

April – May
2026

EDGEWAYS




Sacred Heart Parish Magazine

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*Celebrating 25 years of David Gammie
as Parish Organist (pp.6–7)*

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***FREE* but donations are always welcome**

From grandparents to grandchildren



A reader writes to Canon David...

Dear Canon David,

My children don't take my grandchildren to Mass. What can I do?

At one level, your options are limited. You can't lead other people's lives for them or impose the Faith on them. But there are some things you can do to help pass on the Faith to the next generations.

First of all, all parents can give their children a good foundation. By being fervent in bringing up children to pray, to perform good deeds, and to participate in Mass every Sunday, your children will at least have their lives based on Christ's teachings – even if they don't realise it and even if they reject Him later in life. When something happens later on, such as a bereavement or wanting a place for their children in a Catholic school, they may return to the practice of the Faith.

Secondly, and most importantly, you can show by your own lifestyle what the Faith means to you. If you are casual in your Mass attendance, if you appear mean-spirited, if your faith seems more of a burden than a joy – then young people will be quick to spot the apparent hypocrisy. On the other hand, if they see that your faith is firm and that it gives you serenity amid the troubles of life, then they may begin to think that there is something in Christianity after all.

As Jesus said:



'In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.' (Matthew 5:16)

Of course, thirdly, there is always prayer. Quietly, without too much fuss, let them know that you pray for them. Don't provoke arguments by criticising how other people raise their children; that will be counterproductive. Instead, batter Heaven with your prayers, as St Monica did for her son, St Augustine.

One thing you might do, if your grandchildren live near you, is to offer to take them to Mass every Sunday. Our parish tries to be welcoming, with the Children's Liturgy of the Word at the 10.00am Mass during termtime (see the weekly newsletter for dates) and biscuits afterwards in the Lounge. Your grandchildren will enjoy coming to Mass with you. As they get older, they will enjoy learning about the Mass and what happens

at each stage. If you explain it carefully, they will even learn to be quiet and reverent at Mass.

The other thing you might do is to find out why your children are falling away from the Faith. Without appearing to be the Spanish Inquisition, quietly enquire about the values your children are passing on to their children. We live in a world without common values, and with all sorts of contrary calls and enticements. Surely your children want your grandchildren to grow up to lead happy and morally correct lives.

You can also drop hints when it is time for the grandchildren to receive their first Holy Communion and Confirmation – the parents did, after all, promise at their children's baptism (if they were baptised) to bring them to this stage.

Don't be afraid to introduce the subject, but do respect their opinions. Begin by asking, not telling. Equally, don't be shy about carefully explaining the Church's teachings on the moral issues of the day. If you are too vague or wishy-washy, it will not be convincing. Make use of what is in the news to steer the conversation around to what is important: the eternal verities like truth, love, justice, and peace, and the true way to happiness as revealed by Christ. If one of your children has a particular strong reason for abandoning Mass attendance, research the Church's answer to their concern.

Above all, do everything in love.

Canon David



Wednesday 13 May



All aboard! The Friendship Group (see p.21) recently visited Denbies Wine Estate near Dorking. *Didn't we have a lovely day?*

A busy issue!

A warm and sincere 'thank you' to our contributors this month for their interesting articles.

Canon David kicks us off with how to **encourage grandchildren** to come, and keep coming, to Sunday Mass (*pp.2-3*).

This May, parish organist **David Gammie** celebrates 25 years at the keyboard (*pp.6-7*); he tells us how it all began quite accidentally. From us all, I can truly say: "Thank you for the music!" [ouch – Ed!]

In response to recent inaccuracies in a lecture about **Cornelia Connelly SHCJ**, parishioner Celia Capstick leaps to her defence (*pp.8-9*).

It has been a busy time for events in the parish. The Friendship Group welcomed broadcaster **Joanna Bogle** to discuss the origins of the dates in the Christian calendar (*p.21*). We separately hear from Joanna as she invites us to join one of her **Catholic History Walks** (*pp.22-23*).

Grace Oskiera-Vooght tells us about **Poets & Prophets'** latest event: a poetry, writing, and painting workshop as a 'creative welcome to spring' (*p.14*).

Sarah Norville, Headteacher at **Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School**, launches an appeal to repair its weather-damaged playgrounds to allow children to continue playing outdoors, and we also learn about the school's plans to expand nursery provision (*pp.16-17*). The pupils also report on a very special **Easter Mass** (*p.19*).

Meanwhile, over at Donhead Preparatory School, Lay Chaplain Ruth Pandole tells us about how pupils all sang joyfully in Wapichan following a **visit from a Jesuit**



missionary (*p.19*). We hear from **Paul Chitnis**, who leaves our near neighbours, Jesuit Missions, after fourteen years as Director (*p.5*). Continuing with the international missionary theme, Mark Kudady tells us about **Aid to the Church in Need's** visit to the parish, including the testimony of a priest abducted by Boko Haram in Nigeria (*p.15*).

Finally, turning to Merton Citizens, we include a report on its **Pre-Election Assembly** (*p.10*) and – with enormous thanks on behalf of all parishioners to Graham Kennedy – we report the latest on the parish's **Be Well Hub** mental wellbeing initiative (*p.11*) and the upcoming series of Be Well talks, starting on Tuesday 9 June (*pp.12-13*).

David Hurst

(ps. Some parishioners noticed that there was no April Edgeways – thank you, Rehana. This was because Matteo's valuable time was diverted to producing the new Annual Report.)

We welcome your letters, feedback, and article suggestions! Please email the editor at wimbletonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk.

Production credits: David Hurst (Editor, wimbletonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk) and Matteo Baccaglioni (design and layout).

Farewell to Paul Chitnis, Director of Jesuit Missions



Photograph by David Hurst

Wednesday 29 April

Fr Peter Gallagher SJ, Provincial Superior of the Jesuits in Britain, visited the parish to celebrate a Farewell Mass for Paul Chitnis, who leaves the post of Director of Jesuit Missions after nearly fourteen years to become Province Delegate for Social & Ecological Justice at the Jesuits in Britain. Paul writes a farewell message for parishioners.

After 14 years, I have decided to step down as Director of Jesuit Missions. It has been my privilege to have helped to reorient this important and deeply valued organisation for the future.

The contribution of the Sacred Heart Parish to its work has been enormous. Special mention goes to our faithful Stamp Volunteers. Returning Jesuit missionaries to Edge Hill over the decades have been profoundly grateful for the welcome and support of the parish community. Sadly, few missionaries remain alive today – but the work of Jesuit Missions continues to be deeply embedded within Jesuit provinces in twelve countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It is an example of the Jesuit commitment to 'a faith that does justice'.

In my time, Jesuit Missions has engaged in campaigns on access to food, human rights, and climate change – all issues affecting our partners. Our advocacy is a fuller expression of our mission as a Catholic organisation. Pope Leo states: 'All members of the People of God have a duty to make their voices heard ... in order to point out and denounce such structural issues, even at the cost of appearing foolish or naïve.'

I have met many Jesuits and lay people who have committed their lives to working for justice: Fr Stan Swamy SJ in India (whom I did not know) died in custody after being unjustly imprisoned for defending the rights of marginalised people in India; Fr Victor Luke Odhiambo SJ, whom I met in South Sudan, was murdered in the same room in which, a while earlier, we shared a meal. His parting words to me are a clarion call to all of us: 'We must not despair. We must do something!'

Thank you to the parishioners of the Sacred Heart for all you do to support Jesuit Missions and all it represents.

David Gammie at 25 ... a happy accident!

David Gammie *reminisces on 25 years as Organist at Sacred Heart Wimbledon.*

My arrival at the Sacred Heart was almost accidental – or so it seemed at the time.

My parents both came from families with strong Nonconformist roots. On one side, grandpa's uncle was the preacher and evangelist William Fullerton, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, author of many devotional books, of histories of missionary work in China and Africa, and of the lovely hymn *I cannot tell why He whom angels worship* (No. 874, sung to the tune of the Londonderry Air).

On the other side, there are Scottish ministers in the distant past. My great-grandfather Alexander Gammie was Religious Correspondent of the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* for 30 years; he authored numerous biographies of famous preachers.

At weekends, the focus of our family life was St Andrew's Presbyterian Church (later United Reformed Church) in Cheam, where my parents met and married. Mum taught in the Sunday School for over 50 years and I would later be Organist and Choirmaster for nearly 20.

After leaving the University of St Andrews in 1992, I freelanced on Sundays, often playing in Anglican churches (mostly not very inspiring!) and in Catholic churches, where I grew to love the beauties of the music and the liturgy. I had lived in Wimbledon for years – but the big, grey church on the hill was still something of a mystery, and apparently run by Jesuits who were obviously not to be trusted!



'The Bob and David Show!'

Early in 2001, the Organ Club of Great Britain decided to celebrate its 75th anniversary with a CD of members playing famous English organs from different decades of the 20th century. To represent the 1910s, they selected the Walker organ at Sacred Heart Wimbledon, and they asked me to contact the church to see if something could be arranged. I was given the phone number of someone called Robert Rathbone and then everything happened very quickly.

I took a deep breath and picked up the phone. Bob invited me to come up to the church on a Wednesday evening for an organ practice session. It transpired that he was about to advertise for a new Organist and Assistant Director of Music.

And the rest, as they say ...

The first two months were not the easiest: Bob and I both lost our fathers in the space of a few weeks. It took a while to settle in, but I was given such a warm welcome, and Frs Mitchell and Donovan SJ instantly dispelled my inherited misconceptions about Jesuits!

Little did I know then that I would still be here 25 years later, that the beautiful church would become a second home, and that new friends (some, alas, no longer with us) would become a second family.

The editor has asked for any special memories – but these would take up several pages!



'Look who I found on the street ... !'



Parishioner Anne Remedios accidentally met Nova Scotians Pat and Ken Clahane, who seemed to be lost on their way to Mass at the Sacred Heart while visiting parishioner Fiona O'Reilly.

Google reveals that 'Ken and Pat search the world on pilgrimages yearly along with supporting the people of Cuba and volunteering at English Sign Language schools in Europe and the Caribbean.' They are now on their way to Taizé in Burgundy, whence they have promised an illustrated report for *Edgeways* readers ... hence their new appointments as our 'International Correspondents'!

(Taizé was founded in 1940 as an ecumenical Christian monastic community, welcoming young people and visitors of all ages from around the world for prayer, song, and reflection.)

In defence of Cornelia Connolly SHCJ



'There was a case when I was Chair of the Historic Churches Committee relating to the sisters who established the Catholic school in Mayfield, Sussex. The then-Archbishop of Philadelphia wanted some of the body of Mother Cornelia Connolly SHCJ, the foundress, because he wanted to start a shrine in Philadelphia Cathedral. They applied to Rome and got permission to exhume the body. The relevant Dicastery in Rome issued a decree saying that they were allowed to do this ...

'The decree from Rome – as well as being riddled with inaccuracies in the Latin (they weren't very pleased when I pointed that out!) – said that the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton must personally supervise the dismemberment of the body. The thought of Bishop Moth wielding a chainsaw ... !

'But one of the problems was that Mother Cornelia is buried underneath the chapel, but nobody knows actually where, so they had to apply to my Committee for a faculty to dig to find the body to get these relics. It received the most objections we'd ever had to any proposal in the 20-odd years I had been on the Committee – we got something like 450 objections, all from old girls of the school. It was like a scene from St Trinian's, with all these old schoolgirls turning out with their lacrosse sticks!

'So we declined the faculty, and the sisters gave in. And by all accounts, Mother Cornelia led such a disreputable life that she would never become canonised – at one point, she abandoned her children.'

– Canon David on St John Henry Newman, Lenten talk of Tuesday 17 March



Celia Capstick – parishioner, past SHCJ pupil, and former coordinator of the European Province of the SHCJ Associates – responds to Canon David's characterisation of Cornelia Connolly SHCJ.

In a recent lecture, Cornelia was referred to as 'disreputable' and as having 'abandoned her children'. This article aims to set things right and establish the truth.

Cornelia is the revered and loved foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ). Their schools for the education of girls in Europe, America, and Africa are considered outstanding by educationalists for their enlightened and progressive methods. As a mother, Cornelia had a special insight into children's needs, and this was reflected in her founding principles. She lost her children in following God's will and, as she said, the Society was founded on a breaking heart.

Cornelia and Pierce, a young American Episcopalian minister, were married in Philadelphia in 1831. They had five children before Pierce decided he wanted to become a Catholic priest and join the Jesuits. His request to the Pope was granted, which meant that their marriage vows were dissolved and Cornelia had to take a vow of chastity. She was asked to establish a religious order which would provide education for girls in England. She started her work briefly in Derby in 1846 and then in St Leonard's, Hastings, with the foundation of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and the first Holy Child schools for girls.

In 1848, Pierce changed his mind and sued Cornelia in the courts for the restitution of conjugal rights. He kept the two youngest children, Adeline and Frank, to hold as weapons in his fight against their mother. One baby had already died as an infant and two-year-old John Henry had also died in a horrific accident in the early years of their marriage. Their eldest, Mercer, died of yellow fever while staying with his uncle in America.

For Cornelia, this was a time of great suffering – but she held fast to her religious vows while the case became a

cause célèbre in England, where the Catholic hierarchy had recently been reestablished. At a time when women were still legally the property of their husbands, many saw her as obstinate and unmotherly. St John Henry Newman called her 'that bold Yankee', not fully understanding the facts of the case.

The highest ecclesiastical court eventually found in her favour. Pierce took the children to Italy but continued to harass Cornelia through his attempts to influence the Rule, which she had yet to get ratified in Rome.

Cornelia's writings and the testimonies of the members of her religious community – together with the devotion of many of the past pupils of her schools – have led to the request for canonisation (she has been declared Venerable), but misogyny and concern about the Church's own role in this story still cloud the outcome of her canonisation.

Meanwhile, the probably somewhat mistaken request by the Archbishop of Philadelphia for a relic of Cornelia and the ensuing uproar show that controversy still haunts this most steadfast of God's servants.



The tomb of Mother Cornelia Connolly SHCJ at Mayfield School, East Sussex. Source: SHCJ European Province.

Local politicians agree to Merton Citizens' asks

On Monday 27 April at Wimbledon College, Merton Citizens held their fourth Pre-Election Assembly for Merton voters to hear from councillors standing for re-election on issues of key importance to the borough's public.

All 14 members of Merton Citizens – including our parish – were represented, with some 100 people in attendance. The leader from each of the three leading parties on Merton Council was challenged on five specific 'asks', which were written after an extensive listening campaign among Merton Citizens' members.

The party leaders (*pictured, left-to-right*) were Ross Garrod (Labour, Leader of the Council), Anthony Fairclough (Liberal Democrats, Leader of the Opposition), and Daniel Holden (Conservatives).

Merton Citizens achieved a clean sweep of agreement to all its asks. All three leaders agreed:

1. to work with Merton Citizens to tackle low pay, poor housing, and digital exclusion;
2. to raise the number of Living Wage employers in the London Borough of Merton by 10% year-on-year;
3. to make a Living Hours plan for the borough, in order to prevent Living Wage employers from reducing the number of hours worked;
4. to work with the Merton Centre for Independent Living (MCIL) and others to make an action plan to overcome digital exclusion; and



5. to agree tentatively to address the asks on the five basic needs for temporary accommodation – access to WiFi signal, laundry facilities, adequate storage, food preparation facilities, and a named officer and phone number for support with repairs and case updates.

The evening also featured powerful testimonies from Rev'd Mark Eminson from Merton Priory, Fatima from MCIL, and Sade Walters from the YMCA.

In the council elections of Thursday 7 May, all 57 seats across 20 wards were up for election. All three leaders were re-elected in their wards. Labour held onto control of Merton Council with 32 seats (up one). The Liberal Democrats won 19 seats (up two) and the Conservatives won four (down three). Merton Park Residents Association retained its two seats.

This article was adapted from a press release by Merton Citizens.

be well The parish's Be Well Hub grows and grows and grows!

Graham Kennedy, *parish Be Well Hub Co-ordinator, provides an update on the initiative.*

Sacred Heart Wimbledon's Be Well initiative continues to grow steadily, with around 20 parish staff and volunteers now equipped to operate as Be Well Champions.

Be Well Champions

A focus for our Be Well Champion volunteers is helping to bolster the parish community, especially at the monthly Continental Breakfasts, by helping parishioners to feel more welcome, connecting them with other parishioners, and raising awareness of what the parish can offer. Be Well Champions also explain what it means for the parish to be recognised as a Be Well Hub and respond to wellbeing queries.

We delivered a talk to the Youth Group about what it means for the parish to be recognised as a Be Well Hub and how youth group members might benefit from this.

Print and media

Signposting leaflets to be handed out to parishioners are now complete. Rather than publishing and promoting a separate list of parish groups, we plan to use the parish's forthcoming Annual Report to do this.

Sharing our experience

The parish is also beginning to share the benefits of its experience more widely. We are helping groups benefit from our experience of being recognised as a Be Well Hub, and this is helping to raise the profile of the parish. Richard Moth, Archbishop of the Diocese of Westminster, has invited me to a meeting to explore how others might learn from us.

Madeleine Jarratt, Leader of the Memory Lane Club for those living with dementia and their carers, is part of a panel at the South West London Mental Health conference on Tuesday 19 May ('Faith, Culture & Mental Health: Partnering with faith communities to support prevention and recovery').

I am helping Our Lady Immaculate in Tolworth, another parish in the Diocese, become recognised as a Be Well Hub. I have been asked to join a Be Well Steering Group for Merton.

Finally, a Be Well programme of talks is set to launch in the parish on Tuesday 9 June, and the Archdiocese has kindly agreed that we no longer need to spend our Archbishop's Grant by 30 June.

To learn more about the parish's Be Well Hub, and how it can support your mental wellbeing and the mental wellbeing of the community, please email Graham at wimbledonbwhc@rcaos.org.uk.

Sacred Heart Wimbledon Be Well Hub invites you to ...

Managing wellbeing through lifechanging events

'I knew who I was this morning – but I have changed my mind a few times since then!' Join us as we consider incidents in our lives that create stress and offer advice on how to manage them for our own good.



Lower Hall, Sacred Heart Wimbledon
(Edge Hill, SW19 4LU)



Tuesday 9 June 2026



7.15pm refreshments
7.30pm – 8.30pm talk



David Hurst is a former Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council at Sacred Heart Wimbledon and Editor of *Edgeways*, the parish magazine. Since April 2018, David has been the Parish Lead for Merton Citizens, whose initiatives include the Be Well Hub. He is now supporting a churchguiding initiative.

Giulia Pezzuto is a psychotherapist with an MA in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy. A clinician and researcher, she has 13 years of experience in mental health across private practice, the NHS, schools, and charity settings. Giulia was a research team member on ETHOS, a study on the effectiveness of school-based humanistic counselling for young people.



Sacred Heart Wimbledon is a Be Well Hub – a space for you to turn to when you feel your mental health is low or you feel isolated.

We invite you to join our free talks on how we can improve our mental wellbeing. Each talk lasts an hour, with refreshments served beforehand; come to as many or as few as you can!

Managing wellbeing through lifechanging events

Tuesday 9 June

7.15pm for 7.30pm

Lower Hall Sacred Heart Wimbledon

David Hurst Merton Citizens
Giulia Pezzuto Psychotherapist

Using listening to improve relationships

Tuesday 7 July

7.15pm for 7.30pm

Lower Hall Sacred Heart Wimbledon

Elisabeth Roger Psychotherapist

The mental health spectrum

Tuesday 22 September

6.45pm for 7.00pm

Lounge Sacred Heart Wimbledon

Dr Phil Hopley Consultant Psychiatrist

Be well through being positive

Tuesday 27 October

6.45pm for 7.00pm

Lounge Sacred Heart Wimbledon

Anthony Lee Parish Resident Counsellor

Maintaining mental wellbeing balance

Tuesday 24 November

6.45pm for 7.00pm

Lounge Sacred Heart Wimbledon

Tim Tweedy Operations Manager, CDARS

Free and no registration required – we look forward to seeing you there!

Logo by Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Poets & Prophets returns!

Poets & Prophets met once again in the Lounge to host a poetry, writing, and painting workshop – a ‘nourishing evening of creativity and connection’ – to offer ‘a creative welcome to spring’.

Participants of all levels were invited ‘to explore words, colour and emotion in a supportive and collaborative space [with] shared reflection and open creative flow’. They were ‘honouring the new season, planning new ideas, releasing what no longer serves us and giving voice to what wants to bloom.’

We are sure that everyone left ‘refreshed, inspired and more deeply attuned to [their] creative spirit!’

Photographs by Grace Oskiera-Vooght.



‘Escaping by foot, we heard our beloved town seized by ISIS’

Parishioners welcomed Fr Peter, Karam, Elaine, and Fr Stephen (*pictured, left-to-right*) to talk in the Lounge on how persecution shaped their faith.

Fr Stephen, from northern Nigeria, opened the session by recounting how he was woken at midnight by men searching for a priest. This marked the beginning of his abduction by Boko Haram. His time in captivity was marked by severe physical abuse and the brutality of terrorists. Yet towards the end of his ordeal, he described a remarkable change of heart among his captors, which he attributed to the intervention of the Virgin Mary, ultimately leading to his release.

International development professional Elaine provided insight into the situation of Christians in Pakistan. Being from Pakistan herself, she outlined numerous examples of structural discrimination, including blasphemy laws, forced conversions, and violence. These conditions place Christians under constant distress and threaten the future of their communities. Most strikingly, lawyers who defend them often face attacks and death threats, rendering a fair legal process nearly impossible.



Karam spoke about his experience as a Christian in Iraq. Attacks on churches and clergy have claimed many lives, including priests and bishops. His testimony as a survivor of ISIS began with the sudden withdrawal of Iraqi and later Kurdish forces, without warning the Christian town. Expecting an imminent attack, they were forced to decide whether to flee the town they had grown up in. ‘Escaping by foot, we heard our beloved town seized by ISIS, with shouts of *Allahu akbar*.’

Finally, Elliott from Aid to the Church in Need highlighted how parliamentary decisions can make a tangible difference. Through petitions, humanitarian aid, and political advocacy, meaningful support can be provided to persecuted communities.

Mark Kudady

Photographs by Mark Kudady.

An appeal for Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School by Headteacher Sarah Norville

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School has always been much more than a building within the parish. Since it opened in 1930, it has been a huge part of parish life. Many of you here today were pupils yourselves, sent your children to Sacred Heart, have grandchildren there now, or know families whose lives have been shaped by the school. We are very proud of that long and special relationship between school, parish, and home.

Can you help us stop our playgrounds from flooding?

Those of you who know the school well will know that, during the winter months, we suffer from serious flooding across the playground. At times, almost half of the outdoor space becomes unusable. For our children, this means less room to play, to run, to socialise, and to enjoy the fresh air that is so important to their wellbeing and development.

The Diocese has very kindly offered us a grant to resolve this problem, but the grant depends on the school community raising 10% of the total cost. That comes to approximately £10,000.

Our families, staff, and friends of the school have already worked incredibly hard, and we have raised over half of what is needed. However, our school serves families from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds, and not every family is in a position to contribute financially. That is why we are so grateful to be able to ask our wider family, our parish family, for support.



A playground after flooding

We fully understand that there are many demands on people's generosity, and we know that drainage is not the most glamorous of causes. But this project is not really about drains. It is about giving our children a safe, dry, and welcoming place to play. It is about protecting their school environment. It is about making sure that the children of Sacred Heart have the space they need to flourish.



Any contribution you are able to make, large or small, will make a real difference, and will be received with sincere gratitude. You can donate online at:

justgiving.com/team/sacredheartminimarathon2026

Expanded nursery provision

I would also like to take this opportunity to share some very good news about the future of Sacred Heart. From September, our successful Nursery provision will be expanding to welcome children from the age of two. We will also be extending our Nursery opening to offer all-year-round provision, from 7.30am to 6.00pm. We know that many parents are working long hours and need flexible, reliable childcare that is rooted in the same Catholic values and caring ethos as the rest of our school.

So, if you have younger children, grandchildren, neighbours or friends who may be interested, please do encourage them to contact the school. We would be delighted to speak with them and show them what Sacred Heart can offer.

Thank you

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School belongs to this parish. We are the parish primary school. It was built by the faith, hope, and generosity of those who came before us, and it continues today because that same spirit is still alive in this community. Every child who runs across that playground, every family welcomed through our doors, and every young life shaped by Catholic education is part of the legacy of this parish. Today, by supporting this project, you are not simply helping us fix a playground; you are helping us care for the next generation of Sacred Heart children – and for that, we are truly grateful.

Thank you, and God bless.

Sarah Norville
Headteacher



Come to a school tour!

There's no substitute for visiting our parish's primary school to appreciate what makes it special. Throughout the year, the school offers bespoke, small group school tours with the Headteacher or another senior member of staff.

For available tour dates and to book, please visit tinyurl.com/shcpstours. If you cannot make any scheduled tour, please contact the school office on 020 8942 0215 or email school@sacredheart.merton.sch.uk to arrange a tour.



Donhead Preparatory School welcomes an overseas visitor from Jesuit Missions

On Friday 24 April, Fr Paul Martin SJ – a Jesuit missionary who has served in Guyana, South America, for over 30 years – spent a day visiting Donhead Preparatory School alongside Jules Gibson, Community and Engagement Manager for Jesuit Missions. During their visit, they worked with every year group, offering pupils a valuable insight into life and mission in Guyana.

Through a series of engaging workshops, pupils explored the school's link project, the Quality Bilingual Education Project, and learned about the importance of education in remote communities. Fr Paul shared vivid stories of his daily life, including memorable encounters in the rainforest, which particularly captivated the children.

As part of the visit, every pupil wrote a postcard to a child in Guyana, describing life in Britain and asking thoughtful questions in return. This meaningful exchange helped to deepen their sense of global connection and understanding.



Pupils were also introduced to the indigenous Wapichan language and greatly enjoyed learning to sing *If You're Happy and You Know It* in Wapichan! [BGT, watch out ... ! Ed.] The day concluded with a joyful whole-school singalong, celebrating their shared learning.

Throughout the visit, pupils demonstrated key Jesuit Pupil Profile virtues, especially being attentive and discerning. They engaged thoughtfully with the experience, reflecting on what they had learned and how they might respond.

The visit was both inspiring and enriching, strengthening the school's connection with Jesuit Missions and its global community.

Ruth Pandole
Lay Chaplain



A very special Easter Mass!

WRITTEN BY THE PUPILS THEMSELVES

On Thursday 16 April, St Kateri Class led Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School in a very special Easter Mass with the theme of joy, celebrated by Bishop Gerard Bradley and Canon David.

Bishop Gerard invited us to reflect on the Easter themes of joy, hope, peace, and forgiveness. He encouraged us to proclaim: 'Jesus is Risen! Truly, He has risen!' The choir sang *Dona nobis pacem* ('grant us peace') for the Communion reflection. After Mass, he commented that we read, sang, served, and prayed beautifully.

We felt honoured and very lucky to be chosen to serve Bishop Gerard during this special Mass, and we felt that we grew closer to God through this experience. We also felt truly blessed to serve him and to witness a Mass led by him in our school.

Afterwards, we took Bishop Gerard on a tour of the school. We were able to tell him all about how we apply Catholic



Social Teaching principles in our lives and work, as well as how much we enjoy the Mark 10 Mission on Wednesdays.

We also showed him the Prayer Garden and shared about the Rosary Club and Lenten Prayer Club.

He was very kind and caring, and he showed a genuine interest in hearing all about us and our school.

Bella Rae, Kristoff, Sam, and Finn

This article was adapted from the original, published in the school's Sacred Heart Herald (issue of Friday 17 April).



Could you be a companion?

Could you offer company, conversation, and culture to someone who'll truly value it? We're looking for kind individuals in Wimbledon and Kingston to make a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults.

Our shortened companion specific induction focuses on what truly matters: empathy, reliability, communication, and kindness.

Whether it's a stroll through the park, a matinee show, or simply good conversation over coffee, your time could mean the world to someone.

Get in touch today:

homeinstead.co.uk/wimbledon-kingston
0208 942 4137 wimbledon@homeinstead.co.uk



Friendship Group welcomes Joanna Bogle

Before enjoying a cup of tea and some timely homemade Easter Simnel cake* – thank you, Terry Redwood! – the Friendship Group listened to guest speaker Joanna Bogle, a Catholic writer, broadcaster, and journalist (*see pp.22–23*).

Joanna discussed the origins and meanings of dates and facts from the Christian calendar. For example, when is Candlemas, who was the original St Nicholas, and why do we eat hot cross buns?

For the answers to these and myriad more related questions, you will just have to buy Joanna's fascinating book, *A Yearbook of Seasons and Celebrations* (2007), available from Amazon, and find out!

(* Originally associated with Mothering Sunday, Simnel cake is eaten in the middle of Lent as an allowed respite from fasting. It consists of layers of marzipan famously decorated with eleven (not twelve) marzipan balls representing the faithful Apostles, excluding you-know-who.)

The Friendship Group is open to all and meets on the first Friday afternoon of each month in the Lounge. Please see the parish's weekly newsletter for upcoming dates and events.



Joanna Bogle (left) with Judy Ruston (right), who organises the Friendship Group



Would you like to write for Edgeways?

Do you have an article that you think would be a great addition to YOUR parish magazine? We're always open to contributions! Please contact the editor at wimbledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk.

Come on a Catholic History Walk!

Since 2010 – after being inspired by Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the United Kingdom – Catholic writer, broadcaster, and author **Joanna Bogle** (pictured) has been offering guided walks of London's Catholic history.

There are one or two standard responses when I tell people about the Catholic History Walks I help to organise in London.

One is: 'Ooh, history. I love it. But, of course, I found it very boring when I was at school' – and this is always said as though this was something unique.

The other response, from Catholics, is: 'Ooh, history, yes! Um ... Thomas More!' His is virtually the only name many can conjure up when the words 'Catholic' and 'history' are put together.

In fact, discovering London's Catholic history – which effectively means all of London's recorded history – is something that anyone and everyone can share, whether or not they profess to love the subject. And there is much, much more than just the story of St Thomas More – hero and martyr though he most certainly was.

The Christian faith arrived in Roman times – we do not know the exact date, but the Church was certainly flourishing in parts of Britain by the time the Roman legions left in 410 AD. We were part of the Roman Empire – that same Empire into which Christ our Saviour was born. Sometimes, in order to give the flavour of the thing, to help set the scene, and to place the centuries into some perspective, I find myself adding: 'Roman Empire – togas – gladiators – Colosseum ...?'



There is quite a lot that we know about that early Romano-British Church, and some of it is from the correspondence between St Augustine of Canterbury, the Benedictine who arrived in 597 with a band of monks to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons, and Pope Gregory the Great. There were a number of questions that Augustine needed to settle as a result of his conversations with the British Christians ... some of them rather odd, some simply seeking explanations.

If we start at Westminster Cathedral, we can look at the Archbishops of Canterbury (Elphege, Anselm, etc.), whose images surround the great entrance – or, if we have time, we can briefly consult the list on the brass plates on the wall inside.

As we set out, we can enjoy stories about Edward the Confessor founding an Abbey to the West of London on what was then a marshy island and which would in due course give its name to a place and a parliament known across the world. As we

cross into St James' Park, we can learn that it was originally a leper hospital run by the Abbey – and as we head out towards Horse Guards Parade, we will be walking through the centuries and be ready to discover King Charles I and to discuss his fate.

As we go on down Whitehall, we note magnificent public buildings and speculate on whether the bureaucrats within are doing anything useful. By unspoken understanding, we tend to fall briefly silent to honour the Cenotaph.

And then the gothic buildings come in sight and, of course, we encounter St Thomas More as we approach Parliament – the Great Hall where he was tried still stands, and we can ponder the extraordinary fact of a great Pope speaking there over four centuries later.

Do come on a Catholic History Walk! Westminster is not the only option – come and explore Southwark, including our St George's Cathedral, plus Lambeth and the river. Come on a walk across



London Bridge and learn about a Viking battle – and then finish at St John Henry Newman's birthplace, marked by a plaque. Come further out – a short train ride from Wimbledon – to Richmond, and discover Newman's childhood home at Ham.

Catholic History Walks are not a commercial enterprise – we suggest an optional donation of £5 per person. And they are not exhausting: you can leave at any time, and there are always bus and tube stops nearby.


There is no need to book – just turn up! For upcoming walks, please visit catholichistorywalks.com. If you would like a specific walk for your group, family, etc., please contact Joanna at catholichistorywalks@gmail.com.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

We welcome into the family of the Church those who have recently been baptised:
Chun Pong Dennis Tang • Simisola Adeola Chilo-Offiah • Kit Taylor-Preston

We congratulate those who have recently been married in our church:
Joseph Michael Cripps & Charlotte Teresa Mary Winter
Aaron Anthony Rigley & Rebecca Rose Dunn

We offer sympathies to the families and friends of those who have died recently:
William John Street • Teresa Maria Escalona • Casmiro Francis Saldana
James Gabriel McNally • Laurent André Christian Busy
Alexander William Barlas MacDonald • Paolo Cardazzone • Rose Frances Barden
Rosa Maria Oliveti • Alan Nugent Toohill • Camillo Natanaele Cuddeford

A close-up portrait of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, showing his face and upper torso. He is wearing a red coat with gold embroidery and a white cravat. The background is dark and textured.

The Sacred Heart Chorus and Orchestra

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Christian Barraclough *Trumpet*
Robert Rathbone *Conductor*

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