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# Church isn't closed, just the buildings: facing the Coronavirus crisis together

**Food and hospitality has always been an important part of life at St George the Martyr, Southwark, writes the Revd Jonathan Sedgwick, Rector of St George's.**

For two years now we have regularly been cooking lunch in school holidays aimed at families experiencing holiday hunger. The Revd David Adamson, our curate, is usually head chef. He is committed to serving the kind of food you would want to share with family and friends for a special occasion, so our menus have included home-made pasta, tasty curries and a memorable Beef Wellington. Like many churches, we have a food bank and a Community Fridge so we have a good network of supermarkets offering us surplus food.

### Food for friends

When the current crisis kicked off, it was obvious that lots of our neighbours would struggle to get food, both financially and practically – especially if they needed to stay at home. We've had many generous donations – a particularly large cod from Borough Market was turned into 60 fish pies. The Food Hall at Harrods gave us some spectacular items. Fora, the meeting centre opposite the church, lent us two huge freezers. And congregation members and local residents alike have come forward to volunteer in lots of different roles: cooking, collecting, sorting and delivering. To them all, a huge thank you. It has meant that we have been able to give away hundreds of prepared meals, and many, many kilos of delicious fresh food.

For David, the inspiration behind the way we cook for church groups, and particularly for the holiday lunch club



**Cooking for the community: David Adamson portions up a huge cod (above); kitchen stories (above right); a volunteer prepares meals for delivery (bottom right).**

and therefore for our brothers and sisters in isolation, comes from the idea that the way we really value others is shown in the way we cook for them. As Christians, we should cook the same way for our friends as for those we don't know, or those in need.

This understanding of providing food for others naturally has at its roots the Eucharist; the bread that we eat there is the food that Christ gave up to the people who were closest to him – his body: "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

As believers in the Word made Flesh, with the Body and Blood of our Lord at the heart of our life, this sharing of food seems therefore both a practical and sacramental necessity. And it has, in turn, stimulated so much generosity in the hearts of our neighbours.

Next week (in line with the Waterloo Food Bank) we are moving to a delivery service which we think will comply with the Government's advice on physical distancing. See [www.stgeorge-themartyr.co.uk](http://www.stgeorge-themartyr.co.uk) for offers of food, help or for those in the SE1 area to request a delivery.

*For more on the response of parishes to the Coronavirus crisis, see pages 4-5*



**The Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett installed as Archdeacon of Croydon – see page 12**



"The Bishop of Southwark noted that this was a day of great joy and new beginnings, and that Rosemarie's long, faithful and inspirational service to God and his people in Southwark Diocese had begun a new and exciting chapter."

## A view from The BRIDGE



Our first concern in a crisis is for the health, safety and well-being of those we love, and those entrusted to our care. In the past few days and weeks we have been reminded that we are part of a global community as the threat of Coronavirus has become clear and, nation by nation, emergency measures have transformed the daily lives of us all.

I became aware of the rapid spread of the disease at the beginning of Lent, whilst co-leading the first Ecumenical Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The night before we were due to visit the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the West Bank was locked down and our happy band of 70 pilgrims was barred from going there. We were one of the last Pilgrimage groups to fly out. Since then, my concern and prayers have been for the Diocesan family of parishes and other communities of faith, indeed for all people who have been affected by the virus.

The message from our Government has been very simple and very clear: Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, Save Lives. The simplicity of this message is its greatest compelling strength. It has needed to be, given the risk to life, and the danger of stretching the capacity of our NHS to breaking point. The impact on lives and livelihoods, and the mental health of many people, particularly those who are isolated or vulnerable, or living in cramped accommodation, is also considerable.

In all this, much is being threatened and endangered; but there is much to be gained as well. It is wonderful to learn that in the past 24 hours, at the time of writing, more than half a

million people have offered voluntary service to support the NHS. I also know that in many of our parishes the Church is at the heart of emerging local networks which will reach out to those most in need.

I express my thanks and appreciation, especially for all that is being extended in prayer and pastoral care. Many of us are able to put a renewed focus on home and family as we take this opportunity to give precious time to each other. Equally, many of us are living alone and relying on other networks of support.

We are also recovering the New Testament understanding of Church as people, not buildings, and as believers drawn together by their shared faith, hope and love in Jesus Christ. We are finding new ways in which we can worship in our homes, and making ever more creative use of social media and other helpful technologies.

Just as the Government message is simple and compelling, let us take this opportunity to look at the world around us more simply: the simple beauty of springtime, with trees bursting into blossom, is very apparent in the many open spaces of South London which people are accessing for exercise and recreation, whilst observing proper social distancing; the simple peace of a world in which there is less traffic and less pollution; above all, the simple peace that is to be found in prayer, and in our eternal Hope, new every morning as we journey with the suffering Lord towards Holy Week and Easter, when we shall proclaim that Christ is Risen.

**Bishop Christopher**



## LET US PRAY

### APRIL

The Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, has invited us all to pray together for our nation and for all those affected by the coronavirus at 1pm each day. Please pause in whatever you are doing and say the Lord's Prayer, and again at 7pm. Where it is safe to do so perhaps you could light a candle in your window each evening as a symbol of Christ's light in our world at this dark time.

The Dean of Southwark, the Very Revd Andrew Nunn, has written the following prayer, which you may wish to use:

*Please pray for all who are involved in the response to this crisis worldwide.*

*Loving God,  
source of healing and comfort,  
fill us with your grace,  
that the sick may be made whole,  
that those who care for us may be strengthened,  
that the anxious may be calmed,  
and those most vulnerable be protected  
in the power of Spirit  
in the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*



To listen to an audio version of this prayer, visit our website: [southwark.anglican.org/news/dailyprayer](https://southwark.anglican.org/news/dailyprayer)

## The Bridge goes online only

With the current restrictions in place, the decision has been taken for *The Bridge* to go online only until July. This is in order to safeguard the welfare of distributors and parishioners.

We will continue to provide news from – and for – our parishes in PDF and online form every month. As ever, we welcome your contributions, and want to hear and share how you are coping with life in this very different world.

The Press and Communications team continue to be a hub for information. If you have a general query, please contact Steve Harris, Communications Officer, on [steve.harris@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:steve.harris@southwark.anglican.org), while our Social Media Manager Daniel Stone, on [daniel.stone@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:daniel.stone@southwark.anglican.org), can help with social media and website-related queries.

Our online communications are continuing as usual. Please get in touch via Twitter @SouthwarkCofE or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthwarkCofE>. You can also read weekly updates via the blog, Hearts on Fire, at <http://southwarkcofe.tumblr.com>



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#### Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

The MAY edition is due to be published online on 1 May 2020. Material for that edition must be with Wendy S Robins by e-mail by **MONDAY 20 APRIL**.

Space limitations mean that we cannot guarantee to publish everything we receive and material may be edited. All photographs submitted for publication are assumed to have the necessary permission for printing. So, please ensure that people are happy for their photographs to be submitted before you do so.

Forms for permission for the use of photographs of children and adults who may be vulnerable can be found at [southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-procedures](https://southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-procedures)

# Southwark chaplain joins Nurses' League



The Revd Stanley Njoka, Lead Chaplain at East Surrey Hospital, has been invited to join the King's College Hospital Nurses' League as an honorary member.

Honorary membership is given in recognition of exceptional contributions from those who have become closely associated with the League. The committee decided unanimously that

Stanley should receive this honour in recognition of the work he has done in supporting the League through his time in the chaplaincy at King's and for his years of friendship to the League's members.

# Bishops stand up for climate justice in Parliament Square



Pictured above, from left: the Revd Joshua Rey, Bishop Christopher, the Revd Vanessa Elston, Fleur Anderson, MP for Putney, Bishop Jonathan and Bishop Richard join a Christian Aid prayer vigil outside the Houses of Parliament on 11 March, calling for action on climate change.

# PCC Secretaries' Conference: the chance to refresh relationships



As Parish Manager at St Laurence, Catford, I was intrigued by the PCC Secretaries' and Parish Administrators' Conference in February, writes the Revd Sue Charles.

Would it be excellent or would it be a "teaching my grandmother to suck eggs" experience? I think it would be fair to say that it wouldn't have been my first choice of activity on a Saturday, but our PCC Secretary, Joyce, and I set off for Kennington hoping that the day would be useful... and it was. With a great many attendees, and some excellent catering, this was both an educational and networking pleasure.

There were a number of speakers (each may have had something crucial to say to some) and they all gave us a lot of valuable information and a good general overview. The Venerable Jane Steen, Archdeacon of Woolwich, gave us a fun and memorable presentation on the new Church Representation Rules 2020 (which was no mean feat), and all the other presenters (including

David Loft, Director of Human Resources for the Diocese) were both engaging and informative.

We were given a goodie bag which contained a copy of the Church Representation Rules 2020, a pen (always a must for managers and secretaries), and a wonderful bookmark from the Diocese with an administrator's prayer on it, which hasn't left my diary.

The welcome and hospitality at St Mark, Kennington, was wonderful – and the breaks were a chance to get to know others or to refresh our relationships. It was also really valuable to be able to speak to someone face-to-face about any thorny issues – and, in fact, the personal nature of the conference was one of its strengths.

If you are a PCC Secretary or Parish Administrator, and you weren't able to attend the conference, I would very strongly recommend it to you in future.

# A message from the Diocesan Secretary

Dear friends,

In every church and every parish, the Coronavirus is having a dramatic impact. This affects not only how we demonstrate our faith, hope and love as Christians in our communities whilst our church buildings are closed, but also how we seek to sustain finances to "be Church" across our amazing and diverse Diocese. Finances are causing understandable concern at church, parish and Diocesan level and we need to work together, continuing to resource parishes across the Diocese.

Thank you so much for all that you are doing, especially our Parish Treasurers and other volunteers, working hard to seek to sustain their parish finances. This is so important at this time, as we seek not only to continue our lives and work now, but also to be able to be there for our communities when the threat of the coronavirus has lifted in the future.

In the same way as it is vital to continue to sustain our parish finances, it is also important that you please continue to pay your Parish Support Fund (PSF) pledge. Should you be able to give more generously at this time to support our ministry, please do. As you know, the PSF is used to pay our clergy stipends and pensions, provide housing, and so much more.

We need to be able to resource our parishes with ministers now, but, more than that, the PSF also looks to the future, supporting ordinands, curates and lay ministry and development. It also ensures that we are fit for purpose in areas such as safeguarding, and in our financial and human resources advice to parishes. Whilst we urge you to continue to support the Diocese through the PSF, please do contact us if you need advice and help.

In the meantime, I am taking every step I can to reduce expenditure in our offices to ensure we prioritise front-line ministry. Thank you for our partnership, holding fast to our faith as we go through these extraordinary times together and as we approach Holy Week and Easter.

**Ruth Martin**



# PSF Vision evenings cancelled

It is with regret that the Bishop and senior staff have made the decision to cancel the Vision events because of ongoing uncertainties as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19).



## IN FOCUS...

### Coronavirus crisis

# Being one Body while we're apart

*The message from the Bishop's Coronavirus Task Group is that we remain the Body of Christ even when we cannot be together, writes Wendy S Robins, Director of Press and Communications, and that our ministry is more important than ever during these days.*

These are unprecedented times in the Diocese of Southwark and, as we learn to be Church in a different way, Bishop Christopher has set up a Coronavirus Task Group (CTG) in order to communicate information, help and reassurance to the clergy and people of the Diocese.

The CTG consists of Bishop Christopher; the Dean of Southwark, the Very Revd Andrew Nunn; the Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich, the Venerable Alastair Cutting; the Diocesan Secretary, Ruth Martin; and the Director of Press and Communications, the Revd Canon Wendy Robins.

As things have changed day by day, the Group has met regularly, sometimes daily, to ensure that people's questions and concerns are dealt with in the most appropriate way.

Before the formation of the CTG, Press and Communications sent a number of e-mails to parishes pointing them to the latest information on the Church of England website. Since these, clergy have received a pastoral letter from all the Bishops, a further three letters from Bishop Christopher on behalf of the CTG and four CTG bulletins updating them on government and Church of England guidance regarding their church buildings, services, funerals and more.

The CTG has sought to ensure that as wide a group as possible are aware of material that is relevant to their ministries, so letters from the Bishops and the CTG Bulletins have also been also copied to lay ministers, Churchwardens and Deanery Lay Chairs.

Furthermore, the material is available on the Diocesan website at [southwark.anglican.org/coronavirus/](https://southwark.anglican.org/coronavirus/)

In their letters, the Bishops encourage us to put our faith in God whilst finding new ways to be Church in the face of

*'We are called to show that we are Christ's disciples by loving one another and reaching out with love and compassion'*

restrictions which mean we can no longer meet in person as the Body of Christ. They tell us that we will continue to walk with hearts on fire, loving God, walking with Jesus and led by the Spirit. This is the hope that sustains us, and the hope we are called to offer.

They remind us that we are called to show that we are Christ's disciples by loving one another and reaching out with



Messages of hope being left around the parish of All Saints, Carshalton.

love and compassion to those in need. We continue to be the Body of Christ, they say, and in the face of perils and adversity we become yet more the Church, for it is by encountering these challenges in a right spirit and trusting in God that we are forged into the image of Christ and become the people God made us to be.

Bishop Christopher asks us all to think of spontaneous acts of kindness to our neighbours so that we can show the love of Christ in all we do. Now is the hour to mobilise ourselves to serve – and to take good care of ourselves.

The CTG will continue to meet at least twice a week throughout this national emergency and will send updates to the parishes as the situation begins to change. Please pray for the group and join with Bishop Christopher in stopping at 1.00pm to say the Lord's Prayer and at 7.00pm to light a candle and repeat the Lord's Prayer.

At this time, as we find new ways of sharing in fellowship and deepening our faith, there is a new dedicated button on the website home page for Children and Young People containing a host of material for use with families.

The Prayer section on the website is also adding material to help to sustain us at this unprecedented time. And, as we find new ways to be Church, it is important

too that those who can safely do things such as shop for others, or staff our food banks and become involved in other random acts of kindness, should do so.

We want to show that God's love and care is for all and especially so at difficult times. We are keen to share these actions with others to inspire them to act too, but also to encourage one another as we see God at work in our troubled world.

So please do tell us what your parish is doing. Make sure we know if you are streaming your services so that we can add them to our ever-growing list which can be found at [southwark.anglican.org/churchonline](https://southwark.anglican.org/churchonline) (e-mail [daniel.stone@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:daniel.stone@southwark.anglican.org) to be included).

Please also tell us about other things that you are doing so that we can share these initiatives widely across the Diocese. You can send material for publication here in *The Bridge* next month or on the newly developing section of the website which will share fresh expressions of being church in this new situation (e-mail [bridge@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:bridge@southwark.anglican.org)).

Please tell us, too, if you have found any books or prayer and reflective material to be helpful so that we can share your recommendations with others. Once again, please e-mail [bridge@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:bridge@southwark.anglican.org)

## St Margaret, Putney's care in the community

In the early days of the Coronavirus crisis, St Margaret, Putney set up a volunteer task force and crowdfunding page to bring essentials to those in isolation, running errands and checking in with more vulnerable people.

"We want to make sure that every neighbour feels cared for, valued and not alone in this time of uncertainty – neighbourly help is just a phone call away," they said.

Sadly, St Margaret's has had to close its



doors but is streaming daily prayer and services via Facebook on: <https://www.facebook.com/StMargaretsPutney>

## Help is just a phone call away...

As the Coronavirus crisis continues, community charity Oasis is launching a "friendship phone line" for the lonely and anxious along with a *Guidance for finding calm* tips sheet for use when people are struggling with anxiety.

"For those most at risk from the virus, staying at home may be a desperately lonely experience," said Oasis Founder and Ecumenical Canon at Southwark Cathedral, the Revd Steve Chalke. "That's why we're launching a national phone service – offering a listening ear

and giving people a chance to chat. The number is 020 7921 4272, and is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday."

He added: "This is not an advice line, it's an offer of company and kindness on the other end of the phone, at a time when many of us will feel more anxious or alone. Kindness and listening services are as vital as food supplies."

Find the "tips for calm" sheet at <https://www.oasisuk.org/coronavirus>

Life under lockdown: new ways of being Church

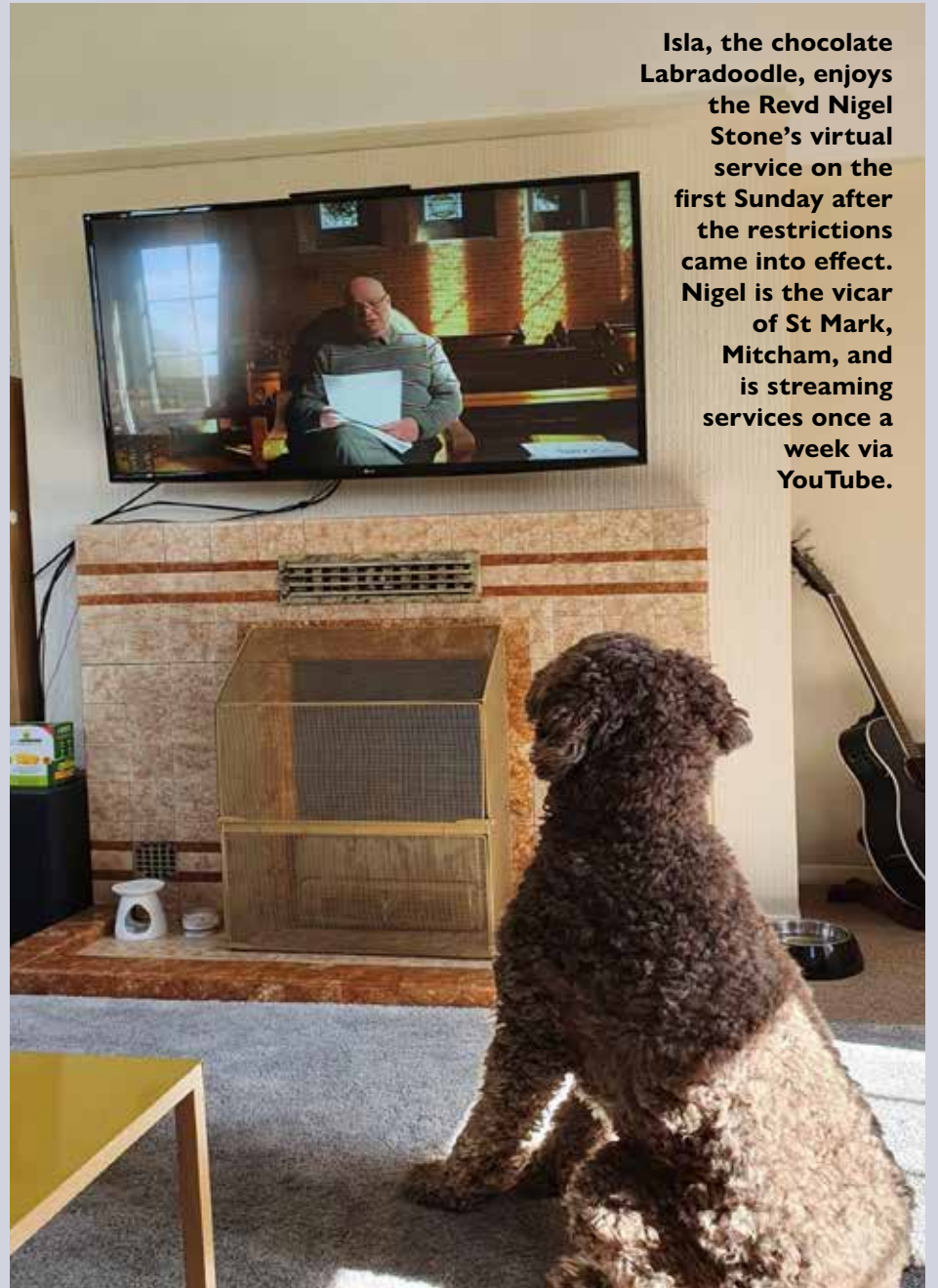


Amy Douthett and family take part remotely in the St Michael, Barnes Mothering Sunday service (above). The Revd Tim Goode, Rector of St Margaret, Lee, has set up a chapel in his study from where he will stream morning prayer every day (below).



Ascension, Balham Hill has transformed its Parish Coffee initiative into Parish Outreach, a community kitchen, and Parish Drop Off, a hub for people to leave donations for vulnerable and in-need people.

The screen capture on the left shows a volunteer preparing the meals for delivery.



Isla, the chocolate Labradoodle, enjoys the Revd Nigel Stone's virtual service on the first Sunday after the restrictions came into effect. Nigel is the vicar of St Mark, Mitcham, and is streaming services once a week via YouTube.



Joining Christ Church, East Greenwich's live-streamed Sunday service.



Find a list of churches offering virtual services in the Diocese at <https://southwark.anglican.org/churchonline>  
Find the latest advice from the Coronavirus Task Group at <https://southwark.anglican.org/coronavirus>



## DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

*Pilgrimage: the Holy Land*

# The road to the Resurrection

*In part one of our special four-page section on pilgrimage, Wendy S Robins, Director of Press and Communications, recalls the Ecumenical Pilgrimage to the Holy Land while, overleaf, the Revd Ruth Lampard reveals that spiritual journeys can happen anywhere – even in lockdown*

When we planned this centre spread, we could not have known the circumstances into which we were going to be publishing the paper. So much has changed so quickly.

It's hard to imagine that, just over a month ago, 67 people from the Anglican Diocese and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark were on an Ecumenical Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

It was the first such pilgrimage and it was a great success. We were able to experience first-hand the spiritual communion necessitated by our desire to have both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Rites. For the first time many of us experienced being at a service and receiving a blessing rather than the bread and wine. We didn't how important this experience was going to be as we have become reliant upon this kind of spiritual communion for the foreseeable future.

Diocesan Pilgrimages always happen during Lent and are a special way of beginning our journey through Lent to Holy Week and Easter.

Yet this pilgrimage was different because it was ecumenical and also because it was affected by the presence of Coronavirus, early signs of what was to come for many.

The Pilgrims couldn't visit Bethlehem, which was particularly hard on those who had not been to the Holy Land before and were looking forward to seeing the Church of the Nativity. But we visited the Comboni sisters in Bethany instead and learned about their work with the Bedouin and others who were, at that time, locked down in the West Bank because of the virus. You can read about their work here: <https://southwarkpilgrimages.com/recent-posts/an-unexpected-change-of-plans/> and here:



*For the first time many of us experienced receiving a blessing at a service rather than the bread and wine*

<https://southwarkpilgrimages.com/recent-posts/pilgrims-reflection-2/>

We couldn't see the church over Jacob's Well either as this is near Jericho in the West Bank and thus inaccessible. A change of plans on our last day meant that we were unable to go to Caesarea Maritima and receive anointing for our onward pilgrimage of faith as we had to catch an earlier flight home. Fortunately,

we were able to bring forward the boat trip on Lake Galilee and were anointed and received a small cross which had been blessed, floating on the Lake as the sun set.

For me this has become a metaphor both for our present times and for our pilgrimage in the Christian faith. In planning these pages we wanted to offer some insight into our pilgrimages of faith and the journey through Lent, a time for self-examination and repentance in preparation for the triduum of Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Day. The joy of Easter morning is so much more intense because of the previous 40 days in which, through fasting and prayer and acts of charity, we have prepared for living the resurrection joy.

Our Christian journey may often seem bumpy as we encounter difficult moments in life and this time seems to be another



Clockwise from above: sunset over Lake Galilee; Bishop Christopher anoints the pilgrims; carrying the cross through Jerusalem; renewing baptismal vows at Banias.

**“What touched our hearts most was that we glimpsed the unity for which Jesus prayed”**

This was always going to be a special journey taken to mark our 50th wedding anniversary but we did not anticipate quite how blessed it was going to be.

The programme was packed; it will take time to process it all. But as we reflect, our focus, surprisingly, is not primarily on the places we visited.

Of course it was wonderful to look down on Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, to follow in Jesus’ steps to the Garden of Gethsemane, and pray the Stations of the Cross carrying a cross up the Via Dolorosa.

We prayed where Jesus was condemned to death and where Peter denied his Lord. It was awesome to walk in the hills of Galilee, and to take a boat on the Sea of Galilee where we watched the moon rise while being anointed by our two bishops.

We wept as we prayed in the various sites in Nazareth where the Holy Family had lived, and renewed our baptismal vows being sprinkled with water from the Jordan. As Bishop Paul Hendricks (Auxiliary Bishop in the Roman Catholic

Archdiocese of Southwark) said, it was a baptism of the imagination feeding our meditation now we are home.

Yet what touched our hearts most was that we glimpsed the unity for which Jesus prayed. We shared in prayer, received blessings from each other and renewed our baptismal vows together. We worshipped together in the Mass and the Eucharist, respecting our respective disciplines yet experiencing a profound sense of spiritual communion. It was a foretaste of that glorious day when we will share fully at the Lord’s table. After this week together that day seems not only possible but close. We experienced a model of what life could be like if we practised such unity in our local communities.

We came home pondering all this in our hearts. The deep unity we felt was a gift that we received because we were walking together on the way of Our Lord. On this pilgrimage we were able to walk in his actual footsteps. Now the challenge is to continue to do so in our daily lives.

**Barbara and Don Woods**



**“This was my first time in the Holy Land”**

This was my first time on pilgrimage and visiting the Holy Land.

My highlights: renewing baptism promises; celebrating Eucharist in outdoor chapels; unaccompanied singing in churches with wonderful acoustics; being anointed with oil on the Sea of Galilee; carrying the cross on the Via Dolorosa; meeting a retired Roman Catholic bishop at the Latin Patriarchate who was so positive about the ecumenical nature of our pilgrimage; hearing the testimony of the Comboni sisters caring for Bedouin people in Palestine; walking through the Mount of Olives.

The spiritual aspects of pilgrimage were well planned with the most made of every opportunity –

related Bible readings, morning prayer and Compline, Eucharists in a variety of locations, as well as conversations with other Christians throughout the week.

The clergy, organisers and guides on the trip were excellent, often seen speaking to those who were on their own, or offering an arm or assistance for those with mobility difficulties. They coped well with changes to the plan, such as not being allowed to visit Bethlehem and our return flight being rescheduled.

The only downside was that I came back with hundreds of photos and memories, which will take time to process, and I am really tired and wishing I could sleep past 6.00am.

**Jill Gregson**



bump. Yet, this too can be a pilgrimage of faith for us. It may not be easy but if we continue to reflect upon the sacrifice of God in Christ and all that this has meant for us and humanity, we will find peace and joy. Our pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a gathering in which people could share their thoughts and reflections. So much of what we do as Christians is in community and we need to find new ways to journey together as a community this Eastertide.

As we enter these last days before Holy Week we pray that you will have a blessed Holy Week and joyful Easter and that you will know the presence of the Risen Lord in your lives even at this challenging time.

Find the story of our pilgrims’ journey in the Holy Land at <https://southwarkpilgrimages.com/>; please share details of your own journeys through Holy Week, Easter and beyond by e-mailing [bridge@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:bridge@southwark.anglican.org)

**Going on a spiritual journey – aged 10**



**The pilgrimage was a big deal for St Peter’s, writes Zoe Moughtin-Mumby, aged 10.**

It was a journey from St Peter, Walworth to St Peter’s Basilica in Rome. It was four days and so it was a good amount. Thirty-six people from St Peter’s church went and there were six children (me, Ana, Joy, Joel, Mitchell and Shalom) and 31 adults (I’m not going to list them). We stayed at a convent which was cosy and had a delicious breakfast!

We spent most of our time either following our guide around different holy places, sightseeing, or relaxing in the convent. We took lots of pictures! We saw a lot of churches and we went to the Vatican. We worshipped at All Saint’s Rome on Sunday. We also went to the Anglican Centre in Rome and we met some Norwegians there.

What I remember most about the experience is praying at St Peter’s tomb (above) and also just the whole Basilica and touching the foot of St Peter’s statue. That made me feel quite special as a lot of other people including important people have touched that foot. I felt closer to God on the pilgrimage and I grew closer to the other pilgrims because I spent nearly all my time with them.

One amazing thing was that Bishop Christopher came with us, and sat with us children all the time when we were eating.

This was an amazing journey spiritually and physically, although it was very tiring. If you have the opportunity to go on a pilgrimage definitely take it!

**Further reading**



**The Diocese of Bath and Wells has created a comprehensive resource on undertaking a pilgrimage at home.**

Find it at [http://southwark.anglican.org/downloads/cypmm/pilgrimage\\_at\\_home\\_bath\\_wells.docx](http://southwark.anglican.org/downloads/cypmm/pilgrimage_at_home_bath_wells.docx)



## DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

*Pilgrimage: at home*

# Follow The Way without leaving the house

*In these uncertain times, as we stay indoors, the idea of going on pilgrimage may seem far distant. However, as the Revd Ruth Lampard reveals, pilgrimage is about far more than a journey through space. Here, she shares her own experiences of undertaking a spiritual journey without leaving home.*

How do you go for a walk when you can't? My Virtual Pilgrimage started in May 2018, and now so many of us can't get out and about, perhaps this might be a Way to consider?

I've always wanted to walk the Camino de Santiago – as a curate I'd led a parish trip to Santiago de Compostela. I refused attempts to call ourselves pilgrims, as we weren't actually walking, but I did resolve to walk it one day.

Struck down by a viral illness in July 2015, while working as a Chaplain for Chapter 1, a charity supporting people at risk of homelessness, I never recovered. Persistent flu-like symptoms, cognitive impairment, deep unrelenting fatigue and a profound intolerance to exercise led to a diagnosis of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis or ME. There is currently no effective treatment. The key to managing the illness and not deteriorating is to stay within your available energy; consistently doing too much can lead to permanent deterioration.

But I was inspired by these words in a *Guardian* article about the Camino de Santiago by Jay Griffiths on 29 May 2018: "You walk The Way, and the way you walk matters. It has an ethic. Be curious; be kind; be generous; trust that The Way will provide". I simply decided to set off from St Jean Pied de Port and walk the Camino.

I decided to walk the way I could, not the way I couldn't, so: virtually. My Virtual Camino had a simple plan: I used my daily step counter to track my steps against the map of the Camino. Every day, rather than just taking steps around the house or neighbourhood, my steps were mapped against the hills and great plains of Northern Spain; my hills were mountains

of housework and daily living; great plains, the hours spent resting – body and brain in neutral, allowing my batteries to recover from the energy expended.

Living a hyper-local life, basically within four walls or the immediate neighbourhood (I can't walk to and round the local park), life is very confined.

So travelling virtually opened up realms of people, place, history and community: I drew on the full resources of the internet to explore each section of the walk, delving into the history of the town or villages I passed through, enjoying the videos and blogs of people who had walked that Stage of the Camino.

I was joined on Twitter by people who had walked the Camino and shared their



*"You walk The Way, and the way you walk matters. It has an ethic. Be curious; be kind; be generous; trust that The Way will provide."*

pictures with me: my virtual journey was a real-time journey too. It took me 271 days to complete the Camino, most days walking two to four kilometres.

As well as "travelling virtually" I'm exploring, digging deep into possibilities of the hyper-local, which in our daily rush, and urge to travel, seems to have become foreign territory.

Finding Twitter was a godsend. Because of its very short character limit, it is



an accessible lifeline for me and many people with chronic illness and disability. We are able to meet, chat and share life companionably when able: the kind of mix of light and deep levels of interaction most people get by going to work, the shops, church and community events. There's a lot of support and a lot of thankfulness, even within the context of very curtailed and dis-abled lives.

So my Virtual Camino also consisted of daily tweets, sometimes a short thread about my Virtual Camino: a bit about the day I'd had, how far I'd walked, where I was, sharing stories, pictures and history of that part of the Camino. I'd also share conversations with people I'd fallen into company with on Twitter: rather as pilgrims fall into company with people and exchange a bit about life and faith and then move on to meet again later, so too in the virtual world.

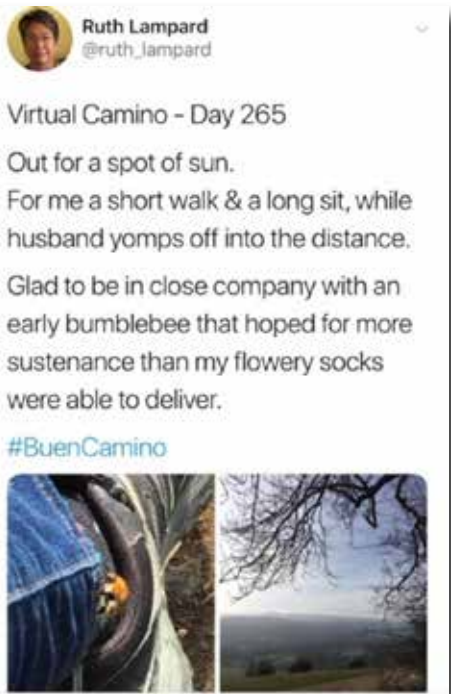
So who are my companions on Twitter? People with chronic illness and disability – particularly people with severe and very severe ME for whom my levels of activity are unthinkable. Whilst, in the mainstream community, my circumstances are very reduced, for very many I'm in company with, I'm an epic traveller.

I follow people who bring delight to the day: at the moment @SeaSkyCraster posts a photo of his sea view every morning and @CarlBovisNature tweets pictures of robins and chaffinches (see page 9); nature writers, photographers, scientists, medical researchers, church and community friends, writers, people on the margins trying to be heard, oh, and some clergy. Together on Twitter travelling companionably, sometimes wrangling and sometimes tangling with big issues.

I chose to frame myself as "pilgrim" in part because of the Camino but also because that is a central motif in the Christian faith – of someone travelling "The Way". The Way is slow and personal: we know God travels at three miles an hour: the Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama points out that Jesus walked everywhere, and the human pace is three miles an hour. Still too fast for me and more than I walk most days.

For me, in limited circumstances, the identity of pilgrim brings a combination of stability and fluidity, discipline and freedom, a daily task and long-term goal. I have found the daily discipline of the Virtual Pilgrimage to be life-giving: community, purpose, wholeness.





ME is an illness that most people don't talk about with employers, friends and family. It is stigmatised, levels of shame are high and it is disabling – though mostly when we're out and about we do our best to look good, we're travelling and enjoying our time in "normal life" before we have to withdraw and rest.

Writing and travelling as a Virtual Pilgrim, I can tell the story of my day in my own words. It is spectacularly uneventful. But I can convey something about what living with ME is like to a diverse community for whom chronic illness is a foreign country. It is also an act of solidarity and hope for many with ME, and especially for those who can't talk about their lives with families and friends.

My Virtual Pilgrimage continues – having reached Santiago in February 2019, I needed another walk, and am on the world's newest long-distance path, the 3,000km Te Araroa trail from the tip of the New Zealand North Island to the tail of the South Island. I'm currently just over 1,000km in, walking the volcanic plains around which three great mountains tower: Tongariro, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu. You can share in my virtual journey on Twitter @ruth\_lampard

# Journeying into the past on two wheels

**Southwark is the starting point for many pilgrimages, writes the Revd Canon Jay Colwill, Canon Missioner.**

People travel to Canterbury, in the footsteps of the pilgrims of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Others begin pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela on the famous Camino.

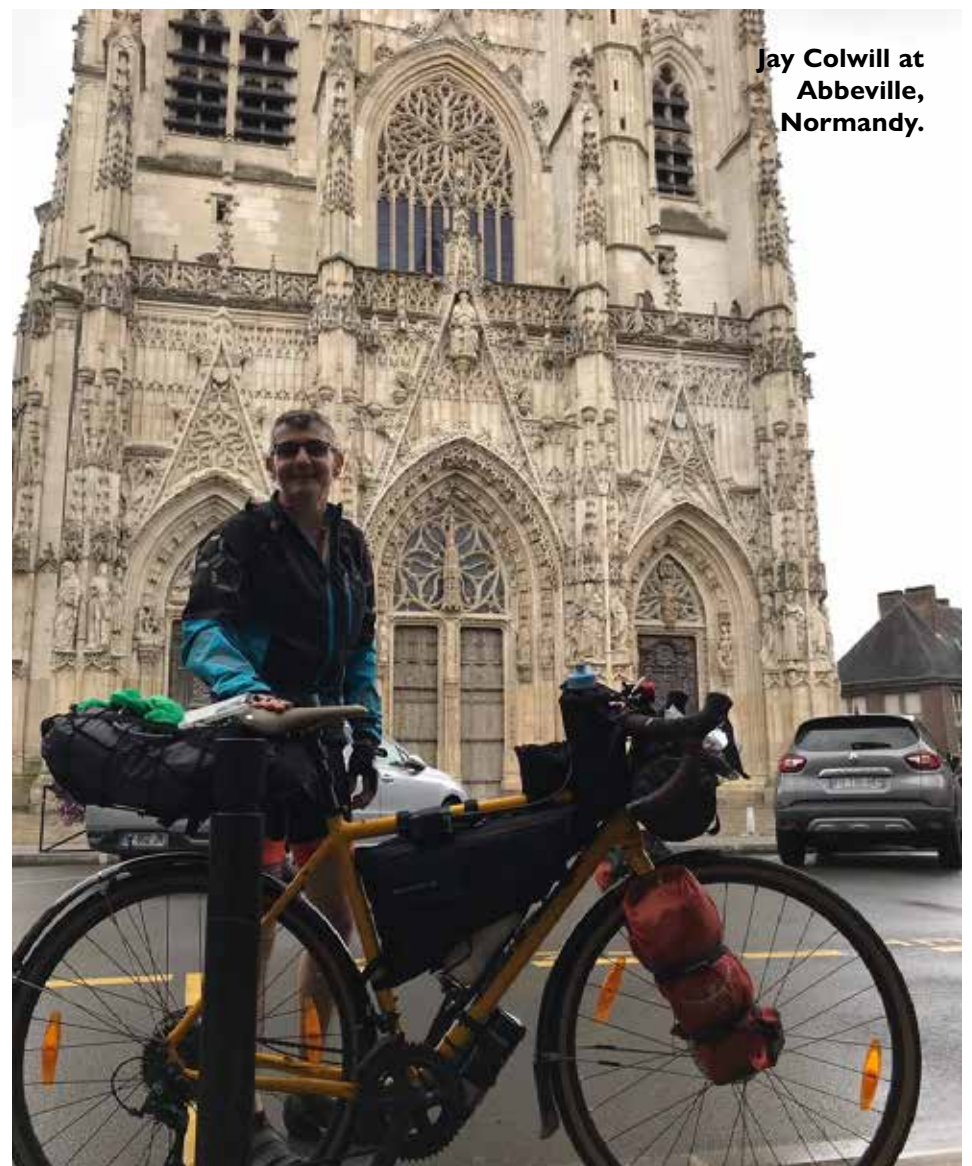
I was struck by the story of another saint, St Olav. At Southwark Cathedral, behind the altar is a stone-carved reredos. In the top left-hand corner stands a warrior, with sword and shield. He doesn't look very holy or reverent. Instead, he seems to be looking out to the middle distance – watching out for some kind of trouble.

Although relatively unknown in the UK, St Olav is the patron saint of Norway and very significant in the Scandinavian countries. His links to London are that he was said to be a Viking convert to Christianity who fought on the side of King Aethelred (The Unready) in the defence of London.

Baptised a Christian at Rouen Cathedral in France, he then travelled to Norway via London to bring Christianity and conquest. He died in 1030 in battle and was made a saint soon after. Within decades, a number of churches in London took him as their patron.

Quite providentially, Southwark Cathedral has ecumenical links with Rouen (France) and Bergen (Norway) Cathedrals. As a Cathedral Canon, I thought it would be an adventurous pilgrimage to cycle to Rouen, via Rochester, Canterbury and Abbeville last summer.

I enjoyed it enough to plan that this



Jay Colwill at Abbeville, Normandy.

summer, God willing, I will cycle 1,500 miles to Trondheim in Norway on a cycle route called the EuroVelo 3, or the Pilgrims' Route. This will take me through Bremen, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Sweden, Oslo, and then north to Trondheim. For me, pilgrimage

is as much about encountering God on the journey as at the destination. I look forward to how God might reveal Himself on "The Way".

You can read more about Jay's pilgrim reflections at [www.tobeapilgrim.info](http://www.tobeapilgrim.info)

## Preparing for a (virtual) prayer walk...

**On Pentecost Sunday, we had hoped to encourage parishes to consider making a prayer walk/pilgrimage to Southwark Cathedral, praying for their communities as they went, writes Jay Colwill.**

**Our prayer focus was to be on places of education, healthcare, government and entertainment. Now, they need our prayers more than ever.**

**Whilst it is unlikely that we will be able to make a pilgrimage on Pentecost Sunday, it doesn't stop us praying purposely and, perhaps, making a virtual journey. Within your church tradition and using whatever means feels natural (telephone, video conferencing or within a family unit at home), could you make a similar pilgrimage?**

**One idea would be to take a map of your parish or deanery, identify the places of education, healthcare, government and entertainment, and**

**plot a route between them, returning to your parish church at the end. Then, with others or alone, create a virtual prayer walk or pilgrimage which takes you to each destination. (Some reflective music might help you create the space between each destination.)**

**On "arrival" at each point on the map, pray for those who work there and for their roles. Then journey on to the next point on the map.**

**This is just one idea but you may have more creative ones. Let's think about how we can pray for our communities in an imaginative, purposeful way.**

**Physical or imaginative journeys can be a great way to centre on the missionary God. If you would like to read more about real and imaginative journeys, please go to [www.tobeapilgrim.info](http://www.tobeapilgrim.info) where some of my own journeys and pilgrimages are recorded.**





## IN FOCUS...

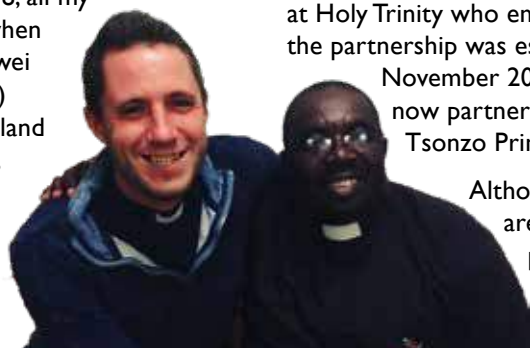
News round-up

# Connecting classrooms from London to Harare

Hosting clergy from another Diocese is always a nerve-racking experience, writes the Revd Edd Stock, Priest-in-Charge at Holy Trinity, Sydenham.

What will they be like? Will we get on? What cultural differences will emerge?

However, in July 2018, all my fears were allayed when the Revd Abel Waziwei (right, with Edd Stock) arrived from Manicaland Diocese, Zimbabwe, as a member of a delegation visiting Southwark Diocese.



Over his week-long stay, we stayed up most nights talking, sharing and laughing. It was on one of those evenings that we hatched a plan. Our plan was to partner my parish's school, Holy Trinity Sydenham Primary School, with a school within his Diocese.

Thanks to Tim Woods and Jessica Smith at Holy Trinity who embraced the idea, the partnership was established in November 2019. Holy Trinity is now partnered with St Matthias Tsonzo Primary School.

Although the two schools are in contrasting places geographically, one in leafy



Forest Hill and the other 250km south-east of Harare, they are both founded on Christian principles and that goes a long way in providing common ground for a growing relationship.

### Deepening relationships

Despite it being more than 11,300km away, Mr Chigweche, the headteacher of St Matthias, led prayers via video link at Holy Trinity's collective worship.

Children at Holy Trinity have sent pen-pal letters and are currently awaiting their replies. And both schools have sent and

received photos which have prompted positive discussions.

Our hope is that this partnership will enable shared learning, develop a deepening relationship, and allow for a potential staff exchange. Who knows? I might even go myself!

So, beware of prayer-filled, late-night conversations; you never quite know where it will leave you. But I am certainly glad that I opened my home to Abel. His friendship and leadership has opened our schools' hearts to growing friendships they never thought possible.

## Bishop Christopher gets behind St James, Clapham's message of hope



Bishop Christopher spent the morning of Sunday 15 March at St James, Clapham where he preached and presided at a service launching *Hope: An Exhibition*, part of Clapham Park Hope 2020.

As well as photos and artworks from the local community there was a new exhibition by photographer Jim Grover. Jim, whose previous exhibitions include *Here Am I* – a collection of images of women priests in the Diocese of Southwark – has contributed a set of images that he says “portray hope or, for one reason or another, give me hope”.

In his sermon, Bishop Christopher said: “The theme of this exhibition could not be more timely. This is a time of anxiety – for some, a time of real fear.”

He went on to say that the hope we had in Jesus was what drew us to worship and that in dark times this hope mattered even more.

A video of the exhibition will be available soon at <https://www.stjamesclapham.org.uk/exhibition>

See Jim Grover's images at <http://www.jimgroverphotography.com/new-page-1>

## St Mary, Balham gives bugs the five-star treatment

On Saturday 15 February, with Storm Dennis approaching, about 20 intrepid members of the St Mary, Balham congregation turned up, intent on building a bug hotel, writes Marian Shaw.

The site had been chosen in a corner of our Oasis Garden. Aged between two and seventy-something, and without architectural plans or experience, we set to work enthusiastically.

The structure is composed of four wooden pallets, with a layer of straw at the bottom and bundles of twigs, bamboo and hollow stems inserted into the spaces to make little habitats for visitors.

Natural materials had been donated and we were fortunate enough to be given enough roofing felt and tiles to make a posh roof. The trunk of the Christmas tree had been saved after Candlemas and this was cut into poles and laid on top to prevent the tiles from blowing off in a gale. As we finished, we saw a tiny insect moving on a piece of wood – our first visitor!

We hope the Oasis Garden will come to life with insects visiting



the flowers we are planting. The morning remained dry and the whole project felt miraculous.

# Top marks for Redhill CofE primary



In the final week before all schools were closed, St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, Linkfield Lane, Redhill was visited for its Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and was judged to be Excellent.

The resulting report also praised "the school's exemplary focus on the individual's gifts and talents" and "the passionate and committed leadership" of senior staff.

As well as the overall judgement of Excellent, the Impact of Collective Worship and Effectiveness of Religious Education

(RE) were also marked as Excellent, with inspectors praising the school's worship programme and RE curriculum, as well as its extracurricular activities.

St Matthew's headteacher, Janet Lightfoot, said: "This is a tremendous and well-deserved achievement, with the top grade of 'excellent' in every category

giving external validation of our school's excellent academic and broad curriculum and inclusive provision for all our children.

"We are very proud of St Matthew's School and its strong community of children and adults. Amidst all the uncertainty around us at present it is good to have something to celebrate."

## Southwark schools step up to help their communities

I am proud that at this challenging time our Diocesan schools are continuing to serve their communities as part of the Government strategy to support key workers and vulnerable children, writes Colin Powell, Diocesan Director of Education.

Our headteachers, senior leaders and governors, supported by Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) staff, have worked tirelessly to adapt to the daily changing agenda to provide the best support for pupils and families in their local community. It is at times like these we see the true professionalism and generosity of spirit of all staff working in our schools.

Premises staff, catering staff, teaching assistants and teachers are all exploring ways of working with their headteachers to keep schools open by working flexibly, keeping morale high, and managing their own family situations.

Our Local Authority partners have been instrumental in working with us to ensure that our Church of England schools play their full part at this time. It is highly likely that schools will be open over the Easter holiday period to continue to offer this service. Most of our schools are also providing educational resources, in a variety of formats, to support parents at home.

The SDBE, too, continues to provide a full level of support for its schools and chaplaincies, supported by our Board. Please pray for our schools in the weeks ahead as they continue to support their communities.

## St John, Caterham Valley choirmaster auctions paintings to raise money for refugees

John Woodhouse, choirmaster at St John, Caterham Valley and organiser of the Westminster Interfaith Group, was one of a group of eight artists who auctioned their work to raise money for good causes in January.

Their work was exhibited over three weeks at Mount Street Jesuit Centre before being sold off to raise more than £5,000. The money will be divided between Westminster Lourdes pilgrimage, and charities Aid to the Church in Need and Safe Passage.

Artist and teacher Nelson Ferreira offered portraits as a lot.



Jennifer Scott, Sackler Director of Dulwich Picture Gallery, opened the auction and spoke of the profound effect of pictures such as Syrian Pieta (left) and Unsafe Passage (above), both of which describe the refugee experience and were painted by John.

## Board of Education holds annual general meeting

On Wednesday 25 March, the members of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi Academy Trust (MAT) held their annual meeting.

It was pleasing to report that the MAT was going from strength to strength. Ten Diocesan schools are in the trust and are performing well. Members were pleased to note that the MAT was financially secure with capacity to grow. The level of services provided to support schools had increased again during 2019.

In November, the Regional Schools Commissioner carried out her annual review meeting with The Venerable Simon Gates (Chair of the MAT Board), Mr Colin Powell (CEO) and Mr Mark Burnett (COO). This was a positive meeting and the follow-up letter was shared with the Members.

## St Nicholas, Plumstead parishioners awarded the Lancelot Andrewes Medal

Bishop Christopher said it was a "great joy and privilege" to present his Lancelot Andrewes Medal to Reg and Doreen Martin on 12 March.

Long-standing parishioners of St Nicholas, Plumstead, Reg and Doreen (right) received the award in recognition of their Godly service and zeal for the Gospel over many years.



# Rosemarie Mallett installed as Archdeacon of Croydon in Southwark Cathedral

Southwark Cathedral opened its doors on Sunday 15 March for the Collation and Installation of the Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett as Archdeacon of Croydon by the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, and the Sub Dean and Canon Pastor of Southwark Cathedral, the Revd Canon Michael Rawson.

The service was one of the last events to be held before the restrictions around Coronavirus took effect, and took place during Choral Evensong. It was attended by Church and civic dignitaries from outside the Diocese including the High Commissioner of Barbados, the Deputy Lieutenant for Croydon and the Mayor of Croydon, as well as the Bishops of Rochester, Dover and Bradwell and Bishop Lenford Rowe, representing the Ascension Trust.

During his sermon, the Bishop of Southwark noted that this was a day of great joy and new beginnings, and that Rosemarie's long, faithful and inspirational service to God and his people in Southwark Diocese had begun a new and exciting chapter. He referred to the circumstances in which the service was taking place saying, "We do not minimise the seriousness of the Coronavirus threat to public health; but neither do we take fright."

Bishop Christopher described the role of an Archdeacon as immensely valuable. He said: "It is life-giving and joyous in many aspects; but it can be challenging. They need to be purposeful and resilient. Rosemarie, 'be strong and courageous!'"

Rosemarie Mallett has served all her ministry in the Diocese of Southwark since her ordination in 2004, most recently as Vicar of St John, Angell Town and Director of the Department of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. She succeeds the Venerable Christopher Skilton, who retired at the beginning of February, as Archdeacon of Croydon.



**Clockwise from above: the Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon, the Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett and the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark, after the service; the Revd Canon Jay Colwill presents Rosemarie with her cope; the Mayor of Croydon looks on.**



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Finding a spiritual director  
Please go to our website,  
[www.spidir.org.uk](http://www.spidir.org.uk),  
or contact Biddy Taylor (above)

## 'A city on a hill that cannot be hidden': St Peter, Woodmansterne welcomes new Rector

A new Rector of St Peter, Woodmansterne, the Revd John Murithi Itumu, was instituted early in March.

At the service, John said: "St Peter's, being at the centre of Woodmansterne, is like the city on a hill that cannot be hidden. (Matthew 5.14). We will therefore seize every opportunity to be the agents of God's light in our village as we continue to retell the Christian story of God's love for us."

