

Unexpected Joy ~ by Rachel and Kevin Pugh

We went to the Mass of Chrism for the first time, not having lived very close to our nearest Cathedral before. So this was a new opportunity. Wow!

The Cathedral in Norwich felt different with its purple screen hiding the huge Crucifix. Suddenly the stained-glass windows were more noticeable, and as the morning progressed the sunlight came slanting in giving a warmer atmosphere.

The beautiful music from the choir lifted our spirits in appreciation as the many, many, priests of the diocese came together processing in two by two. A few we recognised and noted the variety of ethnicities at work in the diocese. Our Bishop has a great sense of humour, he lightened the atmosphere a few times, teasing his priests about his power to send them out and at the same time, tenderly calling them his sons. They renewed their vows together... "Beloved sons, on the anniversary of that day when Christ our Lord conferred his priesthood on his Apostles and on us, are you resolved to renew in the presence of your Bishop and Gods holy people?" "I am."

We wondered how we had missed the significance of this yearly moment, it was moving and humbling, and my new friend from Costessey parish, told me it made her tearful to participate in this mass and would come again.

"As for you, dearest sons and daughters, pray for your Priests, that the Lord May pour out his gifts abundantly upon them and keep them faithful as ministers of Christ, the High Priest, so that they may lead you to him, who is the source of our salvation. Christ hear us."

The choir sang beautifully as huge jugs of oil were processed up to the altar and then later presented and blessed, sanctified with beautiful prayers. We found the mass moving, if long, the reward was the free hot cross buns which some of us dived in for and some of us missed because we were longer at mass than expected and needed to get to the coach. Liz valiantly represented our parish as a server and that too was special to us. What a lovely parish community we have. We would go again. Look out for it next year: it is worth going.



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The Shack

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... from humble beginnings

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The Shepherd's Corner

Hope to Hope

As we witness the unfolding of events before us, we can see the plan of God setting in motion. It is a time to sit back, fasten our seatbelts, and embrace the exciting ride that lies ahead.

Through recent Parish Open Fora, one issue has become clear – our parish is facing financial challenges. Despite an increase in collection, the parish accounts are running a deficit. In light of this, we must explore alternative solutions to finance our ongoing projects. Enter the ancient art of fundraising, a tool that proves to be an effective tool in the shed.

Financial Challenges: Exploring Alternative Solutions - The reality of our parish facing financial challenges should not dampen our spirits. It is an opportunity for us to think outside the box and find creative solutions. While an increase in collection is commendable, it is evident that more needs to be done to address the financial deficit. This calls for an exploration of other avenues, such as fundraising, to generate additional income for our parish projects.

Fundraising: Fostering Ownership and Accountability - Fundraising is not merely a means to gather funds; it is a tool that fosters ownership and accountability within our parish community. When individuals actively participate in fundraising initiatives, they develop a sense of ownership over the parish's well-being and take accountability for its financial stability. This heightened involvement goes beyond maintaining the physical aspects of the parish; it extends to the vital aspects of communal prayer and worship.

Seeing Financial Challenges as a Glitch in Our Spiritual Journey - Although financial challenges may seem like a hurdle, they are but a glitch in our spiritual surfing. This obstacle does not define us. It is a temporary setback that provides an opportunity for growth, both individually and as a community. As we come together



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Editors: Fr. Jay Magpuyo & Elaine Wilkes

Email: edsacredheart@gmail.com; www.sacredheartdereham.org.uk

in our efforts, we can maintain our focus on the true essence of parish life – communal prayer, worship, and spiritual nourishment.

The Parish Pastoral Committee: Strengthening the Community - The formation of the Parish Pastoral Committee adds strength to the entire machinery of our parish. With this committee taking the lead in addressing significant issues, we fortify the sense of community we have. By working together, we become a Eucharistic people nourished by the Word of God. This unity strengthens our collective efforts in embracing fundraising as a means to support our parish projects.

In the face of financial challenges, it is essential to approach the situation with hope and optimism. By recognizing fundraising as a valuable tool, we can foster a stronger sense of ownership and accountability within our parish community. Through these efforts, we reinforce the importance of communal prayer, worship, and the spiritual growth of our parishioners.

New Parish Pastoral Committee

The new Parish Pastoral Committee (PPC) was established at the beginning of May, following two rounds of open parish voting. The members duly elected to the PPC are Andrew Bell, Philip Borthwick, Ian Campbell, Donal Hannon and Kevin Pugh. Donal Hannon was elected as Chairperson. Ex officio members of the PPC are Fr. Jay and the Parish Treasurer (Stephen Smith). The Chairperson of the PPC also becomes an ex officio member of the Parish Finance Committee.

The PPC will be instrumental in taking forward not only the forthcoming Parish Stewardship Programme but also to lead on and oversee the various projects (both Alive in Faith, as well as general property maintenance) previously undertaken by the Fabric Committee, whose functions are now absorbed by the new PPC.

However, it is also intended that the PPC's role should equally have a focus on the wider parish pastoral concerns and help to facilitate both the spiritual as well as the communal and social needs of the parish. To this end a number of parish teams under the auspices of the PPC are being established to address and manage these areas of concern in the parish and to take the initiative for its growth. The areas of concern have initially been identified as follows and will be refined further as they take shape over the coming months:

- Youth
- Alive in Faith Projects
- Parish Stewardship Programme
- Liturgy & Music
- Spirituality and Formation
- Logistics and Website
- Parish Activities
- Parish Social Outreach.

Each of the parish teams will report on their progress through the PPC.

Restored Permission for the Reception of Holy Communion under both Species

Earlier this year, the Bishops of England and Wales endorsed this restoration, permissible from the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. For this parish, the restoration commenced on the feast of Corpus Christi (11th June). It has been very encouraging to see the parish once again fully taking up reception of the Chalice at Communion. At the Corpus Christi Mass, all Eucharistic Ministers renewed their commitment to serve the parish both at Mass and in taking Communion to the sick and housebound of the parish.

Parish Stewardship Programme

An important project for the parish this year will be the forthcoming Diocesan Stewardship Programme – Time, Talents and Treasures. This is a timely matter given the current economic circumstances affecting the parish's financial projections, which continue to be very constrained. The Stewardship Programme should greatly help in setting out the options open to the parish, not only in terms of finances but, perhaps more importantly, in terms of how people could share more widely in the life of the parish through the gifts of their time and talents that they could offer. The Programme is scheduled to begin on the weekend of 23rd-24th September.

Picture Gallery

First Holy Communion



Our congratulations go to Jovel, Finn and Chris, who celebrated their First Holy Communion at the 11.00 a.m. Mass on Corpus Christi Sunday, 11th June. It was a very special occasion for them and their families.

Altar Servers' Awards – Guild of St Stephen

At the 11am Mass on Sunday, 21st May, three of our Servers received the official Certificates for serving on the Altar for over five years, congratulations to Elizabeth, Dennis and Samantha. Also, Kate Meehan was awarded the Silver Medal of Merit for serving in the Parish for over 20 years.



Patronal Celebration

Our Patronal celebration took place on the Feast of the Sacred Heart on Friday, 16th June at 1730 preceded by an Exposition at 1600 and followed by a light dinner in the presbytery garden after the Mass.



Pentecost

On Pentecost Sunday, on 28th May, we celebrated with a bring and share lunch in the presbytery garden after the 11.00 Mass



Confirmation

On Monday, 26th June at 7pm, Bishop Peter Collins attended the parish, for the first time since his appointment, to celebrate Mass and Confirmation of thirteen young people, eleven from our own Parish and two from Downham Market, and we also welcomed their Parish Priest Fr Erico.

It was a very special occasion for those confirmed and their sponsors, families and friends. Congratulations to Anitta, Aleena, Alfina, Chelsea, Dennis, Dillany, Domas, Gabija, Keisha, Renato, Samantha, Samuel and Virroch.

Following the Mass there was a hog roast and refreshments in the Presbytery garden which was enjoyed by all.



Parish Social Events Calendar

- September (date to be confirmed) – Altar Servers Bowling & Pizza
- September (date to be confirmed) – Parish BBQ
- October (date to be confirmed) – Parish Auction & Fundraising
- Thursday, 21st December 2023 – Parish Christmas Party at Yaxham Village Hall from 12 noon to 6pm.