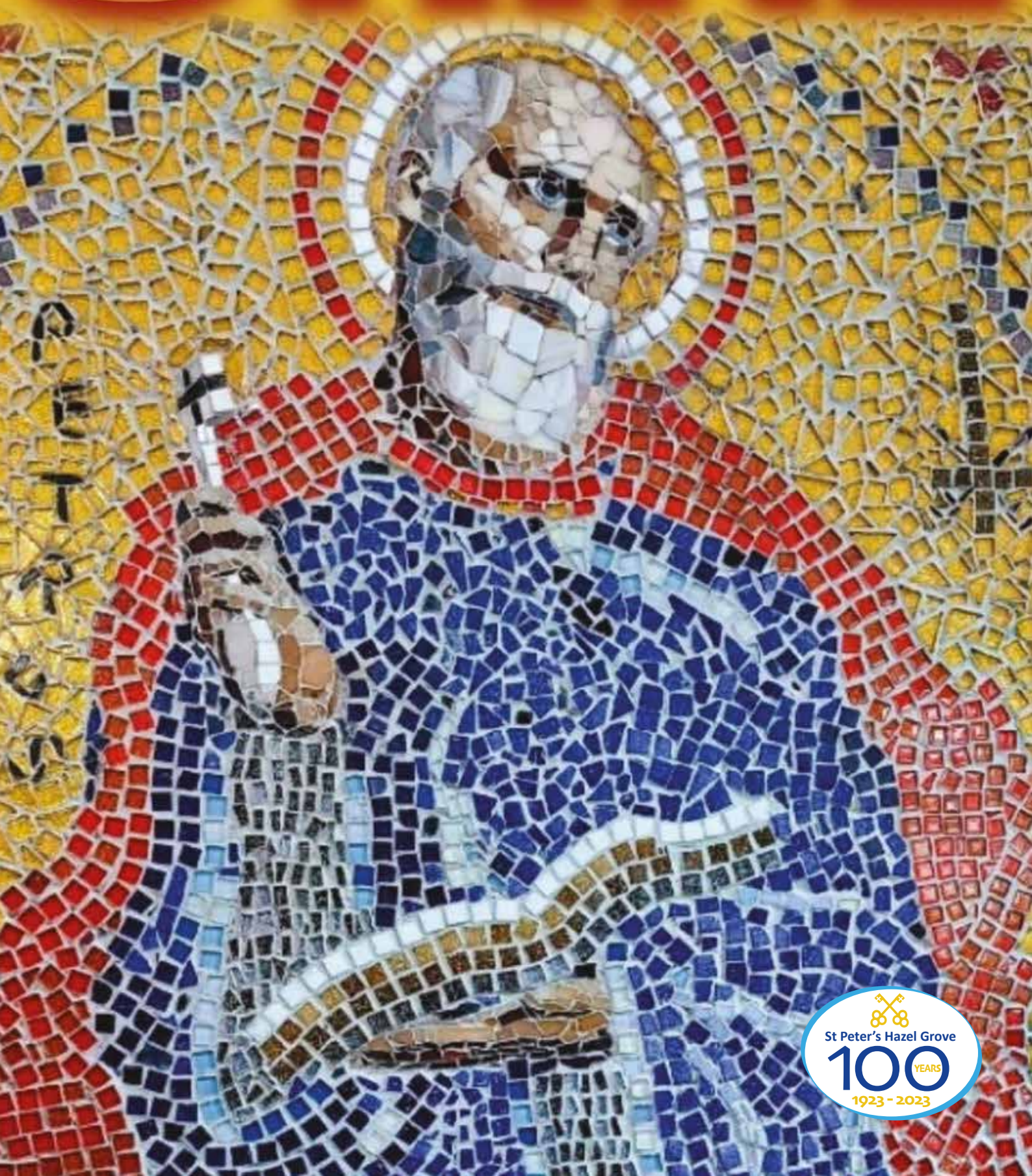


# SHINE





# CONFIRMATION GROUP 2025



Lizzie Bamforth, Seth Coyle, Mia Thurstan-Coyle, Julia Darul, Morrie Fok, Hannah Higginson, Maddie Hill, Hannah Jose, Olivia Jose, Faith Locke, Ruby McDonough, Abigail Rourke, Maya Swan, Mia Witter



Naomi and the whole Fitton family with her sponsor James together with Bishop Mark



**Hello all,**

Welcome to our Summer issue of Shine and thank you to all those who have sent in articles this time. It shows how much is going on in our parishes and also the varied interests of our parishioners.

As many of you will know I am celebrating 50 years as a priest during this month of July. I wonder where the years have gone! It has been an interesting journey to say the least. I was ordained a priest by Bishop Grasar on 19 July 1975 – the feast of St John Plessington, one of the Forty Martyrs who was martyred just up the road from St Werburgh's church in Chester. St Werburgh's was my first appointment as an assistant priest.

After four years there I went to St Anthony's in Wythenshawe for 2 years. I then volunteered to go to the Diocese of Kisii in Kenya for 5 years. Coming back to the diocese I served for six years as parish priest in St Theresa's Blacon, Chester and then went back to St Werburgh's as parish priest. After 14 years there I came to St Peter's and now it's time to step back from parish ministry.

Along the journey I have met some wonderful faith-filled people whose example has been tremendous. I have learnt far more than I have taught! I have been given wonderful support in all the places I have served; the 'Lord has indeed worked marvels for me.'

As I write these few words, I am still house hunting and hopefully we will find the right place for me to live, not too far from the family and not too far from Edgeley Park!

Thank you to all of you for welcoming me to the 'Grove' and let us keep one another in our prayers.

**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,  
Stockport SK7 4EA  
Tel 0161 483 3476

**St Philip's Church**

Half Moon Lane, Offerton,  
Stockport SK2 5LE

Email: [admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk](mailto:admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk)

Fr Peter: [petersharrocks@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk](mailto:petersharrocks@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk)

Our joint website is [www.stpeterscatholic.church](http://www.stpeterscatholic.church)



# Shining a light on our parish communities



All the Confirmation candidates at the Away Day at Savio House, after climbing up to White Nancy

## Tatiana Precieux reflects on her Away Day at Savio House

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus' deep connection with nature is revealed several times; He often used elements of the natural world in his teachings. For example, in the parable of the sower, He compares the different types of soil to the way that people receive and respond to God's word. Jesus had a close attachment to nature. He retreated into the wilderness or climbed the mountain on many occasions to reflect and pray. Nature also was witness to several of his miracles: when He walked on the water or when He calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus' interaction and connection with nature show us how He emphasised and embraced the goodness and beauty of God's creation.

My day at Savio House made me reflect on my relationship with the environment. Like Jesus, that experience of and connection with nature were a break from the hurried pace and provided a time with God, a break from social media, from the constant rush of daily life. The Away Day helped me to pause, breathe and connect more deeply with God through the various activities offered by the team.

Just like Jesus, I took a step back and felt the importance of being in the present. It was a great time of reflection, of prayer and appreciation of nature around me. It also helped me understand and realise how important it is to steward creation, to protect and care for our environment.

## St Philip's School

### 1st Holy Communion children



Star, Agatha, Hollie and Harvey



Fr Peter blesses our new mosaic of St Peter commissioned to mark our parish centenary. See p34

- Would you like to visit the big questions?
- What does it mean to believe?
- How can I have faith?
- Who is Jesus?
- What about the Holy Spirit?

Alpha starts Tuesday  
16 September 2025 at 7.30pm  
for 10 weeks

Venue: St Philip's church,  
Half Moon Lane, Offerton SK2 5LE

For more information or if you  
want to come please email  
Deacon John at:  
[mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com)

#TryAlpha



## Abba night

What a fabulous, fun night was held in the parish centre recently, Tricia Byrne writes. To expand our experience: an amazing ambience, incredible, talented singers and excellent food. However, at the heart of it, was a community feeling of enjoyment and love. Just brilliant. May it be repeated!



Helen Beard, Tricia Byrne, Pat Hinde and Marjorie Donnelly

## Farewells and welcomes

Since our last issue, the following people known in our community have gone to their rest:

Warren Walton  
Colin Rudder  
Paul Medina  
Brenda Bowden  
Edith Pratt  
Angela Trueman  
Patricia Morris nee Miller  
Lilian Richards  
Terry Riley  
Mary Anne Kan Hai  
Anthony Mulcahy  
Egbert Le Bon  
Michael Higginbottom  
Janet Martin  
Juan Perez Gonzalez  
John Hazeldine  
Victor Bradley  
Gerry Clarke  
Richard William Dearman  
Colin McAllister  
Maura Burke  
Peter Ratcliffe

Roy Shorrock  
John Kenny  
Kathleen McCarthy  
Edward Riley  
Joseph Kerrigan  
Jimmy Murphy  
Elizabeth Bradley

and the following have  
been baptised:

Rose Maria Cooper  
Noah Lokhei Tang  
King Fung Jason Chan  
Summer Ann Seaton  
Thomas Christian Hunt  
Amy Hannah McDonald  
Florence Hazel Johnson  
Lexi Rose Nichol  
Kikiogo Loueth Olanipekun  
Boluwatife David Olanipekun  
Mercy Kikiola Olanipekun  
Rose Rebecca Edwards

Jaden Maria Arun  
Ivy Cecelia Morris  
Arthur Thomas Kakanskas  
Alfie William Wood  
Evie Jeanne Cummins  
Inala Malaika Janet Kan Hai  
Nakoa Zakkai Xian Kan Hai  
Rashidat Omozoje Ohichela  
Kit Antony Power  
Anya Roae Bakare  
Raife Micahel Charles Espley  
Alice Evelyn Lynes  
Georgia Hope Jean Boyle  
Lachlan Matthew Inman  
Freya Annie Inman  
Margot Karen Foong Johnstone  
Frida Nora Moore  
Frank Michael Nils Moore  
Ashley Carver  
Aimee McHugo  
Anthony Carver  
Millie & Gracie Hamblin





On 26 April the world celebrated the Requiem Mass of Pope Francis, aged 88. Taking his papal name from the inspiration of St Francis of Assisi – it was quite fitting that a group of St Peter's pilgrims huddled together in the back room of an Assisi hotel to watch the service including the wonderful eulogy delivered by Cardinal Re describing Pope Francis as 'a pope among the people, with an open heart toward everyone'.

Five mornings earlier, 31 St Peter's pilgrims touched down in Rome on Day 1 of our 2025 Pilgrims of Hope journey. Our mobile phones on landing quickly told of the death of Pope Francis who, having greeted his people in the Vatican for the final time on Easter Sunday, just the day before, had now returned to the Lord.

What followed was a wonderful eight days of reflection, prayer and friendship which exceeded what I could have hoped for. But what did I hope for? Travelling alone, I hoped I'd get on with others in the group – I already knew half of those



Our official Pilgrims of Hope walk down to St Peter's Square

# On our pilgrim way

**Chris Glennon** was among the pilgrims from our parish community who travelled to Italy

travelling and most I liked, so this was positive! I hoped I would be able to cope with the 6am starts every morning – pilgrimage, not an endurance test? And I guess I hoped I'd be spiritually inspired, not least by those around me. In Rome we

visited wonderfully ornate churches including the Basilica of Saint Mary Major where Pope Francis would be finally laid to rest; we visited St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican for our Jubilee of Hope pilgrimage walk starting from the avenue leading up

to St Peter's (Via Conciliazione) and around the great church. (A special thanks to James for carrying the cross at the front and negotiating a passageway through the crowds).

We celebrated Mass daily at various locations, my personal favourite being in a side chapel at the Church of the Twelve Holy Apostles in the city. There Deacon John gave a wonderful homily on our God being

the God of Surprises and we should never underestimate him or forget how all-knowing he is – God, not John – one such surprise for John was that he was delivering the homily.

We met the Irish priests at the Pontifical Irish College and celebrated Mass with them. We listened to the Augustinian Sisters sing their daily Vespers in the Four Saints Church, close to our hotel.

Our daily post-dinner walks with our most knowledgeable guide Anthony took in local spots including the Colosseum – a most awe-inspiring structure oozing the history of the events it once held.

During the visit the sadness of Pope Francis' passing was eased with the sense of opportunity and privilege this afforded. On the Wednesday we again visited St Peter's Square, some



After waiting over four hours we enter St Peter's Basilica to pay our respects to Pope Francis



We had Mass every day of our pilgrimage. Here Fr Peter is saying Mass in St Anthony's Covent, Assisi



Carlo Acutis, a 15-year-old who died in 2006, is set to become the Catholic Church's first millennial saint. His body lies in repose in a glass tomb in Assisi





*Our official coach named after Fr Peter*



*Wonderful first view of Assisi*

of us queued from an early hour and attended a short service in which Pope Francis' body was taken into St Peter's, before paying our respects whilst Francis lay in state. A truly remarkable experience shared by many of us through the day.

A daily blog was set up to report our experience to those back home and the messages we received made it quite humbling to know there were many sharing this trip with us. To this end we managed to secure some prime-time slots on TV with some 'live' reporting for those who

couldn't access the blog. From Rome we travelled to Assisi, a beautiful hillside town which is the birthplace of two saints, the well-known St Francis and the lesser known (certainly to me) St Clare. Where Rome was glamorous, ornate and imposing, Assisi was simple and peaceful.

Highlights were the Masses celebrated at St Anthony's Convent, home to Sisters Sue and Alessandra – in contrast to Rome this intimate surrounding just about fitted our group within the small chapel. We visited the home of Roy Grant, a

90+ year old Englishman whose passions are medieval history and art. He spoke to us for an hour and we were riveted. His home was a simple one floor, two-room structure with many artefacts, some dating back to Moses' era. And there was St Francis' refuge in the mountains where he went for solitude and peace; it was impossible not to be inspired.

I have covered only a small number of the fascinating places we visited. We were blessed to have Fr Peter with us who celebrated Mass for us daily, preparing an individual

homily specific to the day. In Anthony Coles we had a knowledgeable guide who kept us all organised and informed despite the late itinerary changes.

Finally, I would like to thank the group – now friends – I shared this with. You all brought something unique to the trip – yourselves – and the laughter and good humour we shared throughout is a truly special memory. The full and long days meant we returned physically weary though we were certainly spiritually refreshed.



*Some of our pilgrim group on the Spanish Steps in Rome*



*Basilica di Santa Maria degli Angeli*



*Roy Grant who gave a wonderful talk on medieval history and religious art*



*Every church paid their respects to Pope Francis*



*Thousands of people lining up to file past Pope Francis lying in state*



*Pope Francis's final resting place, Basilica of Saint Mary Major*



# We praise *in* Makaton

**Ashley Carver** from St Peter's explains why inclusion is important for us

St Peter's Disability Inclusion Group is a very dedicated and hardworking group doing amazing things; we're all passionate about bringing the word of God and His worship to people with disabilities and additional needs. Between us there is a mix of those with disabilities or additional needs ourselves, those with experience or interest in supporting others and those with related skills.

I'm a Makaton signer. Makaton is a communication system involving signs and symbols, originally created to support those with disabilities that make communication more difficult, including Down's Syndrome and Autism. I was drawn to Makaton when I was aged about 15, despite no personal need or direct relationship with anyone whom it could help. But God has a plan for all of us, although His ways can often be a mystery. God knew that many years to come I would come to be in a parish where the skill was needed. God blessed me with a spirit of service and the Holy Spirit taught me and guided me in this direction. What a beautiful thing for others to benefit from our skills.

Like every organisation supporting those with additional needs, Makaton has grown and now finds its benefits for a much larger set of people. It's now commonplace in nurseries to support pre-verbal children and pre-readers; mainstream schools are adopting it too.

The link to schools and the work of the group led us to choose Makaton signing as actions for our new songs. This benefits the children in different ways:

- a Makaton user can feel included from our opening hymn. They recognise the signing and feel joy at seeing someone using 'their language' as it's a very visual way of saying they belong here with everyone and with God



- other children learn a little of a skill that helps them understand and communicate with children and adults they may meet along their life's journey
- a younger child can use Makaton to understand the meaning of the lyrics, increasing their vocabulary because synonyms often use the same sign
- it forms a little movement break within the TOAST session, refocusing minds
- Makaton has been proven to improve retention of new vocabulary and concepts, which helps children who may be learning the concepts of our Catholic beliefs for the first time or deepening their faith.

It helps deepen my faith too. Some of the signs are a beautiful reminder of faith - like "sin" which depicts a bad thing we do that takes us away from God, and "forgiveness" which brings us back to Him. Sometimes the best signs for a hymn aren't the exact words sung. Makaton encourages us to adapt for the audience and to unpack metaphors to reinforce their

meaning. So, we frequently discuss the intention of the lyrics and their message for the children and decide together the best fit of possible interpretations.

Songs are my favourite to interpret as I enjoy matching the timing of the song to embody the beauty of the music. British Sign Language (BSL) talks about dancing with our hands. I try to pass the beauty of the music for those who cannot hear it. I find it's the timing of the signs that gives the interpretation similar poetry.

When the TOAST group leads the Mass, we often sign the gospel. It's a focal point of the Mass and we want the children to pay attention and go home with its story in their hearts. I know that without the signing, some people in church don't hear the words as well, some who do not understand its language as much, and some who struggle to pay attention to the gospel especially longer passages.

Signing it is a big responsibility and there's a prayer that's in my heart as I approach the altar. It doesn't really have words but exists in a deep longing for God to bless my hands that in signing I will bring glory to Him and people to know Him more. Because God's word is for everyone, not just those who can hear spoken word, or those who can sit still, or those who understand complex vocabulary. It might be my hands signing, but it's God's word. That's why I stand beside Deacon John, for it to be one and the same Gospel. I simply relay the message in the communication system I know, just as Deacon John is relaying the message in the spoken word.

What a privilege it has been to sign complete Masses for the Disability Inclusion Group. These Accessible Masses are an important place to welcome all for a shorter service aimed at their needs. They can bring

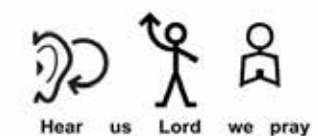
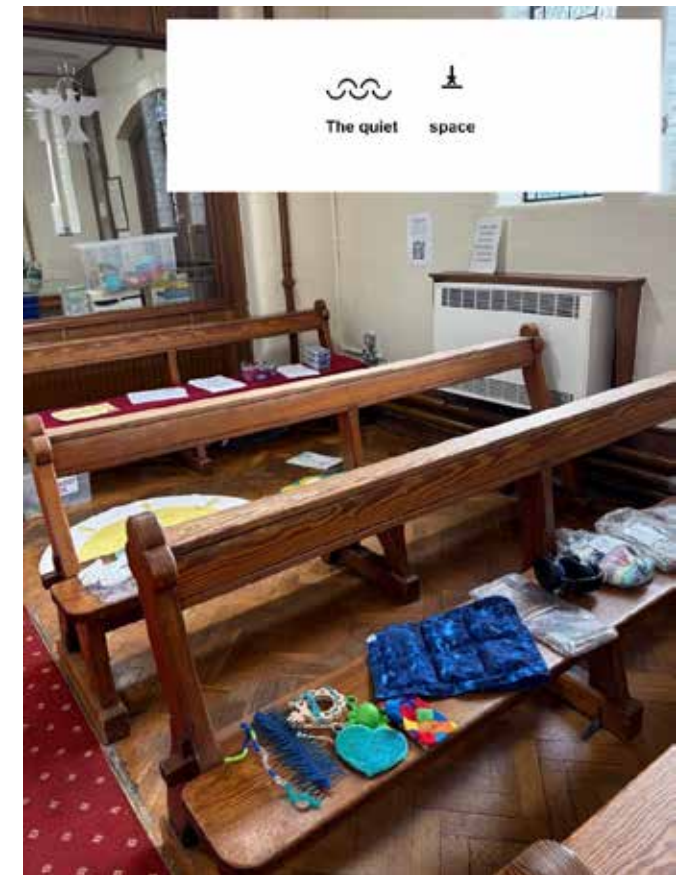


their genuine selves before God at these opportunities and come to know that church is a place where they can belong. This is important for their families too, who may feel they don't get to celebrate Mass alongside their loved ones. No one minds extra noise here, or those who have a need to move about during the service, or those who need to fiddle. God didn't ask us to take His message to just those who can sit still in a Mass or have the self control to know when to take themselves to a breakout space; His love is for everyone and so our Mass is too. There are well known songs, sensory prayers and activities, which all make the Mass an engaging and memorable experience.

During Jesus' time on earth, He sought out the marginalised, the disabled, the outcasts. He had a lot to teach the people of the time about what God means when He said "everyone." And so He left us with "go out in the world, tell everyone the good news." That's one of God's messages I think about regarding Makaton in church, as some people are called to travel to far-off places and speak the word of God in foreign languages, but we also have a calling to find new ways to carry God's message and love to those who

need a bit of extra help to access it. Another key message is that God loves us just the way we are. He doesn't love us any less if we are not able bodied, or struggle with mental health, or are non-verbal. In telling us to love one another like He loved us, it is our duty to love all of those He did too and He will give us strength and skills to carry out this mission. What greater love can there be than passing on the Good News? In relaying that all

are loved eternally by God, who sent Jesus to live human suffering and death as we do, so that together we might live forever in His embrace in heaven. Anyone with additional needs or disabilities and their families is welcome at our inclusive Masses, regardless of denomination. Our next Sunday Masses are on 5 October and 30 November. We'd also love to hear if you think anything could improve the accessibility of our church, groups or activities.





# 80th anniversary of VE Day



At 9.30pm, like thousands of people around the country, we went out onto the lawn, to light a Lamp of Peace. We came together in prayer to show our gratitude for the many sacrifices that secured our freedom.





Fortunately, we never had to use our gas masks. Mine was thrown round something awful and all those times my Mum said, "Where is your gas mask?" They were kept in a cardboard box with a string hung round your neck. We had regular gas mask drills at school.

There was an air raid shelter on the school field. We went in them a good few times during air raids. The teacher used to have us singing, "One man went to mow" and "Ten green bottles" to pass the time. There's nothing like a damp, earthy smell! There were benches down each side.

In the playground, we practised lying flat on the ground in case we were attacked from the air by machine guns.

On the recreation (rec) ground, the air raid shelters were dug into the ground. We used to play down there and the real heroes were the boys who dared to jump down through the manhole covers into the air raid shelter for a dare when they were locked. Our family never used the air raid shelters. My Dad had us go into the "Glory hole" under the stairs instead! - a row of heavy saucepans would've landed on our heads, if we'd ever have had a direct hit!

A huge water tank was erected at the top of North Avenue, eight feet high and covered with mesh, to be used by the firemen to put out fires after a raid. The kids used to throw stones which lodged on the wire on top, causing it to break up. In other towns, some kids drowned in them. I remember the fireman coming into school and he taught us a song to the tune of "Don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else, but me", but the words were 'Don't throw stones on the water tank or climb up on the edge. Oh no no... And then our homes won't burn.'

Huge cylinders of concrete were lined up on the edge of the roads leading into Leek ready to be rolled across the road if an invasion happened. Wires were stretched across Tittesworth reservoir to stop German

*Our VE Day 80 celebrations prompted the family of 90 year-old **Margaret Birch** to find her notes from an interview about her own experience at school between 1940 and 1946. She used to share these memories with pupils at her old primary school in Leek, Staffordshire.*

# Margaret's wartime memories

sea planes landing. We remember the home guard (Dad's Army!) lying down in Britannia Street training their guns down towards Picton Street.

They fitted blackout blinds on all our windows to stop German pilots from realising that Leek was down there. There were lots of shouts of "Put that light out!" if your blinds were not a perfect fit or if you shone a torch.

Everyone had a ration book – excellent for making sure everybody got a minimum of the right food. You had to register with one shop. Extras like matches and cornflour were added to your order when they were available.

When I was nine and weighed only 3 stone 4 lb, I was selected for cod liver oil and malt. This was given at the head teacher's room every morning. You had to bring your own spoon from home with a different coloured cutting round the handle. Mine was orange. We lined up and Mr Myers would twirl the spoon round in his huge jar of malt and stick it in your mouth! I also had

sunray treatment once a week at the clinic in Strangeman Street. As I now weigh 10.5 stones, it must've done some good!

We got free school milk in bottles with cardboard tops. There was a small inner circle in the middle which we pushed out and used them to make bobbles for the babies. There were no sweets at all during the war nor ice cream. We'd buy the ice cream wafers at Pownall's and put jam on them. I never liked liquorice root; I remember sitting on

the rec on many occasions, eating a malt loaf from the inside out, leaving the shell til last.

I longed for a banana and my mum used to tell me mouthwatering stories about having them mashed with milk and sugar. When I got one, I could not take my eyes off it on the way to school and kept lifting my desk lid to make sure it was still there. In the end, I couldn't wait till break and had a bite of it. It was a bit of an anticlimax really.



We'd leave our desks for the shelters at the bloodcurdling sound of the air raid warnings. The all-clear siren was a long, reassuring note after the throbbing "rm rm" of the German planes on their way to and from Manchester.

Once enemy planes were being chased by Spitfires and they jettisoned their bombs over Leek without drawing the detonators. Bombs hit the ground but didn't go off. If they had done so, most of us would have been killed! I remember the sash window going with a shattering "bang! bang!" with the blast and the scream of the bomb going past. It fell in Nunn Street where, sadly, one young father was killed. John's uncle survived an incendiary bomb which crashed into his kitchen. And yet we were all in school the next day!

As part of the war effort, all the railings were sheared off all over Leek. We all used to collect

wastepaper and were encouraged to bring as much as possible into school. You got a ranking according to how much you had collected. I was a Corporal. One boy who had all his extended family collecting was a Field Marshal. I was very jealous! At home, Mums were knitting balaclava helmets and mittens for soldiers and sewing parachutes for the Air Force.

When the evacuees from Ancoats arrived in Leek they swelled our classes to around 50. In the emergency, it was chaos.

About 300 children were walked round the streets and people picked out who they liked the look of. I remember it so well in West Street: kids crying and pleading to be picked. Families of four trying to stay together. But at least they were safe from the bombing. It was quite an adjustment for us having the boys from Ancoats staying with us. We all had to get treated for nits when they arrived and they used to go

to bed in their clothes. They came to Westwood Road School in large numbers and never got into much trouble. Later a large group came from London. Their teacher, Miss Bennett came with them; she was a marvellous woman. She visited the children in the homes where they were staying and darned their socks and mended their clothes. She became a lifelong friend of Miss Tomlinson, our teacher and lodged with her for several years.

Seeing the Americans, including the first people of any colour was a new experience for us all. They were very rich! They gave us chewing gum and the formula to get it was, "Have you got any gum, chum?" They were stationed in the barracks on Hillswood Avenue. The pubs did a roaring trade and I remember several of them coming to chapel.

Italian prisoners of war were also brought to Leek. I remember feeling sorry for them. Many Polish soldiers were based at the camp on Blackshaw Moor; many of them married Leek girls and were very hard-working.

As more and more women went to work in the munitions factories, the teachers kept the schools open during the holidays. My mother worked from home as my brother was a still a baby, but I loved school and, like several others, went along too. I remember the teachers talking about it to one another, pointing me out among those who shouldn't be there!

You had to be quiet as a mouse when the news was on the radio. Mr Myers, our head who used to come down West Street in the middle of the road with as many as 10 children holding hands on each side, sadly, lost his only son Harry, who was killed while serving in the army. I never forgot my Mum telling me. He insisted on coming to school on the day he got the news.

Everything took place in the hall: hymn singing and songs, PE and games, all ages together. There was a tremendous spirit both in and out of school.



**TOAST is back on Sunday 7 September 2025**

**T O A S T**

**Time on a Sunday together**

**Sunday at 9.30am, St Peter's Parish Centre**

**TOAST and refreshments at 9.30am**

**All families are welcome, we will unpack the Gospel of the day through music, prayer, fun and games.**

**What's at TOAST:**  
**Music**  
**Live interactive Gospel Quiz and fun activities**  
**Terry's Teaser**

**You are all very welcome.**

**For more information about TOAST contact Teresa Thiele on 07778 848709**

# Sarah wins gold

*Sarah McKay shares the background to her recent international success – which has been described as 'oarsome'...*



Recently I went out to Bulgaria with the GB rowing team to race at the European rowing championships in the women's quad on Sunday 1 June.

I've been rowing for the last nine years. I started at Liverpool uni as I was doing my nursing degree. I do feel like I 'fell' into it, although I did have it in the back of my head because my friends Nuala and Jenny said they were going to give it a try at Manchester Uni. I'd done a bit of running at school and clearly remember being at the Freshers' Fair looking for running under the 'R's and finding the rowing table instead (turns out running was under 'A' with athletics).

Learning to row at Liverpool and the social life that came with it, was great fun. It was definitely a balancing act fitting it all in with the nursing hours, especially when we were out on placement but somehow I managed to make it work.

Towards the end of my degree, I moved to Royal Chester Rowing Club and had a great summer racing in a four with my friends Lowri, Ange

and Cathryn. For the first time, I'd followed a more structured training plan and was noticing that I was starting to improve.

It was at that point Patrick, my boyfriend, encouraged me to think about giving the GB trials a go – something I wouldn't have considered if it wasn't for him. I've been really blessed with people who have believed in me.

My coach, Paul Turner, at Grosvenor Rowing Club taught me to scull ie row with two blades; at Liverpool I used to sweep ie with one blade, and he got me to a place where I was competitive at the trials. Looking back, he taught me then all the skills I needed to succeed now. After four years of balancing my rowing with my nursing job at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, it felt like it was time to give my rowing 100% and so was granted a sabbatical from work to give it a go.

I moved to Leander Club in September 2024. It was such fun having so many training buddies and incredible to have access to the great facilities and coaching there.

I can't believe how quickly things accelerated though over the year and to be training with the GB rowing team now. Paul had always talked about 'producing results that couldn't be ignored' and finally at the various GB trials over the year, I managed to do that and got selected to race the quad this summer.

The racing in Bulgaria was just amazing and an experience that I will never forget. Having my Mum and my sister Mary there was so special, along with Paul and all his family. Getting to race for Great Britain was always a dream, and then to go on and become European Champions was just insane!

Thank you to everyone who's supported me over the years, for all the kind words of encouragement when I've been back home at St Peter's and to all the livestream watchers. My motto has always been "I'll keep going until I stop enjoying it", so I'll keep training hard and be excited to see what happens.





# Celebrate Pentecost Day



## Why we loved the Pentecost celebration at TOAST children's Mass

At Pentecost, God's Spirit came,  
With wind and fire, in Jesus' name.  
At Toast, we felt that Spirit near,  
In every prayer, each song, each cheer.

The children's Mass spoke heart to heart,  
Where all God's children play a part.  
From babes in arms to growing youth,  
Each felt embraced in love and truth.

Like our son, who speaks in his own way,  
Was moved by the Spirit that joyful day.  
And with buttery toast and sweet cake, too,  
We tasted joy both deep and true

**Marianne Kennedy**



Our new TOASTIE  
baby Kennedy



Beautiful Pentecost cakes  
baked by Rebecca Knight  
... thank you!



Some of our  
amazing  
TOAST  
helpers ...  
thank you!



# and the Spirit moves . . .

a very special time as some of our **TOASTIES** are baptised and others receive First Holy Communion

Freya and Georgia with their Baptism certificates



Fr Peter with Daniel on his First Holy Communion



"We find St Peters perfect for our family, always warm and welcoming and the day felt relaxed and very inclusive. Our family and friends said it was a lovely atmosphere to be in and it was a joy to see everyone together for Freya and Lachlan's Baptism."

Freya and Lachlan's mum, Emma



Wallace with his family and Fr Blaise on his First Holy Communion



Maya's special First Holy Communion Day



Millie and Gracie at their Baptism



Georgia's Baptism and with her parents by the Baptismal font





# St Peter's 1st Holy Communion children

## 28th June 2025



Rupert Coe, Alicja Dmowska, Chidike Elope, Isabelle Frost, Matilda Gilding, Hugo Glennon, Sabastian Greenstreet, Mia Hall, Hugo Holland, Freya Inman, Cooper Kuhwald,

Otis Kuhwald, Erin Lally, Niamh Leonard, Christopher Little, Chloe Luddington, Isla McLaughlin, Annie O'Farrell Victoria Panek, Minnie Whittle-Moseley, Sukey Wiatr



# St Simon's 1st Holy Communion children

## 5th July 2025



Oliver Daniels, Savannah Dempsey, Isaac Dunn, Emily White,  
Ishan Adersh, Cerah Aders, Andrei Yumena, Daniel Dixon,

Isabella Rose, Sidney Rose, Georgie Boyle, Alice Lyons,  
Oliwer Flader, Richard Lynsdale, Ryan Rony and Emma Rony





The house where we lived in 1952 when my father worked in the mines and I visited in 2000.

# An unusual start to Mass

**Brian Edwards** a parishioner at St Peter's, reminisces about an unusual happening in his home town in India.

Many years ago, I was at Mass one Sunday morning at Our Lady of Victories church in a town known as Kolar Gold Fields (KGF), a gold mining town in Mysore State, 86 miles from Bangalore in South India.

The town was started in the 18th century and it had at one time the second deepest mine in the world. Gold was first mined there in the days of Tippu Sultan in the 18th century; his father Haida Ali was born in Kolar, most of the middle management in the mines were Anglo-Indian and the owners were John Taylor and Sons, a Cornish mining family.

Before I tell you more, let me explain about a rock burst. When pressure builds up underground and there are no escape shafts for the air, it builds up and eventually the ground explodes similar to a mini earthquake. These explosions happen quite often in the mining

area of Kolar Gold Fields and when they do, the ground shudders, buildings wobble and some even collapse.

So, back to the Sunday morning in 1952 just after the 5am Mass ended. People were making their way to the church for the 7am Mass when an explosion happened just under the church. A rock burst resulted in the collapse of the church building as well as the adjoining St Joseph's convent. The steeple, the walls, roofing and the bell tower were all reduced to rubble.

Outside the church building at the front was a statue of Our Lady mounted on a granite pillar about 1m square. These granite blocks are used underground as supports for holding up the roofing when earth is removed with the quartz. The statue had been concreted on to the support pillar. When the church building collapsed the pillar



Our Lady of Victories church, rebuilt after the rock burst.

remained intact and the statue had turned around a full 180 degrees. It was then facing the other way – all still intact. The locals all saw this as a miracle. The 7am Mass was not cancelled but it was held outside among the rubble. Not a single person was killed as a result of this rock burst.

In time the church was rebuilt with money donated by people from all religions; there were many converts to Christianity. The church still stands today, more than 70 years later and is now a tourist visiting place for people who visit South India.

I was at Primary school at St Joseph's (Kolar Gold Fields) in 1952 and then attended the Jesuit-run St Joseph's in Bangalore from 1953-59. Happy days.

Flowers are such a lovely part of church life. When we display the flowers and foliage in church we celebrate God's creation in colour, form and scent. They bring beauty and nature into our service to remind us of God's wonderful world.

Flowers add beauty and colour to the church creating a welcoming and uplifting environment.

The use of living flowers rather than artificial serves as a reminder of the gift of life, care and provision that God has given to us.

At St Peter's, flower arranging is a team effort, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose for those involved. The process is very therapeutic and calming. We enjoy getting together to do our bit for our church community both as individual teams and as a whole group for bigger occasions. We all find the experience fulfilling and the feedback we receive is always appreciated and rewarding.

If you like flowers and would be interested in joining our teams, please contact **Colette** on 07714 470 854. Experience is not required and our more experienced members are more than happy to mentor.

# St Peter's Flower Arrangers

**Colette Christie** explains why they do what they do!





By coincidence two groups from our parish have both visited the same place on separate occasions and have shared their findings.  
It's the **St Pio Friary in Bradford**.

# A sanctuary of faith and service

Nestled within St Patrick's church in Bradford, the St Pio Friary is a quiet yet powerful beacon of faith and service which we visited recently. During our visit, we had the privilege of spending time with the Franciscan friars, witnessing their devotion to God and dedication to the local community.

The friars live a life centred around daily worship, prayer, and service without the distractions of modern technology. They have no social media and only a single computer for Emails which enables them to maintain a deeply spiritual existence, focused on helping those most in need. Their work extends far beyond the walls of the Friary, reaching out to the homeless, to individuals struggling with addiction, and to others seeking solace and support.

The Friary itself is simple yet profound. Though we were unable to visit their residential quarters, the friars kindly showed us around their humble (yet surprisingly functional)

Firstly, **Stephen Gomes** shares his family's rather special experience.

spaces. Small rooms, each containing only a single bed, reflected their vow of simplicity.

Upstairs, a workshop was dedicated to woodwork and electrics — a place of craftsmanship and utility. In the loft, we discovered a hermitage and a rooftop with breathtaking panoramic views of Bradford. It was clear that this space, though exposed to the elements, offered the friars a place of quiet reflection and retreat.

During our visit, we were invited to Mass where we participated in the sacred liturgy and communion. Friar Joseph guided us through a profound method of prayer, teaching us to read scripture three times, each time relating it more deeply to our lives. His wisdom and encouragement made the experience deeply personal and spiritually enriching.

The friars' hospitality was another testament to their generosity. At the end of our visit, we were presented with a table full of sandwiches, crisps, biscuits, cakes and a plentiful supply of tea! It was a reminder that faith is not only found in prayer but also in the act of breaking bread together, in kindness and community.

St Pio Friary stands as one of only five Catholic churches in Bradford, a city where mosques number over 100. Yet, despite its small size and quiet presence, the Friary is a vital sanctuary of faith and service. Our visit left us all deeply moved, inspired by the friars' commitment to God and their mission to uplift those around them.

For those seeking peace, prayer and a renewed connection with faith, I would strongly recommend that St Pio Friary is a place worth visiting.



Totally unrelated, our **SPY group (St Peter's Youth)** also headed there earlier this year and leader **Chris Glennon** sent this account of their day.

On a sunny spring Saturday morning the SPY group ventured by coach over the Pennines to visit the Franciscan friars at St Pio's, Bradford. We travelled east accompanied by a background hum of youthful chatter.

The Friary is located on a Bradford side street, a few blocks away from a mosque, next to a church amongst a row of Yorkshire stone terraced houses. Unassuming and in keeping with the Franciscans' life of simplicity though in an all-too-common challenging neighbourhood. After a few minutes Deacon John located one of the brothers and we were welcomed in.

Inside the property was a number of rooms with high ceilings, very basic furniture and, despite the warm sunny day outside, it was cold – the greeting, however, was wonderfully warm. Brother Mariano from Brazil and Brother Joseph, an American, were our hosts and, splitting us into two groups, we toured the property and learned about their lives of prayer and meditation. Three days a week a soup kitchen was run from the building and the brothers were a lifeline to the those living nearby. They were full each day, an organised ticketing system was in place and separate eating areas existed, all in a very simple environment resourced by donations and volunteers and fuelled by compassion.

We celebrated Mass in the adjoining church and I was struck by the profile of the congregation for a Saturday lunchtime service – many adults aged 40 to 60 attended – younger than I expected. After lunch we had a couple

of sessions learning and listening from the brothers - they spoke of their upbringings and the global journey that brought them to Bradford and the difficult decisions they faced during that time.

On Friday they were astounded to be given an anonymous substantial donation of sweets and goodies – as if in readiness for our visit. We reluctantly (!) enjoyed these with Mariano and Joseph before having a final session on

a reading from Matthew's gospel – in which we picked certain words from a text to focus on. Fittingly we focussed on 'we were strangers but you welcomed me' – in keeping with the welcome offered to those seeking food, shelter and company.

The Friary was simple and yet its very existence is critical to many. It was a humbling experience and I would welcome the opportunity to revisit. The journey home for me was one of reflection and gratitude. A most uplifting day.





# St Peter's Helpers – serving others with a smile!

Our Christmas celebration was a lovely party with a full Christmas lunch and trimmings, entertainment by St Simon's and St Peter's schools and wonderful waiting-on by students from St James' High School, all ably assisted by a great team of helpers and co-ordinators behind the scenes. Furthermore, our special friends all received a goody bag with treats galore and hand-painted coasters and cards from our children from St Peter's, St Simon's and St Philip's schools and their teams of Mini-vinnies and Faith Council members and classes.

We marked our fifth birthday in March 2025 with a delicious shared table from our helpers, scrumptious birthday cake and a very enjoyable but extremely competitive quiz, with a single mark between the finalists... a re-match is promised!

At Easter, the children excelled themselves again by making a beautiful selection of gifts, all crafted with love and care, plus Easter cards. Many recipients also received a handmade Easter card from our Chai and Chat group which works tirelessly



*Our Chai and Chat group which meet every Wednesday*

to support people seeking refuge from war and persecution.

Chai and Chat went from strength to strength, with special activities from Morris Dancing to hat wearing and storytelling, alongside handicrafts, games and English conversation practice and celebrating key cultural and religious events including Eid and Easter.

Behind the scenes, efforts continue to help all people in need in our local

communities and to offer a friendly phone call to those who are more isolated than others. This is unseen work, but it is the bedrock of St Peter's Helpers. Thank you to those involved and to all our helpers for everything you do.

Thank you to Fr Peter and Deacon John for their tireless support for St Peter's Helpers, especially to Fr Peter for all his help (both spiritual and temporal!) to Mrs Rigg and Chris for leading the beautiful music liturgy at the special Healing Masses (complemented afterwards by a catered lunch in the hall, organised and served by the amazing team of helpers).

Our regular Cuppa and Chat sessions continue to be very popular and enjoyable. If you know someone who might like to get out a little more, or who may need a lift to join us, please get in touch. Card making sessions also continue to be a popular activity for people to get out and get involved with. Everyone is welcome; we are St Peter's, after all!

We are always interested in hearing from people who may want to share a little of their time with us, even helping on an occasional basis.

**Get in touch:**  
[stpetershelpers@gmail.com](mailto:stpetershelpers@gmail.com)  
or visit our mini website  
<https://sites.google.com/view/st-peters-helpers/home>



*The Morris Dancing group came out to entertain at our Chai and Chat*



*Our monthly Cuppa and Chat is very popular. Ee also do a healing mass termly and light lunches every six weeks with transport*

## Synodality means walking together

At his first Urbi et Orbi address on Thursday, 8 May 2025, as His Holiness Pope Leo XIV addressed the crowd, he made it clear that the synodal way of being church is here to stay.

"To all of you, brothers and sisters of Rome, of Italy, of the whole world, we want to be a synodal Church, a Church that walks, a Church that always seeks peace, that always

seeks charity, that always tries to be close especially to those who suffer."

Things seem to have gone quiet in this country about the Synod on Synodality. The following article appeared in The Tablet recently and we have their permission to reproduce it here. Their Assistant Editor Ruth Gledhill wrote the following in the 3 June 2025 issue.

### Catholic laity appeal to bishops of England and Wales to be more enthusiastic about synodality

**An opening up of leadership roles to women is among the suggestions of a group report on synodality**

Catholics from the three London dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster have called for a "more participatory Church" after meeting over three years in response to the global Synod process of reform and renewal.

Drawn from 15 parishes across the three dioceses, the group submitted a document, "The Church we could become – an untorn net: beyond synod 2024" to the Vatican's Synod Office and to the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, as well as to the bishops of the three dioceses.

In the document, the group says, "The seeds of the Second Vatican Council might now bear fruit in one, holy, catholic, apostolic and synodal Church if only we nurture and allow these to flourish."

Members say they were inspired by the documentation which has emerged from the Synodal process at both continental and Vatican Assembly levels, but "found our considerations much less reflected in the responses of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales.

This risks breeding local frustrations when there appears to be little encouragement from all levels of clergy to make synodality happen, not least because much of what we have discussed in the past three years mirrors many of the conclusions of the 1980 National Pastoral Congress process and event. The ability to



*Pope Leo XIV, pictured making his first address to the College of Cardinals at the Synod Hall, has indicated his enthusiasm for the synodal process.*

Vatican Media Pool/SOPA Images via ZUMA Press Wire/Alamy

implement many of these was sadly blocked by the Vatican at that time." The title of the document is taken from "the untorn net" story in St John's Gospel (21:2-3; 5-6; 8-11). "Just as those gathered around Jesus were named, so everyone in the Church counts and should be named and recognised for who they are, particularly those who are

marginalised at the edges of Church and society," the group says. "The core of what it means to be Church, to be the People of God, is found in baptism not ordination. The Spirit's gifts which we receive in baptism and confirmation are the driving forces for our unity-in-diversity, for there is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'."

The Tablet is a weekly Catholic journal of news, opinion and culture, founded in 1840 and is available on subscription for either the print version or the digital version via their website: <https://www.thetablet.co.uk>

#### And in Hazel Grove and Offerton...

Whilst the response to the Synod both locally and nationally has been mixed, we do seek as a parish to be people of dialogue, ready to welcome all and to be bridge builders with each other and all those in our community around us; people who walk together and support each other and those around us.

Our parish groups seek to reach out and build connection with God, with each other and those around us. Emerging groups recently have been our St Peter's Helpers group, disability inclusion group, TOAST and the Chai and Chat group for all migrants to our local area.





# Travel on the television

Parishioner **Sue Ripley** saw several news reports on the television from Rome in April which featured our own pilgrims from the parish. This got her thinking of other travel programmes that she's watched and enjoyed, especially one currently that she feels follows the principles that TV programmes should "inform, educate and entertain."

For many years I have watched and enjoyed the various TV travel programmes, from 'Around the world in 80 days' with Michael Palin, cruising with Jane McDonald and more recently island hopping, the enthusiasm from Susan Calman travelling around the UK in her motorhome – to the challenges faced by couples who literally race across the world.

However, my enduring favourite presenter is former model and current actress Joanna Lumley. She and obviously a whole team behind the camera lens, engages in unusual and sometimes challenging journeys. Joanna manages to be delighted in her locations using sign language and spoken foreign language to communicate with different people she meets along the way. She also acknowledges the challenges faced by some of the individuals especially compared to our western lifestyle.

The new series 'Danube, Europe's mightiest river' follows this great river across ten European countries from the Black Forest in Germany to the Black Sea, Ukraine and Romania. As well as giving facts about the location and journey, describing the scenery and people she encounters, Joanna shows delight, charm and empathy with the people.

So far, in Episode 1 Joanna has visited a large convent in Maltersdorf-Pfaffenberg, Bavaria which is self sufficient in funding their charity work with an on-site bakery, baking bread, fruit bread, muffins and cupcakes. Astonishingly they also brew their own beer – with a picture of Master Brewer, Sister Doris on the bottle label! The nuns are encouraged to drink beer each



day (¼ to ½ glass per meal) with the idea that they will not drink too much, but enough to gain the health benefits from the natural barley and yeast. Sr Doris says that if Jesus had been born in Bavaria, He would have preferred beer to wine!

In a more sobering interview, Joanna meets Viktoria who was born and lives in Odessa, Ukraine. After the war started in 2022, her family encouraged her to leave Odessa and live in Regensburg in Germany, which is twinned with Odessa. She is now safe, working as a language teacher and has daily phone calls from Odessa – the challenge of having to start her life again with the potential of not being able to return is almost unbearable. When talking with Joanna, the connection of the river Danube that flows 2,000km to the Black Sea, gives her some feeling of being hopeful – and closer to her family who remain in the Black Sea port city of Odessa.

As Joanna says, this young lady, through no fault of her own, has had to leave the family and city that she knew and loved to start a new life in a new country. She quotes Hebrews 13:2: "be not inhospitable

to strangers, lest they be angels in disguise" – and of course she says it beautifully.

Another wonderful visit is to a café, Vollpension, in Austria where the staff are known as "Grannies" (or of grandparent age) – people who are not yet ready to stay at home after retirement. The general idea was to reduce loneliness and poverty in old age. Their life experiences and confidence to meet and greet the many tourists in Vienna has made the café a tourist attraction in its own right.

The world can seem so small – this is just Europe after all, but lives can still be so different. Yet there remains a hope for the rest of the journey: more fascinating people to meet and share their lives and experiences, to help reduce barriers of language, upbringing and religion. To simply connect and understand that 'different' is good. God created a world of different people, animals and plants and while there are troubles and conflicts there is more goodness in communicating with others to find we share similar ideas and goals for ourselves, our families and our world.

2025 has been going well for Footsteps. Our Christian community is growing and we've been so pleased to welcome more new faces from various denominations to share our journey in our Christian faith.

Footsteps is very relaxed - we work hard to ensure it's a friendly, informal setting that encourages thought, dialogue and interest in the aspects of our faith that unite us all. The parish centre gets rather full each evening, which is a real joy to see; we always have food for thought as well as food for consumption with nibbles a-plenty on offer.

## Will and Ruth

We were introduced to Ruth at our first meeting this year – well, the Book of Ruth, which is a lesser known part of the Bible. There are many characters in this short book and we were encouraged and guided through them by a very able Will Wilson.

Will was a great friend of the late John Mercer from our parish and indeed spoke at John's funeral. Will had attended the Church of England in his youth, then married and raised his children in the Catholic faith. Almost 25 years ago he became a Methodist lay preacher and he currently is welcomed to preach at other denominational churches outside the Methodist circuit. His professional teaching career began in 1971 working with special needs pupils in secondary education and continued in the same field, even after his official retirement, until a few years ago.

Will challenged us to consider what encouragement for our walk through life can be derived from the characters in the Book of Ruth; how does the story of Ruth reflect Paul's statement that we are chosen, guided and ultimately redeemed and if and how our own life story reflects these biblical truths. Wow!

## Bishop Sam

March brought us the delightful and engaging Bishop of Stockport, Sam Corley who thrilled and inspired a packed parish centre with a whirlwind tour of the entire Bible,



# Footsteps



helping us to meet some of its key characters and to understand the significance of key events. In his usual down to earth way, he helped us understand how the stories of old are actually the stories we and the world find ourselves in – now and in the future. He called it "God's big picture" and it was indeed fascinating, fun and interactive.

## Mary

In May we had the joy of hearing our 'very own' Mary Hardiman share her thoughts about the Jubilee year of hope and in particular what jubilee means and how we can experience the hope and freedom that God offers. Mary held us in the palm of her hand as she gently shared some of her personal experiences with her usual great humour, referred us to parts of Scripture and gave us much to consider about freedom and about hope. She suggested that whatever you do for Christ, even if it's just a smile or a prayer, makes you a pilgrim of hope. Read more from Mary on p38 in this issue.

## Fr Eamonn

Always a popular and inspiring speaker, Fr Eamonn Mulcahy CSSp, a Spiritan missionary priest from Manchester, came from his new base in Stoke on Trent to share his thoughts on



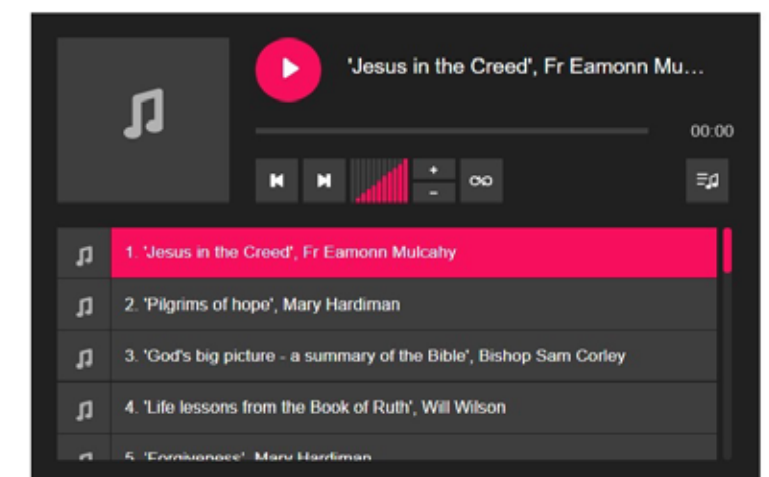
"Jesus in the Creed". This year is the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and its Creed that we all use in our various Christian denominations. He told the fascinating and intriguing story of what really went on in what was the first ever Ecumenical Council in the history of the church. By sheer coincidence (or maybe the Holy Spirit organised it) we met on the very day that the first Council had taken place – 19 June!

Rather than spoil your enjoyment, why not listen to these talks, which were recorded and uploaded to our new website? You'll find 24 of them in the News/Events page.

And the rest of 2025 holds some more jewels, including a talk from Sister Alicia Perez, who receives pilgrims at the end of the Camino de Santiago. You may remember the article on p20 in our last issue of Shine (17) from Mags Coffey, who shared her experience of walking the Camino.

We always publish the details of our forthcoming events in the parish newsletter, but if you'd like to be in the 'in crowd', send an Email to [footsteps2020@mail.com](mailto:footsteps2020@mail.com) asking to be included on our database.

## Some talks from our Footsteps programme





We met local artist **Maria-Elena O'Grady** recently, (Shine Issue 17, p22) after her work was completed on the stunning mural in our sister parish of St Philip's in Offerton. Now, she reviews her time spent in subsequent months.

When Fr Peter asked if I would create a mosaic of St Peter for St Peter's church, I was very flattered. I was delighted to have my amazing gifts acknowledged; and it was an opportunity to acknowledge Fr Peter's dedication to his parishioners in both churches – and his kindness to my husband.

I said, "Yes" at once. "So, Fr Peter, what size do you want this mosaic to be?" "Well," he said, "like the one you did for St Philip's."

"Great. Yes. It will be a pleasure," I said (although "In your dreams" was what I initially thought – with respect, of course!) The mosaic at St Philip's (known to its creator as BIG Muriel) is rather... BIG but I still said 'Yes'. So, as soon as Christmas was over and the last mince pie was eaten, I started the work.

I do not know why it had never occurred to me that St Peter had such a big following in Stockport, but a surprising amount of people here seem to be familiar with him... This made things a bit complicated for me. I would be working along happily, pleased with my handiwork and then somebody looking at it would remark, "No, I can't see Peter ever wearing that shade of blue". Or another would add, "Peter would never have let his hair grow that long." Someone else would say, "You've given him an insolent look. And he certainly was not insolent at all."

So, there were lots of changes, alterations and a couple of artistic tantrums. But after eight different heads, my grandson (a true artist) came to the rescue – and there was no need for head number 10! It goes without saying that some 'friend' from deepest Cheshire might pop in to say, "No, that is nothing like Peter's nose. He

## The tribulations of an artist

and Andrew had identical noses... and that is not it!" It has been a pleasure and a pain, but with all that changing and starting again, I have the practice and confidence to tackle the bathroom this autumn!

Seriously, I do hope Fr Peter and the parishioners of St Peter's will love having Old Peter with them. It was done with much love.

The mosaic was installed in our church to coincide with the feast of St Peter and Paul, 29 June. Do take time to stand and look at the amazing detail in this work of art: the key, the church, the cockerel, the upside down cross on which Peter was crucified, his name in Latin, Petrus. Look at the detail of his face, his eyes, his beard, his stance, preaching and teaching. Then stand back and look at the overall effect and feel a connection with this image of St Peter. A plaque has been added to the base of the mosaic which reads,

**"You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church"**

**This mosaic was created by Maria-Elena O'Grady to commemorate our parish centenary.**

We hope all parishioners and visitors to our two churches will enjoy sharing the privilege we have in our communities of Maria-Elena's artistry and craftsmanship.



## The Power of the Holy Spirit at work

**Janet Dunn** shares the effect reading a book had on her spiritual life.

**With Pentecost almost upon us I was thinking of God the Holy Spirit and how He works in the church.**

As an avid reader I have read many books. One or two have resonated with me so that now and again I still go back and re-read them.

One book in particular impacted me so much that it led to changing my spiritual life profoundly. On recommendation I read 'The Cross and the Switchblade' by Rev David Wilkerson. He was a Pentecostal preacher serving in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania.

One night he felt the Holy Spirit call him to leave his fairly cosy life as a rural pastor. The Holy Spirit called him to go and work among the most brutal, violent, evil street gangs of New York. West Side Story is very tame in comparison to what Rev Wilkerson came to face in New York.

His story begins in the late 1950s. His account of the power of the Holy Spirit working in his ministry had me gripped from the start. After finishing

the book, I thought "That's the God I want to know!"

So, I picked up my Bible and began to re-read it. I'd grown up knowing the Old Testament stories. I'd heard scripture read at Mass, studied them at school. I'd always been aware of the Holy Spirit. Looking back, I'd even seen where and how the Holy Spirit had made His presence known in my life. But now I was reading the familiar text with new eyes and understanding.

The Holy Spirit is at work in the Old Testament. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are on fire with the power of the Holy Spirit. But Rev Wilkerson's account is of the Holy Spirit working in more recent times. It shows that the Spirit at work in the Bible is still at work today.

I came to know that God.

A Father who loved the world so much that He sent His only Son into the world. A Father God who dances for joy on seeing me, celebrates a feast because of me (Zeph 3:17).

That's how our Father reacts over each one of us. A simple message of love.

I've come to know God the Son, Jesus. He loves us as the Father does. He willingly underwent the agony of the Cross to reconcile us to our Father. A Saviour who cares for us.

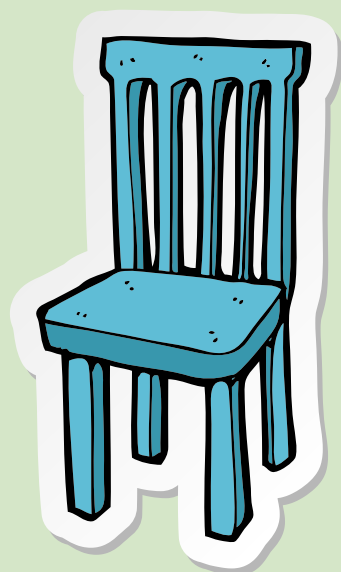
I've come to know God the Holy Spirit. He enables us to do all things in His name "Not by might or by power but by my Spirit" (Zech 4:6)

'The Cross and the Switchblade' has been recommended for all teenagers to read, but I'd recommend it to everyone.

We've all been given the gift of the Holy Spirit. We can all work in the power of the Spirit – if we dare to unwrap the gift that has been given to us.

This Pentecost I pray "Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on us. Come Holy Spirit send your gifts, inspire our hearts. Come Holy Spirit, lead us to the fulness of life. The promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ."





## The Naughty Chair

by Brendan Morrison

Up our stairs upon the landing  
Is the dullest, darkest spot  
Where the rainbow never reaches  
In a place that time forgot.  
It lives its sparse existence,  
By itself, alone, just there  
Until Mum or Dad send me to visit  
And stay a while with the naughty  
chair.

Now I know that I'm not very old,  
I've not been around that long,  
But honestly and cross my heart  
I've never seen it do anything wrong.  
It doesn't scream or stamp or shout  
Or steal or even swear.  
And despite all the things it doesn't do  
It's still called the naughty chair.

If sometimes when I'm maudlin,  
And if sometimes when I'm mad,  
If sometimes when I'm angry  
And if sometimes when I'm sad  
I'll drag myself to the landing  
And peer through the dusty air  
And ask if I can rest awhile  
On that lonely naughty chair.

I'll plonk right down and heave a sigh  
And confess just how I feel  
And tell it why I'm visiting,  
That what I did wasn't such a big deal.  
It always listens silently  
With patience and with care  
And never passes judgement,  
My wise old naughty chair.

It's really rather clever  
At sorting out my mind  
And making me feel good again,  
And to face, once more, mankind.  
I leave him with a smiling heart,  
He has a talent so precious and so rare,  
And say goodbye, for a while at least,  
To my comfy naughty chair.

Never once has he ever scolded me  
Or banished me away,  
But he helps me find my rainbow,  
And that's why I can truly say  
That to me he's not a naughty chair,  
And quite simply in the end  
He always has, and forever will be  
My bestest ever friend.

## On the way

Michael O'Malley writes:

One of the many joys of walking is meeting with a stranger on the way and pausing to pass the time of day. The weather is frequently commented on or the difficulty of the path. Often in the conversation connections are made. As barriers are lowered something deeper is shared: a new birth, a death or some other joy or tragedy.

Everyone has a tale to tell and of course we have ours, but it is good to put ourselves on hold and give space to the stranger. There is an inner universe in everyone we encounter on the way and our listening presence can allow some articulation of that lonely place.

A chance encounter can alter a life. The road to Emmaus is never far distant.

?

For pity's sake  
Do not ask me  
What I do.  
Rather ask me who  
I am.  
I am you  
I am everyman.  
Like you  
I have my joys,  
My sorrows.  
Come then  
Let us be!

## Emptying

Like a pebble scouring  
A pothole at the bottom  
Of a stream,  
To make room for more  
water;  
God scours the  
Soul through  
Prayer,  
To make room there  
For more God.

# Praying the Holy Rosary: A journey through the life of Jesus

As a convert to Catholicism, it took me a while to discover the beauty of the Holy Rosary. A friend gifted me a book called "Linking Your Beads" by Patricia Ann Kasten and what a gift it was. It taught me so much. I discovered that the Holy Rosary is so much more than a string of beads; it is a rhythm of prayer that draws me into focusing on the heart of the Gospel. Rooted deeply in Catholic tradition, it is a meditative devotion that honours Our Lady while leading me through the most profound moments of the life of Jesus.

The word 'rosary' comes from the Latin 'rosarium', meaning 'rose garden.' Each prayer offered is like a rose laid at the feet of Our Lady, a gesture of love and trust in her intercession. The Holy Rosary is composed of a series of prayers, including the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be, and the Hail, Holy Queen, all structured around a set of 'decades' — groups of ten Hail Marys.

But beyond its structure, the Holy Rosary is a spiritual pilgrimage. Each decade is devoted to a mystery, an event in the life of Jesus and Mary, that invites me to reflect and contemplate. There are four sets of mysteries: the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous mysteries. Each set of mysteries is traditionally prayed on specific days of the week:

Joyful mysteries (Mondays, Saturdays): focuses on the early life of Jesus, including the Annunciation, Visitation and Nativity.

Sorrowful mysteries (Tuesdays, Fridays): leads through Christ's Passion, from the Agony in the Garden to the Crucifixion.

Glorious mysteries (Wednesdays, Sundays): celebrates the Resurrection, Ascension and the glory of heaven.

Luminous mysteries (Thursdays): introduced by Pope St John Paul II, these reflect on Christ's public ministry, including the Baptism in

Joe O'Brien shares her experience of the Rosary



the Jordan and the institution of the Eucharist.

Each mystery is contemplated while praying the decade, turning a rote prayer into a living meditation on the life of Christ.

### How to pray the Rosary

- 1 Begin with the Sign of the Cross
- 2 Pray the Apostles' Creed on the crucifix
- 3 Say one Our Father on the first large bead
- 4 Say three Hail Marys on the next three small beads (for faith, hope, and charity)
- 5 Say a "Glory Be"
- 6 Announce the first mystery and begin the decade
- 7 One Our Father
- 8 Ten Hail Marys
- 9 One Glory Be (and optionally the Fatima Prayer: "O my Jesus...")
- 10 Repeat for all five mysteries
- 11 After the five decades, pray the "Hail, Holy Queen"
- 12 Conclude with the final prayer and the Sign of the Cross.

### Why pray the Rosary?

This was my first question and I discovered that the Holy Rosary is a powerful way of praying for many reasons:

#### It centres us on Christ

Though Marian in structure, the

Holy Rosary is deeply Christocentric, focusing my heart and mind on Jesus' life and mission.

#### It brings peace

The repetitive nature of the prayers calms the mind and settles the soul, creating space for contemplation.

**It's a weapon against darkness** Many saints have called the Holy Rosary a spiritual weapon, capable of bringing about conversion, healing and protection.

#### It unites us with Our Lady

Praying the Holy Rosary places me under her gentle guidance, allowing her to lead me closer to her Son.

In a busy and distracted world, the Rosary offers me a sacred pause. I can pray it in the quiet of my morning, during a walk, on the way to work, or before sleep. I don't need a church or a perfect environment — just a desire to pray. In good times and bad, the Holy Rosary is a wonderful prayer, offering me strength and peace.

The Holy Rosary is not about perfection, please be clear about that — it is about my presence.

When I first started, I simplified it by omitting some of the longer prayers whilst I learned the rhythm of the prayer as a whole and built it up.

Remember, "pray as you can, not as you can't." Whether you are like me and your mind wanders or you struggle to stay focused, what matters most is my being there.

Each prayer is an act of love, a step along the path of grace. As Our Lady said at Fatima, "Pray the Rosary every day." In doing so, we are not just reciting prayers, we are walking hand in hand with Our Lady through the life, death and resurrection of her son, Jesus.

On this sacred journey, the Holy Rosary becomes not only a devotion but a doorway to peace, to faith and to the heart of God.





# Mary's corner

Mary Hardiman shares her thoughts on hope and offers us a personal encouragement.

**In April I was very blessed to be part of our parish pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi (see pp8-11). 2025 was declared a year of Jubilee by our late Pope Francis with the motto 'Pilgrims of Hope'.**

Our time away got me thinking about the life of our Blessed Lord and where in his ministry and especially in his teaching he offers us this beautiful gift of hope. The writer Ronald Rolheiser says this:

'We are generally confused about hope. We see it in terms of wishful thinking, or as being a sense of optimism that some of our brothers and sisters are lucky enough to be born with. Hope isn't a wish or a mood; it is a perspective on life that needs to be grounded on a sufficient reality.'

That sufficient reality is God himself, made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ. He alone is enough.

Pope Francis declared that hope is the person of Jesus Christ. He is the answer to our deepest desires, our deepest longings and our deepest hopes.

Throughout his public life, we know that Our Lord offered hope to so many people; the sick, the lame, the blind, the deaf and dumb, the sinners and tax collectors and all those whom society had rejected were received into his special circle of compassion and inclusion.

But for me, the stand-out offer of hope comes from the Sermon on the Mount and especially when Jesus takes us through the Beatitudes, promising life beyond suffering. It's the message of the cross, that in and through trials and difficulties, God will be present and that, in the words of Julian of Norwich, all will be well.

As I outline what each part means to me, my prayer is that you will be encouraged by the hope that you bring to your families, your community, your parish and to all those you meet on your path of life.

Matthew 5: 1-12

**Blessed are the poor in spirit; theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.**

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux once said, *1 will give everything to Jesus and when I have nothing left to give, I will give him this nothing.*

Those who are poor in spirit need God in their lives. The opposite is someone who is self-reliant, always in control and who sees vulnerability as a weakness to be overcome and not as a virtue to be offered to God. The Unholy Trinity of 'me myself and I' can often be prevalent in those who are not poor in spirit.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you place yourself before God poor in spirit. Whenever you recognise that all you have, all your skills, gifts and talents are God's gift to you, that nothing is possible without him, that you have nothing to boast about, that there is nothing you can give him that he's not already given to you, that you need him for everything, then take heart; your humility

and poverty of spirit will not go to waste because the Kingdom of Heaven is all yours to enjoy.

That's hope.

**Blessed are those who mourn; they shall be comforted.**

Mourning is not just about bereavement, although that's important too. We know that you can never mourn unless you have loved. But this is about more than death. It's a radical call to face the pain of our brothers and sisters both at home and overseas which so many of us find terribly difficult.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you recognise and pay attention to the sorrows of the world, when you stand shoulder to shoulder with those who suffer loss, loss of a loved one, loss of a home, of security, of a safe childhood free from war, violence and abuse, when you share the sorrow of another so that they don't have to bear it alone. In other words, your mourning will not go to waste because God who loves you will give you all the comfort you need.

That's hope.

**Blessed are the meek; they shall inherit the earth.**

Thomas Merton once said that meekness is the biblical word for non-violence. It can be so difficult to live a non-violent life when the desire for revenge or the settling of scores is so deep-rooted. We all have anger within us; it is a very human emotion. But this God of love wants us to give him our hearts of stone so that he can transform them into hearts of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you endure difficulties with patience, when you don't fight back, when you allow God to soothe your anger, when you refuse to scapegoat others or blame groups of people for all that's wrong in society. It is then that your meekness and attitude of non-violence will not go to waste because the whole earth is yours to inherit.

That's hope.

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; they shall have their fill.**

Righteousness is a rather old-fashioned word that we rarely

## Pilgrims of Hope through the Beatitudes

use these days. Many equate it with adhering to religious practices and rules promoted by a particular church. But again, the Lord always goes deeper. For me, righteousness goes hand in hand with social justice, concern for our neighbour and making peace with our enemy.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you long for a world that is fair and decent, where poverty and hunger are things of a shameful past, where each person is acknowledged as precious and important, loved and forgiven. Whenever you do this your hunger and thirst will not go to waste because you shall have your fill.

That's hope.

**Blessed are the merciful; they shall have mercy shown them.**

Mercy can be defined as 'undeserved kindness'. Whilst we may at times give up on God, God never gives up on us. His mercy is inexhaustible. And in turn, this mercy is ours to give away.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you show undeserved kindness to those who hurt you, or when you refuse to go down the 'if he hits you, hit him back' road, or the 'hang 'em and flog 'em' way of thinking. When you do this, it will be worth it. With God, there is no 'tit for tat' exchange. His mercy does not depend on achievement or worthiness. And so when you show mercy, even and especially when others don't think you should, or when it is nearly impossible for you to do so, your mercy will not go to waste because the mercy you need will be granted to you.

That's hope.

**Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God.**

For me, purity of heart is less about chastity, celibacy and virtue and more about an intention to love and a freedom from selfishness. There is a huge difference and it can be very difficult to love and to let go in a world that is so egocentric; we all have our own selfish motives; we are all tempted to put our own needs before those of our neighbours'.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time your starting point is love and goodness and acceptance.

When you put the needs of others first, when you refuse to allow all that is evil to rob you of your joy, your purity of heart will not go to waste. You will see God in it and you will know God in it.

That's hope.

**Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called Children of God.**

Peace is so much more than the absence of conflict. In his book 'Blessed are You', Father Chris Thomas says that 'the peacemaker is the one who searches for and actively seeks to create right relationships with God, with our brothers and sisters and with our world'.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time you allow God to tame the animal instinct within you that seeks revenge and retribution and reprisal and a settling of scores for something that has hurt you. Your desire for peace, no matter how much it may cost you will not go to waste because you will be known as a Child of God. And there is no identity greater than this.

That's hope. And last of all...

**Blessed are you when people persecute you and speak evil of you on my account; rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.**

I believe that the one thing Jesus came on earth to do was to show us how we beloved of God we are. In a human body Jesus taught us what it can be to live a life that is free, transformed and full of hope.

The hope that is the person of Jesus Christ comes every time others make fun of you, call you a 'Bible Basher' or a 'Holy Joe' or a 'Weirdo' or whatever words they may use, when they threaten you or hurt you or seek to destroy your dignity as a Child of God because you do all of the above, your faith in Jesus Christ will not go to waste. You will be rewarded in heaven.

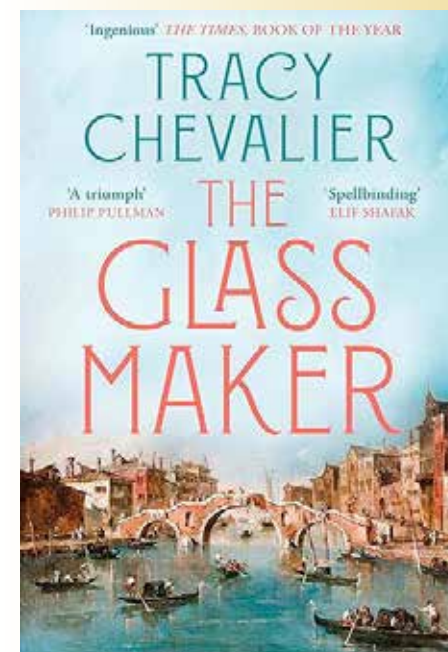
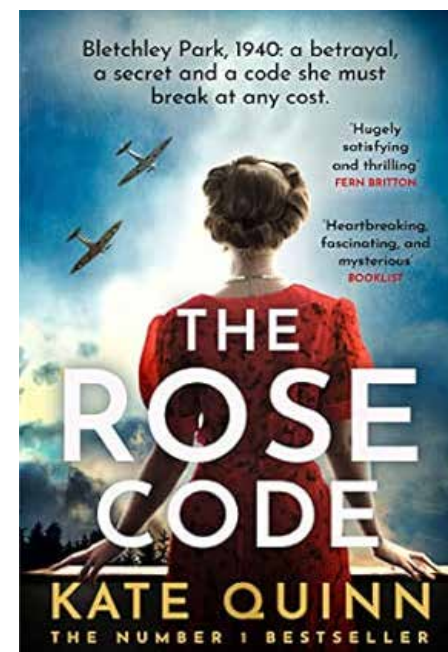
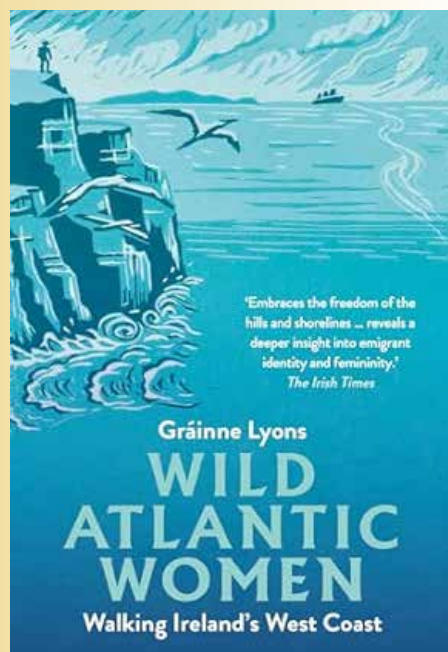
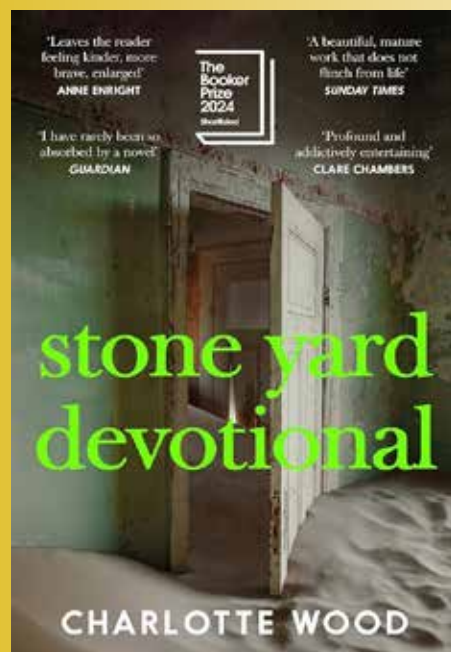
Is this not hope? You see hope is, as Pope Francis says, 'not a passive feeling but an active force that allows us to press forward'. Hope is a choice that is dynamic and life giving, because hope is the person of Jesus Christ. And I know that for some who suffer terrible anxiety and depression, hope is hard to see and hope is hard to choose. But in such times, maybe the desire for hope is a gift in itself.

Whatever you do for Christ, even if it's just a smile or a prayer makes you a Pilgrim of Hope.

But I wonder if, as you come to the end of this reflection, you can allow this God of Hope to simply curl his hand around your ear and whisper these words to you:

'Thank you, I see the hope you carry. I see the hope you give. I see all you're doing in my name and I love you.'





# St Peter's Book Club

As so often happens, the books we choose to read over a period of time are somehow bound together by a theme. This time it feels like we have been on a journey through time with women who are intelligent, resilient, complex and vital to the success of their communities. Please dip in to them; you won't be disappointed.

## Stone Yard Devotional by Charlotte Wood

Set amongst the isolated surroundings of Monaro, a region in New South Wales, Australia, is a cloistered community of nuns. A woman is drawn to this austere setting, located near to her childhood home, as she decides to flee her cosmopolitan, city life. She says, "I had a need, an animal need, to find a place I had never been, but which was still, in some undeniable way, my home"

This is a book with some big themes, ranging from caring for creation, to the pros and cons of religious life, to forgiveness and grief. The author's clever use of the plague of mice, which evokes the biblical plagues and suggests punishment and judgement, also serves to highlight that even though the narrator seeks refuge and escape, the infestation of mice reinforces that past guilt and trauma, or shame, cannot simply be shut out. Perhaps the greatest clue to this

## Wild Atlantic Women by Grainne Lyons

This is a true 'travelogue' story about Grainne Lyons, a Londoner born to Irish parents, who sets off on a journey to explore the rugged west coast of Ireland, whilst also seeking to understand the lives of eleven pioneering Irish women. Through her exploration of the lives of women rooted in a particular time and place,

St Peters' Book Club meets every three or four months. We have a meal and discuss the books we have read before agreeing on our next books. There is no pressure to read everything we recommend. Please do join us or get in touch if you would like to suggest a good book! Contact details can be found on page 43.

## Alison McGarr reviews the latest books

meditation on life is in the powerful contrast embedded in the title itself: Stone Yard Devotional. It is a story that focuses on the difficult, the spiritual struggle, coupled with grief, penance and the grace that emerges from the bleakness of the stone yard.

Grainne, at a crossroads in her own life, goes on a journey of self-discovery. As she describes the lives of the women and their struggles to survive, she cleverly shines a light on how a sense of place can connect us to our history and the people of our past. Anchored in the towns and villages along the Wild Atlantic Way, the journal is deeply concerned with themes of departure, return, resilience and cultural memory, which are central to the Irish diaspora. The women she meets and writes about are repositories of lived history; they serve to highlight the effects of cultural erasure through colonisation and the importance of retrieval and what it means to return – return to roots and walk the line between belonging and exile.

This is an innovative way to explore a beautiful landscape and it gives the reader a brief glimpse into Ireland's rich oral history. It might also inspire you to follow in Grainne's path.

## Small Pleasures by Clare Chambers

Set in 1957 in suburban London, the book focuses on the life of 39 year old Jean Swinney who lives with her mother. Unusually for the time, Jean holds her own as a feature writer with

the North Kent Echo, a local newspaper. Unlucky in love, she appears to lead a mundane life. That is until Gretchen Tilbury, a wife and mother, responds to an article in the paper: "Men No Longer Needed for Reproduction!" The editorial in the article focuses on the highly unusual concept of parthenogenesis, which is a type of asexual reproduction. Gretchen claims that her 10 year old daughter, Margaret was born without the involvement of a man. The paper is interested in running a story about this and Jean is given the task of investigating Gretchen's claim of a virgin birth. Despite her reservations about the validity of the story, Jean quickly becomes embroiled with the Tilbury family.

Without giving too much away, this feels like a story of its time – that is the post-war period when people didn't feel entitled to happiness and understood the concept of living ordinary, sacrificial lives. A time when sacrificing one's own happiness for the sake of someone else was just what people did.

## The Rose Code by Kate Quinn

An historical fiction novel set during World War II, centered on the codebreakers of Bletchley Park. It is a blend of espionage, friendship, betrayal and resilience. At the heart of the novel are three female protagonists, each from different social backgrounds but united by their work at Bletchley. The psychological and emotional cost of war and the clandestine nature of the

work done gives the reader an insight into the lives of those who fought the war without leaving the shores of England. Post-war life is also explored in the story and it is fraught with mental scars, institutional betrayal and a yearning for unattainable normality.

Like a lot of good historical fiction, the story is loosely based on historical fact – with characters like Alan Turing and Dilly Knox featuring and the Blitz of Coventry, which plays a significant role in the storyline. Most striking is the way 'The Rose Code' exposes how mental health was stigmatised in the 1940s – especially for women labelled as hysterical or who defied social norms by being too intelligent or assertive. The misuse of asylums to control or silence women is another historically grounded theme and adds to this portrayal of how women's brilliance was misunderstood and weaponised against them.

'The Rose Code' is a gripping story that celebrates the contribution of women in the war effort. They are depicted as agents of change who can solve critical military problems, uncover betrayals and challenge the status quo.

## The Glassmaker by Tracey Chevalier

This is a time-bending historical novel that spans over 500 years of Venetian history, viewed through the eyes of one woman: Orsola Rosso. Set on the island of Murano, the novel begins in the 15th century with Orsola, the daughter of a glassmaker who enters into the male-dominated glassmaking industry. She

lives on, through plagues, revolutions, industrial shifts, and even into the 21st century. Chevalier explores what it means to live through centuries, to witness change while remaining tied to one place and craft. Orsola's longevity is a metaphor for the art she creates – art that outlives the creator and for Venice, a place that evolves through the ages, from a Renaissance power to a modern tourist trap.

This is a lovely story that manages to blend historical facts with magic to create a beautiful tale as delicate and as powerful as the glass it celebrates.

## Instructions for a Heatwave by Maggie O'Farrell

The novel is set in London during the heatwave of 1976, and the heat is a metaphor for the emotional pressure of a family in crisis. Robert Riordan, a retired Irishman, goes out to buy a morning newspaper and never returns. His disappearance sets off a chain reaction of different responses from his wife and three adult children. At its core, the novel is a study of a fractured family, with sibling rivalries shaped by Catholic guilt, silence and avoidance. Each major character is hiding something and is wrestling with their sense of self and, whether literal or emotional, the characters are all exiled in some way.

It is difficult to say more because this isn't a novel with big dramatic twists and turns – it is the slow reveal of emotional truth, with a focus on how painful but necessary it is to face the past in order to move forward.



# The Cenci family

On the itinerary of the April 2025 Jubilee Pilgrimage was a walk from Castel Sant'Angelo to St Peter's Basilica. Before we set off I prayed for the souls of three members of the same family who were executed on the Ponte Sant'Angelo on 10 September 1599. They were Giacomo, Beatrice and Lucrezia Cenci (pronounced chenchee). Their crime – patricide.

Count Francesco Cenci was a cruel, miserly husband and father. His first wife, Ersilia Santacroce, had died. Together they had had five children. Cristoforo and Rocco had died violently in their late teens. Giacomo was married and lived with his wife in Rome. Beatrice lived at the family palazzo with her father, step-mother, Lucrezia and her younger brother, Paolo.

Being such a miser, Francesco did not want to pay a dowry for Beatrice to make a decent marriage. So, he had her incarcerated in an attic room of the palazzo. He had a jailer watch over her. Olimpio, was married with a family of his own. However, he and Beatrice fell in love and became lovers. It's said Beatrice became pregnant. Terrified of what Francesco would do, Olimpio and Beatrice plotted to get rid of Francesco, dragging a reluctant Lucrezia into their plan.

An opportunity arose when they went to stay at their summer home at Villa Cenci in Umbria. By now the child had been born and smuggled out of the palazzo to be raised by a friend of Beatrice as her own.

Lucrezia administered a sleeping draught to Francesco's wine. Whilst he slept in his bed, Olimpio smashed Francesco's head in with a mallet. Then he smashed the wood of the balcony, making a hole big enough to push the body through. It was meant to look like Francesco had accidentally fallen to his death.

The authorities were called to the Villa to confirm the death was accidental. However, suspicions

*Delving into history revealed some startling information for Janet Dunn*



Portrait of Beatrice Cenci

were immediately aroused as the wood of the balcony was good with no sign of rotting.

Beatrice, Lucrezia and Olimpio were arrested and taken to the Castel Sant'Angelo. There, Beatrice and Lucrezia were tortured by having their hands tied behind their backs then being suspended so their arms were pulled upwards. Beatrice refused to confess but Lucrezia, terrified, told the authorities everything.

Olimpio had been killed trying to escape en route to Rome.

Giacomo, though he wasn't at Villa Cenci and knew nothing of the plot was also arrested along with Paolo, who was only 15 years old.

Beatrice, Giacomo, Paolo and Lucrezia were tried by the Papal Court. Francesco had been a good source of income for the Papal coffers with all the many absolutions he'd had to purchase.

Also, there had been another recent case of a noble parent being killed by their offspring. So,

as an example to ward off a spate of children killing off parents, all four of them were found guilty of patricide.

Beatrice and Lucrezia were sentenced to be beheaded. Giacomo was sentenced to have his head smashed by a mallet but first he would have to undergo torture as he journeyed across the bridge. He was to have red hot pincers pull at his flesh. Paolo was sentenced to life as a galley slave and forced to watch the executions.

Lucrezia was dragged screaming to the scaffold and executed first. Beatrice was calm and serene as she mounted the scaffold. She was 22 years old. The crowd, moved by her youth and serenity, called for mercy and that she should be reprieved. The authorities denied the appeal and Beatrice was dispatched by the axe. Giacomo, bleeding and in pain from his tortured body was then bludgeoned to death with a heavy mallet.

I discovered all this from a book called 'The Fall of the Axe' by Philip Lindsay which is now out of print. Some accounts claim that Beatrice was raped by her father but there is no written evidence of this. It is believed the rape claim was added to embellish the story. Percy Shelley in his poem 'The Cenci' certainly takes up this claim. It is something that cannot be proved or disproved.

It is believed that Beatrice is buried at San Pietro in Montorio, Rome. Nothing is known of what happened to Giacomo and Lucrezia's bodies. Paolo, on the accession of a new pope, was released and pardoned after serving two years as a galley slave.

These are the ancestors of my husband and children who are direct descendants of Paolo Cenci.

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

### Celebrating liturgy

**Altar linen**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

**Altar servers**  
Elaine Rhodes: 07973 943238  
ellie.r.28@icloud.com

**Church cleaners**  
Margaret King: 0161 483 4584

**Eucharistic ministers**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

**Flower arrangers**  
Colette Christie: 07714 470854  
colette.christie4982@hotmail.co.uk

**Lay-led liturgy**  
Rachel McKay: 07724 749217  
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**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

**Readers**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

**Welcomers/stewarding**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

### Creating social activity

**Book club**  
Alison McGarr: 07792 107152  
ajmcgarr68@outlook.com

**Men's group**  
John McKay:  
07715 362403

**Parish newsletter**  
Parish office: 0161 483 3476

**Parish noticeboards**  
juliewilliams10@ymail.com

**Parish website**  
Chris Rhodes  
christopher.d.rhodes@virginmedia.com

**Special events**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072  
helenlyons1957@hotmail.co.uk

**Tea and Coffees, after Mass**  
Rachel McKay: 07724 749217  
mckay7897@hotmail.com

**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 and Sycamore programmes**  
Rachel McKay: 07724 749217  
mckay7897@hotmail.com

**Baptism programme**  
Anne-Marie Gallogly  
Karen Haines - justasec55@hotmail.com

**Confirmation programme**  
Fr Peter  
petersharrocks@stpetershazलगrove.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

Email address for the parish office is  
[admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk](mailto:admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk)

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

### Sharing faith

**Centering prayer**  
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296  
michaeldomalley@sky.com

**Footsteps**  
Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213  
footsteps2020@mail.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

**Mothers' prayers**  
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709  
terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

**Rosary groups: adult and children**  
Laura Small: 01625 876 752  
lauramsmall@hotmail.com

**Scripture and faith sharing group**  
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296  
michaeldomalley@sky.com

### Supporting families and youth

**Bereavement support**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072

**TOAST (Time On A Sunday Together) Children's liturgy**  
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709  
terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

**Little fishes**  
Anne Wroe: 07763 387001  
anne.wroe@sky.com

**Marriage and family life group**  
David Small: 01625 876 752

**SPY (St Peter's Youth) group**  
David Small: 01625 876 752

### Outreaching in the community

**Disability Inclusion group**  
Maura Beesley  
inclusionstpeters@gmail.com

**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@stpeterhazलगrove.org.uk

**LAMBS disco group**  
Kath Coll: 07592 755980  
Brenda Martin: 0161 483 7720  
brenmart46@gmail.com

**Lenten lunches**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072  
Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348

**Missio**  
Margaret King: 0161 483 4584  
Fiona Preece: 0161 456 4319

**Schools chaplaincy**  
St Peter's  
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 2431  
0161 483 3476

St Simon's  
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 9696  
0161 483 3476

St James' High School - Via School  
0161 482 6900, office@stjamesche.org.uk

Harrytown High School - Via School  
0161 430 5277  
office@harrytown.stockport.sch.uk

Aquinas 6th form college  
0161 483 3237  
Carmel.Scanlon@aquinas.ac.uk

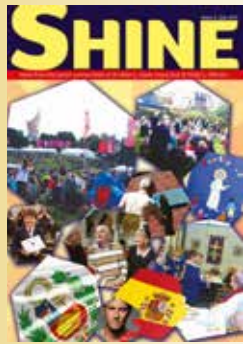
**St Peter's Helpers**  
stpetershelpers@gmail.com  
0161 483 3476

**St Peter's Refugee Project**  
Alison McGarr: 07792 107152  
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Issue 1, April 2017



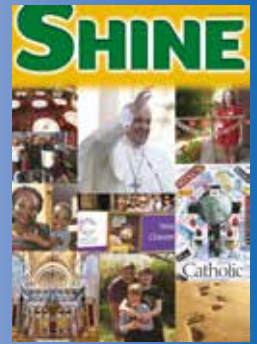
Issue 2, July 2017



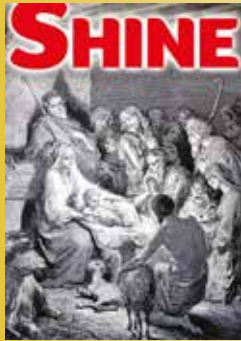
Issue 3, December 2017



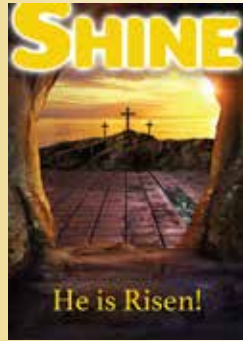
Issue 4, April 2018



Issue 5, September 2018



Issue 6, December 2018



Issue 7, April 2019



Issue 8, September 2019



Issue 9, December 2019



Issue 10, May 2020



Issue 11, December 2020



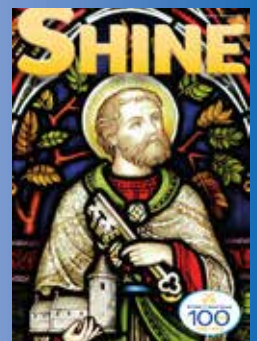
Issue 12, June 2021



Issue 13, July 2022



Issue 14, December 2022



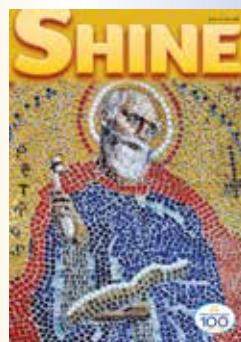
Issue 15, September 2023



Issue 16, April 2024



Issue 17, December 2024



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