered in the Bishop's lounge in the White House where we ate pizza and had a real moment to catch up. There was then time for many to look back and share their World Youth Day experiences with the group, their highlights and how it may have made an impact in their life since coming back. After reflection and fellowship, we then



convened back in the church for an hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament whilst Fr Peter Wygnanski and Hamish MacQueen led us in some worship music. The group were then blessed to have the opportunity to stay overnight in the Diocesan offices

and some even got the privilege of crashing out in the Bishop's lounge. Overall, it was a joyful experience to catch up with all our friends and reminisce about the highlights of our summer trip and reflect on the fruits that came from it.



Chance to join exciting new musical youth initiative

The Diocesan Youth Service has launched an exciting new initiative which seeks to bring together young contemporary Catholic musicians from around the Diocese of East Anglia and is now inviting applications to join it. Under the leadership of Fr Peter Wygnanski, the East Anglia School of Contemporary Catholic Music aims to grow as a community committed to discipleship in Christ through prayer and praise and worship music and then to be able to lead others at events and retreats in the Diocese.

It's called the Sibyl Collective in honour of St Hildegard of Bingen, herself an accomplished musician and composer, and who was also known as the 'Sibyl of the Rhine'.

Fr Peter said: "It's a truly exciting prospect to gather together and nourish some of the great but hidden musical talent amongst the young faithful in the diocese, both to encourage and strengthen their own faith and to share the fruits of that in praying with others."

"A new chapter of contemporary Catholic music is unfolding, grounded in eucharistic adoration and music which opens up hearts and minds to the presence of God. Through this project, the Diocese hopes to play a part in this vision of the power of music to foster encounter with Christ in the sacraments."

Applications are invited from Catholics (aged 16 – 30) who play an instrument or sing. This round of applications will close on December 10, after which successful applicants will be invited to an initial meeting in the New Year.

Subsequent meetings will take place every 2-3 months usually on a Saturday afternoon. If you have any questions, then please contact peter.wygnanski@rcdea.org.uk. To apply for the project, visit: www.rcdea.org.uk/youth

Christmas Mass times

Wishing all of our Readers a very Merry Christmas!

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2023/2024. SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER. 11.00 am - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Confessions & Rosary. 12.00 noon - Holy Mass of the 4th Sunday of Advent. 8.00 pm - Vigil, Blessing of the Crib & First Mass of Christmas.

ST LUKE'S Benyon Grove, Orton Malborne, Peterborough. PE2 5X5. stlukeorton.org. 01733 371129/130713. Sunday 17th December: 6pm Christmas Nativity & Carol Service. Sunday 24th December: 6pm Family Vigil Mass; 8pm Vigil Mass; 11pm Mass in the Night. Monday 25th December: 9am, 10.30am & 12noon Mass with Carols.

Church of Our lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Wymondham. Christmas Eve 5pm: Family/Children's Mass (Wymondham) 10pm: Midnight Mass (Wymondham). Christmas Day 8.30am: Mass (Lighthouse, 131 Hargham Road, Attleborough, NR172JP) 10am: Mass (Wymondham).

ST EDMUND KING & MARTYR 21 Westgate Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1QG. Christmas Eve: Children's Mass at 5.00pm and Mass at 10.30pm at St Edmund's. Mass at 7.00pm at Lawshall. Christmas Day: 8.30am and 10.30am Masses at St Edmund's 10.30am Mass at Lawshall.

Table with 3 columns: Church Name, Time, and Mass Type. Includes St. Mary's Catholic Parish and Christmas Mass Times for Sunday 24th and Monday 25th December.



Deputy and Assistant Heads from across the diocese gathered in Poringland for an annual conference focused on Catholic Social Teaching, featuring insights from Bishop Peter and guest speaker Beth Friery. On November 24, Deputy and Assistant Heads from both primary and secondary schools came together for their annual conference in Poringland. Here they had the opportunity to meet Bishop Peter and found it interesting to hear about his emphasis on providing authentic Catholic education across our schools and his recognition of the excellent work that teachers and support staff do in our diocesan schools. The theme for the day was Catholic Social Teaching (CST), often styled 'Catholicism's best kept secret'. There are seven elements to Catholic

Social Teaching including the dignity of the human person, the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, the preferential option for the poor and marginalised, family and community, the common good, rights and responsibilities, and stewardship. Andy Stone, Director of the Schools' Service, said: "Informed by Catholic theology, we enjoyed an excellent, interactive presentation from our guest speaker, Beth Friery, from CAFOD's national office. There were plenty of practical resources and examples of activities to take back into school to help teach and train pupils and teachers about CST. "Colleagues found the day very useful and enjoyed the opportunity to share ideas with participants from a range of different schools. Everyone left inspired and with practical resources to take back to their school communities."

Young people celebrate at Rise Up event in Norwich

Young people from across the diocese gathered in the Narthex at St John's Cathedral in Norwich on November 11, for an evening of music, talks and prayer at the Rise Up event. Adam Dodd reports.

Hosted by the Ignite Team, Rise Up was intended as a diocesan celebration ahead of the Feast of Christ the King on November 26, which coincided with World Youth Sunday. The event began with praise and worship music from the YFC Band, followed by an introduction to Operation Christmas Child and the important work it performs for children facing poverty and hardship throughout the world, from Mark Watkins. The keynote speech was given by Deacon Anthony Asomugha, who talked about his experiences at World Youth Day 2023 and Pope Francis' message to young Catholics at that event. Hamish MacQueen, head of the Diocesan Youth Service, was next to speak, emphasising the importance of parish initiatives on World Youth Sunday to celebrate young Catholics and the contributions they can and will make to the future of the Church.



Mark Watkins, from Operation Christmas Child speaking to young people at Rise Up in Norwich.

Bishop Peter Collins then took questions on a range of topics from young people attending the event.

Rise Up concluded with a Vigil Mass in the cathedral led by Bishop Peter and an evening meal, with music provided by Oscar Lyons – a student at St Benedict's School in

Bury St Edmunds. One catechist commented "It was great to see the event attended by so many young people. We hope that it will give them an awareness of the importance of being open about their faith and the vital role they all have to play in the future of the Church."

Renowned author and a former Quidenham Prioress

Quidenham-based Carmelite nun and former Prioress, Sister Rachel Gregory OCD, renowned author of more than a dozen books on prayer and the spiritual life, died on November 10, aged 100. Sister Teresa Keswick ODC gives an appreciation.



■ story continued from page one.

■ never belonged to the deluded theory that “If it’s nasty it must be good for you.” Her joy in little things such as the occasional small glass of port at Sunday lunch or a chocolate to celebrate a sister’s birthday was catching. She was never too busy or stressed to look out of the window and admire the plants according to season, and at the end of her life, would insist that the driver of her wheelchair pause by the refectory window so that she could see what was going on in the garden.

Rachel was my novice mistress and then my prioress, which means that this appreciation of her many qualities is personal. Her profound understanding of people, whether young or old, meant that she was an extraordinary listener, who combined sympathy with a highly practical way of thinking and also of expressing herself. She knew from within, and without ever dodging them in herself, the frailties of human nature.

Rachel was the author of more than a dozen books on prayer and the mystical life, under her pen name of Ruth Burrows.

On the back cover of one of her later books, a blurb described her as “one of Britain’s greatest spiritual guides.” She snorted on reading this. A little while later I asked her what spiritual direction consisted of. Her reply was instantaneous: “Most of the time it is telling people to behave themselves.” No wonder she was a controversial figure, but I for one would not have had her any other way. Her yardstick for anything said that might be dubious was “Is it kind?”

Rachel was a scripture and theology scholar in her own right, entirely self-taught, and a born teacher. The conferences she gave to her novices were the basis of the books she was subsequently to write.

One felt that not only did she know the Gospels, but that she lived them. Following Jesus in her everyday and humdrum life was essential to her and encouraging others to do the same was the mainstay of her existence.

I came from a rather spoilt and privileged background and had never done

any housework. On my first Saturday in the novitiate, Rachel gave me a morning’s worth of intensive training in domestic science. It was a lovely day; at the end of the session she took me outside to shake out the dusters. As she did so she smiled into the sunshine and said “You do it for Him, you see. Otherwise it just becomes a chore.”

She was forthright, which suited me, though it didn’t suit everyone. I found that this directness was (nearly) always tempered by sensitivity. She never lacked courage when it came to speaking the truth, whether or not this was going to be agreeable to the hearer. And she realised that there was a time for telling truths: she would wait until her hearer could take them in.

Once her first books were published, her scholarship and grasp of the human situation began to attract people. One of her greatest fans was a young Passionist priest, who was later to become a bishop in both Sweden and Britain and who is the best preacher I have ever heard. He remained a close and faithful friend to Rachel until she died.

Another young priest, a Jesuit from the United States, wrote a long thesis on one of Rachel’s shorter books. He came to Quidenham to interview Rachel, somewhat alarmed by the very rural surroundings of the monastery and its general air of austerity. He was to become the president of a large and prestigious Roman Catholic university in America and he too remained a friend until Rachel died. These two, among many others, were a huge asset to the community: they would share their informed and intelligent knowledge with the sisters, to the advantage and pleasure of the latter.

One of Rachel’s many skills – some would say her greatest – was in the area of reform. She revelled in the documents that came from the Second Vatican Council, and was conscious, from the outset, of the necessity of the conclusions that they were drawing. She particularly welcomed the insights regarding the reforms to the religious life. Thanks to her, many out-of-date and sometimes oppressive customs were swept away.

At the time (in the early 1960s) this wasn’t necessarily to everyone’s liking, and she had to struggle to get her convictions across. She had no sense of nostalgia for “the good old days”, having seen at first hand the harm that outmoded traditions could do.

When studying the main Carmelite saints: Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross and Therese of Lisieux (the latter was her favourite), she had a keen eye for assessing what they wrote: she set aside the values which were strictly of their time and retained the eternal truths about which they were so eloquent and which were of such a help to her.

Rachel’s books remain in print, thanks to her publisher who considers their importance to be of enduring value.

One of the strangest and most rewarding aspects of her life was her close friendship with Sister Wendy Beckett. They made an impressive team, and Wendy’s constant encouragement and understanding gave Rachel the confidence to put her insights into practice. Sister Wendy became a household name thanks to her television programmes, where her extraordinary ability to convey to others her appreciation of art in all its forms and throughout the ages made her a huge success. Rachel was proud of this, but warned her of the dangers of becoming a celebrity.

Rachel herself never became a celebrity. There was a time when she was much in demand: to appear on television, talk on the radio, and give lectures as far away as America. To my knowledge, she turned them all down, on the basis of her valuing a perfectly ordinary Carmelite day above most things, and certain above fame and adulation. The only time she left the enclosure, in order to give a talk, was to help the women religious in East Anglia: they were local and she felt they deserved any support she could give them.

Rachel’s last two years were particularly hard; it was with relief and a feeling of liberation that I heard of her death. Now those who knew and loved her are entrusted with carrying on the good work she achieved in us. Her path to God was one of no consolation. She once told me that this was a royal road.



Faith in the Home: living our Catholic faith each day

In our society, it seems there is no real Advent; there is only Christmas, which starts around the end of November and ends shortly after Christmas Day! For the Church, however, Advent comes first and is distinct from Christmas. Marriage & Family Life Co-ordinator, Antonia Braithwaite, explains more in a regular new column.

■ The word ‘Advent’ comes from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning ‘arrival’, and just as Lent is a time of preparation for the joy of Easter, the weeks of Advent are an opportunity to prepare ourselves for Christmas.

We remember what happened on that first Christmas Day in Bethlehem, when God Himself was born as one of us, and we reflect on that future day when Jesus will come again at the end of time to judge us all. Advent is an opportunity to reflect on our lives, strengthen our virtues and work on our faults.

Many exterior preparations form part of Advent and help to create that atmosphere of joy and expectation: putting up Advent wreaths, lighting Advent candles, opening Advent calendars, putting up Nativity scenes, and so on. They impress upon us that we are awaiting something very special.

However, far more important during Advent is our interior preparation. We prepare our hearts and souls to be a more fitting home for our Lord, so that He can be born in a heart full of love for Him on Christmas Day.

Going to confession during Advent is a supreme way of cleaning out our ‘interior house’ and starting afresh. Prayer, too, is the rope that binds us to Our Lord. One traditional Catholic prayer that is prayed throughout Advent is the Christmas Anticipation Prayer below. Traditionally, it is prayed 15 times a day from November 30 to December 24 for a special intention. But even once a day for some of Advent is better than nothing at all!

Try to pray it together as a family this Advent:

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold.

In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee,

O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires, [mention your request here] through the merits of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen

Volunteer Tisha helps support seafarers

Ipswich resident Tisha Morelos has joined Catholic maritime charity Stella Maris as a volunteer, offering critical pastoral and practical support to seafarers docking at Felixstowe and Ipswich ports.

■ Seafarers arriving in the ports of Felixstowe and Ipswich have been welcoming a new face on board their ships in recent months.

St Mary’s Ipswich parishioner, Tisha Morelos, has joined Catholic maritime charity Stella Maris as a volunteer ship visitor and now works alongside its local port chaplain Julian Wong. They provide pastoral and practical support to hundreds of men and women whose ships berth at the docks.

Tisha’s first ship visit was in early August where she got to see and speak to the seafarers on board – but not before climbing 86 steps up the ship’s gangway! “I was able to witness how Julian helped the seafarers. What caught my attention were the smiles they all had when they saw us on board,” she recalls of the visit.

“But what made me conclude that it is God’s will for me to be a ship visitor was during my second visit on the vessel Ocean Breeze. I went with Julian and Fr Trindade Johnson Monteiro, assistant parish priest at St Mary’s, who cele-



Tisha Morelos with port chaplain Julian Wong and a seafarer.

brated Mass on board, followed by fellowship with the crew including the ship master. I could see from the seafarers’ reaction how grateful and happy they were, simply by our presence, and the interaction we had with each other, listening to their stories. I felt that it was God’s mission for me to be there, to make a difference.”

Tisha feels that seafarers embody the true meaning of sacrificing themselves for their families’ future. She says most people are lucky to be able to witness the key milestone moments and events of their children’s lives.

Seafarers, due to the nature of their job being at sea for prolonged periods, don’t get to do this.

“I have listened to the struggles of what it is like being a seafarer, the most challenging of which is battling loneliness on board. It has made me realise that all the seafarers, regardless of rank, require support for their mental health and wellbeing. A simple visit makes a lot of a difference,” she said.

Tisha, who is originally from the Philippines, has a brother-in-law who is a serving shipmaster, as well as other relatives and friends who are also seafarers; hence she feels a strong call to be of service to them.

It was in July, after reading about Stella Maris in her parish’s newsletter on Sea Sunday, that she decided to make a go of it and got in touch with chaplain Julian.

Tisha worked as a modern matron in a community hospital of East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation NHS Trust and is currently an interim governance manager of the same trust. She is married and has three children.

Tisha’s advice to anyone considering becoming a Stella Maris ship visitor is this. “If you have the passion for people, the willingness to make a difference and most of all a heart of service, don’t hesitate to put yourself forward. Serving humanity is serving the Lord. So come and express your faith through your service to seafarers with Stella Maris.”

To find out more about Stella Maris, including volunteering opportunities, or to donate, please visit: www.stellamaris.org.uk

Real treasure

■ St Edmund’s Bungay and Harleston celebrated their patronal feast and that of Christ the King with pizza and a party on Sunday November 26, and at the same time honoured a special person in the parish with the presentation of the diocesan medal.

Carole Hunt was for many years treasurer of St Edmund’s parish, but in the last years when the previous parish priest, Fr Charles Fitzgerald Lombard, was ill after a stroke, Carole kept the parish going. She fulfilled many roles and undertook many tasks, but failing health has now forced her to take a back seat.

Carole was presented with the diocesan medal for her “generous service” to the Church.

The picture shows Carole with her medal and certificate of service, presented by the current parish priest, Fr Mike Brookes.



Light up Christmas for hundreds of seafarers and fishers.

Look around you: 90% of the things you use has been brought here by sea. It’s extraordinary to think how much we depend on the shipping industry. But so often, men and women of the sea are forgotten.

This Christmas, the port chaplains and ship visitors of Catholic charity Stella Maris will welcome many seafarers and fishers in ports around the UK, bringing them gifts, and ensuring Mass is organised for them, where possible, at this special time.

And it’s all thanks to you. Your gift to Stella Maris helps us to share God’s love with seafarers and fishers and make their Christmas special.

Please visit www.stellamaris.org.uk for more information about how you can light up Christmas for seafarers and fishers. Please also keep them in prayer. Thank you, in advance, for any support you can kindly give.



Picture gallery from parishes around the Diocese

■ St Mary's, Thetford, celebrated their community spirit with a festive Christmas fayre on Saturday November 25, raising an impressive £1,440 amid the cost of living crisis reports Paul Gilbert.

Parishioners supported the event by running stalls which included toys, puzzles, bric-a-brac, books, cards, cakes, drinks, children's face painting and jewellery. In addition to these, there was a tombola and raffle stall.

Father Christmas paid a lunchtime visit.

Fr Pat Cleary, Parish Priest, was delighted with the turnout and the amount raised: "The parish is a small, close-knit community, and when it comes together for an event like this, it truly is amazing what we can achieve. This is a family and it's wonderful to see the generosity, not only financially, but with the time and effort it takes to prepare and organise events such as this," he said.



■ In a significant moment for St Felix Church, Felixstowe, Bishop Peter Collins blessed eight newly installed nave windows during a celebrated Mass, marking his inaugural parish visit reports John Conlon.

St Felix Church in Felixstowe welcomed a special guest who agreed to visit and bless eight new windows in the nave.

Bishop Peter Collins celebrated Mass at the Felixstowe church on Sunday October 29, during his first visit to the parish since his appointment. He blessed the large windows that had replaced the windows first put up in 1912, which had become unstable.

Parishioners and supporters rallied around when parish priest Canon John Barnes made an appeal for funding earlier in the year. They raised more than £66,000 within a few months. The work was undertaken by specialists Devlin Plummer, of Great Moulton, Norfolk.

Canon Barnes said: "Most of the donors were present at the Mass, together with two of the young craftsmen who had installed the windows. After Mass, the bishop attended a parish lunch in the crowded church hall, with food from the various nationalities represented in the community. He cut a special cake which had been made for the occasion and met many of the parishioners. I think the whole occasion went very well."

■ On Sunday November 12, St Mary's Catholic Church in Thetford joined with other community groups and civil dignitaries to mark Remembrance Day.

Roger Hall, a parishioner of St Mary's, was selected to lay a specially commissioned yellow and white wreath from the Royal British Legion on behalf of the parish community.

Paul Gilbert, Chairman of the parish council, said:

"The wreath has two-fold meaning, yellow and white for the Vatican colours but also in remembrance, white is for peace and yellow symbolises reconciliation between all nations.



As soon as the 10am Mass was over, parish priest Fr Pat Cleary joined with other parishioners gathered to mark the act of remembrance. It was a great event to be involved with and one that has become a tradition for St Mary's."



■ Two dozen parishioners at St Pancras in Ipswich came together for an inaugural pub-style quiz night, covering topics from history to sports, but were left puzzled by a tricky picture round on island flags. Fr Joseph Welch reports.

Around two dozen parishioners joined what looks set to become an annual event at St Pancras in Ipswich on Friday October 20, when they settled down for a pub-style quiz evening. Sorting themselves into teams, parishioners both old and young mulled, mused, and meditated on topics as varied as geography, history, sports, mythology, and patron saints.

During the supper break of fish and chips, teams had to design, test, and choose their best paper aeroplane to pit against each other. Two entries jointly won, with flights that covered almost the entire breadth of the parish hall.