

FR JAMES WRITES ABOUT THE FUTURE OF PRIESTLY MINISTRY TO OUR PARISH: *An update...*

Fr Carlos and I have passed on to you an outline of the plan for providing priestly ministry to our parish in a stable and sustainable way for the next chapter of her life. Our particular circumstances of having two sites and the ever-changing pastoral challenges of the locality make this complex and urgent. Over the 12 years I have been here we have seen great upheavals. During that time we were blessed for some years to have stable regular help for the Sunday Mass schedule. Subsequently our arrangements have changed every year or two, which is not ideal.

In order now to try to provide for the spiritual needs of the parish, and *so that we can keep* the same pattern of Sunday Masses as we have now, the Archbishop has decided with his advisers to give care of the parish to priests of a Religious Congregation who will live as a stable community of priests, based at the Presbytery, and take charge of the parish from September this year. *To date I am told that these arrangements are being put in place, and we will let you know the details as soon as they come.*

From September Fr Carlos is to be the Parish Priest of Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, Queensway as well as taking on a chaplaincy role at St Charles Sixth Form College. Before moving to a new diocesan appointment Fr James has been given a period of sabbatical leave, and he will be doing a course of further studies at the Institute for Continuing Theological Education in Rome.

FAREWELL TO OUR PARISH CLERGY: Whilst we haven't yet been given the details of the new priests for our parish, who will take charge from September, the time has come to make arrangements to say goodbye to Frs James and Carlos.

Fr Carlos's last Sunday at St Bernard's will be 20 August, and his final Sunday will be at St Gabriel's on 27 August after which he moves to his new parish. Fr James will be helping the in-coming clergy to settle in, and then there will be a chance to say a formal goodbye to both our priests with a **PARISH LUNCH ON 10 SEPTEMBER** in St Gabriel's hall after the 12 Noon Mass. This will follow the usual pattern, so just come along and bring something to share to eat. Lunch finishes about 3pm.

SEA SUNDAY COLLECTION & PETERS PENCE: Thank you for your donations the last two weekends to these causes. We haven't got totals, and if anyone wishes to add anything to either collection just put it in an envelope marked accordingly.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE PARISH: As things move on from the Covid period, and with all the upheaval of a change in clergy, it is important to keep an eye on all the nuts-and-bolts things that keep our churches running:

Cleaning and grounds care: Church cleaning is a really useful gift to offer your parish, and is also a great aid to spiritual life as we care for the place of worship. Cleaning teams currently meet for an hour on occasional Saturday mornings at 8.30am. Can you join? Many hands make swift and light work. Please contact the Parish Office to be added to the contact email list.

Similarly, there is now an enthusiastic team to give occasional care to the grounds of our sites. This provides a time of fellowship and a real sense of achievement! Could you join the team? Contact Parish Office as above.

REPOSITORY SHOPS: Thank you to the volunteers who have offered to staff the shops on Sundays. What we really need is someone willing to work with the office to keep the shops stocked and to organize the volunteers. Could that be you? If so, please speak with Fr James.

SVP CONFERENCE: Our SVP Conference will be becoming the focus for voluntary work in the parish to reach particular needs and offer pastoral support. There will be more news soon about practical arrangements. However, the next formal meeting of the Conference will be **TUESDAY 12 SEPT** at 7.30pm at St Gabriel's hall. Come along and find out more.

SVP SUMMER RAFFLE: The SVP alleviates the effects of poverty and loneliness through its members, volunteers and staff by providing friendship, practical assistance, and daily support in parishes. **THIS WEEKEND** raffle tickets will be on sale to support both our parish Conference and the national work of SVP. Tickets are £1 each or £5 per book. First prize is £5000!!; second prize is £1000 and then fifteen prizes of £100. Prizes are drawn at the SVP centre in Bradford on 27 September. Well worth a punt!

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM: Saturday 23 September. We have booked a coach! Prices inevitably rise, and seats on the coach are priced at £28, for a break-even total. Seats can be purchased from the Parish Office. The date may be a while away, but do sign up as soon as possible.

WORLD YOUTH DAY LISBON: Please pray for the hundreds of thousands of young adults meeting together for World Youth Day in Lisbon between 1-6 August and meeting with Pope Francis there. Among these will be **THREE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THIS PARISH**, who volunteered for the leadership team of Westminster Diocese pilgrimage. In the week before 1 August they will join young people in the north of Portugal for an experience of the local church, and make a pilgrimage to Fatima.

THANK YOU TO THE PARISH: because your generosity has made it possible for these three young adults to join WYD 2023 and of course we also raised money to allow a young person from Brixton parish to join the Southwark group. These events help to shape young lives. *(Also among the huge crowd will be Fr Carlos, helping a group of his community from Spain.)*

NEWS FROM GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK: The 13th Annual GK Chesterton Pilgrimage will BE ON Sat 29 July. Bishop David Oakley of Northampton will preach at the Mass at 2.30pm at The Bridgettine Convent, Fulmer Common Road, Iver, SL0 0NR. Please send any prayer requests to; CatholicGKCSociety@yahoo.co.uk or text them to 07795205114. Details of the many different ways in which you can be involved on the day, as well as printable GKC prayer cards can be found on our website, www.CatholicGKChestertonSociety.co.uk Over the years the pilgrimage has raised over £20,000 for Good Counsel.

INVITATION TO YOUNG ADULTS FROM THE COMMUNITY OF O.L.WALSINGHAM: The Community of Our Lady of Walsingham (COLW) is offering an opportunity to Catholic men and women aged 18 - 35 to live alongside their community in Norfolk for a week this summer. As well as joining community prayers, meals and activities, there will be formation on topics such as Prayer, Scripture, Discernment and the Spirituality of Walsingham. There's a choice of dates: either 14 - 21 August or 30 August - 6 Sept. Enquiries welcome by 31 July at freetobe@walsinghamcommunity.org; Tel: 01362 421442; www.walsinghamcommunity.org.

“RIGHT TO LIFE UK” NEED OUR HELP: RTL writes: You may have heard about the recent tragic case of a woman being sent abortion pills by the abortion provider, BPAS, who had not accurately established the gestation of her baby, Lily, who was then aborted at between 32 and 34 weeks, which is around 8 months gestation. Rather than take responsibility for sending out abortion pills 22 weeks beyond the legal limit for at-home abortions, BPAS is running a major campaign to fully ‘decriminalise’ abortion, which would introduce abortion up to birth!

Right To Life UK has launched an easy-to-use tool on our website which makes it simple for you to send an email to your MP asking them to oppose the introduction of abortion up to birth and instead ask the Government to reinstate in-person appointments to ensure babies like Lily are protected in the future. For more info, AND TO FIND AN EASY AID TO WRITING TO YOUR MP, go to:

www.righttolife.org.uk/noabortionuptobirth

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE OF REPARATION 5 AUGUST: There will be a Pilgrimage of Reparation and Prayer for the Sanctity of Life to Walsingham on Sat 5 August, led by Archbishop Kevin McDonald. It will take as its theme ‘Accepting the Gift’. See poster in church for details.

NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION ON ST FRANCIS: The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, is holding an exhibition from 6 May to 30 July exploring the life and legacy of St Francis of Assisi. The exhibition includes paintings by Botticelli, Sassetta, Caravaggio, Murillo, El Greco, and Antony Gormley as well as a new commission from Richard Long. Admission is **free** and likely to be very popular. More info at the exhibition’s website at <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/saint-francis-of-assisii>.

Fr James writes: This small exhibition contains some real gems and is well worth a visit. It includes more than the usual works of art, including two astounding artefacts, one being a reliquary of a habit of St Francis. Offered free of charge, it is highly recommended.

COULD YOU BE A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR AT A CATHOLIC SCHOOL? The All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT) is currently seeking to recruit Foundation Governors for a number of our Schools local Governing Boards, across the Trust, to ensure high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by setting the school’s vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

This is an exciting opportunity to play a role in a vibrant and collaborative Trust that is in the process of expansion and development. The role of Foundation Governor is a rewarding one and offers various opportunities for professional and personal development. To be eligible for appointment, you must be a practising and committed Catholic, in communion with the Church. If you are interested in the opportunity to apply to become a Foundation Governor please contact Christina Reffold, Director of Governance & Compliance, via email governance@ascat.co.uk. See poster in church.

MARCH FOR LIFE, SATURDAY 2 SEPTEMBER: Put the date in your diary to join this important act of witness by Catholics and others of good will. This year’s theme is ‘Freedom to Live’. “Many are concerned about restrictions on freedoms but it’s not until these restrictions affect us personally that we speak up. Sadly, those who have their most fundamental freedom taken from them, by abortion, cannot speak for themselves – this is why we march. For our nation to be truly free, no one can be denied the number one freedom, the freedom to live!” 10:30am: Mass at Westminster Cathedral; 10:30am-1pm: Events/Stalls/Talks/Testimonies at The Emmanuel Centre 1:30pm: March for Life (Emmanuel Centre to Parliament Square). Web: www.marchforlife.co.uk.

PILGRIMAGE TO ROME AND ASSISI 6-13 NOVEMBER: Fr Tom has sent details of a pilgrimage he will be leading from Northwood parish between 6-13 November. 4 nights in Rome and 2 in Assisi. Full details on the poster in church.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND 19-27 NOVEMBER: The annual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land will take place from Sunday 19th Nov to Monday 27th Nov, led by Bishop John Sherrington and Fr John Farrell OP. You can book online at <http://www.tangney-tours.com/WHL> or call Gill at Tangney Tours 01732 886666 or Elizabeth at the Pilgrimage office 0207 798 9173. It will include visits to Galilee, Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Flights will be from Heathrow. Costs are £2265 per person sharing, £682 single room supplement; travel insurance essential.

VOCATION TO RELIGIOUS LIFE? COME AND SEE WEEKENDS: The Cistercian Nuns of Holy Cross Abbey, Whitland, Pembrokeshire, are inviting single Catholic Women between the ages of 25 and 45 who are discerning a vocation to experience their monastic life during one of these weekends: Friday 11th August – Monday 14th August; • Friday 20th October – Monday 23rd October. Info at www.hcawhitland.co.uk.

MISSIO RED BOXES THANK YOU! In 2022 our parish raised £1,625.45 through our Rex Boxes and donations to MISSIO and the Mill Hill Missionaries. This is part of a worldwide network of people supporting missionaries through prayer and financial assistance. Your support of projects such as the Fundong Mission Station in Cameroon has enabled Fr Leon, a Mill Hill Missionary, to help children learn in a safe environment and instil values that empower them to turn away from conflict and towards faith in God. Visit missio.org.uk to find more about how your support changes lives for the better. Red Boxes are available from the Parish Office or from the Sacristy at St Bernard's.

CARITAS HOMES FOR UKRAINE MATCHING SERVICE: See the poster in church. Caritas, in partnership with St John of God Hospitaller Services have launched a service to bring together displaced Ukrainians with those in the Catholic community willing to host them for 6 months. If you have room in your home in these difficult times to consider welcoming a stranger displaced by the evil war, visit <https://sjog-homesforukraine.uk/> for information.

GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK CAMPAIGN INFO: GCN have sent their 2022 Review (copy on the noticeboard at St Bernard, which amongst other things lists the names of lives saved with your support during the last year. GCN writes: *“Please also pray that the plans to introduce national buffer zones around abortion centres in the UK will not come to pass. In GK Chesterton’s epic poem, The Ballad of the White Horse, Our Lady tells King Alfred, “I tell you naught for your comfort, Yea, naught for your desire, Save that the sky grows darker yet And the sea rises higher.” Things may seem very dark indeed and the tide seems to rise higher but it is Christmas, and this is a season of hope. We do have a reason to hope. And the children that will celebrate their first Christmas this year because of your support, are a witness to this hope and this Christian joy!* To be a regular supporter or get involved in peaceful prayer vigils, write to info@goodcounselnetwork.com.

“There have now been over ten **million abortions** in Great Britain since the Abortion Act was passed 55 years ago, in October 1967. With this terrible number of lives lost, please pray and fast for the end of abortion in this country. GCN have sent a link to an article about the 10 million abortions that have taken place in Britain since the Abortion Act was passed on 27th October 1967. Also see what you can do to help end abortion. Please also share the article, <https://mariastopsabortion.blogspot.com/>. There are cards in the foyer to help you get involved.

CONTACTLESS MACHINES: We, like other parishes have been experiencing problems with the contactless payment consoles. We have made a little progress with determining the problems, but not yet as far as getting a solution. *Thank you for your patience. Thank you to everyone for your commitment and generosity in hard and uncertain times.*

CALLING ALL SINGERS/MUSICIANS! MUSIC FOR SUNDAY MASS: During August there's less music at Sunday Mass. That reminds us how important music is to our worship and how, like anything valuable, it needs to be constantly renewed and developed. For the foreseeable future our Sunday Mass schedule is remaining as it is now, and we want to build up the music especially at 9am, 10am and 11am Mass. A GREAT WAY TO OFFER A MINISTRY TO YOUR PARISH IS TO COME AND JOIN THE SINGERS TO LEAD MUSIC AT THESE MASSES. Speak with the clergy or with Simon (Director of Music) if you can offer your talent in this way...and don't be shy!

CARITAS WESTMINSTER: The umbrella department for all social outreach have written to share a film that was produced to show the impact of our social justice work across the Diocese. It is a celebration of what we have achieved together across the Diocese. Here is a link to the film: <https://youtu.be/Vgxvkd-8Ug>

YOUNG CATHOLICS (AGE 18-35 YEARS): Keep in touch with the Youth Ministry website at www.dowym.com for many resources. Particularly now “Words of advice for Catholic Young Professionals”.

NEWS FROM CARITAS WESTMINSTER: POVERTY CHALLENGE - SEE, JUDGE, ACT: Following the Pandemic many households face new hardships as prices rise. Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) the Catholic agency addressing poverty and injustice in England and Wales has released a new booklet to increase awareness of Catholic Social Teaching on poverty. This can be downloaded

at www.csan.org.uk

COST OF LIVING HUB: The Mayor of London has launched a new Cost of Living Hub to help people access information, support and advice about claiming benefits, dealing with debts, financial management and mental health support. Visit <https://www.london.gov.uk/cost-living-hub>

GRANTS TO HELP WITH ENERGY DEBTS: Possible help from a charitable trust plus links to other advice providers at <https://fuelpovertysource.org.uk/focus-on/fuel-debt-and-trust-funds/>

THE CATHOLIC NETWORK: See the poster in church advertising this free digital on-line service, a point of contact and interaction for catholics seeking to interpret the world we live in. Each week the network welcomes guests, commentaries, reflections and instruction, as well as news items about work being done by catholic organisations. More information at www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk.

INTRODUCING CATHOLIC LISTENERS: Catholic Listeners; Diocese of Westminster, a new confidential listening helpline has been set up for those who are returning to the faith. The number is 0800 448 0704.

This service is based on the Landings ethos of compassionate listening. Although not a counselling service, they have a professional team trained on signposting to other services and agencies. They aim to help those in need of a safe space to talk. For further information please contact Ade at Catholiclisteners@gmail.com

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION IN OUR PARISH: As we emerge from the Covid period to a new reality, so too our approach to preparation for the sacraments needs to change. We don't have an official line on this in our diocese as yet, but Cardinal Grech, Chair of the European Conference of Bishops, memorably said in 2020 that if after Covid the Church went back to doing what we did before it would be suicide!

There are some radical new ways of thinking on this unfolding in some parishes around the UK as we wait for the bishops to take a lead. We will be a little less radical.

As Parish Priest I ask families and candidates not to come with particular expectations or sense of entitlement to what should happen when: candidates should come to the sacraments when they are ready, and the first step to being ready is that habitual Sunday worship in line with the "Obligation" should be the **established** norm for the families of small children - and the children be part of this - or chosen personally by those of teenage years and above. After that, we can start to look at the base on which to build. If you have any questions or observations, contact Fr James. (**Notice issued March 2022**)

(Copies of the bishops' statement on Sunday and Holy Day worship of May 2022, and Fr James' digest of the previous statements by the bishops are available in the foyers of our churches and on the website. This will help to give context to the above.)



Support our parish.

You can make a donation to the parish by scanning the QR code or making a card payment on the card machine at the entrance of both of our churches.