

SHINE



You're invited to

ALPHA ONLINE



Fed up of lockdown? Want to explore the most important questions we could ever ask?

Through the power of technology we're inviting everyone to join Alpha online. It's a new adventure that has been working really well.

Starting online via Zoom on

Thursday 30 April 2020

7.30-8.30pm.

Why not give it a try?

**For more information please contact
mckay7897@hotmail.com**

All are welcome!



FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

Welcome to our latest issue of 'Shine' which is our first digital-only version. It is a bit of an understatement to say that the past few weeks have been a little trying for all of us, but in this issue you will see how much has been going on in our parish community and the various inventive ways of making sure that the message is still getting through.

People speak of us getting back to normal but perhaps things will never be the same again. Our experience of the past few weeks reminds us of how much we do need one another and perhaps the new normal will be better than the old one. We must keep up our care for one another.

Easter brings new life to us in the Risen Lord and the Risen Lord always produces good out of seemingly hopeless situations. Hopefully this truth will be seen as good comes out of our experience of the Corona virus.

Happy reading and keep up the good work.

Fr Peter



*News from the parish communities of
St Peter's, Hazel Grove and
St Philip's, Offerton.*

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Where we are . . .

St Peter's Church and presbytery

16 Green Lane, Hazel Grove,
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Tel 0161 483 3476

St Philip's Church

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Stockport SK2 5LB

Email: admin@stpetershazelgrove.org.uk

Fr Peter: petersharrocks@stpetershazelgrove.org.uk

Our joint website is www.stpeterscatholic.church

Shining a light on our parish communities

Celebrations

Teas and Coffees after 10am Mass on a Sunday is the place to be, especially if you want to celebrate in style. Just about every week there's somebody's birthday or special wedding anniversary to celebrate and magically, there always seems to be cake and candles available. Here's just a small selection of recent events.



Music successes

Several of our parish groups and individuals enjoyed success in the Hazel Grove Music Festival held in February.

Once again, the Junior Choir won their class, with some stiff competition this time! They opened the Winners' Concert the following weekend to much acclaim. Special mention must go to Millie-Rose Clayton who won a solo class the previous week. She performed her winning song ('Over the Rainbow' and very appropriate at the present time) beautifully in the concert.

The Instrumental Ensemble class was very interesting. There were three competitors, all Catholic primary schools! St Peter's School Orchestra, competing for the first time, won the class; St Simon's Recorder Group and an ensemble from St Benedict's, Handforth, came joint second.

St Peter's School Choir competed, but sadly were too few in number on the day to perform their best, and the parish Adult Choir took part in the Choral Recital class as always – a feast of choral music with performances of a very high standard.

When we eventually return to normal, new members for both parish choirs would be more than welcome. Please give it some thought.

Eileen Rigg

A week of guided prayer

We can and will still have our week of guided prayer from 31 May to 6 June but it will be a 'virtual' week, available online. A week of accompanied prayer is an ideal way of drawing closer to God in the midst of daily living, particularly in our present circumstances, and will be open to all who have access to the internet. Each day participants set aside a half hour prayer period based on Scripture and, in addition, receive face to face spiritual support/guidance from a member of the prayer team via Zoom or Skype or any other communication app that's readily available.

Participants make their prayer exercise at home and but also have a timed internet appointment with their assigned prayer companion for 30 minutes Monday to Friday inclusive. On the opening Sunday and the closing Saturday there will hopefully be a group session via Zoom. If you're interested in making this personal retreat online, please send an Email clearly headed Directed Prayer week to: michaeldomalley@sky.com Please include your name, your 'phone number, your Email address and also, very importantly, whether you will be using Facetime, Skype or Zoom to communicate with your prayer companion.

The holy dusters

Have you ever wondered how the church remains clean and tidy when you come to visit?

We are a group of ordinary parishioners who tirelessly clean and polish each week for all our services. We work on a six week rota. There are only so many of us and if you have a few hours to spare and especially want to have some free exercise, then this is for you! Our average age is around 60/70 and even 80 years old. Why not come and see for yourself; even the men can join in – no exceptions.

If you would like to join this worthwhile commitment to the parish, you will be most welcome. For more information about church cleaning, please phone 0161 483 4584 or ask Fr Peter at any service how you can help. God bless and we hope to see you in the future.

New loop system

We installed a loop system in the parish centre in January, which has been very well received. One of our parishioners has written to give his reaction.

"I was born profoundly deaf a long time ago. I have struggled with my hearing all my life with hearing aids and lip reading. You just have to get on with it. Then two years ago I got an infection in my ears so I could not wear my hearing aids. On the plus side I qualified for cochlear implants; they work without going in the ear.

My life has come on leaps and bounds with the implants. I still struggle in crowds but the loop system is a revelation. In church once the loop was installed, I could hear what was going on for the first time. Now we have the loop system in the parish centre, it is marvellous.

I went to a Footsteps talk where Mary Hardiman was telling us about her experiences in Death Row. I never felt more moved by a talk in my life. I have never heard anything like that before. Thank you, Mary. And also thank you everybody for making the loop possible. A very happy John Brett!"



You've been spotted!

Fr Peter's helper and sound technician over Easter and on a Sunday. We're so very grateful to James Walker for making our services so special.

Farewells and welcomes

Since our Christmas issue, the following parishioners have gone to their rest

Margaret Waldron
Thomas Osborne Helicon
Terence (Terry) Smith
Anne (Nancy) Hardiman
Elizabeth Joxy (9 days)
Joseph Michael Cheetham
John McCarthy
Neville Joseph Holt
Derek Doherty
Mary O'Donaghue
Margaret Clayton
Stella Farrell
Jacqueline (Jackie) Fish
Harry Knox
Jean Hiller
Margaret Barron
Stephen McCumesky
Myles McGuire
Yele Mary Ireland
(Stillborn baby)
Gerard Sturmeay
Irene King
James Flynn
Peggy Saunders

We have welcomed the following people into the church through baptism:

Lottie Atkin
William Carvil
Cole Brown
Sophia Wood
Matilda Shields
Joshua Lishanthan
Ivy-Rose Gould
Ava Jackson

Shining a light on our parish communities



Lassa EMCI

I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the kids and parents of Lassa community for the generosity and kindness to these kids education. The library is fully functional now with books on shelf and computers which was all bought and built by the kindness of the St Peters parish. I hope you will be able to add this to the future shine magazine. It's a year now since this kind heart was sent to Lassa EMCI

Yakubu

Two of our own



Steph Leyden working in the NHS



Dr John McKay and nurse John Du Guzman proudly wearing their homemade scrubs



Maddie McGarr has made headbands and scrub bags for the NHS and they have been gratefully received by staff in Congleton.

Fancy a virtual cuppa after Sunday Mass?

At 11am after our 10am Mass on a Sunday, we have started to meet via the Internet for Teas and Coffees and a chat. We do this via Zoom and it's quite straightforward. All you need is the link to join us. Simply Email:

mckay7897@hotmail.com

Once you've registered you'll receive an Email with the link to the Zoom meeting. If you're struggling with Zoom technology, Email us and we'll do our best to help:

stpetershelpers@gmail.com.

Hope to see you on Sunday!



Bereavement support group

We started the year by meeting on Thursday 2 January for prayer and a reflection by Margaret Mercer in the parish centre and then on Friday 17 Jan we had a hot pot supper there, which was a very enjoyable evening. On Tuesday 4 February John McKay gave us a very inspirational talk on coping with grief. Our last social event was on Sunday 23 February when we had a Sunday lunch for 30 people. The atmosphere was great as we enjoyed a good social event with delicious food. It was an amazing afternoon, well worth all the potato peeling!

Obviously our activities had to stop in March, but luckily, with Lent starting on the 26 February we were able to have our Lenten Service on the evening of 3 March in church once again, beautifully done by Margaret Mercer. We went over to the parish centre for some refreshments afterwards.

It's so sad we cannot be together for a while but you are all in our thoughts and prayers; our phone calls keep us in touch. Keep safe, and we will soon be together again enjoying each other's company.

PPE

These dry hands
Gloved, cocooned in plastic
Separate our skin.
I hope you feel my touch
To let you know I am here.

These fatigued smiles
Masked, concealed in fabric
Separate our view.
I hope you see my kindness
To let you know I care.

These exhausted bodies
Gowned, wrapped in scrubs
Separate our souls.
I hope you value my dedication
To let you know behind all this I am me.

By Sarah Quinn



“Christ our Light! Christ our Light! Christ our Light!” Three times I sang it and three times there was no response – or was there from the distance? Then the Exultet, that ancient hymn of praise, which is at the heart of the Easter Vigil, followed. I have always sung it and I wasn’t going to let a virus stop me this year. And so the Easter Vigil continued using some psalms sung by our own cantors downloaded from last year’s recording and some imported music from YouTube. It has been the same for Sunday Mass for a few weeks now and it looks like continuing throughout April and into May.

Yes, it is very strange celebrating Mass in an empty church and just talking to a camera which is on the choir gallery. But how pleased we are that we had it installed some years ago.

The first time I celebrated Mass in this way was on a Saturday lunchtime and at that time the church was open for private prayer. So at 11.45am after Exposition I had to remind people to leave and then proceeded to celebrate on my own. Was anybody watching? It soon became apparent that they were as the Emails and 'phone calls came in, not just from our parish but beyond. Each day we get a read out of how many 'hits' we have had the previous day and they break it down into the amount of time watched. So, on Easter Sunday 303



Easter in lockdown

Fr Peter explains what life is like from his point of view

people watched for an hour or more and 619 watched for between 5 minutes and 1 hour. For the month of April we have had 20,006 unique viewers of whom over 5,000 have watched for an hour or more. The hits come from all over the world. As well as celebrating Mass it gives me the opportunity to pass on live

information and requests for prayers. Some people put their 'phone next to the speakers of their computers, iPads and other devices, to transmit the sound from the internet feed, so there are others who are just listening to Mass and the Rosary. The First Sacraments group are meeting on Zoom and hold a short Children's

Liturgy after Sunday morning Mass and a natter between the Mums afterwards. I have a 'virtual' tea break most mornings on Zoom with four others.

Fortunately the tea is real!

Technology is playing an important role in lockdown, but there is more going on. St Peter's Helpers, a group of volunteers, are doing sterling work keeping in touch with people and helping with shopping, collecting prescriptions or just simply phoning to say hello. The prayer group is collecting all the various intentions of prayer that are coming in and using them as the basis for prayers. Personal contact is being maintained and this is important.

When we get back to normal, we will? What will the new normal look like? Will we retain the personal contacts we have established during these past few weeks, sit down to family meals, realise that we are not in control as much as we thought we were? Will we continue to appreciate the work done in our hospitals and care homes? Will we switch off our computers, tablets, laptops and iPads and come back to St Peter's? I hope so because it will be nice to see some familiar faces again. The camera at the back isn't the same as a smiling or, for that matter, an unsmiling face! Hope to see you soon.

The Beatitudes are found in Matthew's Gospel 5:3-12. This lovely passage has been adapted for today's needs.

FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO STAY INDOORS FOR THEY HAVE PROTECTED OTHERS	BLESSED ARE THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE SELF-EMPLOYED FOR THEIR NEED OF GOD IS GREAT	BLESSED ARE THE CORNER SHOPKEEPERS FOR THEY ARE THE PURVEYORS OF SCARCE THINGS	BLESSED ARE THE DELIVERY DRIVERS AND THE POSTAL WORKERS FOR THEY ARE THE BRINGERS OF ESSENTIAL THINGS	BLESSED ARE THE HOSPITAL WORKERS, THE AMBULANCE CREWS, THE DOCTORS, THE NURSES, THE CARE ASSISTANTS, AND THE CLEANERS FOR THEY STAND BETWEEN US AND THE GRAVE, AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS SURELY THEIRS
BLESSED ARE THE CHECKOUT WORKERS FOR THEY HAVE PATIENCE AND FORGIVENESS IN THE FACE OF OVERWORK AND FRUSTRATION	BLESSED ARE THE REFUSE COLLECTORS FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD DESPITE THE MOUNTAINS OF WASTE	BLESSED ARE THE TEACHERS FOR THEY REMAIN STEADFAST AND CONSTANT IN DISTURBING TIMES	BLESSED ARE THE CHURCH WORKERS, THE DEACONS, PRIESTS AND BISHOPS FOR THEY ARE A COMFORTING PRESENCE IN A HURTING WORLD AS THEY CONTINUE TO SIGNPOST TOWARDS GOD	BLESSED ARE THE SINGLE PARENTS, FOR THEY ARE COPING ALONE WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THERE IS NO RESPIRE
BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ALONE, FOR THEY ARE CHILDREN OF GOD AND WITH HIM THEY WILL NEVER BE LONELY	BLESSED ARE THE BEREAVED, FOR WHOM THE WORST HAS ALREADY HAPPENED. THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED	BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE ISOLATED WITH THEIR ABUSERS FOR ONE DAY - WE PRAY - THEY WILL KNOW SAFETY	BLESSED ARE ALL DURING THIS TIME WHO HAVE PURE HEARTS: ALL WHO STILL HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE; ALL WHO WORK FOR PEACE AND WHO MODEL MERCY MAY YOU KNOW COMFORT. MAY YOU KNOW CALM. AND MAY THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BE WITH US ALL. AMEN	

TEXT: DAYNE HANFRED

CartoonChurch.com

For 1-30 April

Number of Viewers	Number of Unique Viewers	Total Time Viewed	1 Min or Less	1 Min to 5 Mins	5 Mins to 1 Hour	1 Hour or More
50,322	20,006	25,096 hrs	28,721	7,583	8,974	5,044
Unique Viewers by Country (53 countries)						
UK: 17,621 Ireland: 1,481 Poland: 248 United States: 229 India: 48 Germany: 46 Spain: 39 Canada: 30 Australia: 22 France: 17 Guernsey: 16	New Zealand: 14 Nigeria: 13 Austria: 12 Italy: 10 Sri Lanka: 7 Singapore: 7 Czechia: 6 Turkey: 6 Brazil: 6 Philippines: 6 Norway: 6	Switzerland: 5 Portugal: 5 Trinidad and Tobago: 5 South Africa: 4 Kuwait: 4 Malaysia: 4 Isle of Man: 4 Qatar: 4 Kenya: 4 Greece: 3	Slovakia: 3 Uganda: 3 Tanzania: 3 Ghana: 3 Latvia: 2 Mexico: 2 Nicaragua: 2 Mauritius: 2 Malta: 2 United Arab Emirates: 2	Cyprus: 2 Netherlands: 2 Saudi Arabia: 2 Sweden: 2 Belgium: 2 Ukraine: 1 Japan: 1 Nepal: 1 Denmark: 1 Bahamas: 1 Argentina: 1	Finland: 1 Thailand: 1 Oman: 1 Croatia: 1 Iran: 1 Hong Kong: 1 Jamaica: 1 Belarus: 1 Chile: 1 Anguilla: 1	

Miss Cahill, Acting Head Teacher at St Philip's shares some of the exciting things happening during the last few weeks.



When the Right Honourable Gavin Williamson announced that schools would be closing on Friday 20 March for the foreseeable future, St Philip's Primary School knew there was a challenging time ahead of them. We knew we had to ensure, to the best of our ability, that our children were still able to learn from home. St Philip's also wanted to stay in touch with our children as much as we possibly could. Each teacher wrote a letter to the children in their class explaining how to get in touch with them during the lockdown period and encouraged their parents and family members to follow us on Twitter.

I am very proud of the experience the staff at St Philip's are giving to both our children at home and those in school. The children who are still in school have created a banner to thank the key workers who are keeping our society going.

Staff members at St Philip's post challenges on Twitter each day, covering a range of subjects. The children both at home and in school can have a go and then send their efforts via Twitter or Email.

News from St Philip's Primary School



We had some very creative responses to our dot and line challenge as you'll see above.

Our latest challenge is to see how many of our St Philip's staff members can the children name from their own childhood photographs. There are four members of staff who went to St Philip's themselves. The uniform has changed a few times throughout the years! See if you can see the four St Philip's uniforms in the photographs.

You can keep up to date with our newest challenges and photographs by following us on Twitter. Our Twitter handle is @st_philofferton.

St Philip's send everyone their best wishes and want to let you know that our parish family are in our prayers. Look after yourselves and stay safe.



Do you recognise any of the teachers at St Philip's from these photographs?



Nehemiah

Have you ever read the Book of Nehemiah? If you avoid the Old Testament because you find it boring and not relevant to today, think again! Nehemiah is a wonderful example to us of why and how to pray and then to work with God to achieve the desires that He puts in our hearts for His purpose.

Nehemiah was a success: a cupbearer to the king. But God had given him gifts for another reason. The temple in Jerusalem had been rebuilt but the walls around the city were a mess as the people were not focused and working together. God gave Nehemiah a desire to rebuild the walls. He was going to do this by turning into God's great building inspector and foreman. In doing so Nehemiah was to bring the people together with a common purpose and then reaffirm them in their faith.

Nehemiah knew God and knew that before he did anything, the best plan was to pray and talk to God about it.

Nehemiah had a structure to his prayer. He recognised that his God was holy and asked to be heard by Him (1:6). He then confessed his sin and asked for help (1:4-11). This made God the centre of his life and plans. But then Nehemiah also had another tool in his box – as well as this structured type of prayer, he also had 'arrow' prayers that he fired up to God on the hoof as he needed God's help (2:4, 4:4, 6:9). These were quick and responded to his need for God's input into what was happening at that time. This put the situation right into God's hands. By doing this Nehemiah put the direction God would want him to go at the forefront of his mind as he made choices.

Joe O'Brien offers some of her thoughts about Nehemiah to encourage us in recognising that prayer is a way of life.

Nehemiah was also not afraid to be honest with God and expressed feelings such as anger (4:4-5). This handed the problem over to God. Instead of acting on the anger, Nehemiah realised that God could help him. Nehemiah recognised that the answer to difficulty was often within himself.

Nehemiah was always taking action in response to his time spent in prayer – trusting God does not mean that we do nothing about the situations we find ourselves in; it means we listen to God to find out how to respond in them (4:9). When asking God to do something about a situation, we may hear "I have done something about it! I have put you there!" So, faith is active, not passive. As we pray and have a conversation with God, we should be ready to act on what we hear. Nehemiah figured out what needed to be done and he found the people God needed to do it. A goldsmith, a perfume maker and even one man's daughters heard the call and did their share of building work.

Lastly, Nehemiah kept his focus on why he was doing what he did: to please God (5:19). Nehemiah realised that everything he accomplished,

including the overseeing of the building of the walls and gates of Jerusalem, was with the help of God. God was his guide. In order to know that he was following Him, he kept talking with God in prayer. He knew that God has promised to answer prayer, so he kept on praying and kept on asking.

Nehemiah had wonderful affirmation from God that he had followed the right path from cupbearer to building inspector. After the wall and gates were rebuilt, Ezra the priest read the Law to the Jewish people assembled in Jerusalem's walls. And all the people said, "Amen!" Their faith was reaffirmed (8:1-6).

What can I learn from Nehemiah?

I can learn that it is good to have God as the focus of my life and that in order to do this, a regular prayer time with God is the key. Sometimes I may have time for spending a lot of time with God, perhaps in contemplation or in more lengthy, formal prayers. At other times I may need God whilst I am busy and can turn to him less formally with an 'arrow prayer' to ask for guidance quickly. Nehemiah shows me that it is the act of choosing to place God at the centre, which is the important lesson for my prayer life.

"Every Christian needs a half hour of prayer each day, except when he is busy – then he needs an hour."

St Francis de la Sales



What a great day, just before the lockdown. Lots of people came to help and join in with all the kids. It was amazing!!! The theme was Love and Forgiveness and we looked at it through music, art, drama and prayer.

Centurion's tale of the tomb!

St Peter's Easter Day where over 80 children enjoyed a day filled with fun, songs and drama!



Children showing their paintings to their families



All getting together in their teams for the start of the day



Painting and creating in their teams



Reuben dressed as Jesus ready to answer questions from the rest of the children

'It's been really nice being able to take part in the St Peter's Church Children's Sunday Service. I've been calling it 'The OC (online church) Service'.

It's a great way of being able to go to church and stay connected to friends in the church community, whilst we have to stay at home.

It was good when I dressed up as Jesus. When I was in the hot seat people asked some really good questions about the Easter Story - I enjoyed getting into character and trying to understand what it was like for Jesus.

It's really really nice that even my Nan from Liverpool can join us for the children's service too. She loves it! We've been learning lots during the sessions too.

Thank you so much Teresa, Terry, Clair, Rachel, Dave, Fran and Father Peter for organising this and helping us stay connected through church.

Reuben and family



Reuben made a spectacular Stations of the Cross



Children's Sunday service on Zoom when 100 children come together

LET THE SUN IN!

When you open the windows, do you have to beg the fresh air to come in? Or when you open the curtains in the morning, do you have to argue with the sun to make it shine into your room? How silly! You just open the windows and the air flows in. You open the curtains and the sun shines in.

The Bible says it's like that with God's peace. It will flow into our hearts, if we let it.

Are you worried? Are you anxious? Is anything troubling you today?

Don't try to work it all out by yourself. Let God's peace flow in—like sunshine into a dark room.

Beautiful prayer from Noah



Quinn's lovely picture for Palm Sunday

POEM
by
Lucy
Garratt

Every time once a year,
All of us have lots of cheer.
Someone rose from the dead,
The name was Jesus it was said.
Easter is the best time in April,
Risen Lord we are all grateful!

St Peter's Church children's Sunday service

We gather every Sunday after 10am Mass to tell the Gospel of the day in video, word and song.



Charlotte and Sophie with their drawings and paintings



Zach wanted to do his bit for Coronavirusuk key workers after hearing about PPE shortages. He went online to source, buy and manufacture 50 of these face shields in three days! He then donated them to Stockport NHS.

Helen MacDonald shares an update on the group activity in our parish.

Mothers’ Prayers is a worldwide group that began in England in 1995. It provides an opportunity for mothers to meet together and pray for their children and grandchildren and, by doing so, to give and receive support. The meetings are held fortnightly at the home of Teresa Thiele and attendance varies from week to week depending on other commitments etc.

We are welcomed by Teresa and join in hymns, prayers and reflections on the Word of God. We are particularly proud of our rendition of “Father, We Adore You” which we sing at the end (this is also the cue for Terry to put the kettle on!).

We gather round a small table on which are placed

- a cross to remind us that Jesus is our Redeemer
- a candle to remind us that He is the Light of the World
- a Bible to remind us that He is the Living Word
- a small basket at the foot of the Cross ready to receive the names of our children and grandchildren, written individually on small paper circles, as a symbol of our placing them into Jesus’ care. Whilst individual mothers are placing their circles into the basket they pray for their family in silence and, at the same time, the other mothers pray for that individual and her prayers.

There is also the opportunity for mothers to share, in confidence, any worries or fears about loved ones.

I have been coming to the group for about 18 months and love the sense of peace and support that comes from the meeting. So, when we entered the strange new world of Covid19 I thought I would feel lost without our meetings,



Mothers’ Prayers Group

especially at such a worrying time when so many of us cannot be with family members.

However, I need not have worried – technology came to the rescue! Our meetings are now held online via Zoom. Teresa sends us the log in details and password and at 7.30pm we are good to go! As with anything new there were a few teething

problems which were easily overcome (especially the time lag on our singing – thank you Amy for leading the singing and keeping us together!) and I’m not too sure about the idea of virtual tea and biscuits!

The important thing is we are still able to meet, share our worries, pray and give and receive support in a difficult time.

Finally, I would like to share one of the prayers used in our meetings:

Lord Jesus, we come before you as mothers, wanting you to bless our children, and all children throughout the world.

We thank you for our children – they are a precious gift to us. Help us, always to remember this, especially when they are in difficulties.

Lord, they live in a troubled world – a world that does not always acknowledge you, a world that may sometimes cause them to be laughed at if they admit to belief in you.

Help them to be strong, Lord. Help us to know that you are always with us, sharing in the joys and in the sorrows, joining us in the laughter and weeping with us in the pain.

Please give us all the graces we need to fulfil your plans for our lives and for our duties in our families. You are Almighty God. You can change things.

So, we turn to you in faith and love knowing that you will answer our prayers. Lord let us always remember how much you love us and our children and how you urge us to come to you with our problems. Amen.

Compassion

Sarah Quinn is a second-year Master’s student in Adult Nursing at Oxford Brookes and lives in Oxford. In addition, she is a nursing assistant – a role which she thoroughly enjoys. She also has a keen interest in art, especially how this can be used as a medium for mental health promotion. She is an avid photographer with an eagle eye for seeing the beauty in the everyday.

Sarah writes: ‘The prompt for writing this poem, ‘Compassion, the life blood of the NHS’, was a call to arms by an artist who wished to roll out an art project putting up posters in staff break rooms across the whole of the NHS (you can find the artist on Instagram: @notestostrangers). He asked for inspiration of what it was like to work within the NHS and why we do what we do.

At the end of a very busy, stressful and emotionally-tolling twelve-hour shift I was walking home mulling over my day (nearly in tears). In this moment of reflection, I started to write on my phone to remind myself that I am there for those patients and how lucky I am to be surrounded by such amazing colleagues.

Now more than ever the NHS is a symbol of hope and needs to be protected. I have personally looked after patients suffering with COVID-19 and seen both sides of this pandemic: the pressure that this puts on family, friends, businesses and people’s way of life. So, for people out there reading this, know that your everyday sacrifices are making a difference on the front line. Together we can get through this and a little compassion goes a long way.’

Compassion, the life blood of the NHS

We are here for you 24/7, in your darkest, most vulnerable and weakest moments.

We are the holding of a hand to show you we are here through it all.

We are people who make porridge at 4am for that eight-year-old boy whose beloved granddad just died and was in need of distraction.

We are the first people you see when you wake up after surgery and tell you it all went well.

We are the ears who listen to that 90-year-old lady recite from memory her favourite poem perfectly because no family comes to visit.

We are the eyes you show your wounds to which we dress without batting an eyelid.

We are the assistants who help you learn to walk again, and who motivate you to try again after failing.

We are the people who make you a cup of tea after you find out the child you were carrying will never be born alive.

We are the carers who shave you when you can’t, so you look smart for your wife even in your hospital bed.

We are the staff who learn to ‘sign’ their name so they can communicate in a way you understand.

We are the staff that turn up every day and see so much. In this never ending battle we still try.

A little compassion goes further than you may ever know.

We are the NHS.

A return to Ireland by Gerry Clarke

Squeezing through twin portals
Of Punt Britannia across the Menai straits
Glimpsing on lofty lord on treetop column,
Naval head amongst tumbling rooks;
Farewell long-slumbering England,
Croeso Ynys, Temple of the Arts,
Varied landscape of timeless relics.

Centuries years ago, Celtic monk, Colmcille,
And more, set sail for the unknown,
Like swooping swallows, their song
First-falling on Cymru aliens,
On fearsome tribes, and rival chieftains,
With offers to be free and monasteries to-build,
An Augustinian priory fragment still there in Penmon.

Holyhead ferry awaiting, Ireland for me,
Westward along Anglesey’s Route 55;
Bats starting-up, a moon rising, and hares
Migrant returning from uninvited pastures
To a homeland to stay-in or die-in?
Joyce’s voice from a silent Zurich grave
Still haunting Dublin and Ireland:
“Have I ever left you?”

Project Update

TARGET
£15,000

£14,331.49

£15,000

£13,000

£8,000

£6,000

£4,000

£2,000

£1,000

On Monday 27 April, we sent the completed application form off to our lead sponsors, Caritas - version 7 and 33 pages in length. Caritas will need to complete some work at their end and they will then send it to Reset and the Home Office for official approval. Given the current situation, we anticipate quite a significant wait before we welcome our refugee family, but we have done our bit so it is just a case of waiting now.

A very big thank you to everyone who has made this possible: to all those who generously gave money, baked cakes, donated books, purchased Christmas gift cards and came to our Race Night, so we could reach the Home Office minimum of £9,000. **THANK YOU.** We now have £14,331.49 in the account!!

Also, a huge well done to the Community Sponsorship team who were meeting every fortnight and have really pulled together to make this happen during the difficult lockdown period.



*The Race Night was a great success and well supported. We raised over **£900.***





Footsteps steps out

We've had some real treats in 2020 at our series of presentations in the parish centre. Since we began in 2018, we've been able to welcome a variety of speakers to come and share their insight, their faith and their humour with us.

We began on Thursday 16 January with Pastor Lloyd Gordon who unpicked the Our Father for the packed audience and he really got us thinking. Lloyd is a dynamic, family man who is based in Stretford, though he travels all over the world. "Discovering hidden promises" certainly lived up to its billing. Lloyd inspired us with his enthusiasm, his modesty, his faith and made us really consider the depths of the Lord's Prayer. As one lady in the audience said, "Praying the Our Father will never be the same again". The place was buzzing and Lloyd himself was delighted, commenting afterwards how he "loved seeing people take significant footsteps out of their comfort zone into a place of freedom."

On Tuesday 25 February again the crowds gathered, this time to hear Mary Hardiman share the story and the impact on her of her friend Jeremiah's story of his dramatic conversion to a live and living faith that completely changed his life. Jeremiah is on Death Row in Louisiana



Mary Hardiman



Pastor Lloyd Gordon

and Mary presented much of his own testimony and experience in his own words. It was a very powerful and moving presentation and rather than give more detail here, why not listen to Mary's talk yourself, which she recorded on the night. We've uploaded it to our parish website, on the Media page <https://stpeterscatholic.church/media/>. If you scroll down the page, you'll see 'Talks by Mary Hardiman' and her Footsteps talk is the fifth one in the list, "Ain't no man put them damn clouds in the sky".

By the time our next event was due, we had all just gone into lockdown, so the Footsteps night of Thursday 26 March was quite a different experience. James Gallogly, like Mary, is from our own parish and lives very near the church. He made sure his evening walk took him past the church and he came in to deliver his presentation from the lectern at the altar, so that it could be seen via the webcam on the Internet. We also recorded it and you'll find it on a different page of the website – this time on the Webcam page under Recordings <https://stpeterscatholic.church/webcam-2/>. Scroll down the page and you'll see the orange boxes – look for 'Footsteps talk Journeying through Lent'. We could tell via the website statistics that more than 100 people were watching James and the positive reactions from them afterwards were extremely supportive and included, "excellent... wide ranging and profound... thought provoking... inspired... a wonderful address". It really



James Gallogly

can't have been easy talking to an empty church with no audience reaction, but James, the polished presenter that he is, didn't let that stop him. Of course, he was more than familiar with the church setting, which made it easier for him. Again, listen for yourself to what he had to say about fragility and what imprisons us.

At the time of going to press, we're not sure whether we'll be able to meet back in the parish centre for our next presentation which is scheduled for Tuesday 19 May at 8pm. Owen Le Blanc is our next speaker, who comes from Glossop. It may be better to wait until we can have a live audience. Please keep an eye on our parish newsletter, which is always published on the News page of our website <https://stpeterscatholic.church/news-2/>. **Fr Peter will announce details at Mass nearer the date, so stay tuned.**



As soon as news of the escalation of the Corona virus hit, an informal group of parishioners, supported by Father Peter, immediately formed a crisis relief team to look at ways of people supporting each other. We recognised that we all have gifts and, whilst one person might need practical help, that same person might be able to help others by chatting on the telephone.

We met before the lockdown to discuss the best possible ways that we can serve our local community and established certain systems and people in key positions, to enable us to help in the most efficient way possible.

Many people then registered for support and to volunteer, on telephones, keeping in contact with people and also helping with shopping or other essential outreach activities such as collecting medicines or posting letters.

A month later, we have over 50 supported households and over 50 volunteers registered. This is on top of the existing friendships and informal support that many parishioners offer to each other all the time – and in addition to the ongoing fantastic work of the SVP, who are also keeping in touch with people. We are keeping in close touch with Hazel Grove Mutual Aid, who are also matching volunteers with people in need across the area on a street by street basis.

A few examples of what St Peter's Helpers have been doing include

- telephone calls to help each other in lockdown
- shopping errands
- Easter cards from some of our young people and pictures drawn by St Peter's School children
- collections of toiletries for both care homes and recently, a large donation of single use shower gels and shampoo for Stepping Hill and Macclesfield hospitals
- getting involved with 'For the love of scrubs' to make scrubs and other items for healthcare workers (community and some hospital workers). Sewing machines have been dusted off!
- some volunteers are enabling people without internet to listen to the Mass down the 'phone.

Please contact us on stpetershelpers@gmail.com or by phoning church on 0161 483 3476 and Fr Peter will pass a message on.

**CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT
YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

ST PETER'S HELPERS

We are St Peter's Helpers, a group of St Peter's parishioners who want to join up support to everyone who needs it, particularly those who are self-isolating, at risk, or just concerned.

We will try to offer practical support, friendship and signposting to information, reducing isolation and enabling everyone to contribute their talents.

If you'd like a phone call to keep in touch, some help with picking up shopping or anything else, please register.

TO REGISTER FOR SUPPORT OR TO VOLUNTEER

Email us: stpetershelpers@gmail.com

Phone us: 0161 483 3476

www.stpeterscatholic.church

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Stpetershazeltgrove/

Registration form for support
<https://forms.gle/HhW9ocmU5McmFt7d6>

Registration form for volunteering
<https://forms.gle/Mv4v8bm6iAwXBvLXA>

We are linked with St Peter's Catholic Church, Hazel Grove, but operate as an informal network of volunteers, with a code of conduct.

- Please look at our website, which has lots of information, current appeals for help, links and ways to register for support or to volunteer: <https://sites.google.com/view/st-peters-helpers/home>

You can now also register on our website for

- joining our prayer team
- registering your interest in joining our 'virtual groups' including Virtual Teas and Coffees on Sundays at 11am, Marriage Course Online and Alpha Online.

If you are in any need, would like a friendly chat, or for practical support in any way, please do get in touch. We are particularly keen to get the message out to those parishioners who do not have access to the internet, so please do tell others. We would love to hear from you with any other ideas you have to help.

Thank you to all our amazing volunteers! God bless.



We'll meet again!

Thank you to the large team of St Peter's Helpers' star bakers and deliverers of homemade scones! Around 200 scones were delivered to people in the parish for VE Day. People were delighted with the scones, the special 'VE Day' card and the personal delivery! It was great for us to see people's faces again, even though we were at a distance.

Here is some of the wonderful feedback.



Mary McKay delivers scones to David Young



The Mercer family get their scones



"They were eaten with butter & jam accompanied by a beer (shame it was not 'Spitfire' beer!)"

Mike Higginbottom enjoys his scones - cheers!



"The scones went down beautifully with butter and blackcurrant jam; scones are not always easy to bake, but these were just right.....thank you once again"

Pete Lyons doing a fab job making everyone laugh on his round delivering the scones

WHEN WAR ENDED WE CELEBRATED WITH STREET PARTIES



Jean Smith, marked with an X, among her school friends on VE Day

"Thank you so much for our scones yesterday. All delicious and much enjoyed. We had Prosecco as it was such a special day, and we are of the age who remember the war and the relief of VE Day."



Laura and David Small entertaining their neighbours on VE Day

Stockport Gin was set up in Nov 2018 and launched in March 2019 by husband and wife Paul and Cheryl Sharrocks from their distillery in Stockport. You may recognise the surname – Paul is the nephew of Fr Peter Sharrocks!



Paul and Cheryl Sharrocks

We are both born and bred in Stockport and met on a cold, wet weekend Torquay in 2006 watching Stockport County. The rest, as they say, is history!

We have always loved gin and were drinking it before it was even popular – a time when the most fashionable person drinking G and T was Audrey Roberts on Corrie! Many a Sunday was spent with Paul's family drinking G and T before Sunday dinner and

that's where the love of the spirit took off! Since the change in legislation in 2008 (which we won't bore you with right now!) the rise of craft gin has been incredible to see, and more and more distilleries are making amazing

products up and down the country. Wherever we travelled to, we always loved trying the 'local gin' when we were in pubs and bars and often brought bottles back home with us. We soon came to realise that most of the places we went to had their own gin... apart from Stockport. If you went into a pub or bar in the town and asked for 'the local gin' you'd be given one from Manchester or Macclesfield or Salford and so on. We kept saying to ourselves "someone should make a Stockport gin" but no-one ever did... so we did!

Between us, Cheryl is normally the one with the crazy ideas and Paul is the rational thinker. One Friday evening in November 2018, after a few G and Ts at home, Cheryl said, "Come on, let's do it, let's make Stockport Gin!" and instead of Paul knocking the idea back, he agreed and so we woke the next morning as directors of a newly formed company! After that, the hard work started. The licencing and approvals process took five months and in that time we spent many hours researching and learning distilling techniques, setting up the distillery, the branding, recipe development and the hardest job of all – taste testing! On 22 March



The range of gins



A local success

2019, at a Gin Festival at Stockport Town Hall, we launched Stockport Gin to the world.

At launch we had one gin, our Original Edition. As we said earlier, we love trying all types of gin but our favourites are the citrus-based ones, so we knew when we made our own we wanted to make a gin we loved in the hope that others would do too. Our Original Gin is made with eight botanicals: juniper, coriander seeds, orris root, cubeb, cardamom, lemon peel, orange peel and pine needles. The lemon and orange give the gin a really smooth citrus taste whilst the cubeb and cardamom give a warmth. What we wanted though was a local botanical, something that would tie the gin to Stockport in flavour not just the name which is where the pine needles come from. We were in Rome during the set-up process and tried a gin there made with pine needles and that's when it dawned on us. We could use pine needles from Etherow Country Park which is right on the doorstep of our home in Compstall. We forage our own pine needles from the forest and use that as our signature botanical in all our gins!

Our next gin was launched in the summer of 2019 in conjunction with Totally Stockport and SMBC to help promote the Stockport Frogs Art Trail project in the town centre. Originally this gin was meant as a limited edition during the project, but it proved so popular that we decided to keep it and it's now known as our Twist of Lime Edition. We use seven of the eight botanicals in the gin but instead of the orange peel we use fresh lime peel to give a fresher citrus taste. Our Pink Edition followed shortly after, which is made using the same base gin as the Original Edition but then infused with raspberry, strawberry and pomegranate to give a more fruity twist. Ours is not like other pink gins on the market; it is neither heavily flavoured nor sweetened, it retains its roots – a traditional gin but with a refreshing fruitiness in the flavour.

Finally, our latest gin is our Sustainable Edition. Shortly after we launched in March, we were lucky enough to meet with the spirits buyer at Selfridges in London who liked our gin and agreed to stock it. Since then, we have built up a good relationship with them and when they approached us to produce

an exclusive product for them, we jumped at the chance. Both ourselves and Selfridges are very keen on sustainability and saw this as a great theme for the exclusive product. After many meetings and discussions with them we came up with the idea of using botanicals in the gin that could be sourced from waste products from the stores. We agreed we would collect leftover orange peels from the bars and restaurants in Selfridges' stores, which would otherwise be going to waste and use these as the key ingredient in the gin. Less Waste More Taste. We then bottle the gin in fully recyclable bottles. Even the labels we use for this gin are sourced from a specialist supplier and are fully biodegradable.

At the moment we continue to operate from our home where we have converted the garage into a mini distillery. We use a 100 litre stainless steel column still and the two of us are involved in everything we do. We forage our own botanicals, distil the gins ourselves, every bottle is filled and labelled by hand and then we package each bottle and deliver it to customers. We now have over 120 stockists in and around Stockport as well as some further afield. We have huge plans for the future of the company and some great ideas for new projects, so keep an eye out for that!

You can find out more information on us, what we do and the gins we make on our website www.stockport-gin.com.



The Original Edition

As we enter Holy Week and for many of us, the third week of physical isolation and only 'virtual' connection with others, one of the few positives for me has been more opportunity for spiritual reading and reflection.

This poem, originating from medieval France, was recited and discussed at a "Faith and the Arts" Retreat which I attended in 2019 and was presented and translated by Neil Curry. Revisiting it recently, I found much to evoke my emotions as well as my thoughts. Moved, especially by the part of The Rood as 'narrator' in the telling of the Easter story, I felt Inspired to offer my own interpretation, which follows on from the original poem below. I hope something resonates here for you too. The Rood means 'Rod or Wood' (the Cross).

***The Dream of the Rood
translated by Neil Curry***

Listen a while and I will tell you the most wonderful dream I ever had. It was midnight. All mortal men were sound asleep, when it seemed to me I saw a truly splendid tree.

High above me it hung, haloed with light, the brightest of beams. It blazed like a beacon, glorious in gold. The ground at its base glittered with jewels, while five of the fairest flamed from its cross-tree.

Hosts of heaven's angels watched over this world's wonder.

No cross for criminals this; they came simply to gaze upon it the most saintly of spirits, and men the world over, the whole of creation.

A veritable tree of Victory it was while I myself felt stained with sin, wounded with wickedness. There I beheld it, this bright tree of glory graced as it was with cloth of gold and rich gems, rightly in honour of own world's ruler.

Even so through all that gold I could sense the struggles and the terrors suffered upon it in times past, when from its side the red blood ran down. Troubled I was and saddened with sorrow for the sight, fair though it was, was fearsome, and bright though it was, I saw how the colours that clothed it changed: at times looking as if bedecked with blood at times to drip with jewels.



***Glenda Davies** writes about what inspired her during Holy Week this year.*

The Rood

A long while I lay there, for a long sad while beheld our Saviour's Tree. Until of a sudden I heard it. Wonderstruck, the wood itself give voice and these were the words which it spoke.

"It was many years ago yet still I remember. At the furthest edge of the forest I was felled to the ground wrenched from my roots. Wretches they were, and so strong they bore me away, made a thing of mockery of me, fastened their felons onto me, carried me on their shoulders set me up on a high hill, hung sinners by the score on me.

Then it was I saw the Lord of all mankind come marching manfully towards me, come to climb up upon me. I did not dare go against God's word by bending or breaking, though I beheld the earth itself buckle and tremble.

His enemies I might easily have brought low but I stood firm, while our Saviour stripped off his clothes, boldly as if for battle. Undaunted was our young hero, his foes he outfaced and gallantly climbed the lofty gallows-tree, where he would redeem mankind. I trembled when his warrior arms

embraced me, but still dared not bend to the ground or fall to the earth. My duty was to stand fast. Raised up, I was the Rood, bearing aloft the high King and Lord of Heaven. Stoop I dared not. Dark nails they drove into me, in hatred hacked at me. My scars can still be seen, look. Yet harmed them I durst not though they hurled such abuses at us both.

Drenched by his bright blood I was. When he sent forth his spirit, it streamed from his side. Many were the sorrows I suffered on that hill where the Lord of Hosts was cruelly stretched and wracked. Dark night came to cover His corpse, clouds enshroud the radiance of our Ruler. The world wept, bewailed and lamented the death of its King. Christ was on the cross.

Now though – men came running nimbly from far and near to that solitary Man. I saw it all. And though great was my grief, I gave myself up gladly and humbly into their hands. The high God of Heaven they gently took down from his torment.

The soldiers left me there, wet with his blood and wounded by their spears. Weary of limb, they laid him down and stood watching at his head, beholding the high Lord of Heaven who lay as if resting a while after his long battle. Then they determined to build him a tomb; the victorious Lord of Hosts they housed in it, carved it from the bright rock, carved it even within sight of me who had slain him. After the frail light

of evening had faded and the songs of lamentation had been sung, they knew it was time for the Prince to be left alone in His grave.

We stood there weeping long after the voices of the warriors had passed. The corpse, life's lovely dwelling place, grew cold. Men then came to chop us down. We crashed to the ground. I feared for our fate. Into the deep pit they flung us, but my Lord's friends found us and it was they set me about with this silver, girded me with this gold.

Now my dear friend, you have heard what sharp pain and sorrow I suffered at the hands of these sinners. The time is now come though when they worship me, far and wide, men the world over, indeed the whole of creation bends its knee in prayer before this Beacon. Truly the Son of God suffered a while upon me once, but now I tower in glory and am granted the grace to save the souls of all who revere me. Men saw me once as the most savage of tortures. Hated by all I was until the time came when I could point them to life's proper path. Proud I was to be picked out by the Prince of Glory, honoured by Heaven's King, foremost of trees in the forest as foremost of women the whole world over stands Mary His mother.

Now what I want, my own dear warrior, is that you reveal this vision; that you speak to the people, tell them I am the Tree of Glory on which God suffered for the manifold sins of men and for

the deeds of Adam done long, long ago. Tell them He tasted death upon this Tree, yet He went up to Heaven, but on Doomsday will descend, the Lord Himself, Almighty God and all his Angels to search and seek out every mortal man, pronounce His judgement and say what justice each has earned, in this their fleeting life on earth. None then will feel afraid when they think what questions the Lord might ask.

Where are they, He will say, willing in God's name to taste such bitter death as He did on that Cross? Stark terror will strike then those who know not what to say, but none need feel afraid who bear on their breast this best of signs. The Cross will carry up to the High Kingdom of Heaven all those whose longing is to live with Our Lord".

It was with a glad heart then that I gave thanks to that Cross, prayed to it with new passion. Alone there and happy to be so, my soul longed to set out. My whole heart's hope was to seek this Cross, my one wish to worship it and more than any other man, ever to be true to it.

Of my faithful friends few now are left to me. A long journey they have gone, far from the joys of the world. They sought the King of Glory and now live with God the Father, blessed among the blest. While I abide here in hope of the day when I too will be fetched from this fleeting life, will be called upon by my Lord's Cross, which once I saw so clearly here on earth, and brought to that bright place of bliss where the chosen are seated among the saints, as at a feast and where I may join them in their everlasting joy.

May the Lord who suffered upon that Cross for the sins of man be a friend to me. He saved us, granted us life everlasting in Heaven, which is our home. New hope He brought to those who burned among the brands of hell. See Him now, how He comes in triumph from that field of conflict, the Son of God, riding at the head of all his host. See how joyfully He leads them to his Kingdom: the angels. The holy saints, and all whose souls dwell in glory. Home to His native land, Christ the hero, is now in honour come.



The Dreamer speaks:

I dreamed I saw a truly wondrous thing; a tree but like no other. Tree of shining magnificence, towering high above like a beacon for all to see; its colours blazed red and gold, all haloed in white. Adorning its brightest beam was draped with cloth of gold, which seemed to drop its flame-like jewels onto the earth. Sainly spirits could be seen, come to gaze enraptured by this mighty tree, as I too gazed enraptured for a long time.

Then a company of Angels appeared and I sensed a struggle here, a dark shadow and great sorrow beneath the splendour. The colours of adornment began to change, darken, the red jewels softened melting, dripping down, like blood onto the Tree. I now behold our Saviour's Tree.

The Rood speaks:

I was once a wondrous thing; a mighty tree towering above all in the forest, my power and strength envied, even revered. That was before evil came, to cut me down, wrench me from my roots. Bad men fixed their talons onto me, dragging me away. No more mighty and proud, to my captors my size and strength a thing of mockery, insult. It took many to bring me to the hill of Golgotha, where criminals and sinners are hung from trees. No such wretch was put to me - it was The Lord Himself approached.

My instinct told me to "bend or break - scatter His enemies", but could I go against God's word, while our Saviour stood before me, outfacing the insults? I am the Rood (who else should hold aloft the Lord of Heaven?) so I stood firm, as the earth shook beneath us.

Fusion. I felt calmed when His arm reached to embrace me. Then with hatred and abuses, they drove long nails into us, fusing us together, forever scarred. The sun's heat passed across the hillside; my frame may shade Him a little. He was pierced before darkness fell and I felt His blood, jewels of red, spill from His side - onto mine. We held there together, until He turned His head toward the Heavens and released His Spirit. The world wept with grief for their King's passing, while I shook with privilege, now holding the Christ himself.

Good people came running. Hesitantly, I kept my grief but gave Him up into their

The Story of the Rood

by **Glenda Davies**



charge. Soon lamentation song with lantern lights drifted up the hill, our Prince processing to his tomb before dark silence resumed.

Early light brought men with hatchets. I was crashed to the ground, tossed into a pit. That's where the Lord's friends found me and kept me safe until one day - girded with gold and homage - I will tower in Glory again.

Tell mankind to despise me not for the Lord's slaying - my arm did not wield the spear that spilled His blood, nor did it

drive the nails into His flesh. Tell them that He suffered death upon me not by me. Rather, let them see me in pity, as our Lord's true companion, His co-journeyman on the road to His Resurrection.

I am the Rood, the Cross chosen by God, a permanent symbol, a sign of God's love and strength in weakness. Come to me, kneel and kiss me, where His precious feet have been. And I will sing with you in praise **"By Your Cross and Resurrection You have set us free. You are the Saviour of the World". Amen.**

A Litany for peace in our hearts

Celia Bermingham one of the prayer guides who comes to the parish for Guided Prayer week, has written this during the current lockdown because of Corona virus.

Lord, we need PEACE at this time.

Many of us are frightened, unsure, distressed, bewildered, lonely and alone. We obey the rules and stay in our homes but the uncertainty and not-knowing when it will all come to an end is unnerving. Some will die. Some won't be affected at all, physically but will carry scars mentally for years to come. We need you in our lives at this time, Lord, more than ever before. We need to commit ourselves to you. Your loving mercy will be there before we even ask and you will see that all will be well, but we need the confidence of knowing that you are in charge. You know what is going on and you will be always at our side. Help us to be aware of your presence. Keep us calm in the knowledge of your love. Hold us in quietness and in your peace.

May your words, Lord, give us peace.

May the smile of a loved one give us peace.

May the hope in our hearts give us peace.

May the sunshine give us peace.

May the green shoots of spring give us peace.

May the song of the thrush give us peace.

May the memory of a hug give us peace.

May the sharing of prayer give us peace.

May the thought of a loved one give us peace.

May the call from a friend give us peace.

May the offer of help give us peace.

May the acceptance of service give us peace.

May the trust that all will be well give us peace.

May the sharing of news give us peace.

May the memory of times past give us peace.

May the Spiritual Communion give us peace.

*May the memory of our last visit to church }
give us peace.*

May the wave of a neighbour give us peace.

May the visit of the postman give us peace.

May the sharing of internet services give us peace.

May the dedication of our priests give us peace.

May the union of families give us peace.

*May memories of loved ones who have died
give us peace.*

May the communion of parishes give us peace.

May the indwelling of Christ give us peace.

May persistence in prayer give us peace.

May the knowledge of God's love give us peace.

In our times of panic, distress, worries and concerns may we put all our cares into your hands, Lord, knowing that you have us there already and these human responses are signs of our frailty but the sign too, that without you, we are lost in a mire of despondency.

This time of worry comes at the time of our remembrance of your Resurrection; the time of your reminder to us that you are in charge, you are the one who conquers, you are the one who overcomes.

May this Easter season fill us with hope and trust in your love, your mercy and your concern for our well-being, now and into eternity. Amen.



The Youth Alpha retreat

The Youth Alpha process was one that I attended and enjoyed, as it was recommended to do it to help my faith grow during the sacrament of Confirmation. It was a very enjoyable gathering every Sunday after the evening Mass at St Peter's (I especially looked forward to the variety of absolutely scrumptious food!). On the penultimate week the leaders did something different and took us on a retreat to Savio House in Macclesfield and White Nancy which lasted a day and included a lot of various activities all of which were great fun. I'm writing this to tell you just how much I enjoyed the retreat and what it included (a lot of food!).

We all arrived around 9 am (thankfully the parents were separated from us immediately) and we played games for a while both on our own and with the leaders – there was a pool table and table football in the room which we happily took advantage of. All through the process we have been watching videos where God, faith and the Bible were discussed, then throughout the video we were asked questions and we talked in groups about

Tom Burke shares his experience of a special day for the youth.

our thoughts and feelings. So this theme was carried on at the retreat and we also included a short private prayer to God. All of this really made us think about our faith and our lives; it was very interesting to hear other people's thoughts and perspectives.

Throughout the Alpha course we play icebreakers, had lots of thought-provoking discussions and played lots of games, so by the time we were at the retreat, we had already got to know each other really well. Before lunch, we went on a walk from Savio House through some countryside and then up a large hill called White Nancy. We were very lucky with the weather; it was quite a warm day so we had a bit of a sweat on at the end. Some of us sang from 200 to 0 'bottles of the wall' which really annoyed the others and we had great conversation the whole way. Some found the walk easier than others but there was a definite sense of achievement when everyone arrived at

the top! We had a group photo taken where we showed our handsome selves off and then we walked back feeling pretty happy with ourselves and very refreshed.

When we got back, we got into two teams – leaders and kids – and all together played a massive football game on the courts nearby; this was really fun as well as everyone got pretty excited and competitive. Later on, we were called to do the Stations of the Cross which ended up being quite calming, also doing reconciliation with a relaxed Father Peter. We were then invited to partake in a laying on of hands. I hadn't done this before and was quite apprehensive beforehand but after being invited to say to the two leaders anything you were worrying about or anybody you wanted to pray for, they then laid hands on my shoulders and prayed for me. It was a gentle and warming



The whole team at Savio House

experience. Not long after that, we all took part in a very upbeat youth Mass led by the very famous Fr Peter – everyone took part by either sitting and listening, playing an instrument, singing, doing a reading or leading the psalm which some really good kids on the front row (including me) happily volunteered to do – with hymns, prayers and an opportunity to say a prayer ourselves in the Mass and a thank you to all the leaders and volunteers, followed by lots of clapping. We then came together for a really tasty spaghetti bolognese made by the lovely ladies who had catered for us

throughout Youth Alpha (they'd also plied us with loads of snacks and drinks throughout the day: cookies, brownies, flapjacks, water, fizzy drinks, orange or apple juice; you name it, it was on that table!). In the end, a band (a drummer, a singer and a pianist) joined the company and we had a long, joyous singsong – everyone dancing, clapping, laughing, and of course scoffing the chocolate cake and lemon cake the cooks were passing around for dessert! Great songs as well, they got everyone up! Then, at around 8 pm we said our thank yous and goodbyes, we all left after really enjoying the day we'd had with Youth Alpha (though I was a bit unhappy to be stuck with my parents again after successfully avoiding them most of the day).

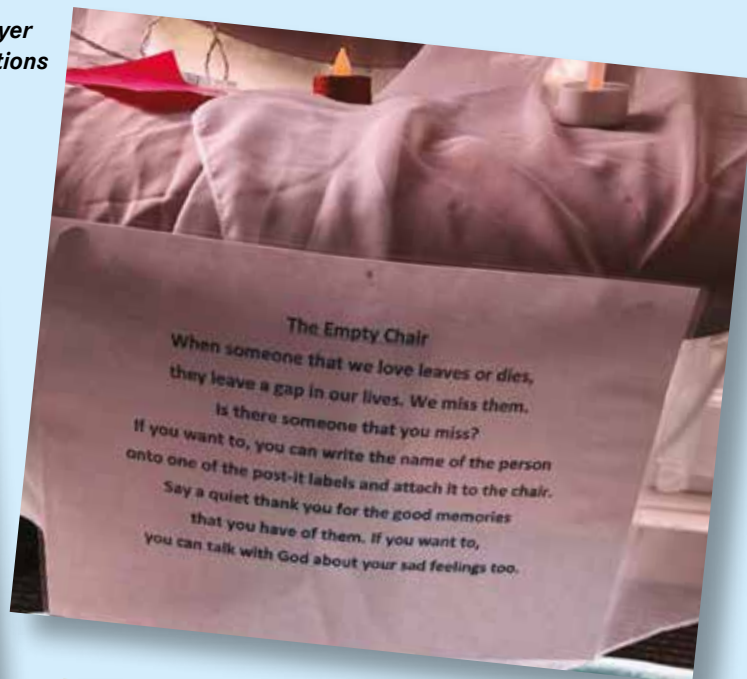
All in all, I just enjoyed that day so much and it helped increase my faith and my spirit in general; I know I will never forget it and I really want to thank the leaders of Youth Alpha and the very talented chefs and the other kids – just everyone that took part, thank you so much. And I hope whoever's next to take part enjoys it as much as I did.



Photographs of the Youth Alpha retreat day



Prayer stations



We had Mass in the afternoon



We always have a footie match



Made it to the top of White Nancy



Some interactive praise and worship

Sitima in Malawi represents an ever changing landscape. I remain simply amazed by the developments I have seen in the three years since I first visited. One of the biggest and most current physical change that has occurred between November 2019 and February 2020 is the creation of two nurses' houses directly opposite Bessie's Place; this has completely opened up the road outside the house and in a strange way has made it more accessible.

Disability

Three families were visited during our stay and were given a variety of things including a soft grip to prevent hand contractures, money for school uniforms, clothes, especially pants, and oil was bought for one family so that the child could use their wheelchair again.

Harry was particularly useful in knowing the families to reach out to, and also a young man who was unemployed, whom we were able to use as an interpreter when we visited the families and also when working with the children at Sitima. He was so pleased to be of use, and this might be worth following up in future visits, as a way of giving young people with no future, a chance.

Handwashing education

It is with hindsight that we reflect on the spot on timing of this piece of work! We had great fun wherever we went and whoever we were with, teaching the "happy birthday clean hands" song whilst demonstrating the way to wash hands effectively and explaining the need.

Whatever activity we undertook we started with a hand washing session. When this happened at Bessie's Place, it was facilitated by the construction of mponda gear (tippy tap) in the front garden. The children made posters using their own strap line: 'Clean hands every time', or 'msambani m'manja, nthawi iliyonse'. Tippy taps and soap were also given to those primary schools we were able to reach.

Village Projects

In our last issue **Network for a Better World (N4BW)** described the aims and activities of their charity. Now we have a further update from Veronica Corben since we responded to their appeal last year.



Knitting projects

In preparation for the forthcoming cold season the main craft activity delivered was knitting, where the villagers made beanie style hats. Some people learned to knit, others who could already knit were delighted with the resources made available. At times the numbers seemed immense especially when teaching some of the children.

The numbers participating included 22 from the literacy group, 27 from the youth group and 42 children.

One of the elements that particularly pleased us was the number of young men from the youth group who enthusiastically took part.

One Saturday morning we had both the children and the youth group together, so more than 50 people in total and we were absolutely delighted when one of the young men from the youth group offered to help us on a hand washing education session, with the children, by acting as translator.

Healthcare

I was able to accompany a young woman with aggressive rheumatoid disease, and her father to the hospital in Blantyre, and to have an informed

discussion with the consultant looking after her. I also undertook managing minor injuries, eg cuts to hands, skin conditions particularly prevalent scabies this time, as well as helping a family with a child with a serious chest infection. Using a pharmacist and a nurse, based in Zomba, I was able to get advice when needed. I also made up a training first aid box which can be used by anyone else teaching first aid, and left an outline copy of my teaching at Bessie's Place.

International Women's Day

To coincide with International Women's Day, we hosted a hat party with the ladies from the literacy group and used the formality of the meeting to teach about hand washing, personal hygiene and also about the comfort of hand massage.

Kitchen gardens

The scheme is operating in two villages Mindano and Minyanga where the local chiefs are actively supporting the initiative. The process has been that any prospective participants have submitted a request to the local chief and have agreed to prepare the land and build a protective fence around the growing area.

Following this act of commitment, Harry Makawa has issued seeds and provided training on vegetable growing. To date we have had 14 participants from Mindano and 10 from Minyanga. All 24 of them have sown seed, most have transplanted seedlings and some have produce ready for picking.

N4BW were extremely grateful for all our donations – and for the promises of ongoing prayers.



Some of the couples who have done the marriage course

The marriage course online

This is a unique moment in time where we find ourselves in a season where strength in relationships is needed more than ever. This applies particularly to marriage. We are looking to offer the marriage course online in the coming weeks, a fantastic resource for strengthening marriages. Just follow this link:

<https://alphainternational.cmail20.com/t/j-l-qzjin-tkktskhs-y/>

There is no cost involved and the film series will be shown in webinar mode ensuring complete privacy for couples. **Please register your interest by emailing laurasmall92@outlook.com**

“It was with considerable trepidation that Colin and I entered St Peter’s parish centre on a dark, rainy night at the end of January to commence the MC. After fifty years of marriage we were certainly aware of each other’s failings and perhaps a little forgetful of their strengths. The course is centred on the concept of helping each couple understand more fully why they married, how they felt at the beginning of their life together and how they can strengthen those ties in their daily lives (you also get a wonderful meal each evening - many, many thanks to the chefs). We came away fortified by the experience and are really trying to put all we learnt into good practice during our current enforced togetherness! Many thanks to all concerned in the running of this important venture.”

Monica and Colin

Behind the scenes of the Alpha marriage course

A wedding is for a day, a marriage is for a lifetime...a number of years ago Brett and I went on the marriage course. It took some cajoling to get Brett to come along as he was uncertain of what he would need to do and being a non-denominational Christian he was afraid that he would be forced to discuss religion.

Well, those of you who have had the pleasure of attending know that this amazing seven week journey into your marriage is one of rediscovery, of new shared learning about one another. The rewards of spending one evening a week together for seven weeks with no real-world distractions are tangible for every marriage whether you are starting out, experiencing some challenges or perfectly enamoured with one another. In a most peaceful and calm setting, you are invited to sit at a candle lit table for two (and here’s where it gets even better) you are then provided

with a sumptuous meal which has been carefully shopped for and cooked by the team (Alison, Laura and Rachel). Alison’s culinary skills are a true delight and the meal you are served can be savoured knowing that you do not have to get up and clear anything away, that you your partner can just be together in this safe environment and enjoy the week’s learning.

Then comes dessert. Desserts are planned as an accompaniment to the meal that you have enjoyed, and each week brings with it a hopefully tasty treat that just finishes off the time together. Some of the recipes for the desserts are adaptations of known favourites and on the last course, the pear flan pictured came from Kath Smith (my Mom) and was a childhood favourite, so brought with it many happy memories when being made.

There are a number of volunteers that work behind the scenes to make this

marriage course a truly encompassing learning experience, from those who invite you to attend the course, the organisers, the shoppers, the cooks, the setting up and break down of the room including John’s delightfully scented candles, the AV set up and of course those essential kitchen helpers who clean and tidy away the dishes.

I have been helping in the background since attending the first marriage course and I find that each year I remember or learn something more. The shared camaraderie in the kitchen, praying together as helpers before each session (the highlight of my year). Sometimes we have new helpers from a previous year and we all pull together to make the experience as unique as possible for each couple who attends.

We look forward to seeing you at the next course which we hope to start as an online course in the coming weeks.

Sophie Hourihan

Pear flan recipe

Ingredients:

Flan base: Ready made flan case (my Mom always made her own)

Custard: You can use shop bought custard or make your own
Tinned pears (you can use 5 halved fresh pears if you prefer)
50g melted dark chocolate mixed with a little warm water to drizzle on top

Method:

If you are making your own flan base, follow the recipe below
Make the custard and pour this into the flan base
Place pears on top of the custard
Drizzle chocolate sauce on top

Flan base recipe:

- 2 eggs
- 55g (2oz) caster sugar
- 55g (2oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/160C fan
- 2. Grease and flour a flan tin
- 3. Beat together eggs and sugar until very pale and thick, add water, then mix with sifted flour, gently folding until fully incorporated.
- 4. Pour the batter into your prepared flan tin
- 5. Bake for 8-10 minutes until just starting to turn



Custard recipe:

- 1 pint milk
- 55ml single cream (not really necessary)
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 free-range eggs, yolks only
- 30g caster sugar
- 2 level teaspoons cornflour
- 1. Bring milk and cream to simmering point slowly over a low heat
- 2. Whisk the yolks, sugar and confflour together in a bowl until well blended
- 3. Pour the hot milk mixture onto the eggs and sugar, whisking all the time
- 4. Return to the pan and add vanilla extract and gently stir over a low heat until thickened
- 5. Allow to cool, then pour into flan case and finish as above



Mary's corner

Mary Hardiman reflects on the forthcoming feast of Pentecost

Acts 2: 1-11

When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all

assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. "Surely" they said "all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God."

In the 1970s London Weekend Television aired a comedy series called *Mind Your Language*, which focused on a rather hapless Mr Brown, attempting to teach English to a rather disparate group of foreign students with hilarious results. 'Excuse me please' comes out at 'squeeze me please', 'L for elephant', 'I am hoping to be enrolled' as 'I am hopping to be unrolled' and so on. In this reading it would appear that the apostles had a much easier time of it than Mr Brown's students!

On 31 May this year, Christians all over the world will be celebrating this great feast of Pentecost, the birth of the Christian church. The name Pentecost comes from the Greek word Pentekoste meaning 50th.

At the time this happened many foreigners would have been in Jerusalem for Pentecost, a feast which took place 50 days after Passover and which celebrated the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. Every male living within 20 miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to attend this festival as well as many more who would make that long journey to commemorate with others, hence the vast numbers from so many regions.

Normally on Pentecost Sunday many of us would come to church wearing red and we would hear our readings and bidding prayers in other languages, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Arabic, Gaelic, Malayalam, Igbo, Nyangia, Kurdish, Slovakian, Welsh, Chinese, Farsi and Margi. I don't know about you but I love to hear these languages and to celebrate the diversity we have in our parish community.

In this reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we find the disciples huddled in a room together, assumedly afraid and wondering what to do. What I like about the introduction is the contrast it draws between that day and the day of the crucifixion when all the disciples of Jesus scattered. To me it speaks of the power we have in community, that when we come together in the name of Our Lord, he comes to meet us even in our fear and uncertainty, to strengthen us, to console us and to affirm us in our common belief. For me it also signifies the power of the resurrection, because if Jesus had simply died without being raised to new life, then I don't think the disciples would have stayed together, nor do I believe that over 2,000 years later, I would be writing this reflection for our community of believers.

We read that as the apostles gathered there was the sound of a mighty wind which filled the entire house. How symbolic is this? They were only in one room after all, but the Spirit of God is bigger than one room. To me this shows the expansiveness and reckless generosity of God who always gives more than we can ever expect, ask for or imagine.

We read too that the Spirit appeared as tongues of fire which separated and came to rest on each person there. Again, the underlying meaning of this is not lost, as it signifies both the generic and unique gifts that God gives to his people. Not only that but a tongue speaks, and the only words that the Holy Spirit will ever speak are the words of God himself. As for the fire, this too is rich in meaning because fire spreads quickly, it consumes and it can be both hazardous and comforting, bringing danger as well as warmth and light. To be consumed

Pentecost

with the Spirit of God will always carry a risk, a risk of rejection, sacrifice and suffering; however, it also brings hope, meaning and light to lives which are broken and lost. The breath of God brings power and grace, even and especially to the darkest and loneliest of places; it brings love and peace to every corner of the homes of our hearts and our lives. The Spirit of God needs no passport or visa; there are no border controls or security checks. This mighty wind from heaven fills the whole house in which this group of believers was sitting and, with tongues of fire and with supreme generosity, anoints each and every person there, blowing away all doubt and fear and replacing them with God's sevenfold gift of grace. How incredible is that?

We then go on to read that this same Spirit gave the apostles the gift of tongues, of being able to communicate in many different languages. As a linguist myself, I can't help feeling slightly jealous that they managed in moments what it took me years of struggle to accomplish.

However, Luke, in writing this, is keen to tell us all the different areas and countries from which people had come to Jerusalem and how each of them heard the disciples speaking in his own language. Why does Luke do this? Again, I think it's to demonstrate the outrageous generosity of God. This Spirit doesn't just give them the gift of one language, but of many, and so all are included; nobody is left out, no matter who you are or where you come from.

Once more, this is rich in symbolism because I don't believe it is simply about being able to successfully formulate sentences in a foreign tongue; I think it's about speaking the language of our Creator. We don't have to attend English classes with Mr Brown to reach out to people from other cultures and backgrounds; we don't have to study grammar and syntax for years on end or to live overseas to speak God's language. All of us can offer words of acceptance, tolerance, compassion, understanding, companionship, empathy, kindness and love. Like the disciples, we simply need to stay close to Jesus, to listen to him, to watch him, to see creation through his eyes, to learn from him, to copy him and to love as he does. For me, this reading is about meeting people where they are at, about reaching out and having the courage and wisdom to share our faith in the risen Christ the way that Jesus asks us to. We cannot do this in our own strength; we need that mighty wind from heaven to fill the house of our hearts and minds and to give us the gift of speech, so that we too can carry the message of Christ's victory over death to the ends of the world.

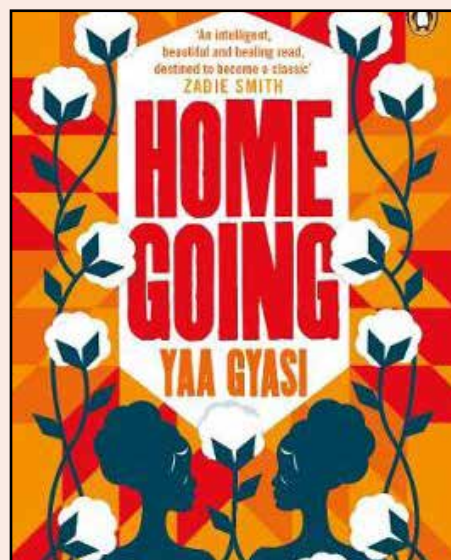
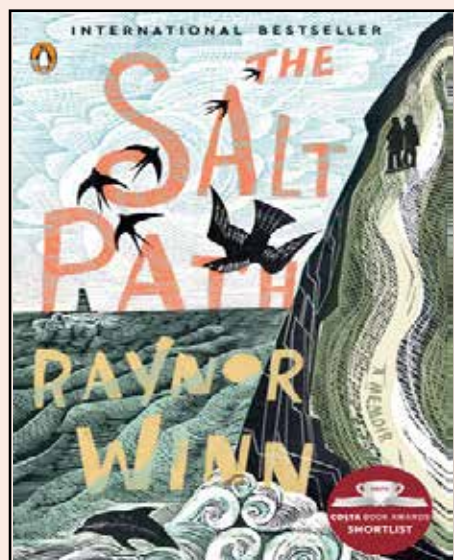


As I write this, we are in the middle of our Corona Virus lockdown and are seeing thousands of examples of this language of love every single day, of people reaching out to those who are the most vulnerable and in need. We see medical staff risking their own safety to care for the sick and to take the place of family at the bedsides of the dying, whole streets and communities applauding key workers, we see the younger generation shopping for the elderly, the elderly raising millions for the NHS, people picking up the 'phone to check on the wellbeing of another, we see our priests putting their own lives at risk to anoint the dying, clergy offering Mass in an empty church for the benefit of those they serve. And if that's not the Spirit and language of God at work, then I don't know what is. No matter where we are, in lockdown or free, the Spirit of the Lord will still come to anoint us. Do we believe this?

During the final days of this beautiful Easter season, let's remember that Christ has the victory, that he sent his Spirit to empower and strengthen us and that whenever and however we speak the language of love, we speak the words of God's Holy Spirit.

Just like the life of Christ, Pentecost is a celebration of both diversity and inclusion. We are all global citizens. Birthplace, age, skin colour, culture, background, experience, status, gender, race or education, none of these are barriers to God who invites and welcomes us all to share the life of His risen Son.

Send forth your Spirit Lord, and renew the face of the earth.



Alison McGarr shares some ideas on some of the books reviewed by St Peter's Book Club

St Peter's Book Club has been very busy since Christmas and the following is an overview of the books we have selected to read – as we continue with self-isolation, you will hopefully find one or two books that you like the look of...

The Salt Path by Raynor Winn

A true story that sees husband and wife, Moth and Raynor Winn, discover that Moth is terminally ill just as their home and livelihood is lost in an acrimonious court case involving an old friend. With nothing left, they make the courageous and spontaneous decision to walk the 630 miles of the South West Coast Path, from Somerset to Dorset, via Devon and Cornwall.

They have almost no money for food or campsites and carry only the bare essentials for survival as they wild camp – illegally seeking shelter each night along the path or hidden in farmers' fields. The Salt Path is a beautifully written true story about coming to terms with loss and finding the beauty of humanity in the most unexpected places.

The Burial Rites by Hannah Kent

The Burial Rites is based on a true story about the final days of a young woman accused of murder in Iceland in 1829. After being charged with the brutal murder of her former master, Agnes

is sent to an isolated farm to await execution. The family who host her are appalled at the prospect of sheltering a convicted murderer but learn that all is not as it initially seems.

Home Going by Yaa Gyasi

This is a tale that spans many generations and follows the descendants of two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, who are born into different villages in eighteenth-century Ghana. Effia is married off to an Englishman and lives a life of relative luxury in Cape Coast Castle, whilst her sister, Esi, is imprisoned beneath her in the castle's dungeons waiting to be sold into the Gold Coast's slave trade before being and shipped off to America, where her children and grandchildren will be raised in slavery.

One storyline follows Effia's descendants through centuries of conflict in Ghana, as the Fante and Asante people struggle with the slave trade and British colonialism. The other narrative follows Esi and her children into America as they live through the slave plantations of the American South, the Civil War and the Great Migration north to twentieth-century Harlem.

Villa Triste by Lucretia Grindle

This is a narrative that has two, seemingly unrelated, storylines – one thread is set in Florence in 1943 where two sisters,

Isabella and Caterina Cammaccio, are imprisoned by the brutal Nazi occupation. In defiance the Italian underground movement, known as the Partisans, begins to fight back. The second thread is set in the present day, where Alessandro Pallioti, a senior policeman, begins to investigate the murder of a Partisan hero. Pallioti finds himself investigating a crime that has its roots in the actions of people struggling to survive over sixty years ago.

The Hunting Party by Lucy Foley

This is a modern day Agatha Christie set during the Christmas holidays when a group of old friends from Oxford get together to celebrate the New Year. They head off to a remote estate in the Scottish Highlands and arrive just as a snow storm isolates them from the outside world. Within two days one of them has been killed and one of them must have done it.

Silence by Shusako Endo

This novel tells the story of a seventeenth-century Portuguese Jesuit priest in Japan at the height of the persecution of the Christian community. Father Rodrigues has come to Japan to find out the truth about his famous teacher Ferreira who has allegedly renounced his faith. The narrative follows him as he encounters the horrific torture of the Christians in Japan until he too begins to realise the futility of his mission as he encounters God's silence in the suffering.

The Private Joys of Nneena Maloney by Okechukwu Nzelu

Nnenna is a half-Nigerian, seventeen-year-old girl who lives in Stockport/ Manchester (it sounds like a mixture of Didsbury and the Heaton) with her mother Joanie. Nnenna knows little about her Nigerian heritage and as Joanie, her mother, battles her own past and refuses to discuss Nnenna's father and how she came to be pregnant and living as a single Mum, Nnenna becomes increasingly frustrated and secretly begins to connect with her Igbo-Nigerian culture. This is a story about identity – the identity of a Nigerian immigrant who struggles to 'be' at Cambridge university in the 1990s, his daughter who is asking big questions of how to 'be' when she doesn't know who she is and Joanie, the mother of his daughter, who wonders how to love when she has never been loved.

Still looking?

We read a lot of books last year – see the list below if you are still searching for a good book!

- Thomas Keneally's epic novel The Daughters of Mars
- Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow's autobiographical account of how Mary's Meals was established – The Shed That Fed A Million Children
- Mad Blood Stirring by Simon Mayo
- Fleeing ISIS Finding Jesus by Charles Morris and Craig Borlase
- A Thousand Splendid Suns by Kahled Hosseini
- The Light Between Oceans by M L Stedman
- The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
- Bryan Stevenson's Just Mercy, is an autobiographical account of his career as a lawyer representing the marginalised victims of the American criminal justice system

The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah

This is a story set in Alaska in 1974, when Ernt Allbright, a former POW, comes home from the Vietnam war a changed man and, after struggling to settle back into his previous life, he decides to move his family north, where they can live off the radar in what seems to be America's last frontier. At first, Alaska seems to be the answer to their prayers but as the winter takes hold and they are isolated in the darkness, Ernt's family realise that the battle for survival is a struggle from within.

Wolf Hall by Hilary Mantel

This is the first of a trilogy about Thomas Cromwell who rose from poverty to the highest echelons of 16th century society. Henry VIII wants to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn but the Pope and most of Europe is against him. Thomas Cromwell is the fixer who helps Henry achieve his goal.

The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri

This is a harrowing story which gives us a fantastic insight into the refugee trail to Europe. Nuri is a beekeeper and his wife, Afra, is an artist. They live simply, surrounded by family and friends in the ancient Syrian city of Aleppo –

- The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry by Rachel Joyce
- The 2018 Man Booker Prize winner, Milkman by Anna Burns
- Becoming by Michelle Obama
- The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kid
- The Seal Woman's Gift by Sally Magnusson
- The Yorkshire Shepherdess by Amanda Owen
- The Man Called by Ove by Frederik Backman
- A Lineage of Grace by Francine Rivers
- When All Is Said by Anne Griffin
- The Ritchie Boys by Bruce Henderson
- The Star of the North by D B John is a thriller set in North and South Korea
- Death Notice by Zhou Haohui is the first of a trilogy and is a Chinese police crime thriller
- The Spy and The Traitor by Ben McIntyre is a true story which is a superb and riveting book about one of our most notable living spies

until all they care about is destroyed by war and they are forced to flee. They begin a terrifying journey through Turkey and Greece as they desperately try to re-connect with family who have managed to escape and have successfully reached the UK.

Tidelands by Philippa Gregory

This is a story set in England during the 17th century when England is torn apart by the civil war between King and Parliament. Tidelands is located in a remote and isolated landscape where superstition and witch-mania are rife. Alinor, who is desperate to be free of her cruel and abusive husband, sets out on a path that provokes suspicion and envy and which has terrible consequences.

Normal People by Sally Rooney

A story about two teenagers: Connell is popular and the star of the football team, Marianne is lonely and shy – yet they connect with each other. By the time they go to Trinity College in Dublin, their roles are reversed; Marianne is swept up into the maelstrom of university life while Connell is marginalised, withdrawn and uncertain. They need each other but can they re-connect?

Here's a list of the parish groups and activities at St Peter's

Celebrating liturgy

Altar linen

Pat Tomlinson: 0161 456 7627

Altar servers

Fr Peter

Church cleaners

Margaret King: 0161 483 4584

Eucharistic ministers

Housebound

Maureen Horton: 0161 483 1590

mary.horton@ntlworld.com

Church

Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720

tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Flower arrangers

Colette Christie: 0161 427 4982

colette.christie4982@hotmail.co.uk

Lay-led liturgy

Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659

mckay7897@hotmail.com

Adult and junior choirs

Eileen Rigg: 01625 872948

emrigg@hotmail.co.uk

Folk group

Steph Leyden: 0161 456 6285

stephleyden@icloud.com

Piety stall

Denise Noon: 0161 483 0217

Readers

Monica Beckitt:

admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk

Welcomers

Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213

ambailey@cheerful.com

Creating social activity

Book club

Alison McGarr: 07792 107152

ajmcgarr68@outlook.com

Men's group

John McKay:

07715 362403

Parish newsletter

Monica Beckitt

admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk

Parish noticeboards

Outside - Julie Williams:

juliewilliams10@gmail.com

Inside - Barbara Goodier

Parish website

Anne-Marie Bailey: ambailey@cheerful.com

Special events

Helen Lyons: 07854 928072

helenlyons1957@hotmail.co.uk

Tea and Coffees, after Mass

Sandra Coleing: 0161 419 9083

Theatre group

Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720

tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Walking group

Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720

tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Exploring faith

Alpha

Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659

mckay7897@hotmail.com

Baptism programme

Anne-Marie Gallogly

Karen Haines - justasec55@hotmail.com

Confirmation programme

Fr Peter

petersharrocks@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk

First sacraments preparation

Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709

terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

Marriage preparation

Fr Peter

RCIA - Enquirers group

Tony Martin 0161 483 7720

tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Vocations

Fr Peter

*Names and contact details
are correct at the time the
magazine went to print, but
are subject to change.*

Sharing faith

CaFE

Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659

mckay7897@hotmail.com

Centering prayer

Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

michaeldomalley@sky.com

Churches Together activities

Maureen/Phil Horton: 0161 483 1590

pjhorton@virginmedia.com

Footsteps

Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213

ambailey@cheerful.com

Guided prayer

Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

michaeldomalley@sky.com

Holy hour and prayer ministry

Laura Small: 01625 876 752

lauramsmall@hotmail.com

Lending library

Ann Bonner: 0161 456 6152

anntbar46@yahoo.com

LPA liaison

Julie Williams: 0161 285 0244

juliewilliams10@gmail.com

Mothers' prayers

Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709

terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

Praise and worship

John McKay: 0161 487 1659

mckay7897@hotmail.com

Rosary groups: adult and children

Laura Small: 01625 876 752

lauramsmall@hotmail.com

Scripture group

Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

michaeldomalley@sky.com

Supporting families and youth

Bereavement support

Helen Lyons: 07854 928072

Childrens' liturgy

Janice Ormerod: 0161 449 5840

Explorers

Joe O'Brien: 07976 423 203

joe_obrien@ntlworld.com

Little fishes

Anne Wroe: 07763 387001

anne.wroe@sky.com

Marriage and family life group

David Small: 01625 876 752

SPY group

David Small: 01625 876 752

Outreaching in the community

Hospital chaplaincy

Chaplaincy Office: 0161 419 5889

Hospital Chaplaincy (Emergency)

Hospital switchboard will bleep

0161 483 1010

Via St Peter's

0161 483 3476

petersharrocks@stpeterhazelgrove.org.uk

Justice and peace

Carmel O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

LAMBS

Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348

Kath Coll: 0161 456 0881

kathcoll@btinternet.com

Lenten lunches

Helen Lyons: 07854 928072

Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348

Lourdes group

Mary Conway-Kelly: 07809 748805

Luncheon club

Margaret Hulme: 07775 162694

Missio

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