

February 2025

EDGEWAYS

Sacred Heart Parish Magazine

Vol. 36 No. 2

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*Archbishop John celebrates
Mass for Youth 2000 (pp.10–11)*

- A Valentine's Day message (pp.6–7)
- 'Called to Bear Fruit' explained (p.9)
- Fr Michael Holman SJ returns (p.15)

FREE but donations are always welcome

Going on pilgrimage

On holiday in Portugal once, I came across a Shrine of Our Lady of which I had never heard, namely the Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios (Our Lady of Remedies) in Lamego. This devotion dates from the 16th century and it set me thinking about pilgrimage.

Pilgrimages in history

Pilgrimages have long been a part of human experience, ever since Adam and Eve, who made a journey – admittedly somewhat reluctantly! – from the Garden of Eden onwards. One thinks in the Old Testament of Abraham, called by God to leave home and settle in Canaan (Genesis 12), Jacob's pilgrimage (Genesis 35), and, of course, the Jewish people's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land (Exodus). Jesus Himself made pilgrimages to Jerusalem, including the time His parents left Him behind.

Once Emperor Constantine recognised Christianity in 314 AD, Christian pilgrimages began in earnest, starting with his mother, Empress Helena, who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 326. A little later, an unnamed pilgrim called the Bordeaux Pilgrim wrote a full account of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as did a woman called Egeria in the 380s.

Besides the Holy Land, other pilgrimage destinations grew up – especially Rome, the place of the tombs of St Peter and Paul; Compostela, the very popular Shrine of St James the Great; and, since 1061, Walsingham in England. Following his martyrdom in 1170, the shrine of our own St Thomas of Canterbury was a much-visited place of pilgrimage until the Reformation.



Many pilgrimage places are, of course, particularly associated with apparitions of Our Lady, including Knock in Ireland, Fátima in Portugal, and Lourdes in France, the most visited pilgrimage place in Christianity. Other religions have pilgrimages as well, including Islam (to Mecca and elsewhere), and there are many Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites in and around India.

Why go on pilgrimage?

In short, a pilgrimage is a microcosm of our whole life's journey towards God. One definition describes a pilgrimage as 'a journey towards God with a purpose'. It is thus different from a holiday or vacation trip. In a pilgrimage, we take time out from our everyday life to encounter God, and it is meant to be a life-changing experience. Each pilgrimage should be a response to the never-ending call to conversion and a renewal of our interior life of holiness. We return refreshed and renewed in our practice of the Faith.

Everyone has a personal reason for going on pilgrimage: some hope to receive special spiritual graces; some want a bodily or mental cure; some have petitions to present to God; some wish to give thanks to God; some are looking to discover their purpose in life. But all share the same search for faith. After a pilgrimage, many pilgrims become more fervent in their study of the Faith, in their prayers, in their parish work, and in their particular apostolate.

Pilgrimages do not have to be sombre affairs: they can be enjoyed, not least because they afford time for relaxation and for getting to know one's fellow pilgrims better. The disabled children I went to Lourdes with were sad when the week ended because they had enjoyed themselves so much and forgotten their troubles.

Parish Lourdes Pilgrimage

In September, we will have a parish pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, in southwest France, where Our Lady appeared to St Bernadette in 1858. It is a place of pilgrimage, prayer, healing, hope (very appropriate in this Jubilee Year), joy, and renewal and renaissance.

More details and the cost are in the newsletter (e.g. see Sunday 9 February, tinyurl.com/shwlourdes25).

Have you booked yet?

Canon David

Your Parish Pastoral Council needs you!



Our parish is a vibrant and active community and its strength lies in the dedication and commitment of its parishioners. We are blessed to have so many individuals willing to share their time and talents.

The PPC plays a vital role in ensuring that our parish activities and initiatives reflect the needs and aspirations of our community. It serves as a key consultative body, providing valuable insights to discern the best way forward in serving all parishioners.

The PPC meets on the evening of the first Thursday of each month to discuss a range of topics related to parish life, including parish social activities, developing relationships with local Catholic schools, and wider community initiatives. It is a collaborative effort, and your voice and ideas would be greatly appreciated.

See page 6 to learn about what was discussed at the last PPC meeting. If you would like to learn more about joining the PPC and what the role entails, please do not hesitate to contact David Hurst, the interim PPC chair, at dthurst52@gmail.com.

Happy (belated) Valentine's Day!

A belated 'Happy Valentine's Day', especially to all parishioners who are on their own. As well as being the patron saint of 'love', did you know that St Valentine is also the patron saint of ... bees! Buzzy man!

To keep your heart tingling, you can learn more about the **meaning of love** courtesy of Fr David (pp.6-7).

In this issue, Canon David tells us all about **pilgrimages** before inviting you to join him on the **parish pilgrimage to Lourdes** from Wednesday 17 to Saturday 20 September (pp.2-3). Details of how to book are in the newsletter.

The diocesan initiative 'Called to Bear Fruit' invites parishioners to form small groups. We explain what to do (p.9) and we also summarise the last **Parish Pastoral Council** meeting (p.8) as we invite parishioners to give of their time and join this important voluntary group (p.3).

'Faith in the Parish' reviews the second **Youth 2000 retreat** (pp.10-11), at which we were honoured to have **Archbishop John Wilson** celebrating Mass in our church (front cover).

The Newman Circle had two full houses: first to hear **Fr Toby Lees OP** talk about his vocation and role as Priest Director of Radio Maria England (p.14) and then to enjoy **Fr Michael Holman SJ** as he returned to Wimbledon to inform a riveted audience about the Ignatian Examen (p.15).

We pay tribute to parishioner **Jim Tait**, who passed away in September (pp.18-19).



From our schools, **Catherine Banks** continues our youth journalist series in an interview with **Mrs Polly Harrison** of the Ursuline High School (pp.12-13).

We then review the seasonal panto, **Dick Whittington and his Cat** (pp.16-17) – plus a lot (and I mean a lot) of hangers-on! A huge achievement and a popular success. We offer a few other delights for your diary: **Brahms' German Requiem** and **Haydn** at our parish (p.5), and **Katy Lees** at the Lantern Arts Centre (pp.25-26).

In a possible new regular feature, we uncover our parish history through **past issues of Edgeways** (pp.22-23). This month, we look at Februarys 2015, 2010, 2005, 2000 and 1997. This was really fascinating to research and write.

We present a 'Special Offer' of a 2025 calendar and greeting cards showing local scenes illustrated and made by people at **Workshop 305**, a thriving local hub of creativity for artists and creatives with complex neurodiverse learning and physical disabilities (pp.20-21).

And now this exhausted editor is off to bed. Enjoy!

David Hurst

Academy Choir
WIMBLEDON

Brahms

Ein Deutsches Requiem

Beethoven Overture: Egmont
Strauss Metamorphosen

Saturday 8 March 2025, 8PM
Sacred Heart, Edge Hill, Wimbledon SW19 4LU

Regular partners of
wimf
www.academychoirwimbledon.co.uk
0333 666 3366 Booking fee applies

THE SACRED HEART CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

HAYDN

Te Deum in C Major (Marie Therese)
Symphony No. 101 (The Clock)
Missa de Angustiis (Nelson Mass)

Saturday, 14 June 2025 at 8pm

SACRED HEART CHURCH, EDGE HILL, WIMBLEDON, SW19 4LU

Love, love, Catholic love

When I was a teenager, the very word 'love' made me want to throw up!

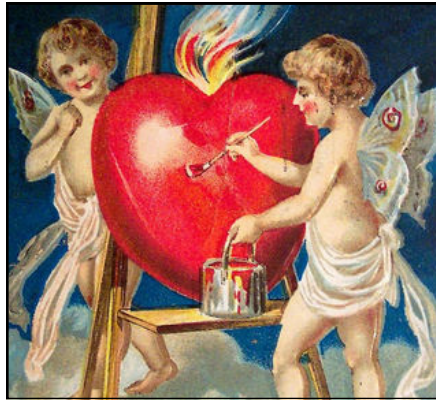
It always conjured up Valentine's Day images of big red hearts, flowers and general sopppiness. Actually, this is a total distortion of what love is. Perhaps the difficulty is that in English, we use the word 'love' to cover such a multitude of meanings, ranging from romantic love to the love of friends or the love of country.

Instead, in the Catholic sense, to love someone is to will their good, principally to will and help them to go to heaven – even if we don't particularly like them!

Many people confuse loving and liking. God commands us to love everyone, but that doesn't mean we necessarily find every person we encounter a delight or someone we'd go for a pint with.

When we look upon Our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, we see love. God loved us so much that He thought we were worth dying for. He doesn't simply tell us He loves us: He lets actions speak louder than words. Likewise, Our Lord Jesus Christ's gift of the Mass and Holy Communion are gifts of Himself. God doesn't give us *something* but *someone*: His very self.

All of us are aware that real love invariably involves sacrifice. Think of the parents who get up multiple times during the night when their little child is sick, or the legion of husbands and wives who are full-time carers for their spouse, often at great personal cost. It is easy to say we love someone, but the proof is in the pudding. Would you be willing to inconvenience yourself or even lose your life for someone else?



This is where Hollywood's idea of love falls flat – not that there is anything wrong with authentic, holy, romantic love between man and woman, but it boils love down to having nice feelings and a happily-ever-after outcome.

Saint Valentine, along with all the Saints, understood that God loves us unto death and that love is only satisfied with a return of love. God simply wants us to love Him back – but again, the proof is in the pudding. If we are 'too busy' to go to Mass, to pray, or to give God any time in our daily lives, then can we really claim that we love him?

Saint Valentine loved God so much that he wanted to share the saving belief in Him with others, leading to his beheading. All the martyrs throughout the centuries bear witness to the reality that, when we love God, we would rather die than deny Him, precisely because we know how much He loves us and has sacrificed to open the gates of heaven to us.

Fr David Hunter

Who was Saint Valentine?

Saint Valentine is well known as the patron saint of love – but he is also the patron saint of marriages, engagements, young people, greetings, travellers, beekeepers, people with epilepsy, and numerous churches. *Busy man!*

Valentine was a doctor in third-century central Italy who became a Catholic priest. People say that God worked through his life to perform miracles and teach people how to recognise and experience unconditional love.

Valentine was sent to jail for performing weddings for couples during a time when new marriages were outlawed in ancient Rome. Legend says that Emperor Claudius II thought marriage was a obstacle to recruiting new soldiers.

For refusing to renounce his faith, Valentine was beheaded on 14 February 270 AD – a day now celebrated as Valentine's Day. One tradition holds that before his execution, Valentine sent a loving note to a child he had taught, the daughter of his jailer – and that note eventually led to the tradition of sending Valentine's cards.

He certainly has a lot to answer for ... !



Part-time Administrative Assistant wanted

Anthony Lee is a registered social worker and psychotherapist who provides free counselling services to Sacred Heart parishioners. Anthony is seeking a part-time Administrative Assistant, who will handle general office administrative tasks and assist in communication and coordination with government and community service partners. Applicants must be UK citizens and proficient in office computer applications; university students and retirees are welcome to apply. The job is work-from-home, seven hours per week at £18 per hour. To apply, please submit your CV to anthony.on.lee@gmail.com as soon as possible.

Thursday 6 February

What happens at the Parish Pastoral Council?

The PPC comprises up to ten lay members plus Canon David, Fr Jackson, Fr David, Deacon Julian, Sr Dorothy, Rob Hitchcock (as Faith and Formation Minister), and Chris Woodward (as Chair of the Finance Committee).

The last PPC meeting on Thursday 6 February had three observers, who were there to learn about what was discussed. A wide range of agenda items was covered and the key ones are summarised below.

Parishioner presentations

Invited guest presentations included:

- reviving the 'Be Well Hub', a mental health referral service originally set up before lockdown with Merton Citizens;
- new ways that pupils from our primary school are visiting our church; and
- ways to encourage more children to sing in the choir at the 10.00am Family Mass on Sundays.

Called to Bear Fruit

The PPC discussed the parish's response to the initiative to help shape the future of the Archdiocese, 'Called to Bear Fruit'. The initiative invites parishioners to discuss key themes in small groups, recording and submitting responses to the Archdiocese by Sunday 6 April.

The PPC resolved to order more consultation booklets and designate a contact to coordinate groups. See the next page to learn more about forming or joining small groups.



Future events

The PPC discussed resourcing for future parish events, including:

- **Welcome Tea for New Parishioners** at 3.00pm on Sunday 9 March in the Lounge
- **'Thank You' Party** for volunteers at 7.30pm on Saturday 10 May in the Upper Hall
- **Parish Day Garden Party** for the Feast of the Sacred Heart on Sunday 29 June

With members leaving the area or withdrawing after serving on the PPC, there are now some places available for more lay members to join.

If you would like to learn more about joining the PPC and what the role entails, please do not hesitate to contact David Hurst, the interim PPC chair, at dthurst52@gmail.com.

Have you joined a group yet?

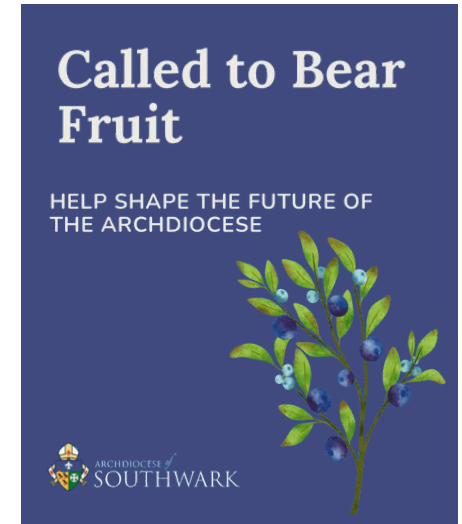
'Called to Bear Fruit' is an initiative of the Archdiocese of Southwark to enable parishes to become communities that evangelise, form disciples, and inspire witness to the Catholic faith.

The consultation booklet – available in paperback copy at the back of the church or online at rcaos.org.uk/calledtobearfruit – fully explains the initiative and lays out its six themes:

- Taking stock
- Proclaiming the Word
- Living discipleship: Faith
- Living discipleship: Prayer and community life
- The witness of charity
- Proposals for revitalisation

The process of forming small groups, meeting, discussing the themes, and responding is:

- **Talk** to your friends and other parishioners and agree to form a small group of four to seven people.
 - If you want to invite others to join your group, please email David at dthurst52@gmail.com.
 - If you are on your own but want to join a group, please email David at dthurst52@gmail.com.
- Agree **where** to meet: on parish premises, in a home, or online via Zoom or MS Teams.
- Agree **when** to meet: once or on regular days each week **before Sunday 6 April**.
- Appoint a **facilitator** from your group to lead the discussion and feed back your group's findings.



- Meet once or regularly and follow the **meeting format** on page 11 of the booklet.
- Agree **how long** each meeting will run: around one hour is advised.
- Follow the **six themes** on pages 15 to 33 in the booklet.
- **Record** the group responses to each theme in writing.
- At the end of each meeting and before Sunday 6 April, **submit** responses online or by post as explained on page 34 of the booklet.
 - If you have **problems submitting responses**, email David at dthurst52@gmail.com.

...and remember to **enjoy** this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Saturday 25 January Youth 2000 meets again at our parish



On Saturday 25 January, from 9.00am to 9.00pm, the parish young adults group, in collaboration with Youth 2000, hosted the second Youth 2000 Retreat Day in our parish, attended by over 220 young people.

The theme of the day was around the Jubilee Year for Pilgrims of Hope and from Luke 4:16-21, where Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah about the 'year of the Lord's favour'.

The retreat was an incredibly blessed day! In the morning, we were joined by Fr Damian Howard SJ, who spoke to us on the theme of the retreat and what it means to celebrate this Jubilee Year for 'Pilgrims of Hope' in the Church.

In the afternoon, Kerry Christopher from the Humanum Institute shared her wisdom during the women's session, while Max Toone and a panel of men from the parish shared their knowledge and authenticity in the men's session.

We were very blessed to be joined by Archbishop John Wilson in the afternoon, who celebrated Mass for us in the Sacred Heart Chapel.

In the evening, Fr Bernard Murphy CFR gave an inspiring talk on healing and reconciliation. This was followed by a beautiful healing service. Throughout the day, the Sacrament of Reconciliation was offered and we were blessed to be joined by priests from in and around the diocese who heard over 200 confessions!

John Griffin



An interview with Mrs Polly Harrison about her work at the Ursuline High School

WRITTEN BY A YOUTH JOURNALIST

Catherine Banks continues our youth journalist series in an interview with Mrs Polly Harrison about her work at the Ursuline High School.

'So ... what do you do in the afternoon?'

An eight-year career at Ursuline High School has certainly been colourful ... and a busy one for Mrs Polly Harrison!

From fostering international relations within the Ursuline community to hosting global conferences and leading an outstanding enrichment programme, Mrs Harrison really does it all.

An Ursuline alumna herself, Mrs Harrison attended the University of Oxford, where she studied Law before embarking on a career in pensions law.

Her return to Ursuline was one of coincidence and, after a meeting with Ms Waters, Mrs Harrison returned to her *alma mater*, this time as a Sixth Form support teacher. Her career change was significant, telling me that she had 'never had a job like it' and that, despite all the work she says teachers must do – often beyond the classroom, it is extremely 'fulfilling'.

A short time later, Ms Waters called upon Mrs Harrison once again. This time, to take over Lisa Thefault's job and, in response, Mrs Harrison pondered: 'What does Lisa do?'

Years later, Mrs Harrison has certainly made the job her own, fulfilling multiple



Photograph by Dominic Cunliffe

roles and responsibilities across all year groups. For the lower school, there are an array of opportunities, such as the First Give Program for Year 8. During this programme, each class picks a charity they care about and then they raise money for it. Recently, Ms Harrison has seen more participation than ever before. Just this year, the students have raised £8,500 which is £3,000 more than three years ago – demonstrating the commitment of the students in the service of their local community.

And in the Sixth Form, which occupies most of her time, there is an even wider range of enrichment opportunities. From volunteering at local primary schools to a Global Scholars' Programme and a Gospel

music society, Mrs Harrison oversees 'The Enrichment Programme', a unique programme which 'gives students breadth in their skills' while fostering a connection with the local community.

There is also the Ursuline Links programme. Students are able to join this programme in Year 12, where they are invited to volunteer alongside members of the wider Ursuline community. In the past, Ursuline Links has run outreach programmes, summer camps, and a clean-up for Hurricane Katrina. The 'special thing about it' is the involvement of the alumnae.

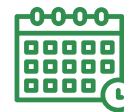


What does the future hold?

Mrs Harrison's role is constantly evolving (and growing!) as she develops the student exchange programme so that they will be able to offer programmes in Ireland and the USA. She will also be attending a conference in Cincinnati this October.

Mrs Harrison plays an integral role in school life and packs many roles into a single workday – and then some! Her passion for these roles is evident, saying that the best things students learn is 'to use their gifts for the benefit of others', emphasising the importance of 'good and strong female leaders' – principles which she embodies in every part of her role.

The work that Mrs Harrison does at our school is so busy and diverse that one is tempted to ask cheekily: 'So ... what do you do in the afternoon?'



Saturday 7 June: Archdiocesan Jubilee Celebration Day

Join us for the centrepiece event of the Year of Jubilee 2025 in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

Led by Archbishop John Wilson, we will gather as an Archdiocese at The Friars, Aylesford, for a day of prayer, reflection, celebration, and fun. There will be lots of activities for children and adults. The event is free.

Further communications on the Celebration Day will follow; for now, please save the date in your diary. You can find out more about the event and the Archdiocese's wider Jubilee Year plans at rcaos.org.uk/jubilee2025.

A walking pilgrimage to the Friars will depart from St George's Cathedral, Southwark (Lambeth Road, SE1 7HY), on Monday 2 June. An information session for interested pilgrims will be held at 7.00pm on Monday 10 March, both online and at Amigo Hall at St George's Cathedral. You can view the pilgrimage itinerary and register your interest at aec.rcaos.org.uk/pilgrimage2025.

Wednesday 29 January

Fr Toby Lees OP visits the Newman Circle

As interim host, David Hurst welcomed Fr Toby Lees OP – OP stands for *Ordo Praedicatorum*, which translates as the Order of Preachers, more familiarly known as the Dominicans, but you already knew that!

Toby's mother, Delia (pictured with Fr Toby), lives locally and is a long-standing parishioner in our parish.

Toby discussed the fascinating story of his life, first as a City lawyer and then 'scratching his vocational itch' (Toby's words), Toby was ordained as a Dominican and has now been handed the responsibility of being Priest Director at Radio Maria England, based in a fully-equipped broadcasting studio next to St Dominic's Priory, a most beautiful church on Haverstock Hill.

Radio Maria supports Catholics and others in their spiritual journeys while offering insight into learning more about the Catholic faith. Programme titles include:

- *The Liturgy of the Hours* ... daily at 7.00am, 1.00pm, 6.30pm, and 9.45pm
- *Word for Today* ... with Fr Toby, daily at 1.15pm
- *Diving Deeper* ... into your spiritual life
- *Mornings with Radio Maria* ... 9.00am music, interviews, and chats
- *Credo* ... learning more about the Catholic faith
- *The Rosary and the Mass* ... deepening your spiritual life



- *Just Life* ... on topics ranging from neuroscience to cooking
- *The Bardcast* ... inspiring listeners to write poetry
- *Questions of Faith* ... responding to your phone-in questions live on air

You can tune into Radio Maria online at radiomariaengland.uk, via the app, DAB+, or on your Alexa smart speaker.

Radio Maria England is part of the world family of Radio Maria, formed in 1998 in response to the apparition and messages of Our Lady of Medjugorje and Fatima.

The station relies entirely on donations to continue broadcasting. **Fr Toby stresses: 'Radio Maria matters; what we are doing really counts. It's hard work, but it's also joyful work and it is making a real difference. It is touching lives and transforming them.'**

Thursday 13 February

Fr Michael Holman SJ explains the Examen

Newman Circle host Rock Tansey introduced Fr Michael Holman SJ, telling us that he was born in Wimbledon, educated at Wimbledon College and ordained as a Jesuit priest with others in our church – and so Fr Michael was, in some ways, 'coming back home' to talk to possibly the largest group ever gathered in the parish lounge for a Newman Circle meeting.

The principal belief of Ignatian theology is that 'we find God in all things'.

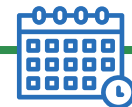
We learned from Fr Michael that the Examen is a daily, prayerful exercise in discernment, part of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, helping each of us to respond to God's loving invitation in all daily activities.

The Examen is a personal reflective experience that is best contemplated each evening – but, importantly, in order to be alert, not just before we go to sleep – and that it comprises three distinct parts:

- a quiet reflection on all of the happenings of the past day, both good and less good, giving gratitude for the part that God played in making the day happen that way for us;
- an apology to God for what may not have gone so well, through our own fault or neglect, during the past day; and
- an expression of hope for tomorrow and a prayer for how God may play a part in our meetings with others and the events that will take place throughout the next day.



The appreciative audience were all most grateful to Fr Michael for returning to Wimbledon to deliver this insightful and engaging talk on the Ignatian Examen: do come back soon!



Next Newman Circle meeting

7.00pm Thursday 20 March
in the Parish Lounge

Join parishioner Julian Hoskins as he discusses his career in rehabilitation and family services in HM Prison Service, viewed from a Catholic perspective.

'Turn again, Dick? ... this panto was spinning!'



Catching the enthusiastic, late panto-season audience, the Edgehill Players once again delivered in spades with a raucous, fun-filled presentation of *Dick Whittington and his Cat*, in this colourful adaptation by Wendy Tansey and Terry Marsh.

In case the audience were in any doubt, the show both opened and closed with energetic, ensemble songs about this being 'A Pantomime'.

Most of us know the tale – but not this version, which included a flamboyant ring walk followed by an on-stage boxing match between King Rat and Tooting the Cat. Who won, you ask? You'll just have to wait until the show is streamed!

The show expanded into providing 'accomplices' to Dick in the forms of one cat called 'Tooting', 11 kittens, 9 tinklybells, 9 rattings, assorted Londoners, pirates, mermaids and sea creatures and, borrowed from *Jack and the Beanstalk*, a guest appearance by none other than

'Buttercup the Cow' – well, if you've got the costume, use it!

Familiar songs from famous movies and shows turned up, such as *You Are My Sunshine*, *My Only Sunshine*, popular in the 1940s, *Marry the Man Today* from *Gyps and Dolls*, *You Can Be Anything You Want To Be* from Bugsy Malone, *The Court of King Caractacus* (you'll have to ask Mr Google to find where that one came from!), and a wonderful, three-baby reprisal of *Triplets* from *The Bandwagon* (1953).

And this version of Dick Whittington delivered a strong moral message: 'Don't accept bad luck in your life, but turn again and make your own fortune'.

At the curtain call, I counted 76 'Players' dancing on the stage and celebrating the very essence of live performance with a reprise of *It's a Pantomime!*

Another Tansey-Marsh triumph!



Photographs by John Stone

James 'Jim' Robert Tait 22 May 1934 – 21 September 2024

Dad was a member of this parish and kept his Roman Catholic faith all of his life, from which he drew great strength and comfort.

Dad was father to four children, with twelve grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. His lifelong friend and parishioner Sadie Smith sums Dad up perfectly: 'Jim was an exceptionally nice and good man. He did so much for so many people. He always thought about others before himself. He was so highly respected: in the community, in the nursing home, in the army, in the nursing world. Not only did you love him, but we all loved him and admired him.'

Caroline says: 'Dad was a humble man with a twinkle in his eye. I will miss him every day. He was so supportive of Peter and I as our family grew up. To Carol and I at the Stables, always willing to help out with our sponsored rides often in support of cancer charities, events, and much general maintenance. After he left 'Mirawala', it was a privilege to see him most days in the care home.'

Phil would relate to Dad's ability as a comic and a prophet. Feeling guilty about lazing at home after his RAF Regiment Service, Dad said: 'Enjoy it while you can, Phil: before you know it, you'll be married with a mortgage and kids' ... Sure enough, one year later ... !

Dominic recalls the loving, safe family environment Mum and Dad gave us as children. The cups of tea; the hot water bottles; the amazing meals they cooked; his patience at the mayhem that we often caused in the household; doing my paper



round on a cold and frosty morning; the Sunday roasts; Mum in tears with laughter – these times brought out the best in him.

As for me, Dad's advice was often brief, to the point, from the heart, absolutely honest, and always wise. I really miss our chats and his insight and awareness of almost everything. Dad would hate us saying this, but he was in his own quiet way: a 'great man'.

Dad's philosophy was: 'Live each day for the moment and don't dwell in the past as you cannot change it'. The plaque in his care home room read: '*Vivre l'instant present*'. It was only when Mum had passed away that Dad really started learning French, achieving a GCSE even though he felt he'd never really mastered it.

Back in the day, he lived with his parents and his sister, Margaret, in the Wimbledon Village Club which his parents ran and managed; while living

there, members taught him fishing and snooker. Dad recalls hitting his first snooker ball aged nine, entering a Boys National Snooker Competition and playing in some top venues. In 2011, at 75, he won both the Wimbledon Village Club singles and doubles titles.

At work, Dad was a total professional. He claimed that he was lazy at school, leaving at just 14, but to his mother's surprise, he sat and passed entry exams to a technical college. At 16, he gained a diploma in woodwork and engineering, which led him to his first employment making thermometers, earning good money.

At 18, Dad began his National Service in the Royal Military Police: the 'Red Berets'. En route to his posting in Korea, a big cheer went up on board his ship as they learned that the war had ended. Dad also served in Japan and Hong Kong, where he benefitted from military hospital training. While in the Army, 'Corporal Jim' also obtained O-Level passes in English, Maths, and Geography.

On completion of National Service in November 1955, Dad embarked upon a career in nursing aged 21, being one of two male students among 30 ladies!

A year later, he met Jeannine. After the Suez Crisis briefly recalled him to duty in Cyprus, he saw Mum again, by chance. Never again to be parted, they married in 1960. Their marriage was 50 years of love, devotion, family, and companionship.

Dad worked at both St George's, Tooting, and at St James', Balham, where he became the first man to be awarded the Gold Medal as The Best All-Round Nurse. Phil noticed how Dad relished being at work, thriving with the people around him – whoever they were, whatever their role. And everyone liked him.

Dad won two other major prizes and completed a postgraduate course in neurology at Atkinson Morley Psychiatric Hospital, where he was a registered psychiatric nurse. He attained a degree in Social Science from the Open University, starting his career in nurse tutoring in 1972, a position he relished for 21 years.

In 1993, Dad took early retirement. He continued nursing through agency work until 2002, when Mum began to need his full-time support. Dad cared for her lovingly until she passed away in 2010.

In his later years, Dad missed Mum, of course. As well as learning French and delighting in his family, he resumed art, fishing, some incredible modelling, and his beloved snooker. He supported cancer friendship groups and became Secretary to the local Korean Veterans Association. He gradually began 'decluttering' the family home, 'Mirawala', loved by us all, but which eventually had to be sold when it was clear Dad was struggling and had dispelled the idea of ever returning.

The care home gave him a new lease of life, and we are thankful to all the wonderful staff at the Barchester Wimbledon Beaumont Home. Relishing having people around him again, he was identified for the role of Residents' Ambassador. He produced some lovely watercolour paintings, discovered TV wasn't so bad after all, and most of all, he loved visits from the family, especially his grand- and great-grandchildren and Caroline, who was pivotal to his care.

That was Dad: always able to surprise, to set standards and examples. An amazing and lovely, lovely, man: our Dad, Grandad, Great-Grandad, and friend, Jim, Jim Tait.

Anthony Tait

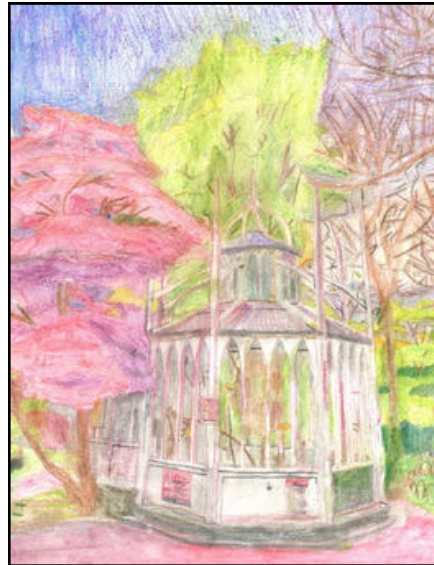
2025 calendar from Workshop 305

Workshop 305 CIC is a thriving hub of creativity situated on Weir Road in Wimbledon and home to over 70 adult artists, makers, and creatives with complex neurodiverse learning and physical disabilities.



Specialist workshops in art and print, ceramics, textiles, and woodcraft run across the week. Some of Workshop 305's woodcraft pieces are currently being showcased at the Wimbledon Museum, Ridgway, and are there until the end of March. Two designs from the calendar are also available as greetings cards.

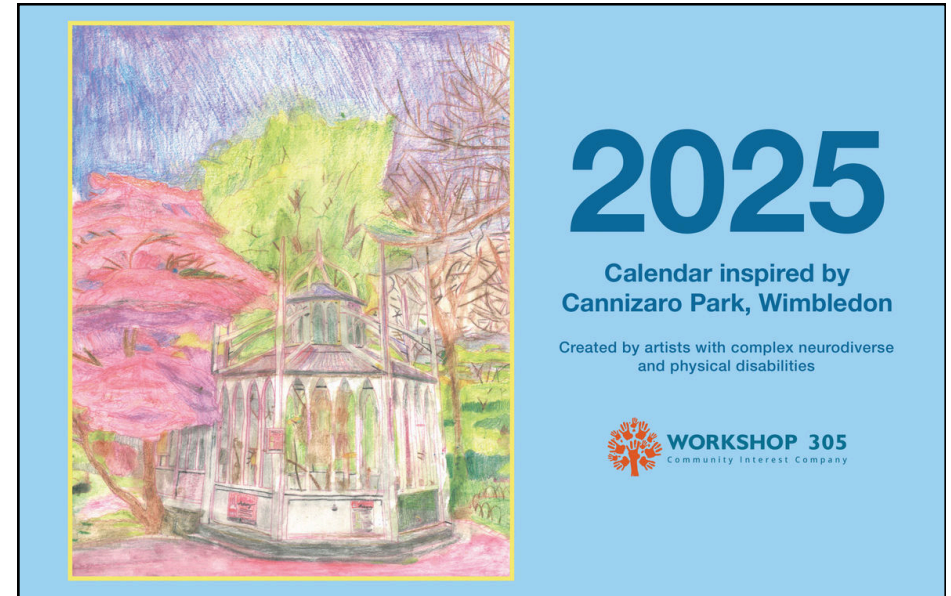
For the public, Workshop 305 also offers evening and weekend classes, including regular beginners and improves pottery sessions. If you have ever thought about taking up pottery or brushing up on skills long past, here is your chance!



For the 2025 calendar, we suggest a donation of £10. For greetings cards, we suggest a donation of £3.50 each. To place an order for personal delivery, please email David at dthurst52@gmail.com.

Every purchase and every booking actively supports our 'specialist workshops', so Workshop 305 thanks you.

For more information, please visit workshop305.com.

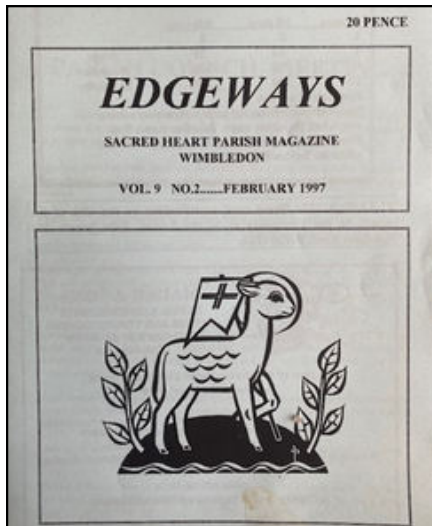


This month back then – an Edgeways history of YOUR parish!

Your editor thought it would be fun to show the front covers and three storylines from past Edgeways magazines to show what was happening in the parish 'way back then' – that is, each respective month 10, 15, 20 years ago, etc..

This month we look at what was happening in the parish in Februarys 1997, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015.

Nearly all 400 back issues of Edgeways dating back to 1989 are available to borrow on request – yes, really! To arrange this, email your request for individual months (one month at a time) to David at dtthurst52@gmail.com.

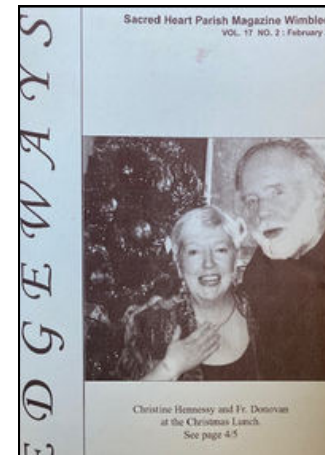
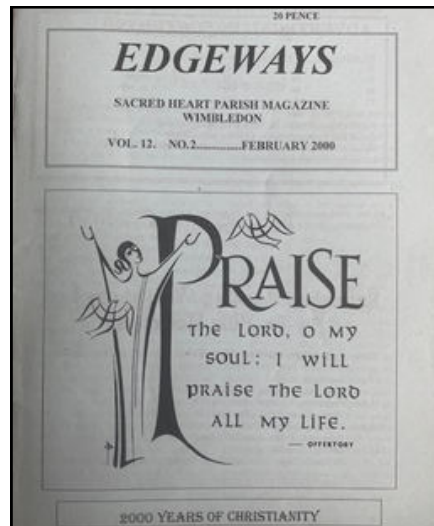


February 1997 (Vol. 9 No. 12)

- Michael Orbell is awarded Knight of St Gregory by Pope John Paul II
- Parish Youth Club opens on Sunday evening in the Lower Hall
- Rob Mobile reports on Pop Quiz and Five-a-Side football match

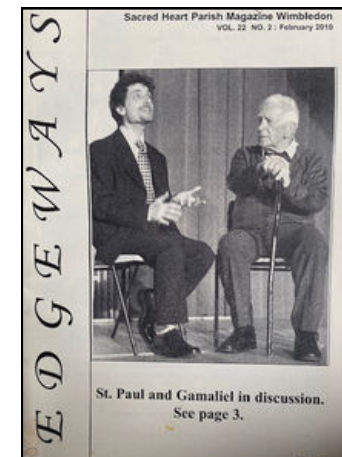
February 2000 (Vol. 12 No. 2)

- Richard Millward reviews 100 years of the church in Wimbledon
- Sadie Smith previews the Mass for all parish volunteers
- Tony Brook pays tribute to Fr Philip Wetz SJ (1910–99)



◀ February 2005 (Vol. 17 No. 2) ◀

- Christine Hennessy and Fr Kevin Donovan SJ at the Christmas lunch
- Plaque to commemorate Fr Frank Walsh SJ, Parish Priest 1992–98
- Mary Connellan recalls the Credit Union as it closes

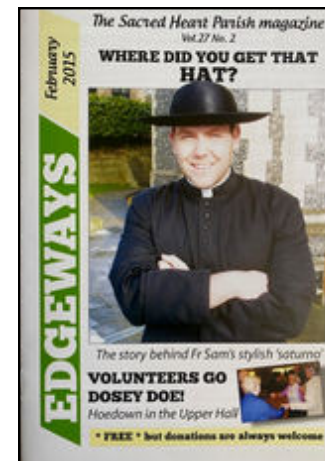


February 2010 (Vol. 22 No. 2)

- Giles Kennedy plays St Paul in a play by Wendy Tansey
- Thirteen new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are commissioned in the parish
- Alison Williams writes about the annual service of Christian Unity

◀ February 2015 (Vol. 27 No. 2) ◀

- Fr Sam Davey wears his stylish 'saturno' hat
- Julia Waters on Catholic education today
- Canon John Clarke celebrates Churches Together service





Breathe
 A Journey Through Cancer in Five Arias
 Fri 7th & Sat 8th March 7.30pm

LANTERN ARTS CENTRE
 Creativity & Community

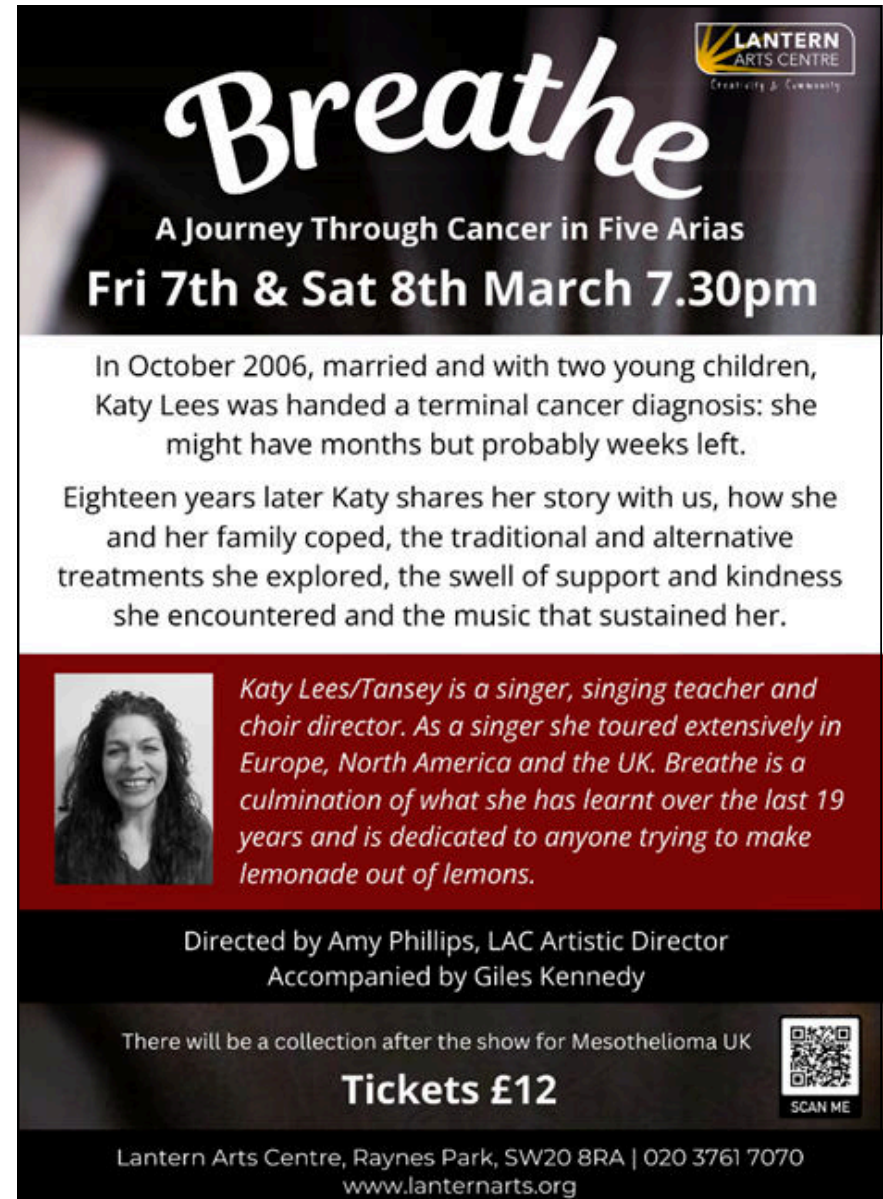
SCAN ME

Soprano Katy Lees takes us deep inside her extraordinary journey of survival and sings the arias that gave her strength.

Tickets £12

Directed by Amy Phillips
 There will be a collection after the show for Mesothelioma UK.

Lantern Arts Centre, Raynes Park, SW20 8RA | 020 3761 7070
 www.lanternarts.org




Breathe
 A Journey Through Cancer in Five Arias
 Fri 7th & Sat 8th March 7.30pm

LANTERN ARTS CENTRE
 Creativity & Community

In October 2006, married and with two young children, Katy Lees was handed a terminal cancer diagnosis: she might have months but probably weeks left.

Eighteen years later Katy shares her story with us, how she and her family coped, the traditional and alternative treatments she explored, the swell of support and kindness she encountered and the music that sustained her.

 *Katy Lees/Tansey is a singer, singing teacher and choir director. As a singer she toured extensively in Europe, North America and the UK. Breathe is a culmination of what she has learnt over the last 19 years and is dedicated to anyone trying to make lemonade out of lemons.*

Directed by Amy Phillips, LAC Artistic Director
 Accompanied by Giles Kennedy

There will be a collection after the show for Mesothelioma UK

Tickets £12

SCAN ME

Lantern Arts Centre, Raynes Park, SW20 8RA | 020 3761 7070
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Merton
citizens

CELEBRATION



Our parish was a founding member of Merton Citizens in April 2018, and it continues to be active alongside 14 other organisations, mostly schools and churches.

Come and join us as we celebrate the progress made and many significant achievements accomplished in Merton in the areas of Housing, Living Wage, Mental Health, and Refugee Welcome, and our plans to make a better community in the future.

Please RSVP to Vitoria at vitoria.russo-gaino@citizensuk.org or David at dthurst52@gmail.com.



7.00pm Thursday 27 February
Holy Trinity Church,
Wimbledon SW191SB