

The JOURNAL

The newspaper of the Parish of St John the Baptist, Andover.
Including: St John Fisher, Whitchurch and
The Chapel of St Theresa of Lisieux, Farleigh

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Symposium on Artificial Intelligence

Our world is marred by division and conflict, and many fear that the development of Artificial Intelligence – now often referred to as Super Intelligence – presents yet further opportunities for creating infinitely more horrific engines of war.

The first meeting of *AI4Peace – a Global biennial Symposium & International Conference* was held in September at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome. Its intention was to bring together experts and researchers to examine the role of artificial intelligence in relation to peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution, human rights and governance.

The symposium was a platform for dialogue between experts and “peace scholars” to address the challenges AI brings to technological advances and global security. Few doubt that artificial intelligence is going to alter every aspect of society, so it is reassuring that the symposium focussed on the use of AI in promoting peace, preventing conflicts, and protecting essential human rights.

Pope Leo sent a message to the participants in the first meeting of *AI4Peace* in which he stressed that the development of artificial intelligence must be guided by wisdom and charity so that technological progress may serve the dignity of every person and strengthen the bonds that unite the human family. He noted that the symposium was dedicated to exploring both opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, the protection of human rights and global governance.

In his message, which was read out by Fr Andrea Ciucci, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy for Life, during the symposium at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, Pope Leo sent “cordial good wishes to all gathered for the *AI4Peace*, Global Biennial Symposium & International Conference,” and he expressed the hope that the discussions will contribute “to a renewed and widespread commitment to placing technological innovation at the service of the common good.”

In the context of a world experiencing division and conflict, said the pope, technological development requires not only technical expertise but also a vision “inspired by wisdom and charity”, and he stressed that the aim of progress should be to “serve the dignity of every person and strengthen the bonds that unite the human family.”

The Pope concluded his message entrusting the participants’ work to the hope that it will produce lasting results, “With the assurance of his prayers that their efforts will bear lasting fruit.”

Earlier this year Pope Leo released his first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, addressing the rise of Artificial Intelligence and the need for technology to serve human dignity and the common good rather than driving inequality or replacing human conscience.

Pope Leo returned to the subject during his visit to France. Speaking at the at the Élysée Palace, the pope identified artificial intelligence as one of the major challenges facing humanity, and President Macron added the warning that “In the face of the power of digital technology, human beings must retain their rightful place. Artificial intelligence must be a servant, not a master. The digital revolution must liberate, not enslave.”

The Catholic Union will be holding a webinar on Monday 19th October at 6.00pm to explore how AI can enhance human experience rather than lessen it. Chaired by Catherine Pepinster, a well-known journalist, attendees will hear from Fr Michael Baggot (Associate Professor of Bioethics at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum) and Sam Monaghan (Chief Executive of Methodist Homes Association). Kanishka Narayan MP, Minister for Artificial Intelligence, has been invited and further panel members will be announced shortly. This webinar will draw on the practical applications of the encyclical. Those wishing to register for the webinar please email info@catholicunion.org.uk and a zoom link will be provided. Booking is essential.

St Teresa of Avila

Saint Teresa was born in Avila, Spain, March 28, 1515. She died in Alba, October 4, 1582. Her family origins have been traced to Toledo and Olmedo.

In 1528, when Teresa was 15, her mother died, leaving behind 10 children. Teresa was the "most beloved of them all." She was of medium height, and in her youth she had the reputation of being quite beautiful, retaining her fine appearance throughout her life. Her personality was extroverted, her manner affectionately buoyant, and she had the ability to adapt herself easily to all kinds of persons and circumstances. She was a skilful writer as well as an able needlewoman. She had a tendency to react enthusiastically to romantic ideas, as is illustrated by her decision, aged 7, to walk, with her brother, to the Moorish territory to be beheaded for Christ! Fortunately, they were spotted by an uncle as they were leaving the city and he took them home.



At about the age of twelve, she began to take an interest in stories of chivalry, and her father was disturbed by the romantic notions she began to harbour towards her cousin. To make matters worse, her mother died. Seeing his daughter's need of prudent guidance, her father entrusted her to the Augustinian nuns at Santa Maria de Gracia. Influenced by life in the convent school, she began to wonder if she might have a vocation to the religious life. When illness compelled her to return home to recover her strength, she spent time reading the works of St. Jerome, and became determined to enter a convent. Disregarding her father's objections, she ran away from home and entered the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation at Avila.

Her father resigned himself to her chosen way of life, but her health continued to give her trouble. While recuperating she read the Tercer Abecedario of Francis Osuna, and found a positive direction for her prayer.

Teresa grew even more ill, and her father brought her back to Avila in July 1539. On August 15 she fell into a coma so profound that she was thought to be dead. After 4 days she revived, but she remained paralyzed in her legs for 3 years. She attributed her eventual cure to St Joseph and, despite difficulty in praying, she began to have mystical experiences until she had an image of "the sorely wounded Christ" which destroyed her selfish need for the appreciation of others and allowed her to enjoy a vivid experience of God's presence within her. Sadly, many of her friends – and her confessor – cast doubts on her visions of God, claiming they were the work of the devil. But St. Peter of Alcantara counselled her: "Keep on as you are doing, daughter; we all suffer such trials."

Unhappy with attitudes within the Convent of the Incarnation, Teresa arranged for her sister to purchase a house and convert it for use as a convent where she could found a congregation in the primitive Carmelite tradition. The move met with opposition from the townspeople, the prioress of the Incarnation and the Carmelite Provincial. Eventually these objections were overcome and before the end of 1562 the foundress, as Teresa of Jesus, was authorized by the provincial to return to the new convent. There followed the 5 most peaceful years of her life, during which she wrote the Way of Perfection and the Meditations on the Canticle.

During the rest of her life she worked at establishing convents following the reformed rule. This work was often done in the face of opposition but was undaunted and indefatigable until her death. Her body was interred in Alba. Paul V declared her a blessed April 24, 1614, and in 1617 the Spanish parliament proclaimed her the Patroness of Spain. She is also St. Teresa is the patron saint of headache sufferers. Her symbol is a heart, an arrow, and a book. Gregory XV canonized her in 1622 together with SS. Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Isidore, and Philip Neri.

The Healing Prayer Group



The Healing Prayers Group meets in the parish church each Tuesday evening between 6.30pm and 7.00pm.

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 the parish office.



World Homeless Day

Head of Charity, Jenny LeLean has drawn our attention to World Homeless Day on Saturday 10th October. The Journal may be somewhat late in highlighting this event, but homelessness is an ever-present problem and one we should all think about and do something about.



enny writes: World Homeless day serves to highlight good works, benchmark progress and advocate for improved policies and funding to help prevent and end homelessness. It also aims to raise awareness about the needs of people who are currently experiencing homelessness and promote work in local communities to alleviate suffering and prevent death.

Having adequate shelter is a basic human right; one that the Church teaches as part of respecting and recognising our humanity. Ensuring everyone is able to access a safe, stable and adequate home is a way to work towards the common good and ensure that all our brothers and sisters are treated with dignity and respect.

Key drivers for homelessness include:

- **Lack of Affordable Housing** increased mortgages and rent along with stagnant wages and a lack of social housing.
- **Economic Inequality** including those struggling to cover basic living costs.
- **Family Breakdown** including relationship breakdown, domestic violence, and family disputes and young people leaving care.
- **Mental Health and Substance Misuse** can both contribute to homelessness and be exacerbated by it.

Caritas Portsmouth Homeless Resource Guide includes case studies of the projects, Breakfast at St Ed's, Southampton and the Hope Into Action partnership in Reading, prayers and reflections and guidance on what you can do if you see someone who is homeless.

This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. (Isaiah 58:6-7.)

New Ways Charity Donations

St John the Baptist parish will be running the Rotations charity shop in Whitchurch from 15th to 21st of October. We are looking for donations of good quality items to sell – books, autumn/winter clothes, bric-a-brac etc.

Donations may be left at the parish office in Andover from where they will be collected and taken to Whitchurch. Alternatively, there is a box at the back of St John Fisher church in Whitchurch. Please do not leave items outside the parish office or either church.

The charity New Ways supports the Turkana, a mostly semi-nomadic tribal people in Northern Kenya. The area experiences frequent droughts and the number of hungry children in the nursery school has been increasing. For a child to develop both physically and mentally, they require good quality nutrition during their early years.

At New Ways' nutritional rehabilitation units it costs £1.25 a week to feed one child two meals per day for six days. The units feed over 2,000 children every year and every penny donated helps to make a real difference. The feeding programme encourages more children to attend primary school get an education and to grow up healthy.

October – Month of the Rosary

October is a month dedicated to the Rosary, that universally popular devotion that helps us meditate on the life of Christ through the eyes of Mary. It is both a vocal and mental prayer, intended to draw us closer to God, seek Mary's intercession, and reflect on key events in salvation history. People pray it for personal intentions, world peace, or spiritual growth, and it is considered a powerful spiritual practice.

During October, Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) are organising a global Rosary for peace. Children throughout the world will be united in prayer through ACN's One Million Children Praying the Rosary campaign. From schools, parishes, and families young people across every continent will have come together and prayed for peace, unity, and hope in a world marked by conflict and suffering. This year's initiative will run from 1 to 7 October, culminating on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, with Pope Leo XIV joining children in prayer at the Vatican. We can all join in that prayer and continue to recite the Rosary as a daily prayer throughout the year.

At shrines such as Lourdes and Fatima, Our Lady has asked for the Rosary to be prayed, and it is a staple of many people's prayer routine. But some people seek different ways of making the Rosary more personally meaningful, and there are many books designed to help us to pray the Rosary with more understanding and greater devotion.

Books range from *The Secret of the Rosary*, written in 1650, which is St. Louis de Montfort's heartfelt appeal to clergy, sinners, and devout souls alike, weaving vivid stories and counsel to reveal the Rosary as both meditation and spiritual weapon. It is an intimate path through Jesus and Mary's joys, sorrows, and glory toward holiness.

Much more easily accessible, and available, is *Praying the Rosary* by Fr Denis McBride, described as "A Journey through scripture and art". Fr McBride's takes a fresh look at the Rosary in a beautifully illustrated book. Through the four sets of mysteries he takes his reader on a gentle journey through the twelve episodes in the lives of Jesus and Mary, offering prayerful insights on the way. The book is a Redemptorist publication and is also available as an eBook.

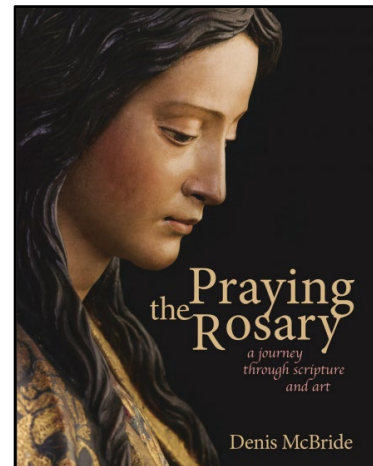
The **Marian Graces** website lists books the writer has found that helped her with her praying and meditating on the Rosary;

The first book she read about the Rosary was *The Rosary: Keeping Company with Jesus and Mary* by Karen Edmisten. Karen wasn't always a Catholic, so she addressed a lot of the issues I struggled with as a convert. She assured me that it was okay to pray the rosary, and that it wasn't idolatry, or vain repetition. She explained a brief history of the rosary, as well as how to pray it and what the mysteries are. A book worth recommending to new Catholics.

Another interesting book is *The Rosary, the Prayer that saved my Life* by Immaculee Ilibagiza, a Rwandan genocide survivor whose family was murdered. She survived with seven other women by hiding in a tiny bathroom for three months and believes that the prayers of the rosary saved her life and her soul. In this book she shares how the rosary helped her survive and to forgive her family's killers so she could go on to live a full and happy life.

The Contemplative Rosary with St John Paul II and St Teresa of Avila (see our Saint of the Month) by Dan Burke and Connie Rossini is another book recommended on the website. There are colourful illustrations, information on the Mysteries, Scripture passages and meditations to help pray the Rosary as St John Paul II wants us to pray!

A comprehensive book on the Rosary is *Champions of the Rosary* by Donald Calloway. In the first part of the book he describes the history of the Rosary through the centuries. In the second part of his book, he introduces Champions of the Rosary, 26 short biographies of saints, popes, and others who have championed the Rosary. In the 3rd part of the book he suggests ways to pray the Rosary.



New British Ambassador to the Holy See

On Friday 28th August 2026, Her Excellency Tammy Sandhu presented her credentials to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to become the new British Ambassador to the Holy See.

Ms Sandhu is the first woman from an ethnic minority background to hold the prestigious role. Over a third of British Heads of Mission overseas are women and 14% are people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Born and raised in Leicester, Ms Sandhu's parents were Indian immigrants from Punjab who came to the UK in the 1960s, setting up a successful family business selling household goods and manufacturing curtains and bedding. Decades later, their daughter has now assumed the most senior role in a British Embassy. This follows a distinguished 20-year career in the UK's Diplomatic Service, including postings in Rabat, Brussels, San Francisco, and – as a living embodiment of the historic ties between Britain and India – Chennai.

As Ambassador, Ms Sandhu will work with the Holy See and the Catholic networks to advance UK priorities including peacebuilding, climate action, AI governance, and tackling modern slavery, human trafficking, and violence against women and girls.

Upon receiving her official accreditation from Pope Leo XIV, Tammy Sandhu said: *“I was immensely proud to meet Pope Leo XIV and formally accept my appointment as British Ambassador to the Holy See. Our diplomatic engagement with the Vatican amplifies Britain's global influence and advances our work, often in parts of the world where local faith communities have the greatest impact. I only wish my parents were able to see where I am today: representing the UK abroad as a proud British Asian”*.



English Language Version of Book by Pope Leo

Last month the English version of Pope Leo XIV's book *“Freedom Under Grace: Reflections on the Spiritual Tradition That Formed Me,”* went on sale in the UK, United States, Australia, and across the Commonwealth.

The original Italian version was published by the Vatican Publishing House under the title *“Liberi sotto la Grazia.”* The English version of *“Freedom Under Grace”* is published in the UK and Australia, by the Enliven imprint of Penguin Random House UK.

The book brings together homilies, addresses, reflections, and personal writings from the time that the Pope was Prior General of the Order of St Augustin. It demonstrates the way the legacy of St Augustin shaped the spirituality and vision of the world of Fr. Robert Prevost. It opens up unique insights into the perspective of the first pope whose mother tongue is English and whose cultural heritage is American.

“We are called to be fully human in the midst of an inhuman society. Christian holiness is love, and is born in our hearts,” writes the Pope. “As Augustinians, we are called to promote life, in the depths of what it means to be truly human; we must promote those values that make true humanity possible: peace and justice, the richness present in all cultures, the beauty of creation in nature. To be truly human requires an attitude of service to others and openness to authentic dialogue.”

(Continued on the next page)

(Pope's Book Continued from previous page)

The publisher's press release notes that, Pope Leo, "drawing from the work of St. Augustine, whom he calls his spiritual father, advances a vision for life rooted in community, solidarity, and service to marginalized communities."

The future Pope Leo XIV, it says, "invites readers to sit at the table, as if in real time, responding to the aftermath of 9/11, emerging political ideologies, and the Church's response to poverty and human rights conflicts."

There is an audiobook edition which features opening homilies and addresses read by Emmy award-winning comedian and devout Catholic Stephen Colbert, with the main text narrated by award-winning narrator and Grammy nominee Scott Brick.

CAFOD Aid For Flood Victims



It doesn't take long for disasters to slip out of the news and out of our memories, but the need for help for those affected often goes on for months and even years. CAFOD Portsmouth Community Participation Coordinator, Andrea Hoyland, shares news of the recent flash floods in Nepal and how you can help.

Caritas Nepal, CAFOD's local partner, is working with authorities to assess the impact of the devastating flash floods that struck the districts of Nuwakot and Rasuwa on 26th August and to coordinate support for affected communities. Triggered by an avalanche that unleashed a sudden surge of water, the floods caused widespread destruction, claiming hundreds of lives, leaving many people missing, and severely damaging homes, roads and other essential infrastructure. With the risk of further flooding still a concern, emergency efforts remain focused on reaching those most in need.

CAFOD is active in the area, and Caritas Nepal is currently carrying out assessments to determine the full scale of the disaster while working alongside local authorities to coordinate the emergency response. Efforts were initially focused on search and rescue operations, evacuating those at risk, providing urgent medical care, distributing essential supplies and helping to restore critical services.

Food assistance has already been delivered, providing enough meals for 300 families for up to 15 days. As more information becomes available and access improves, support will be expanded to reach additional communities in need.

In the aftermath of disasters like the floods in Nepal, rapid action can make a life-saving difference. Through our network of trusted Caritas partners, CAFOD is able to reach vulnerable communities quickly and provide urgent support when it is needed most. Donations to CAFOD's Emergency Fund help ensure that resources can be delivered swiftly to local partners on the ground, enabling them to respond without delay. Your support can help bring hope and practical help to people rebuilding their lives after a crisis. Thank you for your support and prayers. For more information on what is happening and how you can help you can go to the CAFOD website at <https://cafod.org.uk>

Church Appointments Bill

The government have introduced a Bill to repeal the historic religious restrictions which prohibit persons of the Roman Catholic or Jewish faiths from advising the Crown on ecclesiastical appointments in the Church of England or Church of Scotland.

The current Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, was raised as a Catholic, although his father was a protestant. The PM, who was educated in Catholic schools in Lancashire, describes himself as “Catholic by upbringing” and has said that Catholic social teaching underpins his political views.

As principal adviser to the Monarch, providing advice on appointments to the Church of England is a part of the Prime Minister’s role. Amendments were brought into law in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to remove restrictions on Catholic and Jewish people participating in many aspects of public life. However, the restrictions on Church appointments were left in place, and that is what The Church Appointments (Repeal of Discriminatory Provision) Bill will remove.

Those restrictions had little practical significance until Burnham’s appointment as there had not been a practising Roman Catholic or Jewish Prime Minister. Boris Johnson was Catholic when it suited him, and it may be that he transferred his role in advising on religious appointments to another Minister, but there is no evidence that he did this. Benjamin Disraeli, who was Prime Minister in 1868 and again between 1874 and 1880, was Jewish by birth but had an Anglican upbringing and so was able to advise on Church appointments. Indeed, there is some doubt as to Andy Burnham’s religious standing as he has admitted to being “not particularly religious”.

The Church Appointments (Repeal of Discriminatory Provision) Bill, being introduced by Louise Haigh, First Secretary of State, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Minister for the Cabinet Office, will do away with one of the last remaining political restrictions imposed on Catholics and Jews, ensuring that any future Jewish or Roman Catholic Prime Minister will be able to carry out all the functions of their office.



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H is for Hawk (2025)

This is a powerful film about grief and the way it can destroy a life and why it did not in this case. Based on “true events” as the start of the film displays on the screen, its source material is a memoir and is set in 2007 in the Cambridge academic world.

There and then, Helen (played by Claire Foy) is a thirties-something rising academic on a Fellowship and teaching at the University. Approaching the end of her Fellowship, she has been approached by the prestigious European Institute and invited to apply for a Fellowship in Germany. Also, she is extremely close to her father. Thus, when her father dies, suddenly of a heart attack, her world falls apart. It gets much worse. Her father, wonderfully played by Brendan Gleeson in flashbacks, has brought her up to be an observer of life and not to get emotionally involved. So, when he dies (falls dead in the street) she has no way of engaging with her grief.

No surprise then that Helen's well-ordered academic outer life and equally controlled well-ordered inner life both start to unravel. Her friends and her family (mother and siblings) do what they can, and it isn't enough. Thankfully, one of her friends is a falconer, is expert and owns and flies a large hunting bird. As she and her late father were very much into observing aerial hunting birds, she gravitates to her falconer friend and decides to get and train a hunting bird. All is done properly and legally and the bird, a goshawk, is bought from a licensed breeder.

Naming her goshawk Mabel (the gentler the name, the fiercer the temperament) this main chunk of the story concerns the trials and tribulations of training the goshawk. Her public-facing life continues to be on the slide whilst it becomes clear to her family and friends and everybody else that the main emotional relationship in Helen's life now has feathers and talons and not arms and legs. Yet, it's still human emotion for a living creature and through it Helen becomes enabled to re-connect with her family and her own emotions and her own personal grief. This is evident when she is able to give the eulogy at her father's Memorial Service and can allow herself to be tearful as she does.

Completely, this is Claire Foy's film. As Helen, she carries the story and the drama from beginning to end and you believe it all and the character and their narrative. What authenticates it all is Claire Foy's engagement with Mabel. That was for real. “Hands on” don't even get close and Claire was fully up for it. Tick in the box for this, big tick. Why? Well, there wasn't just one Mabel used in the film. A number of different goshawks had to be used, to do different things at different points in the film.

What then of this film? An excellent watch with its portrayal of human emotion and grief and the requirement to engage with our emotions and work through them – and the cost if we do not. Once watched though, would you watch it again? Possibly not.

John Newland



2027 Missal Orders

The Parish Office is now taking orders for the new 2027 Year B Missal. If you would like to order a copy please contact the Parish Office.

The Missal is priced at £9 and payments may be made by BACCS (annotated “Missal”) or in cash.

The deadline for orders is FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER.



The Pope's Prayer Intention for October

At the beginning of each year the Holy Father sets out the intentions for which he asks us to pray each month. His prayer intention for October is for mental health ministry: Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

Some Thoughts on the Pope's Prayer Intention

Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

The Church can play a crucial role in addressing the stigma and discrimination faced by individuals with mental illnesses. By providing compassionate listening, professional care, and support, the Church helps to create a more accepting environment. Here are some ways the Church can support individuals with mental illnesses.

The Church can help by educating the community about mental health conditions, challenging stereotypes, and promoting accurate information and understanding. The Church can create supportive environments in workplaces, schools, and communities that prioritize mental health and well-being, offering resources and support for those in need.

Dr. Kathie Erwin, who is a Professor in Clinical Mental Health Counselling at Divine Mercy University, Licensed Mental Health Counsellor, National Certified Counsellor, and author of six professional books. She was team leader for Green Cross Academy of Traumatology in Trinidad, India and Romania, she also served as a guest faculty member at University of Iceland and International Institute for Postgraduate Education in Ukraine.

She offers this reflection on Pope Leo's prayer intention for this month:

In the Church where I grew up, these words are written over the altar: "Come to me all you who labour and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). I saw it many times, but it was not until my career as a Clinical Mental Health Counsellor that I realized why this Scripture matters so much.

I encounter people who have been rejected for their distress, labelled *weak*, and blamed for their emotional struggles. Tragically that rejection happens too often by "church people" who admonish, "If you had more faith, you would be ok" or "You have not prayed about it." Regardless of the specific slight the message is clear: "you are not spiritual enough for God to answer."

Yet our gracious God gave us the ultimate 24/7 hotline to connect with him in prayer no matter what the need. Our challenge is to stop struggling and use it. Sure, our Can-Do culture encourages independence and responsibility which are important, but how much can we do in our human strength? Not always enough. There is no failure in doing your best, then letting God do the rest.

As a professional counsellor, I walk alongside people in their darkest hours. I remind each new Client that "God is the healer; I am just his helper." In that role, I have seen God "set a captive free" from a horrific past or destructive choices. When that blessed moment of freedom happens, I am privileged to be present for the miracle of a life revived. Mental Health Counselling is indeed a calling; it's also a ministry for those of us who work in his name.

Dr. Kathie Erwin

Douai Abbey Programme of Events

Douai Abbey Community invites readers to join in their Autumn Pastoral Programme:

- **Saturday 7th November 10.30–12.30: Ten maids awaiting the Bridegroom:** An introduction to Bach's Cantatas, showing their liturgical significance and their devotional & teaching purpose, illustrated with the Cantata BWV 140: Sleepers awake which relates to Matthew 25:1-13, the Gospel passage for Sunday 8th November.
- **Saturday 21st November 10.00-4.00: "Deep calling on deep"** An Awakening of the human Spirit led by Fr Peter Bowe OSB. Across religious traditions and beyond many are finding a new awakening to "Presence," to "Now." We shall look at some tools for living in the present, as in E. Tolle's *Power of Now* & Tom Wright's biblical vision of *God's Homecoming* to our "renewed heaven & earth." A full day - for seekers of a deeper way!
- **Saturday 28th November 10.30–12.30: Introduction to the Gospel of Mark:** Proclaimed on Sundays of coming Liturgical Year 2027 (Year B)
- **Saturday 5th December 10.00-4.00: Advent Reflection Day - 'For peace comes dropping slow'** led by Barbara Priest Obl.OSB an Anglican lay minister and oblate of Douai Abbey. In the midst of busy preparations for Christmas hides the beautiful breathing space of Advent. This expression of W.B. Yeats introduces a gentle exploration in how we can reclaim this precious time in God's peace and light.
- **Saturday 12th December 10.30–12.30: Bach Advent Cantatas:** A reflection on Cantatas 61 and 62 *Now come Saviour of the Gentiles*, and 36 *Soar in your Joy* to help us prepare to welcome Christ at Christmas.

You can find more details and view the current Pastoral Programme on the Douai Abbey website.

Community Hubs - a new way to get support, closer to home



Andover Foodbank has opened four Community Hubs, three in different community centres in Andover and one in Ludgershall. These are a way for people to access Andover Foodbank support closer to where they live. The Hubs offer all of Foodbank support, alongside a cup of tea, a warm welcome, signposting and access to additional support, including Citizens Advice.

People helped by Foodbank have responded positively to the Hubs. They are easier to access and there is a less of a stigma visiting one of these community centres than coming to St John the Baptist.

Andover Foodbank is talking to two more centres and hopes to open two more Hubs in the near future. This will mean that there is a Hub open each day of the week. Donations will continue to be delivered to the warehouse and office at St John the Baptist.

Between January and the end of August 2026 the Foodbank supported more than 4700 people in our community. This is more than 40 000 meals provided to people who needed a little extra support. Behind every number is a person, family or household facing a difficult time. And behind every one of those meals a community of people who have made it possible – donors, care professionals and volunteers. Andover Foodbank is very grateful for all the support and generous donations it has received.

If you'd like to find out more about the Foodbank and the Christmas appeals, please visit the Andover Foodbank website and follow on Facebook or Instagram.

Thank you.

Annie Mihell

Secretary

From the School

Welcoming the start of the new academic year the school reflected on opportunities to show love, forgiveness and respect. Even when we do not always get along with someone we must continue to treat them with kindness and dignity. As a Catholic school community, the children are encouraged to be peacemakers and follow Jesus's example of forgiveness and reconciliation, fundamental values of St John's School life and ethos.

Those qualities are also at the heart of the school's Mini Vinnies programme. Under the guidance of Mrs Roseanna Juliff, Year 4 will be undertaking the role of Mini Vinnies for the coming year. Last month the President of St John the Baptist Parish Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul attended the Mini Vinnies commissioning ceremony and handed each new member their Mini Vinnies certificate.

Beginning a new school year, families were reminded of the importance of good school attendance and punctuality. The Department for Education sets a national attendance expectation of 96%. St John's aims higher with a target of 97% or above for every child. This enables each child to build stronger friendships, develop positive learning habits and achieve their full potential, and reinforces the understanding that every lesson matters.

With harvest time approaching, St John's School is focussing on sharing God's gifts and generosity with those in need and less fortunate. A visit from a volunteer from Andover Food Bank explained the important role that the Food Bank plays supporting local families experiencing difficult circumstances. During the visit the children learned how the Food Bank collects and distributes essential food and household items, working alongside local agencies to ensure that help reaches those who need it most. The volunteer shared how donations from our community can make a real difference and bring hope and comfort.

As part of the Harvest 2026 celebration St John's will be supporting Andover Food Bank through collections and donations of food and non-perishable items. Donations can be handed to one of the School Council members in the playground each morning or placed in the box in the School Office. Working together we can make a difference to families in our local community during this harvest thanksgiving time, bringing to life the words of the Gospel which reminds us of God's generosity towards and care of each person.



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Please pray for those who have died recently,
Alan Bowden

And for those whose anniversaries occur in October

Sir Ivor Stourton, David Curtin, Kate Wall, Philomena Ecclestone, Violet Mortley, Kevin Marchant, Anthony De Stefano, Michael Luxford, Agnes Smith, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Elizabeth Dean, Diane Clemas, Magdalene Ward, Edward Toland, Margaret Doyle, Gerrard McKeever, Joanna Stockley, Maisie Burnett, Colonel Plowden, John Bell, Rita Hinton, Winifred Bruen, Dora Burke, Francis Priestman, Catherine Wiltshire, Darrell Hide, May Blazic, William Hilleard, Marjorie Jeanne, Michael Hughes. George Platt, Michael Palmer, John Evans, Bartholomew Jarvis, Eddie Murphy, Catherine Morley, Peter D'Costa, Eric Smith, Edith Weal, Hans-Gunter Ziegler, Margaret Holmes, Eric Attrill, Anita Mutton, Nan Martin, Helen Greenwood. Alice McCumisky. Bert Bradbury, Brenda Millington, Alfred Coveney, Marguerite Freely, Arthur Cleary, Mr Murray, Sister Theresa, Tim O'Donne, Margaret Holland, Bill Murphy, Mary Holland, Dan Quinn, Bill Baxter, Tony Murphy, Sarah Macleod, Connie Antrobus, Julia Hardiman, Robert Henebury, Joan Mullins, Tony Reading, Thomas Scanlon, Mary Kelly, Adrian Kane-Smith, Simon Lytle, Francis Davis, Mary Bennett, Mariquita Radcliffe, Daniel Zalavolgi Hide, Joseph Ryder, Flora Wilson, Andrew Sharkey, Eric Ramsden, Dominic Gaughan, Lucy Sullivan, Patrick Copeland, Violet Mortley, John Byrne, Regis Boudreau, William Kilmartin, Alan Hamilton, Patrick Philips, Gonzales Rosa, John Patman, Anastacio Lopes, Martin Charlton, Dorothy Wisniewski, John Heeks, Josepha Wozniak, Mary Gittens, Kathleen Czyzewski, Lucy Talbot, John Senior, Marguerita Hewitt and her son Nick Lynn, Marina Daniels, Phyllis Hancock, Mike Schiffer, Daryn Sutcliffe, Lydia Humphreys, Edward Minns, Elizabeth Judd, Mary Howell, Eileen Measures, Baby Finlay James Christopher, Peggay Bray, Patrick White, Terence Fitzpatrick, Bev Wadhams, Margaret Taylor Valerie Stratton, Oliver Byrne, Elizabeth Stanbridge, Conal O'Kelly, Jeanne Lynam and Samuel Gyimah Jantuah.

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

Esme Coveney, Rita Lane, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Fiona Hilleard, Bernard Ivinson, Tony Fabian, Helen O'Connell, Douglas Manning, Diane Mahoney, Rita Casey, Carol Keenan, Eileen Wharton, Oran Keenan, Margarita Hardiman, Tom O'Regan, Robert Colledge, Eileen Price, Concepta Cuddihy, Frank Hinds, Clan Furtado, Lisa Rammage, Susanne Church, Sandy Saunders, Margaret Blair, Angelo and Angela Alvarez, Pat Middleton, and Lillian Da Silva

<u>Please Note</u>	<u>Endpiece</u>
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.	Many thanks to the various contributors to this month's The Journal. The next edition will be issued on the weekend of 7 th & 8 th November. Contributions should be with the editors Monday 2 nd November. Please leave contributions at the Presbytery or email them to stjohnsjournal@gmail.com .