

CROSSKEYS



The magazine for the Catholic Parish of St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs

Two men on the moon and countless people in heaven

Father Mark Hogan explains his mission to create a culture where everyone is invited to come to the feet of Jesus

The story is told that in 1962, President John F Kennedy visited NASA for the first time. During his tour of the facility, he met a janitor who was carrying a broom down the hallway. The president asked the janitor what he did for NASA, and the janitor replied, "I'm helping put a man on the moon."

There are two things in particular that strike me about this brief conversation. Firstly, that janitor knew what the organisation he worked for was trying to do. He was aware of the exciting vision they had – to enable a human being to stand on the moon for the very first time.

Secondly, that janitor knew that he had a role to play in enabling this vision to be achieved. He was part of the team that worked together to achieve that dream and turn it into reality. Every day he was playing his part in moving towards that inspiring picture of the future.

I wasn't alive in 1969, so I can only imagine the excitement that must have captivated the world, with at least 600 million tv viewers, when Neil Armstrong, and then Buzz Aldrin, took those first lunar steps. They were fulfilling a vision articulated by President Kennedy in 1961: that of 'achieving the goal, before

Father Mark blesses new tabernacle



Fr Mark Hogan blesses the new tabernacle at St Stephen's, full story on page 7.

this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth.'

I'd like to suggest that we have a vision, as part of the Catholic Church, which is much more important, much more long-lasting, and much more exciting. It is that of 'putting' as many men, women and children as possible in heaven!

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1027) tells us that this

'mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description.'

Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: 'no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God

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Getting people on right bus to heaven

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has prepared for those who love him'. Heaven is the home of the saints, so we might equally say that our vision is to make as many saints as possible.

What could possibly be more wonderful and beautiful than that?

Reaching heaven is not something we can achieve by our own efforts – it is ultimately by grace that we are able to enter into God's presence – but we do all have our part to play.

St John Henry Newman reminds us that God has created each of us 'to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.'

The vision we have for the parish is all part of that wider vision of 'getting people on the right bus to heaven'.

That's why we are trying to create a culture in which people of all walks of life are invited to come to the feet of Jesus, be filled with God's love, and share that joy with others.

It's why we want to provide room for everyone to be drawn into the heart of our beautiful, inspiring and life-changing worship together.

It's why we want our parish to offer an environment of living communion and participation, in which all our members are aware of their responsibility to and for each other.

It's why we desire everyone's name and story to be known and each person to be loved and supported on their pilgrimage of faith.

It's why we wish to create opportunities for all our parishioners to discern how best they can love as Christ loves and serve as Christ serves.

It's why we want everyone in our parish to recognise Christ in the lost, poor and needy and overcome all obstacles in bringing them to the feet of Christ.

It's why we long for our parish to be a community of communities who desire to sit at the feet of Christ, thirsting for the water of life.

It's why we hope each disciple will make their own personal commitment to deepening, enriching and growing in their knowledge and love of God.

Everything we do as a parish – our Masses, our Alpha, our Acorn groups, our prayer and worship, our numerous ministries and courses, our church cleaning and flower-arranging and brass-polishing, our various operational activities, our communications – all have their part to play in achieving that vision of creating a

community which enables more people to share the Father's heavenly home and experience glimpses of heaven here on earth.

Everything we do as a parish, or at least everything we should be doing, every single day, is about bringing people closer to Jesus in hope and joy. I'd like to encourage each and every one of you who is a parishioner to reflect on everything you are doing in your daily life and ask yourself, 'to what extent is this bringing people closer to Jesus Christ in hope and joy?'

If each of us, in our own way, is faithful to playing our part in that mission, then we will be co-operating with God's grace and the work of the Holy Spirit and helping to make many saints and put many people safely through heaven's doors.

What is really amazing is that we can all be that janitor. Even more, with the support of each other and by the grace of God, we can all be Neil Armstrong too and make that giant leap into eternal bliss.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if at the end of each day, just before our head hits the pillow, we were able to look at ourselves in the mirror and say: 'Today I played my part in putting someone else in heaven – by bringing him or her closer to Jesus Christ, in hope and joy.'

Walking with people after suffering a loss

Before Christmas Fr Mark asked me if I would think and pray about setting up a new team to walk with people after loss, writes Liz Slinn.

Loss in this sense being mostly for the bereaved, but also perhaps after some other significant loss such as home or job. After thinking and praying for a few weeks we met

again and a few months later there is now a team of seven who have been trained and prepared to help people in or associated with the parish.

When the clergy are informed of a death they will ask the bereaved family if they would like someone to 'walk with them' for a few weeks or longer offering Christian fellowship, listening and signposting to practical

help if needed. If they are happy to have such a companion then one of the team will make contact.

The team are part of the Outreach ministries in the parish and will work closely with Petercares and the SVP.

Contact
lizS@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

Rachael's faith a source of comfort

Tony Darlison, who is training for the Deaconate, and his wife **Liz**, reflect on the death of their daughter Rachael

Our beloved daughter Rachael died suddenly in her sleep in the early morning of Easter Tuesday, 6 April, 2021, after spending Easter Monday with her husband and three young children.

Since her death many parishioners have supported us with their prayers and practical help, for which we continue to be immensely grateful.

This is a difficult article to write because nothing has prepared us for writing an obituary for our own daughter. Some of you will have your own memories of Rachael, having known her for some or all of the period between when we moved to Winchester in 1997 (when she was five) until she left for university. Some may recall Rachael and Matthew's beautiful wedding in St Peter's church in 2013. Others may not have known Rachael but simply heard about her sudden death, and perhaps were able to watch online her Memorial Mass or Requiem at St Peter's. For all of you who may be interested, we simply wish to impart a little more information about her life, and we can think of no better way than to reproduce the obituary written by her husband, Matthew, for the *Catholic Medical Association*.

Before handing over to Matthew, Liz and I want to say that one of our greatest comforts and sources of strength has been our, and Rachael's, Catholic faith and, in particular, the knowledge that she received the sacrament of confession on Holy Saturday, three days before she died. We also know that her very last words on earth were words of prayer and of love. It is the sacred duty of parents to help their children to accept the gift of eternal life with God; however



Rachael Ward, nee Darlison.

well or poorly we may have fulfilled that duty for Rachael, our hearts are full of gratitude for her beautiful life, and full of hope for her eternal life. As for all she leaves behind, we pray for, and trust in, God's mercy and providence. Perhaps we will never understand in this life the mystery of why this happened – it seems to make little sense to us in any worldly terms – but we trust in, and surrender to, the infinite goodness of God's plan.

An obituary for Rachael, written by Matthew Ward for the Catholic Medical Association.

In the early morning of Easter Tuesday, 6 April, 2021, after spending Easter Monday with her family, Dr Rachael Ward died suddenly in her sleep. She had one day remaining of maternity leave with her third child, and was about to begin a cardiology placement at the beginning of Foundation Year 2 with East Sussex NHS Trust.

Rachael Caera Ward (née Darlison) was born in Haywards Heath, West Sussex in 1992. Her family moved to

Winchester in 1997 and she attended The Westgate School and Peter Symonds Sixth Form College. After considering a career as a teacher, Rachael decided on medicine after work experience with her general practitioner aunt and went up to study medicine at Clare College, Cambridge in 2010.

While at Cambridge she met her husband-to-be, Matthew, a PhD student in music. After graduation from her pre-clinical course, Rachael and Matthew married in 2013 and Rachael commenced clinical studies at Imperial College, London. Her first child was born in 2015 and Rachael took substantial maternity leave out of her studies to devote herself to her daughter.

On her return to work Rachael served as treasurer of the Imperial College School of Medicine Parents' Group. She eventually received her degree with distinction in 2017, only five days after giving birth to her second child and first son.

During this maternity leave Rachael and her family moved to Mayfield, East Sussex, and here she began her foundation year training in the East Sussex NHS Trust, working less than full time hours so as to be present to her children as much as possible. She found working less than full time to be both challenging and rewarding, and in September 2019 published an informational article on the subject on the blog 'Mind the Bleep'.

This was during her third and final pregnancy, and in March 2020 Rachael completed her foundation year 1 training and began maternity leave again. Rachael and Matthew's second son was born in May 2020.

Rachael was an accomplished musician; she sang to a very high level with the Hampshire County Youth Choir, the Choir of Clare College,

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Rachael's faith informed her life

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Cambridge, and the London Philharmonic Choir among other ensembles.

With Clare College Choir between 2010 and 2013 she sung around the world and made several recordings. In 2013, while in Cambridge, Rachael played the role of Zima in a performance of Rameau's opera *Les Indes Galantes*. She continued to sing as much as possible during her time as a busy doctor and mother, including performances at the Royal Festival and Albert Halls, and with the Mayfield Consort of Voices. A particular highlight was singing *The Dream of Gerontius* under Sir Mark Elder, a performance in which her husband also sang. *Gerontius* was a piece of music close to Rachael's heart, and *The Angel's Farewell* from the second part was performed at her Requiem vigil.

After a year of being unable to sing as much as she would have liked due to Covid regulations, Rachael was overjoyed to have been able to form a small choir for the Paschal Triduum in 2021 at her parish. She thus spent her last days singing beautiful sacred music, which had meant so much to her throughout her life, while at the same time expertly juggling her ten-month old baby. At Easter Sunday Mass Rachael sang solo for the final time in public, giving the aria *I know that*

my Redeemer liveth at Communion, accompanied by her husband Matthew on the organ.

Rachael's Catholic faith informed every aspect of her life, including her work as a doctor. During her time at Cambridge she was the co-chair of the Fisher Society, Catholic Chaplaincy to the University, and later a member of the Catholic Medical Association.

She was passionately pro-life, believed strongly in the importance of good palliative care and had an ambition to work as a doctor in the hospice movement in the future. This was partly inspired by her seven week elective study in 2017, a rewarding period during which she worked at the Princess Alice Hospice in Esher.

In the weeks before her death Rachael was preparing to give an online course for junior doctors on the essentials of palliative care medicine. While at Cambridge her musical and medical interests combined in her dissertation on 'The Role of Music Therapy in the Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders' and her participation in work with the charity Turtle Song with dementia sufferers.

In all aspects of life, Rachael's attitude was one of self-giving, motivated by deep faith nourished by the sacraments. Not content with serv-

ing the Church and world as a mother and a doctor she also had ambitions to become a catechist, having trained in level one of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd during 2019 and 2020; the establishment of an atrium for this purpose was stymied by the repeated lockdowns. Into this work she poured considerable time, energy and skill, producing beautiful materials for teaching in woodwork and textiles. She was a gifted seamstress and crafter of useful objects and toys, and many of her family and friends have clothes and other tangible reminders of her love, motivated by a deep instinct for beauty, her faith and the generosity which marked her short, but intensely lived life.

The night before she died, Rachael and her husband prayed the Glorious Mysteries of the Holy Rosary and St John Henry Newman's *Litany of the Resurrection*. They had also been reading Dante's *Divine Comedy*, beginning *Paradiso* on Easter Sunday after the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* throughout the previous two months.

Rachael's Requiem Mass was offered at St Peter's Church in Winchester on 28 April, the feast day of her favourite saint, St Gianna Beretta Molla, also a doctor and mother, and she is buried in the churchyard of St Dunstan's Church, Mayfield.

SVP creates strong links with India



Mark Pellegrini, the new local SVP Twinnage contact, describes its work

Twinnage is the way in which St Vincent de Paul (SVP) groups in developed countries provide support to SVP groups in developing countries.

SVP England and Wales is currently twinned with local groups in India, Sudan, South Sudan, Grenada, Guyana

and Romania. Over 50 years ago, inspired by a plea from the Holy Father that the laity in the developed world should become more active in their support for those in the less developed countries, the SVP International Twinnage scheme started. Links began in India, and there are now over 1,500 twinned SVP groups. Despite having

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Twinnage support takes many forms

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the sixth biggest and fastest-growing economy in the world, there are still over 300 million people in India who live below the poverty line. The SVP offers various support to local groups by helping fund education through our student sponsorship scheme and the creation of small income-generation projects to tackle the root causes of poverty and promote self-reliance.

We in Winchester are twinned with five conferences in India. Three are in the state of Kerala, at the extreme South of India, on the western coast: St Anthony Eloor; St Antony's Ladies Conference, St Antony's Church Arimpur, Kerala and St Elizabeth's Conference, Kollam, Kerala.

Two are in the State of Andhra Pradesh, slightly further north, but on the east coast: St Anthony's Conference, Kesarapalli and St Mary's Conference, Tadepalli.

There is no defined period for how long the Twinnage should last. Sometimes the financial twinning link does end, for example when the receiving conference is financially self-sufficient, as happened to one of our twins at the end of 2019. At this time we were able to adopt another conference which had been waiting for a twin.

Twinnage involves prayer. It is important that the members of the twin conference, and those they work to support, are prayed for regularly. This will include prayers at conference meetings, but can include other prayers and having a Mass offered for the twin conference(s).

Where possible it is important to exchange letters or e-mails at least twice a year to maintain contact, share information and learn. Messages are shared with all members of the conference so that every member is involved and feels part of the



Provision of clothing to adopted families in Winchester's twin, St Mary's Conference, Tadepalli.

world-wide Vincentian family.

Twinnage generally requires a regular commitment to send financial support to help the regular activities of the twin, specifically the support of the adopted families of the twinned conference. This helps to ensure that vital funding reaches the poorest communities in countries where the SVP exists.

Winchester activities include small income-generation projects; in early May at Masses there was an SVP appeal for support in India. As a result of a generous parish response we were able to commit to a new project to provide five dairy cows for St Mary's Conference. The conference will provide milking cattle for five families so they can generate some additional income for their daily needs. In addition, funds were provided to help with Covid-related emergencies and these funds were matched pound for pound by SVP central council funds which meant your donations were doubled.

Previously, the SVP in Winchester has supported a similar project for milk buffaloes for another conference, and welding equipment and sewing machines elsewhere to pro-

vide the catalyst to generate some income. We have even provided funds to help towards five new houses for those in dire need.

The SVP believes that education is key to breaking the cycle of poverty. SVP has a student sponsorship scheme in India which helps young people and their families by supporting them financially through their studies; either for a year of study in a primary school, three years of technical and vocational training or four years to train as a doctor or engineer. In Winchester, we are not currently sponsoring any students, but this is an activity we have done until recently.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support for SVP activities, including twinnage. If you wish to find out more, you can contact the SVP in the parish, or you can visit:

[https://www.svp.org.uk/
twinnage-and-overseas-aid/
india](https://www.svp.org.uk/twinnage-and-overseas-aid/india)

<https://ssvpindia.in/>

Mark Pellegrini would be delighted to answer any questions. Contact via the parish SVP email address: svp@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

Catch up with Canon Michael Leamy

Canon Michael Leamy looks back on his time since leaving Winchester

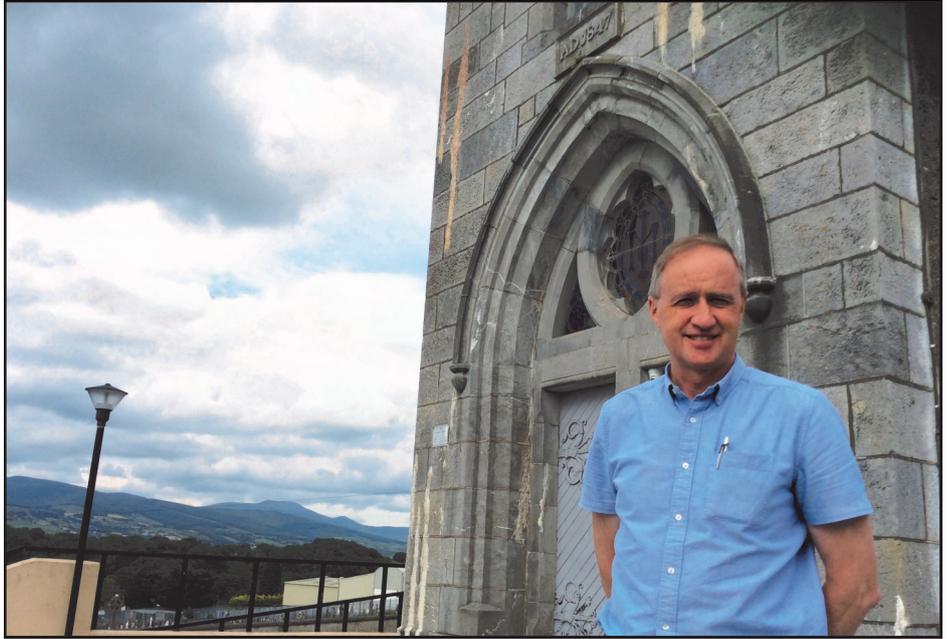
It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed since I left Winchester to return to the Diocese of Cloyne in 1996.

I very much enjoyed my time in St Peter's, from my daily ministry and encounters with parishioners, to working alongside Canon Peter Doyle and to the friendships forged during those four years.

The first parish I served in on my return to Cork was Blarney, home of the famous Blarney Stone, where I ministered for almost eight years. Blarney was always a very busy parish with a big influx of tourists during the summer, including some visitors from Winchester. When the dreadful events of 9/11 happened, we held a service in the parish church for tourists and parishioners, reaching out and supporting those affected – it was a day that will always be imprinted on my memory.

In 2003 I was appointed to St Colman's Cathedral in Cobh and in 2006 took on the role of administrator of the Cathedral. I served as administrator for nine years during which time I worked with three different bishops. It was an interesting and eventful time not only in the life of the parish but my own life too. I was appointed priest director of ACCORD Marriage Care, preparing couples for marriage and marriage counselling. I have continued to be involved in this work online during recent lockdowns. In 2005 I accompanied a group of students to Calcutta to work with street children, an experience that remains with me to this day.

In 2012 the Easter Ceremonies were broadcast live from our Cathedral on our national tv station. A great honour for the priests and people of the parish. In a moment of sheer madness, I volunteered to abseil from the Cathedral roof, as part of the fund-raising drive for restoration work in the Ca-



Canon Michael Leamy, now parish priest of Mitchelstown.

thedral. I also celebrated 25 years in ministry. Sadly, in 2008, my mother died.

Before taking up my next appointment I spent four months on a Sabbatical in the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. Here I attended lectures and classes on spiritual growth and renewal and a gained a deeper understanding of my ministry. I also saw a little bit of Texas.

On my return to Ireland in 2014, I took up the appointment of parish priest of Rathcormac in North Cork, not too far from where I grew up. My dad died the following year. While in Rathcormac I was appointed as a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter. During this time Ireland hosted the World Meeting of Families and while attending the meeting in Dublin with some parishioners from Rathcormac, I met Bishop Peter Doyle.

In September 2019, Bishop Crean appointed me parish priest of Mitchelstown and Vicar Forane of the Deanery. The following March we went into lockdown due to Covid-19. It was a very challenging time trying to settle into a new parish and dealing with lockdowns. The live-streaming of Masses from the parish church offered me some connection with my

new parishioners which I have since been able to build on as restrictions are easing. My garden and area around the house are looking good too.

As the summer of 2021 gets under way there is a sense of hope here as society begins to open up again. The current rollout of the vaccination programme in the country has lifted the spirits of all of us after what has been a very difficult year for everyone. We continue to hope and pray that our lives can return to some sort of normal as soon as possible.

I recently celebrated 35 years of priesthood. These years have been challenging, rewarding, uplifting and at times, very tough. However, I have been fortunate to have been supported by my family and, in all parishes where I served, by kind and caring people, whose faith and prayers have sustained and supported me in my ministry.

I have very fond memories of my time in Winchester and enjoyed my return visit for the celebration of the 90th anniversary of St Peter's Catholic Church in July 2016. I would like to wish you and your families and the parish many blessings in these challenging times.

Former tabernacle restored to church

Mary Alveyn writes about the history of the tabernacle in St Stephen's

The Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi) was a very special event at St Stephen's this year.

We celebrated the blessing of the newly reinstalled tabernacle during the Mass and then the Blessed Sacrament was placed in the tabernacle where it now remains for veneration before and after Masses and for the school during its liturgies.

The installation was the culmination of a long period of planning by Fr Mark and the parish team, delayed of course by Covid, sadly the occasion could be shared only by our usual 'distanced' congregation of around 70 people.

The tabernacle was discovered in the organ loft at St Peter's and although it looked rather worse for wear, it became clear that it had been made for St Stephen's and Sean Reidy found a company of silversmiths in Birmingham who were able to transform it into its current spectacular condition. A plinth was also discovered which matches the other altar furniture, from St Thomas More, Weeke, and eventually it was arranged for all to be secured, in accordance with Canon Law, in the alcove behind the Altar.

Cleaning was done, the Taize cross,



The tabernacle previously behind gates at St Stephen's.



The restored tabernacle now back in its position at St Stephen's Church.

formerly in that space was repositioned at the back of the church and a new San Damiano crucifix placed above the tabernacle, the whole adorned with beautiful floral arrangements by Freda Shields. A red flashing sanctuary light was deemed unsuitable for this space and we have a gently flickering candle in its place.

Since St Stephen's was opened 52 years ago there have been several reconfigurations of the space from the original design with the tabernacle behind metal gates shown in the photograph and the sacristy at the back of church, now the community room, through removal of the Stations of the Cross when the walls were covered in gym bars as the school needed to use the space as a hall; it may have been at this time that the tabernacle was removed, and

was never reinstated, to the transfer of the Sacristy adjacent to the sanctuary and replacement of the stations and benches. Now we have a further evolution with the source and summit of our faith restored to the church.

Our parish school has the mission statement Christ at the Centre which is surely a vision for all of our lives and we now have the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist right at the centre of our worship at St Stephen's.



The tabernacle.

Parish forms a Laudato Si group

Mike Slinn and members of the parish Laudato Si group explain their aims

Six years ago, at Pentecost, Pope Francis published the encyclical Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home.

Recently a parish Laudato Si group has been formed with a vision of bringing people closer to Jesus through caring for our common home.

The group is open to all parishioners and seeks to energise them to embrace the messages of Laudato Si and to achieve its objectives in the way we live and influence social and political views. You can get more information updates from the Winchester Laudato Si facebook group.

The group's immediate tasks are to develop parish projects and ideas for celebrating Winchester Green Week (late September) and to help Fr Mark prepare the parish for the COP26 international environmental conference in Glasgow in November which Pope Francis hopes to attend.

Some of our group members explain why they are involved.

Sarah Glanville writes: "I became a Catholic over 25 years ago. Using what talents and gifts God has given me is important to me as I see it as a way of showing my gratitude for everything God has done in my life and all the difficult times he has walked by my side and seen me through. Our



world is God's gift to us and how we care for it will impact our lives and those of our descendants. The Laudato Si movement is an amazing growing tribe of people all walking towards and sharing values of care and healing and respect for our planet. Values which are personal to me and which will literally make our world a better place to be in. I hope that what skills God has given me can be used for the common good."

Colin McDougall writes: I recently



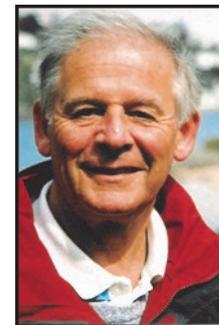
become a Catholic and one of the attractions was Catholic social teaching. Laudato Si really shows that teaching in action. I read it as a non-Catholic and the power of the need to be steward of our planet had a real impact on me, so it seems natural to get involved with the local group when the opportunity arose. As the old adage that we are stewards of the earth which was given as a 'common treasury for all' is a powerful way to link faith to a real social issue. Hopefully I can contribute to promote the values and ideas from Laudato Si."

Helen Pope writes: Due to our declared climate emergency I believe we have a responsibility to do everything within our power to make changes to protect our planet. The Laudato Si encyclical takes this a step further and tells us as Catholics

that it is our duty to protect our planet, this wondrous gift we have been charged to be stewards of and are failing in. To make changes in our actions and to lead by example to instigate change globally through our faith is something I hope this global Christian community can achieve."



Steve and Beth Taylor write: "When we helped to set up St Peter's and the Winchester Martyrs' Parish Laudato Si group, it was because climate change is in our view the single most challenging and important issue facing us, our children, our grandchildren and all future generations. We have a responsibility to face up to that challenge now. Pope Francis' encyclical gives clear insight into how this crisis for our planet is linked to so many issues which require our attention as Christians. It highlights not just the existential need to respect and nurture God's Creation but also the need to address our economic and developmental policies to protect the most vulnerable people on the planet."



Peter McManus writes: "Our parish has long had a Justice and Peace group, small in number and inexorably ageing. Transforming this into the Laudato Si group has focussed

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Time to care for our common home

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our efforts onto a single, overwhelmingly important issue and greatly widened participation. Laudato Si has been hugely influential in energising our Christian communities to appreciate how fundamental the climate justice issue is to the biblical message on creation and 'our common home'. Our group's scope is indeed wide, and a major challenge is to select the actions that will have the most effect on bringing the whole parish to become 'activist' in the way we all conduct our lives. Fr Mark's Pentecost message this year (video on our parish website) shows our parish leader's support."

Kasia

Wilkolek

writes:

"Being part of the Laudato Si group gives me the opportunity to learn about existing challenges that affect our climate and the environment. It involves meeting experienced, passionate and knowledgeable people who put their heart and soul to the work for the greater good of others and the planet. People full of life, and faith in a better future for all of us



with ideas and solutions to influence our response to climate change. Being part of the Laudato Si group is about getting inspired by others' potential, creativity and experience which often generates new ideas, new solutions and change of views. For example, reading *Simple Life* suggestions, I was able to reorganise my habits of shopping and created new behaviours which support the reduction of waste and plastics."

If you would like to get more involved and share your ideas with other like-minded parishioners then you can join our WhatsApp group by emailing...outreach@stpeterswinchester.org.uk and providing your mobile number.

Advertisement

St Peter's Catholic Primary School Is your child starting school 2022?

"St Peter's is a school that is caring and supportive and where every child matters." Diocesan Inspection 2019

"At St Peter's we aim to make learning enriching and meaningful, equipping our children for the next stage in their education, so they live life and live it to the full.' Please get in touch via the links adjacent to visit us, and experience the nurturing environment we can offer for your children.



For more information and how to apply:
www.stpetershants.co.uk email: admin@st-peters.hants.sch.uk
telephone 01962 852820

Was your child born between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2017? If so, it is important that you apply for a school place by midnight on 15 January 2022. You can collect a St. Peter's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) from the school office. It is also available to download from our website. You will also need to apply to HCC on line at www.hants.gov.uk/admissions or to request a paper copy ring HCC 0300 555 1377."

Catholics Come Home

<https://www.Catholicscomehome.org>

Alpha offers an amazing experience

Allegra Matunda brings an update on the parish Alpha courses

As we come to the end of another academic year, we continue to celebrate the success of Alpha in helping people come closer to Christ in hope and joy.

The Alpha experience is for those with no faith, those wishing to deepen their faith as well as for those looking for a sense of community. It provides a place of belonging and enables us to grow in relationship with God and with one another.

Some of the terms used to describe Alpha are 'connection, friendship, love, God, support, thought-provoking, open, honest, faith building, warm, welcoming, joy-filled' to name a few. It is truly an amazing experience for both team and guests.

Dan, (pictured right) one of our guests on the spring Alpha, shares his experience of the course, while comments from other guests are also offered.



"I came to Alpha after hearing about it from Father Mark at the end of Mass around the Lenten period, where he recommended giving it a go to strengthen and deepen our understanding of faith. I thought this sounded like a great idea, especially as I was preparing to be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, so I signed up to take part.

“It has made me think about other people and to pray for them even though they don't know I'm doing it.”

“Going into it, I didn't quite know what to expect, so I would be lying if I said I wasn't a

little nervous! However, within moments I was feeling much more comfortable as everyone was so welcoming and friendly, especially within the small groups.

“Each week, I found the Alpha videos to be very compelling and thought-provoking, even with those which I thought wouldn't be as interesting due to the topic being something I thought I knew about and understood – In fact, more often than not, these were the times I learnt the most!

“Being able to then discuss the videos with the same small group each week was a wonderful experience that helped everyone feel comfortable to ask questions, share experiences and really work through everything together.

“Over the weeks, you really form a connection with those in your small group which allows the discussions to get deeper and creates a great environment that brings people together in faith in ways you never would expect.

“Overall, I found the weekly experience to be something I always looked forward to, and that really helped me to deepen and reflect

“I have discovered that God knows I love him - I always knew He loved me. And that I want to be in relationship with Him. Praying more has helped me to do this. I also realised how good it is to be with others that are interested in the same things as me.”

“It was good to be able to discuss things in small groups as there were so many people. It was a chance to share thoughts and feelings and get to know the others and what was happening in their lives. We started a WhatsApp group and are going to stay in touch.”

on my faith in ways I would never have expected going into it and helped me to think about things from other perspectives and develop a closer relationship with Jesus through group prayer and discussion.

“I would recommend the Alpha course to anyone who is curious about questions of faith and about our Lord Jesus! The no-pressure environment is one that really helps to facilitate discussion and an overall really enjoyable time, so why not give it a go?”

BACK in person!

The team is looking forward to meeting guests once again in person, for great food, fantastic talks and grabbing conversations. Next term, the Alpha course will run both in-person and online. As we ease out of lockdown and social interaction resumes, why not consider bringing friends and joining us in the parish centre?

Youth Alpha is merging with our main Alpha at the in-person gathering. Young people will have their own stream while their parents will join the adults. If you have young people aged between 11 and 18, why not join Alpha as a family next term and share the experience together?

To register on the next Alpha course, visit

www.Catholicwinchester.org.uk/alpha or for more details, email alpha@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

In-person, from Monday 20 September 2021 at 7.30pm in the parish centre. Online, from Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 7.30pm on Zoom.

To register young people onto Youth Alpha, email Jo: youthstuff@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

“Being at the Holy Spirit day helped me make prayer more a part of my life.”

“I enjoyed it very much and it helped strengthen my faith.”

Forming journeys of faith and friendship



Acorn groups began in April and emerged from the need for Alpha graduates to move onto something after their Alpha involvement had come to an end.

There was a desire for people who had experienced Alpha to continue their journey in faith and the friendships they had made.

We are currently meeting using Zoom which has proved invaluable in connecting people from within the parish and further afield. Many new friends from locations such as Hook, Reading and Essex (made during previous online Alpha programmes) have returned to join us in an Acorn Group along with parishioners.

However, in the coming months it is hoped that groups will begin to meet in person; something that for many people is very much anticipated - the ability to have human interaction, to share a physical space and most importantly share food! One group though will remain online in order to be able to welcome our members from outside the parish. As much as each small group becomes its own autonomous unit and meets individually, in the spirit of our theme of connection each season begins and ends as a single entity.

Although meeting via Zoom seemingly removed any geographical problems, future 'face to face' groups had to be planned for and varying availabilities and timings had to be considered, and not least how the group dynamics might work. There was also training for hosts, safeguarding compliance and finally technology and its numerous glitches! With helpful advice from other parishes running similar pro-

grammes, research into material provided by Divine Renovation and browsing YouTube these issues were overcome to varying degrees and now we are the proud owner of a small group network.

The inaugural season began with us following 'The Prayer Course' by Pete Greig and sharing our thoughts and experiences in our breakout rooms afterwards. It has proved illuminating for many people and introduced several new ways of praying and looking at prayer. Although Acorn Groups are not specifically prayer groups, the idea of praying with and for each other is at the heart of their personality and a deeper understanding and 'a toolkit' with which to pray together would benefit us all.

Our Acorn Groups have begun to take root and connections are forming among members who have expressed a deeper understanding of faith, of sharing experiences and of living a life in the Gospel.

As more people join this summer and more groups are formed it is hoped these roots will deepen and more connections will be made. Our next focus is looking at being 'Rooted in Faith', exploring our own experiences and also examining the lives of saints and their relevance in our world today.

If you have enjoyed Alpha, I encourage you to join us. The season is open for new registrations via the link below until 20 August and we will again begin with a brief prayer course. We are running three Saturday sessions from 4 September from 10.30am – 12noon before joining one of the Acorn Groups restarting on the evening of 30 September. <https://forms.office.com/r/A1p3TR5jKE>

Emma said: "The Acorn group has given me more understanding and confidence with prayer. It is a great opportunity to keep listening to oth-

ers and to share our faith experience."

Norman said: "Having gained so much from an Alpha course and helping with the Alresford course, the Covid pandemic and lockdown looked set to bring a slow down to growth in faith and prayer and also the friendship that Alpha offered. Unknown and in the wings was developing the idea of Acorn groups with a vision to bring together small groups committed to growth through faith and friendship. My wife and I leapt at the chance to join.

"The first term has been focussed on prayer. I am not alone in admitting to finding good /fervent prayer difficult. So often one's mind wanders all over the place even to the point sometimes of forgetting what one was praying about!

"The YouTube videos, which form part of each weekly session, and the discussions in groups which follows has brought up so many suggestions of how other people try to pray. These include praying while you walk, finding a special peaceful place to pray, downloadable Apps such as BIOY and Sacred Space.

"This crossflow of helpful ideas is what we were hoping for. We have been confined to using Zoom this term but this has its limitations. We hope we will be able to meet live in groups in due course. This would enhance the already positive vibes we get from our group sessions.

The current weekly sessions on Zoom work well and are enjoyable (social time, prayer, sharing, input, reflection and discussion) while there is no reasonable alternative.

"We look forward to the time when we can meet in person and each group, as originally envisaged, can develop its own theme and focus as they develop their journey of faith and friendship."

Memories of meeting the Royal Family

His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh – Reminiscences
by parishioner Mike Gretton

It was sad that Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, did not get to his 100th birthday – and his telegram from the Queen – but he leaves a fabulous legacy with his scheme for the development of young people, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.

I had the privilege and huge reward of being the director (now called chief executive) of the award from retiring from the Royal Navy in 1998 until 2006. Before recounting something of my time working for Prince Philip as patron of the award and as an active chairman of trustees, I will divert for a short moment to explain my earlier link to Her Majesty the Queen.

Queen Elizabeth II launched the aircraft carrier HMS Invincible in 1977 and so became the patron on the ship. I took command in 1987 towards the end of a long modernisation, after which it is naval custom ‘re-commission’ the ship with its new ship’s company. Her Majesty generously agreed to do so in Portsmouth, our home base, in May 1988: it was a wonderful day, with Her Majesty so evidently enjoying herself and getting to meet many of our people and their families. She put us all at our ease with her happy smile and evident interest in who we were and what we were up to. As was usual on such occasions, the Queen was not accompanied by Prince Philip – he would have loved to be there, observing all the detail with his keen, naval eye. So now I will move on to working for the Duke of Edinburgh several years later.

My connection with the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award preceded command of HMS Invincible when I was responsible for recruiting officers for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. I was aware of its value in demonstrating the sort of qualities we sought in our officers, particularly working with others in a team and persistence – hanging in there when the going was tough. In assessing candidates for cadet training, achievement of a bronze, silver or gold level award carried much weight, along with academic and other achievements. And my experience in that recruiting job made me very interested in the personal development of young people and all the factors affecting their progress.

It was not until my last summer in the Royal Navy, when I was inspecting the CCF (and my son dressed in Army uniform), that the Abbot of Ampleforth told me that the award was looking for a new director. It seemed to me an ideal second career and I proceeded through a couple of selection interviews, at the end of which I went to Windsor Castle to meet Prince Philip – rather nervously.



Mike Gretton, accompanied by members of his family, meeting the Queen.

He sat me down in a low chair, with him seated between me and a large window through which a bright sun shone. So throughout the 20 minute interview I was hardly able to see him!

But he gave me the nod and in April 1998 I started my new job. My office was in the award headquarters, about 100 metres away from Windsor Castle, and after a couple of days – reading in to the ways of the award – I became aware of a person walking into my room and just saying “Well, how’s it going then?” It was the patron having a walkabout – no warning – to see how we all were, and particularly the new boy.

I took over a very healthy and well established award, but I felt that it needed to be available more widely to young people who would benefit from it most – from disadvantaged areas with less opportunities; those in trouble with the law and some in detention or prison; in Northern Ireland few of the nationalist community had the opportunity to participate. The main exception there was if you were in a young offenders institution, where loyalists and nationalists mixed freely and equally to take part in the award programme.

The Duke was very supportive of these efforts, but would remind me that reaching out costs money to the charity, and that I should not forget my responsibility for raising the necessary funds. The main fundraising efforts were through ‘Award in Business’, through which many corporates – large and small – supported us. The highlights were glamorous events in royal palaces or hotels in which the Duke played an active part: one of my main memories was in the Dorchester Hotel with Prince Philip entranced by the post-dinner performance of Shirley Bassey.

How did I find Prince Philip as a person? My first point

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Working with the Duke of Edinburgh

Continued from page 12

is that he has a clear vision for the award. The underlying principles came from his headmaster at Gordonstoun, Dr Kurt Hahn, but Prince Philip had the vision, drive – and influence – to turn fine principles into a practical programme which was relevant to young people. For me, the most important principle was to provide the opportunity to advance from whatever your own starting point to a stretching but achievable goal: there were some who proudly gained their grade 8 in a musical instrument, but for me to have got to grade 1 would have been progress.

The Duke's vision was backed up with high intelligence of a practical nature, and the ability to persuade others to join in the noble endeavour. The first director was Everest climber John Hunt, who surrounded himself with volunteers until able to operate the programme as a not-for-profit but effective organisation. While Prince Philip grasped the big ideas, he also had an eye for detail, maybe reinforced by his naval training and experience: I have two examples.

At my first gold award presentation, all of which Prince Philip attended without fail, I arrived at the entrance to St James's Palace five minutes before the Duke was due – but he was already there! From then on I always ensured I was in position to greet him 10 minutes before he was due to arrive. He hated being late for anything.

The second example was when I wanted to introduce a change which I considered minor – previously participants could not start their award programme until their 14th birthday, which in the school context meant pupils beginning at different dates in year 9. In a briefing I explained to the Duke at length, before announcing the change at a National Award Conference, the benefits to all of starting together at the beginning of Year 9.

Frankly, after he cross-examined me, I did not know where he stood on the change. At the subsequent conference with Prince Philip in the chair, I presented the change and the first questioner objected vigorously to the 'drop in standards'. The Duke answered, using my arguments but far more eloquently, and there was not another questioner. He had grasped the detailed issue clearly.

A surprise about Prince Philip's personality came up at my first trustees' meeting. At the appointed time he, as chairman, said 'Let's get on with it'. I pointed out that one trustee – his son Prince Edward – was due but not yet present. After some gruff comments about punctuality we started the meeting. Two minutes later Prince Edward entered the room with apologies, and Prince Philip stood up, kissed him on both cheeks, and welcomed him. It was an example of the human and tender side of the man.



Mike Gretton with the Duke of Edinburgh.

One aspect of Prince Philip, about which I was aware but did not witness personally, was his deep Christian faith and inquisitive mind on spiritual matters. He was raised in the Greek Orthodox church but became an Anglican on marriage to support the Queen as leader of the Church of England. I was told that he would take notes during homilies at services he attended, and later cross-examine the celebrant on what he had preached.

Apart from being a fantastic support to the Queen over so many years, I believe that the Duke of Edinburgh's greatest legacy was his award scheme. It has benefited millions in the UK and all round the world: today over 120 countries offer the scheme to their young people with varying titles, but all operating to the same principles and framework. This struck me most forcibly when the International Award Conference was taking place in South Africa. One day all the delegates went to a prison not far from Capetown for the presentation of gold awards to over 100 young prisoners from all over South Africa.

Into the hall came President Mandela with Prince Philip: they then separated and talked to every gold award participant. It was typical of Prince Philip that he watched President Mandela's progress round the hall – Mandela loved talking, joking and inspiring – so that he matched his progress and they finished together. Many of the hardened prisoners were in tears – we were confident they would not offend again.

The Duke's legacy of the award programme will continue and thrive due to the strength of the underlying principles but also his hand on the tiller as the programme developed. Prince Edward will ensure that the momentum will be maintained, but all of us will miss that very personal impetus given by the late Duke of Edinburgh.

Pilgrimage links to two popular saints

Parish archivist **John Thornhill** describes an image in St Peter's east window

On spotting this image (left) in the east window at St Peter's, people occasionally ask me "Who is it with a sword stuck through his head?". The answer – St Thomas Becket ('à Becket' is now considered incorrect). Although the image seems odd, it is used to depict the manner of Thomas's death.

Last year marked the 850th anniversary of Archbishop Becket's murder. The pandemic caused celebrations to be cancelled and many are being held this year instead.

The story is well known. Four of Henry II's knights broke into Canterbury Cathedral on 29 December 1170 and killed Thomas with sword blows that sliced off the crown of his skull. In fear, the monks hastily interred the body in the crypt and closed the desecrated church. However, within days miraculous cures were attributed to Thomas and such was the public demand to view his tomb, visits were allowed.

News of the martyrdom and miracles spread quickly and attracted pilgrims from all over this country and Europe. In 1173 the pope canonised Thomas as St Thomas of Canterbury. With unprecedented numbers of pilgrims crowding into the crypt, the monks eventually translated the saint's body to a sumptuous shrine at the cathedral's east end.

The gold casket became ever more gloriously decorated with gems gifted by wealthy pilgrims. In pride of place was a huge ruby, the Regale de France offered to St Thomas in 1179 by Louis VII of France. To one visitor, with the lit candles, stained glass, gold and glittering gems 'it seemed as if Paradise was opening up'.

Three hundred years earlier, Winchester had St Swithun, who is also depicted in our east window. In 862 Bishop Swithun died aged 62. At his



wish, he was buried outside his cathedral, Old Minster. Within 10 years cures were associated with him and his body was moved to a more prestigious location in Old Minster.

His cult grew, as did the number of miracles and visions. The walls of his chapel were hung with crutches abandoned by the cured. Swithun was not officially canonised but by common assent (not unusual at that time) and became one of the most popular and important of English saints. His cult spread not only in England but also across Ireland, Scandinavia and France.

In 1093 St Swithun was translated to the new Norman cathedral (which is the one we know today). Over the years he was moved several times until finally, in 1476, a new more magnificent shrine was inaugurated at the east end of the building. The site is now marked by a modern memorial.

The growing popularity of Canterbury did not dampen pilgrimage to Winchester. After seeing the shrine,

pilgrims could rest awhile in the town or in Pilgrims' Hall in the cathedral grounds, before setting off to Canterbury, a journey of some 130 miles.

The end for both shrines came in 1538; destroyed by order of Henry VIII.

Canterbury suffered first. The casket was stripped of its jewels and the gold melted down; the marble shrine was smashed. The spoils filled two chests 'such as six men could but convey out of the church'. The famous Regale was appropriated by Henry who set it in a thumb ring for himself.

The bones were rumoured burnt, although Thomas Cromwell claimed that he had 'bestowed them where they will cause no superstition'.

Destruction fell on Winchester on 21 September. Cromwell's commissioners reported that 'in the morning, about three of the clock, we made an end of the shrine here at Winchester. There was in it no piece of gold, nor any ring, or true stone, but all great counterfeits. Nevertheless, we think the silver alone thereof will amount to near 2,000 Marks.'

This was a huge fortune but what of the 'great counterfeits'? Was Winchester poorer; the pilgrims less generous? There is contemporary evidence that on hearing of Canterbury's fate, the monks hurriedly substituted fakes and St Swithun's bones were 'hidden where no man could find them'.

By the end of the year most of the English shires had gone and Henry had suppressed 'wandering to pilgrimage', obliterating a much-loved element of medieval religious life.

Confirmed at Pentecost

Twenty-three candidates were confirmed by Fr Mark Hogan at St Peter's on Pentecost Sunday, 23 May. Because of Covid it was not possible to have a group photograph but among the Winchester candidates were sisters Antoinette and Louisa Sarfo who are pictured here with their parents and sponsors. Before the pandemic both sisters were altar servers at St Stephen's.



Should religion have a role in politics?

Ian McHardy outlines plans for a second diocesan symposium, this time to be held online

Following on from the successful symposium held in Winchester in November 2019 on 'Science or Religion?' the diocese of Portsmouth, led by Bishop Philip Egan and the dialogue with cultural sectors group, is running a second symposium entitled 'Politics or Religion?'

As in the previous symposium, the aim is to test the relationship – whether that be a positive synergy or a conflict of ideas – between religion and one of the great cultural topics of the age, in this case, politics.

The symposium will be held online on 6 November 2021.

There will be two key speakers, one of whom is confirmed as Jacob Rees-Mogg, leader of the House of Commons and president of the Privy Council and a well-known practising Catholic.

There will also be six workshops covering issues of current importance including immigration, homelessness and the politics of climate change. The workshops will run in two parallel streams of three each, so attendees will participate in two workshops of their choice.

The symposium will start at 10.30am and continue, with short breaks to allow participants to have coffee and lunch, until approximately 4.30pm.

The draft timetable includes a welcome and introduction by the Bishop followed by the first keynote speaker on 'Should religion have a role in politics?'

There will be a break followed by workshops and participants will choose in advance from one of the following:

Issues with immigration (Dr Mary Sutton); b) Why homelessness? (George O'Neill, CEO of the Cardinal Hume Centre); c) Diversity and

the new Puritanism (Lord David Alton).

After a further break there will be another choice of workshops: d) Being a Christian MP (Mark Hoban); e) Religion and the politics of climate change (Liz Slinn); f) What is Catholic social teaching? (Rev Dr David Goodill op).

After another break the second keynote speaker will also address the question: 'Should religion have a role in politics?'

Tickets, together with details about how to attend, will be available in the near future.

Representatives from Winchester Churches Together took part in the annual national parliamentary prayer breakfast this year, which was an online event on Friday 25 June.

They also shared a Zoom discussion with the Winchester MP Steve Brine, who is a regular participant in these events.

The St Peter's school polish certificate

St Peter's School head teacher **Louise Buxton** describes the children's latest activities

'If a task is worthy of our attention, it is worthy of our best.' – Jack Hyles.

Over the past couple of years everyone at St Peter's has been striving to achieve 'The St Peter's polish'.

While recognising that much of what we already achieve is good we all know that with a little more effort, a bit more of a push or an additional thought to how we finish the job we can ensure there is that polish and so we achieve more. This is something we celebrate weekly with the St Peter's polish certificate.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1 we have been working hard to make sure all our work has the St Peter's polish. This means writing our letters on the line, sticking our work in straight and always doing our very neatest writing.

In Year 2 we also have the challenge of joining up our handwriting, we learn the letter joins and then once children can join their writing consistently in all their work they not only get a St Peter's polish certificate, they also become the proud owner of their own 'Super Special Shiny Pencil with a rubber on top!'

Owning your own, new pencil is not only a great motivator but also a real celebration of all the hard work that has taken place. Of course even when we receive our pencil we still have to keep up the amazing handwriting!

CrossKeys welcomes letters, stories and photographs
Deadline for Christmas 2021 edition: Monday, 15 November
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In Key Stage 2, the children have been working hard to perfect the St. Peter's polish.

The children have been making a more conscious effort to deliver legible and joined handwriting in all lessons in order to show the value and pride that they take in their work.

'We always have smart handwriting and we are working hard to join it up,' Kasper (Year 2)

'We always try to have good manners, so say thank you, please and will often tell people to have a nice day,' Aoife (Year 2)

'The St Peter's polishes all about being kind and helpful. Miss Buxton says 'be kind, be kind and be kind some more,' Callum (Year 2)

As well as this, Year 3 have had a focussed effort on perfecting the polish in their maths books by using a square for each digit, even when they move onto smaller squared books!

This is quite a challenge when the squares half in size in these maths books. From ensuring that we present our work with pride we then encourage children to develop maths skills that enable them to explore and solve problems encountered in the outside world.

Our maths curriculum teaches and develops a logical approach to solving problems and develops mental strategies. We believe that every child has a right to these skills and through a range of activities we aim to provide them with a 'tool box' that they can apply when solving 'real life' problems.

'Maths is fun because we do so much different stuff.' Jack (Year 3)

'I really like maths as there are so many different things to do. My favourite are times tables, especially the eights.' Emily (Year 3)

'Maths can be a challenge and sometimes it can be easy. We learn lots of different things.' Luca (Year 3)

'When I find things difficult there's always someone to help me.' Mabel (Year 3)

The majority of maths taught at St Peter's is done through a daily maths lesson, linked to the National Curriculum. Children explore the key concepts of number, measurement, geometry and statistics. Maths learning across the school is based on a mastery approach with concepts being introduced using concrete apparatus and learning consolidated through the pictorial and then abstract.

'Mathematics has beauty and romance. It's not a boring place to be, the mathematical world. It's an extraordinary place; it's worth spending time there.' – Marcus du Sautoy

Not only are the children focussed on polishing their presentation in their books but they are considering how the polish applies to their personal appearance and the overall look of being a St Peteronian. Children have been excellent ambassadors by ensuring that they wear the St. Peter's badge neatly and with pride.

Finally, it's not just the children who work on the St Peter's Polish. The staff and some parents worked together after school this term to make the learning environment for our younger children as attractive and well organised as possible – so setting expectations from the very beginning of the children's time with us.

'Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.' Proverbs 16:3

Little Fishes Pre-school has been focusing on health and wellbeing, as part of mental health awareness in young people. There has been a lot of research into the benefits of gardening, nature and being outdoors. The children have enthusiastically engaged in growing our own vegetables and encouraging wildlife into our garden. It has created an awe and wonder for our beautiful world, an awareness of seasons and change and a care for our environment.