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# 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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## Parish International Day

The diversity within our parish was quite spectacularly highlighted when members of the different ethnic groups came together to celebrate a Mass and share a meal comprising some of the dishes commonly found in their respective countries of origin.

There was a capacity congregation in the church well before the Mass was due to begin. The church, grounds and hall had been imaginatively decorated with a floral arch surrounding the entrance, flags of all nations strung out over the car park, and flowers around the altar. During the Mass, a choir from the Philippines enhanced the service with local hymns, and the Eucharistic procession was accompanied by two young Indian singers.

After Mass the hall was crowded with those eager to sample the foods on offer. Apart from the traditional dishes of the British Isles, there were dishes from many parts of India including Goa, and from Sri Lanka. The African continent was well represented with offerings from Zambia, Nigeria, Gambia, and Kenya. Portugal, Poland and Malta provided tastes from Europe, while other delights came from Mauritius, the Philippines, St Lucia and Brazil.

It was an exciting day, and one which brought the parish together in a joyful celebration of the Catholic nature of our parish and of God's Church. James Saviour had undertaken the overall organisation of the event. He had gathered a willing group of helpers, and their hard work was much appreciated by all who enjoyed this wonderful event. This was the second International Day to be held in the parish, and it is greatly to be desired that it will not be the last.



# Mockery at Opening Ceremony

The world has enjoyed the spectacular efforts of hundreds of athletes from over 200 countries at the 2024 Olympic Games held in Paris. It is a pity that the opening ceremony which had many marvellous, creative and original moments was marred by the inexplicable over-sexualised involvement of drag queens culminating in an inappropriate and outrageous parody of *The Last Supper*.

The disingenuous mockery of Christianity has, not surprisingly, resulted in condemnation from many quarters. The French Bishops' Conference released a statement deeply regretting the "scenes of mockery and derision of Christianity." Their statement expressed the view that Christians on every continent have been hurt by the

"outrageousness and provocation of certain scenes", adding that "we want them to understand that the Olympic celebration goes far beyond the ideological biases of a few artists".

Others have added their condemnation and feelings of sorrow concerning the sacrilegious lampoon. Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco used his X account to place what had happened in a wider context. "Secular fundamentalism has now infiltrated the Olympics, even to the point of blaspheming the religion of over a billion people. Would they do that with any other religion? I ask all of our people to pray for a restoration of good will and respect."

The respected Catholic preacher Bishop Robert Barron released a video decrying the gross mockery of the Christian Faith: "This deeply secularist, post-modern society knows who its enemy is; they're naming it and we should believe them, they are telling us who it is," adding, "Catholics must not be sheepish" he called on Catholics to make their voices heard in loud and unequivocal resistance.

Also using a social media platform, the Archbishop of Malta Charles Scicluna said he had contacted the French Ambassador to Malta to express his "distress and the disappointment of many Christians at the gratuitous insult to the Eucharist during the Opening Ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics."

A number of Christian groups in the UK demanded an apology from the organisers of the Games. *Voice for Justice UK*, a Christian activist organisation - yes, there are such things! - issued a press release stating: "Christians across the world are outraged at the deliberately blasphemous parody of the Leonardo da Vinci painting, *The Last Supper*, seen in the Olympic Games opening ceremony in Paris. The offensive tableau was performed by a group of over made-up and be-sequined drag queens and was an open expression of contempt for Christianity."

The press release stated that sport is "rightly lauded as a universal language that transcends borders, uniting people from different backgrounds and cultures" but goes on to say that the Games' organisers have "apparently decided to abandon the goal of respectful competition, in order to exploit the Games as leverage to, quote, 'make society more inclusive'."

The artistic director of the Olympics' opening ceremony, Thomas Jolly, has tried to diffuse the situation, stating that "our subject was not to be subversive" and "we never wanted to be subversive. We wanted to talk about diversity. Diversity means being together. We wanted to include everyone, as simple as that. In France, we have freedom of creation, artistic freedom. We are lucky in France to live in a free country."

The President of the Paris Olympic Games, Tony Estanguet, also addressed the controversy caused by the opening ceremony. "The idea was to really trigger a reflection. We wanted to have a message as strong as possible. It is a French ceremony for the French games" and "so we trusted our artistic director. We have freedom of expression in France, and we wanted to protect it. We imagined a ceremony to show our values and our principles, so we gave a very committed message."

It certainly gave a message, but not one that reflected any glory on the French Olympic Committee or the country they represent. The "freedom of expression" was further cast into doubt by an incident which was almost totally ignored by the media. A small group of Christians staged a protest about the opening ceremony's insult to Christianity by hiring a bus bearing the slogan "Stop attacks on Christianity". The bus was driven around Paris attracting many waves and signs of agreement. The bus passed many members of the police force without any problem. However, later in the afternoon the bus was flagged down and surrounded by armed police. The six occupants and the driver were arrested for "organising a demonstration" without approval from the French government.

The group had researched the law and established that the regulations regarding demonstrations targeted large scale marches and did not apply to a slogan on a bus. Nevertheless, they were handcuffed, taken to a "secure facility", had their belongings confiscated, were strip searched and refused access to a lawyer. They were kept in custody overnight, denied food and water and were unable to contact their families. The next day prosecutors ruled that no offence had been committed and the captives were released. So, "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité* - so long as you are not a Christian. Vive la France!



# Archbishop Excommunicated

The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith has released a statement declaring the excommunication “*latae sententiae*” incurred by the former nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who does not recognize the legitimacy of Pope Francis or of the Second Vatican Council. The Archbishop is regarded as a fierce ultraconservative critic of Pope Francis. He has variously described Pope Francis as a “false prophet” and a “servant of Satan”.



Excommunication is an ecclesiastical penalty placed on a person to encourage the person to return to the communion of the church. An excommunicated person cannot receive any sacraments or exercise an office within the church until the excommunication is lifted by a valid authority in the church, usually a bishop.

A *latae sententiae* penalty is a penalty that is inflicted automatically, by force of the canon law itself, at the very moment a law is contravened, hence a broadly applied judgment.

The 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, which binds Catholics of the Latin Church, inflicts *latae sententiae* censures for certain forbidden actions; an apostate from the faith, a heretic, or a schismatic automatically incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication.

On July 4, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò - the Vatican's former apostolic ambassador to the United States - was excommunicated for schism, having abandoned communion with the Bishop of Rome and the Catholic Church.

The press release issued by the Dicastery states: “On 4 July 2024, the Congress of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith met to conclude the extrajudicial penal process referred to in canon 1720 CIC against the Most Reverend Carlo Maria Viganò, titular Archbishop of Ulpiana, accused of the reserved delict of schism (canons 751 and 1364 CIC; art. 2 SST).”

The communiqué continues, “His public statements manifesting his refusal to recognize and submit to the Supreme Pontiff, his rejection of communion with the members of the Church subject to him, and of the legitimacy and magisterial authority of the Second Vatican Council are well known.

At the conclusion of the penal process, the Most Reverend Carlo Maria Viganò was found guilty of the reserved delict (canonical crime) of schism.”

Finally, the statement says, “This decision was communicated to the Most Reverend Viganò on 5 July 2024.”

The lifting of the censure in these cases is reserved to the Apostolic See, but it seems unlikely that Viganò, who Trump-like uses social media to communicate, will be rushing to return to the communion of the church.

The 83-year-old Viganò had refused to take part in the disciplinary proceedings, claiming he did not accept the legitimacy of the institutions behind it. In a message on X he remained unrepentant. He urged Catholic faithful to voice their support for him, quoting Jesus in the New Testament: “If they keep quiet, the stones themselves will start shouting.”

In a lengthy text, Viganò referred to the pope only by his surname, “Bergoglio”, and accused him of representing an “inclusive, immigrationist (sic) eco-sustainable, and gay-friendly” Church that had strayed from its true message.

Francis has angered many conservatives by making overtures towards divorcees and the LGBT community, and by saying that mercy and forgiveness should come before the strict enforcement of Catholic doctrine. He has also put himself at odds with conservatives and traditionalists by championing migrant rights and the fight against climate change and condemning the excesses of capitalism.

# A Feast Day for September

September 8<sup>th</sup> is traditionally the Feast of the Birth of the Virgin Mary, and as such has a special place in the affections of all Catholics. For those who hail from the island of Malta, however, the day has even more significance. The Maltese know September 8<sup>th</sup> as the Feast of Our Lady of Victories, for it was on that day that the Great Siege was lifted in 1565, and coincidentally that day marked the end of the blitz of Malta in 1942.

Following the defeat of the Knights of St. John by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the Order were given the islands of Malta and Gozo and the port of Tripoli by King Charles V of Spain, and they settled there in 1530. They had continued to take the battle to their Muslim enemies and the Barbary pirates, until finally Suleiman sent a vast armada to attack their home base on Malta.

Despite suffering terrible losses, the Knights and the locally recruited defenders had refused to give up. Several of the major settlements had been destroyed, half the knights killed and the defences of the cities round the harbour so greatly weakened that by mid-August the council urged Grand Master Jean Parisot de la Valette to withdraw to one fort, the Fort St. Angelo. La Valette refused.

On August 23<sup>rd</sup> the Turkish forces made what was to prove their final major assault. Every available man, and it is said every woman and child able to hurl a rock, joined in the stubborn defence, and the attack was repulsed. The defenders had no idea of how desperate the Sultan's troops had become. The death of their great leader, Dragut, earlier in the year had been a great blow, food and ammunition were running low and morale had been further weakened by disease, that inevitable enemy of all besieging armies. Following a half-hearted assault on 1<sup>st</sup> September, which the island's defenders repulsed with relative ease, the weary Turks received the alarming news of the landing of a Christian relief column which had been sent from Sicily. Not realising that the reinforcements consisted of only a handful of men, the Turks decided that they had had enough, and on September 8<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of Our Lady, the Maltese people and the Knights of St. John saw the Ottoman fleet retreating from their shores.

When Grand Master La Valette began building the new city which was to become the island's capital, the first building to be completed was the Church of Our Lady of Victories. La Valette himself laid the foundation stone in 1566 and was himself laid to rest in that church following his death in 1568.

The Maltese conviction that Our Lady has a special care for them was strengthened much more recently than the sixteenth century. Just inside Valetta's ancient walls, the ruins of the once magnificent Opera House remain to this day as a silent witness to the heaviest aerial bombardment of the Second World War; a bombardment which ended – many would say miraculously - in September 1942. A few yards from those ruins, intact and unscathed is that same Church of Our Lady of Victories – a reminder of the debt that the Maltese people owe to their great patron in heaven.

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1943 the surrender of Italian forces was marked by a flotilla of Italian ships surrendering in Malta and bringing fresh hope to the beleaguered island.

Although no longer officially Malta's National Day, September 8<sup>th</sup> is still an important national holiday.



Statue of Our Lady of Victories  
Sculptured by Pietru Pawl Azzopardi

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## Healing Prayers 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.



# Ordinations

On Saturday 13th July, Bishop Philip ordained two new priests for our Diocese: Fr. Ambrose Chou and Fr. Tom Hiney. An ordination is a moving occasion, and the Cathedral was packed with guests, including many priests from our Diocese.

Every priest has a story to tell about what God has done for them in their life, the epic journey that brought them to the priesthood. Tom was a journalist, a biographer and an Anglican Army Chaplain. Ambrose was a student of criminology. Their life-journeys testify to God's grace.

In his homily, Bishop Philip spoke about the anointing of the hands of a new priest: "A priest's hands are holy because, anointed with the power of the Spirit, they have become Christ's hands. They handle holy things. They are instruments of God's self-giving love for His people. By the prayer of the bishop and the laying on of his hands, a new priest shares in Christ's three-fold ministry as a priest, a prophet, a shepherd.

Like Mary who holds Jesus in Her hands, so a priest holds Christ in his, as he celebrates the liturgy and the sacraments, leading people in prayer. Like Mary who presents Jesus the Word, so a priest teaches, preaches and explains to people the Word of God. And like Mary Who gave everything to serve Her Son, so a priest shepherds the flock, leading and loving it, caring for the poorest and neediest. This is why being a priest, sharing in Christ's three-fold ministry, is a sublime vocation. It's a life of selfless service."

Please pray for Fr. Tom, who will serve from September in the Cathedral, and for Fr. Ambrose, who will be serve in Jersey.

On Saturday, 27th July, Bishop Philip ordained two new deacons for our Diocese: Rev. Stephen Patterson from Windsor and Rev. Zacharias Parambi from the Cathedral parish.

Stephen, who is married to Jacoby and has two sons, James and Robert, originally comes from Newcastle. He has worked as an historian and a curator in the Royal Household and was made a CVO in the 2021 New Year's Honours List.

Zacharias, who is married to Cici and has three children, Sneha, Josh and Shryia originally comes from Kerala. He has worked for the Sultanate of Oman and is presently a pharmacist at St. Mary's, Portsmouth.

There are over 40 deacons in active ministry in the diocese, and the bishop offered his gratitude to Fr. Dominic Adeiza and his team for all their hard work supporting and caring for them. He prayed that the Lord will grant us many more deacons so that every parish community can have a deacon to support them.

The bishop has appointed Deacon Stephen to his home parish of Windsor and Ascot, and Deacon Zacharias to serve in the Cathedral parish. Please keep them both and their families in your prayers.

Earlier in the month, the bishop went out to Villa Palazzola and the Venerable English College for the ordination to the diaconate of Ryan Browne. From September Deacon Ryan will be attached to the Cathedral parish. Please pray for Deacon Ryan, and God willing he will be ordained a priest next summer.



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## Gospel Study Opportunity

*The Parish Bible Study Course is now full, but if you would like to take part in a course looking at St John's Gospel, Deacon Martin McElroy invites you to join him on a journey through the Gospel according to Mark: an online formation series, which you can follow at your own pace.*

He has re-published the videos of the presentations he made during the formation series on Mark's gospel, which ran in the spring and summer of 2021. The entire series (episodes 1-20: one per chapter, plus introductory and summary sessions) is now available via the YouTube site of the parish of St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs. There's also a Playlist that you can use to follow the episodes in order.

Each episode has an accompanying PDF document containing the presentation material - allowing you to follow in your own time, and at your own pace, from the comfort of your own home. All episodes are also broken down into "chapter headings", allowing you to focus on particular topics, if you don't have time to watch the whole episode.

We are currently reading Mark's gospel on most Sundays during Ordinary Time, so this is an ideal opportunity to learn more about this gospel. Or perhaps you can use it as the basis for a small discussion group, with friends and family?

If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Martin: [mmcelroy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mmcelroy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

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## Environmental Conference

As part of the Season of Creation, Caritas is holding an environmental conference, 'To Hope and Act with Creation' at **St Peter's and Winchester Martyrs Parish** on Saturday September 14th, 10.00am-1.00pm. We have John Paul de Quay from the Ecological Conversion Group Charity speaking on: '*Fellowship of believers, how faith should motivate us in caring for our common home?*'. There will be updates from COP28 and preparation for COP29 and practical actions for parishes. Everyone is welcome.

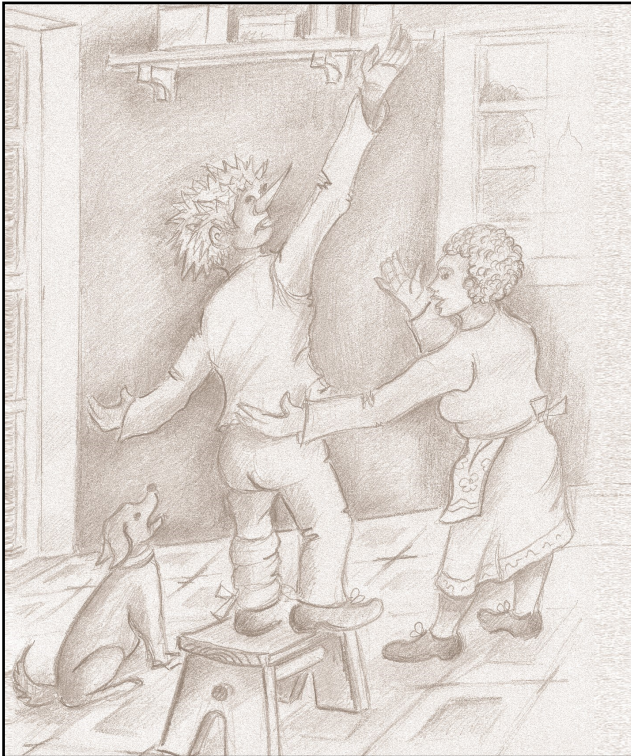
A flyer can be found along with more information on our website - [www.caritasportsmouth.org.uk](http://www.caritasportsmouth.org.uk).

Any questions, please contact us at [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or on 07825513195

# Words of Comfort

A relative of mine is seriously ill. During a recent spell in hospital, he kept his spirits up by taking a positive thought each day and illustrating it with a simple pencil drawing. His son compiled the thoughts and sketches into a booklet.

We have previously printed twelve of the thoughts and their complain sketches and here print four more to provide weekly thoughts for each week in September



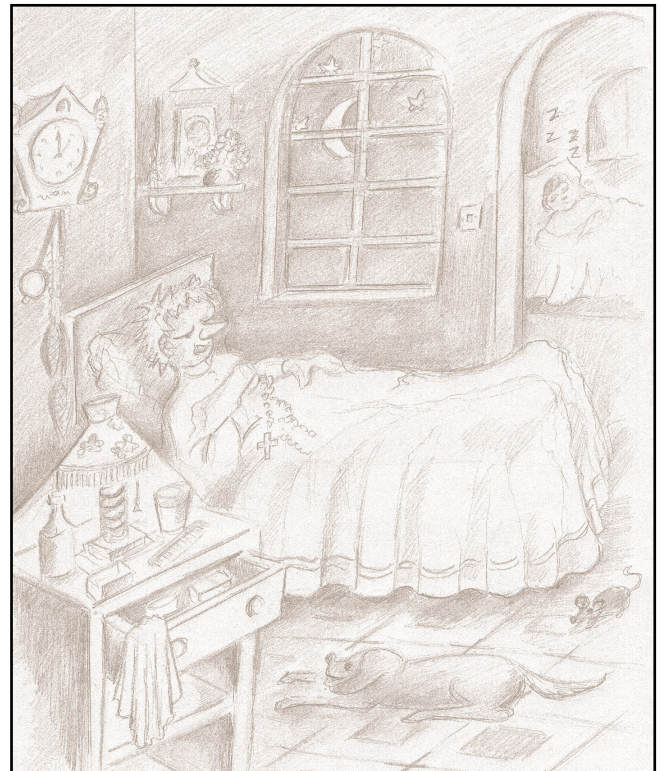
It is better to ask your loved ones for help rather than risk getting hurt again. Don't be too proud to ask for help.



Pain can prevent you from appreciating the company of others. It's not your fault, but try to be grateful for visitors because they make sacrifices to be near you.



Be aware that not everyone can express themselves well or understand your situation. Patience is a virtue ... let nothing hinder the peace of your heart.



Moments of loneliness come upon us all. Do not give up, be courageous. Pray God for the peace and healing of all those suffering in so many parts of the world.

# The Pope's Intentions



The Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. For the month of September the Pope asks us to pray for the cry of the earth:

Let us pray that each of us hears with the heart the cry of the Earth and victims of natural disasters and climate change, personally committing to care for the world we inhabit.

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## Reflection on the Pope's Prayer Intention

Considering rising temperatures around the globe, we can say the earth has a “fever”, Pope Francis says in his video-message announcing this month’s prayer intention. The earth “is sick”, he continues, “just like anyone who’s sick”.

“But are we listening to this pain?” he asks. “Do we hear the pain of the millions of victims of environmental catastrophes.”

In his message the Holy Father notes that it is the poor who suffer most from these disasters, pointing especially to those forced to leave their homes due to floods, heat waves, or drought.

Our response, he continues, must be comprehensive, involving not only ecological but also “social, economic, and political” action. “We must commit ourselves to the fight against poverty”, the Pope says, and to “the protection of nature” by making both personal and communal changes”.

Pope Francis’ prayer during the month of September – when the Church observes the “Season of Creation” – is “that each of us might listen with our hearts to the cry of the earth and of the victims of environmental disasters and climate change, making a personal commitment to care for the world we inhabit”.

The prayer intention for September was written in collaboration with the Dicastery for the Promoting Integral Human Development.

In a press release accompanying the Pope’s video-message, the Dicastery’s prefect, Cardinal Michael Czerny, S.J., says, “Creation is groaning. Its suffering is caused by humans who were originally its guardian and are now its subjugator”.

However, Cardinal Czerny points out that in his Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Francis invites Christians “to hope and to act with Creation, which we could translate as ‘living in faith’.”

The prefect’s comments are echoed by Fr Frédéric Fornos, S.J., the international director of the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network, which publishes the pope’s prayer intentions each month. “The earth is crying”, he says, as are the victims of environmental disasters and climate change.

Pope Francis, he concludes, “invites us to prayer, for only prayer can awaken our anaesthetised hearts”.

*Christopher Wells*

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## Diocesan Board of Trustees

Early in July the Bishop had a meeting with the Board of Trustees. He expressed his gratitude to the diocesan Trustees who commit their time, energy, enthusiasm and expertise to the Diocese. They play a vital role in two ways. First, the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is a registered charity and as such has a Board of Trustees to oversee its work. Their role is to make sure that the Diocese fulfils its charitable purpose for the public benefit (in summary, the advancement of the Roman Catholic religion in the Diocese), that it complies with its own governing document, and with the law. They make sure that the resources of the Diocese are managed responsibly.

The bishop has explained that there are many things that can go wrong when running a large organisation like a Diocese, which is why there is a need for policies and rules. “For example,” he said, “we need to ensure that: we do not spend charitable funds inappropriately on things that are *not* part of our charitable purpose; that we safeguard vulnerable people; that we implement proper health and safety systems for everyone; that we have solid financial controls to help prevent fraud, negligence, waste, and so on.”

The Trustees make sure that the Diocese is accountable for what it does, for example by means of its Annual Report and Accounts. In doing all of this, they must act with reasonable care and skill in the best interests of the Diocese.

*(Continued on Next Page)*

# El Shaddai Prayer Group

**E**l Shaddai is an Old Testament term which can be interpreted in several ways, referring, for example, to God as God Almighty, God the Overpowering or the All-sufficient One. El Shaddai is the name found in Genesis through which God the Father revealed himself to Israel. Today, El Shaddai is the name of a Catholic charismatic prayer community which was started in the Philippines in 1984.

Mike Velarde, a Filipino property developer and owner of Radio Station DWXI, inspired by his recovery from heart surgery, started a weekly Bible-based radio show. The show drew a large number of listeners, many of whom reported that his Bible readings had cured or eased their own health problems.

In 1984 Velarde named his radio show “El Shaddai” and started holding monthly prayer rallies outside the radio station. The number attending the rallies grew to such an extent that he started weekly rallies in a football stadium. As weekly numbers increased, he moved to larger and larger locations ending up in a business park owned by his family. Velarde moved his Bible-based prayer show on to the state-owned television service, and the show ran on television for nearly thirty years, with ever-growing numbers of devotees.

The movement has expanded rapidly, with prayer groups being established in many countries, and has over 11 million members worldwide. As a Roman Catholic movement, it places itself under the direction of Bishop Jessie Mercado of the Diocese of Paranaque, and has Bishop Emeritus Teodors Bacani as its spiritual director.

In England there are some ten active “Cell Groups” including one in our own parish. The Andover El Shaddai Outreach Prayer Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month. They have prayers, including Holy Rosary, Praise and Worship, Welcome and Testimonies from one o’clock, followed by Healing Message. The sessions end at six o’clock.

All are welcome to join in the prayer sessions, to bring loved ones and friends, to experience the healing touch of El Shaddai, God Almighty, through His Son Jesus Christ and through the intercession of our Mother Mary.

The “Mission and Vision” of the movement are fourfold:

To proclaim to the world the greatness, faithfulness, power, goodness, and love of God.

To provide relief to the people whose hearts and minds are burdened with problems.

To draw the spiritually and physically afflicted of our time to the healing power of the Holy Spirit.

To preach the Good News of Salvation offered by Our Lord Jesus Christ.



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*(Diocesan Trustees, Continued from Previous Page)*

The second way Trustees play a vital role is that the Board of Trustees fulfils an important requirement of canon law. The Catholic Church is the mystical body of Christ, a communion, a sacrament, indeed, the Bride of Christ. She is the people of God on earth. There is an institutional dimension to this. As a people, just like the people of a nation or a city, members have certain rights and certain responsibilities to one another. These rights and responsibilities are set out in the Code of Canon Law

Bishop Philip pointed out: “We have the right to expect our Diocese to be well-administered. This is one reason why the Code of Canon Law provides (Can. 492-494) that every diocese establishes what it terms a *finance committee*, presided over by the bishop or delegate. The Board of Trustees forms the canonical finance committee. The finance committee does not just deal with purely financial matters, but more generally helps the bishop administer the Diocese well, ensuring that our resources are being used to good effect in carrying out our mission. Indeed, this is a key ambition in our 10 year Mission Plan, *You will be my Witnesses.*”

The day-to-day management of the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is delegated by the Bishop and Trustees to the Chief Operating Officer, Heather Hauschild, and her management team, and also to parish priests. The curia and the priests work hard to ensure that the necessary policies and rules are put in place and followed for the support of our schools and parishes. There are also external professional advisors to help the Diocese meet its legal obligations, particularly the external auditors, who audit the annual financial statements. The diocese also engages specialist legal advice, and specialist surveyors who help us with such things as the sale and development of property.

The bishop is always on the look-out for people who can serve as Trustees, or who can contribute to the functioning of the Board through one of its committees. “This,” he said, “is a wonderful way to offer our life experience and workplace expertise (such as in education, safeguarding, law, business, or finance) to the Lord in His Church.”

If you think you might be called to serve in this way, please in the first instance contact Deacon Tony, the Secretary ([tdarlison@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:tdarlison@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)).

# Civil War (2023)

This is a stonking film. It is a house definitely built on rock. And yet, the rock it is built on has a fault line in it put there unconsciously by the film's Director and Writer; Alex Garland. Regrettably, Mr Garland isn't cold-blooded enough (or perhaps sufficiently capable) to establish a solid, clearly understandable rationale as to what his film is meant to be about and why.



The Background: Civil War in present day America. The President has granted himself a third term (illegal) as President. Texas and California refuse to accept this, have joined together as the Western Federation (WF) and have raised an army to advance on Washington, remove the President and restore the American Republic to democracy by force of arms. It's 1776 again and for real. They are now on the brink of winning. Indeed, the film opens with the WF forces preparing for their final assault on Washington and the President in his fortified White House.

The Story: From New York, 3 Journalists set off to travel to Washington to obtain the President's final interview. They are hardened woman war photographer Lee, male journalist Joel and wannabee woman war photographer and ingenue, Jessie. To get to Washington they have to do a wide circular sweep to avoid the fighting. We've all heard that one before (ie "avoid") and so it proves. As they journey along, they get caught up in various small actions and much unpleasantness. It's not often clear who is fighting whom but the action sequences are chaotic, visceral and carry you through emotionally.

As for when the winners emerge, it gets worse. Wounded soldiers attempting to surrender are shot. Opposing soldiers captured alive are stood up and shot. Civilians are killed and dumped in mass graves. Geneva Convention? Never heard of it! However, our trio of dramatic leads survive all of the carnage and make it to the WF assembly area for the Federation's final assault. Naturally, in they go in with the WF assault troops. It's that sort of film.

The assault on Washington is a cinematic masterclass in how you do an extended action sequence. Like going down the rapids it bumps and bangs along without pause, let or hindrance. The adrenaline just drips off the screen. But the President ain't going down without a fight. Defended by hard-line army loyalists ("do or die soldiers"), the Secret Service are also standing by their man. Berlin 1945 is clearly the reference. Unsurprisingly, the result is the same.

A squad of WF soldiers penetrate the White House interior and shoot their way to the Oval Office. There, as in keeping with the rules of war thus far, the President is shot out of hand and our Media trio, now duo (Lee having died saving the now (ex) wannabee Jessie's life) record the scene. WF soldiers beam triumphant over the dead President like Big Game Hunters and their kill - which exactly is what it is. Film fades to black and ends.

So what is the Director's intention with this film? Not really a clue but it's a rollercoaster ride

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# New Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham

**W**alsingham is a centre for both Anglican and Catholic pilgrimage, having started in 1061 when the Lady Richeldis, a Saxon noblewoman and widow of the Lord of the Manor of Walsingham Parva, had a vision in which she was taken by Our Lady and shown the house in Nazareth where the Annunciation of the coming of Jesus Christ was made by the Archangel Gabriel. Mary asked Richeldis to build an exact replica of that house.

Richeldis's son Geoffrey had a Priory built around the simple "Holy House of Nazareth". The Priory came under the care of Augustinian Canons and became a place of pilgrimage for those unable to make the long, costly, and hazardous pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As the shrine grew in popularity it attracted pilgrims from all levels of society and was visited by several kings starting with Henry III until it was destroyed in the reign of Henry VIII.

Although the Priory no longer existed, devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham persisted and in 1897 there was a Catholic pilgrimage to the restored Slipper Chapel, which is now at the centre of the Catholic Shrine.

In 1921 the Anglican Vicar of Walsingham, Rev Hope Patten, commissioned a new statue of Our Lady, the design of which was taken from an image depicted on the seal of the medieval Priory. As the trickle of 20<sup>th</sup> Century pilgrims grew to a flood, a new Holy House within a pilgrimage church was built to house the statue. The church was expanded a few years later to form the Anglican shrine as it is today.

In England and Wales each day, in liturgical terms, is a feast day. Weekdays may be classified as Optional or Obligatory Memorials, or Solemnities. The feast of Our Lady of Walsingham has up to now been an Obligatory Memorial, but now the Vatican's Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has agreed to the request of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to raise the status of this day from an Obligatory Memorial to a Feast in England and Wales.

There are special prayers for the Feast Day. These include a new and impressive 'Preface of the Daily Life of the Blessed Virgin in the Home at Nazareth':

*It is truly right to give you thanks, truly just to give you glory, Father most holy, on this celebration of the glorious Virgin Mary. For at Nazareth she receives with faith the message of Gabriel and becomes the Mother of your Son, begotten by you before the ages, now born into this world of time as our saviour and our brother. At Nazareth too, in loving communion with her Son, she watches over the growing Church, in the person of her Child and hands on to us the shining example of her life. In the holy house of Nazareth, as the first disciple of her Son, she receives the message of the Gospel, treasures it in her heart, and reflects on it in her mind. At Nazareth also this purest of virgins, united with Joseph, the just man, in an unbreakable bond of chaste love, praises you in song, worships you in silence, honours you by her daily life, and gives you glory as she cares for her family. And so, with all the Saints and Angels, we praise you, as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts...*

The Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, 24<sup>th</sup> September, is a day of particular significance to Bishop Philip Egan, since it was on that day in 2012 that he was ordained as Bishop of Portsmouth.



## Sister Hyacinthe Awarded Doctorate

**C**ongratulations to Sr Hyacinthe Defos du Rau OP of the Dominican Sisters of St. Joseph in the New Forest, who has just been awarded a doctorate by Liverpool Hope University.

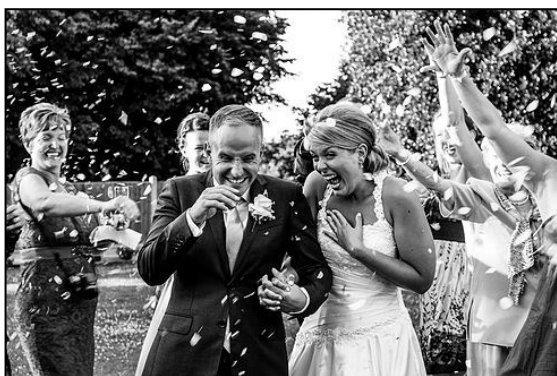
Sister Hyacinthe is well known by many here at St John the Baptist. She has conducted religious courses here in our parish, as well as overseeing Days of Recollection for parish groups at the Dominican Convent in Sway, and guided Ministers of the Word in completing the diocesan *Recognitio*.



The title of her thesis is “The Transmissibility of Christian Hope: The Scope of Human Influence in the Genesis and Growth of a Theological Virtue”. In it she asks: Can one person transmit hope to another? For St. Thomas Aquinas, hope is a theological virtue, infused by God and directed to Him. Since it is caused by God, how could it be transmissible through human agency?

By studying Aquinas in relation to certain passages of Scripture, the dissertation explores whether there is a scope for human influence to prepare others to receive the gift of hope. Such pathways include friendship, the sacraments, the sacred Liturgy, prayer and the development of virtues.

In conclusion, the analysis of the Thomistic and scriptural data would confirm, she argues, that while hope in God cannot be transmitted as such, the disposition to hope can nevertheless be fostered in another, essentially through interpersonal relations within the context of the Church.



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## From The School

The school celebrated its patronal feast day for St John the Baptist towards the end of the summer term. Father Austin celebrated Mass for the school and parish community. This was followed by a family picnic and the school sports day which began with an Olympics themed opening ceremony. The House Captains led their teams onto the field holding aloft the Olympic flag and an original 2012 Olympic torch. Results at the end of the day were close, but St Rose of Lima (Green House) was triumphant for the second year running.

Father Austin celebrated the feast of St Peter and Paul with Mass in school. Father Austin reminded all that neither Peter nor Paul started their journey of faith as “perfect candidates for the job”, but after their encounter with Christ their hearts changed, and they went on to shape the Faith we have today. We, in our turn, are charged to take up that baton and continue to build His Faith and Church today.

Year 6 enjoyed a busy and exciting day in London, visiting the War Museum, having a trip on the Underground and then watching the West End production of “Mrs Doubtfire”.

Year 2 visited Langford Lakes to investigate wildlife in the area. The morning was spent pond-dipping and bug hunting. Newts, blood worms, nymphs, pond skaters, beetles, slugs and millipedes were among the treasures they discovered. After lunch they ventured into the forest to learn about forest wildlife, handling deer antlers, skulls from foxes, badgers and other forest creatures. Guided by wildlife artist Andy Goldworthy they made beautiful wildlife art, and learned that when leaving the forest one must only take away memories and leave only footprints.

Weeks of hard work culminated in the Key Stage 2 summer production. All went smoothly, the lighting and sound technicians did a professional job, the stage management crew changed scenes expertly, the choir sang beautifully supporting the cast on stage. Congratulations to all involved. Cast and audience had a wonderful time.

The sun shone for the Summer Fayre, and there was a great turn out of family and friends. Suzanne School of Dancing, Fijian dancers, a cheerleading athlete and a yoga demonstration provided great entertainment. There was an enticing array of stalls, including a barbecue, a Polish cake stall, stalls with sweets and candy floss. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Friends of St John the Baptist, and the continued support of families and friends, the Summer Fayre raised over £2,000 which will be used to provide extra opportunities and equipment for the children.

Year 6 went to The Lights Theatre for their Primary School Graduation Ceremony, organised annually by Test Valley Borough Council. They listened to inspiring speeches by the Mayor of Test Valley, a representative from Winchester university, and Mr Stevens, the Head of John Hanson School, before receiving their Graduation Certificate. Mrs Whatley ended the ceremony by sharing memories of Year 6's time at St John's, how they have helped to shape the school, the legacy they leave, and her hopes for their future as they take with them the values which the school strives to achieve.

To end the term, Father Austin celebrated the Leavers' Mass in the parish church, which was attended by Year 6, their teachers and their families and friends.

Rounding off the year, Mrs Whatley said how proud she is of the hard work and dedication shown by the staff and children throughout the year. Indications are that results for Year 6 this year are again above the national average, reflecting the seven years of hard work and teamwork since the children started school in Year R.

The staff, the children and their supportive families are to be congratulated on another successful year and a well-earned summer break.



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## Lourdes Pilgrimage

Lourdes is where in 1858 Our Lady appeared 18 times to the young Bernadette Soubirous. She told St. Bernadette to ask her parish priest to build a chapel and to drink water from a spring, which Bernadette dug out with her own hands. Lourdes has thus become a place of healing. People from all over the world go there with their intentions, especially bringing the sick, to ask the Blessed Virgin's prayers and to obtain God's favour.

In July, four members of our parish joined Bishop Philip on the diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, which as ever was expertly organised by Canon PJ Smith, Sue Field and the team. There was an uplifting air of friendship and solidarity among the pilgrims who had a truly enjoyable time together, staying in Hotel Solitude on the main street of Lourdes just outside the entrance into the Domaine.

The pilgrims celebrated Mass and Morning and Evening Prayer together each day in the beautiful Sacred Heart Chapel at the *Hôpital Notre Dame des Douleurs* opposite the hotel and joined in all the main pilgrim activities: the Torchlight Procession, Mass at the Grotto, a visit to the Baths, the Blessed Sacrament Procession and the International Mass. On Thursday, they brought to the Grotto all the intentions that people had requested and lit a large diocesan candle for them. One afternoon they had an excursion to Gavarnie high up in the Pyrenees and the source of the River Gave.

Lourdes is Europe's greatest shrine: over 4 million pilgrims go there every year. This year's diocesan pilgrimage 'overlapped' with diocesan pilgrimages from Westminster, Wrexham and Liverpool.

# Vatican Cricket Team Tour

The Vatican has a cricket team – as Michael Cane might have said, “Not a lot of people know that”! Officially known as St Peter’s Cricket Club, the team was formed in 2014 and each year has undertaken a “Light of Faith” tour. Over the years it has toured Portugal, Argentina, Kenya, Malta, and Spain. Its first tour was to the Netherlands where it faced the Fellowship Of Oddly Odd Countries Cricket Club in a 35 over match, the Vatican side winning by 49 runs.



The aim of each trip is to promote dialogue and friendship between the host country and the Catholic Church, as it says on its social media page, “spreading the message of friendship, unity, and gospel hope”. The players are not residents of the Vatican but are all seminarians and priests based in Rome, and see themselves as ambassadors for the Catholic priesthood. As the team’s co-ordinator, Fr Eamonn O’Higgins reminds them, they may well be the only Catholic priests many of those with whom they interact will ever have met or will ever meet.

The team is part of *Athletica Vaticana*, an umbrella organisation which brings together all the Vatican’s athletes, and is committed to promoting fraternity, inclusion and solidarity bearing witness to the Christian faith among sportsmen and women. Pope Francis recently said that “In the particularly dark historical moment we are living, sport can build bridges, break down barriers, and foster peaceful relations.

This year the team made a second visit to the UK, having first visited in 2018. They played their first games were two T20 matches against England Seniors First and Second Elevens comprising players over 60 years. The First eleven had just returned from Chennai, India, where they had reached the finals of the World Cup. The matches were played at one of the country’s most beautiful cricket grounds in the Wormsley Estate. In the first match the Vatican eleven put up a creditable 105 runs, but England overtook that score after just 14 overs. The second match went down to the last over with England making the necessary 134 runs with three balls to go.

The third match was against St Mary’s Catholic University, and was played at the spectacular Arundel cricket ground. As the Vatican team arrived at the pitch following a tour of the castle, it looked set to be a good match. The St Mary’s side had been specially formed for the occasion and included a player from the England Men's Deaf cricket team.

The Vatican opened the batting. They hit well and consistently, with an excellent final push that took their total to 136 for 5. St Mary’s immediately fought back, with an impressive opening partnership that lasted until the end of the tenth over. Once they had taken their first wicket, however, the Vatican bowlers were able to ratchet up the pressure, forcing an increasing number of dot balls. The game was on a knife-edge until the very last over, with the British side ultimately coming up just five runs short, with a total of 131 for 5.

Two days later, the Vatican cricket team travelled to Windsor Castle where, following an ecumenical service in Windsor Castle’s Chapel Royal they faced off against the King’s XI, a cricket team composed of members of the monarch’s household.

At this match, a slow wicket meant the ball kept low, causing problems for batsmen on both sides. The Vatican, who opened the batting, lost a few quick wickets, and had to settle for a final score of 98 for 8.

They immediately struck back, however, with dominant bowling. After three overs, the Vatican had taken three wickets, and limited their opponents to seven runs. The Vatican kept the pressure on until, around twelve overs in, rain started to descend, causing problems for their bowlers. A strong partnership with six wickets down allowed the King’s XI to pile on the runs. The eighth and ninth wickets fell in the nineteenth over, and the game was balanced on a knife-edge. In the end, in the final over, the King’s XI was able to get over the line, finishing on 99 for 9.

King Charles had prepared a message for the occasion. He pointed out that this was the fourth match between the Vatican and a royal team, and said he was “delighted” that the two sides had “once again been brought together by the love of cricket.”

Noting that the Vatican were “reigning champions”, having won the previous match, the King added that he was keenly waiting to hear the result. One hopes he was suitably amused.

**Please pray for those who have died recently**

Fr Boniface Moran OSB, Dorothy Nash, Brian Nolan, Sally Coffey, Jill Maddocks  
**and for those whose anniversaries occur in September**

Cecily Plowden, Ursula Reid, Michael Gavin, James Lowry, Gladys, Vickery, Agnes Smith, Fr Joe Connell, Margaret Scott, Patrick Monaghan, Cecilia Connelly, William Green, Tiggy Eldridge, Nora Smith, Kathleen Lee, Kevin Marchant, Edith Bush, Fr Jean Marie Vincent SMM, George Lynn, William McLamey, Margaret Symon, Matthew Everett, Florence Coleman, Br Joseph, Max Double, Guiseppe Ardolino, Pat Copeland, Laura Pearson, Gordon Ross, Doris Baulk, Mary Field, Patsy Hynes, Lilly Collins, Eric Ramsden, Nan Bootyman, Brian Fleming, Almuth's Father Wilhelm, Sheila Collins, Harold Fowler, Bill Green, Fr Isherwood SMM, George Platt, Esther O'Hanlon, Pauline Badman, Angus Glen, John Cremins, John King, Thomas Saywell, Annie Hynes, Ruth O'Shea, Gwendolyn Dodsley, Patrick McDonnell, Dorothy Bennett, Kathleen Bowen, Mary Reeve, Staistawa Danisz, Eileen Watts, Catherine Thornton, John Tschuk, Cecil Mundy, Annie Howlett, Finbar Howlett, Sandor Zalavolgyi Hyde, Carlos Cabral, Mary Simmon, Fr. Patrick O'Donnell, Norah Kimmet, Mary Snelling, Sybil Evelyn Murphy, Ivor Palmer, Bridget Pierce, Dorothy Robinson, Paul Coady, Sean O'Connell, Jean Lloyd, Elizabeth Scanlan, Kathleen Copleston, Fr Danny Burns, Virginia Geary, Teresa Moss, Laurie Fisher, Maria Ardolino, Dorothy Lomax, Baby Dominic Quaresama, Daphne Channing, Frances Egglestone, Pam Nolan, Geraldine Beetham, Geraldine McCaulder, Mary Hanifin, John Mills, Peter Henley, John Hodge, HM Queen Elizabeth II, Rita Binsley, Kathleen Ineson

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

Esme Coveney, Rita Lane, Tom Wilkins, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Sheila Muir, Sheila Roberts, Mary Hathaway, Christopher Brown, Lisa Ramage, Mervyn Owen, Michelle Taylor, Bernard Ivinson, Fiona Hilleard, Carol Keenan, Mary Oak, Tony Fabian, Silé Monnelly, Helen O'Connell, Robert Williams, Simon and Victoria Rowney, Douglas Manning, Guy Foa, Diane Mahoney, Sarah Viney, Diane Gan, Wendy Rawlings, Victor Trapani, Elizabeth Stanbridge, Catherine Ash, Bill Jago, Conal O'Kelly 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**

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**ENDPIECE**

**M**any thanks to the various contributors to this month's *The JOURNAL*. The next edition will be issued on 5th & 6th October. Contributions should be with the editors by Monday 30th September. Please leave contributions at the Presbytery or email them to: [stjohnsjournal@googlemail.com](mailto:stjohnsjournal@googlemail.com)