

**FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**  
**28th December 2014**

Pastoral Letter for the Feast of the Holy Family 2014

My dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

In writing this letter to you for the Feast of the Holy Family, I want first of all to wish you all a very Happy Christmas. For many good reasons, Christmas is clearly focussed on the family. So I hope that you have the opportunity to spend some precious time with your families, far or near, over this holiday period. May God bless you in your homes and in the bonds of your family life.

It is indeed about the family that I want to speak with you today.

You will recall that I was present in Rome last October to take part in the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops dedicated to a consideration of the pastoral challenges facing the family today. The Synod gathered plenty of public attention and I wrote to you all about it on my return.

The intention of Pope Francis was always that this Synod would be followed by a further Synod of Bishops, next October, in order to continue this work and bring it to some conclusions. This next Synod will do that. It will also have a slightly different emphasis as the theme now is 'The Vocation and Mission of the Family Today.'

At the end of the Synod last October, in his closing address, Pope Francis said this:

'Dear brothers and sisters, now we still have one year to mature, with true spiritual discernment, the proposed ideas and find concrete solutions to so many difficulties and innumerable challenges that families must confront; to give answers to the many discouragements that surround and suffocate families.....May the Lord accompany us and guide us in this journey for the glory of His Name.'

So this is what we must now do. We must use this time well to ponder and pray over all the challenges and opportunities which face the family, and the marriage at its heart, in our society today.

In the Pope's words, this is to be a time of 'spiritual discernment'. That is rather different than collecting together people's opinions. Spiritual discernment concerns my sense of where God is present and at work in my life. It focusses on those things which both test and strengthen my faith, which give encouragement to me, which warm my heart of faith or, conversely, make that heart fearful and anxious. It includes recognition of all that is wrong and in need of forgiveness. Spiritual discernment also means the Church's task of identifying the promptings of the Holy Spirit, by which we are led to express more fully, in our complex situations, the teachings and actions of Jesus about marriage and the family. This task comes to a crucial moment in the next Synod of Bishops.

In order to help with this 'spiritual discernment' the Bishops of England and Wales have put together a pamphlet of reflection, prayer and questions. I hope that by using it, by following its suggestions, you will be able to join in this period of spiritual discernment.

The leaflet is available today. Please do get hold of one, either from your parish or from the

Diocesan website. You may choose to use it alone, or within your own family circle. Perhaps you could follow its suggestions with a group of friends, or perhaps through an initiative within your parish. I am sure you will find it fruitful in any of these circumstances.

The pamphlet contains questions for you to ponder prayerfully. I would like to know how you respond to them. Your responses, then, can be sent directly to Mr Edmund Adamus our Director for marriage and Family Life by Pentecost Sunday, 24th May [at Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN or on line to [edmundadamus@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:edmundadamus@rcdow.org.uk)]. I promise that your responses will help me to prepare well for the Synod next October at which again I will be present. Your parish may also decide to draw together your responses for the benefit of the pastoral care offered there.

At the heart of this period of reflection, I suggest, lies an approach to life suggested by Pope Francis. As you know, he speaks of us all as 'missionary disciples', those who not only seek to be close to Christ but also to extend to others the joy and beauty of knowing Jesus and living in his love. This leads Pope Francis to invite us to see every challenge that we come up against in life as an opportunity to make clear the way of Jesus and his power to make a difference in our lives.

Often those challenges emerge in family life: moments of tension and anger; moments of disappointment and betrayal; moments in which we fail to understand what has got into our loved ones; moments of fatigue or extreme stress. These are the challenges which we are invited to change into opportunities. When we do so, they open up as times of grace and of real witness to the power of our faith.

I can remember many such moments from my own family life, moments which have planted in my heart key phrases which capture the strength given by faith in Our Blessed Lord. These moments often provoked my mother's favourite sayings: 'The Lord never gives a burden without the backs to bear it.' 'This is the day the Lord has made, so let us rejoice and be glad in it.' And then she lived the challenge accordingly.

I hope that you may be able to share with each other, and with me if you would be so kind, some of the ways in which for you too family life is a place of grace, supported by a pattern of prayer, a place in which difficulties are present but in which they become opportunities for true Christian perseverance and for allowing Christ to lead and strengthen us.

At the beginning of the last Synod, Pope Francis said to us bishops: 'Speak freely and from the heart. And listen humbly to each other.' I say the same to you. Then indeed we shall be blessed in all that we strive to do to strengthen family life today.

May God bless you all.

+Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
Archbishop of Westminster

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**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**21st December 2014**

**A MESSAGE FROM CARDINAL NICHOLS**

After three years effort across the parishes of the diocese, our Growing in Faith campaign is coming to a close. I want very much indeed to express my thanks to you for the attention and support you have given to its three key themes: strengthening parish life; supporting priests in formation and old age; and Caritas, our work with the poor. I thank you for your prayers, the work done by the volunteers and I thank all who have made financial contributions. In total, with gifts and pledges a sum of £37 million has been given. This great achievement will do so much to enable us to meet our needs and look forward confidently. This is a marvellous measure of your great generosity and love for the Lord and His Church. Thank you very much.

I also want to take this opportunity to wish you a graceful and peaceful Christmas, full of the Lord's blessings for you all and your family.

+Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
Archbishop of Westminster

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### **GAUDETE (Rejoice) SUNDAY** **14th December 2014**

\*REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS....." is the opening of the Mass for this Third Sunday in Advent. We are close to celebrating the:

INCARNATION and we rejoice that the Lord is faithful to his promises and comes among us in the infant Christ. The Church is therefore, Pope Francis says, "a house of joy": this is a keyway in which we witness to Christ. Our Lord reveals God's love to us that we are known and infinitely loved: the more we embrace this, the more we find joy!

SADNESS comes for many reasons, but the key reason is sin. John the Baptist in today's Gospel practiced a baptism of repentance: we have to have a change of heart (repentance) if we are to recognise God's love revealed in Jesus Christ. The same holds true now, so a very important part of our preparation for Christmas is to make a good confession.

REMEMBER.....Advent lasts till Christmas Eve, and Christmas begins with the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve. Then we have the Octave of Christmas 8 days when each day is celebrated as Christmas Day, and then we continue celebrating Christmas until January 6th (Epiphany).

Meanwhile, continuing our Advent, we want to rejoice in the Lord always, and wake up to all God wants to share with us: for this, let us pray for one another.

Fr David Barnes, PP

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### **BIBLE SUNDAY** **7th December 2014**

Today is Catholic Bible Sunday and it is themed: Hear, Reflect, Proclaim.

Bible Sunday reminds us each year of the gift of the Word of God. God's Word in human language, recorded for us in the pages of the Holy Scriptures, proclaimed in our Liturgy and available for prayer and reflection day-by-day.

We know and experience being fed by God's Word and Sacraments at Mass. Christ the Word teaches us. Christ our Eucharist nourishes us. Catholic Bible Sunday reminds us to hear, to be attentive to God's Word through reading and reflecting on the Scriptures in our homes daily. It reminds us too to seek ways of proclaiming that life-giving Word to everyone we meet.

How appropriate then that we begin reading the Gospel of Mark on this day! Mark's Gospel opens with faith-statements about Jesus. He is the Christ. He is the Son of God.

The evangelist continues by pointing to the fulfilment of words from the book of Isaiah already proclaimed in our first reading. The people who lived in exile are assured of liberation and return. Those longing for the promised Messiah learn that God is preparing the way for him.

It is John the Baptist who announces the fulfilment of the promise, and the forgiveness of sin. His words are confirmed by the symbolic action of baptising people in the Jordan. A new start is announced for them and for us.

In this time of Advent, John reminds us of the need for preparation. John has prepared for his ministry by penance and by listening to God's Word. He knows that God's promise is soon-to-be fulfilled. He foresees the coming of one who is stronger than he is, one who will baptise with the Holy Spirit.

John teaches us openness to God's Word, and the need to be fed by the true values of the gospel. The slow process of grace works deeply in our hearts through listening and through prayer. Preparing the way for the Lord requires courage and reliance on God's power. Yearning for His 'new heavens and new earth' will bring a new perspective to our lives this Advent.

Pope Emeritus Benedict wrote in a Church teaching document called *Verbum Domini*: We need to make every effort to share the Word of God as an openness to our problems, a response to our questions, a broadening of our values and the fulfilment of our aspirations.' (23)

May the word of God bring peace to our world and to our hearts today. May we seek every opportunity to hear, reflect and proclaim God's Word day-by-day.

Rev Dr Adrian Graffy, Commission for Evangelisation and Formation, Brentwood Diocese

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## **THE MEANING OF OUR ADVENT WREATH**

### **30th November 2014**

1st Candle (purple) The Prophecy Candle or Candle of Hope. We can have hope because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. Our hope comes from God. The prophet Isaiah writes: "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations;

the Gentiles will hope in him.”

2nd Candle (purple) The Bethlehem Candle or Candle of Preparation. God kept his promise of a Saviour who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to ‘get ready’. Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.” (Luke 3:4-6)

3rd Candle (pink) The Shepherd Candle or Candle of Joy. The angel said to the shepherds, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:7-15)

4th Candle (purple) The Angel Candle or Candle of Love. The angels announced the good news of a Saviour. God sent his only son to earth to save us, because he loves us! “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (John 3: 16-17)

5th Candle (white) Christ Candle. The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins. His birth was for his death; his death was for our birth!

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## **OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE**

### **23rd November 2014**

This great feast of Christ the King brings to mind images of God that speak of relationships, cooperation, interdependence, rather than authority and hierarchy.

Jesus says, “My Kingdom is not of this world”. His Kingdom is not a place where tyranny reigns and opposition is put down by force – but a place where love and humility reign. Jesus did not come to exercise temporal and social power. He came to reveal the truth of the God of love and the love of God.

This is a King who does not seek an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. His Kingdom is based on love and compassion, on peace and goodwill, on justice and integrity, on opportunities to change and a willingness to forgive. This is the King of love who wants to communicate His love in and through His weakness and vulnerability. This is a King who became – one with us, who identifies with us in our daily lives in the journey of our faith – this is a King who meets us where we are and who walks with us each step of the way – this is a King who walked the way of humility.

Sr M. Lucina, Parish Sister

“O marvellous humility. O astonishing poverty! The King of the angels, the Lord of heaven and earth, is laid in a manger!” (St Clare)

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## **33rd SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**16th November 2014**

**ATTITUDE**

There was once a woman who woke up in the morning, looked in the mirror and noticed she had only three hairs on her head. “Well,” she said, “I think I’ll braid my hair today.” So she did, and she had a wonderful day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror, and saw she had only two hairs on her head.”Hmmm,” she said, “I think I’ll part my hair down the middle today.” So she did, and she had a wonderful day. The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only one hair on her head. “Well,” she said, “today I’m going to wear my hair in a ponytail.” So she did, and she had a fun, fun day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn’t a single hair on her head. “Good,” she exclaimed, “I don’t have to fix my hair today!”

**THOUGHT: ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING.**

So... ..Be very kind, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle.  
Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly. . . . and leave the rest to God.

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**DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA**

**9th November 2014**

**REMEMBERING...**

Understanding who we are and our present requires understanding our past and our history – personal, family, national and international, and indeed of the universe! Remembering is therefore essential, and in these days we remember in particular those who gave their lives so that we can live in freedom. Our attitude should bear fruit in how responsibly we live this freedom, wonderfully expressed in this poem from World War 1:

**In Flanders Fields**

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie  
in Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grew

In Flanders fields.

REMEMBERING is a theme for this Sunday's Feast, the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica: this Basilica is the Cathedral Church of Rome, founded around 324 by the Emperor Constantine. The main entrance has the words "The mother and teacher of all the churches of Rome and the world." Today's Feast is a celebration of our love for and communion with the See of Peter and the successor of Peter, Pope Francis. Our identity is formed by living as Roman Catholics, united to Christ through Baptism (reading 1 and the Gospel) and now being "God's building the temple of God" (reading 2).

St Paul says "Everyone doing the building must work carefully." Are we seeking to unite our life more closely to Christ and to his Church, especially through love of the successor of Peter, and working for justice and peace?

Fr David Barnes. PP

THERE WILL BE A COLLECTION FOR THE SICK AND RETIRED PRIESTS' FUND TODAY The Sick and Retired Priests' Fund was set up in 1979 and over the years it has helped hundreds of Sick and elderly priests. But it can only do so with our help as it depends on donations. Please give as much as you can afford and" if you pay tax, don't forget that you can add 25p to every pound that you give (at no extra cost to you) by completing the Gift Aid declaration on the back of the donation envelope. (You can also make a donation online at [www.rcdow.org.uk/donations](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/donations))

#### PRAYERS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2014

On this remembrance Sunday when our thoughts particularly focus on all those who died as a result of modern warfare, we pray together, knowing that God alone can bring peace and heal the wounds battle.

We pray for Pope Francis and all Church leaders that they may be instrumental of a peace which is more than simply an absence of fighting and bloodshed.

We pray for all those who serve in our armed and emergency services, that they may be peacemakers, defending the defenceless.

We pray for peace in all countries where there is fighting and bloodshed. Remembering especially Iraq, Syria, the Middle East and Nigeria, that there may be an end to suffering and injustice experienced by innocent victims of the conflict.

We pray for families who, today, remember the self-sacrifice of the few who laid down their lives for the many so that others might live in peace and security. We particularly recall those who have died in modern warfare and those whom they have left behind.

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#### **ALL SAINTS and ALL SOULS 2nd November 2014**

NOVEMBER focuses on the call to holiness. God calls us to find freedom from sin, because sin diminishes our humanity. If free from sin, we are holy and whole beings who reflect the love and mercy of God: here lies our greatest happiness.

THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS reminds us that this is possible! We celebrate all those who, though never formally canonised, became saints through their co-operation with God's grace and their refusal to be mastered by sin – they found true freedom.

POPE FRANCIS also reminded us last Thursday about the Devil's work, which is to take us

away from God. “In this generation, like so many others, people have been led to believe that the Devil is a myth, a figure, an idea, the idea of evil. But the Devil exists and we must fight against him. . . . Christian life is a battle, a beautiful battle, because when God emerges victorious in every step of our life, this gives us joy, a great happiness.” The Devil’s most common tactic is to discourage us: so, never yield to discouragement, for God’s love and mercy is greater than our human weakness. We are called to persevere in the Faith!

ALL SOULS DAY (this year kept on the 3rd November) reminds us that we die as we lived-sinners. So before we can come to see God face-to-face (the Beatific Vision) we need to be “purged” of our sins hence the state of PURGATORY. We help the Holy Souls by having Mass said for them, praying for them, and doing penance for them. This November, develop a deep love of the Holy Souls: this is part of our vocation to love.

Fr David Barnes, PP

### PRAYER FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Prayer by Blessed John Henry Newman

O GOD of the Spirits of all flesh, O Jesu, lover of souls, we recommend unto Thee the souls of all those thy servants, who have departed with the sign of faith and sleep the sleep of peace. We beseech Thee, O Lord and Saviour, that, as is Thy mercy to them Thou became man, so now Thou would hasten the time, and admit them to thy presence above. Remember, O Lord, that they are Thy creatures, not made by strange gods, but by Thee, the only Living and True God; for there is no other God but Thou, and none can equal Thy works. Let their souls rejoice in Thy light, and impute not to them their former iniquities, which they committed through the violence of passion, or the corrupt habits of their fallen nature. For, although they have sinned, yet they always firmly believed in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and before they died, they reconciled themselves to Thee by true contrition and the Sacraments of Thy Church.

O Gracious Lord, we beseech Thee, remember not against them the sins of their youth and their ignorances; but according to Thy great mercy, be mindful of them in Thy heavenly glory. May the heavens be opened to them, and the angels rejoice with them. May the Archangel St Michael conduct them to Thee. May Thy holy angels come forth to meet them, and carry them to the city of the heavenly Jerusalem. May St Peter, to whom thou gave the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, receive them. May St Paul, the vessel of election, stand by them. May St John, the beloved disciple, who had the revelation of the secrets of heaven, intercede for them. May all the Holy Apostles, who received from Thee the power of binding and loosing, pray for them. May all the Saints and elect of God, who in this world suffered torments for Thy Name, befriend them; that, being freed from prison beneath, they may be admitted into the glories of that kingdom, where with the Father and the holy Ghost Thou lives and reigns one God, world without end.

Come to their assistance, all ye Saints of God; gain for them deliverance from their place of punishment meet them, all ye Angels; receive these holy souls, and present them before the Lord. Eternal rest give to them, O Lord. And may perpetual light shine on them. May they rest in Peace.

Amen

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**30th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**  
**26th October 2014**



## SVP AWARENESS MONTH

The core work of the Saint Vincent de Paul society (SVP) is to visit and befriend people in need, providing practical and moral support through this one-to-one contact.

The SVP Society of St Anselm & St Cæcilia work amongst people in our parish area where help is required due to the poverty of loneliness, sickness, bereavement, and visits to the isolated elderly in their homes or at hospital/nursing homes.

Pope Francis has called everyone who loves God to show their love in a practical way.

Concern is a great starting point but, without action, it is not enough.

Concern alone will not befriend the lonely, feed the hungry comfort the bereaved or welcome/befriend the stranger amongst us.

We ask you to support your parish SVP. There are several ways you can do this:

Pray for our work and the people we attempt to support

Assist us financially with your donations whenever possible

Join us and become a SVP member (please contact: Coral Olson: 07790-030106)

Thank You, from members of your Parish SVP Society

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## **29th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**19th October 2014**

“Be Missionaries of God’s love” says Pope Francis to us on this World Mission Sunday 2014.

He writes to us as follows:

Dear brothers and sisters,

On this World Mission Sunday my thoughts turn to all the local churches. I invite you to immerse yourself in the joy of the Gospel and nurture a love that can light up your vocation and your mission. I urge each of you to recall, as if you were making an interior pilgrimage, that “first love” with which the Lord Jesus Christ warmed your heart, not for the sake of nostalgia but in order to persevere in joy. The Lord’s disciples persevere in joy when they sense his presence, do his will and share with others their faith, hope and evangelical charity. Today vast numbers of people still do not know Jesus Christ. For this reason, the mission ad gentes continues to be most urgent.

All the members of the Church are called to participate in this mission, for the Church is missionary by her very nature: she was born “to go forth”.

World Mission Sunday is a privileged moment when the faithful of various continents engage in prayer and concrete gestures of solidarity in support of the young Churches in mission lands.

Let us pray through the intercession of Mary, the model of humble and joyful evangelisation, that the Church may become a welcoming home, a mother for all peoples and the source of rebirth for our world.

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## **28th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**12th October 2014**

### CARITAS COMMUNITIES

CARITAS WESTMINSTER, the social action agency of the diocese, is going in

communities by developing a series of hubs across the diocese, with a pilot hub starting in Hemel Hempstead to serve the Watford and St Alban deaneries. “The mission of Caritas Westminster is to encourage everyone in the Catholic community to reach out with practical help towards those in need. We are here to serve the good of all, especially the most vulnerable.”

Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

CARITAS WESTMINSTER have adopted priority areas covering debt, food, poverty, social isolation, people with intellectual disabilities and the deaf community, and aim to support existing projects and initiate new ones, build expertise at parish level, and encourage volunteering.

For more information in requesting assistance with social action projects in your parish, or for volunteering opportunities and other ways to get involved, please contact John Coleby at [johncoleby@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:johncoleby@rcdow.org.uk), or visit our website at [www.rcdow.org.uk/caritas](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/caritas).

For more information on the pilot hub or ways to get involved, contact development workers Sue Day ([sueday@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:sueday@rcdow.org.uk)) or Edward de Quay ([edwarddequay@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:edwarddequay@rcdow.org.uk)).

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## **27th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**5th October 2014**

“Let us learn this from Mary our Mother. In England, “the Dowry of Mary”, the faithful for centuries, have made pilgrimage to her shrine at Walsingham.

The statue of Our Lady of Walsingham, lifts our minds to meditate on our Mother. She obeyed the will of God fearlessly and gave birth to the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Faithful at the foot of the Cross, she then waited in prayer for the Holy Spirit to descend on the infant Church. It is Mary who will teach us how to be silent, how to listen to the voice of God in the midst of a busy and noisy world. It is Mary who will help us find time for prayer. Through the Rosary, that great Gospel prayer, she will help us to know Christ. We need to live as she did, in the presence of God, raising our minds and hearts to him in our daily activities and worries”.

Pope St John Paul II, at Wembley 1982

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## **26th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**28th September 2014**

Prayer to the Holy Family for the Synod of Bishops,  
Rome, 5-19 October 2014

Jesus, Mary and Joseph  
in you we contemplate  
the splendour of true love,

to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
grant that our families too  
may be places of communion and prayer,  
authentic schools of the Gospel  
and small domestic Churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
may families never again  
experience violence, rejection and division:  
may all who have been hurt or scandalized  
find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth,  
may the approaching Synod of Bishops  
make us once more mindful  
of the sacredness and inviolability  
of the family, and its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph,  
Graciously hear our prayer. Amen.

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## **25th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR** **21st September 2014**

### HOME MISSION SUNDAY

Supporting outreach to non church-going (lapsed) Catholics.  
This year's theme: Evangelisation 'in the heart of the family'

### A CALL TO MISSION

On the 21st September 2014 the Bishops of England and Wales invite parishes to celebrate Home Mission Sunday to encourage every Mass-going Catholic to respond urgently to the call to evangelise. With most Mass-going Catholics feeling the pain and sorrow caused by a large number of family members and friends not practising their faith, there is an urgency for us all to consider afresh how we might respectfully and joyfully reach out to our absent brothers and sisters in Christ.

To do this we have to renew our own conversion constantly. As Pope Francis says, "I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ...The Lord does not disappoint those who take the risk" (Evangelii Gaudium 3). So take some time to reflect on your relationship with Christ. Do you devote time to prayer? Is your lifestyle "worthy of the Gospel of Christ" (Second Reading)? Do you witness daily to Christ, in the big and small things?

Every Christian family should try to follow two models: the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and the Holy Trinity. The Holy Family had its difficulties, persecution from Herod, losing Jesus aged 12, etc., but despite them Mary, Joseph and Jesus loved one another and each tried to follow God's will for them. The Holy Trinity is three persons, bound together in

love, and this same unity in love should be displayed at the heart of every Christian family.

So parents: how do you pass on the faith to your children, and are you transmitting God's values to them? Children: what do you do to help, not obstruct, family life? What can you do to make the world a better place? Everyone: how can we overcome our difficulties, and show love and joy? As members of a family we evangelise best by our witness in our daily lives coming to Mass every Sunday as a family, praying together as a family, working together as a family, like the workers in the Bible, for the kingdom of God.

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## **A FORETASTE OF HEAVEN**

**14th September 2014**

Reflecting on last Monday 8th September, Our Lady's Birthday, this was the thought uppermost in my mind, it felt like being in heaven and what it will be like.

Where do I begin to thank you all. First of all for your presence, you excelled yourselves, the presence of the children was like the icing on the cake.

Thank you for your prayers, love and good wishes. Thank you for the generous gift from the parish and all the individual gifts, I will be thanking God for you all every day for the rest of my life.

Thank you for your welcome to my family, friends and community, they were all inspired and impressed by your warmth and love. The sisters came back to the flat with me at the end of the evening where we sat up until 2am, praising and thanking God for all of you.

I know when I am walking around Holborn, I am walking in the steps of the saints, the parishioners of SS Anselm and Cæcilia have convinced me I am living and working with the saints, it is a really humbling experience to know. I have been granted this great privilege. I feel well and truly blessed.

My last word is to thank Fr David Barnes for making this wonderful day happen. Without the example and leadership of his loving kindness, thoughtfulness and love among us in showing us how the good Lord wants us to be. With St Paul may I try always to praise and thank God for you all.

My sincere and heartfelt thanks to everyone for giving me a foretaste of things to come.

Sr M. Lucina, Parish Sister

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## **CONGRATULATIONS SISTER MARY LUCINA**

### **DIAMOND JUBILEE**

**60 Years in Religious Life**

**8th September 1954 -2014**

Sr Lucina, on this great day

We thank God for your fidelity over all these years.

We thank God for your life-time of school teaching.

We thank God for your 10 years among us.  
We thank God that you want to stay among us!

Thank you Sr Lucina.  
May God continue to bless you abundantly.

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## **SUMMER PERIOD**

### **July/August 2014**

During this summer period, we offer you a brief guide to this church. We have a fuller guide available from the parish office and a booklet 'HOLBORN London's VIA SACRA' a brief but inspiring account of the courage and heroism shown by the Saints and Martyrs in Holborn who gave witness to the Faith during the Reformation.

A short tour around the church of St Anselm and St Cæcilia's.

1) As you enter the church, to the left there is the Baptistry. The Large Crucifix is venerated throughout the year, but especially on Good Friday when the faithful kneel one by one to kiss the feet of Our Blessed Lord. There is also a plaque to Edith Gwen Kinghorn, wife of Tony Kinghorn, who for many years was an altar server in the church.

2) Statue of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The Little Flower who, from the age of fifteen until her death at 24, lived a hidden life in the Carmelite convent in Lisieux. She is one of the most popular saints the world has ever known - a Doctor of the Church. Her Little Way of spirituality emphasizes the seeking of holiness in the simple and the ordinary.

Proceed alongside the left hand aisle of the church, where you will see the continuation of:

3) 14 Stations of the Cross on either side of the church; each recalls an aspect of the suffering of Our Lord on Good Friday.

In between the Stations of the Cross and at various positions around the church, small tablets in red with a gold cross are set in the walls, with a small candle holder fixed in front. These are points where the Bishop anointed and consecrated the church in 1959.

Further along the left aisle, past the 14th Station are 2 plaques.

4) The Colonna Crucifixion, after Michaelangelo, circa 1542, commemorates Canon Francis Bartlett, who was parish priest of St. Anselm and St. Cæcilia's from 1977-1985.

5) This plaque is to the memory of Charles T. Fisher IV, an American Banker who worked near the church and died in the Lockerbie air disaster in 1988, three days before his 36th birthday. The door to the right leads down to the Parish Room.

6) The Sanctuary, with the altar - the focal point of the church. On the left of the sanctuary is the Ambo from which Holy Scripture is read.

7) The Sanctuary lamp is the gift of the legal profession (in its two branches) and signifies the presence of God in the Tabernacle that contains the Eucharist.

8) The Tabernacle, which contains the vessels in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. To the left, set in the wall is a small recess, the Aumbrey, where the Holy Oils are placed for baptism and anointing the sick. To the right, again set in the wall, is the piscina where water used sacramentally is disposed of directly into the earth. Nowadays the piscina in the Sacristy is used for this purpose.

9) On either side of the Tabernacle are two roundels bearing the Instruments of the Passion and above are sculptures of Christ crowning Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, surrounded by Angels, with the patron Saints, Anselm to the left and Cæcilia on the right.

10) High above is the wooden canopy or Baldacchino, painted in blue with gold leaf.

Depicted in the centre is the symbol of the Holy Spirit (a dove) and roundels in four corners

with IHS, which, in Greek are the first letters for Jesus, Son and Saviour.

11) Proceed halfway along the centre aisle then, facing the Sanctuary, look up to the Great Cross, with statues of Our Lady standing on the left and St John on the right of the suffering Christ. Behind this scene, on the left, is the organ loft, which is better viewed from the right aisle alongside the Sanctuary.

12) Here are the doors leading to the Sacristy, with the large painting of the Descent from the Cross hanging on the South wall. This is reputed to have been painted by Benjamin West, but is also attributed to John Marcus Rigaud RA. In the Old Sardinian Chapel it hung above the High Altar.

13) As you leave this passage, look up towards the West Window with the stained glass depiction of Christ rising from the flames, just as a phoenix rises from the ashes, with images of St. Anselm and St. Cecilia to the left and right. This window commemorates the fire on Christmas Day 1992 when much of the church roof was destroyed as a result of an electrical fault in the main organ. Below is the choir gallery with organ and console to the left.

14) The first Station of the Cross begins along the South wall, Jesus is condemned to Death. Look for the young apprentice carrying nails for the crucifixion.

15) Further along on the left is a statue of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was the visions of St Margaret Alacoque in 1673-5 which gave definite shape to the object of devotion and its practices. The feast day is observed on the Friday in the week after Corpus Christi.

16) Our Lady's Altar. Tradition maintains that the Lady Altar was the High Altar of the Old Chapel. According to an old parchment, which may date from around 1700, the altar stone of the High Altar in the old Chapel came with its relics from the Lady Chapel of Glastonbury Abbey. This area of the church was bombed during the Blitz in 1940, but restored after the war. There is a piscina to the right of the altar.

17) To the right of Our Lady's Altar is the Chapel of St. Thomas More – A Man for all Seasons. An inscription on the wall describes St. Thomas' time as a bencher of Lincoln's Inn and Lord Chancellor. Having opposed King Henry VIII over his divorce and martyred on the grounds of having opposed the Act of Supremacy, he was beheaded in the Tower of London in 1535. St. Thomas was canonized in 1935.

18) Halfway along the South aisle is St. Joseph's Altar. The mosaic was commissioned in 1962 by Father Joseph Scholles, then Parish Priest, in memory of his father, Joseph Scholles, who died around that time. The mosaic depicts St Joseph, protector of the Universal Church, holding the church of St. Anselm and St. Cæcilia in his hands. Inscribed in Latin on the front of altar is - Sancti Joseph, Ora pro nobis. (St. Joseph, pray for us). On the left is a statue of St Joseph carrying the infant Jesus and holding a lily in his right hand - a symbol of purity.

19) To the right of St. Joseph's altar are the confessional boxes.

20) Above the West end of the Lady chapel is the Royal Sardinian coat-of-arms, which originally surmounted the organ in the old Sardinian Chapel.

21) Approaching the last row of benches, behind the pillar is a statue of St Jude, much invoked as the patron of hopeless cases and lost causes.

22) To the right is the small altar and statue of St Anthony of Padua, a simple and humble Franciscan Friar and Doctor of the Church who preached the Good News lovingly and with fearless courage, much invoked in cases of special difficulties and commonly referred to today as the finder of lost articles. Usually depicted with a book and the Infant Child Jesus in his arms. He was thought by his fellow friars to be uneducated yet became one of the great preachers and theologians of his day.

23) Statue of St Peter. In the Middle Ages pilgrims who reached Rome, touched and kissed the foot of the statue and prayed to St. Peter, asking that he be merciful and open the gates of

Heaven for them if they died during the pilgrimage.

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## **SEA SUNDAY**

### **13th July 2014**

In the parable of the sower Jesus reminds us that we need to listen to what God is saying to us. For many of us, this can be hard. There seems so many things we have to do each day and there seem so many distractions. Jesus understands this, which is why he gives us four examples of seeds falling on the ground. He is saying that it is only when we act on the word of God that our lives will change and bear fruit.

Many seafarers are hungry for the word of God. They often spend weeks or months at sea, with no human contact apart from other crew members. In such circumstances, it is easy to feel isolated, lonely and cut off from the spiritual life of the Church.

When Apostleship of the Sea chaplains visit ships in port, one of the things they try to do is help the seafarers to receive the word of God into their lives and nurture it. They might do this by praying or reading the Bible with them, or arranging for them to attend Mass in a local church. By sowing the Word, chaplains help seafarers grow in faith, which is what Jesus calls us all to do.

This Sunday we pray for all seafarers, and ask Our Lady, Star of the Sea, to keep them safe from all harm and to support the members of the Apostleship of the Sea in their pastoral ministry.

Did you know.....? Over 90% of merchandises worldwide are transported by nearly 100,000 ships, run by a workforce of approximately 1.2 million seafarers of all races, nationalities and religions.

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**PRAYER FOR SEAFARERS:** Dear Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for seafarers who bring us food and goods from all over the world. We pray that you will protect them and keep them safe. Amen. Our Lady, Star of the Sea, pray for them.

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## **FIVE FINGER PRAYER GUIDE**

### **6th July 2014**

1. Your thumb is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember.
2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, nurses, counsellors, priests, sisters and others in the caring professions. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. Next is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leadcrs. Pray for our leaders in government, business and industry. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need

God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as nursery piano teachers will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need our prayers day and night.

5. Lastly is our little finger, the smallest of all. Here we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. Your little finger should remind you to pray for yourself. You yourself know best your own needs and concerns.

PRAY THE ROSARY, even if you don't have your rosary with you, with eight fingers and two thumbs you have "a decade".

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## **CORPUS CHRISTI**

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"Let us ask ourselves....adoring Christ today present in the Eucharist: do I let myself be transformed by Him?" said Pope Francis last Thursday.

The following is an extract from Pope Francis' homily, and is his commentary on the question as to how the multiplication of the loaves came about.

The answer lies in the invitation of Jesus to His disciples. "You yourselves give (to them)....," "give," share. What do the disciples share? What little they have, five loaves and two fish. But it is precisely those loaves and fish that in God's hands feed the whole crowd.



And it is the disciples, bewildered by the inability of their means, by the poverty of what they have at their disposal, who invite the people to sit down, and - trusting the Word of Jesus - distribute the loaves and fish that feed the crowd. This tells us that in the Church, but also in society, a key word that we need not fear is "solidarity," that is, knowing how to place what we have at God's disposal! Our humble abilities! It is only in the sharing, in the giving of them, that our lives will bear fruit. Solidarity: a word upon which the spirit of the world looks on unkindly!

Once again, the Lord distributes for us the bread which is His body, He makes a gift of Himself. We, too, are experiencing the "solidarity of God" with man, a solidarity that never runs out, a solidarity that never ceases to amaze us. God draws near to us, in the sacrifice of the Cross. He lowers Himself, entering into the darkness of death in order to give us life, which overcomes evil, selfishness, death.

Jesus today gives Himself to us in the Eucharist to share our journey - indeed He becomes food, real food that sustains our life even at times when the going is rough, when obstacles slow down our steps. The Lord in the Eucharist makes us follow His path, that of service, of sharing, of giving, and what little we are if shared, becomes wealth, because the power of God, which is that of love, descends into our poverty to transform it.

Let us ask ourselves, adoring Christ truly present in the Eucharist, do I let myself be transformed by Him? Do I let the Lord give Himself to me, guide me to come out more from my little fence, to get out and be not afraid to give, to share, to love Him and others?

Discipleship, communion and sharing. Let us pray that participation in the Eucharist moves us to follow the Lord every day, to be instruments of communion, to share with Him and our neighbour who we are. Then our lives will be truly fruitful. Amen.

Pope Francis, 19 June 2014

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## **THE MOST HOLY TRINITY**

**15th JUNE 2014**

The human face reveals so much of who we are, and of what is going on in us. Pope Francis describes the TRINITY as "the face of God." So today's Feast of the MOST HOLY TRINITY celebrates the fact that GOD is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This revelation is God's way of loving us, an act of faith and trust in humanity - in each of us - a declaration that God wants to be known and loved by us. Our response to God is enlivened the more we appreciate how infinite is God's faith and trust in us: for we only reveal our inner self when we know we can trust someone. So today we celebrate too the fact that God has such faith in us and trusts us. God has complete faith in me: why do I not have complete faith in Him?

The revelation is that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons but one God. God is a community of life and love, and we are called to know God on a personal level, not as some abstract reality.

Jesus alone reveals God fully to man, and so it is to Him that we come: we are to be Christ centered. We express this most fully through the Mass, when in holy communion Christ shares himself fully with us. This we celebrate next Sunday on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The more Christocentric I am, the more I will understand who I really am! The more I recognise my true identity the more I will want to fall down and worship the God who made me, and wants me to know and love Him now and for all eternity - that is true happiness and fulfilment.

Fr. David Barnes, Rector

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## **PENTECOST SUNDAY**

### **8th June 2014**

"Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.."

This is our prayer today as we celebrate the Birthday of the Church. The Holy Spirit enlightens us, and leads us out of the dark places of our life. The following words of Joyce Rupp, and her poem, can help us ensure how to let the Holy Spirit enliven us.

"As I was leaving for work one morning, I opened the door to the apartment and found a frightened, disorientated blackbird flying in the stairwell between the second and third floors. As it flew about in its search for freedom, the small bird kept hitting itself on the walls and ceiling. I opened the hallway door to the next floor where there was an open window for the scared creature to fly out. I tried to shoo the bird towards the window, but it kept going back to the small stairwell space. As I hurried down the steps, I hoped that the panicky bird would find its way out. But that evening when I returned home, I sadly found an exhausted bird lying there dead. Later, as I reflected on my day, I thought about the bird. It was such a vivid picture of disorientation and unfreedom. The bird had no sense of a larger world. It had fixed its sight on a small space, seeing it as the only reality, and had missed the freedom of the open window. It was too caught up in its own fear and confusion to see a way out."

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## **SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

### **25th MAY 2014**

**BEHOLD HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS WHEN BROTHERS DWELL IN UNITY**  
We are living in an age where there is real need for the Church to come together with one voice - one voice in solidarity against the injustice and oppression endured by our Christian brothers and sisters around the world.

Blessed John Paul II used to talk about a church that "breathes with both lungs" to explain unity between Eastern and Western Christianity.

With this in mind, Pope Francis is determined that his historic meeting with Patriarch Bartholomew at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem will be fruitful in reconciling the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches - and ensure that a Christian presence remains in the Middle East. Pope Francis wrote in his letter to Patriarch Bartholomew: "I am aware that you are deeply concerned for the situation of Christians in the Middle East and for their right to remain in their homelands. Dialogue, pardon and reconciliation are the only possible means to achieve a resolution of conflict."

For the Church, the Arab spring has turned into a Christian winter. The deepening crisis in Syria and rising Islamism in the region is threatening to uproot all Christians from the ancient biblical lands.

Let us pray that the Pope's meeting with Patriarch Bartholomew will bring healing and hope to the region.

Neville Kyrke-Smith  
National Director (Aid to the Church in Need)

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## **FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

### **18th MAY 2014**

#### **NEW BEGINNINGS**

For the last few weeks all my spare time has been spent cleaning out cupboards and draws knowing that my days in St. Etheldreda's Convent, Ely Place, were numbered. There was the excitement of choosing a flat, I really wanted to be as near as possible to St Anselm and St Cecilia's, the choice was varied there were some lovely places around, lots of them way out

of the budget I was given. All this activity made me think about the roots of our order.

Our Founder, Antonio Rosmini, began writing the constitutions in Calvario, Domodossala, Italy in 1850. The first sisters arrived in London in 1856, they taught in Southgate Street, Kingsland until 1875. There was another convent in Saffron Hill, the sisters there taught in St. Bridgit's, Baldwin Gardens. The sisters have moved around, in 1902 the convent was number 20 Thaves Inn. We have had three convents in Ely Place, 1906 we moved into 28 Ely Place, later we moved again to number 15, and lastly to number 13, which is where I have been living for the last ten years and where I taught in our kindergarten in the late 1950s and early 1960s. I have always been happy living in London.

During the second world war 1939-1945 the sisters and some of the children were evacuated, during this time the Daily Telegraph staff used the convent as a hostel for their staff. After the war the convent re-opened as a Convent Day School until 1975. Not all the sisters taught in St. Etheldreda's some went further afield to Voluntary Aided School in and around London.

I can remember we used to cook meals for the Priests next door and served it through a turn in the kitchen; this ministry is now discontinued.

My new address is: 70 Guilford Sq Flat number 1, WCIN 1DF. My telephone will be installed on 6th June 2014. My mobile number is: 07435580750.

It is good to be here working with Fr David and thank you, the parishioners for your generosity, kindness and prayers. I feel really blessed working with you.

Sr M Lucina, Parish Sister

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## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

### **11th MAY 2014**

## **OUR LADY AND POPE FRANCIS**

Pope Francis has a special devotion to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots. The following helps us to understand why!

While studying in Germany in the 1980s, he discovered this devotion at the Church of St. Peter am Perlach in Augsburg. In the Church there is a painting from about 1700 that depicts Mary in heaven surrounded by angels. She stands on the crescent moon crushing the head of the serpent, Satan. She holds a long ribbon and is untying a large knot, one of several on the ribbon.

Perhaps the inspiration for this depiction of the Blessed Mother arises from the writing of St. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons (martyred in 203) in his treatise "Adversus Haereses" (Against Heresies): Mary, the Virgin, is found to be obedient, saying: 'Behold, O Lord, your handmaid. Be it done to me according to your word.' Eve, however, was disobedient; and when yet a virgin, she did not obey.....Having become disobedient, (Eve) was made the cause of death for herself and for the whole human race; so also Mary, betrothed to a man but nevertheless still a virgin, being obedient, was made the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.....Thus, the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. What the virgin Eve had bound in unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosed through faith."

This devotion had a profound impact on the devotional life of Pope Francis. As Archbishop

of Buenos Aires, he introduced and encouraged the devotion to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots. The devotion was so intensely popular throughout Argentina and Brazil that the British Guardian called it "a religious craze."

The Prayer to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots is as follows:

Virgin Mary, Mother of fair love, Mother who never refuses to come to the aid of a child in need, Mother whose hands never cease to serve your beloved children because they are moved by the divine love and immense mercy that exists in your heart, cast your compassionate eyes upon me and see the snarl of knots that exist in my life. You know very well how desperate I am, my pain, and how I am bound by these knots. Mary, Mother to whom God entrusted the undoing of knots in the lives of his children, I entrust into your hands the ribbon of my life. No one, not even the Evil One himself, can take it away from your precious care. In your hands, there is no knot that cannot be undone. Powerful Mother, by your grace and intercessory power with your Son and my liberator Jesus, take into your hands today this knot (Mention your petition here.)

I beg you to undo it for the glory of God once for all. You are my hope. O my Lady, you are the only consolation God gives me, the fortification of my feeble strength, the enrichment of my destitution, and, with Christ, the freedom from my chains. Hear my plea. Keep me, guide me, O safe refuge.!

This beautiful prayer, similar to the Memorare," moves us to invoke the compassion of our Blessed Mother. In her maternal care for each of us, she wants us to remain close to her Son, Jesus. Never would she want the burdens of life to cause us to lose hope or despair.

Yes, sometimes our lives may seem one big knot due to circumstances beyond our control, as when we face the medical problem, financial disaster and difficulties in relationships. Yet, we look to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots, who stood faithfully at the foot of the cross with her Son, trusting that every Good Friday will pass to the glory of Easter.

Moreover, poor children of Adam and Eve, we must look to the humble obedience of our Blessed Mother. So often the "knots" of life are of our own making. How often we "knot-up" our own life by disobeying the commandments and the teachings of the Church, and then even blame God and others (as did Adam and Eve) for what we choose to do. Nevertheless, with humble and contrite hearts, we can depend upon the prayers and intercession of our Blessed Mother to show us the way and to help us unknot our lives so as to live in the freedom of God's children.

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### **THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER** **4th MAY 2014**

#### **THE GIFT OF UNDERSTANDING**

The gift of understanding is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis spoke about this gift last Wednesday. "Born of our sharing in God's life through faith and baptism, the gift of understanding enables us to see in all things the unfolding of his eternal plan of love. The Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts and enlightens our minds, guiding us to an ever deeper understanding of Christ's teaching and his saving mission. Like the disciples on the way to Emmaus, we often fail to recognise the Lord walking at our side and the working of God's grace in our lives and the world around us. Yet thanks to the Spirit's gift of understanding, our eyes are opened and our hearts burn within as (cf. Lk 24: 13-27) as we



recognise the Risen Lord's presence and view all things in a new light, with fresh spiritual insight. How important it is to implore this gift of understanding! Through it the Holy Spirit dispels the darkness of our minds and hearts, strengthens us in faith and enables us to savour the richness of God's word and its promise of salvation."

This coming Saturday (10th May) 8 of our parishioners receive the gift of the Sacrament of Confirmation in Westminster Cathedral at 2.00pm. Please pray for them: Boris Brako, Thelma Brako, Peter Coleman, Conor Connolly, Oliver Elkington, Anna Hopkins, Irene Kasozi-Batende, Paul Obanya.

MAY is MARYS MONTH. May we all deepen our love for her in these coming days. To understand Our Lady is to understand the Church.

Fr David Barnes, PP

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## **SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**27th APRIL 2014**

### **MERCY AND HOLINESS**

TODAY is "DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY", a feast given us by Pope John Paul II when he canonized Sr Faustina Kowalska on April 30 2000. St Faustina was a Polish nun who died in 1938 and to whom Our Lord entrusted much teaching about Divine Mercy.

TODAY we see how MERCY and HOLINESS are inextricably linked when Pope Francis canonises two recent Popes – John XXIII and John Paul II: both showed by word and deed that holiness is the fruit of embracing God's mercy. Pope Francis writes: "Only someone who has encountered mercy, who has been caressed by the tenderness of mercy, is happy and comfortable with the Lord". It is the experience of God's mercy that enables us to grow in holiness, for God's almighty power is made known most especially through mercy and forgiveness. In this way God's unending and unchanging love for us is made known. The simple and wonderful truth is this – we cannot change God's love for us (even by grave sin) because we simply do not have the power to change God!

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is the encounter with God's mercy. Pope Francis writes "How many times in my pastoral ministry have I heard it said: 'Father, I have many sins', and I have always pleaded: 'Don't be afraid, go to him, he is waiting for you, he will take care of everything.' We hear many offers from the world around us, but let us take up God's offer instead: his caress of love," and again, "God is indeed waiting for you: he asks of you only the courage to go to him."

These two great Popes, John XXIII and John Paul II are today proclaimed as saints - or, in the time honoured phrase, are "raised to the altars." Each showed us and taught us about the mercy of God: we in turn invoke their prayers that we may be living witnesses of God's mercy and forgiveness. The only proof we know God's mercy and forgiveness is that we show mercy and forgiveness to one another.

Fr David Barnes, Rector

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## **PASSION SUNDAY (PALM SUNDAY)**

**13th April 2014**

### **POPE FRANCIS on PALM SUNDAY**

Jesus enters Jerusalem. The crowd of disciples accompanies him in festive mood, their garments are stretched out before him, there is talk of the miracles he has accomplished, and loud praises are heard: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"(Lk 19:38).

Crowds, celebrating, praise, blessing, peace: joy fills the air. Jesus has awakened great hopes, especially in the hearts of the simple, the humble, the poor, the forgotten, those who do not matter in the eyes of the world. He understands human sufferings, he has shown the face of God's mercy, and he has bent down to heal body and soul.

This is Jesus. This is the heart which looks to all of us, to our sicknesses, to our sins. The love of Jesus is great. And thus he enters Jerusalem, with this love, and looks at us. It is a beautiful scene, full of light - the light of the love of Jesus, the love of his heart - of joy, of celebration.

At the beginning of Mass, we too repeated it. We waved our palms, our olive branches. We too welcomed Jesus; we too expressed our joy at accompanying him, at knowing him to be close, present in us and among us as a friend, a brother, and also as a King: that is, a shining beacon in our lives. Jesus is God, but he lowered himself to walk with us. He is our friend, our brother. He illumines our path here. And in this way we have welcomed him today. And here the first word that I wish to say to you: Joy! Do not be men and women of sadness: a Christian can never be sad! Never give way to discouragement! Ours is not a joy born of having many possessions, but from having encountered a person: Jesus, in our midst; it is born from knowing that with him we are never alone, even at difficult moments, even when our life's journey comes up against problems and obstacles that seem insurmountable, and there are many of them! And in this moment the enemy, the devil comes often disguised as an angel, and slyly speaks his word to us. Do not listen to him! Let us follow Jesus! We accompany, we follow Jesus, but above all we know that he accompanies us and carries us on his shoulders. This is our joy, this is the hope that we must bring to this world. Please do not let yourselves be robbed of hope! Do not let hope be stolen! The hope that Jesus gives us. Let us ask the intercession of the Virgin Mary. She teaches us the joy of meeting Christ, the love with which we must look to the foot of the Cross, the enthusiasm of the young heart with which we must follow him during this Holy Week and throughout our lives. May it be so.

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## **5th SUNDAY OF LENT**

### **6th April 2014**

#### **WALKING THROUGH LENT WITH POPE FRANCIS.**

##### **The Raising of Lazarus**

Through death, Lazarus had been cut off from his family and friends, bound like a mummy and buried. Jesus brought him out of the tomb, restored him to his family and spoke words of liberation: 'Unbind him, let him go free'. Pope Francis has described ways that people can be robbed of life and the church's sense of mission can die. He has named some features of our world which diminish life, things we must oppose to uphold life.

**To ponder:** The way our global economy has developed has consequences for peoples lives.

##### **Pope Francis reflects on an economy of exclusion and inequality:**

Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case

of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality. Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless. As a consequence, masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without means of escape. Human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a "throw away" culture which is now spreading. *The Joy of the Gospel, 53*

**Question:** How does the global economy impact on me and the people I know? Are there choices I could make to resist its negative effects?

**To ponder:** Our lifestyle affects others.

**Pope Francis reflects on a lifestyle that excludes:**

Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for others, pain, and feeling the need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility" and not our own. The culture of prosperity deadens us; we are thrilled if the market offers us something new to purchase. In the meantime all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us. *The Joy of the Gospel, 54*

**Question:** How conscious am I of those who produce goods I consume? How does this awareness affect the choices I make?

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. How do I respond to the questions that Pope Francis has raised about the culture in which we live?
2. What are the main burdens that are weighing people down in our community?
3. What are we already doing to help those who are struggling? What more can we do?
4. How is our parish community supporting families, especially those with different structures or difficult experiences? Are there others we could help?

*These notes were prepared by the Department for Evangelisation in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.*

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**4th SUNDAY OF LENT (Laetare Sunday)  
30th March 2014**

**WALKING THROUGH LENT WITH POPE FRANCIS.  
Jesus heals the man born blind.**

**To Ponder:** The blind man responded to the gift of sight by sharing his new faith with others, but many things can stop us from doing the same.

**Pope Francis reflects:** In some people we see an ostentatious preoccupation for the Liturgy, for doctrine and for the Church's prestige, but without any concern that the Gospel have a real impact on God's faithful people and the concrete needs of the present time. In this way, the life of the Church turns into a museum piece or something which is the property of a select

few. In others, this spiritual worldliness lurks behind a fascination with social and political gain or pride in their ability to manage practical affairs, or an obsession with programmes of self-help and self-realization. It can also translate into a concern to be seen, into a social life full of appearances, meetings, dinners and receptions. It can also lead to a business mentality, caught up with management, statistics, plans and evaluations whose principal beneficiary is not God's people but the Church as an institution. The mark of Christ incarnate, crucified and risen, is not present; closed and elite groups are formed, and no effort is made to go forth and seek out those who are distant or the immense multitudes who thirst for Christ. Evangelical fervour is replaced by the empty pleasure of complacency and self indulgence.

**Question:** is sharing the Good News of God's mercy something we have forgotten about? Is it something important in my parish and in my life?

**To ponder:** There is more to sharing the Good News than preaching. Pope Francis reflects: Today, as the Church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbours or complete strangers. This is the informal preaching which takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home. Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street in a city square, during work, on a journey. In this preaching, which is always respectful and gentle, the first step is a personal dialogue, when the other person speaks and shares his or her joys, hopes and concerns for loved ones, or so many other heartfelt needs. Only afterwards is it possible to bring up God's word.

**Question:** How are we sharing the Gospel already through our parish and in our daily lives?

*These entries were prepared by the Department for Evangelisation in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.*

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### **3rd SUNDAY OF LENT** **23rd March 2014**

#### **WALKING THROUGH LENT WITH POPE FRANCIS.** **The woman at the well.**

**To ponder:** in today's passage the woman at the well discovers that she is loved and so she is able to respond. The Pope puts this invitation (to know we are loved) and our response at the heart of the mission of the Church.

**Pope Francis reflects:** (from the Joy of the Gospel, n 39)

Before all else, the Gospel invites us to respond to the God of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to seek the good of others. Under no circumstance can this invitation be obscured! All of the virtues are at the service of this response of love. If this invitation does not radiate forcefully and attractively, the edifice of the Church's moral teaching risks becoming a house of cards, and this is our greatest risk. It would mean that it is not the Gospel which is being preached, but certain doctrinal or moral points based on specific ideological options. The message will run the risk of losing its freshness and will cease to have "the fragrance of the Gospel".

**Question: How can we attract others towards the "fragrance of the Gospel" whilst being faithful to the moral teaching of the Church?**

**To ponder:** The Samaritan woman was seen by many as an "outsider", but to God no one is excluded.

**Pope Francis reflects: (from the Joy of the Gospel n 47)**

The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that the church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself "the door": **baptism**. The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.

**Question:** This challenges us to reflect on our pastoral practice: how can we live out what the Pope is suggesting? What are the "pastoral consequences"? Can we leave open the door of the Church?

**Questions for reflection and discussion**

- In what ways are we already living out the vision of Pope Francis to be an open door community?
- The Eucharist is "not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak." What are the implications of this for our parish community?
- The Pope quotes St. Francis de Sales saying: "A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar." How can we put this into practice as a church, as a parish and as individuals?
- Pope John XXIII called a parish "the village fountain where everyone could come and be quenched". How is our parish community a place of rest and refreshment for those on the journey of life? How could it be more so?

**PRACTICAL EVANGELISATION** At the end of the Gospel the woman told others about Jesus and she brought them to meet Jesus. How can I find an opportunity to have a conversation with someone about Jesus this week? Who could I bring to Mass at Easter this year?

*These notes were prepared by the Department for Evangelisation in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.*

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**2nd SUNDAY OF LENT**  
**16th March 2014**

## **POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR LENT**

It has been said that the only real regret lies in not being a saint (L Boy); we could also say that there is only one real poverty: not living as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ.

We might think that this 'way' of poverty was Jesus' way, whereas we who come after him can save the world with the right kind of resources. This is not the case. In every time and place God continues to save mankind and the world through the poverty of Christ, who makes himself poor in the sacraments, in his word and in his church, which is a people of the poor. God's wealth passes not through our wealth, but invariably and exclusively through our personal and communal poverty, enlivened by the Spirit of Christ. In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and to take practical steps to alleviate it. Destitution is not the same as poverty: destitution is poverty without faith without support, without hope. There are three types of destitution: material, moral and spiritual. Material destitution is what is normally called poverty, and affects those living in conditions opposed to human dignity those who lack basic rights and needs such as food, water, hygiene, work and the opportunity to develop and grow culturally. In response to this destitution, the Church offers her help, her diakonia, in meeting these needs and binding these wounds which disfigure the face of humanity. In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. Our efforts are also directed to ending the violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are often the cause of destitution. When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth. Our consciences thus need to be converted to justice, simplicity and sharing. *The full text can be found on the Vatican website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va), as can Pope Francis' "The Joy of the Gospel".*

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**1st SUNDAY OF LENT**  
**9th March 2014**

## **POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR LENT**

*"He became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor.8:9)*

So what is this poverty by which Christ frees and enriches us? It is his way of loving us, his way of being our neighbour just as the Good Samaritan was neighbour to the man left half dead by the side of the road. What gives us true freedom, true salvation and true happiness is the compassion, tenderness and solidarity of his love. Christ's poverty which enriches us is his taking flesh and bearing our weaknesses and sins as an expression of God's infinite mercy to us. Christ's poverty is the greatest treasure of all Jesus' wealth is that of his boundless confidence in God the Father, his constant trust, his desire always and only to do the Father's will and give glory to him. Jesus is rich in the same way as a child who feels loved and who loves its parents, without doubting their love and tenderness for an instant. Jesus' wealth lies in his being the Son; his unique relationship with the Father is the sovereign prerogative of the Messiah who is poor. When Jesus asks us to take up his 'yoke which is easy', he asks us to be enriched by his 'poverty which is rich' and his 'richness which is poor', to share his filial and fraternal Spirit, to become sons and daughters in the Son, brothers and sisters in the first-born brother.

It has been said that the only real regret lies in not being a saint (L. Bloy); we could also say

that there is only one real kind of poverty: not living as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ.

*The full text can be found on the Vatican website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va), as can Pope Francis' "The Joy of the Gospel".*

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## **EIGHTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR A**

**2nd March 2014**

### **ASH WEDNESDAY 2014**

**LENT** begins this Wednesday! The ash placed on our forehead reminds us of our mortality: "remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". Our response is directed by "Repent, and believe the good news".

The ash is placed in the form of the cross: it is the cross of Christ that sets us free from sin, and ultimate consequence of sin which is death. Lent is therefore a time of conversion, made up of shaking off all our sins and deepening our faith in the Paschal Mystery. Lent is indeed our preparation to celebrate the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord with our mind and heart renewed.

**PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING:** these are to be our priorities. Prayer opening us to God, fasting disciplining our body and mind, and almsgiving showing love to those less well off. Before Ash Wednesday it is best to have worked out what we are going to do in these three areas. If we are not clear what we are going to try to do, we shall probably end up doing little or nothing: that would be sad, and a missed opportunity.

**PRAYER** is the subject of our Lent talks. Each Monday evening of Lent beginning 10 March, David Torkington will guide us through how our personal prayer can develop. We all need help on this, so please do come. David is a master of this subject and you will not be disappointed - it could change your life! Each talk is at 6.45pm in the parish Room.

**SUNDAYS IN LENT** will include teaching from Pope Francis "The Joy of the Gospel". The more we encounter the Risen Lord, the more we experience joy.

**PRAY** that we shall all keep a good Lent.

Fr David Barnes. PP

### **BULLETINS FOR FEBRUARY 2014**

## **SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR A**

**23rd February 2014**

### **MANY CONGRATULATIONS**

TO OUR ARCHBISHOP, VINCENT NICHOLS, who today (22nd February), in Rome, received "the red hat", symbol of his being made "Cardinal" by Pope Francis. We assure our new Cardinal of our loyalty and prayers. Cardinal Vincent is now a member of the College of Cardinals whose members are at the service of the Pope's universal ministry as Pastor and Teacher. The College of Cardinals also elects the Pope.

TODAY (Saturday 22nd February) is the FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF ST PETER, which celebrates the fact that Our Lord conferred on St Peter the mission of PASTOR and TEACHER. We celebrate the foundation of the Church on Peter, and that he is the focus of unity for the Church. Hence the Pope "gives the red hat" on this Feast of the Chair of Peter. CATHOLIC TEACHING sees that communion with Christ and communion with the Church are two sides of the same coin. So communion with Christ is effected through our communion with the Church, expressed in a particular way through recognising our Bishop (Cardinal Vincent Nichols) as our leader in the Faith in this Diocese of Westminster, and our communion with the Universal Church as expressed through Cardinal Vincent being in full communion with Pope Francis. Our loving participation in this communion fosters the peace and unity of the Catholic Church. This communion is celebrated at every Mass, when we offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice and pray for Francis our Pope and Vincent our Bishop. Once again, we assure Cardinal Vincent of our congratulations, loyalty and prayers.  
Fr David Barnes. PP

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## **SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**16th February 2014**

### **NO PERMISSION TO SIN**

GOD does not want us to sin. We do so because we choose to: we prefer our own will to the Will of God.

OUR LORD calls us to be holy, to choose to do the good. We are all moved to sin at times: it is then we must choose to say NO TO SIN so as to say YES TO GOD: this is when we experience the Cross!

EVERYONE wants a sense of self-fulfillment. The world looks for self-fulfillment by doing what you want, what makes you feel good (the feel-good factor). Sometimes people reinforce this by saying "I don't mind what you do.....all I want is for you to be happy."

OUR LORD'S TEACHING is very different. He says "the person who seeks to save their life will lose it, but the person who loses their life for my sake and the sake of the Kingdom will find it." Self-fulfillment is found through self-transcendence. Happiness in the Gospel is found as a consequence of doing the true good (ie what Jesus teaches).

OUR POWER TO CHOOSE is the emphasis of today's readings.

REFLECTION on the Word of God. "If you will, you can keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice." (first reading at today's Mass). "All you need to say is Yes if you mean Yes, No if you mean No: anything more comes from the Evil One". (Gospel reading at today's Mass). Do not try to justify our wrong wrongdoing.

Fr David Barnes. PP

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## **FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

**9th February 2014**

### **OUR HELP IS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**

In today's Gospel we read 'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be



trampled under foot by men.'

'You are the light of the world.' We are told our light must shine for all to see (St Matthew 5 13:14) How do we keep this light burning? We have been given the wherewithal in the Sacraments of the church. We know there are seven Sacraments. Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Sacrament of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. We need these Sacraments to help keep us stable and strong in order to be true followers of Christ.

The Sacraments are divided into:

The Sacraments of: Christian initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist);

The Sacraments of Healing: (Penance and Anointing of the sick;

and the Sacraments "of Communion and Mission: (Holy Orders and Matrimony).

The Holy Eucharist is at the heart of the seven Sacraments, for us to use in our needs.

Let us ask God to help us use these precious gifts He has bequeathed to each one of us for His greater glory and the good of His Church, The Kingdom of God and His justice.

Sr. M. Lucina, Parish Sister

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## **CANDLEMAS**

**2nd FEBRUARY 2014**

**FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD.**

Mary and Joseph, following the Jewish Law, present Jesus to God in the Temple in Jerusalem 40 days after His birth. It is above all an act of thanksgiving, and consecrating Him to God. SIMEON declares that this child will be a light of revelation to all peoples - that this child will reveal God fully to all humanity. Hence the feast is celebrated with candles, celebrating Jesus as the Light of the World, and the celebration of the fact that the person who follows Him "shall not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." The procession helps us understand that we are a people on a journey, following Jesus the Light of the World, and we are enlightened by Him.

DISCIPLESHIP involves suffering. Simeon tells Our Lady that a sword will pierce her own heart too. The joy of discipleship involves also the suffering that comes from loving - essentially of learning to do the Lord's will rather than our own. This renunciation is in fact our pathway to freedom.

THANKSGIVING, DISCIPLESHIP and REPENTANCE are the key emphasis of our celebration today. Invoke the prayers of Our Lady and St. Joseph, that we learn better to know and do God's will.

Fr David Barnes P.P.

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## **BULLETINS FOR JANUARY 2014**

**26th JANUARY 2014**

**CHRISTIANS MUST BUILD BRIDGES NOT WALLS**

These were the words of the Holy Father at Mass last Friday in the Casa Marta chapel where he lives.

Reflecting on the conflict between King Saul and David which is the focus of the day's Old Testament reading, the Pope said, David has the chance to kill Saul but he chooses "a different path: the path of dialogue, to make peace".

All Christians, always, should follow the path of reconciliation, the Pope said, because that is what Jesus taught us, because Jesus showed us the way.

In order to enter into dialogue, the Pope explained, it is important to be meek, to be humble, even after an argument or a fight. It is important to "bend", to be flexible, so as not to reach breaking point.

However, the Pope recognised, it's not easy to build dialogue, especially when we're divided by resentment. It's not written in the Bible, he said, but we all know that to be meek, to be humble, we have to swallow a lot of pride-but we must do so, because that's how we build peace, with humility.

Humility may be hard, Pope Francis said, but allowing resentment to swell in our hearts is much worse than attempting to build a bridge of dialogue.

When we allow resentment to grow, we end up isolated in the "bitter broth" of our own rancour. To be a Christian, instead, is always to be the bridge.

It's important, Pope Francis continued, not to let too much time pass after a storm, after a problem. It's important to build dialogue as soon as possible, because time allows the walls of resentment to grow taller and get in the way of the corn - when our walls grow tall, reconciliation becomes difficult!

"I am afraid of these walls" the Pope concluded, "these walls that grow taller every day, building resentment and hatred. Let us follow instead the example of David who defeated hatred with an act of humility".

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## **ARCHBISHOP VINCENT NAMED CARDINAL 19TH JANUARY 2014**

Last Sunday, Pope Francis announced the names of 19 men he has chosen "to receive the red hat": among them is our own Archbishop Vincent. The following is the letter Pope Francis wrote to Archbishop Vincent.

*My dear Brother,*

*On the day in which your designation as a member of the College of Cardinals is published, I offer you my cordial greeting and the assurance of my closeness in prayers. It is my hope that by this closer bond to the Church of Rome, clothed with the virtues and sentiments of Christ (cf. Rom 13:14), you will be able to assist effectively and in a fraternal spirit in my service to the universal Church.*

*The cardinalate is not a promotion, an honour or an award; it is simply a service which calls for a broader vision and a more expansive heart. Although it may seem paradoxical, this ability to see farther and have a greater, universal love can only be achieved by following the same path which the Lord himself took: the path of abasement and humility, in the form of a servant (cf. Phil 2:5- 8). For this reason, I would ask you please to receive this appointment with simplicity and humility of heart. Though it is fitting that you should do so*

*with great joy, try to avoid any expression of worldliness and celebration not in keeping with the evangelical spirit of austerity, sobriety and poverty.*

*I look forward to seeing you, then, on the twentieth of February, when we will begin our days of reflection on the family. I am at your service and I ask you, please, to pray for me and to ask others to do the same.*

*May the Lord bless you and Our Lady watch over you.*

*Yours fraternally,*

*Francis*

Cardinal-designate Vincent replied:

*13th January 2014*

*Most Holy Father,*

*I write to thank you for calling me to serve as a member of the College of Cardinals and for your gracious and inspiring letter. I hope that I can respond to this summons in the spirit of service and humility of which you write.*

*I would also like you to know that your decision has given great joy not only to the Catholic community in England and Wales but also to many fellow Christians and many others in these lands. It is my privilege to come to your service on their behalf and with their encouragement and prayers.*

*Most Holy Father, so many people are full of loving respect for you and constantly support you with their prayers. That is certainly the tradition of the faith in our countries.*

*May I assure you of my constant prayers and thank you for this opportunity to serve the Petrine Office and the Universal Church.*

*With my warmest greetings,*

*Vincent Nichols*

Cardinal-designate Vincent "receives the red hat" in Rome on this coming 22 February.

Some of you may have written to Archbishop Vincent. Fr David Barnes wrote the following on behalf of our parish here:

*Congratulations, best wishes and prayers for you on being named Cardinal,*

*from all of us at SS Anselm and Cæcilia's and asking your prayers and blessing*

*David.*

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## **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

**12th January 2014**

We are all here today to renew our commitment to Our Lord, made at our Baptism. Not a lot of people remember the day they were baptised, but promises were made on our behalf, or if we were older we made our own. Those promises entailed living Gospel values, spreading

the Word and love of God to everyone we meet.

How do we do this? The Kingdom values are:

Blessed are the poor in spirit,

Blessed are those who mourn,

Blessed are the meek,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice and righteousness,

Blessed are the merciful,

Blessed are the pure in heart,

Blessed are the peacemakers,

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The last words of Jesus are "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the Prophets who were before you." Even after 60 years in the convent I still find these lessons of Jesus hard to follow and each day I have to make the commitment made way back in 1954, the Marian year, to try to live the way Jesus taught us.

Let us pray for each other as we continue on this road to perfection.

Wishing you all a very happy and prayerful Feast day.

Sr.M.Lucina - Parish Sister

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## **EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

### **5th January 2014**

The word EPIPHANY comes from a Greek word meaning "to reveal, make known." So just as in Bethlehem Jesus is revealed to the shepherds (representing the people of Israel) as God-with-us, so in the Epiphany Jesus is revealed to the Magi (wise men) or Kings representing all the peoples of the world as God-with-us.

The two traditions (wise men and Kings) speak to us that true greatness is to know our need for God, to know that without God we are incomplete. The Kings/Wise men would seem to have everything - status, money, power, knowledge and celebrity. Yet here they are on a journey, seeking wisdom and truth. Their journey leads them to Jesus, and on finding Him they fall down and worship Him. He is the answer to all they look for.

We are to learn from them: to be truly great and wise is to come to Jesus, fall down and worship Him. He alone is the complete answer to all we look for in life.

The gifts they bring are Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh - Gold represents Kingship, Frankincense divinity, and Myrrh anointing used for burial. Thus our Lord's earthly life is revealed in the gifts - He is King of Kings, God made flesh, who will suffer and die on the Cross leading to His Resurrection.

What gifts do we bring to Our Lord?

Fr David Barnes, PP