

St. Erconwald's Parish Magazine



Issue No. 48, Christmas 2023

Contents

Editorial	Page 3-4
From the Parish: Mass with Anointing of the Sick	Page 5
Mass for Bereaved Parishioners - Blessing of Graves	Page 6-7
First Holy Communion	Page 8
Thanksgiving	Page 9
Confirmation 2023	Page 10-11
Cuba	Page 12-13
Letter from a Family Carer - Mary's Meals	Page 14.15
CAFOD	Page 16-17
Autumn Term at St. Bernadette's	Page 18-19
St. Joseph's Infant and Junior Schools	Page 20-21
Quiz Night	Page 22
<i>The Passage</i>	Page 23
Christmas Celebration	Page 24
<i>The Chameleons</i>	Page 25
"Thank You"	Page 26-27

Cover Photo: The Chameleons in "Dick Whittington"



Editorial: St. Joseph

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the magazine.

Hope you and your families have been keeping safe and well.



I thought of sharing with you some thoughts about St Joseph this Christmas.

When we are placing the statues in our cribs we give St Joseph a place of honour – together with Baby Jesus and Mary. In the Neapolitan Crib tradition, the Holy Family is placed on top of a few steps with the other statues placed below.

Joseph had no direct share in the Mystery of the Incarnation, but he was its guardian. When he planned to divorce Mary, the angel reassured him with the words: “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus.” (Mt.1:20-21).

As a devout Jew he knew the Scriptures and the prophecies about the Messiah. He knew that the Messiah, according to the prophet Micah was to be born in Bethlehem: “But you Bethlehem, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel.” (5:1) And now here he was in Bethlehem. Though living in Nazareth, he and his wife Mary came to their town Bethlehem to register in the census called by the Emperor Caesar Augustus.

Standing close to Jesus and Mary, he must have reflected a lot about his mission from God. By now, his doubts about Mary must have all been solved.

Hearing what the shepherds had to say about how they came to know that the Messiah was born, Joseph must have felt more reassured about the honesty of his wife Mary.

But Joseph’s share in the Incarnation wasn’t only of guardian. It was through him that Jesus could be called ‘the son of David’. He was of royal descent. Even if his occupation was that of a carpenter, he was of noble and royal blood. If Israel had wanted to elect a king at that time, Joseph would have been one of the contestants. As the foster father he was to name the child Jesus which means ‘saviour’ (Mt.1:25).



This humble guardian had his hard times as well. When Herod heard from the Magi that a new King was born, he wanted to get rid of the baby and ordered the killing of all babies under two years. Warned by an Angel, Joseph picked some tools and together with Jesus and Mary left Nazareth and found refuge in Egypt.



The Holy Family stayed in Egypt until an angel of the Lord told Joseph that he may return to Nazareth because Herod had passed away. Here, again another prophecy was being fulfilled: "I called my son out of Egypt." (Hosea 11:1).



Let us turn to St Joseph and ask him to intercede for us and grant us the grace of being humble and to fulfil God's will in our lives even when it is hard to do so.

Today a 14 pointed star marks the place on the floor where the child was laid in the manger and the words read "Here. We kneel filled with awe and worship."

*Wishing you and your families a Blessed Christmas
and a Peaceful New Year.*

Fr. Anthony

Christmas Card Fair

Elizabeth Patten and Team



Thank you to all who visited our Fair.

This is the only time you can view our complete range of Christmas stock and reserve items. All money raised in the Repository Sales helps support St Erconwald's. Space is limited so if you do not see something you require, just ask a repository helper. We might just surprise you!

*We would like to thank all who supported the Repository
during the past year. We wish all our customers a
Very Happy Christmas and many Blessings in 2024.*



From the Parish
Comings and Goings



Please remember in your prayers

We welcome and congratulate those who have been baptised here recently, and their families: Theodore Owen, Kaiyden Dockerill-Scarlett, Cillian Cooper, Phoebe Burke, Eden DaCunha, Valentino Dezzutti.



Mass with Anointing of the Sick

Hazel Wilson



As part of the spiritual preparations for Christmas, on Tuesday 12th December, Fr. Anthony assisted by Fr. Tony Pellegrini, celebrated Mass with Anointing of the Sick. The theme of the celebration was based on the Italian saying: “Tira-Mi-Su”. No matter what way you are knocked down, Jesus is there to “pick you up”. Especially when we are ill, we need Jesus

to pick us up and that is why a large part of the Church ministry is in healthcare and looking after those who are ill. After the Homily, the Liturgy of Anointing opened with the Penitential Rite, which included the Act of Contrition and the Prayer of Absolution.

It was my first attendance at this service which was excellent. I had been feeling rather low for a while because of my husband’s death anniversary last month, but am pleased to say that after the mass and the anointing I feel much better!



After the service we were invited into the hall for soup and a roll so I followed the parishioners into the hall. We were spoilt for choice as four soups were on offer – vegetable, fish, carrot and coriander and potato and leek. Feeling particularly cold that day I had the vegetable soup followed by the carrot and coriander soup, both were yummy. Compliments to the people who made these soups. This was followed by tea, coffee and biscuits! It was nice to chat and mingle with my fellow parishioners. A huge thank you to all the helpers.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK



We keep in our thoughts and prayers: Margaret Beeby, Radwan Naffa, Sheila O’Hara, and Yves Remedios. We remember also those in Kenbrook, Birchwood Grange and Brook House.

May the Lord Jesus bless, console and strengthen all the sick, and may Mary, health of the sick, intercede for them.

Mass for Bereaved Parishioners

Gaynor Family



Invitations were sent to the families of the parishioners who had died during the period 2022-23. On Friday 9th November, Fr Anthony held a lovely memorial Mass for all of the people who had passed away this year in the parish. It was a lovely service where families gathered together to celebrate their loved ones who had passed. The celebration started with the lighting of candles for those who had died over the past year. Candles representing the Care Homes: Birchwood Grange, Brook House, and Kenbrook were also lit. Pictures of those who died were arranged in a beautiful display. This year we remembered 11 parishioners, each had a personalised candle which was given to the family after the Mass. Those who could not attend in person were able to join us via live-stream.

After the service families gathered in the parish hall and had an opportunity to share memories with others. Thank you for such a lovely service Fr Anthony and to all those who helped with the reception afterwards.



The Art of
Dying Well

Prayer for
the Dying



The Art of Dying Well is a web site of the Church in England and Wales that offers a helping hand to those grappling with issues surrounding death and dying. For more information visit: www.artofdyingwell.org

Our sympathies to the families of those departed: Arthur Murphy, Eileen Dowse, Eugene Donetti, Donald Coyle, Margaret Sydes, George Toone, Denton Mackie, Millicent Charles, Frank Carvalho, Theresa Pais, Doug Singer and Fr. Ferry Murray.

*By your grace, we pray,
encourage our hearts
and help us to remember
that your peace is our comfort,
your love is our strength,
your presence is our joy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Blessing of Graves.

Hazel Wilson



This year the service and blessing at Carpenter's Park took place on Sunday 5th November. I do try and attend every year as my parents and my husband are buried there. On the day, I decided to go early in order to secure a parking space in front of my husband's grave and to spend some time at both graves. Was rather surprised on arrival, to find so many people had the same idea! Fortunately, I succeeded in getting a space. When the appointed meeting time approached, the crowd gathered under the tree where we always meet to say prayers and sing a hymn or two. Normally, we have three priests who carry out the blessing, but on this day only Father Anthony and Father Albert from the English Martyrs church were present. On completion of the prayers, people moved to the graves of their loved ones in preparation for the blessing. After the blessing having shed a lot of tears and with a heavy heart, I drove away, but grateful that the graves of those dear to me had been blessed.

Dead Serious!



O'Shea, returning home from a Christmas party was sitting in the back of the taxi. He leant forward and tapped the driver on the shoulder to get his attention.

The driver screamed and the cab swerved across the road mounting the pavement.

"What the heck do you think you're doing?" Shouted the driver. "We could have been killed!"

"I'm really sorry," said O'Shea, "but I didn't think a little tap on the shoulder would have scared you as much?"

The driver calmed down. "I understand but let me explain myself. Today is my first day driving a taxi. You see, until last week I'd worked for thirty years driving a hearse."

[From: The Lilt of Irish Laughter, Ireland's Own]

Let us bid farewell to the past year. It was a year of the Lord, a year of his grace, even a year of growth in the interior life, even if we did not perceive this, because it is in our weakness that God's strength must triumph. And so at the end of the year we can all truly praise God and thank and glorify him for he is good and his mercy endures.



Karl Rahner, SJ [1904-1984]

First Holy Communion

Joseph Psaila

The class meets every other Saturday in the Hall. At the same time the parents meet in the Church. Fr Anthony leads this meeting. During this meeting the parents are given information about the session their children are having. They are also given sheets with notes from the lesson for the children to fill in the blanks and stick in their scrap-book.

Apart from lessons about Reconciliation and Holy Communion which the children are going to receive in 2024, the programme includes also topics like Friendship, the Word of God and Peace and Joy. Towards the end of the lesson, the children are given pictures about that day's topic, to colour in. These pictures are then placed onto a banner which is hung in the Church.

The attendance for the lessons is very regular. Almost every other session is followed by a link Mass which takes place a week after, on Sunday in the Church at the 11.30 a.m. Mass

Next year, the children will receive two more sacraments: Reconciliation, which will be celebrated on Saturday 16th March in the church at 10.30 a.m., and their First Holy Communion on Saturday 25th May at 10.30 a.m. On Saturday 20th April there will be a practice for the children on how to receive Holy Communion.

The programme ends with a special celebration on the feast of Corpus Christi (the Body of Christ) Mass on Saturday 1st June.

We congratulate the parents for presenting their children to prepare for and receive these sacraments, and hope to see them regularly for Sunday Mass.

Please keep the children and their families and their catechists in your prayers.



Thanksgiving

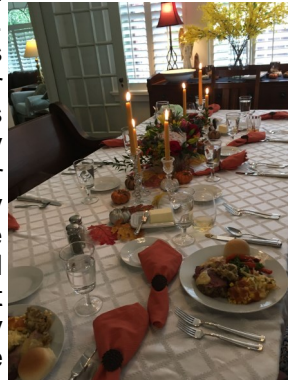
David Pearson



Thanksgiving is a national holiday in the United States celebrated every fourth Thursday in November. This year it occurred on Thursday 23rd November and its origins go back to the early days of the Founding Fathers arriving in the United States. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy issued Proclamation 3560 on November 5, stating, "Over three centuries ago, our forefathers

in Virginia and in Massachusetts, far from home in a lonely wilderness, set aside a time of thanksgiving. On the appointed day, they gave reverent thanks for their safety, for the health of their children, for the fertility of their fields, for the love which bound them together, and for the faith which united them with their God."

Traditionally, Thanksgiving has been a celebration of the blessings of the year, including the harvest. On Thanksgiving Day, it is common for Americans to share a family meal and to celebrate in other ways. I was lucky to be able to experience this myself while on a family visit to Texas. My family in the USA were invited by friends to join them for their Thanksgiving Dinner with their own family and so I was able to enjoy this celebration. The central dish was turkey but with other meats and all the trimmings (largely Texan in nature). What was really striking was the sharing (various family members had contributed various dishes) and the sense of togetherness. I was made to feel really welcome and to feel part of this celebration.



It brought home to me how much we have to be thankful for and how good it is to have a day dedicated to gratitude for all blessings we have and receive. Of course, the holiday for many is commercialised but this should not detract from us pausing to consider all the good things in our lives, all the blessings we have received and our good fortune to be in this position. We can all make our own lists and pause, once in a while, to thank God for what we have received and perhaps celebrate Thanksgiving ourselves either on Thanksgiving Day or whenever works for us.



We welcomed eight candidates for Confirmation this year: Miguel Aldridge, Rishon Antao, Zenia D'Silva, Riva Dias, Ezekiel Obadiaru, Kieyan Ranasinghe, Akisha Travasso and Vanelly Travasso.

The course of preparation started with a meeting of the candidates and parents on the evening of 26th September, and ended on 5th December. There were 6 one hour sessions held on Tuesday evenings, 7 to 8 pm, with the Mass of Enrolment and Mass of Election held on Saturday 14th October and Saturday 11th November respectively. During the final session on 21st November we held a Reconciliation service for the candidates. This year we were very appreciative to have Holly Cook, a Youth Worker, to come again and help us on sessions 1 and 4. Unfortunately because of time constraint we did not have a Retreat or Day of Reflection.

The Mass of Confirmation took place on Saturday 2nd December. Bishop John Sherrington again came to celebrate the Mass for us. The Mass was well attended by parents, sponsors, families and parishioners. The candidates were very smartly dressed. They welcomed the Bishop and the congregation to the celebration, and brought the Oil of Chrism and the Book of the Gospels to the altar. During Mass they took part in the scripture readings, the bidding prayers and thanked the Bishop and everyone who had helped them on their preparation journey. They were presented with the certificates by Bishop Sherrington afterwards, and received a gift from Fr. Anthony.



There was a very joyful celebration afterwards in the hall with a beautiful cake bearing their names, and plenty of drinks and refreshments. The hall was filled with sounds of congratulations and laughter. Bishop John joined us at the celebration, mingled freely with people, chatting to them, and had photos taken with the candidates and families.



On the last session on 5th December, after evaluation of the programme, we had pizzas and soft drinks for the candidates and parents. Fr. Anthony encouraged the candidates to take active part in the parish, especially as readers. It was a nice round up of the programme.



· Here is a summary of the thoughts and feelings of the candidates about the Sacrament of Confirmation and the preparation programme:

I have a sense of accomplishment, a huge step forward in my journey of faith

I am more aware of being a Christian

I feel closer to God

I am more aware of faith and greater responsibility in the Church to spread God's message by my actions

Importance of actions of kindness and love, St. Teresa said, 'smiling is the beginning of love'

I am a more grown up and mature member of the Parish community

I am proud to be a member of God's family. Happy and excited to continue my journey of faith

I will focus on good things, to be wiser and more considerate

I will try to help others and to have a stronger relationship with God

I pray the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit will come upon me and guide me on the right path

We would like to wish our newly confirmed parishioners continued progress on their journey of faith.



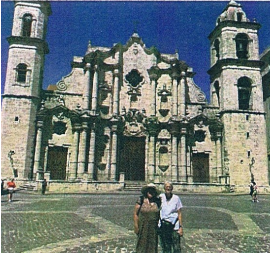
“Christus Vivit” - Christ is Alive

*Dear young people,
May the Holy Spirit urge you on
as you run this race.
The Church needs your momentum,
your intuitions, your faith. We need them!
And when you arrive
where we have not yet reached,
have the patience to wait for us".*

[Pope Francis]

Cuba

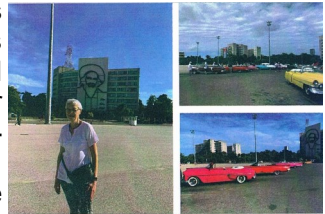
Christine Davis



Finally, Cuba!! This trip was planned for March 2020, we all know what happened then...Covid. So it has taken 3½ years to rearrange. But at last it happened. This wasn't all inclusive beach holiday but an exploratory trip, it surely was interesting. These are my impressions.

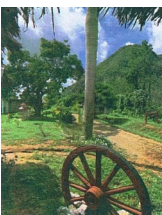
It's hot and sometimes wet - my trip was at the end of the rainy season and so just two days of rain. But the rain was warm.

It's poor. Agriculture is labour intensive, there is no money for machines so it's donkey and horse power and of course human labour in the sugar cane fields. And it's horse drawn carts in abundance even on the motorways. People travel on foot, on horses, on carts pulled by donkeys or horses, on the back of huge ex Soviet army trucks, vintage American and Russian cars (kept working through skill and ingenuity) as well as a minority of newer vehicles. Oh, and bicycles, as well as people waiting in whatever shade they can find to flag down a passing vehicle for a lift. I'm told this hitchhiking is safe, it's certainly common. There is currently a shortage of fuel among other things.



I don't understand the economy of the country, I mean the currency. There is very little acceptance of card payments, the internet signals are intermittent so I understand why this is. Also there is an embargo in place and this includes banking. An ATM will not accept any card which has any connection with the USA. So cash is king, but not the Cuban Peso except for locals. Euros are the favoured currency, sterling and US dollars are accepted on a one for one rate and then any change given in Cuban pesos. Very strange but it seems to work.

Tourism brings money to the country so tourists are well catered for. Many families host tourists on a bed and breakfast basis. Thanks, Milly.



Cuban people smile a lot. They queue for food, for ATMs, for bread, for buses and taxis and still smile. They also kept smiling whilst reassuring me when I (almost) had a problem at the airport with my passport! Jose Marti is revered as founder of the revolutionary ideal and the airport bears his name.

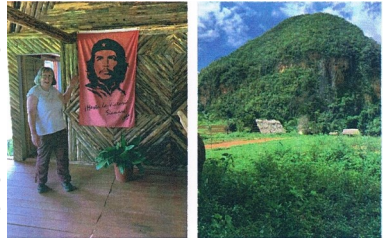


Having given you my impressions of this friendly place which I have finally ticked off my bucket list I'll tell you how I spent my days exploring Havana and Trinidad, two major towns. It was fitting to see first hand the sights of history..... the Bay of Pigs, Santa Clara, Revolution Square, the memorial to Che. The stuff of revolution 60 years ago. Che's father in Argentina was a second-generation Irishman named Lynch).

In Old Havana I drank Daiquiri in Fredrikas bar as did Hemmingway and saw the beautifully maintained convertible American cars from the 50s that are such a tourist draw.

I was surprised at the little evidence of Catholicism I saw. Only two churches were open, in one there was a small congregation waiting for exposition and the other, in the cemetery, was awaiting a funeral.

I saw sugar cane fields, tobacco farming and coffee plantations. I walked in the rain-forest and swam in forest pools. Of course I also swam in the Carribean's beautiful sandy beaches.



So there it is. A short account of a fabulous place.



St. Laurence Larder

This is a charity we support throughout the year. At Christmas we donate items received through the 'Caritas Advent Giving Calendar' to St. Laurence Larder. Once again, your generosity is to be applauded, thank you to all our Christmas donors and those who support the Larder throughout the year. A big thanks to Sr. Philomenia who delivers our donations to St. Laurence Larder



Letter from a Family Carer

Frank Arrojo



I know from personal experience and those of other family carers, how difficult this forthcoming festive period can be. [Supporting a loved one with dementia is not something we ever expected to have to deal with].

The sacrifices family carers make and the challenges they face, in supporting their husband, wife, mum, dad, to live well are enormous, never mind the complexities of the dementia disease itself and other obstacles we have to overcome.

If you're planning to visit a family member and/or friend with dementia, please understand your communications with the main family carer are critical to ensuring a memorable time for everyone.

One of the issues you may be surprised to learn, and is very common, is that a family member or friend visiting do not get a realistic picture of day-to-day life. Each time my sister and brother-in-law visited mum she would "... put on a good show for them ...", as if nothing was wrong. A specialist dementia nurse told me once it was like "... they put up the defence barriers !", for fear of revealing how confused and vulnerable they were.



I've had conversations with many family members who can't understand why their family member carer "... complains so much ...", and say to them "... you've no idea what it's like ...". It's not until I explain why this happens that they begin to have an understanding of the pressures the main family carer experiences every single day. Also, family carers who aren't familiar with this – like I was at the beginning – begin to question themselves as to why this happens to them and not when other family members and friends visit.

Therefore if you're planning such a visit now and in the future here are some tips in seeking to create a safe and warm environment for everyone to have a good time.



Remember to support the family carer just as much as the person with dementia

- Plan ahead and discuss with the family carer what is realistic

- Understand that the daily routine of the family carer and person with dementia is very important, because sudden changes may result in agitation and distress. In other words try to be flexible and fit in with their daily routine.
- It may be safer to stick to familiar traditions and routines the family member with dementia may recognise. A good example is going through old family photo albums at this time of year.
- Don't expect the visit to be perfect and enjoy it for what it is.

Also, be flexible and understanding in case planned visits can't go ahead for whatever reason. Despite the best laid plans sometimes it may not be possible to share in the festivities. In such cases be prepared for such separation to bring up your own feelings of grief or sadness. Look after your own mental health wellbeing.

This will also give you a small insight into what the main family carer is going through.

Finally, remember to remain in regular contact with and support the family member carer, just as much as your family member with dementia.



Mary's Meals Appeal



In October the Month of 'Our Lady of the Rosary' we decided to support Mary's meals by launching 'An Unwanted Foreign Currency Appeal'. Mary's Meals is a charity that provides one meal a day to children in education. It currently feeds over 2.4million young children in over 18 countries. By the end of October, we had a heavy box of unwanted coins but were a little sceptical that this would actually yield much sterling currency.

Surprisingly this pile of old coins and notes some of which were no longer legal tender converted into £352.74. One man's rubbish is another man's riches. So next year when you go on your holidays abroad keep your left-over currency and bring it home for the Mary Meal's Appeal in October.

Please see below Gerrard McMahan's thanks for our help. See the full list of currencies and their value on the notice board.

Mary's Meals would like to thank everyone in the parish for their wonderful generosity in response to our Foreign Currency initiative. It raised a terrific £352.74 which means Mary's Meals will be able to feed 18 children one good meal every school day for a whole year because of your support. Please continue to pray for the work of Mary's Meals. God bless you all.

Who are CAFOD, What Do They Do and How Can I Help?

We have global reach



We are part of one of the largest aid networks in the world. Because of our global reach and local presence, together we have the potential to reach everyone. Our local experts help some of the most difficult-to-reach people in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. We help anyone regardless of faith, gender and ethnicity.

Our global reach is present in the lived experience of local communities. These skilled women and men understand what people need because they are part of the communities they work in. Their commitment, passion and knowledge reach people other organisations can't. We have the potential to reach so many people because we are a member of a global Church network with a presence in 165 countries. The local Church is trusted even in the most dangerous countries, regions and communities regardless of religion. This means that your support will help those who are truly in need.

We are Catholic

We are the official aid agency for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. With your help, we reach out to people living in hard-to-reach places, in war zones and those who are discriminated against.



We help people thrive

No one wants to live on handouts. That's why our experts provide long-term aid to equip people with the skills, tools and opportunities to live with dignity, support their families and give back to their communities.

We face tough challenges

Poverty. Conflict. Climate Change. Inequality. It doesn't have to be this way. Together with your support, and the expertise of our local aid workers, we reach out to those that are excluded and give them the help they need.

We are there in a crisis



We support teams of experts who can act fast, providing food, water and shelter for people who have lost everything. And we're there in the months and years that follow too, listening and helping people rebuild their lives and prepare for whatever the future holds.

We speak out for justice



Campaigning works – it can take years of effort or be as simple as signing a petition. Increased aid for water and sanitation, action on climate change, protection for human rights defenders, and a clamp down on corruption have all come as a result of taking action together.

We reach out to young people

Each year, tens of thousands of young people discover our work at school or in groups – from volunteers, teachers and classmates. We reach out to young people to be the change they want to see in their communities and worldwide.

We are trusted

CAFOD is committed to good fundraising practice and is registered with the Fundraising Regulator. Our supporter promise outlines what we do to earn your trust and support.



"The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, he helps those whose spirit is crushed." Psalm 34:18

How to get involved.

Join us today and help us to ensure no one is beyond reach of the love and care they need.

Give today to help us reach people who are still in need of help.

Act by making your voice heard through our campaigns.

Pray for our brothers and sisters living in poverty.

You can find more information at <https://cafod.org.uk> or 0303 303 3030 and about volunteering at Sign up to volunteer.



We have had a great term at St Bernadette's!

The children returned from their summer holidays raring to go and they have worked very hard to make good progress in all areas of school life.



During this term we have begun the celebrations for our 70th Anniversary. Our school was officially opened on 3rd October 1953 by Cardinal Griffin who held a service in Latin and blessed all areas of the school. St Bernadette's opened with 188 pupils and 7 members of staff and it has grown and grown since. We now have 465 pupils from Nursery to Y6 and 60 members of staff. We had a

lovely Mass led by Bishop John Sherrington on 4th October during which time he repeated parts of the original service and blessed all areas of our current school. Since then we have had a whole school photo, a Quiz and Pizza night for current and past parents which was really well attended and a Bingo evening for the whole community which was supported by almost 200 people! We will continue to celebrate into the new-year and we have a timetable of events on our school website www.st-bernadette.co.uk.

You are welcome to join us at the events and if you know any past pupils then please let them know and get them to contact us at school as we are in the process of developing a 70th Anniversary brochure to share with our community. Celebrations will conclude with a Summer Fete on Friday 28th June from 3.30pm.

This term we have been very successful in achieving 2 major awards. The first was recognition for our whole school focus on eating healthy foods and getting fit. It came from Healthy Schools London and it is their top Gold Award which we are delighted with. We have placed health and fitness at the centre of our curriculum and it has really raised our standards of learning and is helping all children to achieve. This was reflected in our fun run day at the end of September when all of the children ran at least 2km-5km and raised £3,000 for the school to support our children and families in need. The second award was very prestigious to reflect the international work that we do here with our partners in Spain, Italy and France. The International Award has come from the British Council and we are one of very few Primary schools in the country to achieve it. We are very proud of these achievements and the opportunities that they provide for our whole school community.



We are in the middle of our Christmas preparations and celebrations. We have had a very important visitor from Lapland who met all of the children and staff and gave them presents! This has been followed by the Infant Nativity play of The Bossy King and Carol Services from our Junior classes. Our choirs have been very busy singing in St Dominic's Chapel at the Harrow Catholic Schools' Carol Service and at Westminster Cathedral for the HCPT

Carol Service. Then they will be singing at Sainsbury's to raise money for charity and then visit the sick at Edgware General Hospital—busy times!! We are all looking forward to the Christmas holidays at the end of another exciting term!

All of us at St Bernadette's wish Fr Anthony, Elizabeth and all of the parishioners at St Erconwald's a very happy and holy Christmas and we wish you a happy and healthy 2024!

Come and visit us if you would like to see St Bernadette's - you will be very welcome!

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School and Nursery,
Clifton Road, Kenton, HA3 9NS



The Santa "Claus"

Teacher: "Little Johnny, can you define claustrophobia?"

Little Johnny: "Eem, sorry Miss, is it the fear of Santa Claus?"



SUITS HIM!

How do we know Santa is definitely a man?

Because no woman would wear the same outfit for that many years running.

*Education is the most powerful weapon you can use
to change the world.*

[Nelson Mandela]

The autumn term has been very busy as usual. We would like to share some of the events across the term with you.

Harvest Collection

The School Prayer Leaders collected food for the Brent and Parish Foodbanks as part of our Harvest celebrations.



Anti-Bullying Week

The children participated in activities during ‘Anti-Bullying Week’ including Odd Sock Day where we wore odd socks to remember how unique we all are. We released our ‘Confetti Canons’ on Friendship Friday to symbolise our class pledges and promises about how we should treat each other.

Road Safety Week

The children had a variety of activities linked to road safety week and this year’s theme of ‘Let’s Talk About Speed.’ They ended the week with ‘Bright Day’ to raise awareness about the importance of being seen by drivers on the dark evenings.

Remembrance Day



The Prayer Leaders sold poppies to raise money for the Royal British Legion. Children also made their own poppies and wrote class prayers and held their class liturgy for Remembrance Sunday in the Prayer Garden.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

The Infant and Junior schools have been collecting donations on behalf of Saint Erconwald’s Parish for their ‘Giving Trees’ supporting the Passage. The Prayer Leaders sorted, bagged and delivered our donations. They also collected for Saint Joseph’s Parish who supported the Catholic Children’s Society and Brent foodbank.



Catholic Children’s Society Advent Liturgy

Prayer Leaders attended the Catholic Children’s Society Advent service on the 29th November.

Golden Jubilee

Saint Joseph's Infant School celebrated their Golden Jubilee this term. We had a very special Mass of celebration led by Bishop John Sherrington at Saint Joseph's Church on Tuesday 5th December. This was followed by special year group assemblies about Saint Joseph.



Panto Performance

The children enjoyed watching a live performance of 'Pinocchio'.

Dressing the Christmas tree

As part of our Christmas traditions in school every child in the school made a sustainable decoration to hang on the indoor and outdoor trees.



Christmas Card Competitions

Marushka in Year 5 and Nathan in Year 1 won the school design a Christmas card competition. They were also entered into the Westminster Diocese Christmas Card competition and the local Brent MP's Christmas card competition. We were all delighted when Marushka won both of these competitions

Choir Visit

Members of the School Choir visited the Middlesex Care Home to spread some seasonal cheer with their singing.

Carol Concert

Year 3 and 4 also took part in a Carol service supported by a choir made up of Year 5 and 6 pupils. This took place in Saint Joseph's Church in the evening. It was wonderful for our community to come together during Advent.

Year 2 Nativity

Children in Year 2 performed a beautiful retelling of the Nativity. It was fantastic to enjoy this together in our brand-new school hall!



We wish Saint Erconwald's entire Parish a very happy Christmas and New Year. From Mandy Whelan and all the Governors, staff and pupils at Saint Joseph's Infant and Junior Schools Wembley.

Quiz Night

Caroline Horan



The Parish Hall hosted a Quiz Night on Saturday 7th October and it was a great night. We had 5 teams competing. The Bar opened at 6.30pm and then it was down to business at 7.00pm. There were 6 categories, including the Picture Round. As the evening progressed, it became a close-run race between

The Chameleons (our resident theatre group) and Kinky Brook. The Chameleons won by answering the deciding question correctly. During the interval Fish & Chips from the Blue Oyster were served. The Quiz Night is a fun way to spend a Saturday night and beats Saturday night TV so why not join us for the next one?

Why Not Test Yourself?

1. What does an Arctophile collect?
2. What date do all horses in the Northern Hemisphere celebrate their birthday?

TEAM	RD 1	RD 2	RD 3	RD 4	RD 5	RD 6	TOTAL
Kinky Brook	9	14 ³	8	10	8	49	58
The Blue Oyster	14 ³	6	9	7 1/2	7	49	52 1/2
The Chameleons	6	8	14 ³	7 1/2	6	31 1/4	48 1/2
The Chameleons	8	8	8	20 ³	7	51	58 1/2
The Chameleons	6	5	6	18 ³	6	41 1/2	46 1/2



3. Who is the patron saint of music?
4. Which iconic soap character lost his first wife to electrocution by a hairdryer?
5. Which childrens' doll celebrated her 60th birthday in September this year?

Owen's Family Christmas Quiz [Ireland's Own]

6. Who gets visited by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"?
7. Where was baby Jesus born?
8. There are 365 days in a regular year [not a leap year] - what number is Christmas Day?
9. In which country did Christmas trees originate?

Teddy Bears; 1st January, St. Cecilia, Ken Barlow from Coronation street, Cindy [not Barbie who debuted in March 1969], Ebenezer Scrooge, Bethlehem, 359, Germany.

Answers

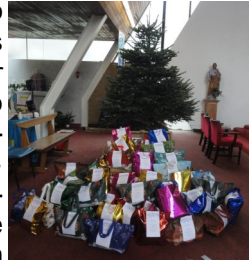
The Passage



This year we had a shorter window in which to collect donations for the Passage, Christmas Eve falling as it does on Sunday. As is usual, we make the Passage donation in conjunction with the Federation of St. Joseph Infant and Junior Schools, Wembley (one of our feeder schools). Despite these financially difficult times, between us all we managed to make-up over 60 Gift Bags and, had some left over for the Passage to store, for use later in the year.

Thank you to Maeve, Bernie, Caroline and Rose Yip for all your hard work making up the bags on Thursday night, 17th November. We were able to display the gift bags in Church and had them ready for Andrew Hollingsworth to collect on Sunday, 19th after the 11.30am Mass.

Thank you to all who donated and to those who helped carry the bags to Andrews van. Thanks also to those who offered money instead of gifts, this money allowed us to buy items we were short of for the gift bags i.e. Shower Gel, face cloths etc. We also wish to thank those who donated money to the Passage via the “Big Give” appeal. This raises a substantial amount of money for the running of the Passage. Our gift bags go directly to the residents of the Passage Hostels so they have a gift to open on Christmas Day. Well done one and all.



Stamp that out



A woman went into the post office to buy stamps for her Christmas Cards.

“What denomination?” asked the clerk.

“Oh good heavens,” have we come to this?” the woman exclaimed.

Well give me 20 Catholic and 20 Church of Ireland please.”

[The Lilt of Irish Laughter, Ireland’s Own]

To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.

[Theodore Roosevelt]

Christmas Celebration

Elizabeth Patten



The evening started with the serving of Mulled Wine and Mince Pies or Fruit Punch.

As is usual, we were delighted to see so many children especially as we were competing with the Chameleons Panto (spoilt for choice). Of course, the children were all excited at the prospect of a visit from Santa. He did not disappoint, visiting each family at their table. Santa is much more relaxed when he visits St Erconwald's, he sits down and talks to the children. He decided this year to promote family values, so each family got a family game to play together, and each child got a small individual gift.

Following Santa's visit we had the Grand Draw. Prize Results were 1st Prize Jerusalem Nativity Crib: Sean Lindsay; 2nd prize: Hamper: Sonia Verzosa; 3rd prize: £50: Joseph Psaila; 4th prize Toy Prize: Jenson Santos. There were many other prizes of Wine bottles, boxes of sweets and biscuit. Those not collected on the night are on display in the Church. Please collect before Christmas. As we neared the end of the raffle all that remained were children's toys. Instead of disappointing adults whose tickets were drawn but had no need of toys, we tried something new. Gathering the children and parents together we showed the prize and asked who would like a chance to win it. Fr Anthony wrote a number down, the range of which depended on the number of children interested. Children were asked to pick a number within the range. Matching number won.



Finally, just to say "Thank You" to all who bought or sold tickets, and prize donors. All who decorated and set up the Hall, those who helped with the serving, Barman Jenson and Fr. Anthony. A special thanks to all who cleared away after the Celebrations. Last but not least. Thank You Santa! Hope you get some rest after all your travelling on Christmas Eve. Love from all in St. Erconwald's.



The Chameleons

An Amateur Dramatic Group based in Wembley. Meet at St. Erconwald's Parish Hall on Mondays and Thursday 8.00pm to 10.00pm.




THE CHAMELEONS
AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

PRESENTS

BOX
020 8

Verdict

by Agatha Christie

7th - 9th July 2022




World's RSC 112 Carlton Avenue East, T16mt

Friday & Saturday • 7:45pm •
Sunday • 2:30pm •

Adults: £14.00 & Concessions: £12

Production of Verdict is presented by arrangement with Co. Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.coordtheatricals.com
Agatha Christie Limited. All rights reserved. AGATHA CHRISTIE is a registered trademark of Agatha Christie Limited in the UK and elsewhere. All rights reserved.
www.thechameleons.co.uk /thechameleons




THE CHAMELEONS
AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

... PROUDLY PRESENTS ...

Dick Whittington

A PLAYWORTH BY ROBERT SPILNER & RAULPH EVERETT

16 - 17 DECEMBER 2023

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, THE AVENUE, WEMBLEY HA9 9QL

SATURDAY 16th DECEMBER 2023
2 PM & 6 PM

SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 2023
2 PM

Special performances on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th December at 6 pm & 8 pm

OFFICE 020 8

www.thechameleons.co.uk /thechameleons

noda
Nottingham Open Dramatic Association




THANK YOU

Things happen in church because people make it happen. We thank the following who made it "happen" this year, [the fear in doing this is leaving people out, so if we leave you out please accept our apologies and above all accept our thanks.]

Parish Council and the Finance Committee

Book-keeper: Penny Donetti [Finances, Yearly Accounts & Gift Aid] and Philip Donetti and Frank Arrojo.

Hall Manager/Repository: Elizabeth Patten and team: Celia Cover, Pauline Lane & Eva O'Connor.

Safeguarding Reps: Rose Yip Heung Win & Maria Rogers.

Stewards: Selwyn Ferrao, Pauline Lane, Patricia O'Reilly, Eva O'Connor.

Eucharistic Ministers - Readers - Altar Servers

Offertory Collectors: Selwyn Ferrao, Pauline Lane, Barbara Hope, Eileen Jozsa, Jenson Santos, Agnieska Torbus.

Choir: Monica Szumilo [Leader] Paula DeSouza, Agatha Ferrao, Evette Govan and Martin and Stella Murray.

Catechists: Joseph Psaila, Bernie Gillen, Rose Yip, Nancy Chu and Holly Cook.

Communications: David Pearson, Church Services Ltd

Social Committee - St. Patrick's Committee - International Day Committee

Church Cleaning Team: Karen Stiell, Pauline Lane, Eileen O'Connell, Pat and Eva O'Connor and Linet D'Silva.

Flowers: Barbara Hope

Parishioner Contact: to all who keep contact with our housebound parishioners.

CAFOD Team

The Larder: Sr. Philomena

The Passage: All who helped prepare the gift bags for *The Passage*

General maintenance and church refurbishment: Joseph Psaila, Patricia O'Reilly, Andrew (AMD Plumbing), Iain Hopkins, Pat O'Connor, Maeve & John Cronin, Stuart and The Chameleons and the Late Don Coyle.

Gardens and Grounds: Tom Boyne and the Coyle family.

Improvements to Church and Grounds

We have managed to make some much needed improvements during the year.

Church: Upgrade of our Emergency lights and signs; extra lights on the Sanctuary; outside the main entrance to the Church; Microphones for the Choir. (Iain Hopkins & Antony Conway)

Car Park: Soak away which caused all the flooding problems (Cascadia) Fence repairs (Tom Boyne).

Gardens: Coyle Family and Tom Boyne, the gardens look wonderful now.

To these establishments who have been very supportive of St. Erconwald's Church: G. Saville & Son Ltd., B.L.Joshi, Clean Scene, Arch PaperLinks Ltd, Blue Oyster, Bryan Maher & Co. & The Chameleon's.

*A huge thank you
to all who have supported St. Erconwald's
either in a spiritual, financial or practical manner
over the past year.
We pray that you keep well
and that your faith remains strong.*

॥ श्री ॥

B.L. JOSHI UK LTD.

Import - Retail Shop
208 Ealing Road, Alperton
Wembley Middx, HAO 4QG,
Tel. 0044 208 9030653 / 9022600



**Various Fabrics, Various Sarees
Visit this shop before shopping**

Georgette, Silk, Polyester, Cotton, Viscosa, Lining,
Punjabi suits, Religious books, etc.



St. Erconwald's Catholic Church
112 Carlton Avenue East, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8NB
Tel: 020 8904 6031

E-mail: wembley3@rcdow.org.uk Website: www.erconwald.org.uk
Microsite: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wembleyprestonroad/sterconwald>
Live-streaming: <https://www.churchservices.tv/wembley3>

MAKING A DONATION VIA OUR WEBSITE

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wembleyprestonroad/donate/>

Via Dona [the company who supply our card readers].

<https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=268>

Donations, Mass Intentions and Repository payments can also be made via new card readers in Church

[If you are a tax payer, please Gift Aid your donation]

This Parish is part of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee
Charity No. 233699

PARISH PRIEST

Father Anthony Psaila

PARISH OFFICE:

See the weekly newsletter or visit: <http://www.erconwald.org.uk>

PARISH HALL LETS:

Elizabeth Patten: wembley3@rcdow.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING REPS:

Rose Yip wembley3sq1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Maria Rogers wembley3sq2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday Vigil: 5.30pm; Sunday: 10.00am and 11.30am

CONFESSIONS: Saturday 4.30 - 5.00pm

HOLY HOUR AND BENEDICTION: Wednesday 10.00-11.00am

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday, Tuesday ,Wednesday, and Friday: 9.30am.