

# *St. Erconwald's Parish Magazine*



Issue No. 49, Pentecost 2024

## *Contents*

Editorial	Page 3-4
“From the Parish”	Page 5
Frist Reconciliation	Pages 6-7
Lent	Pages 8-9
Triduum	Page 10-12
St. Patrick’s Celebration	Page 13-14
Laurence’s Larder	Page 15
Dora – Guide Dog, “puppy in training”	Pages 16-17
A Year of Encounter	Pages 18-19
St. Joseph’s Infant and Junior School	Pages 20-21
Spring Term and St. Bernadette’s	Page 22-23
Ten requests from a person with dementia	Page 24-25
The Lilt of Irish Laughter	Page 26
I learnt it all .....	Page 27

Cover Design: Stations of the Cross, Lent display



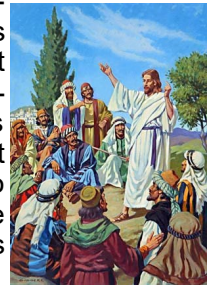
## Editorial: Pieces of Glass



Welcome to the Pentecost edition of the magazine. Hope you and your families have been keeping safe and well.

The feast of Pentecost brings to an end the Easter Season, fifty day after Jesus' resurrection. The word Pentecost originates from the Greek *Pentekoste* which means fiftieth and was one of the three major feasts celebrated by the people of Israel. The feast of Pentecost took place fifty days after the feast of Passover, and celebrated the covenant between God and his people.

During his public ministry Jesus tried to explain to everyone that God loved everyone, that God was giving up his Son for all humanity. So, when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on the disciples, he did so on that Jewish feast of Pentecost, reaffirming the message that God's covenant was not just for the people of Israel but for all peoples. Now, it was for the disciples to go out and make it their mission to do exactly that. In Acts chapter 2, St. Luke lists all the places from where people came amazed that the apostles were speaking to them in their own native language.



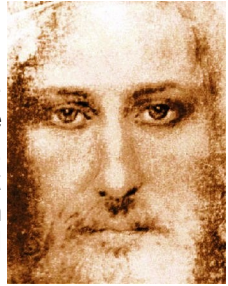
On Pentecost Sunday we gather to celebrate our “Unity in Diversity” and the different nationalities that make up our Parish. As a Parish we are called to reflect unity and diversity. Unity presumes diversity and the variety of gifts, talents and responsibilities. Each one of us needs to be aware of our gifts and talents, which indicate the role each of us must play in building up our Parish

Recently I read a story about two pieces of glass.



*Once there were two little pieces of blue glass stuck to a wall. They were tired of being glued there, in that uncomfortable and humid place. Continually complaining, one to the other, they reached a decision. They would unstuck themselves from the wall and go down to the floor. Someone would surely find them there and give them a better purpose. Thus, they wiggled free and were able to slide down to the cool floor. The next day, a man was sweeping zealously and, not seeing them there, tossed them into the rubbish bin. But, as he sat down and gazed towards the wall to pray his customary morning prayer, he realized that in the beautiful mosaic of Jesus he was so familiar with, the two blue eyes were missing.*

Perhaps we don't always appreciate the role we have to play, or how much people look to us for direction, meaning or inspiration. Like the pieces of glass, we might not always be able to see the beauty we radiate to those around us, or appreciate what we have to offer. Aren't we all at some point a piece of blue glass? Don't we all go up and down, have peaks of positive action and working well, whilst also fighting inward battles and occasionally struggling?



Let us make this feast of Pentecost the feast in which we rediscover the meaning of our lives. The Spirit helped the disciples to rediscover the meaning of their lives. From living in hiding in the Upper Room, gripped with a terrible sense of failure and inadequacy, the Holy Spirit sent them out into the world to do the most exciting and worthwhile work of all – to be witnesses to Jesus' resurrection and to preach the gospel of salvation to all peoples.



It is up to us now, this Pentecost, to explore and discover how that same Spirit works in us. We can ask ourselves: **How can I help in building up St. Erconwald's? What are my talents and how can I use them to best serve my Parish?** Let us also look around and recognize the work of the Spirit in other people and truly appreciate that diversity is a gift to be cherished. The Spirit works in different ways in different people, but the lesson of Pentecost, on that day when the apostles rediscovered their vocation, is that we are all pieces of a greater picture, different but equal, valued and cherished, and invited into an eternal covenant with our creator God.

Once again, thank you for your support.

With prayerful wishes to you and your families.

Yours Sincerely,



*God's Gifts Equip  
Us for Ministry*



**From the Parish**  
Please remember in your prayers  
*Comings and Goings*



We welcome and congratulate those who have been baptised here recently, and their families: Isla Jesurasa and Leander Anthony Cabral.



The Art of Dying Well  
Prayer for the Dying



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

Our sympathies to the families of those departed: Shirley Kingham; Patricia Hollingsworth; Mary Loftus; Barbara Wilson; Edward Joseph, Fr. David Williamson, Bartley McDonagh and Helga Ojinmah. We also remember those who died in Birchwood Grange, Brookhouse and Kenbrook care-homes.

*Congratulations...*

Congratulations and best wishes to all couples who are celebrating their marriage anniversaries: Josepha and Santana Fernandes who celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and to Canisia and Paul Mloi on their 25th wedding anniversary.



Congratulations to Ostral Fernandes who was Confirmed of the  
Easter Vigil.





## First Reconciliation

Joseph Psaila and Bernie Gillen

This year we have eight children preparing for their First Holy Communion. They are being prepared by the catechists Bernadette Gillen and Joseph Psaila. In preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the children and parents had three meetings. Two of the topics presented during these meetings were Baptism and the Bible.



Apart from the catechism regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the children were instructed also on how to prepare themselves for this sacrament and how to receive it. The lessons were all accompanied by a Power Point Presentation.



The Parable of the Prodigal Son played an important part. We used it to help the children understand better what happens during the reception of this sacrament. As near preparation to the sacrament, the Parable of the Prodigal Son was used to help the children memorise the five things they needed to do in preparing themselves for this sacrament.

The Prodigal Son only realised he did wrong when he became penniless, living with the pigs. There he started thinking about the servants at his father's house and how better off they were than him. - **THINK** - The first thing we do for confession is to think of the times when we said 'No' to God and did what pleased us.



The son was now very sorry for what he did against his father. He had hurt his father and now wanted to make up. - **BE SORRY** - We too should be sorry for offending God and ask his forgiveness.



After this the son decided to go and say sorry to his father. - **TELL SINS** - We go to the priest who is there instead of Jesus and tell him our sins.



The priest will tell us to do something to make up for our sins - **SAY PENANCE** - like saying a prayer.

Finally, the son was happy and full of gratitude to his father for, not only forgiving him but also organising a party in his honour. We too should - **THANK GOD** - for forgiving us our sins.

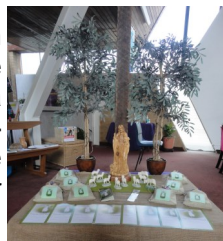


On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February, a “Link Mass” was celebrated with the topic of Reconciliation.



On the 16<sup>th</sup> March the children together with their parents met in the church at 10.30 a.m. Joseph led the children in preparing themselves for confession by saying a short prayer and helping the children to remember their sins by reading a few questions as an examination of conscience. Then, the children together recited the Sorry Prayer and one by one they went to Fr Anthony to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

At the end of the Service the First Holy Communion children were given a gift pack containing some sweets, a Good Shepherd plaque, a book mark and a leaflet with prayers. The children were also given a certificate to remember this Service. We congratulate the First Holy Communion children and their families for moving forward in their journey of faith.



Please keep the children, their families and the Catechists in your prayers.

### The Chameleons: Quiz & Chip Supper – 1<sup>st</sup> June, 7.30pm



Yes it's back once again, the chance to pit your wits in a battle of General Knowledge, whilst you cheerfully munch on tasty fish and chips, sausage and chips, or veggie burger and chips.

With free parking and a licensed bar, all that remains for you to do is book your ticket and decide which of your bathrooms you're going to keep the trophy in....

Tables of up to 8 encouraged, either come with friends or we can facilitate teams on the night! Prices £16 with food & £10 without.

Tickets are available in the normal place:

<https://www.thechameleons.co.uk/tickets/>

or via our box office on 020 8123 6443

## Lent and Easter

Elizabeth Patten



On 13<sup>th</sup> February, we marked **Shrove Tuesday** with pancakes in the Hall after Mass. A good number of parishioners came to partake of this once a year treat. An enjoyable way to prepare for the start of Lent. Ash Wednesday - a day of fasting and abstinence - marks the beginning of our Lenten journey, where we are invited to fasting and abstinence; to works of self-denial; to personal and communal worship, and to reach out to those who are less fortunate than us.

**Ash Wednesday:** Masses were well attended and we were very pleased that we managed to take Ashes to all the Nursing Homes, and to some of our housebound in the Parish. During Lent Stations of the Cross were prayed each morning before Mass and on Friday evening before Mass. On Wednesdays after morning Mass there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and reflection on the theme “We Dare to Say”. Pope Francis has named this year a “Year of Prayer”, in preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025, *Pilgrims of Hope*. Benediction concluded this time of Exposition.



## Reconciliation Service

Mary Sullivan



As part of the spiritual preparations for Easter, a Service of Reconciliation with Absolution was held on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, it was nice to see parishioners from neighbouring Churches joining us that evening. The Service was based on the theme “We Dare to Say”: Forgive us our trespasses ....

The Examination of Conscience was based on the Stations of the Cross. I found this to be a very meaningful exercise. Fr. Anthony always likes to have a symbolic act at these services and he puts a lot of thought and effort into them. This year was no exception, we were asked to place empty mini nests onto a display area, as a sign of our repentance. The service was very prayerful and reverent. The nests re-appeared in a display filled with eggs & chicks amongst the sheep and the Good Shepherd statue. [The sheep had been the symbolic act for the First Holy Communion Children who made their First Reconciliation]. The filled nests were a physical sign of the graces and gifts we had received from the Lord by our act of contrition and repentance. Sincere thanks to Fr. Anthony for providing us with this opportunity to pray and get close to God in our preparation for Easter.



## Anointing of the Sick Mass

Judith Gilbert



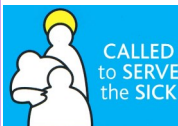
This year the Lenten Anointing of the Sick Mass took place on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Led by Fr Anthony, with assistance from Fr Tony Pelligrini, this Service has become an established event in our Parish calendar and serves to offer an opportunity for the frailer and less active members of our community to come together to pray for God's forgiveness and to receive His spiritual and physical healing in preparation for a joyful Easter. While this Mass is intended to meet the needs of the sick and housebound, who would not otherwise be able to come to a Penitential Service during Lent, it also welcomes their families and carers and any other parishioners who wish to support them in prayer and companionship.

Alongside the Healing Service is a welcome invitation to a soup lunch in the Parish Hall afterwards! This year the Mass was well attended and the soup in great demand. Our thanks to all those who give their time to setting up the Hall, to producing the soup, to waiting on us and to washing up afterwards!



Being a full time carer has left me almost as housebound as my mother, so this Service is as relevant for me as for her. It gives me a chance to be part of a live praying community again and to reconnect with folk not seen for a long time. The conversation and enthusiasm for second helpings must surely be a sign of the healing we have received. I hope many others will be encouraged to join us in the future

### **PRAYERS FOR THE SICK**



We keep in our thoughts and prayers: Annette Rixon, Martin Geary, Susan Bradley, Helga Ojinmah, Mary Owen, Margaret Beeby, Radwan Naffa, Kathryn McGinnis, Sheila O'Hara, and Yves Remedios.

We remember also those in Kenbrook, Birchwood Grange and Brook House.

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

## Triduum

On Wednesday, after the morning Mass, parishioners were asked to prepare the Church and the Hall for the celebration of the Triduum.



We had an unusually big attendance on **Maundy Thursday** for the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, perhaps as a response to Fr. Anthony's appeal from the altar, that Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil are called a *Triduum* for a reason. Each Service leads us on to the next one. To get the full sacramental benefit we need to attend all three. More people meant Fr. Anthony had more feet to wash! It made for a pleasant change for Father, that there were so many volunteers - a reminder of Fr. Anthony's call to service of his flock. The Mass concluded with the Blessed Sacrament [reserved for distribution on Good Friday] being taken in procession to the Altar of Repose in the Hall where we had "Watching" until 10.00pm.

As is always the case **Good Friday** was fantastically supported. In view of our many elderly parishioners and equally vulnerable parishioners who are undergoing medical treatments which leave them open to infections, Fr. Anthony decided to once again this year offer three separate Services. Our Parishioners showed their appreciation by attending all the Services in large numbers. During the morning *Family Service*, crosses were distributed to the families present. After the Service we all gathered outside and together with the other Christian Churches in Wembley, we went on our Good Friday Silent Walk of Witness. This is a very uplifting experience. The Cross leads a congregation of ministers, and people of different ages, nationalities, and physical abilities, some with walking sticks, in wheelchairs or babies in buggies. Leaflets were distributed to those who inquired, explaining what we were doing and why. The "Walk" ends on the Green with a Service of Readings, Prayers and Hymns. The Cross was then returned to St. Erconwald's Church, ready for the 3.00pm Solemn Liturgy and the Veneration of The Cross.



A word of thanks to the Ministers of all the Churches, Readers and Stewards and all who helped with this Service. Special thanks to Cllr. Daniel Kennelly for organising with the Council to have the Green cleaned prior to the Service.

For the 3.00pm Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion we reached our Fire Regulations Limits so the Hall was opened to take the overflow. The Service was live streamed and the Cross was taken to the Hall for Veneration and Communion was distributed by a Minister of the Eucharist to the 60 people there.



Preparations for the Most Solemn and joyous time began on Holy Saturday morning. We gathered together and recited Morning Prayer. Parishioners then set about preparing the Church for Easter with the setting up of the Easter Garden and other displays, decorating the altar with flowers and candles. Preparing the candles for the Vigil, and the fire from which the Easter Candle would be lit. Setting up the Hall for the expected extra parishioners, and many other tasks.



At 7.30pm we gathered to celebrate this most holy of nights: **The Easter Vigil**. People gathered outside the Church for the Blessing of the Fire and lighting of the Easter [Paschal] Candle which was then taken in Procession by Fr. Anthony and the Altar Servers into the Church whilst Philip led us in the singing of "The Light of Christ". Once everyone's candle had been lit from the flame of the Easter Candle, the Easter Proclamation [Exultet] was sung.

An extended Liturgy of the Word followed. Here we meditated on the wonderful things God had done for his people since the creation of the world. Fr. Anthony introduced the readings, and a prayer followed each reading.

The Baptismal Liturgy followed with the blessing of water. Once again, the candles were relit as we renewed our Baptismal Promises. This was followed by the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. We extend our congratulations to Ostral Fernandes. All present [including those in the Hall] were blessed with the Easter Holy Water. The Vigil continued with the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As the congregation left following our final hymn "Thine Be The Glory", they were offered prayer cards and mini eggs. Once again at the Vigil we were over capacity in the Church so we opened the Hall to accommodate the extra people. Thank you to Assis for organising the Hall and liaising with the Stewards in the Church.

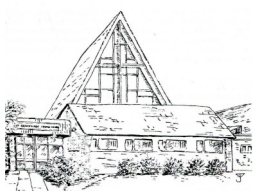


Easter Sunday Masses were held at 10.00 and 11.30am. Both Masses were well attended and following the 11.30am Mass we had our Easter Raffle, with lots of Easter Eggs, Easter Hampers and other prizes to be won. Most prizes were taken home on the day and the remaining were collected over the following days. Thank you to all who donated prizes and those who participated in the raffle. Congratulations to the winners. All proceeds went to the Church Refurbishment Fund.

It just remains to add a few thanks. First thank you to Fr. Anthony for all the wonderful Masses and Services and his brother Joseph for the support he gives Fr. Anthony. They make a good team. The Masses and Services would not be as Spiritually renewing without the assistance of the Readers, Eucharist Minsters, Altar Servers and especially the Choir and their leader Monica, who led us in the singing during Lent. With gratitude we thank Philip Evans for leading us with his singing and playing of the organ during the Triduum. Our Church would not function as well as it does without the assistance of the Stewards/Greeters, the group that meets each and every week to clean the Church on Tuesdays, those who do the Linen, those who help with DIY jobs, who help with the Repository, take Communion to the sick, instruct the young preparing for the Sacraments, those who help out with the big Celebrations, our Safe Guarding Officers, our bookkeeper Penny, counters and those who take the lodgement to the Bank. Last but by no means least The Parish Council and Parish Finance Committee and the Social Committee.



As a newcomer to St Erconwald’s Church, I wanted to express my thanks for the Easter services. I was fortunate enough to attend a number of services through Holy Week – from Palm Sunday through to Easter Day, and I found the services to be very moving and thought-provoking. The Maundy Thursday evening service was particularly beautiful yet solemn – an experience that will stay with me through the year ahead. The Church is blessed with a wonderful choir – a special thanks to them for the wonderful hymns and music. And thank you to Fr Anthony, Elizabeth and the team for their hard work and dedication through this busy week – and for making me feel so welcome in your beautiful Church.



*Christopher Dunn*

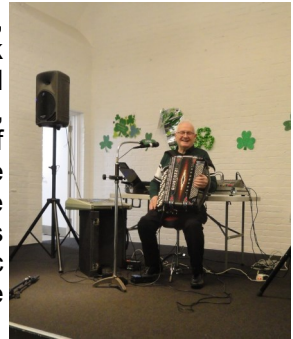
## St. Patrick's Day : Bacon & Cabbage Celebration



This year our celebration fell on Mothering Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March. As we have done in the past we suggested bringing your Mum as a double celebration. Attendance was good so perhaps that was taken on board.

Last year we had a cabbage problem this year it was the Ham. Our usual source had none so we approached O'Farrells Butchers in Willesden and were lucky enough to contact them just as they received their delivery, "so you might say, they saved by our bacon". ps we serve gammon not bacon!

We welcomed our guests after the 11.30am Mass, soon the place was buzzing with the sound of talk and laughter as people met up with friends and parishioners. Once Fr. Anthony had said Grace, the food started arriving on the tables, bowls of fluffy potatoes and plates of gammon and cabbage soon brought a silence to the tables. As people were enjoying their food George Harte and his daughter, entertained us with traditional Irish music and song. For dessert we served apple crumble with cream/custard and plates of tea brack.



There was a good variety of drinks to choose from the bar along with Irish Coffee and Bailey's or a nice cup of tea or coffee. We were spoilt for choice. What more could you want good company, music, food and drink. So we offer a little prayer of thanks to good old St. Patrick!

Eventually, our celebration had to end but before we went we had the Raffle. The Hampers were collected on the day, as were most prizes the remaining items were displayed in the Church for the winners to collect.







A lot of work went into the celebrations so a little word of thanks to the following. The Patrick's Day Committee and team. To Fr. Anthony also Eileen J. and Barbara (Irish Coffee & Tea/Coffee Bar); Mary C. and Caroline and Agatha (Kitchen); Richard, Agnes, Caroline, Eileen, (hams) Patricia (Raffle); Pauline & Patricia (Door Stewards); Selwyn (Bar); Zena, her daughter Elizabeth, Agatha, and all who served the food; Pat and Eva and all who helped set up and cleared away. All the parishioners who helped in any way, we would like you to know we appreciate all your help. Finally, our thanks to George Harte [and daughter] for kindly agreeing to entertain us to some great traditional songs and music.

Anyone new to the Parish come and check us out next year!



### Saint Patrick's Day 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024



Unfortunately, we were unable to celebrate a special Mass this year due to St. Patrick's Day falling on a Sunday, however Fr. Anthony did have the statue of St. Patrick on display. We also sang "Hail Glorious St. Patrick" as the recessional hymn, and the distribution of shamrock - thanks to Tom for preparing the Shamrock. After the 11.30am Mass we continued our celebration in the Hall with Tea & Coffee, Irish biscuits and cakes and some packets of crisps. Thank you to all who came in to join in the celebration. Thank you Fr. Anthony from the Irish Community, for marking St. Patrick's Day; it was much appreciated. Thank you to Caroline for helping to source all the goodies, to Pat and Eva and all who helped.

## Laurence's Larder

Dear Fr. Anthony and the Congregation at St. Erconwald's,



Please accept our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all the regular donations that the congregation provides for Laurence's Larder. Every week we see our numbers increasing and we find more members of our community in need than ever before. We are currently distributing approximately 130 food parcels every week, and feeding up to 300 people. We couldn't do this without your continued and generous support, and it is comforting to know that we remain in the thoughts of our local community.

Alongside the Wednesday food bank and our Thursday community lunch, we are now also open on Mondays for our Community Art Café. Every week we invite guests in from 10.30am - 4.00pm for hot drinks all day, a light lunch, boardgames, and with arts and crafts in the afternoon. It is a very welcoming and calm space, and we'd be delighted if the congregation would ever like to join us to take part in crafting, to play puzzles with the guests or simply to enjoy the space to read or study.



Our sincere thanks again to all of you.

Sara-Jade Hussein [Project Director] and the Team



Photos: Volunteering - Cathy and Patricia; Food bags - Lindsay's arm; Hot meals - Jas, Harpeet, Bill.

## Dora - Guide dog ‘puppy in training’

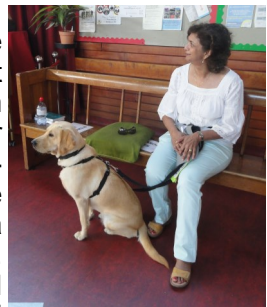
Agatha Ferrão



Parishioners who attend the 10.00am Mass on Sundays will have seen a dog sit patiently by me in the choir. That dog is called Dora and she is a Labrador/Golden Retriever puppy in training to be a guide dog for the blind. So far thank goodness she has not joined in the singing, she is just happy to settle and listen!

I have always had an interest in the work that the charity “Guide Dogs” (previously known as Guide Dogs for the Blind) does for people with visual impairment. I know that having a guide dog makes a huge difference to the lives of people who have lost their sight. The raising and training of these very special dogs takes a lot of money and effort and requires volunteers to foster puppies for the first year of their life until they are ready to go for intense training at one of the Guide dog centres.

Much as I love dogs, full time work commitments, travelling into London and family commitments made it impracticable to have a dog. Once I had a job that was less stressful and allowed me to work from home, I applied to volunteer as puppy raisers for Guide Dogs UK in March last year. I filled in the application form and provided references. Once the references were validated and as I already had a DBS check, the next stage was an online interview. Both Selwyn and I were interviewed as we would both be raising the puppy. Once they were satisfied with the interview, a Guide Dog advisor visited our home to check that the house and garden was safe and secure for their dog. At this point we were told that our application was successful and advised that we may have to wait up to a year for our own puppy.



In May 2023 a number of litters were born at the Guide Dog National Centre in the Leamington Spa and we were fortunate to be offered a puppy. Dora arrived on the 20<sup>th</sup> July when she was 8 weeks old. She is aptly named as she is so adorable.

Puppy raisers are allocated a Puppy Development Advisor (PDA) whose role is to guide and advise you in the development of the puppy which is very reassuring. We also had a lot of support from other puppy raisers in the Harrow area. We could not take Dora out of the house until she was fully vaccinated at 4 months old. Also, as Dora is going on to be trained as a guide dog there are some things she is not allowed to do, such as sit on the sofas, play with balls or go upstairs.



As part of her training programme, I take Dora to puppy classes every 2 weeks, where the PDA teaches her (and me) the various commands that she needs to learn in preparation for when she goes for formal training. Positive reinforcement is the method that is used for training the puppies. Guide dogs need to be calm and settled as they need to be comfortable in lots of different places that a visually impaired person may visit, as well as to being able to travel in a car and on public transport. The dogs need to be trained not to be distracted by people and other dogs unless they are given a release command to interact or if they are off the lead. This has been quite a challenge for Dora as she loves people and thinks she needs to play with every dog she meets.



Dora is a bright dog and learns fairly easily; she is easy to train as she likes her treats and likes to play. She is much calmer now she is older, although she has her moments and having now reached adolescence she sometimes acts up. On the whole she is a lovely puppy, as she is usually gentle and easy to manage. Besides bringing her to mass on Sundays we have taken her to restaurants and pubs and

shopping centres.

We have loved the experience of raising a guide dog and are dreading the day when she leaves us for formal training. I hope she goes on and makes the grade to be a working dog. If she doesn't, I shall certainly want to keep her.

If you are interested in finding out more about the role or wish to donate, see the attached link

<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteering/>

## A Year of Encounter: CAFOD Team [Using the Catholic Voice in the Forthcoming General Election]



As Catholics we need to think about how we cast our votes in electing those who will represent us and with a general election coming later this year it is good time to consider who we will vote for, and who will represent us now that politicians are looking for our votes – and will be listening to what voters want. We have a responsibility to make sure political parties commit

to tackle the injustices that affect our global family and to care for our common home.

The common good is reached when we work together to improve the lives of people both in our local community, and in the wider world. The Church tells us that “...All citizens ought to be aware of their right and duty to promote the common good by casting their votes...”. But in order to arrive at the polling station as well informed as possible, it’s important to know our prospective MP’s views on the things that matter to us. For this reason, CAFOD and the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) are launching **A Year of Encounter**, and are inviting parishes to reach out to their local candidates ahead of the next election to find out more about their views on the issues that we as people of faith care about, from ending global poverty to tackling the climate crisis. This is not about party political affiliations, but rather about strengthening community participation as a local faith group, and practising the culture of encounter that Pope Francis talks about: “with our faith we must create a “culture of encounter,” a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently...” . **A Year of Encounter** will offer parishioners the tools and resources to reach out to local candidates, listening and creating relationships based on true dialogue.

As people of faith, the social and political reality where we live shapes the way that we are called to express our faith. But through our faith, opportunities are also opened up to shape that reality. When the Church calls on us to promote the common good, it means that all of us are invited to play our part in creating the social conditions necessary to bring God’s kingdom closer on earth. For many of us this could sound quite overwhelming. But from small day-to-day acts of charity to involvement in local community groups, or taking part in CAFOD campaigns, promoting the common good can take many shapes and forms.

**CAFOD**  
just one world



CAFOD and SVP have put together a training session and a booklet that provides some easy steps on how to reach out to your local candidates. You can find out more about the **Year of Encounter** Campaign at <https://blog.cafod.org.uk/2024/04/04/why-should-elections-matter-for-catholics/> and <https://svp.org.uk/encounter> and about the online training session on **Saturday 4th May 2024 11am - 1pm** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-year-of-encounter-national-training-session-4th-may-2024-tickets-862247524557?aff=ebdshpsearchautocomplete>

Last, although not part of the election, please think about a donation to CAFOD in response to the emergency situation in Sudan.

### **SUDAN CRISIS APPEAL**

CAFOD are making an emergency appeal and again asking for your support. The situation has become desperate very quickly. At least 8 million people have had to flee their homes. At least 25 million Sudanese need immediate, emergency help. Families are already going hungry. Famine looms ominously. This crisis threatens to become the worst in living memory. This is due to ongoing poverty and latterly intense violence which broke out last year leading to most aid agencies leaving and many borders closing.



But, the Church is still there. And CAFOD'S Church network is working tirelessly to help. So I'm here today to ask you to resource their efforts. The needs are huge and they are escalating.

You can find more information here <https://cafod.org.uk/give/donate-to-emergencies/sudan-crisis-appeal> Thank you.



*The question which is agitating the world today is a social one. It is a struggle between those who have nothing and those who have too much ...*

*Our duty as Christians is to throw ourselves between these two camps in order to accomplish by love, what justice alone cannot do.*

Frederic Ozanam



Spring term has been another very busy term and the children led by our Prayer Leaders have continued to play an active role in growing the Catholic life of the school. We were delighted to have our first Mission Day and to open our newly relocated Prayer Room.

### Monthly Values

We have continued to introduce a monthly value and to send home a value sheet with a shared family task. Over the spring term we have reflected on the following values in assembly and in class focused activities: January - Mercy; February – Justice; March - Equality

### Whole School and Year Group Masses

This term children in KS2 have been having Masses celebrated in their classrooms with their families and staff. This is a really special Mass and we are grateful to Father Joseph and Father Tebin for coming to celebrate class Masses with our children and families.

### Catholic Social Justice Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching continues to underpin the essence of our daily school life. To further embed these themes with the pupils we had a creative project across the end of the autumn and beginning of the spring terms. Each class was given one of the seven areas and a linked theme: *Dignity of the human person; Family and Community; Solidarity and the Common Good; Dignity of Work; Rights and Responsibilities; Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; Stewardship.* They had to then create a canvas



with a linked theme and associated biblical quote. The image was then their interpretation of this. They have created a beautiful display in our Prayer Room.

### Prayer Leaders Own Clothes Day

As many of you are aware there was a terrible fire in Elm Road this week. Some of our families have been affected by this. Thankfully no one was hurt. The Prayer Leaders suggested an own clothes day to support the families. They have raised a magnificent £531.95 which we have donated to the Brent Council Resident and Household Support Fund.

## **Catholic Life and Mission Day- Saint Joseph's Day**

We had a wonderful Mission Day on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March. The children thought about our School Mission and made special personal pledges which they can carry out over Lent. We thought about our patron saint, Saint Joseph and his special characteristics and how we can follow his example of being a loving and hard-working role model.



The children all visited the Prayer Room where special stations were set up for them to visit. They have all also received a special 'Year of Prayer' prayer card. We also had a special feast day Mass on Tuesday afternoon in Saint Joseph's Church. This was a lovely celebration and we are grateful to Father Joseph for leading our special Mass. The children also had a special chocolate treat from the parish which was a lovely surprise.

## **Easter Liturgy**



Year 5 led a wonderful Easter Liturgy. It was a very moving and reverent re-telling of the Easter story through the Stations of the Cross. They reminded us of how our day to day actions link to the Easter story and how our actions can and

should make a difference. Thank you to the pupils and staff for working so hard to share this with the pupils and wider school community.

## **R.E. Section 48 Inspection Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> and Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February**

Both schools were inspected this term and we were delighted with the positive reports that we received. Below are just two of the wonderful comments that were made.

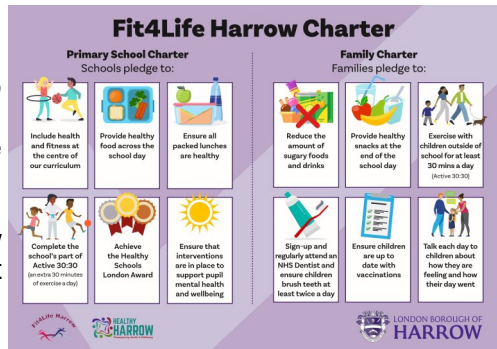
*This is an outstanding Catholic school. The executive head teacher and senior leaders, including the RE leads, share a commitment to ensuring that their Catholic faith is central to this community.*

*The Catholic life and mission at St Joseph's is reflected in every encounter ensuring a real sense of belonging and community which is valued by all and shows the school's priority to put Christ at the heart of everything.*



As we begin our Summer Term it is time to reflect on our Spring Term that we have just completed. As always it was a very busy Term but another good one.

The Term began with the **School and Family Charter** that we developed being incorporated into all Harrow schools so that health and fitness are now at the centre of every school's curriculum and community life. This was devised alongside Public Health Harrow and is a great example of what working in partnership can achieve.



This Charter is for us to focus on at school and for families to use at home and outside of school. We want to **increase the fitness levels of our children and reduce the high levels of obesity in our young children**. This Charter is a focal area for our tours, documents and general expectations. It is proving to be very popular and is on display in all Harrow Primary Schools.

Lent was a very important time for us at school. We had all of our **Easter services** and I was very proud of the fantastic Easter Assembly led by our Y3 children which was followed by the Stations of the Cross led by our pupil Chaplains. The response from all of the children was very reverent and it was highly spiritual. The feedback from our parents was very positive and it set us all up for the Easter period very well.

During Easter we took part in the **annual Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes with HCPT**. This was our 11<sup>th</sup> year as part of this great organisation and it was a great trip! We took 3 members of staff and 10 children from our Y6 and they all had an experience that they will never forget - lifelong memories were made! We took part in the Torchlight procession, daily Mass in different parts of Lourdes, the Stations of the Cross, daily visits to the Grotto, the Baths and a trip to the mountain village of Gavarnie. The sun shone on us and we saw God's glory at its best in the people that we met and the places and events that we saw and took part in. We are very proud to have our own HCPT group and it helps our community understand the importance of being a member of St Bernadette's School.



During Easter we took part in the **annual Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes with HCPT**. This was our 11<sup>th</sup> year as part of this great organisation and it was a great trip! We took 3 members of staff and 10 children from our Y6 and they all had an experience that they will never forget—lifelong memories were made! We took part in the Torchlight proces-

sion, daily Mass in different parts of Lourdes, the Stations of the Cross, daily visits to the Grotto, the Baths and a trip to the mountain village of Gavarnie. The sun shone on us and we saw God's glory at its best in the people that we met and the places and events that we saw and took part in. We are very proud to have our own HCPT group and it helps our community understand the importance of being a member of St Bernadette's School.

Our **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations** are progressing nicely. During the Spring Term we held a Quiz Night for past parents and pupils and a Family Bingo Night for our current families. Huge numbers turned out for both and the events were enjoyed by all, so much so that they will now become annual events. This Term we have already had our St Bernadette's Feast day Mass for all of our families and local Parishioners from All Saints which was followed by tea and coffee back at school. Every child was given a commemorative key ring with the number 70 on it and our school badge. We have also hosted a reunion night for past pupils which attracted a crowd of over 200 which was amazing. They chatted, looked at photos and had a tour of the school. It was lovely to meet so many past pupils and hear their happy memories; reinforcing the fact that we are only the current custodians and the school is full of history already made and of history to be made. **You are all welcome to join us at our final event of the year on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June from 3.30-6pm when we will hold a Summer Fete to celebrate.**

This has all been made possible by our hard working 70<sup>th</sup> Committee of parents who along with the Friends' Association make these wonderful events happen.



## PAIR

Teacher: "You're wearing a very strange pair of socks, Billy. One's blue with red spots and one's yellow with green stripes."

Billy: "Yes, sir, and I've got another pair just the same at home."





## Ten Requests from a person with dementia

Frank Arrojo

[Sudbury & Wembley Dementia Carers Support Groups]



Supporting mum to continue to live as good a life as possible - in spite of her dementia – will be the toughest job I'll ever do.

Your emotions, levels of discipline, tolerance, .... are tested to the absolute limit. Being on call 24 hours a day, unable to have any real quality time to yourself, lack of sleep, .... leave you exhausted. In addition, the lack of support offered by health and social services to actually understand how the type of dementia will and is affecting the person you support doesn't help. Not surprisingly all of this at times leads you to get frustrated at the position you find yourself in.

In this pressure cooker of an environment it's not really that surprising that some may occasionally lose their temper, and as soon as this happens you regret it and immediately feel guilty. Nobody is perfect.

Several years ago at a meeting of the Carers Support Group a family carer, who cared for his wife, passed me a document called "10 Requests from a person with dementia". He found it really helpful to read when his levels of frustration were reaching boiling point. Here it is:

### 10 Requests from a Person with Dementia

- ◆ **Please be patient with me.** I am the helpless victim of a brain disease
- ◆ **Talk to me.** Even though I cannot always answer you
- ◆ **Be kind to me.** For each day of my life is a desperate struggle
- ◆ **Consider my feelings.** For they are still very much alive within me
- ◆ **Treat me with dignity and respect.** As I would have gladly treated you
- ◆ **Remember my past.** For I was once a healthy vibrant person
- ◆ **Remember my present.** For I am still living
- ◆ **Remember my future.** Though it may seem bleak to you
- ◆ **Pray for me.** For I am a person who lingers in the mists of time and eternity
- ◆ **Love me.** And the gifts of love you give will be a blessing forever.



This document is now one of the critical pieces of advice I pass to each new family carer I meet. No one knows who wrote it, and some people may find the language somewhat politically incorrect. However, it's written with the purpose of reminding the family carer – at perhaps their lowest ebb – why they made the sacrifices to support the person they love.



If you support someone with dementia and found this article helpful, and would like to know more, please feel free to contact me on mobile 07867 903917 (or email [frankj.arrojo@gmail.com](mailto:frankj.arrojo@gmail.com)).

*Loving God, Healer and Comforter,  
we pray for those who suffer from the anxiety,  
ambiguity and confusion of dementia,  
and in a special way for their caregivers.*

*Give them patience as they work through  
familiar daily scripts and questions asked,  
answered and asked again.*

*Give them long memories to recall  
the fullness of their loved one's life  
beyond these moments of forgetting.*

*Give them the grace to let go of what was  
and embrace what is in love.*

*When the pain of being forgotten  
and the grinding trials become too much,  
comfort them with the promise of your Resurrection  
where every tear shall be wiped away  
and we shall know each other once more.*

*God of all mercies, sustain those who care for others.  
Grant them what they need for the moments ahead.  
We ask this through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes,  
Amen.*

**Money Matters**

Father O'Malley answers the phone.  
"Hello, is this Father O'Malley?" "It is."  
"This is the Inland Revenue Service,  
Income tax department.  
Can you help us?"  
"I can." "Do you know a Ted Houlihan?" "I do."  
"Is he a member of your congregation?" "He is."  
"Did he donate 10,000 Euros to the Church?" "He will."



**Balancing Act**



"I know I serve my family well-balanced meals" said a woman to her neighbor. "How's that?"  
"Well, one day my husband complains, and then the children complain the next."

**Words of Wisdom**

Being quiet doesn't always mean you have nothing to say.

Whining does not solve problems

No man is better than he wants to be.

If you want to change something, convince enough people that it needs to be changed, then change it.

Awareness adds to life.

A coach feels a loss more than his players, the players feel a win more than their coach.

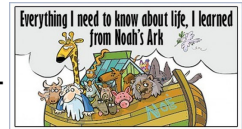


**Riddle Me This**

1. What has a heart but no other organs?
2. Teddy bears are never hungry because they are always what?

1. A deck of cards. 2. Stuffed!

# I learned it all from Noah's Ark



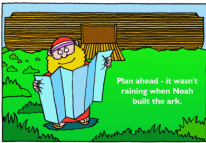
Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark.



**One:** Don't miss the boat.



**Two:** Remember that we are all in the same boat.



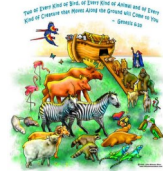
**Three:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark

**Four:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.



**Five:** Build your future on high ground.

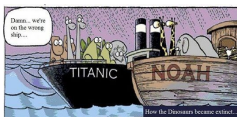
**Six:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs.



**Seven:** Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.



**Eight:** When you are stressed, float a while.



**Nine:** Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

**Ten:** No matter the storm, when you are with God, there is always a rainbow waiting.



[Compiled from Barrack Stanchions of the RNA]  
Submitted by Lew Beckett [Ireland's Eye, June 2015]

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

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

**MAKING A DONATION VIA OUR WEBSITE**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PARISH PRIEST:** Father Anthony Psaila

**PARISH OFFICE:**

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

**GIFT AID:** Penny Donetti

**PARISH HALL LETS:**

Elizabeth Patten: [wembley3@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:wembley3@rcdow.org.uk)

**SAFEGUARDING REPS:**

Rose Yip [wembley3sg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:wembley3sg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

Maria Rogers [wembley3sg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:wembley3sg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

**SUNDAY MASSES**

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

**CONFESSIONS:** Saturday 4.30 - 5.00pm

**HOLY HOUR AND BENEDICTION:** Wednesday 10.00-11.00am

**WEEKDAY MASSES**

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