



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB

# St. Patrick's Newsletter



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

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**MASS at Our Lady of Lourdes is streamed live: for weekdays see website <https://www.ololandstp.org/>**

**Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Saturday 6.30 pm; Sunday Mass: 10.30 am**

**St Patrick's – Mass: Sunday 27th February at 9 am: 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Mass: Sunday 6th March at 9 am: 1st Sunday in Lent**

**Wednesday 2nd March is Ash Wednesday. Day of fasting & prayer for Ukraine.**

**Welcome to the 48th "apart but together" e-newsletter (27th February 2022)**

**"Because where two or three have come together in my name, I am there among them." Matt 18**

## On Finding the Words

**Barbara Bond**

*A man's words flow out from what fills his heart* Luke 6

Last week I had an unexpected reunion with a couple of my old nursing friends. We met, aged 18, at "Cat Soc" in St Mary's Hospital in Paddington. It was a bit of a joke back then that the Christian Union was a lot more fun – and that was also where all the cool medical students hung out!

My chums and I have been through life's trials and tribulations supporting one another and always anchored by the rituals that we often don't realise are sustaining us – providing a framework when words can't – funerals, weddings, confirmations, life milestones...

As we sat and put the world to rights after a lovely meal, we discussed so many important challenges the world is facing: armed conflict, the climate emergency, economic instability, poverty, global health inequality.



**Lord, open our eyes  
that we may see you in our brothers and  
sisters.**

**Lord, open our ears  
that we may hear the cries  
of the hungry, the cold, the frightened,  
the oppressed.**

**Lord, open our hearts  
that we may love each other  
as you love us.**

**Renew in us your spirit.  
Lord, free us and make us one.  
(Mother Teresa)**

As three families all struggling to make the right, faith-based choices, it feels pretty daunting. In the midst of caring for elders and shepherding our youngsters into adulthood, we can pray about them, but we need to act and to speak out as well.

That is when these words from 2 Corinthians 1:4 really spoke to me: "He helps us in all our troubles, so that we are able to help those who have all kinds of troubles, using the same help we ourselves have received from God".

The popstar Feargal Sharkey said, "A good heart, these days, is hard to find". – I pray that mine is open to God's love and that the words that flow out of it are spirit filled.

*The newsletter appears fortnightly. The next issue will be on 13th March. Please send contributions by Friday 11th March to Barbara Bond: [bond\\_barbara@ymail.com](mailto:bond_barbara@ymail.com)*

## Crisis in Ukraine: Pope Francis



**Expressing great sadness at the worsening situation** in Ukraine, Pope Francis asked world leaders on Wednesday to “make a serious examination of conscience before God.”

Speaking at his live-streamed general audience on Feb 23rd, the Pope called for people to fast for peace on March 2, Ash Wednesday, praying that “the Queen of Peace will preserve the world from the madness of war.”

“I have great pain in my heart over the worsening situation in Ukraine,” Pope Francis said.

“Despite the diplomatic efforts over the past few weeks, increasingly alarming scenarios are opening up. Like me, many people throughout the world are feeling anguish and concern. Once again the peace of all is threatened by partisan interests.”

“I would like all those who have political responsibility, to make a serious examination of conscience before God, who is the God of peace and not of war ... He wants us to be brothers and not enemies. I pray that all parties involved will refrain from any action that will cause even more suffering for people, destabilizing coexistence among nations and undermining international law.”

The Russo-Ukrainian War began in February 2014, focused on the east of Ukraine. The conflict has claimed more than 14,000 lives and driven 1.3 million people from their homes, according to Caritas Internationalis, a Vatican-based confederation of Catholic charities.

Catholic News Agency, Courtney Mares, 23/2/22



### **Cardinal Hollerich's statement on the situation in Ukraine and in Europe**

The President of COMECE, the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community, has released a statement on the day Russia invaded Ukraine, warning that “peace on the whole European continent and beyond is facing a serious threat”.

Describing war as a “grave affront to human dignity,” Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich SJ reiterated the fraternal closeness and solidarity of the Bishops of COMECE with the people and institutions of Ukraine.

As well as calling on the international community to find an urgent, peaceful solution to the conflict, Cardinal Hollerich appealed to European societies and governments “to welcome refugees fleeing their homeland in Ukraine from war and violence and looking for international protection.”

*“And yet you have rejected and spurned and are angry with the one you have anointed. You have broken your covenant with your servant and dishonoured his crown in the dust. You have broken down all his walls and reduced his fortresses to ruins.” Psalm 89*

# CAFOD: the Crisis in Ukraine

We stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and send our prayers to our sister organisation Caritas Ukraine, who are already assisting civilians across the country who are affected by this conflict.



## **A Prayer for Ukraine**

Loving God,  
We pray for the people of Ukraine,  
for all those suffering or afraid,  
that you will be close to them and  
protect them.

We pray for world leaders,  
for compassion, strength and  
wisdom to guide their choices.

We pray for the world  
that in this moment of crisis,  
we may reach out in solidarity  
to our brothers and sisters in need.

May we walk in your ways  
so that peace and justice  
become a reality for the people of  
Ukraine  
and for all the world.

Amen

As one Caritas, we stand united with them.

## **International humanitarian law must be adhered to**

We are calling for an urgent diplomatic solution and a lasting ceasefire to prevent further suffering and to bring peace back to the region. There is now a growing humanitarian crisis, and Caritas Ukraine - among other humanitarian organisations - are on the frontline of the response.

As freezing temperatures continue, the plight of Ukrainian citizens will only worsen. Any bombing of infrastructure across the country will only result in further suffering of the Ukrainian people.

International humanitarian law must be adhered to, with schools, hospitals and water systems protected from any armed violence so humanitarian assistance can be delivered - unimpeded - to civilians across the country.

## **Every human life is priceless**

Let global leaders heed Pope Francis' call for political leaders to make "a great examination of conscience before God, who is the God of peace and not of war".



## **Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton,**

<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk>, 24.2.22

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, Eparchial Bishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the UK, has addressed his community and all people of good will in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine:—



“The day that we have been hoping would never come has arrived. This morning we woke up to hear the news that Russia has unleashed its troops into an invasion of Ukrainian soil as well as firing missiles into Ukrainian territory.

“We have been inviting people of goodwill to join Ukrainian Catholics in the United Kingdom to pray for peace in Ukraine these last several weeks. I want to thank you all for these prayers and for standing with Ukraine. Now more than ever before your prayers and your acts of solidarity with the Ukrainian people are needed.”

“We call upon our government leaders and those in positions of power to remain steadfast in support of Ukraine against those who are waging this war upon the innocent citizens of Ukraine.”

“We place the people of Ukraine under the protection of the Holy Family, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Most Holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and the holy and righteous St Joseph the Betrothed.”

*“He is despoiled by all who pass by: he has become the taunt of his neighbours. You have exalted the right hand of his foes; you have made all his enemies rejoice. You have made his sword give way, you have not upheld him in battle.” Psalm 89*

# Crisis in Ukraine: United Nations Refugee Agency



Ukraine has been impacted by years of uncertainty and simmering conflict, and UNHCR has been working in Ukraine since 1994.



<https://www.unrefugees.org.uk/>

Since the beginning of the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the temporary occupation of Crimea in 2014, UNHCR has provided protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced people, refugees and stateless people in the country.

At the end of 2021 almost three million people in Ukraine were in need of humanitarian support. Now, the situation in Ukraine is unpredictable, volatile and evolving rapidly. By Thursday 24th February, over 100,000 children, women and men were estimated to have fled their homes in this new crisis, and become displaced inside Ukraine.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, has further confirmed that in the last 48 hours (to Friday evening, 25th February) over 50,000 Ukrainians have fled into neighbouring countries as refugees, with the majority crossing into Poland and Moldova.

## Peace in Ukraine?

Bernadette (24th Feb)

We say the words 'Peace be with you' and they resonate today. My latest email from a young Polish cousin with a new baby says, *I never thought I would be facing a war in my lifetime.*

Her parents and grandparents had been through so much with war and the restrictions of communism. She has grown up free and able to travel.

The border with Ukraine is 330 miles long and refugees are pouring across. The defence forces are on standby as are the hospitals. Since much of the Polish workforce came here and to other western countries, building in Poland has relied on Ukrainian workers. These are now going home to defend their country.

It's a very tense situation.

Peace be with them.

## Statement on the Situation in Ukraine attributed to UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi 24.02.22

We are gravely concerned about the fast-deteriorating situation and ongoing military action in Ukraine.

The humanitarian consequences on civilian populations will be devastating. There are no winners in war but countless lives will be torn apart.

We have already seen reports of casualties and people starting to flee their homes to seek safety. Civilian lives and civilian infrastructure must be protected and safeguarded at all times, in line with International Humanitarian Law.

UNHCR is working with the authorities, UN and other partners in Ukraine and is ready to provide humanitarian assistance wherever necessary and possible. To that effect, security and access for humanitarian efforts must be guaranteed.



UNHCR is also working with governments in neighbouring countries, calling on them to keep borders open to those seeking safety and protection. We stand ready to support efforts by all to respond to any situation of forced displacement.

**Evacuees board a train at a railway station before fleeing the separatist-controlled town of Makiivka (Makeyevka) outside Donetsk, Ukraine.**

© REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko February 23, 2022

***"You have brought his glory to an end; you have hurled his throne to the ground. You have cut short the years of his youth; you have heaped disgrace upon him." Psalm 89***

# Community News – St Patrick's

## Music Requests for Mass — Irene Green

Mass attenders can request music / hymns to be played before or during Sunday Mass at St Patrick's. You can also say "I hate that one, don't play it!"

**Also please let Bernadette know whether you would like congregational singing to resume and when in the future.**

**Varndean Community Singing** class will resume at St Patrick's on Monday 9th May and end on Monday 4th July. Hannah is teaching us. The class will be from 6.45 to 8.45pm with a coffee break.

## Lectio Divina in Lent

If you would like to explore this ancient method of deepening your heart's experience of the Bible and prayer, please email [patrickgpbond@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:patrickgpbond@yahoo.co.uk) or phone 07425-011341.

I am proposing a session via Zoom, for 45 minutes, once a week on a Wednesday evening at 7 pm. Start date is Ash Wednesday, 2nd March.

## Change in Government guidance for the safe use of places of worship

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales has issued guidance, revised on 28th January — extracts follow:

The main mitigation against serious health issues arising from Covid infection is to be **fully vaccinated**.

There is still a risk associated with gathering for sustained periods in enclosed spaces and therefore there needs to be continued caution by all against infection.

It should be stressed that any people displaying symptoms of Covid-19 should stay at home and not participate in acts of worship in church.

Those attending an act of worship may continue to wear a face covering (both nose and mouth) whilst in the church building.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/covid-guidance-collective-worship/>

**At St Patrick's, please do continue to wear a face covering at Mass, if you can.**



Balsdean Chapel, site of

## Lent Walk

St. Patrick's invites all parishioners to come and join in a Lent walk.

Saturday 12th March, 10 am.

When my ordinary prayer goes nowhere, I find that putting on my boots, opening the door, and getting into the woods, onto a field restores something of the connection between me and the lived experience of God's greater glory *really being* "greater."

Please meet outside Our Lady of Lourdes Church and we will set off

up Whiteway Lane, across the footpath to Balsdean Cottages and then the Farmhouse, before returning down Bazehill Road. May be muddy, may be cold, and may be wet but.....! All for Lent!

Please let me know if you are coming, and contact me if weather is really bad! Frances Low ([frances.low@ntlworld.com](mailto:frances.low@ntlworld.com) or 07816-642943)

Lord, come beside me, walk with me through Lent this year.

Come beside me, let me feel your presence, hear your voice.

Open the eyes of my heart, illuminate within it

places of eternal Lent

where I have not permitted your Love entry.

Help me to open these places.

Root out that which needs to leave, and make room for the joy of your Resurrection.

Open the eyes of my heart to see you in those with whom I live and work and walk.

(Rebecca Ruiz)

**Please do not attend Mass or other functions at St Patrick's if you have been in contact with people with Covid**

*"How long, O Lord? Will you hide yourself for ever? How long will your anger burn like a fire? Remember, Lord, the shortness of my life, and how frail you have made the sons of men. What man can live and never see death? Who can save himself from the grasp of the grave?" Psalm 89*

## The Hummingbird Project

In January, several of us from St Patrick's joined the virtual A&B Justice and Peace Conference, focusing on the plight of refugees. The fact that this was not in person did nothing to dilute the impact of what we heard and saw, which was shocking. It was hardest to hear about the unaccompanied children and young people, many of whom have witnessed unimaginable things and had no adults to support and advise them, never mind offer love and care.

In each of the newsletters running up to Easter I will share some of Hummingbird's achievements and services. This is how the project, specifically focused on children, began back in 2015:

### THE HUMMINGBIRD SAFE SPACE

We saw a huge increase in children arriving, alone,

traumatised, with nowhere to go. Almost all the young people were alone. One of the youngest we met was only 8 years old and had travelled alone from Afghanistan.

They were fleeing conflict and we heard of armies and terrorist groups such as the Taliban and ISIS trying to take them as recruits. They were terrified of going back. Authorities who were notified did nothing. Our team decided to focus on looking out for the ever growing number of children arriving daily.

So we built The Hummingbird Safe Space, offering a creative and therapeutic environment for the most vulnerable young people. Still partnered with Medecins Sans Frontieres and also with Refugee Youth Service and Art Refuge we now worked together to develop a new 'Safe Zone', one which only children and authorised adults could access. We joined forces with Lord Alf Dubs and Safe Passage and called for protection which finally opened up some legal pathways.

[www.hummingbirdproject.org.uk/our-story-calais-to-brighton](http://www.hummingbirdproject.org.uk/our-story-calais-to-brighton).

Here in Brighton the Hummingbird Project looks after young refugees and began as part of Care4Calais in France in 2015.

It has grown and developed since then and was the Mayor's Charity in 2019. When I contacted Hummingbird they said they had plenty of volunteers, what they really needed was money, but their requests were so humble that I was moved to think about how my journey through Lent could provide practical help:

- £10 will pay for the travel expenses of a young person to an activity or meeting
- £25 can support a young person in financial hardship
- £40 will support a young person left destitute
- £100 would support a person for a few days in need of emergency accommodation
- £300 would support one young person for a year

Joe, the financial administrator wrote: "Thank you for your message and for thinking of the Hummingbird Project - it is much appreciated. Donations like yours make such a great impact on the lives of the young people we work with."

**It is my intention, during Lent, to walk or cycle as much as I can and to put 40p per mile into my "Hummingbird Fund" for the car journeys saved. I will keep you posted!**



*"Where are your mercies of the past, O Lord, which you have sworn in your faithfulness to David? Remember, Lord, how your servant is taunted, how I have to bear all the insults of the peoples." Psalm 89*

## Lifting all restrictions on Covid in England

This is not a brave or justifiable move at this moment in time. There are over 2,500,000 people in the UK with Covid today. 18,700 of those are in Brighton and Hove. 160,000 new cases of Covid are diagnosed each day. Testing has decreased by 30% in recent weeks.

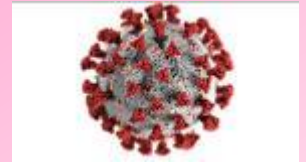
It is not helpful to the NHS and its long waiting list if they have to deal with extra covid cases which will result. It slows down routine health care and operations. If there is no isolation following Covid positive test results, do I want to go to hospital and contract Covid from those trying to assist me or those around me? Do teachers want to teach? Etc. It might give a push to the return-to-office plans, which have been tried several times already. In America, covid jurisdiction has been passed to companies and employers.

## Extra (4th) vaccine dose for over 75s from April

Most over-75s say: I will take gratefully whatever is on offer. The good news for vaccinated individuals has been and is, the protection the vaccine gives from severe disease and death.

There has been a flurry of new research in the US looking at other parts of the immune system that can remember and destroy the virus, including B cells and T cells. The studies found that this diverse repertoire of defences should be able to protect people who have had three shots, or even two, for future months or years.

In the US the centre for disease control is more sceptical about the benefits of a fourth vaccine, though getting one in late summer would help reduce winter infections. And it looks likely that this may be an annual vaccination for elderly and vulnerable people.



## Not seeking to get Covid – it isn't a cold

We haven't been trying to get the disease to 'up' our immune response, but we have been travelling and taking risks as well as precautions. Husband and I are automatically vulnerable because of age and chronic health conditions.

If we get Covid, the antibodies produced may be polyclonal and broader spectrum, on the other hand one in five people do not produce any antibodies when they get Covid.

Apart from the antibody amount there is another measure of effectiveness – the avidity i.e. the ability to bind and stay bound to the antigen (virus-derived). The vaccines have produced reliable antibody titre and avidity.

And it isn't known how long some coronavirus persists in some tissues or organs. This happens with HIV, chicken pox and herpes virus to name but three.

For coronavirus it has been published in Nature, one of the most prestigious scientific journals, that virus particles persist for many months – they have found them in gut, brain, lungs, as well as in the immune and circulatory systems.



## Opinion Piece

Too many roubles in London? Moscow-on-Thames? *Londograd*? London is called “the laundry” by Russia. Russia is funding our politics and elections to get political influence! Guess which side?

Influence in England is not solely in London. Russian people have been plunged into chaos by an elite who have stolen their wealth, stolen their chance of democracy, and stolen their future. Sounds familiar...

*“O God, the nations have invaded your land, they have profaned your holy temple. They have made Jerusalem a heap of ruins. They have handed over the bodies of your servants as food to feed the birds of heaven, and the flesh of your faithful to the beasts of the earth.” Psalm 79*

## For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission — Irene Green

Christopher Lamb gave a webinar this week on his work as Rome Correspondent for the Tablet: He works like a political journalist, he has official and unofficial contacts.

The Catholic church has a huge infrastructure and probably owns more property than any world organisation. There is a danger that the centre piece, Vatican, Rome, becomes a bubble. It certainly has a history of intrigue and corruption.

Pope Francis has had a colon operation which has made him slower moving (or maybe that is age). He is full of energy and vigour when meeting people, he is media friendly, there are no signs he will step down. He wants to stay until his church reforms are not reversible.

In October 2023 there is a landmark synod gathering. The Synod has been an attempt to breathe new life into the church and to have a world council.

Francis has elected a lot of new cardinals (who will elect his successor) and reformed the council, which he hopes will continue his reforms - they are agreed by the council.

There is a new constitution for the curia, Pope Francis is in favour of decentralisation and also of reforming seminaries. He doesn't do the detail himself, doesn't take notes, which may make him look disorganised, but he opens processes of change.

The Synod ended up as a questionnaire, here, because it was difficult to know how to start a dialogue in the church. The Vatican (Church) must accept the primacy of personal conscience and how we discern, but it can influence our conscience.

Webinar was sponsored by McCabe Travel who are organising a trip you can book to Rome and Assisi in the autumn – October. Nice!

Synod 2021-2023 - A webinar with Bishop Richard, Wednesday 9 March at 7.30pm.

A two-year synodal process is taking place across the Catholic Church. Join Bishop Richard for a webinar highlighting the Synod feedback received from people and groups across our Diocese. To register your place go to

<https://abdiocese.churchsuite.com/events/8yaw6pon>



### Fund Raising for The Kanji Project

So far this year, I have sent £150 to the Kanji Project. This is also Gift aided. Thanks are due to 2 friends who gave me £20 each and a kind parishioner donating £50, plus the sale of marmalade, jams and chutney from our porch at home.



Trustee Veronica, who came to talk to us last August, sends her thanks and gratitude. **She has sent us some cards, with envelopes, that we can sell at 50p. They have been adapted to be Easter cards.**

I will leave them in the porch at St Patrick's with the Kanji donation tin.

(I've heard from Indian neighbours that the schools in India are restarting... I hope this is true for Kanji).

**Bernadette Skinner**

# The Kanji Project

*"They have poured out blood like water in Jerusalem, no one is left to bury the dead. We have become the taunt of our neighbours, the mockery and scorn of those who surround us. How long, O Lord? Will you be angry for ever, how long will your anger burn like fire?" Psalm 79*



## Bridges and Brake Vans — Glamorous Getaways



### In a BRAKE VAN for a Break!

**Bernadette Skinner**

I had a bright idea for a birthday few days away for my Ted who likes trains!!! Northiam station, now on the Tenterden to Bodium steam railway line, offers a variety of self catering railway carriages, all mod cons, insulated and cosy. The idea being that you can watch the steam trains go past and be nostalgic.

The first hiccup was that we were due there on Friday 18th: Storm Eunice day. They kindly changed that day for the following Monday. Hiccup Two... no trains were running, including the one we were booked to travel on, as trees were on the line. Nevertheless we enjoyed

our few days in a very comfy 'break truck'.

Sunday mass was interesting. Online there should have been a 9am mass at a church just outside Northiam. No, the gates were firmly closed and no indication as to why. We went to Tenterden, where every aspect of religion seemed to have a church and found St Andrews for a 10 am mass. Only about 35 in the congregation.

The priest launched into sung Latin which stumped my convert husband and dragged the words from my brain. We filed up to communion, then to return to our seats the line disappeared left through a hall and the sacristy, out the back door, around a corner and back through the entrance. Thankfully it wasn't raining.

It was obvious we were visitors but no one was friendly. I think we can say that this isn't the case at St Pat's. Thank you to all our folk who offer a smile and a word to our little congregation.



### London Bridge is not Falling Down

**Irene Green**

Half term stormy weather caused rapid changes of plan for our visiting family which arrived at different times.

We went to London on Thursday 17th Feb, when the entire population of the south east including families on their half term break decided they should go too, before the transport network seized up with Storm Eunice.

Even free events must be prebooked, so trying to do that the day before was disheartening. We have been to many major and hidden treasures in London



over the decades but hadn't considered London Bridge. It isn't just a visit to the machine rooms below. Victorian engineering works to raise the lifting bridge – allegedly about 4 times a day. We watched it, it is fairly quick, only about a minute to go from open road to open bridge, but stopping the traffic and pedestrians adds minutes.

I never knew that you can walk up the tower bits (or take a lift) and walk across the horizontal structure between the two towers from which you get unassailable good views. In 2014 they added two sections of glass walkway up there - you look straight down into the river Thames and bridge with pedestrians and cars. Not for the squeamish.

Our other venues that day included Borough Market, Arsenal (Emirates Stadium tour), the Wallace collection, Westminster walk to Soho and a Chinese evening meal. Not many mask wearers anywhere, including on the buses, Underground, and mainline trains.



*“Do not hold the guilt of our fathers against us. Let your compassion hasten to meet us, we are left in the depths of distress. O God our saviour, come to our help, come for the sake of the glory of your name.”*

*Psalm 79*

## “Teresa n’ Trudy”: Fab Ladies, Blessings and Cakes

Helen Day

Sunday 30th January... Mum (Teresa Ford) and I (Helen) visited Trudy Shepherd at DeanWood Care Home.

The Covid test was a lot easier this time, just sticking a stick slightly up your nose. Not even time for coffee in the car before our tests showed negative. We then had to put on aprons and plastic gloves in a very fetching shade of blue (have you tried these? they are actually very difficult to get on!!)...

We were escorted to the outside door of the little lounge area, but this time we had a Perspex screen in front of us and seated on the other side was Trudy!! Both ladies looked Fab!



No holding hands this time but we did have a speaker and microphone to communicate by. A little difficult and a bit of translating between everyone was needed. We need to try and manoeuvre round and get closer to the speaker next time.



We said our greetings and exchanged news etc and then we were able to set up a WhatsApp call between Trudy and her daughter. It was lovely to hear and see them ‘seeing’ each other after so long.

Our allocation of 30 mins was kindly stretched to 45mins!! And too soon we had to leave.

On Friday 11th February (Patronal Feast Day), Mum, Derek and I attended the Healing Mass for the sick at Our Lady of Lourdes. A beautiful service with 3 co-celebrating priests and Deacon Bernard attending. We had Mass, Blessings and Anointing with oil.

Afterwards we went into the Hall, with beautifully laid tables, for coffee and delicious homemade cakes. It was lovely to see so many people managing to get to the service, and also thanks to all those who encouraged and helped parishioners attend.

Here's some information about **LiveSimply**, from Rod Thick, Volunteers Area Coordinator 07305 465919

A LiveSimply Award Community is a parish, school, religious order or chaplaincy which responds to Pope Francis' invitation to “work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us”.

It's awarded to communities who can show how they have been living: simply, in solidarity with people in poverty, sustainably with creation. To apply for the award, your community needs to plan one substantial action – something which involves either a significant change or a lot of people - and at least two smaller actions under each of these three headings: living simply; living sustainably; and living in solidarity with people who are poor. Nine actions in total.

Start by thinking about what your community already does. Perhaps you welcome refugees, support a local food bank, sign CAFOD campaign cards, look after a parish or school garden, collect recycling, or run a Fairtrade stall. You may find you already have a long list. After the plan, take action, request an assessment, and... Celebrate!

There's lots of help available, and plenty of ideas when planning for the award. See online resources at: <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award>.

I'm also the Live Simply Volunteer & would be happy to visit or meet virtually with your community to help get things started. The aim is to have all communities in the Diocese awarded before 2030.



*“O Lord our God, forgive us our sins; rescue us for the sake of your name... Let the groans of the prisoners come before you; let your strong arm relieve those condemned to die.” Psalm 79*

*See, I will tell you a mystery: we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed... 1 Cor 15: 51-52*

The rain this morning has cleared, thank goodness. Dark skies have blown away, revealing white billows of cloud racing in a light blue sky, lavish spring sunshine, a keen wind, and an ever-present threat of sharp, sleety showers. All very spring-like.

I took time this morning, in the middle of a rattling shower, to clean out and refill our bird feeders. All of them were brought indoors during Storm Eunice, since I feared that they would be hurled about and so destroy their hanging poles, twigs, or hooks. My fears were justified, as a fence post snapped off at midday, dragging a panel down with it and denting my neighbour's car. Eight ridge tiles were torn off a "hip" on the sloping corner of the roof, and lay scattered on the adjoining flat roof, making ominous rumbling noises as the wind agitated and rocked them, directly over my head in my study.

The irony was that I was not at home in the worst of it, having stalked off to remember my friend Tim, who had died suddenly and whose funeral was due to take place in Eastbourne that afternoon. Given the Met Office Red Warning, I did not think I could safely drive from Lewes, and of course public transport was impossible.

I had to find an outlet for my grief and my guilt, because I would not be there; but walking up towards Kingston Ridge in that weather was something near foolhardy. Approaching the top, I felt the full force of God's hairdryer at uncomfortably close quarters, and beat a hasty retreat. But the cobwebs were gone.

The birds in our garden seem pleased that the feeders have been re-charged. The birds are fewer in number than in midwinter: competitive pairing behaviours and squabbling over territory mean that they do not arrive in feeding flocks any more, and spend vast amounts of energy chasing each other round in wild aerobatic combats.



A single starling comes to feast on the coconut half with its suet filling. His spangled, dark, ultraviolet coat and yellow bill strike a gleaming pose in the bright sunlight. The starling is the only bird which feeds by stabbing into the earth (or in this case, suet) with his bill open, not

shut. The robins and sparrows enjoy the fragments that come tumbling down on their heads as he feeds.

Wherever we are, in every place,  
at every hour, at every time,  
every day and continually,

let all of us truly and humbly  
believe, hold in our heart, love,  
honour, adore,  
serve, praise, bless, glorify,  
exalt, magnify and give thanks,

to the Most High and Supreme  
Eternal God, Trinity and Unity,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
to Him who is Creator of all,  
Saviour of all,

without beginning or end,  
unchangeable, invisible,  
indescribable, ineffable,  
incomprehensible,  
unfathomable, blessed,

praiseworthy, glorious, exalted,  
sublime, most high, gentle,  
lovable, delightful  
and, above all else,  
totally desirable,  
for ever and ever.

*St Francis of Assisi*

*"Now the salvation and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him, by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." Rev 11*