

OUR DIOCESAN FAMILY



The newspaper of the Diocese of East Anglia

FREE

November 2008

Final vows for sisters

Five women have taken their final vows at the community of Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace and Compassion in Suffolk.

Two of the women, Sr Victoria and Sr Selina are to stay and work at Montana, the community's care home, in Great Barton near Bury St Edmunds.

They are both from south India but came to the community, where the sisters enjoy a life of prayer, contemplation and care work for 16 residents, to pursue their vocation for different reasons.

Sr Selina said the Grace and Compassion sisters community in India where she lived made a lasting impression on her and she decided to enter the convent.

She has been in Britain for about two years and has worked at the community's sister house

in Gloucestershire. Sr Victoria became aware of a calling while she was studying at a business college and visited one of the communities to observe their way of life.

This appealed to her and she entered the novitiate house to begin the long journey which both sisters have followed to the celebration of their final vows by Bishop Michael.

The eight sisters, under the leadership of their superior Sr Thaya Moses at Montana, follow a daily programme of prayer, contemplation, work with the residents and recreation.

They even play football in the garden on summer evenings to wind down after a busy day.

Sr Selina is pictured on the left and Sr Victoria is second right.



Vocations weekend planned

A weekend of discernment for those reflecting on God's call to Priesthood under the title "Speak Lord for your servant is listening" is to be held on 12 - 14 December at Clare Priory in Suffolk.

Some of the topics to be discussed include feelings of fulfilment and the call to priesthood.

Vocations director Fr David Bagstaff is running the weekend and said many men ask themselves questions like - "Could God really be calling me to be a priest and how would I know?"

"Others question what to do next if they really felt God's call. Some have practical concerns like what would the training be like, how long, would I cope, what's the difference between a religious priest and a diocesan priest?"

"More personal considerations are what would be the reaction of my family and friends or am I holy enough to be a priest?"

"These are just some of the questions which may be going around in your mind and you may have others too. The discernment weekend is aimed at addressing them.

"Discernment is about discovering that particular purpose God created you for and what will make you happy and fulfilled. We obviously have to bring God into the process of discernment as it is His Will we are seeking.

"The journey of discernment involves prayer; celebrating the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist; talking things over with someone we trust.

"Silence is also part of the process, so that we can hear the gentle voice of God. Then there is the actual making of a decision which involves trust in God as His great desire for each of us is that we should be happy.

"Initially we can think that the training is rather long - six years - but it is not just a

question of studying theology, scripture, liturgy and all the other courses which make up the academic programme.

"It is about formation, learning how to pray, what it means to belong to the Church, how to cope with one's own weaknesses and vulnerability, how to work collaboratively with people in the parish who have also been gifted to work for the Kingdom of God.

"It is also learning to know that the greatest challenge is to proclaim the Good News of God's love for all."

Bishop Michael, who will join the group on the retreat weekend for the Saturday morning, said: "At every Confirmation Mass, I remind those being confirmed that each of them has a personal vocation - a calling - from the Risen Lord.

"He has something special for them to do for him. It may be the vocation to marriage and parenthood, or being a single person who does great things, or the religious life, or being a deacon or priest.

"The Catholic Church in East Anglia needs priests for the future, and those priests must come above all from among us here, from our parish communities and schools.

"We must keep praying for vocations, but also encourage and support them when they emerge. Our young and not-so-young men should ask: could Jesus be calling me to be his priest?"

"At the final Mass in Sydney for World Youth Day last July, Pope Benedict asked the young pilgrims 'What will you leave the next generation? What difference will you make?'

"He addressed a special plea to those the Lord is calling to the priesthood and religious life: 'Do not be afraid to say "yes" to Jesus, to find your joy in doing his will, giving yourself completely to the pursuit of holiness, and using all your talents in the service of others!'

CONTACT: for further details Fr David Bagstaff on 01692 403258 or Email: vocations@east-angliadiocese.org.uk

Booking Form

Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____

Tel No: _____ Email address: _____

- I am over 18 and will attend the whole weekend
 I am under 18 (or unable to attend the whole weekend) and attend on the Saturday

Special Dietary requirements - yes / no

Return this form by 23 November to: Fr David Bagstaff, 4 Norwich Road, North Walsham, Norfolk, NR28 9JP.

DATE: Friday 12 December - Sunday 14 December 2008.
Arrive from 5.00pm on the Friday (programme begins at 6.15pm) and depart after lunch on the Sunday.

PLACE: Clare Priory, Clare, Suffolk, CO10 8NX

COST: The weekend is being funded by the Diocese. You will be responsible only for your travel expenses.

AGE: The weekend is for those between 18 and 50 years old but if you are between 16 and 18 years old (or between 18 and 50 but unable to make the whole weekend then you are welcome to come for the Saturday: 10.00am - 5.00pm.



Team St Michael's / St Luke's were the first winners of the Beccles District Christian Council challenge cup donated by the parish of St Benets to mark their centenary this year.

The quiz came out of a meeting to discuss the 'Hope 2008' initiative in May when it was proposed to organise a quiz for youngsters of all the churches and faith organisations in and around Beccles.

Also as part of their centenary celebrations St Benet's offered to organise the quiz and 23 youngsters took part. Representatives of Barsham and Worlingham churches helped with the adjudication and Mrs Ollerenshaw presented the Cup to the winning team. It is hoped that the cup competition will be held again next year.

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**'LET THE MANY
COASTLANDS BE GLAD'
Stewards of God
in Caring for Creation**

Our diocesan theme for 2008/2009

Every year, we have had an annual diocesan theme. It was Confirmation in 2003/2004, Reconciliation in 2004/2005, Baptism & Welcome in 2005/2006, and 'Hearing and bearing the Word of God' in 2006/2007. Over the last year our theme has been 'Given for you, shed for you – receiving and being the Body of Christ', with a special focus on Holy Communion.

Both of the last two themes – God's Word to us in the Scriptures, and Christ's coming to us through his creation in Holy Communion - lead naturally to our theme for 2008-2009, that of caring for God's gift of creation, a creation entrusted to us as God's stewards, and a creation made new in the life, death and resurrection of Christ.



In his letter *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict reminds us of the relationship between the Eucharist and the cosmos. We celebrate Mass 'in the name of all creation', and 'the justified concern about threats to the

environment present in so many parts of the world is reinforced by Christian hope, which commits us to working responsibly for the protection of creation' (n. 92). Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict have spoken of the need for an 'ecological conversion'.

'One of the fields in which it is urgent to work is most definitely that of safeguarding creation. The new generations are responsible for the future of the planet, which shows evident signs of a development that has not always known to preserve the delicate balances of nature.'

Before it is too late, we must make courageous choices with a view to a strong alliance between human beings and the earth. We need a decisive 'Yes' to safeguarding creation and a strong commitment to reverse those tendencies which risk bringing us to a situation of irreversible degradation.'

(Pope Benedict XVI, Loreto, 2 September 2007)

In East Anglia, with its 'many coastlands', we have particular concerns about threats to parts of our coast, the fens, the river floodplains and the Norfolk Broads, as well as more general ecological and environmental worries. Proposed housing developments across our region raise serious questions about their likely impact on the environment and on resources, especially water. We can play our part in raising awareness on these issues, founded upon good theology and good science.

We have a distinctive and positive Christian perspective on Creation, and on our vocation as human beings rooted in Genesis but also in the incarnation of God's Son. As stewards rather than owners of creation, we need to do all we can to preserve our resources for future generations, and to take care of this 'Planet Earth' entrusted to us by God.

As with any year-long theme, we can probably make only a small impact on people's thinking and action, but the hope is that together with others we can make a significant contribution on a vital issue.

On the first Sunday of Lent next year, we will focus on this

NEWS FROM BISHOP MICHAEL



An extraordinary simulation image from floodsim.com of what might happen one day to the centre of Norwich with rising sea levels. The online simulation game that underlines the risk of flooding in Norwich as well as nationally can be played at www.floodsim.com

theme. The first reading that day reminds us of God's covenant with Noah and with all creation, and the whole of Lent leads to the celebration of the Easter Vigil which celebrates God's gift of 'new creation' in Jesus Christ.

It will be an opportunity to give a particular focus to Lent 2009, and to a realisation that care for creation in God's name is a profoundly spiritual issue, rooted in and flowing from our celebration of Mass. Care for God's creation does of course include care for one another and for ourselves, made in the image and likeness of God.

Our theme has three key aims:

- To give Catholics in East Anglia a greater understanding of our vocation as stewards of God's creation, so that we can make a decisive 'Yes' to safeguarding creation.
- To contribute towards education on the current threats to creation (this must be based on sound science).
- To enable everyone to contribute at least in small ways to the safeguarding and care of creation and the preservation of our resources for future generations.

Diocesan Projects throughout the year:

- Pastoral Letters for the 2nd Sunday of Advent and 1st Sunday of Lent 2009
- Articles in the Diocesan Newspaper.
- Diocesan Prayer Card and Act of Commitment as God's Stewards in Caring for Creation on the 1st Sunday of Lent
- Two diocesan 'Learning Together' study days, led by Bishop Michael and the Rt. Hon. John Gummer MP
- Clergy Ongoing Formation Day on ecology & the environment
- Each parish is invited to review how 'green' are its buildings and activities.
- Establishment of a Diocesan Commission for the Care of God's Creation.
- Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham (4th May 2008) on the theme of 'Mary, Queen of Creation'.

God our Father,
open our eyes to see
your hand at work
in the splendour of
creation,
in the beauty of human life.
Touched by your hand,
our world is holy.
Help us to cherish
the gifts that surround us,
to share your blessings
with our brothers and
sisters,
and to experience
the joy of life
in your presence.
*(Roman Missal, alternative
opening prayer,
17th Sunday of the Year)*



St John's First School, Norwich, painting of Bishop Michael (left) and Bishop Kike from Cambodia when they visited the school together last summer. They are wearing the special blue stoles made for them by the school.

LEARNING TOGETHER

These are the next three modules for our diocesan adult religious formation programme. Everyone is welcome.

Still more on Children's Liturgy

*8th November 2008 at the Catholic Church Hall,
1 Norwich Road, Wymondham, NR18 0QE*

Following her popular study day two years ago, Katie Thompson, who leads the Children's Liturgy team at Poringland and has written extensively on the topic, will take things further for those who lead parish Children's Liturgy of the Word during Sunday Mass. This will be new material.

The Eucharist, Sacrament of Love

*22nd November 2008 at St Luke's Catholic Church, Benyon
Grove, Orton Malborne, Peterborough, PE2 5XS*
Bishop Michael explores the meaning of the Mass through Pope Benedict's *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

Preparing for Advent: what it is and how we should celebrate it

*29th November 2008 at St Mary's Catholic Church, 322
Woodbridge Road, Ipswich, IP4 4BD*

Maurice Lynch will lead a day to help us make the most of Advent.

You can register for each module by e-mailing: learning.together@yahoo.co.uk or by going to the 'Adult Education' pages on our diocesan website and registering on-line, or by writing to:

**Diocesan Learning Together Programme, Parish Office,
14 Exeter Road, Newmarket CB8 8LT**

All modules are on Saturdays, with registration and coffee at 10.30 and finishing at 3.00. Bring your own packed lunch.

+ Michael

THE BISHOP TEACHES

THE YEAR OF ST PAUL

Pope Benedict declared June 2008 until June 2009 a 'Year of St Paul' in celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the Apostle's birth. St Paul was probably born between 6 – 10 A.D. The Holy Father explained:

'The Apostle of the Gentiles, who dedicated himself to the spreading of the Good News to all peoples, spent himself for the unity and harmony of all Christians. May he guide us and protect us in this 2000th celebration, helping us to advance in the humble and sincere search for the full unity of all the members of the mystical Body of Christ.'



This image of 'St Paul writing' is from an early 9th century manuscript version of Saint Paul's letters. The manuscript is ascribed to the Monastery of St. Gallen. It is thought to be one of the earliest depictions of St Paul in European art.

We can all too easily sideline St Paul, and even dismiss him because of what we think his views were on certain subjects (women, for example). And yet his proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ lies at the very heart of our Christian faith, and reading the thirteen letters attributed to St Paul is a source of inspiration and renewal for each of us.

Paul (or Saul as he was first known) was born at Tarsus in Cilicia (in modern-day Turkey) around 6-10 B.C. He was a Roman citizen (which is why he was eventually beheaded rather than crucified). As a young man, he joined the Pharisees, and became a bitter persecutor of the new Christian Church. But on the road to Damascus about 34 A.D., just a year after Jesus' crucifixion, a mysterious encounter with the Risen Jesus transformed his whole life. From then on, he dedicated himself to serving and proclaiming Jesus who had personally called him to be an Apostle. His three missionary journeys brought the Gospel to many different communities, especially to the pagans in the Roman Empire. In 58 A.D., he was arrested in Jerusalem, imprisoned, and finally in 60 A.D. sent to Rome for trial. After a time of freedom, he was imprisoned again, and martyred in Rome around 67 A.D. St Peter and St Paul together have always been seen as the two 'pillars' of the Christian Church in Rome, which is why they are celebrated together on 29th June each year.

We need to remember how very early some of St Paul's letters were written. The two letters to the Thessalonians were written about 50-51 A.D., only 17/18 years after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Most of the others were put to paper before the four Gospels were finally put together. We can

rightly talk about the letters of St Paul as 'The Gospel of Paul'.

The Gospel of Paul

What lies at the heart of St Paul's teaching? This is impossible to sum up in a few words, but Paul proclaims above all Jesus Christ who was crucified and has been raised from the dead.

Who is this Jesus? Paul quotes an already existing hymn (to remind us of the kind of people we are meant to be, in imitation of him!):

His state was divine,
yet he did not cling to his equality with God,
but emptied himself
to assume the condition of a slave,
and became as human beings are,
and being as all human beings are,
he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death, death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name above all other names
so that all beings in the heavens, on earth
and in the underworld
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus
and every tongue should acclaim
Jesus Christ as Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
(Philippians 2:6-11)

St Paul's first call to us is to place the Risen Lord at the centre of our lives, to bend the knee of our hearts to him, and to be like him. But we are not called simply to follow and imitate him. Christ seeks to draw us into his life.

Only Christ can save us. We cannot save ourselves, and we depend totally on God's free gift of saving grace, received in faith and lived in love. It is Christ who 'justifies' us, who brings us into a right-relationship with God. Only the Holy Spirit can make us holy and bring us truly alive, with God's life within us.

We are called to die and rise with Christ (Romans 6.1-11), to participate in his saving mystery. We do this first through our Baptism, but also each time we come together for the Eucharist, the Mass. St Paul gives us fundamental teaching on the meaning of the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:17-34).

And we live as Christians not as private individuals, but as members of the Church, the Body of Christ. St Paul gives us a rich theology of the meaning of the Church – the universal Church and each of our parish communities. We are intimately united with one another in Christ himself, who is our Head and the source of our life together. There is no truly Christian life without a deep love for one another.

My own personal favourite quotation from St Paul?

"All I want is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and to share his sufferings by reproducing the pattern of his death." (Philippians 3:10)



St Paul by
Bernardo
Daddi, c.
1333

A Prayer to the Apostle Paul

Glorious St Paul, most zealous Apostle,
martyr for the love of Christ,
give us a deep faith, a steadfast hope,
a burning love for our Lord,
so that we can proclaim with you,
"It is no longer I who live,
but Christ who lives in me."
Help us to become apostles
serving the Church with a pure heart,
witnesses to her truth and beauty
amidst the darkness of our days.
With you we praise God, our Father:
"To Him be the glory,
in the Church and in Christ,
now and forever." Amen.

(From 'Our Sunday Visitor')

"WE ARE CHRISTIANS ONLY IF WE ENCOUNTER CHRIST"

Pope Benedict

At his weekly general audience on 3rd September, Pope Benedict spoke of St Paul's life-changing encounter with the risen Christ: "The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St. Paul both say the Risen Lord spoke to him, called him to the apostolate, made him a true apostle—a witness of the Resurrection—with a specific mission to proclaim the gospel to the pagans."

But despite St. Paul's "immediate relationship with the risen Lord, he had to enter into the communion of the Church, he had to be baptized, he had to live in communion with the other apostles... Only in this communion with all could he be a true apostle."

The Holy Father said the dramatic and unusual details of the conversion of St. Paul, who had been a zealous persecutor of Christians, sometimes claim so much attention that people miss the essential fact that conversion is a result of a relationship with Jesus, not a blinding light or being knocked to the ground.

Pope Benedict said St. Paul's encounter with Christ "enlarged his heart, and made him open to everyone. He did not lose that which was good and true in his life (or) his heritage, but understood it in a new way."

Being with Christ and having an open heart, "he was capable of a broad dialogue with everyone." "What does this mean for us? It means that for us, too, Christianity is not a new philosophy, a new morality... We are Christians only if we encounter Christ."

While Christians today will not encounter Christ in a blinding light, "we can meet Christ in reading the Sacred Scriptures, in prayer, in the liturgical life of the Church. We can touch the heart of Christ and feel Christ touching our hearts."

The Pope ended by praying "that the Lord would enlighten us, that he would give us our own encounter with his presence and in that way give us a lively faith, an open heart and a great love for all that will renew the world."

With my warmest good wishes and prayers as we move towards Advent and Christmas together.

+ Michael

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS IN FOCUS



Young women at St Mary's celebrate receiving their examination results this year.

Studying humanities

St Bede's Inter-church School in Cherry Hinton, has always run a variety of enrichment activities but since obtaining Humanities Specialist status in 2005 this has grown and developed.

The most exciting developments have been our cross-curricular humanities days and work with primary schools.

Humanities days involve students taking a day off their normal timetable to explore a key theme, these have included campaigning work such as "Make Poverty History" and the environment.

Year 5 students from schools such as St Alban's and St Laurence's in Cambridge come to St Bede's to work with Year 9 students and staff.

This year the theme was "Cambridge – Past, Present and Future" and involved workshops on cultural diversity, local history and Yr 9's surfing into the hall!

The school's enrichment programme has included visits to the Black Country Living Museum at Dudley in the West Midlands, and Ely for fieldwork, exam busting workshops and in-school activities.

Young people have studied zoology, and leaders of other religions. Older pupils have been offered the opportunity to study AS level critical thinking.

The highlight of this programme has been the residential visits.

Year 7 follow the 'Bede Trail' to discover more about the saint who wrote a history of the English in the dark ages without appearing to leave his monastery at Jarrow.

Year 9 spent time in Belgium and Holland looking at the effects of war on young people and reflecting on the nature of sacrifice.

St Mary's marks life of founder

The 400th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of Jesus and the Institute of Blessed Virgin Mary is being celebrated by one of the schools the order founded in Cambridge in 1898.

The 17th Century pioneer of female education, Mary Ward, founded her order with the vision that "women in time to come will do much".

She believed that there was no difference between what women and men might achieve, given equal opportunities for education.

St Mary's headmistress, Charlotte Avery, said "Recent results at St Mary's in Cambridge, one of the schools the order founded, seem to prove that Mary Ward was right. GCSE and A level results show a 100% pass rate and grade A is very common.

"Two GCSE students were placed in the top 10 nationally for biology with one of them also in the top 10 for chemistry.

"The former head girl gained full marks in both A level history and english and one art student received full marks at both AS and A2.

"One Year 10 student achieved a top 10 position for her Italian AS level out of 1152 students nationwide - an examination which she took a full two years early and at GCSE.

"Two students gained full marks for English literature, with one of them also achieving the same for English language.

"Along with all the other university entrants, we wish the three girls starting their courses at Oxford and Cambridge the very best for the future.

"We have embarked upon an exciting programme of events for this anniversary, including talks by many inspirational women from a wide range of fields, including business, politics, charities and journalism, to which we are inviting any interested parties."

Baccalaureate makes debut

This September 28 Year 12 students started their International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) at Notre Dame High School in Norwich.

This is offered as part of the Norwich Open Opportunity alongside other schools in the area such as CNS, Earlham, Framingham Earl, Hewett and City College.

Fourteen students joined the NDHS 6th Form from 10 other Norfolk schools, together with 14 Notre Dame students. Two Polish students are taking the bilingual version!

Students study six subjects – including English, maths, a science, a language, a humanity and a choice of options including theatre, art, a 2nd language or a 2nd science. Three

subjects are taken at higher level, and three at standard level.

It is especially suitable for those with all-round interests.

Students also study a theory of knowledge course (TOK), and a creativity, action and service programme (CAS), as well as pursuing an extended essay. This is a distinctive feature of the course.

The IB is an internationally-recognised pre-university qualification and offers real breadth and depth of study. The skills it develops are much sought after by universities and employers.

On Monday 10 November Notre Dame has its 6th Form open evening – all welcome!



Pictured above are students from Notre Dame High School in Norwich who went to St John's Cathedral for Mass to start the new academic year.

Head teacher John Pinnington said: "We had a wonderful opening year Mass in the cathedral. The celebration was led by Father Tony and we filled the Cathedral.

"It was a very special service and one to remember. The behaviour of our students walking to and from the Cathedral was really good, especially as we were at risk of facing a downpour.

"It must have been an interesting sight for those members of the public who saw a procession of 1400 students walking alongside the inner ring to St John's."



Pupils from St Thomas More Junior School Norwich, with Bishop Michael and Fr John Barnes, chaplain, when they attended Friendship Day at Poringland. The children said: "We had a lovely day at Poringland where we saw the Bishop's House. We even met Bishop Michael! We had lots of fun but sadly it was raining so we spent the day indoors."

YOUTH MATTERS (Oh Yes We Do!)

Paintballing contest then retreat with bishop

On the last weekend of August, the Youth Council had their annual paintballing excursion followed by a retreat with Bishop Michael.

Paintballing was as fun and painful as ever! It was quite a hot day so most people only had a t-shirt on under their 'combat overalls' and lack of layers meant it hurt more if you were hit!

The retreat started with pizza, followed by Bishop Michael giving a talk building on the theme of World Youth Day 'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes and you shall be my witnesses'

The evening ended with Taizé prayer around the cross and a late night film. This was the film 'Amazing Grace' telling the story of William Wilberforce's Christian conviction to make slavery illegal.

After a good night's sleep camping in the garden, the retreat continued the following morning, culminating with Mass followed by the now legendary delicious roast dinner.

The Youth Council is a very active group of young people from across the diocese. Amongst other things, they plan youth events for the diocese and write letters campaigning against human rights abuses.

If you are confirmed, aged between 16 and 21, and are interested in joining, please contact



Dressed in the necessary protective uniforms and ready for the paintballing contest



Those taking part in the retreat with the bishop, below. Accommodation and meals, above



Reclaiming the future is new theme

Following on from the themes of 'Live Simply' and 'Solidarity' which were highlighted in the last two years, this year's theme for National Youth Sunday on November 23rd is 'Sustainability'.

Hamish said: "Each year Youth Sunday comes along and often people want to do something in their parish but aren't sure what.

"This year's resources are available on-line so anyone can access them. There are ideas for liturgies, prayers and reflections, videos and lots of other activities.

"In the 'Going Further' section there's an opportunity to explore why the Church teaches that living sustainably is something we are called to do.

"The theme is set by the National Catholic Youth Service but it fits in



beautifully with our Diocesan theme for next year 'Caring for God's gift of Creation'.

"So you could celebrate Youth Sunday and introduce the Diocesan theme for next year at the same time.

"Many of the resources will be useful far beyond Youth Sunday itself. To find out more, go to <http://www.reclaimthefuture.org.uk>

A Reclaim the Future Prayer

Brilliant God, we celebrate your wonderful world and we thank you for the gift of your creation.

On this National Youth Sunday inspire us, we pray, to Reclaim the Future! Help us to see how our actions today will make a difference tomorrow. And bring us together in faith to make that difference a positive thing. Amen.

Contacting the youth service

The Diocesan Youth Office, The White House, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7SH Tel: (01508) 494833 Mobile: (0781) 2004934 Fax: (01508) 495358 Email: dys@east-angliadiocese.org.uk
There are often times when there is nobody in the office. Please leave a message and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Key Events 2009

From the Diocesan Youth Service

Saturday January 3rd

EPIPHANY ' NEW YEAR CANDLELIGHT MASS

For all young people preparing for Confirmation or recently confirmed. Held at Poringland, Norfolk.

Spring Half-term

ICE SKATING

For anyone of secondary school age. Venue and date to be confirmed.

Monday May 4th

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE WALK TO WALSINGHAM

A sponsored walk to Walsingham raising money for good causes, arriving in time for Mass at the Diocesan Pilgrimage.

Summer Half-term

GO-KARTING

For anyone of secondary school age. Venue and date to be confirmed.

Sunday July 12th

THE BIG ONE

Out main Diocesan event for young people. Including competitive games, a barbecue, live music and much more.

Held at St. Benedict's School, Bury St. Edmunds

July 25th to August 3rd

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE TO TAIZE

Our annual pilgrimage to Taizé. For those 17-29.

For more information, go to www.catholiceastanglia.org and click on 'Young People' and then 'Events' or contact the Diocesan Youth Service

Challenged at WYD reunion

You might have thought (even been relieved?!) that you had heard the last of World Youth Day for a while but on the contrary, many of the group met up in September for a reunion.

There were three projectors displaying hundreds of photos, people wearing WYD t-shirts, souvenirs on show and 'sausage sizzle' being served to remind us of our time there.

During Mass, Bishop Michael produced a chemical glow stick that everyone had been given in Townsville.

Of course it was now no longer giving off any light and Bishop Michael challenged us not to be like a glow stick!

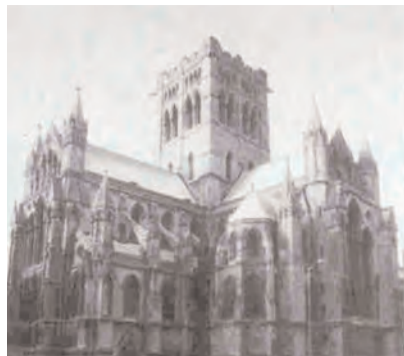
Hamish MacQueen said: "They are amazing group of people, who shared this amazing experience and some great friendships were made.

"Now the excitement of WYD itself is over, it's so important we keep in touch and encourage each other to keep the message of World Youth Day alive.

"It's a lot easier do this when surrounded by nearly half a million Catholics, but doing this in day to day life is ultimately what it's all about."

Hamish continued: "We're planning to have another reunion sometime around Christmas, perhaps more after that.

"Also, we hope many of the group will join our Taizé Pilgrimage in the summer or our Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in January 2010, and dare I mention World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid!"



CATHEDRAL FOCUS

NEWS FROM OUR MOTHER CHURCH

Well on way to raising money to start work on Narthex

Local organisations and charities have pledged almost £250,000 in recent months towards the new Narthex to be built at St John's Cathedral and preparatory work on the £2 million building project is now set to begin before Christmas.

Norwich Town Close Estate Charity, together with another anonymous donor top the list, with grants of £75,000 each.

The Theodore Trust has given £30,000 towards the education centre and grants have also been pledged from the Paul Bassham Trust and the Geoffrey Watling Charity.

Fr James Walsh, Cathedral Dean, said: "When we received the wonderful news of the £1 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund last December, we still had such a long way to go to raise the balance. It seems hardly possible that we are now almost there!"

"There is still some way to go in what is a major fund-raising exercise,

but things are coming together well.

"I am delighted with – and grateful for – the support we have received from notable local and national charities and organisations that have recognised the benefits to the community the Narthex will bring."

Naomi Perowne, cathedral development officer, said tenders will be invited in a few weeks' time to allow the Narthex to be completed by the Cathedral's centenary in 2010.

"Despite the economic gloom and doom which has filled the news agenda in recent months, it's very encouraging to report our optimism about achieving our target and that we should be able to begin preparatory work before Christmas.

"It will be fantastic to have the new complex in place ready for 2010. The Cathedral is planning all kinds of special events for the centenary and we want as many people as possible to be able to join in and enjoy the celebrations in comfort."

To make a donation to support the Narthex, send a cheque payable to "RC Cathedral of East Anglia P&D Trust" to Cathedral House, Unthank Road, NORWICH NR2 2PA



Stewards and helpers made the heritage days such a success and pictured here with the vestments and treasures in St Joseph's chapel are Diane Wilson, Albert Chuck and Stella Brundall.

Heritage days success for St John's and its treasures

St John's Cathedral opened its doors to the city of Norwich during Heritage Week and set out its treasures, plans for the Narthex and displays of parish life.

Parishioners also turned out to act as stewards, to explain the life and history of the Cathedral, conduct tower tours and provide refreshments.

It was an ideal way to see the Cathedral and its people at their best.

St Joseph's chapel was adorned with vestments from Walsingham, the Cathedral itself and a colourful set loaned by Fr Mathew George from Thetford.

These vestments are designed for the heat of India and were light and colourful.

Barbara Scrutton also displayed a new set of Advent purple vestments which she had designed and made.

The main emblem is an ear of corn reminiscent of passages from scripture but also depicting hope for the future, expectancy and new life anticipating the Christmas story.

Once again the intricacies of matching threads with cloth posed a problem for Barbara's team of needle workers but it was solved by her friendly thread supplier who dyed it the right colour.

Peter Thorn, a former book shop owner, brought in some of his treasures to build an impressive display of items some dating back centuries.

He depicted the links the Cathedral has with the Holy Land, with the history of the Church in England, with the City of Norwich and the wealth of knowledge contained in books.

In the display were altar clothes from Germany, early souvenirs of the Holy Land and the olive oil produced there by the Christian communities which are under threat today.



There were displays by the Justice and Peace group and other parish organisations.

But many people came to see the striking architecture of the cathedral building and the views its tower offers over Norwich city centre and further afield.



Barbara Scrutton shows off new designs for Advent vestments, above, and below, Peter Thorn and Annette Prior with the Holy Land links display.

Parish news still needed

The editor Patrick Byrne needs more news about activities and people in the parishes. Please send a few notes and a jpg picture by email or with a photograph in the post.

We look forward to hearing from you. To get in touch with the editor Patrick Byrne the details are listed below.

Our Diocesan Family,
The White House, 21 Ugate,
Poringland, Norfolk NR14 7SH.
Tel/Fax: 01603 627409 and

email:
ptjbyrne@patrickbyrne.go-plus.net





Bishop Michael and the clergy celebrating the Mass of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, above, and one of the stalls that attracted many visitors, right.



The orchestra contained many instruments and with the choir they supported the music at Mass.



Youngsters just could not wait to get on the bouncy castle and let off steam.

Special day for deanery

People from all over the Deanery of St Edmund came to Moreton Hall school to celebrate a day of prayer and share fun, activities and plans.

Bishop Michael celebrated Mass on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross and in his homily he said that the Sign of the Cross was made on each person at their baptism but it was invisible.

"Through the way we live we must make it obvious that this sign sets us apart as people marked by God's love."

The bishop talked of a television programme in which concentration camp victims put God on trial and one of the witnesses asked where God was. One reply was that perhaps God was with them waiting to be gassed.

"Jesus Christ went through a degrading execution in humility to



Volley ball was just one of the activities enjoyed by young people from all parts of the deanery.

demonstrate his and God's love for humanity.

"There is no pit so deep that God is not deeper still.

"The triumph of the cross may seem strange to people who have not grasped the faith of Christ. It was a shocking way to die even in Jesus Christ's time but we need to recover its true meaning that

God so loved the world and His son came not to condemn but to save it."

After a very musical Mass provided by a deanery choir and orchestra young people began playing volley ball, soccer and take part in other activities.

There were interesting stalls, a very popular bouncy castle for the youngsters and various displays.

One of the most interesting stalls displayed plans for a new church at Diss, others sold fairtrade goods and the drinks tent with a barbecue was very well attended.

It was hailed as a successful day and thanks were offered to the staff of Moreton Hall school for loaning their grounds and building.

People from across the Deanery of St Edmund in Suffolk and south Norfolk enjoyed a day of prayer, activities and socialising at Moreton Hall school



Explaining the designs for the new church in Diss were parishioners David and Anne Steel and Monica Maxwell who worships mainly at Quidenham but was interested in the developments.



Pilgrims came from far and wide - the groups above are from Ethiopia and those below from eastern Europe.



African dancers brought colour and music to a prolonged procession of the gifts (above) and the flags of many nations decorated the grounds in front of the Chapel of Reconciliation (right)



International pilgrimage for Dowry of Mary

Thousands of people of all nations came from far and near to attend the Dowry of Mary Pilgrimage at Walsingham in September.

Bishop Patrick Lynch from Southwark led the day which began with a dramatic Mass at the Chapel of Reconciliation.

The procession of gifts was made by dancers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in traditional costume to music and chant from their African home.

New flags of some of the free nations from former communist countries of eastern Europe

decorated Our Lady's shrine.

People of far eastern nations, from the Philippines to China, came together in celebration.

Countries from the north of Africa to the south were represented as well as people from the village of Walsingham, from Fakenham, Birmingham, London and the North of England boosted the crowd.

There were also people who had made their home in the UK from Portugal, India, the West Indies, Latin America and Ireland and wanted to pay their tribute to Our Lady.

Bishop Lynch in his homily also paid tribute to Mary and the way that she provided help at all times to people across the world with worries and anxieties.

Her life and work was also celebrated at shrines across the world, he said.

"Mary reminds everyone that God is with us and she helped to define the pathway to Him.

"She had the strength to say 'yes' to God's plan and shows to humankind the way to be open to Him."

The pilgrimage walk along the Holy Mile to the village of

Walsingham for Benediction in the grounds of the former Augustinian priory was also a colourful and musical international experience.

Our Lady of Walsingham's statue was carried by bearers at the head of the long procession and the Rosary was recited and hymns sung in a wealth of languages.

At Benediction there was spiritual music from Zimbabwe, the Philippines and Poland.

A truly international pilgrimage of people who had made their home in England - the Dowry of Mary and home of Our Lady of Walsingham.



Pilgrims from the Democratic Republic of the Congo chanted, sang and danced all the way to the priory grounds while languages from across the world were heard among those in the long procession to the village of Walsingham.



A new banner was unveiled at the pilgrimage designed for St Anthony of Padua parish at Fakenham, one of the nearby parishes to Walsingham. Pictured here displaying the banner for the first time are Anne Downer, Mary Adams, Andre Wilkins and Janie Davidson-Houston. The painting was done by Tracey Adams, Mary's daughter in law, in celebration of her having a baby. It is set in a restored medieval frame which also carries a rosary bought in Fakenham market set around it. The picture was inspired by Fr Tony Webb who came to a pilgrimage last year with a cardboard sign on a stick to depict the parish. Parishioners were determined to have a distinctive banner for themselves which they could display at diocesan and other gatherings and they have succeeded.

BUILDING BRIDGES in the Holy Land

Michael Collis, one of our two 5th year seminary students, reports on his and Pdraig Hawkins' (4th year) trip to the Holy Land in August 2008.

In early August this year, Pdraig Hawkins and I were given the opportunity to visit our twin diocese of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and to spend some time in parishes in Palestine as a brief pastoral placement. Due to a combination of the ordinations of close friends, the end of the seminary term and working for a few weeks to earn a little cash, I can't say the fact I was going to the Holy Land really sunk in until about the day before I left! Little did I realise that the next two weeks were to be among the most amazing few days I have ever experienced.



Palestinian children

During our first three days we were accommodated in Bethlehem, and Fr Paul Maddison, who was with us and who had organised our trip, arranged that we should spend this time seeing the sights in Jerusalem and Bethlehem; after all, "you can't go all the way to the Holy Land and not visit the Holy Places" (Fr Paul). On the last day before we returned to England, I also had the opportunity to travel with a friend to northern Israel to visit Nazareth and the Galilee area.

It was once said that "Five Gospels record the life of Jesus - four you will find in books, and one you will find in the land they call Holy. Read the fifth gospel and the world of the four will open to you" (Bargil Pixner OSB).

Visiting the places where the most important events in the history of salvation took place profoundly affected me. Suddenly those places in the Gospels, such as Capernaum, Mount Tabor and Nazareth, which I admit I previously had real trouble trying to imagine, I do not now have to try and imagine them, because I am standing right there in the midst of them. It was both awesome and really quite moving to realise that in the places we were visiting, two thousand years before, Jesus had been.

One of the most moving places was the site of the Annunciation. Taking part in the Mass in the Basilica, I was aware that just as I was receiving Jesus at Holy Communion, in that same place Mary herself had received Jesus into her womb when the Angel told her she would be the Mother of God. Visiting the site where this took place made me very powerfully aware of the amazing reality of our faith that God came and lived with us and experienced the reality of human life.

This fact, that God came to share our humanity, reveals to us the passionate love that God has for his creatures, so passionate a love that he wanted to share our joys and our sorrows. This concern of God for his people means that we who are His Body, His Church now on earth, share His mission to reach out to all his people and share their life.

The often painful reality of that life into which God chose to come was clearly manifest to us in the struggles and oppression of the modern-day people of Palestine.



The House of Caiaphas

The rest of the time Pdraig and I were in the Holy Land was spent in parishes in the West Bank, both of which are twinned with parishes in our diocese. I was based in the parish in Ramallah, a bustling town, which has unfortunately become famous in more recent time because of the fierce fighting in the town between Israelis and Palestinians in 2002.

Its more ancient claim to fame is that it was there that Mary and Joseph discovered that the boy Jesus was not with their party on the way back from Jerusalem, and they had to return to find him in the Temple. Pdraig was based in the smaller nearby town of Bir Zeit, famous for its university which, in the current climate, is periodically closed because of tensions between the rival political groups of Hamas and Fatah which manifest also among the student body.

Although I, like all of us, had seen numerous television news reports about the situation in Palestine, I must admit that, partly because of the emotional-distance which TV news can put between you and the events one is viewing, I had not really grasped the harsh reality of the sufferings of our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

Speaking with the warmly welcoming Palestinians, we heard account after account of oppressive actions on the part of the Israeli authorities towards them. In Bethlehem, the Israeli authorities only allow fresh water to reach the inhabitants of the town twice a week, inhabitants which include children at an orphanage run by the Daughters of Charity.

The monstrous "security" wall has led to the division of families on either side, and countless Palestinians have to queue for hours each morning to pass through the wall and reach their place of work (sometimes this place of work is their own land which has been cut off from them by the wall), whether or not they access and the ease with which they do so depends entirely on the whim of the young Israeli national service soldiers on duty.

The necessarily short length of this article makes it impossible to even begin to do justice to the plight of the Palestinian people, not to mention the great witness given by the Christians of the land in trying to work for the welfare of all with their Muslim neighbours and with many Israelis who do not agree with the policies of their government. I can only finish by making a heart-felt plea that each of us supports the Palestinians in their struggle for justice.

Firstly, let's all pray for peace with justice in the Land we call Holy, peace for all who live there including the Israelis who also suffer from the violence. Also, let's lobby our politicians to speak out against tactics of the Israeli government which are often illegal according to international law.

Finally we can also support Palestinian families and

encourage these ancient Christian communities to stay in the land which is theirs by our getting more involved in our diocesan twinning, going there on pilgrimage ourselves to experience the situation, supporting our projects there, and helping their business by our custom.



Part of the 'security wall'

CAN YOU HELP?

Our two main diocesan 'Building Bridges' projects this year are helping to build a kindergarten for the small community at Chrab Viel in Cambodia, and to buy land for affordable housing in the Palestinian village of Aboud.

Would you like to support these projects? Cheques should be made payable to the 'RC Diocese of East Anglia'.

First name.....

Surname.....

Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, etc)

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... Amount enclosed.....

Anything you give will be divided equally between Chrab Viel and Aboud, unless you indicate below by ticking one or other that all your money should go to that project:

CHRAB VIEL (Cambodia) ABOUD (Palestine)

GIFT AID DECLARATION (if appropriate)

I wish the RC Diocese of East Anglia to reclaim tax on this donation. I have paid an amount of UK tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax claimed.

Signed..... Date.....

Please send to:

Bishop Michael, 'Building Bridges', 21 Ugate,
Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7SH
Registered charity no. 278742

Certificates celebration

Twenty six people received Diocesan Certificates at the end of Mass at St John's Cathedral on 13th September.

Each level of the Certificate represents attending four diocesan study days, and those present had been to a grand total of 356 such days over the last three years.

Several people achieved Certificate Levels 5 (20 study days) and 6 (24 days), but Heather Wallace was the only person to have reached Level 7 (28 days).

At the Mass, see picture right, on the feast of St John Chrysostom – which means 'golden mouth' – Bishop Michael hoped that attending the study days would help people become together a 'golden mouthed' community, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ by their words, deeds and lives together.

And he hoped that many other people from across the diocese would come to the 2008-2009 series of study days. Everyone is welcome, whether or not they want to gain certificates.



Pilgrims celebrate jubilee in Lourdes

A larger than usual group went on this year's pilgrimage to Lourdes to celebrate the 150th jubilee of the shrine.

The people from East Anglia who joined the Catholic Association's annual pilgrimage were once again led by Bishop Michael and were accompanied by a large number of helpers - both young and old.

Deacon Ian Hatfield said because it was 150 years since the apparitions of Our Lady to Bernadette the theme of the pilgrimage was jubilee and the Holy Father had granted a plenary indulgence to any pilgrim who completed the Jubilee Way.

"Our pilgrimage this year took place in beautiful sunny weather - a change to our

English summer. It was also larger because many new and former pilgrims decided to come to celebrate the Jubilee Year.

The Jubilee Way is partly a walking tour of Lourdes taking in four places closely associated with Bernadette. They include the Cashot, a tiny prison in which Bernadette and her family lived in dire poverty in one room for several years.

Pilgrims visit the Hospice where Bernadette went to school and prepared for her First Holy Communion, the Parish Church, where she was baptised and, of course, the Grotto where the apparitions took place.

At the start of the Way each pilgrim is

given a badge on which a sticker is placed at each of the sites and they wear this emblem throughout the rest of their stay in Lourdes.

Ian added: "To mark the Jubilee we acquired a new banner, blessed by Bishop Michael at our Diocesan Mass.

"One of the highlights of the pilgrimage was a wonderful, noisy, funny, spirit-filled, joyful Mass organised by the Glanfield Children's Group at which Bishop Michael presided.

"On his retirement after 10 years as director of the pilgrimage, Bishop Michael thanked Deacon Andrew Neate for his dedication and hard work."



Cromer Parish held a celebration lunch to mark the retirement of Fr Peter Brown parish priest for 11 years. The longest serving members of the parish (grand total of 180 years between them!) gave him a leaving present. The youngest members gave him a book of local postcards with messages from the whole congregation. He is moving to Wells to enjoy a well earned retirement.



BISHOP'S ENGAGEMENTS FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER		
NOVEMBER		DECEMBER
31 st October – 7 th November:	at Poringland Suffolk Churches Together at 7.30pm	2 nd St Alban's, Ipswich, Sixth Form on Cambodia
Methodist/Catholic international; Commission in Dublin	20 th Diocesan Schools Service Commission at Poringland at 10.30	4 th Diocesan Finance Board at Poringland
8 th Diocesan Council of Laity at Poringland 11.00-3.00	21 st Confirmations at St Pancras, Ipswich at 7.30	6 th Confirmations at Haverhill at 6.00pm
9 th Diocesan Youth Council at Poringland 3.00-7.00	22 nd Confirmations at Kings Lynn at 7.30	7 th Mass at University of East Anglia Chaplaincy at 6.00pm
10-13 th Catholic Bishops' Conference in Leeds	23 rd Diocesan 'Learning Together' Study Day	9 th Norfolk Church Leaders Meeting (Thetford) at 12.00
14 th Mass with Diocesan Head Teachers at Poringland at 2.30pm	24 th Confirmations at Hunstanton at 11.00	Norfolk & Waveney Churches Together (Thetford) at 2.30pm
15/16 th Parish Visitation to Swaffham	25 th /26 th British Methodist/Catholic Committee in London	13/14 th Parish Visitation to Clare
16 th RoadPeace Service at Norwich Cathedral at 3.30pm	26 th Visit to East Anglia seminarians at Oscott College	20 th /21 st Visit to St Alban's Parish, Blackburn (to talk at Masses on Cambodia)
17 th Anglican/Catholic Bishops' Day of Recollection in London	27 th College of Consultors at Poringland	22 nd Reconciliation Service at St John's Cathedral at 7.30pm
18 th Cambridgeshire Ecumenical Council at 6.00pm	28 th Personnel Board at Bury St Edmunds	25 th Christmas Midnight Mass at St John's Cathedral
19 th Clergy Ongoing Formation Day	29/30 th Catholic/Oriental Orthodox Forum in Stevenage	
	Parish Visitation to Aldeburgh	

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