

Our Jubilee Big Sing took place this year in conjunction with our wider parish Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Over 300 parishioners and members of our community took part in this joyful event and we welcomed our local Mayor to celebrate this occasion with us. Four choirs took part and led the congregation singing a wide range of traditional and contemporary hymns. A real highlight was when we put the church into darkness and everyone waved their finger light to 'This little light of mine'. We learned about the origin of hymns, the patron Saint of musicians (Saint Cecelia) and even sang our most popular Carol 'Hark the herald angels sing' on a warm July evening. Our choirs led the singing beautifully and young and old delighted in

the many different hymns that we sang together. Our most popular hymn - as chosen by our parishioners was 'Shine Jesus Shine' (Graham Kendrick) and was closely followed by 'Sing it in the valleys' as our two most rousing hymns of the night. The spirit of the event carried on after the service where all our singers and parishioners shared in refreshments in our parish hall. Thank you to all who participated in our wonderful event and for giving so generously of your time to celebrate and sing together– all for the glory of God.

> Rachael Boyce Good Shepherd Church, Arnold



MORE THAN 24 YEARS OF BRINGING THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER The monthly paper for the Diocese of Nottingham

Catholic News 🐞

Editor: Nick Layton

Editorial Office: Bellcourt Ltd, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN Telephone: 01440 730399 email: cn@cathcom.org or davidl@cathcom.org Website: www.bellcourtltd.co.uk **Distribution enquiries:** cn@cathcom.org Bellcourt Limited,

Publication date: Fourth Sunday of the month for the following month. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Diocese. Publishers and Owners:

Bellcourt Ltd. N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN Advertising: tel: 01440 730399

Parental permission should be sought before submitting photographs of minors.

Views expressed in The Catholic News are not necessarily those of the editor.

Wanted Parish Correspondents

The Catholic News is looking for a Parish Correspondent in your parish to send in local news for publication in this newspaper. All items to be emailed to cn@cathcom.org before 10th of the month

The spirituality that underpins the SVP

September is a prominent month for the SVP as we celebrate both the feast of Blessed Frederic Ozanam (9th September) and the feast of St Vincent de Paul (27th September). Many dioceses will see Festivals organised to commemorate these feast days. Here in the Nottingham diocese, the SVP will be holding its annual Festival on Saturday 28th September at the Sacred Heart church at Carlton in Nottingham, where Bishop Patrick has kindly agreed to attend to celebrate Mass.

It is an opportunity to affirm the spiritual foundations of the society, where members will be able to meet together, socialise together and pray together.





Vincentian Spirituality

Spirituality underpins the society. Formed as a Catholic lay organisation, it is guided and driven by gospel values and Christ's message to love one another. Members see Christ in the poor, acting through and with Christ when helping others. Members are encouraged to adopt a Vincentian approach to the way they behave, seeing each person as unique, one of God's creatures, that may be in need of some assistance. They should not be making any judgements; they will treat beneficiaries with dignity and respect and appreciate that when they are helping someone in need they are reaching out to Christ.

An important text within the society is 'Mind and Heart of a Vincentian' - spiritual readings complied by the late David Williams. Excerpts are set out below to support this article.

What is spirituality?

For St. Paul, a spiritual person is one whose whole being and life is ordered, led or influenced by the 'Spirit of God' (1Cor 2: 12.14] Even most non-Christian spiritualities would agree with this. Our body and mind can, like our spirit, be 'spiritual' if led by the Spirit. This is quite different from the mistaken idea that anything connected with the body must be somehow 'carnal'.

The truth is that our senses, too, can give a delight which can lead us to God, if we respond with a sense of gratitude that he has created all things, which are good in themselves and reflect his glory. (Jb 12:7-

9, Ps 8:3, 19:1) Spirituality is centred on our personal relationship to God, but it embraces all that God loves. It influences, ever more strongly, our relationships with others. It even awakens in us reverence towards creation, a sense of caring for our planet and our environment.

The more our spirituality deepens, the more we experience the present moment, with all our senses awakened to the beauty in people and in the world around us, which provides a glimpse of God's glory. We become more fully alive. "I have come that they may have life more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Deep spirituality enables us to be totally present with the people we visit, to be so attentive to their words and their feelings that they sense the reverence we feel for them.

In practical terms spirituality for a Vincentian is embodied in a number of ways. Vincentians are encouraged to live by Meetings begin and finish with prayers. There will usually also be a reflection to think about and discuss if appropriate. At various time during the year there is the opportunity to attend a Mass, liturgy or service with other Vincentians, such as the September festival.

Vincentian spirituality will also be evident in the work carried out with beneficiaries. The SVP actively promotes the ideal of putting faith into action so the very act of seeking out and supporting those in need is a spiritual act, alluding to the parables of The Good Samaritan and The Sheep and the Goats, that personifies spiritual activity.

If you would like to learn more about the SVP or are interested in reading 'The Heart and Mind of a Vincentian', please contact Joe Gasan, Membership Support Officer for the SVP in our diocese at joeg@svp.org.uk



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

FRANKLY SPEAKING

At the time of writing this article the unfolding story of individual children being the brutalised victims in Southport has changed their lives forever. Let us never forget each of those little girls had a name, a family, close friends, hopes, dreams and expectations. The much used phrase "thoughts and prayers" must not be just words we should all ensure that this is part of the healing process in our communities.

There should not be any doubt over the need for a healing process but we perhaps need to examine ourselves before blaming others. In Warrington town centre two small boys were the innocent victims of a terrible atrocity in 1993. A healing process is a town I know well incorporates a Peace Centre which

I trust has assisted the local community well known for its friendly people. Since that day in 1993 the term social media has not only become a much used phrase but we can now communicate at speed new developments in our daily lives. I have no doubt that many who use technology do so responsibly but bad news and worse still promotion of accusations, provocation and worst of all threats can be turned into "truth". The victims of this are minority groups who simply want to live their lives peacefully.

If we do need to examine ourselves then so do the social media companies not only their profits but the consequences of their tolerance of what can lead to hatred.

As many town and city centres were affected all of this violent disorder may

need or force government action for the sake of the silent majority.

I am not sufficiently qualified to comment on how social media can further assist our parish communities, but perhaps in these difficult times those who are capable will offer their services. I wrote this because the recent Synod revealed the many demands on our priests. We should remember they are human beings who also need the love and friendship that they promote not only in Southport but in the challenges within and outside of the Church. It will not be easy to move on from the summer of 2024 but we should all be determined to work together.

> Frank Goulding Holy Trinity Parish, Newark



St Mary's Church Derby was the host for a spiritual and prayer filled morning for Christian women. It began with getting to know each other over a continental breakfast of croissants, waffles, yoghurt, pancakes and fresh fruit. Followed by a discussion about the women who have inspired us. A reading of the Book of Ruth showed two strong, resourceful, loving, family orientated women who worked within the confines of their culture to flourish and lead good lives. Jenny Anthony from Spiral Arts then helped everyone create their own prayer book, which let everyone practise their craft and art skills. It's hoped the Prayer Breakfasts will become regular events during the year." Fran Hazel

Fran Hazel

St Mary's Academy Derby raise £150 for Aid to the Church in Need



Children from St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy in Derby's Chaplaincy Team spent weeks making crafts for their stall at the School Summer Fayre. Pipe cleaner Rosaries, holy water containers, necklaces and other lovely items. Their efforts paid off, with them making £150 on their stall. This will be sent to Aid to the Church in Need.

Diamond Wedding Anniversary



Chris and Jim Squire were the first couple to be married at St Joseph The Worker RC Church, Sutton in Ashfield, on 18 July 1964. They received a Papal blessing from Fr John Martin on Thursday, 18 July 2024 at the Good Shepherd Church. Sixty years together making this a very special celebration in the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Good Shepherd Church.

May they have many more happy years together.

Ukulele Afternoon of Fun

The Good Shepherd Parish celebrated their final Friendship Group gathering for the term, on Thursday 18th July 2024.

As it's also the 60th anniversary of the Good Shepherd Church this year we decided a party was a good idea.

We invited the Mapperley Ukulele group to provide the entertainment. They are always brilliant.

The party was well attended and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves with good entertainment, good food and good company with chance to mingle with friends.

So, thanks to the Ukulele group and thanks to everyone who made the day a huge success. The group meets again on 12 September 2024 following the summer break.

> Polly Jarvis Good Shepherd Church

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS



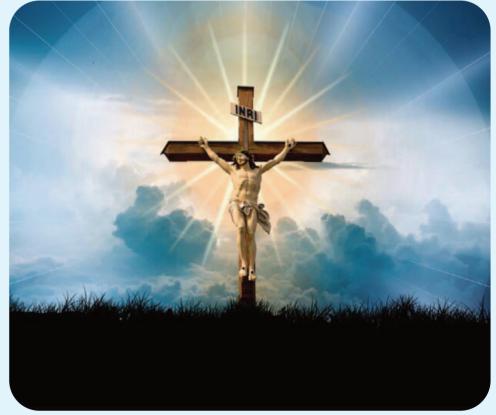
From: Elston Hermitage.....

One of the many things we are thankful for here at the' hermitage' in Elston, is that we are looked after by an excellent medical practice, we are able to speak or see a G.P on the same day and there is a wonderful team supporting our G.P.s. It was only yesterday that I attended for my annual review of medication and to make sure that I was up to date with my vaccines. Over the last few years we have all had our share of vaccines which are important to protect us from disease of all kinds, by training our immune systems to recognize and attack a virus or bacteria. Vaccines inject antigens from the disease into our bodies -small bits in layman's terms, so that we produce antibodies to fight disease in the future. The very thing that overpowers us and brings sickness and death now empowers us to resist and overcome it. This is similar to what Jesus' Cross has done for us.

On the 14th of this month we will be keeping Holy Cross Day or the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. That Cross is the source of our life, our hope and our salvation. How ironic that this instrument of death would bring us life!

Yet this had happened before. In the time of Moses, a seraph serpent that had brought sickness and death became an instrument of healing. (Numbers 21:9) In the same way the Cross of Jesus, where he was condemned, wounded and sinned against, brings us forgiveness, healing from the wounds of sin, and freedom from death. No wonder we have a day devoted entirely to declaring the mighty works of the cross, on Holy Cross Day.

The true Victory of the Cross is that Jesus overcame death when he rose again. So when we "lift up the cross" we are proclaiming Jesus' Resurrection as well as his sufferings and death. Without the Resurrection, there would be no triumph." If Christ has not been raised". St Paul says, our faith is in vain and and we are still in our sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17) But because Jesus both died and rose in a



human body, " everyone who believes in him " can share his victory and have eternal life" (John 3:15)

And so on Holy Cross Day, Rejoice !! that Jesus died and rose - for us all. Spend a few moments gazing upon a Crucifix, the instrument of death, that is now our source of strength and power. Exult, that Jesus' love is stronger than death. Lift up the Cross and proclaim the victory of Jesus' death and Resurrection and watch as our faith grows stronger.

Like those antibodies surging through our bodies, the Cross will bring eternal life to our souls ! Let's be empowered to lift high our crosses and struggles in this life, that God may strengthen our faith, our love and our obedience. Happy Holy Cross Day!

Fr David + h.d.n. Priest and Hermit

CAFOD BBQ at Our Lady of the Angels, East Leake

On Sunday, 7th July Our Lady of the Angels church in East Leake held their annual barbecue to raise funds for CAFOD.

After the 11 am Mass the barbecue was fired up and everyone brought meat, fish, salads and rolls to the Parish room and the bar was declared open!

The weather hadn't been great that morning (like much of our summer!) but fortunately it stayed dry for our lunchtime celebration and we didn't need to shelter under the pagoda we had erected "just in case". Our master chefs, Sean and Claire Hale did a wonderful job of cooking everybody's food and our CAMEO (come And Meet Each Other) group prepared lots of lovely salads and other goodies. David Fenny looked after the bar and made sure that no one was thirsty and Mike Sharpe organised a raffle to add to the excitement.

Everyone enjoyed the occasion and we raised a total of £290 to send to CAFOD for their vital work in disaster relief and to assist people living in poverty around the world with practical help.





Barbecue lunch at Our Lady of the Angels



News from the Catenians

Derby Catenians President's Sunday

Derby Catenians President Richard Penna was joined for mass and lunch by brothers, widows, families and Canon Alan Burbage for mass at Saint George's and Soldier Saints and lunch at the Mickleover Golf Club. Gathering to share in faith and friendship, and a lovely chance to remind ourselves of the value of our association."



Derby Catenians and Family Mark Five years of the Catenian Association Memorial

Led in prayer and reflection by ex-Grand President and Derby Catenian, David Rowley, fellow Catenians and family gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum on a bright and beautiful July morning to mark five years since the dedication of our Association's memorial.

David led the initiative to erect the memorial along with support from late member Andy Holden and many others.



David's words and prayers were poignant and a fitting tribute to our faith and the Catenian association."

Sean and Claire Hale were kept busy cooking everyone's lunch!



LEADING INDEPENDENT | CO-EDUCATIONAL CATHOLIC, BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL | AGES 3 - 18 | LEICESTERSHIRE |

OPEN MORNING

SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2024

9.30AM - 12PM

Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SG admissions@ratcliffecollege.com | Admissions: 01509 817031

www.ratcliffecollege.com



Encouraging-Big-Idea

Scan here to book your place.



Encouraging-Big-Ideas



Scan here to book your place.

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER 2024

6.30PM - 8.30PM

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE 'Excellent preparation for life after school, say pupils, and not just Oxbridge and medical routes.'

Good Schools Guide, 2024

Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SG admissions@ratcliffecollege.com | Admissions: 01509 817031 www.ratcliffecollege.com



NATIONWIDE SERVICE IN DESIGN, INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE OF LIGHTNING PROTECTION AND EARTHING SYSTEMS

HAVE YOU BOOKED IN YOUR ANNUAL LIGHTNING PROTECTION TEST AND INSPECTION?

IS YOUR SYSTEM COMPLIANT TO THE STANDARD BS EN 62305: 2012? CONTACT US NOW TO RECEIVE YOUR FREE NO OBLIGATION QUOTATION OR FREE ADVICE AND SUPPORT REGARDING YOUR LIGHTNING PROTECTION

WWW.LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM C 0115 8411 211 INFO@LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM ECA

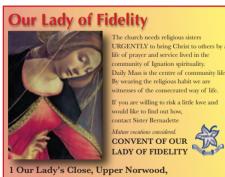
England has it's own Catholic Radio Station RADIO MARIA ENGLAND Tune in on Digital Radio

Smart Speakers, 'Play Radio Maria England'

> A Christian Voice by

> > Your Side

www.RadioMariaEngland.uk 0300 302 1251



I Our Lady's Close, Upper Norwood, London SE19 3FA Telephone 07760 297001

£1.80 provides a child with a meal every weekday for a month



Donate now at www.reachfoundationuk.org Your money goes a long way! Reach Foundation UK - charity no: 1171521



Taking it on the chin

Cross-culturalism, multiculturalism, pluriculturalism or, for those of less Latin but more Greek persuasion. polyculturalism are among terms bandied back and forth these days. They are like Greek sirens taunting society. The terms underscore the defiantly variant natures at loggerheads with each other, gnawing at the fabric of our society. Diversity. individuality, the consuming self-respect over and above that for others hold pole position, vying against the common good. We see a fragile craft increasingly out of kilter in an increasingly restless sea.

It's such terms as catholicity - referring to the inclusion of all - and Catholicity - the universality of the Catholic faith - which offer the opportunity to bind us all as one family striving together for shared goals. Therein lie core issues of Christian ethos such as diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) which we see embodied in the five main British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

So it was that I sat down one evening in July in front of the box – I admit with glass in hand – to enjoy the opening ceremony of The Olympics, Paris 2024, looking forward thereafter to witnessing the efforts of the world's leading athletes in pushing forward their abilities.

The nine years of preparation by France in the run-up to Paris 2024 had taken the previous opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics, hosted by the UK, as the benchmark. Not that anyone expected President Macron to be effecting any form of Elizabethan skydive! It was indeed a pity that that highly heralded outdoor event was marred by inclement weather. But that was a risk the French had taken, nobody really expecting such inclement weather in July.

Attention had long been focussed on the Olympics opening ceremony artistic director, Thomas Jolly (b. 1982, Rouen) and to how the opening ceremony would play out. Jolly had envisioned an inclusive celebration along the Seine river based on 12 tableaux. Jolly's grandfather had taught catechism to children but Jolly himself never received a religious education.

France, as we know, is a secular country. Be that as it may, that fact does not deter the whole French nation from taking any opportunity to enjoy, although perhaps not



to celebrate, all Holy Days in the Christian calendar.

Imagery employed under Jolly's direction at the opening ceremony has enraged many for its apparent parody of the mural 'The Last Supper' (see inset) by the Italian High Renaissance artist Leonardo de Vinci (c. 1495-1498). In the face of criticism from around the world and death threats on social media, Jolly has denied it was ever his intention to cause offence or show disrespect. However, a member of the troupe appears to have contradicted Jolly on this point by saying that the intention was to launch 'The New Gay Testament', albeit in defiance of the Aristotelian classic 3-part theory on persuasion calling for Logos (Logic and consistency of an argument), Pathos (Connection with people's values and beliefs) and Ethos (One's credibility and standing to persuade).

The opening ceremony for Paris 2024 had been based around a procession of small boats moving downstream on the Seine carrying the numerous teams of athletes. Those athletes had been waiting patiently in their thousands for the ceremony to get fully under way. A variety of sideshows were enacted along the river's bank and at various other venues. I admit to being a bit confused.

Market research tells us that 80% plus of adult spectators and viewers had been impressed and that they had duly applauded the spectacle. I admit to siding with the minority on that count, although the final moments with the illuminated image of the horseman who came riding down the river in the style of Noyes was truly an artistic wonder.

I remember being in hospital some years ago, recovering from a major operation. They'd put me on morphine. I was hallucinating wildly seeing images like those now parading on the screen before me. I checked the bottle from which I was drinking. Good ole Chilean red. Nothing wrong there.

However, Mr Jolly's image which has caused a bit of a stir was that of a meal, a supper with a number of personages facing me from behind a long table. The Olympics, born of practices long before the advent of Christianity, had turned to ridicule the Christian basis on which Western culture was based. No doubt, by the time you read this, many bishops - other than those predominantly from the USA – will have also given voice to their indignation.

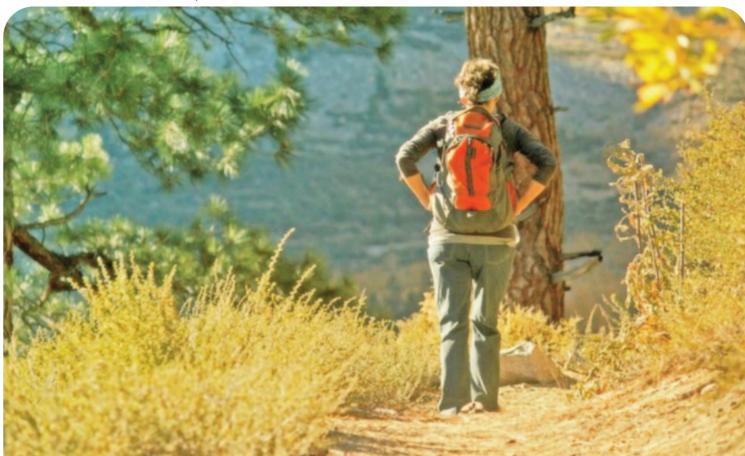
As a young lady from Syria recently commented: 'I'm a Muslim. I'm sick of this. Why aren't Christians doing anything? Why are you weak?'

However, as Christians, we turn the other cheek, we take the hit. And what could be a more defiant gesture of strength than to turn the other cheek? But, on the other hand, as Evangelists, ours at such a point as this is not to fall silent, or to move lamely to one side but somehow to bounce back off the ropes.

Acknowledgements and Attribution: Texts/References adapted and/or adopted from http://en.wikipedia.org under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License 4.0: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/bysa/4.0/; The Last Supper' by courtesy of Pixabay.



Dr J L Kettle-Williams is an experienced business communications consultant and wordsmith (tutor, writer, translator).



Pilgrim's Progress to Rome!

You are invited to join a very special journey in Autumn 2025

You can walk for the charity Life as they walk with women in crisis, creating a world where no one faces pregnancy or pregnancy loss alone. Life are inviting people of all faiths and none to join Pilgrim's Progress to Rome.

The trek is part of an ancient pilgrimage route which goes from Canterbury to Italy. Trekkers will be walking a 110km stretch of the Camino via Francigena pilgrim route. For modern walkers it has come to symbolise a time of reflection, learning, self-discovery and fresh starts. Travelling in the footsteps of so many others, as well as exploring some lesser- known parts of Italy, each step will be raising funds to support women facing unexpected pregnancies or pregnancy loss.

Kerry Smart, CEO of Life, says, "At Life we walk with women in some of the most challenging situations they will ever encounter, faced with unexpected pregnancy and pregnancy loss. "I really encourage anyone with an adventurous spirit and a willingness to support women to take on this walking challenge. "Life is a charity for women and families facing unexpected pregnancies. We offer counselling, housing, practical support, and educational services. Our mission is to create a world where no one faces pregnancy or pregnancy loss alone.

"We're asking you to raise funds by walking with Life on this pilgrimage, so we can continue walking with women in crisis. "We look forward to you joining us on this fundraising journey!" This exciting opportunity is open to anyone who wants to challenge themselves to support women by raising funds and awareness in this unique way. The eight-day trek in Autumn 2025 has only a limited number of places available.

Register your interest

Are you ready to discover more?

by visiting 'fundraising events' on our website or by scanning the QR code.

Catholic Nurses gather at the QMC



Catholic Nurses prayer gathering and Holy Mass took a place at the Queens Medical Hospital Chapel on 07 August, Wednesday 11am to 1pm celebrated by Canon Philipp. Please contact Jancy Joseph via the parish office of the Good Shepherd parish if you wish to gain more information about this gathering.

Jancy Joseph of the Good Shepherd Church, Woodthorpe

MASSERS

Solicitors to the Diocese of Nottingham

Offering you a full range of legal services:

- Wills & Power of Attorney
- Probate & Trusts
- Company & Commercial Law
- Commercial Property
- Commercial/Property Litigation
- Residential Conveyancing

Telephone: 0115 851 1666

At 15 Victoria Street, Nottingham & Tudor Square, West Bridgford E-mail: law@massers.co.uk







subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk 01440 730399



For some of your Parishioners 50 copies: from £12 (24p per copy) 10 copies: from £9 (90p per copy)

Individual Subscriptions Annual 1 Copy from £4 per month





All prices include delivery
www.catholicpost.co.uk



Visit from Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Ha (O.F.M) Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong



Bishop Ha was on a pastoral tour in supporting Hong Kong migrants in the UK. In this pastoral visit, Bishop Ha covered 11 regions of the United Kingdom in 10 days.

During his visit on the 22nd and 23rd of July in Nottingham, he joined us to celebrate the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, followed by a delightful dinner gathering. In his homily, Bishop Ha offered words of encouragement to our group of parishioners, many of whom have recently moved to the UK from Hong Kong. Drawing parallels to Mary Magdalene, he acknowledged the darkness and pain we may feel during this transition, yet he reminded us of God's unwavering love.

This divine love, Bishop Ha emphasized, is our source of strength and encouragement, guiding us on our journey. He reminded us that every experience is an opportunity for growth, as God desires us to strengthen our faith. Bishop HA encouraged us to recognize and feel God's love in various forms and to share this experience with others, just as Mary Magdalene did when she proclaimed, "I have seen the Lord."

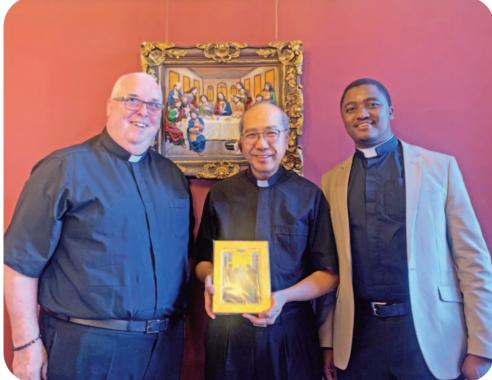
Bishop Ha also expressed gratitude for the continued support from Fr. John, Parish Priest of Parish of the Annunciation, Rushcliffe for the Hong Kong community and was pleased to see many of us actively volunteering in our church community.

The key contact of Hong Kong Catholic Community (Derby & Nottingham), Angelina mentioned that Bishop Ha's visit has drawn a number of Cantonesespeaking believers who had previously not Group photo of the Mass celebrating the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene.

been actively involved in church activities due to language barriers or distance.

All parishioners who attended the Mass and gathering felt profoundly blessed by Bishop Ha and all the priests who have visited or are planning to visit us from Hong Kong. We felt deeply cherished, reassured that God is always with us.

One of the parishioners shared the following: Aux. Bishop Joseph Ha Chishing, one of the essential representatives from the Catholic Church of Hong Kong, is paying a visit to the UK. I was so delighted to have joined a Cantonese Mass he held in the Holy Spirit Church celebrating the memorial of Saint Mary Magdalene on Monday, 22nd July. About 160 Hong Kong Catholics attended the Mass, marvellously. Bishop Ha repeatedly reminded us of the importance of engaging with the local community for the sake of the entire Church and our future, while a Mass or religious event in our mother language embraces our love and connection to our origins and family thousands of miles away. After all, we breathe the same air, and step on the same ground, regardless of where we come from. Bishop Ha loves the Hong Kong congregation so much that he arrived at the Church early in order to perform the sacrament of reconciliation. I am blessed to have had the chance to confess. After the Mass, we enjoyed homemade dishes from some of the participants. It was indeed an unforgettable evening, full of joy and love. Despite the distance, through Christ our Lord, we formed as one big family.



Fr John and Fr Evarist presented a gift to Bishop Ha in gratitude for his visit.



Group photo of gathering after Mass

Scripture Focus

By Fr Jeremy Corley



Page 11

Jesus' Call for Purity of Heart

After a dispute about handwashing, our Lord calls for inner purity in the gospel for 1st September (22nd Sunday of the Year). Jesus redirects the concern for physical hygiene felt by his audience, to focus on being pure in heart.

During the COVID pandemic, we all became aware again of the importance of washing our hands to avoid spreading infection. This is a basic rule of personal hygiene. At the time of Jesus, the Pharisees emphasised the need for handwashing, as part of the purity rules for devout Jews.

Jewish tradition had elaborate regulations about purity, based on the Book of Leviticus. These rules often became distinguishing marks for Jewish communities when they lived among non-Jews.

In our modern society, we can find it hard to understand the Jewish purity regulations. For instance, in the Jewish faith, eating pork is forbidden (Leviticus 11:7). Besides the religious reason, there was a practical hygienic reason, since pork quickly became unsafe to eat in a hot climate without refrigeration.

Besides the Jews, various other communities have their own dietary laws. Devout Muslims only eat halal meat, and many devout Hindus avoid eating beef. Diet can be a sign of identity. Unlike the French, most English people would avoid eating horsemeat.

In this gospel reading, Jesus is criticised for letting his disciples eat food without first washing their hands properly. His response is to turn his attention onto the rather judgmental attitude of the Pharisees.

To be sure, the Pharisees were not bad people. Rather, they were trying to practise their faith devoutly. Indeed, on several occasions Jesus accepted dinner invitations from them (Luke 7:36; 14:1).

But as with other religious people, the zealous Pharisees sometimes missed the point, according to Jesus. In verses from Mark 7 omitted from the lectionary, Jesus explains his view by referring to the Corban practice. If a devout Jew promised to give his wealth to the temple, he regarded himself as excused from the obligation to use his money to care for his elderly parents. But Jesus points out that this legal loophole contradicts one of the Ten Commandments: "Honour your father and mother" (Exodus 20:12).

We often understand this commandment as teaching children to respect their parents (Ephesians 6:1). But at the time of Jesus, this command was understood as teaching the need to care for elderly parents—as in the first reading for the Feast of the Holy Family (Sirach 3:2-6). The need to look after elderly parents still remains relevant today.

For religious people, it can be a great temptation to focus on external conformity to the regulations. But Jesus called his disciples to inner purity. While many of his audience were concerned about dietary rules, Jesus reminded his hearers that after any food has been eaten, waste products are passed into the sewer.

Instead, what Jesus sees as important is to be pure in our hearts. We can face inner

drives and compulsions to violent rage, avarice, pride, folly, and sexual sins. But if we wish to be clean before God, we are called to uproot these sinful behaviours.

We learn by experience that our own strength is not enough to overcome all these sins. We need to rely on the power of God. The psalmist prays: "A pure heart create for me, O God. Put a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). Only the Holy Spirit can give us the strength we need to overcome our weaknesses.

As Catholics, we believe that Jesus offers us forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, when we confess our sins. Our faith tells us that Jesus died and rose again to bring us pardon for our offences.

We seek God's help to live holy lives. Prayer is the means to open ourselves to God's loving assistance. And so we pray: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love."





Page 11

LOUGHBOROUGH Amherst School



"An ocean of opportunity"

Good Schools Guide 2024

Building life-long knowledge, values, friendships and memories for ages 4-18 years

Open Morning: Saturday 28 September – lsf.org/amherst/open

Derbyshire Extraordinary Ministers Renewal Day

There was an excellent turn out for the first Extraordinary Ministers Renewal Day in the South of Derbyshire since Covid. Holy Family Allestree hosted the event, and it was bustling, relaxed and friendly. A great chance for EMs to catch up with each other.

The day began with refreshments and prayer for all those people who initially taught us about the Faith. Many of these would have been grandparents or older people, and it was fitting that the renewal day was held on the weekend when the Church celebrates Grandparents and the Elderly.

The speaker was Joe Hopkins, the Director of Adult Catechesis in the Diocese. Joe posed the interesting question - "What have you done with your baptism?" This led into discussions and reflections about the role of the laity in using this precious gift for the good of Christ and his Church. We are baptised as Priest, Prophet and King, and this privilege calls us to take actions for others.

In the afternoon, a group of children from St Ralph Sherwin Parish led the praying of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. The day concluded with Mass, celebrated by Fr Alan Burbidge from St George's, with uplifting hymns provided by guitarist Mike Ryan from St Alban's Parish."

> Fran Hazel Secretary of the Derbyshire Extraordinary Ministers

