

The Bridge

Parish of Saint John and Saint Mary Higham with Merston



St Peter and St Paul

JUNE 2020

Digital Edition



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'I am the true vine'

Jesus the Good Shepherd has been a popular inspiration for artists from the earliest days of Christianity. But this month we focus on another image that has been just as powerful and influential from the first centuries of the Church: Jesus the vine.

We think of grapes and the vine as symbols of the Eucharist and the sacrifice of Jesus, but early artists borrowed their inspiration from Greek and Roman sources with Dionysos (or Bacchus), the god of wine. For pagan believers, wine was a sign of intoxication and renewal of life, and Dionysos was a god who died and rose again. Under that influence, sculptors would carve vines on Christian tombs as a sign of that promise of new life.

But those artists were also influenced by the vine as an image of the people of Israel in the Old Testament, with God as the vintner tending his vine, as they were influenced by our Lord's own words in St John's Gospel. When Jesus talked of Himself as the vine, He was pointing to two truths. The first was the connection between the vine and the grapes: it was a was the connection between the vine and the grapes: it was a symbol for the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers. They are the grapes, because they receive their fruitfulness from Jesus. Without Him, there would be no growth, no maturity, no fruit. 'Whoever remains in Me, with Me in him, bears fruit in plenty.'

The second truth in this image is the wine that can bring life a new taste. Just as Jesus changed water into wine,

His whole life was one of transformation – bringing water to the thirsty, sight to the blind, light to those in darkness, forgiveness to the sinner, and eternal life to those burdened by this world and the reality of death. The wine is a symbol of that goodness and flavour, both in creation and in salvation – the wine at the dinner party, and the wine in the chalice in communion. Jesus as the true vine brings that flavour and goodness to us. Both truths speak out to us from this month's image of Jesus in an icon. In the Orthodox Church the icon is a window into the kingdom of heaven. As we stand and pray before the icon, if we can bridge 'the distance of the heart' (the space between the human eye and the icon), then God can reveal His glory to us. Here we see the face of Jesus in a 16th century icon, which is in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens – the icon of Christ the true vine. He looks out at us, the Gospel book in His lap and His hands outstretched to bless the 12 disciples. The icon illustrates very vividly that metaphor of Jesus when He says that He is the vine and they are the branches. But those hands are also welcoming us to be with the 12: they invite us to offer our lives to live in Jesus. Anselm Grün, a German Benedictine, tells how one of his fellow monks wondered what a difference there would have been if Jesus had said, 'I am a slimming camomile tea.' But no, He says to us in the Gospel and in the icon, 'I am the true vine': live in Me like my 12 disciples and your lives can be fruitful in my service.

Source: Parish Pump

The Bridge

Monthly Magazine of the Parish of Higham (Ss. John & Mary) with Merston

S.JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH - WORSHIP IN MAY

All MASSES are currently being provided via Zoom

Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday	MORNINGS	10.00 am
Tuesday and Thursday	EVENINGS	6.00 pm
Sunday Mass	MORNING	10.00 am
Sunday Mass (Fr Peter on his Facebook)	EVENING	6.00 pm

Please contact Father James or Father Peter if you wish to join us

NO Marriages, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Confessions, Confirmations, Mass, Home Communion nor Anointing of the Sick can take place in the Church building or in people's homes until further notice

Emergency Baptisms / Confession / Anointing Contact Fr. James

FUNERALS at the Crematorium or a Graveside service are STILL being offered .

In an emergency please contact him at any time or, if he is not available, one of the Churchwardens (details below).



PARISH The Rev'd. Canon James F. Southward

PRIEST The Vicarage, Hermitage Rd Higham, Kent, ME3 7NE.

Telephone 01634-717360 *Email* saintjohn.higham@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE: FATHER JAMES IS NOT NORMALLY AVAILABLE ON THURSDAY

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Mrs Teresa Joblin Hill Cottage Telegraph Hill, Higham

Tel: 01474-823186

CHURCHWARDENS

Mrs Helen Walker 11 S. John's Road, Higham

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CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

THE HALL IS NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

* Evening calls only on these numbers please

June 2020 at S. John's, Hingham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN OUR SERVICES ARE STREAMED LIVE EACH DAY VIA ZOOM [not 6pm Sunday] AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES

SUNDAY 10am and 11am [or 6pm via FACEBOOK with Fr Peter]

Each Weekday 10am - except Tues & Thurs at 6pm.

Contact Fr James for access code to these services

DAY	DATE	CELEBRATION	INTENTION
Mon	1st	Mary, Mother of the Church	(m) Marian Shrines
Tue	2nd	Feria (Ordinary Wk 9)	The Queen Coronation Anniv.
Wed	3rd	The Ugandan Martyrs	(m) African Christians
Th.	4th	Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest	(f) The ministerial priesthood
Fri	5th	S.Bonface <i>martyr-bishop</i> (m)	Endangered missionaries
Sat	6th	Feria	The widowed / bereaved
SUN	7TH	THE MOST HOLY TRINITY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	8th	Feria (Ordinary Wk 10)	The disconsolate/discontent
Tue	9th	S.Ephraem of Syria, <i>teacher-deacon</i>	(m) The Oriental Churches
Wed	10th	Feria	Christian discipleship
Th.	11th	S.Barnabas <i>apostle</i>	(m) Retired Clergy
Fri	12th	Feria	The divorced /separated
Sat	13th	S.Antony of Padua <i>teacher-priest</i>	(m) Schoolteachers
SUN	14TH	CORPUS ET SANGUIS CHRISTI	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	15th	Feria (Ordinary Wk 11) <i>OF REQUIEM</i>	(v) +RIPs & June anniversaries
Tue	16th	S.Richard of Chichester <i>bishop</i>	(m) Bp Norman Consecrated 2011
Wed	17th	Feria	All local councillors
Th.	18th	Feria	Congregational Chapel
Fri	19th	THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS	(S) Care agencies / groups
Sat	20th	The Immaculate Heart of Mary	(m) Walsingham
SUN	21ST	12TH ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	22nd	Ss. John Fisher <i>martyr-bishop</i> and Thomas More <i>martyr</i>	(f) The persecuted and oppressed
Tue	23rd	S.Ethelreda (Audrey) <i>abbess</i>	(m) Religious Communities
WED	24TH	NATIVITY OF S.JOHN BAPTIST	(S)* Church officers & workers
Th.	25th	Feria (Ordinary Wk 12) <i>for unity</i>	(v) Christian Unity
Fri	26th	Feria <i>for vocations</i>	(v)* Orthodox vocations
Sat	27th	S.Cyril of Alexandria, <i>teacher-bishop</i>	(m)* 'The Society' bishops
SUN	28th	SS. PETER & PAUL <i>Apostles-Martyrs</i>	(S+) THE PARISH
Mon	29th	Feria (Ordinary Wk 13)	The homeless
Tue	30th	Feria	Those who work at sea

KEY: (+) *Holy Day of Obligation*; (f) *Feast*; (m) *Memoria*; (v) *Votive*; * *Ember Days*

THE JUNE REQUIEM

is on Monday 15th June 2020 at 10am Zoom Mass

*The recently departed, and those named below, will be prayed for at this Mass.
Those named below are also remembered the Sunday before and on the date itself.*

1st	Brian David Hall	Peggy Doreen Bell
2nd	Peggy Husband	13th Doris May Utton
	'Bill' (Wm) Richardson	Andrea Louise Martin
	Kevin Michael Fowler	16th Marguerita Anne Leicester
4th	Frank Preston	18th Sidney Kenneth Smith
8th	Edward Sidney Walker	19th Malcolm David Ivory
	Philip Doherty <i>PRIEST</i>	20th John Henry Elder
	Caliope Papadopulos	22nd Marshall Welham
9th	Lilian Agnes Joblin	23rd Joe Southward
	Marjorie Hale	25th Hannah Graffin
11th	Ronald Alfred Cole	'Poppy' (Mary) Chesterton
	John Chas. Alexander Meldrum	26th Gertrude <u>Mary</u> Moreton
12th	Lizzie Moor	29th Dorothy Kathleen Gadd
	Nellie May Fowler	Joan Shulver

PLEASE NOTE: Except for previous Incumbents and diocesan bishops (or if it is known that someone attends the requiem to pray for certain people) then the names of those deceased more than 20 years are removed from the list. They can be remembered IF someone attends and requests their inclusion in the prayers prior to the mass starting.

SAVE US, SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD,
FOR BY YOUR CROSS AND RESURRECTION
YOU HAVE SET US FREE.

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES A DAY following the readings used at Daily Mass
in Church - even if you cannot be there. Choose one or both readings.
There are three readings for Sundays and special holy days.

Ordinary Time resumes Week 9 June 1st

M *Mary Mother of the Church*
Genesis 3.9-15,20 or Acts 1.12-14
John 19.25-34

T 2 Peter 3.11-15,17-18 Mark 12.13-17

W 2 Timothy 1.1-3,6-12 Mark 12.18-27

Th *Our Lord Jesus Christ*
Eternal High Priest

Genesis 22.9-18 or Hebrews 10. 4-10
Matthew 26.36-42

F 2 Timothy 3.10-17 Mark 12.35-37

S 2 Timothy 4.1-8 Mark 12.38-44

SUNDAY – HOLY TRINITY JUNE 7th
Exodus 34.4-6,8-9 2 Corinth 13.11-13
John 3.16-18

Ordinary Week 10

M 1 Kings 17.1-6 Matthew 5.1-12

T 1 Kings 17.7-16 Matthew 5.13-16

W 1 Kings 18.20-39 Matthew 5.17-19

Th *S. Barnabas, Apostle June 11th*
Acts 11.21-26; 13.1-3 Matt. 10.7-13

F 1 Kings 19.9,11-16 Matthew 5.27-32

S 1 Kings 19.19-21 Matthew 5.33-37

SUNDAY – CORPUS ET JUNE 14th
SANGUIS CHRISTI
Deut. 8.2-3,14-16 1 Corinthians 10.16-17
John 6.51-58

Ordinary Week 11

M 1 Kings 21.1-16 Matthew 5.38-42

T 1 Kings 21.17-29 Matthew 5.43-48

W 2 Kings 2.1,6-14 Matthew 6.1-6,16-18

Th Ecclesiasticus 48.1-14 Matt. 6.7-15

F *THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS*
Deuteronomy 7.6-11 1 John 4.7-16
Matthew 11.25-30

S *The Immaculate Heart Of Mary*
Isaiah 61.9-11 Luke 2.41-51

SUNDAY - WEEK 12 JUNE 21st
Jeremiah 20.10-13 Romans 5.12-15
Matthew 10.26-33

M *S. John Fisher and June 22nd*
S. Thomas More, Martyrs

1 Peter 4.12-19 Matthew 10.34-39

T 2 Kings 19.9-21, 31-36 Matt. 7.6,12-14

W *THE NATIVITY OF JUNE 24th*
S. JOHN BAPTIST
Isaiah 49.1-6 Acts 13.22-26
Luke 1.57-66,80.

Th 2 Kings 24.8-17 Matthew 7.21-29

F 2 Kings 25.1-12 Matthew 8.1-4

S Lamentations 2. 2.10-19 Matt. 8.5-17

SUNDAY- SS. PETER & PAUL JUNE 28th
ANTICIPATED SOLEMNITY
Acts 12.1-11 2 Timothy 4.6-8,17-18
Matthew 16.13-19

Ordinary Week 13

M Amos 2.6-10,13-16 Matthew 8.18-22

T Amos 3.1-8, 4.11-12 Matthew 8.23-27

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Opening Prayer' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word.

May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength in our lives.

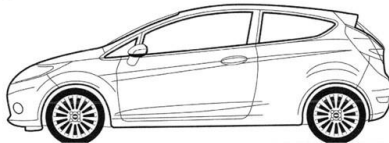
Take us and use us to love and serve everyone in the power of the Holy Spirit,
and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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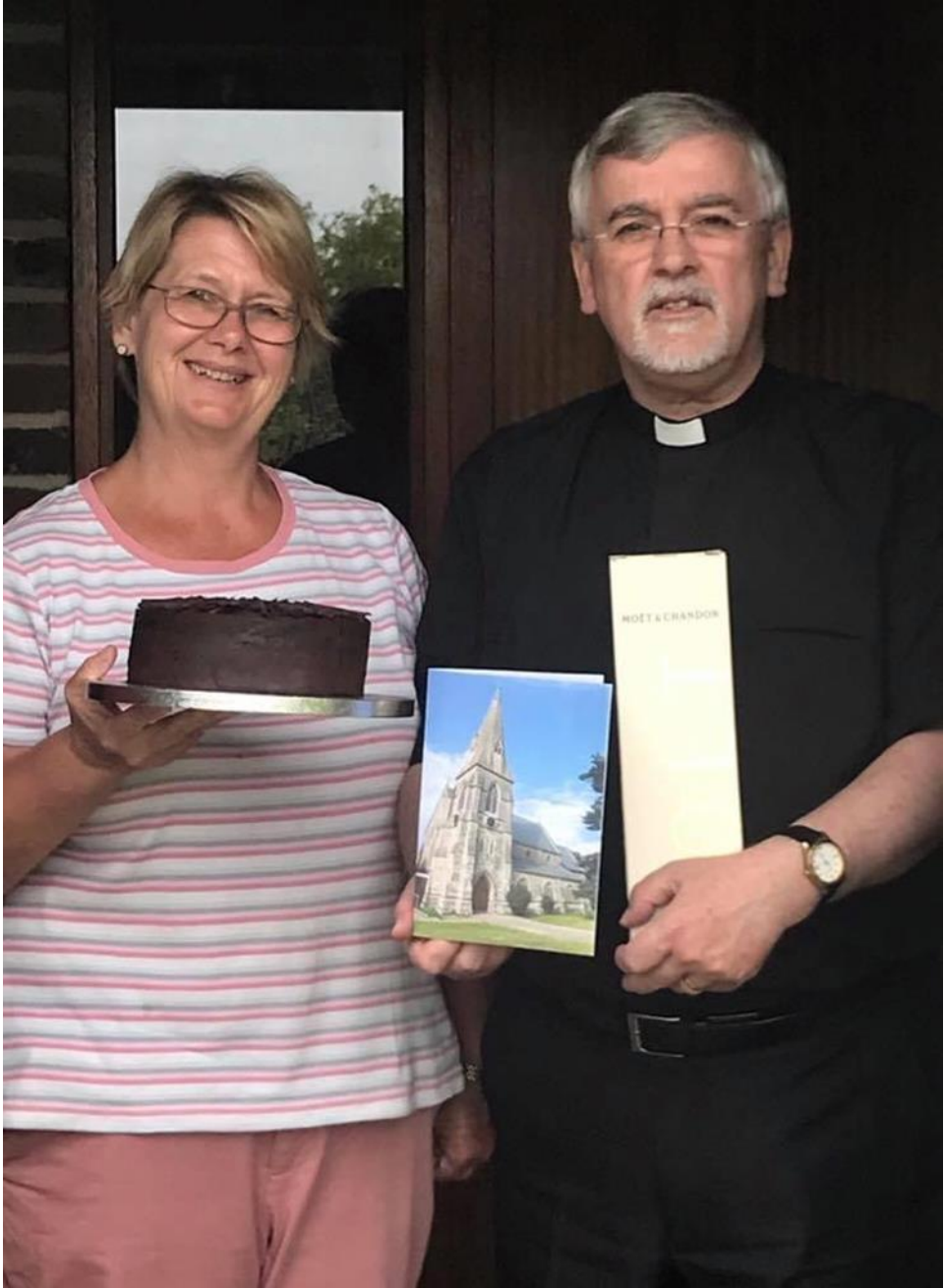
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Elsbeth and Father James celebrating 25 years at St John's Church



SACRED SPACE

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:22-23

Salvation, for many people has come to be about, me, my soul and my God. The question for them is, “Will God allow my soul to enter into heaven when I die?”



Salvation has nothing to do with the body (which will be buried or burned); nothing to do with the community in which I live (for each individual must answer to God for themselves); and nothing to do with creation (which will, surely, be destroyed on the final Day of Judgement).

This view of salvation has nothing in common with the Christian view of salvation. In the Apostles Creed we assert our belief in the resurrection of the body – heaven is not full of disembodied souls. When God created humanity, he insisted that they should be family – “It is not good for man to be alone”. Family and community matter and so when Paul and Silas baptised their gaoler (Acts 16:22-34) we are told that he and his “whole household” would be saved. And Christians believe that a world which is charged with the grandeur of God, which God declared to be good and which God used as the vehicle of salvation, will not be thrown away at the end. St John’s vision is not the destruction of the world at the end of time but rather he sees: “The holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God”. When he speaks of a “new heaven” and “a new earth” he is speaking of the transformation of creation, not its destruction.

We need to start at the beginning. Genesis. God made the world and saw that it was good. The garden in which God placed Man was the place where Man and God would meet. Man was to care for the Garden as a priest cares for the Temple. Man was the priest of the Garden and he sang the praises of God on behalf of all others who lived there:

*“O all you works of the Lord, O bless the Lord.
To him be highest glory and praise for ever.
And you, mountains and hills, O bless the Lord.
And you, all plants of the earth, O bless the Lord.
And you, fountains and springs, O bless the Lord.
To him be highest glory and praise for ever.
And you, children of men, O bless the Lord.
To him be highest glory and praise for ever”.*

Daniel 3 (various)

But Man introduced death into this sacred place. Man made it - not into the place where he would walk humbly with his God - but into Satan's territory. The world became a place of death and sorrow where Man experienced alienation from God. Man knew shame and he hid and, from then on, everything was to be a sheer grind. Not only Man, but his entire world, fell from grace, from beauty and goodness. Even childbirth (that most beautiful thing) was to be called labour.

But despite all that Man had done, God kept making promises. He kept making a promise that he would make His home among humanity again. “I shall be their God, and they shall be my people”. God could not give up on Man but time and again He pitched his tent. In the desert, in Jerusalem, in the Temple, with them in exile and with them in return and with them in Palestine as God became Man and dwelt among us. Full of grace and truth.

God sort to re-occupy territory Satan had taken by deceit. The valley filled with dry bones was to be filled with breath filled humanity. (Ezekiel 37)

*But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you. Isaiah 43:1-2*

And

*Behold, I am doing a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
The wild beasts will honour me,
the jackals and the ostriches,
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
the people whom I formed for myself
that they might declare my praise. Isaiah 43:19-21*

In this, Biblical view of things both the falling away from God and Salvation take place in this world. Salvation consists of the healing of this world so that Man might declare God's praise.

And both the Falling away from grace and the restoration take place in the context of a people. To be saved, as St Peter insists, is to be incorporated into a community, into a people whose function is to sing the praises of God. (I Peter 2: 9-10).



And this salvation will consist of God and Man at home together again: God living among men. And God living among us will transform the world in which we dwell so that springs shall spring up; and the desert shall be filled with life; rough places shall be made plain; and the lion and the lamb shall dwell together. Salvation is a putting right of what went wrong. God grabs back territory that Satan stole.

And if salvation takes place in this messy world of flesh and blood and oil and bread and wine and water and stone and wood, salvation is also brought about by these messy means. There is no salvation without two planks of wood. Health and wholeness cannot be brought to mankind without the shedding of blood. There would be no hope for Man if the eternal Son of God had not taken his flesh. There is no salvation without death in the water of Baptism. If Man is to be restored to his priestly function he must be anointed with oil, just like the oil that flowed down Aaron's beard.

So, what will salvation look like for you and me? It will be this. You and me at home with God singing His praises as we were always meant to do. Salvation will be about this world transformed so that instead of being Satan's playground it can be once more the place

where that praise can take place. Bit by bit this world will be liberated from Satan's clutches. Stone and wood and glass, silver and gold, iron and precious stones, paint and cloth and the very ground itself will be liberated so that they can be deployed in singing God's praise.

And you know of such a liberated space in your parish – a place where you no longer need to hide but where you can walk humbly with your God. My prayer is that it will be open for you again very soon.



F Peter

CHARLES DICKENS PROLIFIC WRITER WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Popular Victorian novelist Charles Dickens died 150 years ago, on 9th June 1870. His books include *The Pickwick Papers*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and *David Copperfield*.

He died of a stroke in Gad's Hill Place, his country home in Higham, Kent, when halfway through writing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. The last novel he completed – most of them were written in regularly released parts – was *Our Mutual Friend*, in 1865.



He had been born in Portsmouth in 1812, the second of eight children. His family were relatively poor, and his mother wanted him out at work, so he never received a formal education. Nevertheless, he edited a weekly journal for 20 years and wrote 15 novels, as well as many other stories, articles and letters. He was also a staunch social campaigner, particularly for children's rights and education.

As could be deduced from one of his most loved works, *A Christmas Carol*, he was a firm believer in Christian elements such as compassion and redemption, and he loved the New Testament, while having little time for the Old or for organized religion. His parents were nominal Anglicans. He is said to have wanted his stories to be seen as 'parables' emphasizing the teaching of Jesus.

Source: Parish Pump

OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM



Today (25 May 2020) would, in normal times, have been the Annual National Pilgrimage to Walsingham. For about ninety years, since the Shrine's revival in the 1920s, pilgrims have come from all over the country and beyond on the May Bank Holiday in honour of Our Lady of Walsingham. Normally there are several thousand pilgrims gathered in the

grounds of the ruins of the medieval Priory which included the original Holy House – the focus of pilgrims' prayer. Nearby was the holy well whose water was used as an agent of healing.

Walsingham was very popular in the late medieval period and second only to the shrine of St Thomas Becket Canterbury. The modern 'National' always has an air of excitement and joy. There is a lot of networking among the clergy, people see old friends and those who feel worried about their parishes often come away encouraged and feeling that they are not alone. Most people enjoy seeing the protesters with their 'No popery' placards and catcalls - "She's only a doll"! They are part of the day. Sitting in the priory grounds and looking across at the meadows and the trees it always seems to me that summer is arriving. For some people, the National Pilgrimage is too big and lacks an 'intimacy' with the shrine. But there are lots of other ways of pilgrimage – smaller parish groups and individual visits, either for a few days or a few hours. I've always enjoyed the Healing Pilgrimage on the August Bank Holiday. Mass, Laying of hands and Anointing of the sick, receiving the holy water from the well and Benediction all take place in the Shrine grounds (It's a mini version of what takes place every day at Lourdes). Looking across the shrine grounds to the bank of trees opposite it always seems to me that summer is passing. The weather is normally good. One year however it was very wet and windy. Four hundred pilgrims huddled together in the shrine church

in soggy clothes for the picnic. It enhanced rather than diminished the sense of coming together at Our Lady's shrine. For many years I took a group of youngsters on the Youth Pilgrimage. This was very well organised and focused on teenagers. We camped in fields near the shrine. The conditions were somewhat primitive but it was great fun. We usually walked the Holy Mile to the shrine barefoot. One year the road had recently been re-gritted. Lots of feet, young and old, needed healing care when we got to the shrine! At the final mass in the parish church the clergy were expected to 'conga' together around the church in the final hymn. One year I looked around and noticed that I was the oldest (although not the slowest) congaring priest. Subsequently I devolved the duties of leadership to a younger curate as part of his training (with no choice in the matter!). Another experience of Walsingham is being alone in the Holy House, in the Shrine church or in and around the grounds. It gives you a more personal perspective on your own Christian pilgrimage.

This year, of course, there will be no National or other actual pilgrimages due to the pandemic. Walsingham must seem rather like it was when the agents of Thomas Cromwell closed the Priory and the shrine in 1538. The shrine was destroyed and the priory church largely demolished. The statue of Our Lady of Walsingham was supposedly burnt with other images at Chelsea but a longstanding rumour persists that it was secreted away and is now in a church in Southern Italy (Unlikely, but wonderful if it is true).



The local shopkeepers and hostelryes who relied on the pilgrim trade lost their source of income and petitioned the king for tax relief. The town gradually became a small market town in a farming community. But, most poignant of all, was the lament at the time that the Shrine was no more. The source of healing and of grace had been cut off. Thomas Cromwell and his propagandist machine would allow no protest or comment (the sub-prior of Walsingham, Richard Mileham, was put to death by fire for refusing to assent to the King's supremacy over the Church).

In 1922, Father Alfred Hope Pattern, newly appointed Vicar of Walsingham, set up a new image of Our Lady based on a medieval seal. This led to the restoration of the shrine as we know it today and the revival of the pilgrimage. The modern Holy House, representing the home in Nazareth, includes stones from nearly all destroyed religious houses in the United Kingdom. We owe Fr Hope Pattern a great debt of gratitude for his vision and determination in restoring the shrine (against considerable episcopal opposition).



The shrine today, with all its facilities and buildings, is very beautiful in its style and outlay. It has a great sense of history and continuity despite the four hundred years gap. But it's about more than beauty and historicity. It is a living witness to

the Catholic faith of the Church of England and its mission to today's world. People always like being at Walsingham but we don't live there. When we come home we always bring something good with us – maybe an answer to a prayer, a sense of healing or a deeper understanding of our Faith. This a boost to our daily lives.



A Christian is a pilgrim journeying throughout the complexities of life towards the heavenly city. This year during the present lockdown we have been deprived of our churches, of our meeting as congregations for worship and for singing and activities, of confession and absolution, of our shrines and above all of the Blessed Sacrament. We're doing our best to use modern media technology to hold us together and to be able to worship and pray with one another. We've learnt a lot and will grow spiritually from the experience, but, we do need to have our churches and the tangibility of being together restored to us. The churches may only be stones, bricks and mortar but they are consecrated to a sacred purpose and used as such. Even people who don't share our Faith have bemoaned the closed church doors, especially in a time of great crisis. Above all we need the Blessed Sacrament restored. It is the food and sustenance of our earthly pilgrimage.

Walsingham will seem very empty and quiet today but it will also have a sense of brooding – of waiting for the end of the present troubles and for the pilgrims to return. There was a very long gap between Thomas Cromwell’s closure of the shrine and its restoration by Fr Hope Pattern. Let us hope that this time next year we be giving thanks for restoration after a terrible time but a much shorter gap.

With best wishes and constant prayer

fr Andrew

PS Some of you may have seen the very beautiful mass streamed today from the Holy House today, and the sermon by Fr Tim Pike. There were two priests actually there and many, many more online, and, we could all join in the singing!

Photographs from the Walsingham website and other online sources

CHRISTIAN AID 2020



Our thanks to everyone who contributed this year. With the 2 Lent lunches that we held in March and your donations we have been able to send £520 to the charity.

There will be further events to raise more donations later when it is possible

NEWBORN AND LOCKDOWN

Oldie 2 (I shall call him 'Dad' as everyone else seems to) has been asked to write about what it is like to have a baby during Lockdown, however, he claims he is far too busy 'Working from Home' to finish it in time, so I have to pick up the slack. After a quick lesson in 'QWERTY' keyboards I'm away...



Well I have had two lockdowns.

The first one lasted nine months in a dark, and increasingly claustrophobic room. By the end it was little bigger than I was myself. There was nothing to do other than eat and grow, but there was time to think about the bigger questions like "Do I believe in a Mum?"; "Are the muffled voices I hear from my dark room better employed as an analogy for Cartesian scepticism or Plato's cave?"; and, "Who is this Plato?".

Finally I was free! Some chap in a mask and a funny hat chopped me out of my dark room in a procedure Dad thought had something to do with a "roaming emperor", well I thought it was classic c-section. At last I had the answer to my first question. Oldie 1 (again following convention, I will call her 'Mum') does exist! And Dad was there too, but only for the immediate relaxation of the lockdown restrictions. Mum and I went to a ward in the hospital, and Dad went home for the last good night's sleep he is going to have for the foreseeable future. Dad told me he was glad that he could be there for the birth but wished he could have stayed with Mum in the

hospital. Mum reflected that only seeing people with masks on for the first 24 hours must have been very confusing for me, I thought in some cases it was a marked improvement.

The following day Dad collected Mum and I and headed home, apparently to yet another lockdown. Again, for the first while we were stuck to the same four walls with little else to do but to eat and grow (again, or is it still). For the Oldies there was time to think, but whenever I tried to join in the conversation, they didn't seem to understand my insightful comments, it seemed to be just babbling and crying to them. Ironically, the Oldies were thinking "Why is he crying?!!!!"

Well I could have told them if only they had listened! I had a tongue-tie. Mum was told that normally it can take months and several appointments for tongue-ties to be sorted. But because of covid-19 (I hadn't heard of any of the preceding 18 covids), and the need for fewer appointments, the NHS was super-efficient and dealt with my tongue-tie there and then. Whatever the NHS is, apparently, it's fantastic and full of heroes.

Although I am fully recovered from the tongue-tie 'snip' I still like to cry a lot, which according to Dad is quite annoying and all the more so as due to the lockdown he cannot escape to work. My older sister is helping Mum look after me. Mum is missing playgroups where she can talk with other mums and exchange horror stories about the kids. And we are all missing our family and friends, especially those from S Johns Higham.

Written for The Bridge by Alex H, aged 1.5 months.



A man was sitting quietly reading his paper when his wife walked up behind him and whacked him on the head with a magazine.

'What was that for?' he asked.

'That was for the piece of paper in your trouser pocket with the name Laura Lou written on it,' she replied.

'Two weeks ago when I went to the races, Laura Lou was the name of one of the horses I bet on, I bought you those flowers with the winnings,' he explained.

'Oh darling, I'm sorry,' she said. 'I should have known there was a good explanation.'

Three days later he was watching TV when she walked up and hit him in the head again, this time with a frying pan, which knocked him out cold.

When he came to, he asked, 'What was that for?'

'Your horse phoned'

Dates are likely to change and will be confirmed nearer

Bags 2 Church Need to declutter?

Have you been meaning to clear some space in your wardrobe and drawers?



Well now is the chance to do it:-

However due to lack of storage, St John's will gladly receive your unwanted clothes, shoes, bags or soft toys **PROVISIONAL DATES**

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Place items in a clear bag which will be available from the Church Porch

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HIGHAM VILLAGE WEBSITE

To see the latest village news, Annual Parish Newsletters, What's On and Parish Council go to www.higham-kent-pc.gov.uk

If your group or society plans an event or meeting and you want more advertising, just let me know so that it can be added to the village website to spread the word. Club and society contact details are always needed to update and extend the online list of groups. If your society has a website, then we can list this as well and link back to you.

Higham is a buzzing, friendly village so lets share this feeling on our parish website!

Robert Gilby, Webmaster

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A priest is driving down the road when he comes across a pig lying dead in the road.

He contacts the police to inform them of his find.

A cocky desk sergeant laughed and said "Did you give it the last rites"

"No" said the priest
"I thought I'd inform his next of kin first!"

KENT ONLINE

Higham Help offers support to the elderly and vulnerable during Covid-19 lockdown

By Megan Carr

mcarr@thekmgroup.co.uk

Published: 12:53, 20 May 2020

An army of volunteers are supporting the elderly and vulnerable in one village with care packages – and things to grow in the garden.

Based in the large village of Higham, in Gravesham, the volunteer group Higham Help has not only created and distributed essential kits for those self-isolating, but also spread happiness across the community.



Sunflower kits at Hayley's Bakery in Higham

Matt Joblin, of School Lane, began a crowd funding page after noticing that those staying at home to protect themselves from Covid-19 were facing a lot of challenges.

With a group of volunteers, he began raising funds to help the vulnerable stay home by shopping for their basic necessities such as food, medicine, anti-bacterial soaps, hand sanitiser, tissues, and toilet paper, all free of charge.

Matt, an offer development manager, said: "We've now managed to raise just over £2,000, we have 35 to 40 volunteers covering every street in the village.

"We have teams making kits with soap, anti-bac and toilet paper, all the things that people have been struggling to get since lockdown began.

"We've also been trying to help with people's well being, so we've created sunflower boxes to help anyone who wants to get out and about in the garden to grow something and spread some colour for people to see when out on their daily walks." Matt Joblin with the sunflower kits in Higham

Every home in Higham village is covered by Matt and his volunteers – the elderly and vulnerable can have their shopping or urgent medical supplies picked up and delivered or can even receive a friendly phone call to avoid loneliness.



Matt said: "More than 100 essential kits have been painted by children in the village to brighten up these dark times for the elderly, vulnerable and pregnant.

"We've partnered up with Hayley's of Higham, a bakery, and The Village Green Grocers of Higham to make deliveries easier.

"Alcohol hand sanitizer is now free to most vulnerable people in the village and has also been fitted in all the local shops and sheltered housing entry and exit points." Matt and the team have also created a free library at Hayley's bakery to keep villagers entertained and keep minds active with books, crosswords, Sudoku, jigsaws, painting and DVDs.

"We've helped our residents stay in touch with family and friends and developed a wide range of activities to keep them busy both physically and mentally. We would love it if anyone could support us so we can continue doing this much needed work."

UNWELCOME VISITORS

in these difficult times a knock on the door or 'phone call is always welcome but when you're enjoying a morning coffee in your garden the last thing you want to see is a swarm of bees heading your way!

Having heard a significant buzzing early in May and then seeing a swarm of bees pass over the house I recognized the sound but clearly on this occasion the 'visitors' decided to stop over on their way up Taylor's Lane. First, they spread into the garden under the sun



parasol so we had to shelter in the house, close the doors and windows. We then watched in fascination as the swarm spread along the side of the house with dog walkers and pedestrians stopping and not knowing which way to go then passing on the other side of the road. Gradually the swarm started to draw together and settled in and around the Choisya which fortunately was outside the garden.

Venturing outside again to see what was happening a Good Samaritan dog walker stopped to see what was taking place. The lady said that she had seen a post on Higham Mutual Appreciation Facebook page re a beekeeper who might be able to help and offered to post a message for us.



Within a couple of hours Hayley, owner of Hayley's of Higham, came to check the location and put a sign up thereby "claiming" the swarm for her father, Simon, who is a beekeeper. Simon, after his day job, arrived with his outfit and box and quickly found the cast and

proceeded to move the bees into their temporary home. The box was left open so that the stragglers could be captured until the sun was going down when he returned to move them to one of his hives in a Cobham.

Our grateful thanks to the Good Samaritan, Hayley and Simon. We learnt a lot from talking to Simon, who was as pleased to have the bees as we were to see them go! A fascinating day.

More information can be found at the beekeeping association website:

www.bbka.org.uk.

Liz Croker

Our Daily Bread

Give us we pray
The bread we need today
Or, Lord, at least
Provide us with some yeast!

We'll feast our eyes
To see the yeast-dough rise
No fun we lack
When we then knock it back.

Once more it proves,
Then to the oven moves
And then we haste
That nice fresh bread to taste!

Source: Parish Pump By Nigel Beeton

One-line quiz questions



1. What time of day was Adam created?

Just a little before Eve.

2. Who was the fastest runner in the race?

Adam. He was first in the human race.

3. Why are atoms Catholic?

Because they all have mass.

4 Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?

Because Noah was always standing on the deck

5. Why didn't Noah ever go fishing?

He only had two worms.

6. Did Eve ever have a date with Adam?

No — just an apple.

7. Why did the unemployed man get excited while reading his Bible?

He thought he saw a job.

8. Does God love everyone?

Yes, but He prefers 'fruits of the spirit' to 'religious nuts'.

9. Why couldn't Jonah trust the ocean?

He just knew there was something fishy about it.

10. What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?

Absolutely ruthless.

11. The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose.

Mosquitoes come close, though.

12. What's so funny about forbidden fruits?

They create many jams.

Submitting Articles or Items to The Bridge

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The following are actual call centre conversations....



Wrong number

Customer: "I've been ringing you on 0700 2300 for two days.

Why didn't you answer?"

Travel agent: "Where did you get that number from, sir?"

Customer: "It's there on the door to your Travel Centre."

Operator: "Sir, they are our opening hours."

What it says on the sign

At a towing company: "We don't charge an arm and a leg. We want your tows instead."

On a maternity room door: "Push. Push. Push."

At an optometrist's office: "If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."

In a podiatrist's office: "Time wounds all heels."

On a house's fence: "Salespeople welcome! Dog food is expensive."

At a car dealership: "The best way to get back on your feet -miss a car payment."

Outside a muffler shop: "No appointment necessary. We hear you coming."

In a veterinarian's waiting room: "Be back in five minutes. Sit! Stay!"

At the electric company: "We would be de-lighted if you pay your bill. However, if you don't, you will be."

In a restaurant window: "Don't stand there and be hungry. Come on in and get fed up."

In the front yard of a funeral home: "Drive carefully. We're happy to wait."

**

One-liners

Archaeologists will date any old thing.

'Yes man': one who stoops to conquer.

Vote: to choose the lesser of evils.

**

Polite church

"The congregation was wonderful," said the visiting minister after the Zoom service. "They were so polite that they even covered their mouths when they yawned."

The Golfers are back



JUNE 2020 Donation Guide

**The next collection-is Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st May
8 am to 8 pm**

**PLEASE NOTE: FOR JUNE THE FOODBANK HAVE SPECIALLY REQUESTED THAT WE
GIVE PRIORITY TO THE HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS BELOW**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instant packets of cup of soup ✓ Tinned ham & corned beef ✓ Tinned potatoes & smash ✓ Meals in tins - ravioli, chilli con carne, curry ✓ Instant packets of noodles, pasta and rice ✓ Small bags of white rice ✓ Tinned rice pudding & custard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small bottles of squash ✓ Cereal bars & crisps ✓ Small bottles of washing up liquid Toiletries ✓ Men & women's deodorant ✓ Bio laundry tablets |
|--|--|

Also required:

- Meat pies
 - UHT whole and semi skimmed milk
-
- Tin macaroni cheese
 - Tin spaghetti and sausages
 - tinned custard
 - Juice
 - Tinned vegetables
 - Instant packets of cous cous
 - Spreads – jam and peanut butter marmite
-
- Vegetarian foods
 - Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, sugar.
 - Jars of pasta sauce
 - Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits

- Jars of pasta sauce
- Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits
- Tinned fruit, sponge puddings,

Cleaning and toiletries

- Household cleaners, spray polish
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes, bars of soap
- Ladies personal toiletries, toilet rolls
- Nappies size 4 & 5
- Shaving foam/gel, body spray
- Shampoo
- Hand soap
- Shower gel,

Thank You very much for your support

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