

Grape Vine Magazine

Parish Magazine
Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation
and Holy Family Church



SEPTEMBER 2025

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF KING'S LYNN

CLERGY

The Very Rev. Canon Peter Rollings - Parish Priest

Rev. Fr. Gordon Adam - Assistant Priest, Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham

Rev. John Belfield - Deacon

Rev. Martin L'Estrange - Deacon

Rev. Shaun Morrison - Deacon of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham

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Grape Vine Magazine

Editor, Lotte Gaberle

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MASS TIMES

Saturday	Our Lady	6:00pm	Vigil Mass
Sunday	Holy Family	9:30am	Mass
Sunday	Our Lady	11:30am	Mass
Sunday	Our Lady	4:00pm	Vespers and Benediction

CONFESSIONS

Saturday	Holy Family	10:30am	Confession
Saturday	Our Lady	5:00pm	Confession



Our Lady
of the
Annunciation
Church



Holy Family Church

BAPTISMS – DEATHS – BIRTHDAYS – WEDDINGS

BAPTISMS



Liam Ferrera
 Motiejus Makrusin
 Chimaram Ariel Mbonu
 Alexia Dabrowska
 Ariana Garnys
 Mateo Garnys
 Niall Dylan Goodrum-Yates
 Millena Nameiko
 Jasmin Chinoso Ezeji

DEATHS



Lawrence Cavanagh
 Charles Theodore Coates
 Benedictus Jacobus Maria Stek
 Camilo Manuel Pinto Soares
 Ausra Vainauskrite
 David George Moreland

BIRTHDAYS

Pope Leo XIV 70th birthday

Greetings for a happy, healthy and joy-filled new year go to everybody who has celebrated his/her birthday this summer, especially all octogenarians and nonagenarians – or older. May Our Lord bless you and keep you safe.



WEDDINGS

Piotr and Chloe Lis

Congratulations and prayers to the couple for a long and happy married life.

PARISH SICK LIST

Antonas / Pat Athey / Tony Burton / John Cairns
 Betty Dockney / Caroline Glazebrook
 Mark Griffiths / Mike Griffiths / Beryl Green
 Sadie Harris / Ann Lindley / Owen McDonagh
 Cathy McNeil / Thomas Noone / Debbie Roper
 Maria De Rosa / Renee Thomas
 Sylvia Waddilove / Susan Young / Josie Wenham



EDITORIAL

Dear All,

On one of the hottest Sundays this July was Sea Sunday. Sea Sunday is a day to pray for seafarers and fishers because we owe them more than we are aware of. *"Eternal Father, strong to save, Whose arm hath bound the restless wave, Who bid'st the mighty ocean deep Its own appointed limits keep; O hear us when we cry to Thee, For those in peril on the sea."*

King's Lynn is a port and market town. And so, we are familiar with the screech of seagulls, with the tidal times of the estuary River Ouse, we breathe brackish air and are supplied with fresh fish daily.

For us, the sea is a dangerous element – but not so for Jesus. How often did Jesus 'cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee' to get away from the crowds! Jesus walked on water. He was undisturbed by a fierce storm raging on the Sea of Galilee - he calmed the storm. Jesus called his first disciples, Simon, then called Peter, and his brother Andrew when they were fishing on the Lake of Galilee. The most crucial story, this time happening on the shore of the Sea Tiberias, is the third encounter of the resurrected Jesus with his disciples. Peter, lost and overwhelmed by the events concerning Jesus, appears to want to go back to his old trade, saying "I'm going out to fish," and some of the other disciples came with him. Jesus blocked Peter's attempt to resume his old trade of fishing; he established him as the 'rock' of the Christian Church. In ACTS we find the story of the ship that carried Paul as prisoner from Jerusalem to Rome. The ship was shipwrecked in a frightful winter storm on the island of Malta. Miraculously, everyone survived.

Water, boats and fishing play a noticeable part in the Gospels. The very beginning of the history, the survival and the growth of the Christian Church are intimately linked with this unstable, unpredictable element–water- that Jesus used and uses to teach us to trust and to baptise.

I wish you a delightful golden October.

Lotte

ARCHIVE

Our Lady of the Annunciation, King's Lynn Alter Servers Circa. 1933-1937.

*Our Lady of the Annunciation, King's Lynn, Alter Servers Circa 1933-1937.
Back row Servers had red capes.*

Back : Tom Banner Killed in Burma WW2 - Jimmy Blackburn - Alfred Farr - Norman Farr - ? - Herbie Gates - Leonard Farr -
Cedric Johnson - Thomas Farr - Joey Sinnot

Middle : ? - Beverly Filby - ? - Tom Carter - Bernard Smith (M/C) - Canon Stokes - "Tosh" Britten - Herbert Morley -
"Hooky" Thurston



Bottom : ? - ? - Patrick Filby - Felix Thrope - Dennis Krill - ? - Ken Johnson - ? - ?

Nicholas Farr writes:

I have attached a PDF of a photo from the 1930's, of the Altar Servers at Our Lady of the Annunciation church in King's Lynn, which I thought might interest parishioners. In the photo, there are seven members of my family, which are the four Farr's on the back row, of which Thomas Farr is my father, and the other three my uncles. Beverly Filby on the middle row, was my mother's father, and one of his younger sons is Patrick Filby, on the bottom row.

"Hooky" Thurston on the middle row, was married to Hetty Grace Farr, a cousin of my father, and their daughter Marjorie Thurston married Denis Green, who many of the older parishioners will probably remember.

Regards

Nicholas Farr.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

John Cairns *used to write articles for the Lynn News and the Grape Vine Magazine regularly. He and his wife Miriam moved to Gloucester last year. They are still very attached to our Church and so John offered some of his articles as contribution to the Grape Vine magazine.*

The Pope is obviously a person of deep humanity. We can admire his reaching out to others. He is, like many of us, concerned about the mockery and satirising of religious belief. He compared defending religion to punching someone who might have insulted his mother. There is such a thing as righteous anger.

In the New Testament it says Jesus ‘found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the moneychangers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple’.

We don’t know what injuries Jesus inflicted with his whip of cords or how large this improvised whip was, but he did use force and used it effectively.

Jesus also said ‘Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come. It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea’.

A punch on the nose seems a very moderate statement compared to being drowned in the sea. What would any of us do if our mother, or our cherished beliefs were attacked? Pope Francis would certainly not condone killing anyone, but some influential people would like to imply that he would. There is a climate of belittling religions in the name of press freedom, but editorial selection of news is biased in many ways. Let us have the freedom to proclaim our religious beliefs without caricature.

— **John Cairns.**

CANONISATION of Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Giorgio Frassati



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBGx2KBubxE&t=3761s>



St Giorgio Frassati quotes: 'In a world gone astray from God there is no peace, but it also lacks charity, which is true and perfect love.'

'The times we are going through are difficult because cruel persecution of the Church is raging. But you bold and good young people should not be afraid of this small thing; remember that the Church is a divine institution and cannot come to an end. She will last till the end of

the world. Not even the gates of hell can prevail against her.'

<https://youth.rcdow.org.uk/voices/pier-giorgio-frassati-quotes/>

St Carlo Acutis quotes: 'In the front of the Eucharist you become a saint.'

'Not I but God.'

The Canonisation of the two young saints, Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, who were born exactly 90 years apart, touches us profoundly. We live in a time when Christianity is attacked and bullied, so much so that the effect of this stifling is eroding family life, is causing loss of faith, loneliness, and the feeling of being without purpose and hope. Both saints died at a very young age; Carlos died when he was 15 years old and Giorgio died at the age of 24. Whichever website one is consulting about these two new saints one reads that they were ‘men of their time’, and by being so, inspired the young as well as the elderly, the poor and the affluent. No wonder that there is a wide range of books available about them, some also as audio books.



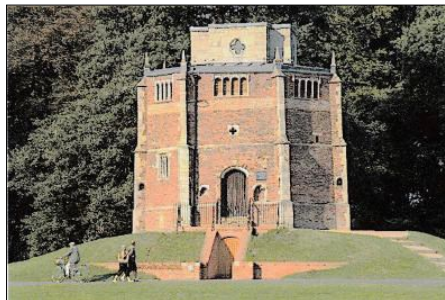
Very interesting and touching is this interview with St Carlo Acutis' mother:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8E5vTpL_Ew

Carlo Acutis: “Our soul is like a hot air balloon. If by chance there is a mortal sin, the soul falls to the ground. Confession is like the fire underneath the balloon, enabling the soul to rise again... It is important to go to confession often.”

PARISH DIARY

Procession of Our Lady of Walsingham statue to the Red Mount Chapel



... The King's Lynn Morris Dancers leading the way to The Red Mount Chapel 17-08-2025



The relics of St Margaret of Scotland,
St Columba and St Andrew
at Our Lady of the Annunciation

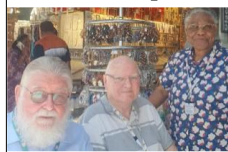
The Knights of St. Columba
proudly safeguard the
revered relics of St. Columba,
St Andrew and St Margaret.

Once again, this year local
Knights have been helping
bring these sacred relics to
locations across the country,
also to King's Lynn from the
28th to 30th of July.



Pilgrimage

On Josephine and Tony Burton's
pilgrimage to Lourdes, they met
with Bishop Peter and Fr James



Cassidy who
married the
couple in
2018.

Heritage Day 14 September 2025



In the church is
the restored
Shrine of Our
Lady of
Walsingham
established by
Pope Leo XIII in
1897. It is a
copy of the
Holy House of
Nazareth.

40th Anniversary of Holy Family Church

Sunday 3rd August we celebrated
the Dedication of our Churches,
especially the 40th Anniversary
of Holy Family Church.



PARISH NOTICE BOARD

Holy Hour: There is a monthly time of prayer for vocations in our diocese, when there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in Our Lady's Church. The next date is on Friday the 3rd of October at 7pm.

Elders Group: The Elders Group will start meeting again on 16-09-2025. They meet fortnightly on Tuesdays at Holy Family Church from 10.00 am to 1:30pm.

Gayton Road Cemetery Closure: Gayton Road Cemetery in King's Lynn will be closed to new full body burials starting April 1, 2026, due to limited space and high water levels.

However, the current team have encouraged us to come together with all faith groups across our town to have some discussions about what might be possible if we pull together - are there smaller pockets of land adjacent to our facilities that might be suitable for extension of existing graveyards? The council would be willing to assist us with exploring options such as this. We would like to offer the opportunity for all interested parties to meet at Gaywood Church Rooms for an informal discussion and an opportunity to ask questions and see what might be possible. A date/ time will follow.

Children's Liturgy: We are proposing to restart Children's Liturgy at 9.30am and 11.30am Mass. For this, we shall need volunteers to help with the sessions. Helpers will pair up to guide the children, aged 4 to 6, through the first half of the Mass. If you are interested in contributing to this, there is a meeting organised for volunteers on Sunday 14th September at 5pm in the Wigglesworth Room. There is lots of information and guidance available and all of this will be shared then. Feel free to contact me. Helen L'Estrange.

Contact details are: h.lestrange@sky.com 07590496538

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2026: There are about 40 children enrolled. A meeting had been arranged for parents Saturday 6th August at 11am in Holy Family Church to outline the programme of preparation for First Holy Communion next year. The list for registration closed at the end of July.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Parish Council Meeting Sunday September 21st. WRIGGLESWORTH ROOM; after vespers & Benediction approx. 4.30pm. This meeting was to Re-establish a working Parish Council. The meetings' function was:

- To share expected NEW Diocesan guidelines• To share information about upkeep & costs of buildings & property requirements
- To establish Parish needs through co-opted “officers” research with parishioners
- To establish some core teams to represent / support specific needs
- To establish long term continuity by evolving buddy / apprentice positions in all key areas.

Since many years have elapsed since last meeting, we must focus on future needs, not past reflections. **Reports & decisions will be published online and print for next stages.**

KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA: Gentlemen, please support our Parish needs; support our Priests & Religious; support our Catholic faith. Join the Knights of St. Columba. Talk to any brother / read our literature / use contact details provided.

We are KSC, Our Lady of Walsingham Council 319, Kings Lynn

St MARTHA SCHOOL: The School Community fun day is on the **4th of October starting** at 2pm. Lots of stalls and attractions await you. The Mini Vinnies will be hosting tea / coffee and sweet or savoury scones. A designated area will be set up to promote SVP and Mini Vinnies. Invitations go out on the Feast Day of St Vincent DePaul 's Anniversary this coming Saturday, 20-09-2025.

CHURCHES TOGETHER from around the world as visited by parishioners during the summer holidays:



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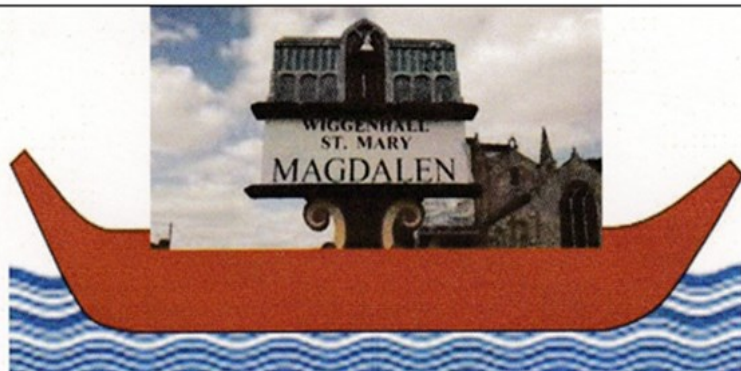
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FEN LINE USERS ASSOCIATION

Do you use the train between King's Lynn and Cambridge?

The Fen Line Users Association (FLUA) was formed in 1985 and successfully campaigned to keep the line from closing. 40 years later we are still representing local rail users and lobbying for faster services, more trains and better facilities at stations. Membership costs just £7 a year and members receive a copy of our Fenliner newsletter which is published 3 times annually. FLUA members also have the opportunity to meet and put questions directly to rail industry managers at our Annual General Meeting held in November. If you use or have an interest in the Fen Line then please consider joining us. The more members we have, the louder our voice! For more information please email us, visit our website or contact the Secretary:
Mark Collins Tel: 07821-809160.



www.flua.org.uk



fluasecretary@flua.org.uk

PAGE FOR AND OF THE YOUNG

'When God is with us, we don't have to be afraid of anything.'

St Giorgio Frassati



Just think about what this means! *'When God is with us, we don't have to be afraid of anything.'* **Giorgio Frassati** was known to aim to reach for the highest – physically, mentally and in his soul, out of his growing love for Jesus: he 'was a passionate mountaineer' and excelled in other sports as well; he studied engineering and above all, devoted his life to helping the poor. Not only the Mini Vinnies will be interested to know that Giorgio Frassati joined the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.



90 years after Giorgio Frassati, **Carlo Acutis** was born in London. He too loved sports and was good at it, he was immensely clever with the computer, teaching himself programming to design websites and also loved video games. His drive though was his love for the Eucharist. *"Our soul is like a hot air balloon. If by chance there is a mortal sin, the soul falls to the ground.*

Confession is like the fire underneath the balloon, enabling the soul to rise again... It is important to go to confession often." His motto, *The Eucharist is my highway to heaven,"* continues to inspire young people across the world.

Holy Stories of Saints for Kids: Inspiring Bedtime Tales of Catholic Heroes like Santa Claus, Carlo Acutis, Pier Giorgio Frassati, Kateri Tekakwitha, and More (Special Stories for Kids)



PAGE FOR THE ELDERS

From:

Pope Leo's Message to Grandparents and the Elderly

'The life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to understand that life is more than just the present moment and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future. In the book of Genesis, we find the moving episode of the blessing given by the aged Jacob to his grandchildren, the sons of Joseph; his words are an appeal to look to the future with hope, as the time when God's promises will be fulfilled (cf. *Gen* 48:8-20). If it is true that the weakness of the elderly needs the strength of the young, it is equally true that the inexperience of the young needs the witness of the elderly in order to build the future with wisdom. How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance.'



**The Elders Group meets Tuesdays, fortnightly,
from 10.00am to 1:30pm at Holy Family Church.**

**Dates: September 16, 30, October 14, 28,
November 11, 25, December 9.**

Contact Jane 07717 083 255

Apple tart for the grandchildren: Ingredients: 250g of flour, 125g of sugar, 100g of butter or margarine, 1 large egg, Vanilla extract. Mix the ingredients well, roll out the dough, place it in a tin and cover the dough generously with apple slices. Bake for 25 minutes at 200°C. It's nice with whipping cream.

CHARITY PAGE

'In a world gone astray from God there is no peace; hence, it also lacks charity, which is true and perfect love.' St Giorgio Frassati

West Norfolk Catenians Raise Over £1,000



Peter Coates, Lucy McKitterick, Chris Davey and Peter Eyre at the Night Shelter in King's Lynn

The King's Lynn Night Shelter provides essential accommodation and pastoral support to those facing homelessness, welcoming guests throughout the winter months. Demand for spaces remains high, with approximately three referrals received for every available bed. Many guests experience complex needs, and the shelter offers them a private room along with round-the-clock care.

MARY'S KITCHEN: "We are very desperate for new Volunteers for Mary's Kitchen", which is a permanent example of a corporate act of Mercy, feeding the hungry in the Wigglesworth room each Saturday. **KSC** are proud to provide support to the Kitchen. Guests enjoy the heartier soups, such as chicken & vegetable / lamb & vegetable / beef & vegetable, together with baked beans-based food. The current small group of volunteers regularly provides guests with foods, **HOWEVER**, this is a parish endeavour, open to all, **so KSC is asking parishioners to support it by bringing ONE TIN OF FOOD (chunky soups / beans etc.) to your MASS, regularly.** Call **07741 537 976** for information.

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED: On Sunday 14th September, Aloma Do Rozario, a speaker for Aid to the Church, gave a talk about the aim of the charity at the Our Lady Church's morning service. The charity is committed to aid persecuted Christian Communities in India, the Middle East and Africa, especially Nigeria. Most of us are ignorant of the growing intensity of this persecution and its menacing form: intimidation, burning of churches, murders, killing of parishioners during services, especially at Easter and Christmas. News channels, the press and radio news hardly ever cover these attacks, which is actually another, silent, form of discrimination. The **Aid to the Church** website has an information link that updates on events daily: <https://acnuk.org/acn-news/>

Radio Maria had a series running in 2022 '*Persecuted and Forgotten*'.

'PERSECUTED' - *The global assault on Christians* by Paul Marshall, Lela Gilbert, Nina Shea, Thomas Nelson Press ISBN: 978-1-4002-0441-0' is one of the best books about this subject.

David Alton writes, 'This powerful and timely text shines a light into the dark corners of the world where men and women face intimidation, persecution and even death for their religious beliefs.'

CAFOD, Harvest Family Fast Day

In today's volatile and rapidly changing world, CAFOD remains committed to working alongside the most marginalised people and building a better future. Our hope is inspired by the firm and reassuring certainty of God's love, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

In this Jubilee Year we are invited to be pilgrims of hope, walking in solidarity with our global family. In his message for the World Day of the Poor, Pope Leo calls us to rediscover Christian hope as a response to global instability and "offer new signs of hope" bearing witness to charity.

CAFOD is the official overseas aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. We believe God wants everyone to flourish — yet many people are struggling with conflict, the climate crisis, inequality and injustice.

That's why we stand defiantly, side by side, with our sisters and brothers around the world, supporting them to face these injustices wherever and whenever they encounter them. We help all people, regardless of background, so that together we can build a better, fairer world – as God intended.

CAFOD's Family Fast Day is a tradition, particularly during Lent or Harvest, where individuals and families are encouraged to eat simply and donate the money saved to CAFOD to support global development projects addressing poverty, conflict, and the climate crisis.

By fasting from a meal, praying, and giving donations, participants support local experts who provide people with the essential tools, training, and resources needed to overcome hardship and build sustainable futures for themselves and their communities.

Family Fast Day has been at the heart of CAFOD since its inception. CAFOD was born when a team came together with others from the National Board of Catholic Women, the Catholic Women's League and the Union of Catholic Mothers to organise the first Family Fast Day in 1960. Due to the number of collections taking place across the dioceses, two years later, the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales registered CAFOD as an official charity.

The very first Family Fast Day was on Friday 11th March 1960. The volunteers were responding to an appeal from the people of the Caribbean island of Dominica where children were starving, to help raise funds for a mother-and-baby clinic.

Everyone in the family was asked to make an act of self-denial. They asked children to give up their sweets and for their parents to make just one main meal for the family – the cheapest possible – and give the money they saved to feed people who were hungry. This remains at the heart of CAFOD Family Fast Days today.

As well as funding the new clinic, the project also helped people to survive and make a living for themselves, including providing water and teaching people how to plant vegetable gardens. This determination to reach those most in need and help people fulfil their potential is still at the heart of CAFOD's mission.

The organisers expected to raise just a few hundred pounds, but the Catholic community responded to the appeal with amazing generosity, donating more than £6,000 - the equivalent of over £100,000 today. However, raising money has not been the whole story.

CAFOD Family Fast Day has always been as much about prayer as about giving to help those living in poverty. One of the first Fast Day organisers explained: "We were very keen that we should do it not just as a giving thing, but as a praying thing. We should really make an effort to remember people, not just by giving them food, but by doing what we could do to support them.

"We weren't doing anything special, we were just doing what we thought we ought to do, remembering that we are all God's children." As we prepare in our own homes to celebrate Family Fast Day, here is a Prayer to remind us of the real difference we can make with our own thoughts and actions.

Tim Gallier

THE KNIGHTS OF SAINT COLUMBA

Saint Columba was born Colum in County Donegal in AD 521. He was of noble extraction from Niall, King of Ireland. He learned the Divine Scriptures and the lessons of an ascetic life under the Bishop, Saint Finian. He entered the Priesthood in AD 546 and in a short time had many disciples.

His manner of living was always most austere and he never interrupted his fast; yet his devotion was neither morose nor severe. It was in Iona, off the Isle of Mull that Saint Columba came ashore from Ireland in AD 563 and began the Christianisation of Scotland. Iona has been a place of pilgrimage and veneration throughout the centuries, for reasons of faith it was also a cradle of the Celtic Kingdom of Scotland.

Fast forward to 1919 when a group of 24 men of vision led by PJ OCallaghan, an Irish man from Cork, recognised the need for an organisation based on strictly Catholic and democratic ideas. The founders at the outset decided on a ritualistic Order, as the Church itself was ritualistic.

The Order as far as possible was to be modelled on the Knights of Columbus, founded in The United States by Father Michael McGivney in 1881. Thus, the new Order would be called the Knights of Saint Columba. The news of the recently formed organisation spread and in the following weeks over 100 Catholic Gentlemen applied for membership. The first initiation ceremony took place on the 9th of November 1919. On St Patrick's Day 1920, The Knights held a concert in St Andrews Hall Glasgow, and because of this event, several hundred applications for membership were received. The Knights of Saint Columba had arrived.

ICONS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

For the first millennium of the Church, there were two "worlds", the Roman and the Byzantine. These worlds were not only geographically but also culturally and linguistically separate; the Roman world largely spoke Latin; the Byzantine largely spoke Greek.

What this means is that, over time, two theological systems developed, independently of each other, because this was prior to the age of the internet, you had access only to the information around you. So, two different theologies of images also develop out of these two worlds.

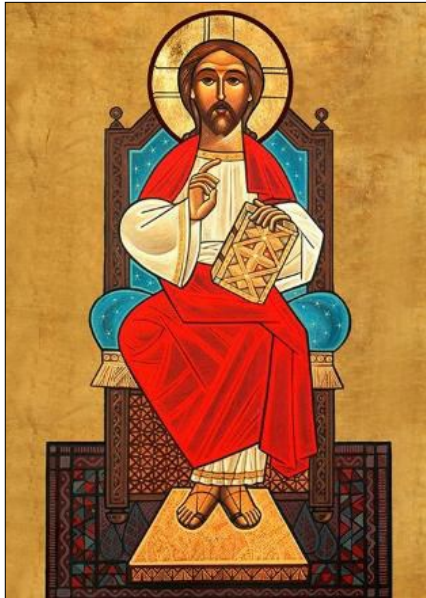
In the East, icons take on a very specific theological meaning. They are seen as windows into heaven, such that the believer looking upon an icon is not looking at a painting on wood, but is as if looking through a portal, looking at the heavenly reality itself.

The West never develops this understanding of images. In the Roman world, the believer looks on an image of a sacred reality, and this image raises the mind above the image to the reality, something by which the believer is moved upwards. For this reason, Western art has a tendency to portray subjects in a much more realistic way, through artistic realism and statues.

Before I moved to cosmopolitan King's Lynn, I was Parish Secretary at a small church in rural Kent. The Parish Priest had travelled, in his younger days, extensively in the Soviet Union and had become a great

collector of icons (copies of course!) Through him I began my own interest in icons and wrote about several in the Parish Newsletter.

I would like to share with you two icons, one is probably the most well known in the west, and the other one is one of my most cherished!



Firstly, the icon Christ Pantocrator (from the Greek *pantos* meaning all, and *kratos* meaning strength, might or power), now known in the west as Christ in Majesty, has come to suggest Christ as a mild but stern, all powerful judge of humanity. The image of Christ Pantocrator was one of the first images of Christ developed and remains a central icon of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In the image, Christ holds the New Testament in his left hand and makes the gesture of teaching or of blessing with his right. This imagery is a common feature in Byzantine churches, often found in

the central dome, and represents Christ's eternal nature as God, creator, and judge.

The second icon is called The Virgin of Tenderness. It portrays the bond of intimacy between the Mother of God and her son Jesus. Their cheeks meet in loving embrace, and their eyes in a gaze of mutual compassion. The icon depicts the Virgin Mary mourning the passion of her son which has been made known to her by Simeon.

Leonid Ouspensky, in his book *Theology of the Icon*, marvellously describes the working of grace in the soul of the Virgin at this moment: *"In all the variety of human feelings those connected with motherhood are the most intense, far more than any others they are connected not only with inner but also with physical life. In the Icon of Tenderness, the motherly caress of the Mother of God is indissolubly*

connected with her tormenting pain for her son. The compassion she feels for Him becomes transformed into motherly compassion for all creatures for whom He voluntarily sacrifices Himself. Contact with the Deity transforms motherly tenderness into all-embracing love and grief for the whole of creation."

If you want to learn more about the theology of icons in the Orthodox church, I recommend looking at the following website:

www.orthodoxartsjournal.org



If you have a favourite icon, or one that has special resonance with you, please email the editor so that we can feature it in future editions.

KEEPING SUNDAY SPECIAL

For many, especially for those who work or are in education, Monday marks the start of a new week. However, for the Jewish people who rest on Saturday and still keep it as the Sabbath Day it is Sunday that marks the first day of the week as, according to the Book of Exodus, the Sabbath is a day of rest, commanded by God to be kept as a holy day of rest, as God rested from creation on the seventh day.

For the early Christians, Sunday, the day on which Jesus rose from the dead, became a festive day and although Christianity didn't become the official religion of Rome until 380AD, some years earlier in 321AD Emperor Constantine enacted a law which stated that on Sunday, *"the venerable day of the sun"*, all judges, city people, and craftsmen were to rest from their work, regardless of their religious beliefs.

What is permissible on the Sabbath Day, or on a Sunday, has been debated over the centuries and still divides opinion to this day. The Pharisees, who adhered strictly to the law, and were always looking for a way to catch Jesus breaking it, disapproved of Him healing a

man on the Sabbath. Jesus chose to put compassion above the law and indeed there are no major religions which would advocate not helping one's fellow man in times of need, regardless of the day.

Sunday too has been the subject of various restrictions over the years with some keen to see even stricter rules enforced. In the 1800's, bakeries were not permitted to bake bread on a Sunday, but they still lit their ovens that day and provided a valuable service to that large section of the population who didn't have an oven at home. Many families lived in a single room where a fire, as well as providing a source of warmth, perhaps allowed just the basic cooking of food in a pot. For those who were fortunate enough to be able to eat meat once a week, they would take their dinner to the bakers who would cook it for them, often while they attended the morning church service. Compassion was clearly not on the mind of wealthy Sir Andrew Agnew MP who, having no need of baker's ovens himself, tried four times to bring a bill through Parliament that would have closed the bakeries, stopped all secular work on Sunday's and outlawed many forms of harmless entertainment as well. None of his attempts were successful.

Closing everything on a Sunday, however well intentioned, simply isn't practical. Hospitals and care homes still need to carry out their essential roles, as does public transport that gets people to their work there. The emergency services too simply can't stand down for one day a week. However, it's fair to say that Sunday for many is now just another day of the week, something that was recognised many years ago by the "Keep Sunday Special" movement which on 27th August this year marked its 40th anniversary. It was founded by Dr. Michael Schluter in response to proposed changes to the Sunday Trading Laws which at the time stopped large shops from opening on a Sunday. Faith and community groups were worried about attendance at church and the effect on family time spent at home, whilst the trade unions were concerned that employees would be forced to work on a Sunday against their will. Eventually, a compromise was reached and large shops were permitted to open for just six hours, whilst Sunday working was to be on a voluntary basis only. I'm old enough to remember when shops were closed on a Sunday, and when they often closed for a half day, or indeed a whole day, during the

week too, and we all seemed to manage back then. But I was also reminded that for nearly 25 years of my working life I regularly worked on a Saturday morning so for me Sunday was the only day of the week when I didn't work, which itself made it a special day!

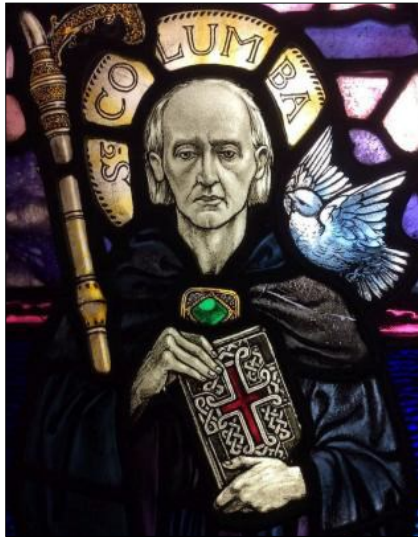
Attending Mass once a week, be it on Sunday, or at the vigil mass on Saturday makes that day special and the fact that we make time to do so gives us a chance to put aside, at least for a short while, those worldly matters which demand so much of our time. In 1998 Pope John Paul II wrote his apostolic letter *Dies Domini* which makes interesting reading on this subject. Speaking of the various dimensions of the Christian celebration of Sunday, the document says that it is *Dies Domini* with regard to the work of creation, *Dies Christi* as the day of the new creation and the Risen Lord's gift of the Holy Spirit, *Dies Ecclesiae* as the day on which the Christian community gathers for the celebration, and *Dies Hominis* as the day of joy, rest and fraternal charity. Pope John Paul says: *"The link between the Lord's Day and the day of rest in civil society has a meaning and importance which go beyond the distinctly Christian point of view. The alternation between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God himself, and is something "sacred", because it is man's way of withdrawing from the sometimes excessively demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew his awareness that everything is the work of God".* He adds: *"there remains the obligation to ensure that everyone can enjoy the freedom, rest and relaxation which human dignity requires, together with the associated religious, family, cultural and interpersonal needs which are difficult to meet if there is no guarantee of at least one day of the week on which people can both rest and celebrate."*

Mark Collins

PLEASE NOTE

**Another article regarding Royal Trains by David Athey
'MEMORIES' will be featured in the December issue.**

**The deadline for material for the Grape Vine
is the last week of NOVEMBER.**



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