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Pope's Easter Message

Conscious of the danger that the war in Ukraine could escalate and even lead to a nuclear war, Pope Francis used his traditional Easter message to the city of Rome and to the world to plead for peace.

Speaking to those assembled in St Peter's Square and to the countless millions who were watching on television, he reminded us that the first message of the Risen Christ to those who mourned him was one of peace.

"We emerged from two years of pandemic, which took a heavy toll," said the pope. "It was time to come out of the tunnel together, hand in hand, pooling our strengths and resources... Instead, we are showing that we still have within us the spirit of Cain, who saw Abel not

as a brother, but as a rival, and thought about how to eliminate him." He went on to say that we need the crucified and risen Lord so that we can believe in the victory of love and hope for reconciliation. Today, more than ever, we need him to stand in our midst and repeat to us: 'Peace be with you!'

"May there be peace for war-torn Ukraine, so sorely tried by the violence and destruction of the cruel and senseless war into which it was dragged. In this terrible night of suffering and death, may a new dawn of hope soon appear! Let there be a decision for peace. May there be an end to the flexing of muscles while people are suffering," he said.

The pope begged that we do not get used to war, and he called on all national leaders to hear the people's plea for peace. He reflected on the disturbing question posed by men like Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein in the mid twentieth century: 'Shall we put an end to the human race or shall mankind renounce war?'

Pope Francis referred to the millions of refugees, displaced persons, divided families, elderly people and children whose lives had been torn apart in Ukraine and elsewhere. "As we look at them," Francis said, "we cannot help but hear their cry of pain, along with that of all those other children who suffer throughout our world: those dying of hunger or lack of medical care, those who are victims of abuse and violence and those denied the right to be born."

He prayed for peace in the Middle East, in Afghanistan and Myanmar, and for those parts of Africa suffering violence.

Yet he also saw the generosity, the numerous acts of charity among those welcoming migrants and refugees, and he prayed, "May the conflict in Europe also make us more concerned about other situations of conflict, suffering and sorrow, situations that affect all too many areas of our world, situations that we cannot overlook and do not want to forget."

The first Latin American pope also prayed that the Risen Christ may "accompany and assist the people of Latin America, who in some cases have seen their social conditions worsen in these difficult times of pandemic, exacerbated as well by instances of crime, violence, corruption and drug trafficking."

Pope Francis concluded his Easter message to the world with these words: "Dear brothers and sisters, every war brings in its wake consequences that affect the entire human family: from grief and mourning to the drama of refugees, and to the economic and food crisis, the signs of which we are already seeing. Faced with the continuing signs of war, as well as the many painful setbacks to life, Jesus Christ, the victor over sin, fear and death, exhorts us not to surrender to evil and violence. May we be won over by the peace of Christ! Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone's primary responsibility!"



Comedy of Errors

The Friends of All Saints Church, in Houghton (Post Code for those wishing to use GPS, is SO20 6LJ) have booked the professional theatre company, “This is my Theatre”, to give a performance of Shakespeare’s “The Comedy of Errors” in their church on the evening of Saturday 11th June 2022. The church is All Saints Church, Church Lane, Houghton, SO20 6LJ

The play, a story of mistaken identity, will be performed by only three actors and a musician and it promises to be a lot of fun. Set in what is now Sicily, the play is about two sets of identical twins accidentally separated at birth. When one pair travel to Ephesus where the other pair happen to live there follows a series of mishaps and incidents which really do create a comedy of errors.

Tickets are £15 for adults and £5 for children under 12. Wine and canapes will be served prior to the performance at 6.30 pm and the performance will commence at 7.30pm.

For further details or to order tickets please contact Mrs Sue Marshall on mobile number 07964 803084 or email susanmarshall42@icloud.com or Mrs Julie Moldon on mobile number 07795 177724 or email jmmoldon@googlemail.com

The group “This is my Theatre” is a Sussex based company which tours throughout the UK. They create work for a wide variety of historic buildings, churches, purpose-built theatres or open-air venues.

While the main aim of the company is to produce classical plays and literature accessible to all, particularly those living in rural communities, as specialists in making performances for all spaces, they also create commissioned works to bring to life events linked to specific venues and to engage visitors.

They regularly work with various charities and privately owned buildings to offer communities high quality theatre locally.

Their first production was Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet, performed initially at St Botolph's Church, cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust (The CCT) nestled in the South Downs near Steyning. Due to the popularity of the performance, they then toured Sussex and Surrey with The CCT later that same year and haven't looked back since!

Wisdom House

Wisdom Centre is a tranquil meeting space offering warm hospitality. We are set amongst beautiful gardens in the centre of the historic market town of Romsey. Able to accommodate and cater for up to 40 guests in our dining room, and up to 100 guests for a networking event, informal occasion or reception. Wisdom Centre offer a variety of meeting rooms and good quality catering options for training sessions, away days, quiet days and therapy. Individuals needing a quiet, reflective space are also welcome.

Although a favourite of our spirituality guests and local people, our labyrinth garden is also enjoyed by corporate hospitality groups and individuals who value time out for reflection. If your organisation would like to include a facilitated team labyrinth session during your day at Wisdom Centre, we would be delighted to arrange this for you. All guests and any member of the public are welcome to visit our labyrinth at any time.

Wisdom Centre welcomes organisations as diverse as healthcare, spirituality, carers, law, charities, technology, therapy and counselling. Events at Wisdom Centre include our programme of community and spirituality events, charity and fundraising events, receptions and celebrations.

Wisdom Centre is a ministry of the Daughters of Wisdom an international congregation of Religious Women. We welcome visitors who would like to view the centre; in choosing Wisdom Centre as a venue, you are supporting the charitable aims of the Centre and the Daughters of Wisdom. *(Ctd on page 3)*

Friends of the Holy Land

During the last year, many people found ways to raise funds to help Friends of the Holy Land keep children in their schools during the pandemic. This year, FHL want to help the most vulnerable to create a sustainable and hopeful future through their work in healthcare, family support, education, and housing.

Many Christians lost their jobs as pilgrimages and tourism ground to halt in the pandemic, while communities desperately need skilled individuals to fill key roles. FHL are developing new programmes to provide skills training, small business mentoring and small business start-up loans. These will help Christians gain stable employment without being dependent on tourism.

Friends of the Holy Land have long supported individual young people with funding for further education. Local vocational training centres provide excellent training and some 90% of their students walk straight into a job.

With no government funding, many families struggle to afford the fees. As a result, many school leavers are unable to access these vocational courses, gain skills or find work.

Friends of the Holy Land are creating a new scholarship programme for training in occupations where there is a shortage of skilled workers. The grants being offered will help students go for the qualifications that they need to work in IT, hospitality, plumbing, nursing, and electrical engineering. Some of these courses are open to anyone of working age, so FHL will be able to help adults whose jobs have disappeared in the wake of the pandemic to re-train.

Friends of the Holy Land are asking for support. One way of helping is to undertake the challenge to walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem – not actually in the Holy Land itself but by covering the hundred miles in your own neighbourhood, over as many days as you want, by walking, cycling, jogging, roller skating, riding a donkey or pretty much any way you want, as an individual, family or team, and get people to sponsor you. Ideally you should try to complete the challenge by Pentecost Sunday (5th June) but you can take as long as you want.

You can register by visiting friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pentecost22. Once you have registered you will have access to a map on which you can update your milage covered and learn about some of the places you have “travelled through”.

You can, of course, sponsor someone who is making the virtual journey, or just give a donation by going to the Friends of the Holy Land website. Any donation, large or small, will help fellow Christians build a future beyond the pandemic.



(Ctd from page 2) With the onset of Spring, the gardens at Wisdom House are looking glorious with hundreds of hyacinths lining the driveway – and all are welcome to visit and enjoy them along with the Labyrinth.

The gardens will be on show on **Sunday 29th May** as part of the **National Gardens Scheme**. The staff will be offering refreshments on the Rose Patio.

The Reception Team are now taking bookings for the following events and they look forward to seeing you soon.

Discover Your Personal Myth in Your Relationships - Saturday 21st May 2022 - a workshop day facilitated by Martin Handy

A Day of Personal Wellbeing - Saturday 18th June 2022 - Come along and experience yoga, sound bath, Reiki, meditation, mindfulness and some creativity.

Meditation: We continue to hold weekly in-person meditation every Wednesday evening 7.30pm-8.30pm. Numbers are still limited so please contact reception to book your place - please feel free to call 01794 830206 or email us.

If you would like to know more about our meditation groups or to receive these weekly meditations into your inbox please contact us: reception@wisdomhouseromsey.co.uk

All our events are subject to Covid restrictions and client safety at the time.

These boots are made for walking...

St Francis of Assisi Pilgrimage

Florence to Rome 340 miles

Hi, my name is Ann May and I am a parishioner here at St John The Baptist Church. I am walking from Florence to Rome on the St Francis Way, to raise funds for the Andover Food Bank. The route, some 340 miles long, connects places of significance in the life of St Francis of Assisi. I begin my journey on the 2nd May 2022 in Florence and follow the route across Umbria from north to south, finishing in Rome at the end of May.

Every year many pilgrims and walkers follow this path, passing hermitages, sanctuaries, ancient forests, olive groves and valleys rich in art and history. St Francis abandoned his comfortable lifestyle for a life of poverty and simplicity. During the Middle Ages he traversed the ridges and valleys of the Apennines, looking for God's signs in nature and talking to people about peace, humility and brotherhood.



If you would like to sponsor me, you can either:

Option 1:

write your name and donation pledge on a Sponsorship Form which you can find at the back of the parish church, fold it and put it in the box on the table. Please do not leave money in that box. *I will collect your donations in June 2022 after I have completed the walk.*

Option 2

or you can donate by going to the web page

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/way-of-st-francis>. All donations online go directly to the Andover Food Bank.

Thank you for reading my story and helping our local Andover Food Bank. If you wish to follow my pilgrimage, I will provide regular updates on the above web page.

Concern Over Computer Game

While computers have numerous benefits for young people, there are elements which can be dangerous for young minds. Despite the filters and safeguarding measures used by media platforms, and the controls employed by parents, some questionable material is still present on seemingly harmless sites.

INEQE is a Safeguarding group that specialises in delivering comprehensive safeguarding reviews, training and cutting-edge products and services useful for teachers and parents. Last year, they carried out an Online Safety Review on the game *Poppy Playtime* which is a PC horror game that involves an unnamed protagonist investigating a mystery in an abandoned toy factory. As the player, you roam around the factory and collect clues to solve the mystery of what has happened. You must solve puzzles while trying to survive the “vengeful toys” left behind.

One of the game’s most popular characters is “Huggy Wuggy”, which is a giant, horrifying, blue creature with wide red lips, vicious teeth, bulging eyes and long limbs. It follows the player as he or she tries to complete the game, appearing unexpectedly and trying to catch the player. If the player is caught, he or she is eaten by a grinning Huggy Wuggy.

Now, this popular character from the game, Huggy has reignited safeguarding concerns due to reports of online challenges and disturbing content featuring the character. Although *Poppy Playtime* was released last year, there has been a recent surge in the creation of Huggy Wuggy-related content, alongside reported playground-style challenges based on the character.

The Dorset Police Cyber Protection Officer has recently released a statement, warning parents that children may be viewing graphic fan-made videos that are popping up on platforms such as YouTube and TikTok.

Some created videos feature songs alongside animation, designed to be upsetting and ‘creepy’. The hashtag ‘huggywuggy’ has over 2.9B views on TikTok. Due to the name of the character, these videos are often ‘slipping through the net’ of platforms’ safeguarding measures like content filtering and age-restrictions.

Amongst the information on the new version that developers have released, is the addition of new characters, including Mommy Long Legs and Kissy Missy. Like Huggy Wuggy, these new characters have arguably ‘innocent’ names that may sound child-friendly but could be visually disturbing and upsetting for children.

There are multiple risks that can arise from children and young people being exposed to frightening content before they are prepared. These risks include creation of additional anxiety and stress and creating new and unnecessary fears of the “Bogeyman” variety and fear of things that have never been a worry before.

INEQE suggest that if the child in your care comes across something scary or disturbing online they should **stop** what they are doing and turn off their screen or device, **pause** to take a breath and try to stay calm, **think** about something that makes them happy, and **talk** to an adult they trust about what they saw and how it made them feel.

Further information is available on the INEQE website: www.inieqe.com

Seminaries

Although there is concern over the lack of priestly vocations in the United Kingdom, and indeed in Europe generally, the picture is somewhat different in some other parts of the world. In Nigeria, **Bigard Memorial Seminary**, Enugu started as St. Paul's Seminary, Onitsha in 1922, with both a minor and senior seminary on the same campus. After several moves it finally settled in its present site in 1951 when it was decided to build one regional seminary for both Western and Eastern Nigeria. The seminary was named Bigard Memorial Seminary to perpetuate the memory of two French ladies: mother and daughter-Stephanie and Jeanne Bigard, foundresses of the *Opus Sancti Petri Apostoli* that supplied the funding for the building.

By the mid 1970s, there were over 600 seminarians studying for the priesthood, including students from Cameroon, Sierra Leon and Liberia. Towards the end of the last century, the increase in vocations and the perceived need for more effective formation of students led to the founding of two more campuses of the Bigard Seminary at Awka and Onitsha named John Paul II Major Seminary, Awka and Blessed Iwene Tansi Major Seminary, Onitsha, respectively. There are currently over 800 students in either the philosophy or theology courses. Last year there were 79 students ordained to the priesthood, and 46 students ordained Deacons.

Christ the King Seminary in Kenya has another success story, although the past couple of years have proved extremely difficult. The largest seminary in Kenya had to try to teach its students online during the pandemic. The seminary rolled out distant learning programmes, but internet access was almost non-existent in some areas of the country. Some students inevitably “dropped out”, but the seminary is back in business with over 300 students. Last year they had seven of their students ordained.

Asia also has thriving seminaries, though they too have had severe problems. **Our Lady of Lanka National Seminary** in Sri Lanka was forced to close for a time as a third wave of the pandemic swept the island. The seminary introduced different ways of maintaining its formation programme, and last year 26 students were ordained across the country's six dioceses.

Meanwhile in India, **St John's Regional Seminary** also had to close during “lockdown”. The new academic year was opened via Zoom sessions, though again students in the more remote rural areas had problems with internet and phone access. Following the government's relaxation of Covid rules, the seminarians were able to return in batches to continue their studies. 19 seminarians were ordained to the diaconate and are on their way to their priestly ordination.

The United States, always likely to have more of everything, has over 5,000 seminarians studying in over fifty seminaries in the States and the Pontifical North American College in Rome. Australia has seen a rise in the number of seminarians. New South Wales has the **Good Shepherd Seminary** in Sydney has 44 seminarians, double the number five years ago and also 18 students in the relatively new **Redemptoris Mater Seminary**. The small diocese of Wagga Wagga, with a Catholic population of 62,00 has 12 men studying for the priesthood.

Let us continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, so that God's Word may spread throughout the world.

Belfast (2021)

This film is a gem – flawless. It doesn't miss a single beat. It's Director Kenneth Branagh's look at his growing up in 1969, at age 9, from his own eyes, at the start of the Troubles. The film covers the period from August 1969 to about a year later when the family removed to live in England and is mainly confined to those few streets of their local and very working-class Community.



Branagh's absolute masterstroke (and it truly is) is that the whole film is both shot in black and white not colour - and in hard-edged, sharply focused and not grainy, black and white. Both these elements are crucial in ensuring that this film works. Why? If it had been shot in colour it would have simply evoked all the news footage (in colour) of the Troubles on television screens back then. If the black and white had been grainy it would have felt “period” and “filmed then”. Shooting the film in black and white and in sharp focus gives it the emotional authenticity and dramatic impact of something that's happening right NOW, in the present and not way back in the past.

With this as the firm bedrock foundation, Ken Branagh builds his narrative slowly and surely, one brick at a time. As with all proper conflict narratives it begins when everything is fine. The Community is mainly Protestant families living peaceably alongside a few Catholic families. Then Protestant Vigilantes turn up, terrorise the Catholic families into leaving and enforce Paramilitary control of the area, exacting obedience and cash from the families in the streets they control. British troops are deployed and an uneasy, not-quite, peace carries on.

Into this mix people carry on with their lives as best and as normally as they can. The young Ken goes to school and is smitten with the girl at the desk in front. The Mother has to be the strength in the house as the Father is often away in England for work as a joiner. The Father comes home as much as he can and it's clearly a household where there is much love and protection and one that is very much a rock standing against the storms of the outside world. And it needs to be.

As the months go on the situation gets worse; the Father is threatened by the Paramilitary boss and Ken's Grandfather is finally killed by all the coal dust he ingested as a miner. The situation gets so fraught in the Community that the Family decide to leave to live in England and the last scene is them on the bus to the Airport with the Grandmother wishing them well. As the film ends it goes to colour and the present day and a valediction by the Director himself, “For those that left. For those that stayed. And for those that were lost.” It don't get more personal that. This film ain't a journey, it's an emotional roller-coaster. And it's one worth getting on with him for the ride.

John Newland

The Pope's Intentions

The Pope's Intention for May



Every year, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month. From time to time, the Holy Father may add a second prayer intention related to current events or urgent needs, like disaster relief. The second prayer request will help mobilize prayer and action related to the urgent situation. The Pope's monthly prayer intentions alternate between prayers for Evangelization and prayers for a Universal theme.

The prayer intention for May is: *For faith-filled young people:*

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.

Reflection on the Pope's Intention

Our Church has been blessed with many young saints. And even more so today, young people have contemporary men and women from whom they can take inspiration like the tennis playing Bl. Chiara Luce Badano or the internet savvy Bl. Carlo Acutis. Young saints of old also inspire like St. Dominic Savio or St. Maria Goretti. In this month's intention, our Holy Father invites us to consider the youthful witness of Mary, who as a teenage girl, accepted God's plan and mission for her life as Mother of God. When she received the visit from the Archangel Gabriel, she did not hesitate to say "fiat" or let it be done to me. Mary lived her life to the fullest because she lived her life in conformity to the will of God. She only wanted what God wanted for her life.

The fullness of Mary's life resulted from making her home with God himself who became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Mary's life is one worthy of imitation for all Christian believers and especially for young people. There is a lot of noise in the world today which demands the attention of young people often distracting them from listening to God. Mary listened to the angel, and she listened to the words and teachings of Jesus. She listened deep within her heart which compelled her to visit her cousin Elizabeth.

Mary teaches us to listen for the quiet whisper of God in our hearts. Attentive listening to God will enable a deeper discernment as young people hear the call to priesthood, consecrated life, or to marriage. The courageous Mary of Nazareth asked her son at Cana to aid a couple as they celebrated their marriage. Mary's courage ushered in the Lord's hour and His ministry but also generated faith among the disciples as St. John tells us "His disciples began to believe in him": (John 2: 11).

As the mother of God and the mother of all believers, Mary dedicates her life in service of humanity by her prayers of intercession and mediation of grace. By Mary's prayers, may all young people live their life to the fullest in conformity to God's will, listening and discerning, believing and serving.

Fr. Edward Looney

(Fr. Edward is a priest of the Diocese of Green Bay, a Marian theologian, host of the podcast *How They Love Mary*, and author of several books. He currently serves as vice-president of the Mariological Society of America)

Events at Douai Abbey

As the monastery emerges from the heaviest restrictions imposed during the Covid pandemic, they are able to resume offering a series of pastoral events. Events being offered in June and July include:



Saturday 25 June:

Journeying towards the End of Life Walking the Path & Accompanying Others.

This Reflection Day will be led by Revd Ann Fulton & Peter Bowe OSB.

You are invited to come and engage with some of the spiritual questions which can arise as we ourselves or someone dear to us approaches the end of life. For some this may follow the unwelcome news of a palliative care diagnosis, for others life may be drawing to its natural close. (Palliative Care is treatment, care & support of those with a life-limiting illness & of their families.)

We shall reflect together on what “end of life” may mean, how easy (or not) it feels to talk freely about death, and what “spiritual care” can be for people today. We shall look at some practical ‘tools’ for accompanying others, the meaning of our own life & how to help others seek their own, sharing darkness and hope, and how we might talk about God. We hope you will bring questions. It will be a gentle day with room for personal space & self-care, with time for reflection & prayer; there will not be too many participants.

Revd. Ann Fulton has been Spiritual Care Coordinator (chaplain) to St Margaret’s Hospice Care in Somerset for 8 years; she was previously a Church of England parish priest. Fr Peter Bowe is a monk of Douai Abbey currently running its Pastoral Programme. Charge: £25 (payable on the day).

Saturday 2 July

Soul Journey with JS Bach (2) – Holy Spirit.

This will be a Reflection Day led by Euan Tait "The water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." says Jesus in John 4.13.

Through Bach's great pilgrim cantatas, you will explore the dance and joy of life in the Holy Spirit, and the constant source of refreshment the Holy Spirit is for us in our vocational struggles.

Euan Tait is an international librettist & experienced retreat leader who works in many UK communities, eg. Ammerdown, Minsteracres & Belmont. For many years a member of L’Arche at Bognor Regis, he now teaches at a college in western England. Charge: £25 (payable on the day)

Tuesday 5 -Friday 8 July

Lectio Divina Retreat. This will be led by Father Gervase Holdaway OSB.

You are invited to experience the ancient art of praying with Scripture. Once practiced by all Christians, it is the slow, contemplative prayer which enables us to listen to God speaking through his Word and respond prayerfully. The retreat will allow time for solitude, reflection & sharing.

Fr Gervase Holdaway is oblate master, formerly parish priest and director of this pastoral programme. Starting Tuesday evening & ending with Friday breakfast. Charge: £200 / shared room £160pp (payable at the retreat please)

Bookings for Individual Guided Retreats and any other enquiries about the Pastoral Programme should be directed to Fr Peter Bowes by calling 0118 971 5333.

Venerable Pauline Jaricot

Later this month, on Sunday 22nd May, Pauline Jaricot creator of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith – now an integral part of the Pontifical Mission charity “Missio” – will be beatified.

Pauline Jaricot was a remarkable young woman possessed of a formidable faith, who believed that if we all give a little and pray together, we can share God’s love throughout the world.

She was born in 1799 to wealthy parents living in Lyons. In her teens Pauline was an attractive and high-spirited girl who was able to enjoy the good life. Her life took a dramatic turn when she suffered a severe fall which caused nerve damage affecting her movement and her speech. Her older brother and her mother both died at around the same time, and Pauline became more withdrawn. Her health deteriorated further.

With the help of a local priest, Pauline found her faith strengthened, and her physical health also began to improve. As soon as she could walk, she made a visit to the sanctuary at Fourvière where she committed herself to Mary.

Her view of life changed too. She abandoned the trappings of wealth, gave away her possessions and she began to take care of people living in poverty. and made daily trips to a hospice to tend and accompany those who were dying. She started catechism sessions for the young workers from the city’s silk factories.

Pauline became increasingly devoted to God. Along with her brother Phileas who was studying in a seminary, Pauline began helping missionaries overseas. At 19, she decided to support them through prayer and material help.

Pauline founded the “Living Rosary” in which groups of 15 people prayed the Rosary together daily. Today there are around 11 million devotees throughout the world. She established a penny collection among her father’s employees: the first social missionary network. Supporters met in small groups to donate pennies, pray and exchange news about ‘the missions’. In turn they created more groups, and by 1822 the network had grown into the Propagation of the Faith.

When only 30 years old, Pauline suffered a heart attack. She had to step back from some of her charitable works, but she established a community of young women devoted to prayer and named them Daughters of Mary.

Her health continued to deteriorate, but in 1835 she travelled to Rome for a personal audience with Pope Gregory XVI. During a visit to the Shrine of St Philomena in Mugnano she made a miraculous recovery.

Returning to Lyons, she built a factory where workers producing devotional objects and sacred art could earn a good living and work in decent surroundings. Sadly, her business partner was dishonest, and the venture collapsed leaving Pauline destitute. She died shortly afterwards aged 63, but her missionary society lived on and grew.

Father Thomas Jackson, a Mill Hill Missionary, adopted Pauline’s “penny collection” and established the Red Box with which we are all familiar. To this day, in England and Wales, the Missio Red Box in partnership with the Mill Hill Missionaries, fulfils Pauline’s vision.



A Bear For Our Time

In the late 1930s-1940s, Michael Bond, author of Paddington Bear, saw Jewish refugee children (Kindertransport children) passing through Reading Station from London, arriving in Britain escaping from the Nazi horrors of Europe.

Mr. Bond, touched by what he saw, recalled those memories 20 years later when he began his story of Paddington Bear. One morning in 1958, he was searching for writing inspiration and simply wrote the words: "Mr. and Mrs. Brown first met Paddington on a railway platform..."

His mind went back to those grim days when the children were rescued from tyranny. "They all had a label round their neck with their name and address on and a little case or package containing all their treasured possessions," Bond said in an interview with The Telegraph before his death in 2017. "So Paddington, in a sense, was a refugee, and I do think that there's no sadder sight than refugees."

Paddington Bear - known for his blue overcoat, bright red hat, and wearing a simple hand-written tag that says "Please look after this bear. Thank you."

Paddington embodies the appearance of many refugee children. His suitcase is an emblem of his own refugee status.

Bond recalled that "We took in some Jewish children who often sat in front of the fire every evening, quietly crying because they had no idea what had happened to their parents, and neither did we at the time. It's the reason why Paddington arrived with the label around his neck".

Michael Bond died aged 91 in 2017. The epitaph on his gravestone reads, "Please look after this bear. Thank you."

Please look after all the young Bears in Ukraine.

David Lundin



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St. Godehard

St Godehard (or Gothard) was born in Reichersdorf, a village in Bavaria. His father was employed by the canons who had taken over the Benedictine abbey of Nieder-Altaich, and as a result young Godehard was educated by the canons. His outstanding ability was drawn to the attention of the bishops of Regensburg and Passau as well as Archbishop Frederick of Salzburg, who took him to Rome and also appointed him provost to the canons while he was still only nineteen years of age. Godehard was ordained a priest shortly after.

The Benedictine rule was restored to the abbey of Nieder-Altaich in 990, and Godehard was one of several of the canons who received the monastic habit. Godehard rose to be abbot, and his installation was honoured by the presence of St Henry who was then duke of Bavaria and who later became emperor. Henry II and his wife Empress Cunegund held Godehard in great esteem. A sash embroidered for him by the Empress was venerated as a relic for many years.

The excellent order kept by Godehard at Nieder-Altaich so impressed St Henry that he sent Godehard to reform the monasteries of Tegernsee, Hersfeld and Kremsmünster. Leaving his deputy to look after the monastery at Nieder-Altaich, Godehard set about this difficult series of tasks which he accomplished while still retaining contact with his own monastery. It is believed that over a twenty-five-year period, Godehard oversaw the reform of nine monasteries.

In 1022 St Bernward, bishop of Hildesheim, died and Emperor Henry nominated Godehard to be his successor. Godehard had no choice but to comply with the wishes of the monarch who was supported in his selection of Godehard by the local clergy. Although he was already sixty years of age, Godehard threw himself into the work of his diocese with the zest and energy of a young man. He built and restored churches, he fostered the cause of sound education – especially in the cathedral school – he established such strict order in his cathedral chapter that it was said to resemble a monastery, and he had a swampy piece of land on the edge of the city drained and built a hospice where the sick and the poor could be tenderly cared for. While he showed a great love for those really in need, he had a less generous approach towards able-bodied tramps who claimed aid at the hospice. He would only allow these “peripatetics” to stay for two or three days before sending them on their way.

Bishop Godehard died in 1038 and he was canonized by Pope Innocent II in 1131. The following year his relics were translated from the abbey church to the cathedral at Hildesheim, and work started on the building of a Benedictine monastery under the patronage of St Godehard. Many miracles were attributed to him and veneration of the saint spread through Scandinavia, Switzerland, and Eastern Europe. His help was invoked against dropsy, childhood sicknesses, hailstones and gout. His feast is commemorated on 5th May.



From the School

During Lent the whole school took part in CAFOD's "Walk Against Hunger", walking a total of an amazing 553 km. So far this has raised £384 which will support CAFOD's work throughout the world fighting malnutrition. Well deserved congratulations to all who took part. The children displayed great enthusiasm planning routes and walking, and parents gave considerable support joining in the walks.

During the Easter holidays the pond area behind Year 3 and 4 classrooms is being further developed to include a canopy and all-weather flooring, so come rain or shine Years 3 and 4 will have access to outdoor space to support their learning. This has been made possible by parental donations to the Building Fund. These voluntary donations enable the school to continue to provide the best possible teaching and learning environment for the children.

Year 4 have spent a week travelling daily to Farleigh School to complete their swimming programme. There was plenty of determination and bravery as the children progressed through a series of activities testing skills and endurance, and they all came through smiling and with a sense of achievement.

Year 3 have recently been writing their own poems, using Kit Wright's poem "The Magic Box" for inspiration. Having discussed what made them laugh, what seemed puzzling, what they enjoyed, they chose what they would like to put into their own "Magic Box". They all enjoyed creating and presenting their own writing in a fun and creative way.

Two football teams for St John the Baptist School joined ten other local teams for a town tournament. The A team just missed out on the main semi-final but won the "Plate" competition after a nerve-wracking penalty shoot-out. The B team, many of whom were representing the school at football for the first time, performed admirably against some A teams from larger schools.

As the term ended, Key Stage 2 welcomed family and friends joining them as they led the Stations of the Cross. Through readings, prayer, drama, dance and song, the children thoughtfully and respectfully re-enacted Jesus's journey to the cross from his arrest to his being laid in the tomb. Friends and family were encouraged to leave a prayer or reflection as they left; these were shared with the children who appreciated the prayers and responses.



Healing Prayers Group

The Healing Prayers Group meets in the parish church each Tuesday evening between 7.00pm and 7.30pm.

If you would like to choose a theme, scripture reading and music, or would like a copy of the El Shaddai Healing Prayer or if you would like any further information, please contact Frank Saunders on 01264 365764

Pope Welcomes Polish President

Last month, Pope Francis, received President Andrzej Duda of Poland. Their discussions centred round current humanitarian problems particularly the plight of Ukrainian refugees.

During the meeting in the Vatican, the Holy Father gifted President Duda a medallion of St. Martin and copies of his Message for Peace 2022, the Document on Human Brotherhood and the book on the *Statio Orbis* of 27 March 2020, by the Vatican Publishing House.

The Polish President reciprocated with a painting depicting Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, who died in 1981, a photo album of the events of the first year of his current term, and a series of music CDs featuring works by Polish composer Chopin.

The president invited Pope Francis to visit Poland, suggesting it would be a powerful gesture for the many Ukrainian refugees who have found shelter in Poland. The president said it would be like visiting two countries at once.

The First Lady ((Pierwsza Dama Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej) Agata Kornhauser-Duda, a former teacher, later joined her husband and the Pope for an informal conversation.

President Duda later met Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and the Secretary for Relations with States, Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher. The Holy See Press Office said the "cordial" talks in the Secretariat of State were devoted to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and to security and peace in Europe. The discussions focused primarily on the situation of Ukrainian refugees and displaced persons, and their humanitarian assistance.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), nearly 4 million people have fled Ukraine since Russia began its assault on the country on 24 February.

Refugees fleeing the war have escaped to the neighbouring countries, primarily Poland, Romania, Moldova, Hungary and Slovakia. Most of the refugees have fled into Poland, which is currently hosting some 2.3 million.



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Please pray for those who have gone before us in April

Fred Flood & David Bull

and for those whose anniversaries occur in May

Anna McCracken, Joseph Cochran, Mary O'Neil, Elizabeth Hill, Annie Nottingham, Joseph Graham, Ethel Turner, Louise Girling, Montague Irwin, Kay Watson, Frank MacKrell, Dean McDonnell, Fr Francis O'Shea, Bridget Coffey, Mary Lonsdale, Fr C Mulholland, Fr D. McCarthy SMM, Kirsten Morgan, Hilda Bell, Nora Hurley, Ellen Kenny, Mary Richardson, Percy Milner, Josie Corbet, Myra Walker, Shirley Stringer, Joseph James, Mollie Stace, Edmund Plowden, Marguerite McGarvey, Mary McGarvey, Mrs O'Kelly, Peggy O'Neil, Annie and Bernard Madden, Patricia Bradfield, John Perrier, Martin Mannion, Margaret Murray, Bill Edwards, Sister Mary Damien, Mary Sainsbury, John Myles, Mary Lee, Danny Gallagher, Maramichela Holloway, Walter Stace, Fr Handley, Christine Simpson, Col. Macfee, Susan Ingram, Thomas Faye, Charles Cooke, Mary James, Catherine Fairmington, John Le Clezio, Frank Hynes, Antonio Da Silva, Sister Marie Columba, Agnes Magrath, Sister Marguerite Marie De La Trinitie, Jennifer Sutton, Arnold Baxter, Muriel Crompton, Joanna Gray, Arthur Stubbs, Mrs Sheridan, Moira Annaud, Kathleen Murray, Eugene Watson, MaryWicks, Mary Jordan, John Campbell, Frederick Wiltshire, Richard Johnson, Sarah Toland, Eileen Bell, Ethel Turner, Eamon O'Dwyer, John Monks, Margaret Monks, Debbie Tuite, Nancy Murphy, Conrad Bartosik, Madge Redish, James Leader, Catherine Farrington, Henry Davins, Lillian bell, Michael Clarke, John Sheehan, Josephine Corbett, Balbina Abreu de Jesus, Father Daniel Hogan SMM, Bob Grey, Ida Keeton, Laura Hougran, Rev. Paul Sutcliffe, Rev. Kenneth Freeman, Christiane Harivel, Philip Harris, Hazel Pereira, Alberto Michetti, Jane Thornton, Kathleen, Greene, John Trusler, Paul Wharton, Florrie Potter, Irene Lloyd, Mrs Atkinson, James Smith, Jim Cogan, William McFadden, Elizabeth Laversuch, Ros Quaife, Bridget Cartmel, William Moore, Harry Curley, Sister Celestina, James, Margaret Burrowes, George Brown, Maria Meager, Bob Hall, Kay Porter, Louise Gallagher Marjorie Baddeley, Fabienne Faulkner, Pat Adams, Dorothy O'Sullivan, Regina Fiedler, Eileen Morrell, Fr. Bob Ellwood SMM, Harriet Martin, Jane Weldon, John Mulcock, Adrian Stokes, Graeme Ellison & Almuth Giebertmann-Fisher.

During the month to come please remember in your prayers the following who are sick:

Patrick Pacini, Esmé Coveney, Doreen Burke, Rita Lane, Debbie Smythe, Tom Wilkins, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Sheila Muir, Therese Ayres, Sheila Roberts, Rachel McGarvie, Mary Hathaway, Rosemary Gallagher, Eileen Dickie, Warrick Allon, Christopher Brown, Lisa Ramage, Mervyn Owen, Michelle Taylor, Kay McGlynn, Mary Bradley, Wendy Rawlings, Hazel Kaye, Alyette Rident, Grace Finegan, Allan Wickens, Di Mussert, Christine Budden, Fr David Caine, and all those in need of our prayers.

If you know that anyone on this list is now happily recovered, or if you would like a name added to this list, please contact the editors.

PLEASE NOTE

Articles printed in *The JOURNAL* are printed in good faith and are not necessarily the views of the editors. Contributions must be accompanied by full name and address, which may be withheld on request. The editors reserve the right to amend all contributions. Please support our advertisers, they support us.

ENDPIECE

Many thanks to the various contributors to this month's *The JOURNAL*. The next edition will be 4th & 5th June. Contributions should be with the editors by Monday 30th May. Please leave contributions at the Presbytery or email them to: stjohnsjournal@googlemail.com