September–October 2026

# EDGEWAYS

# Sacred Heart Parish Magazine

**Vol. 37 No. 6**

*sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/edgeways*



***The MP comes to tea: Paul Kohler joins the Sacred Heart Garden Party! (pp.8–12)***

⛪ **A successful Open House début *(pp.14–16)***

🎶 **Mozart Requiem returns *(pp.18–21)***

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📢 **Students raise money for ACN *(p.35)***

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

# Catholic funerals

As we shall soon be in November, the Holy Souls month, perhaps a word about Catholic funerals is in order.

Sometimes people think it is morbid to plan their funeral, but doing so is a kindness to the family – because it relieves them of the angst as to what to do when the time comes. And the one sure fact of life is death – all the more reason to plan your funeral now.

We still hear about cases where devout Catholics do not have a proper Catholic funeral because they have not left funeral instructions and their next of kin are uninterested.

There has been a big shift in the nature of funerals in this country in recent years. Fewer and fewer are religious: only 1 in 10 people now want a religious funeral of any kind. Instead, there has been a big increase in secular funerals, led by a 'celebrant', and a noticeable trend towards seeing funerals as a celebration of someone's life, with all sorts of music – I was once asked if they could have *Paddy McGinty's Goat* played at a Funeral Mass! – readings, and random things like having balloons or everyone wearing yellow.

**The Catholic funeral**

So perhaps it is necessary to be reminded of the nature of the Catholic funeral.

When a loved one dies, we experience a complex and varied range of emotions of grief. The Catholic funeral offers a ritual in which we say our farewells. This ritual is important for human beings: just think of the distress a family experiences when someone just disappears and there can be no funeral.



The encounter with God, our Creator and our Redeemer, in Word and Sacrament gives us a space for our sorrow, and helps us to recognise our mortality.

A Catholic funeral also offers the chance to say sorry to the deceased for anything on one's conscience. This is all additional to the thanksgiving for the person and their life.

Above all, at a Catholic funeral, we offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and assist the departed with our prayers as they pass from this life to the next. At the Funeral Mass, mourners feel that they are doing something to help the deceased, and what greater thing could this be than offering Christ's saving sacrifice?

Again, the prayers help mourners in their grief, especially in the reminder of our Christian hope: that those who have died in Christ will rise in Christ, to eternal life. This perspective gives strength and comfort to those who are bereaved. This Christian hope is symbolised by the lit paschal candle next to the coffin and in the sprinkling of the coffin with holy water, which reminds us of baptism.

At a Catholic funeral, the dead person is entrusted to the mercy of God and we pray that, ultimately, that person will be reunited with Christ in eternal life.

**Practicalities**

If someone dies, the next of kin should contact a funeral director, asking for a Catholic funeral. Often, the coffin will be brought into church the evening before. The Funeral Mass is arranged jointly by the priest and the family, who can select hymns and readings from the approved selection. Someone can give a eulogy, which helps to make the ceremony more personal.

We can only conduct a Catholic funeral from the approved *Order of Christian Funerals* – so, although there is choice of readings and so on, the set rite has to be followed. Only church music such as hymns is permitted (so don't ask me for *Paddy McGinty's Goat* or the answer will be no!) And, needless to say, nor can we read from the deceased person's favourite *Winnie the Pooh* story instead of Sacred Scripture. A printed order of service is usual, but not compulsory.

Then the committal can either be a burial at a cemetery or cremation at a crematorium. The latter is permitted to Catholics, as long as the choice is not intended to deny the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

Canon David

## Can you volunteer for the Winter Night Shelter?

On Thursdays from 7 January to 18 February 2027, our parish will welcome rough sleepers to our Lower Hall for Merton Faith in Action's Winter Night Shelter.

We are looking for parishioners who can spare a little time to help support our guests. There are several ways you can volunteer:

- **Overnight supervision:** Just one Thursday night.
- **Friday morning breakfast:** Two or three shifts, from 6.30am to 8.00am/8.30am.
- **Luggage transport:** Help on a couple of Thursday or Friday mornings at 8.00am, driving luggage between our parish and another local church.

Whether you can give one night, a few mornings, or help with transport, your support will make a real difference. If you can help, please contact Chiaralisa Giaco at wimbledonWNS1@rcaos.org.uk.

Thank you for supporting this important initiative and helping us offer a warm welcome to those in need.

# Bless me, readers ...

... for I have sinned: the editor's photograph of me that has appeared on this page in the past 25 editions of Edgeways was taken in 2007 and so it is ... a lie! I now look more like this *(right)*, so please forgive me.



If you're thinking this edition of *Edgeways* feels a little heavier than usual, you are quite right! The last edition was in May 2026, and a lot has happened since then.

Where have we been all this time? Please rest assured the *Edgeways* production team hasn't been slacking off! After we published the Annual Report in June, I went to Indonesia to unofficially represent alumni associations of UK Jesuit schools at a five-day congress (more on that another time!), while Matteo has been busy on a few other assignments in the parish.

In June, our parish feast day was well celebrated with our annual **Garden Party** *(pp.8–12)*, the Sacred Heart Chorus & Orchestra's **Mozart Requiem** *(pp.18–21)*, and a **pilgrimage to Edith Arendrup's grave** *(p.17)*.

Then, after the summer, Edge Hill Players treated us to **Guys & Dolls** *(pp.26–28)*, our parish welcomed visitors at its **Open House Festival** début *(pp.14–16)*, and pupils at Ursuline High School and Wimbledon College hosted a **concert for Aid to the Church in Need** *(p.35)*.

Canon David's message opens with an overview of **Catholic funerals** *(pp.2–3)*. For our dose of faith and spirituality, we welcome international correspondent Ken Clahane with a reflection of his stay at **Taizé** *(p.50)* and pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School reflect on the **Parable of the Good Samaritan** *(p.37)*.

Sticking with our schools, we celebrate the results of Sacred Heart's **Catholic Schools Inspectorate report** *(pp.30–31)* and the **exam successes** at our parish's secondary schools *(p.33)*. Then, Catherine Hitchcock, Headteacher at Donhead Preparatory School, reflects on a **reunion of British Jesuit headteachers in Rome** *(p.32)*.

In music and the arts, David Gammie reflects on just how special our **1912 Walker organ** is *(pp.22–23)*, and we celebrate **Edge Hill Players' awards** at the National Operatic and Dramatic Association London 2026 *(p.25)*.

Moving to parish groups, we are delighted to share Graham Kennedy's interview for **a spotlight on our parish's Be Well Hub** *(pp.40–45)*. We also include a few photos of our ever-growing **Young Adults group** *(pp.38–39)*.

We have photographs of quite a few recent events in our church, chapels, and schools – among them our **Corpus Christi procession** *(p.13)* and celebrations for the 80th anniversary of the **Ghanaian Holy Child institutions** *(pp.46–47)*. And we have some not-quite-so-recent photographs and posters from the **archives of Peter Connellan** *(pp.48–49)*, courtesy of his son, Andy.



Last but not least, this issue is scattered with plenty of invitations to upcoming parish liturgies and events, including:

- **Mariella Ing's art exhibition** in support of the parish's Living Stones appeal on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 November *(p.6)*;
- an **ale tasting** in support of the Sacred Heart Chorus on Saturday 21 November *(p.24)*;
- the **Gregorian Chant Workshop Day** on Saturday 28 November *(p.47)*;
- the final **Be Well Hub talk** of the season on Tuesday 24 November *(p.44)*; and
- **Katy's Songbirds Christmas Concert** on Tuesday 15 December, and rehearsals for its choir during November and December *(back cover)*.

Thank you for your patience as we have prepared this bumper issue. As always, please do get in touch with your feedback and articles. We would love to hear from you.

And sorry again for my old photograph!

**David Hurst**

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

**Production credits:** David Hurst (Editor, **wimbledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk**) and Matteo Baccaglini (design and layout).

## Corrections

**David Gammie read Classics at Oxford:** Where we said our parish organist left the University of St Andrews in 1992 *(April–May Edgeways, p.6)*, which would make him 55, we meant to say he left St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Cheam. Apologies!

**We know neither our history nor our parishioners:** The church was opened – not consecrated – by Bishop John Butt on 17 June 1887 *(Annual Report, p.5)*. The church was not consecrated until 7 May 1931 by Bishop Peter Amigo. We also misspelled Annabel's name *(p.15)*. Apologies!

**The best bit axed:** As he finalised the Annual Report, Matteo inadvertently cut the last paragraph of Nandita's excellent report on the Winter Night Shelter *(p.33)*. Apologies! Nandita's report should have concluded:

> 'Working with Faith in Action and other Christian venues with support from the synagogue, mosque, and Hindu temple communities to provide 14 weeks of continuous food and shelter was rewarding, as we felt we were positively making a difference to homelessness in Merton. As a parish, we are committed to offering not only practical support to the homeless, but also reassurance and compassion, as these men navigate a path forward in their difficult lives.'






# Letters to the Editor

*Edgeways* is **YOUR** parish magazine! If you find an article inspiring or lacking, why not let us know? Send your thoughts to **wimbledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk**!

Personally, I think March 2026 was one of the best *Edgeways*! The article celebrating 30 years of Bob Rathbone as Director of Music *(pp.6–7)* was insightful, as were many of the articles.

On *Education as a Human Right (pp.18–19)*, Sister Nivedita was new and interesting for me to read and learn about. Might we link to **books2africa.org** as a charity for inspired readers to support and donate?

*— T*

David, I have just read March 2026 *Edgeways* and I want to congratulate you on the huge improvements in the parish magazine since you took over as Editor. I am sure that it takes an enormous amount of work to produce this each month and I thought it might be nice to know that it is read and appreciated.

*— P*

[The] Annual Report ... is a wonderful overview of the life, faith, and activities of our parish community over the past year. We are delighted to see our school represented throughout the Report, with recognition of our pupils' and staff's contributions through fundraising initiatives, singing, drama performances, and many other parish events. It is a truly inspiring read, and we are proud to be part of such a vibrant, welcoming, and faith-filled parish community.

*— Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School via the Sacred Heart Herald, 19 June 2026*

I have just finished reading the Annual Report and wanted to say how much I enjoyed it.

What stood out to me was how well it captures the life of the parish and its place within the wider community. It tells the story of a parish that is active, welcoming, and committed to serving others.

I was particularly pleased to see [Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School] featured in so many aspects of parish life. From singing at Masses and parish celebrations, to fundraising, supporting parish groups and participating in community events, the Report reflects the strong partnership between the school and parish. It is something [the school] values greatly, and it was encouraging to see it woven throughout the Report.

Reading it also gave me a real sense of pride ... I have seen first-hand the commitment of so many people who give their time and talents to support others. The Report captures that spirit very well.

*— S*

Thank you so much for your Annual Report which is both excellent in content and in presentation. May I congratulate you and all those involved in producing it – and of course all those whose parish involvement is reflected in its beautiful pages.

*— A Monsignor of the Archdiocese*

# Garden Party 2026 – the photos are in!



On Sunday 14 June, our parish's annual Garden Party welcomed parishioners and the local community for an afternoon of stalls and entertainment.

Very many volunteers across the parish came together to ensure a happy feast for everyone. The School of Community filled hungry stomachs with delicious food while the Wimbledon Catenians ran the bottle stall. Parishioners served drinks, teas and coffees, strawberries and ice cream, and cakes; others ran the raffle and plant stalls. The Sacred Heart Chorus & Orchestra sold tickets to the Mozart Requiem *(see pp.18–21)*; next to them, the *Edgeways* production team unveiled the Annual Report.

On entertainment, Rob Hitchcock and the Scouts ran children's games, and we were all treated to music from the Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Choir and from Grace and Rion.

One parishioner remarked: 'We are very fortunate to have such a committed and generous group of volunteers, whose hard work and support made [the Garden Party] possible.' Particular thanks are due to Ruth and Thelma, the main organisers, assisted by Leo, our Caretaker, as well as Rob, Alessandro, and many others.

*Photographs by John Stone, Siobhan Pettit, and Alison Lobo.*













































# Sunday 7 June: Corpus Christi Procession







*Photographs by John Stone and Elaine Childs.*

# ‘Come and see!’: Visitors take guided tours of our beautiful church at the Open House Festival

On Saturday 12 September, Sacred Heart Wimbledon made its first appearance at the Open House Festival, a London-wide initiative that opens up and celebrates the city’s architecture.

Organised by David Hurst *(pictured, right)*, fifteen parishioners volunteered to guide around eighty visitors through twelve stops in our beautiful, Grade II* church.

At the first stop, the gate on Edge Hill, guides drew guests' attention to the ‘IHS’ carving, denoting the first three letters of Jesus’ name in Greek: *iota*, *eta*, *sigma*.

Arriving at the church entrance, guides explained that our church was built in the Late Decorated Gothic style, ‘pointing respectfully towards Heaven’. Opened in 1887, it was designed by Frederick Arthur Walters, whose other works include St Joseph’s, Roehampton, St Winefride’s, Wimbledon, and Downside and Buckfast Abbeys. Walters is regarded as one of the ablest exponents of ecclesiastical Gothic architecture since Pugin.





For the third stop, guides invited visitors to sit in the back pews and take in the interior:

- the impressive nave, measuring 100ft long and 60ft high;
- the pillars of Beer stone from Devon, with their statues of Jesuit saints and their carvings of angels carrying instruments of Jesus’ Passion;
- the windows of Ancaster stone from Lincolnshire, and the colourful stained glass; and
- our Stations of the Cross, based on drawings by John Bentley, the architect of Westminster Cathedral.

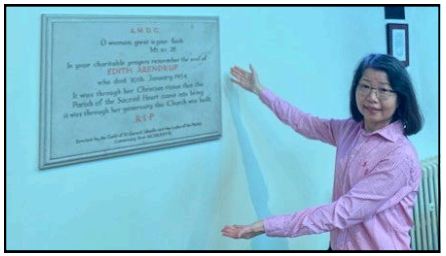
Walking down the southern aisle, the fourth stop was at the plaque of Edith Arendrup, our parish’s founder *(see p.17)*. Guides discussed how the parish reflects her vision. The presence of such a monumental church led Wimbledon to be considered, disparagingly, ‘a hotbed of papists’ in the 1890s.



At the fifth stop, the Altar of the English Martyrs, guides discussed Tudor saints, including Thomas More and Edmund Campion. The altar was sculpted in 1915 ‘to the glory of God and the memory of Fr John Morris’, a priest who died while preaching at the 11.00am Mass on Sunday 22 October 1893, and who promoted their canonisation.

Proceeding to the side chapels, visitors were led to St Joseph’s Chapel. His statue shows him carrying a church, as patron of the Universal Church, and a lily, as a symbol of purity. Next, at the beautifully simple Sacred Heart Chapel, guides explained the history of Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart. In its modern form, the devotion began in the 1670s with the visions of St Margaret Mary Alacoque and the ‘Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart’ that were entrusted to her. Visitors noted the stained-glass window, a memorial to the late Axel Arendrup *(see p.17)*, which parishioners donated in 1897 ‘as a thank offering to his mother’.







At the eighth stop, in the Lady Chapel, visitors were drawn to the large triptych on the right-hand wall, which depicts Our Lady of the Way, the patron saint of the Society of Jesus. Jesuit priests ministered in our parish until its transfer to the Archdiocese of Southwark in 2014.

At the ninth stop, by the pulpit, guides explained that architect Austin Winkley reordered the Sanctuary following the liturgical reforms of Vatican II. Visitors were drawn to the new high altar, designed by David John and consecrated in 1990, and the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, designed by Messrs Regali and placed in 1896. Guides explained the liturgical function of the paschal candle and our pulpit, carved in 1901 with the emblems of St Peter and the four evangelists.

The Holy Souls altar, made in 1915, is a memorial to Fr William Kerr, who founded the Jesuit mission in Wimbledon and who, the plaque says, 'for more than thirty years laboured with untiring zeal for the salvation of souls'. Mass is rarely celebrated at this altar: the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* stipulates that 'the altar should occupy a place where it is truly the centre toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns' – not something that can be said of the Holy Souls altar!

Moving to the St Ignatius Chapel, the tenth stop, guides explained that a wealthy widow, Caroline Currie of Coombe Hill, paid for the church's more opulent northern aisle, including the baptistery; her medallion is displayed in the chapel. Guides discussed the life of St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, while guests viewed the chapel's murals, painted in 1904 by Albert Chevallier Tayler, which depict its key scenes.

In front of the baptistery, the penultimate stop, guides explained the importance of baptism and holy water in the Catholic faith. Mrs Smail of Donhead Lodge gave the striking marble Pietà *(pictured, right)* to commemorate Wimbledon College boys killed in the First World War. She disliked the 'inadequate' oak surround, on which the names of the war dead were meant to be inscribed, so much that the memorial was never finished.

Having returned to the church entrance, for their final stop, visitors turned to admire our lavish 1912 Walker organ *(see pp.22–23)*. After their tour, visitors were welcome to stay on, walk around at their leisure, and come back to visit the church at any time and attend public services.

To accompany the Open House Festival, Rehana Edun-Noys produced a booklet explaining how our church's principal architectural features are used in liturgies. *Inside Sacred Heart Wimbledon: A Guide to Our Church and Catholic Faith* was a great success – copies of the first edition have gone very quickly! – but some should be available at the back of the church, or on request from the Editor.

The Open House Festival, and Rehana's booklet, have been a wonderful way to invite and welcome visitors into our church – and, so too, share our witness of the Gospel as a missionary, evangelising parish.

*This article is adapted from notes used by guides at the Open House Festival and Richard Milward's* A History Guide*, available online at* **sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/history**.




*Photograph by Alvaro Garcia / Archdiocese of Southwark*





# Remembering Edith Arendrup

On Saturday 27 June, the parish and the Daughters of the Heart of Mary held a pilgrimage to the grave of our parish's founder, Edith Arendrup, in Bocking, north of Braintree, Essex.

Edith was born in Bocking on 1 September 1846 to the Courtauld family, which had made its riches in the textile industry and endowed many local buildings, schools, parks, and gardens. She converted to Catholicism in her 20s.

In 1872, Edith married Danish officer Søren Adolph Arendrup. They lived in Cairo and had two children, Agnes (who died in infancy) and Axel. In 1875, Søren Adolph was killed as he led troops for the Khedivate of Egypt at the Battle of Gundet in modern-day Eritrea.

Following his death, in 1877, Edith and Axel settled in Wimbledon. The 1891 census records that they lived with a maid, cook, gardener/coachman, and a kitchen maid. Edith founded a private chapel in her home dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which was opened to the faithful with the bishop's permission. The congregation quickly outgrew the chapel, and in 1887, Edith laid the foundations of our church on land she had bought.

In 1896, Axel died of typhoid in Madeira. Around the same time, Edith suddenly lost her friend and spiritual guide, Fr Morrison, who fostered her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Edith decided to join the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, and renouncing her wealth, that same year, she sold her family home in Bocking to the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and St Francis. A chapel was completed in 1899, designed by John Francis Bentley, the architect of



*Photograph by Paul Davis*

Westminster Cathedral. The convent became the congregation's motherhouse, and the sisters established a day school in 1901 and an orphanage in 1908.

Edith took her vows in 1897 and worked with the poor in Wapping. In 1925, she retired to the Bocking convent, where she died in her sleep following a stroke on 10 January 1934. She was buried there, in the grounds of her former family home where she was born.

In 1948, the main building became St Francis' Nursing Home, which closed in 2010. The sisters, now part of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, withdrew from Bocking in 2019. The site was acquired by the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of London in 2019, and today, the Bethel Centre is used for retreats, services, official meetings, and ecumenical gatherings.

# The Mozart Requiem returns to our church



On Saturday 20 June, a packed church came alive as the Sacred Heart Chorus and Orchestra performed Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem in D minor* at their annual flagship concert.

The concert marked twenty years since the Chorus and Orchestra first performed the Requiem in our church. At that 2006 performance, Wimbledon College student Christian Barraclough made his solo concert debut; he has since played on hundreds of film, television, and video game scores, including Marvel films and *Dunkirk*, and has performed as principal trumpet with orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This year, Christian returned to us to perform Joseph Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto in E-flat major*, which, with Mozart's Overture to *The Magic Flute*, preceded the Requiem.

The Requiem soloists were Katy Lees (soprano), Cathy Bell (alto), John Upperton (tenor) and Aleksi Koponen (baritone). Our Director of Music, Bob Rathbone, conducted.

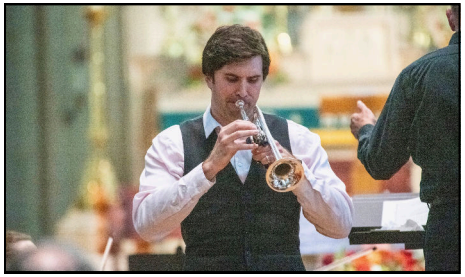
The concert supported two charities:

- **Nerve Tumours UK** provides support and advice to help the 26,500+ children and adults living in the UK who are diagnosed with NF, along with their families, carers and their wider support networks. You can learn more at nervetumours.org.uk.

- **War Child**, which works in some of the world's most dangerous places to protect, educate, support mental health and stand up for the rights of children. In 2025, War Child directly reached 968,054 people globally, of which 62.1% were children. You can learn more at warchild.org.uk.

The Concert Fund donated £3,500 to each charity, supplemented by £1,069.61 raised through a second collection at Sunday Mass. The Concert Fund donated a further £1,500 to the parish's Living Stones appeal.

*Photographs by John Stone.*



Christian Barraclough (trumpet)



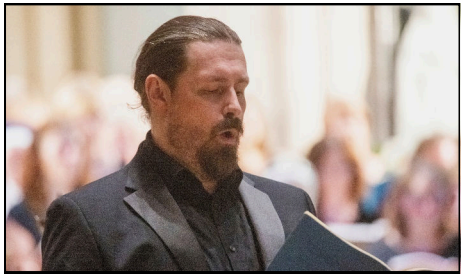
Katy Lees (soprano)






John Upperton (tenor)





Aleksi Koponen (baritone)










Cathy Bell (alto)





**The Sacred Heart Chorus**

**Soprano:** Manda Bell, Samantha Broad, Maura Buckley, Catherine Chapman, Patricia Crowe, Joanne Davies, Wendy Day, Lucy Dickson, Sally-Ann Feldman, Davida Fontannaz, Nicola Harland, Nicki Jegat, Thérèse Kennedy-Laing, Becs Kinnings, Katelyn Krajenka, Julie Leadbeater, Sheena Macdonald, Ola Macintosh, Antonella Mandato, Gill McManus, Melanie Metherell, Marion Noble, Linda Ofori, Dixita Parmar, Emma Potter, Ola Rathbone, Marie Saunders, Oliwia Sikora, Esther Taylor, Patricia Turner, Liz Verran, Doris Yohannes • **Alto:** Mary Appleby, Katy Armitage, Lindsey Barraclough, Maggie Box, Susan Chin, Anne Dee, Olwen Hamilton, Audrey Harrison, Jill Hayer, Genevieve Hurley, Joanna Knap, Małgosia Lasocka, Hyen Jin Lee, Irena Łyczkowska, Jane Maddocks, Frances Maki, Marta Mendizabal, Kate North, Becky Paine, Sally Reeves, Jolanta Sabbat, Angela Searle, Sr Emmanuel Hannigan SSA, Kate Straus, Carmel Swords, Chris Wood • **Tenor:** Graham Bennett, Jerric Chong, David Chapman, Justin Hamilton, Andrew Kennedy, Jude Mariadoss, Tomasz Sabbat, Adam Sikora, Matthew Sterlini • **Bass:** Richard Barraclough, Nigel Brotherton, Julian Burling, David Gammie, John Hayer, Peter Hickson, Kevin Hollands, Mark Lester, Julian Mellors, Daniel Osborne, Nick Philpott, David Reeves, Christopher Woodward

**The Sacred Heart Orchestra**

**1st Violin:** Alberto Vidal, Matthew Bethel, Rachel Allen, Tomas Ruti • **2nd Violin:** Victoria Barnes, Tzu-Fan Tang, Franziska Deschner, James Marshall, Liz Errington • **Viola:** Joe Ichinose, Maggie Lamelas, Mariya Sotirova, Annabel Marshall • **Cello:** Frederique Legrand, Giles Kennedy, Harry Jordan • **Double Bass:** Ed Babar • **Flute:** Ellie Blamires, Henry Roberts • **Oboe:** Peter Facer, Lorraine Hart • **Clarinet / Basset Horn:** Chris Goodman, Helen Pierce • **Bassoon:** Ben Exell, Hannah Robinson • **Horn:** Mark Bennet, Duncan Fuller • **Trumpet:** Shane Brennan, Vicky Rule • **Trombone:** Tom Lees, Rupert Whitehead, Josh Certina • **Timpani:** Jon French

# ‘A survivor from a Golden Age of British organ-building’



When it first opened, Sacred Heart Wimbledon had only a small organ high on the wall on the left-hand side of the chancel. The access door can still be seen in the aisle there – opening now into mid-air!

The arrival of Fr John Driscoll SJ, an ambitious and inspirational choirmaster, changed everything. He opened his own choir school in the rooms above the sacristy, and his choirboys soon outgrew the limited space available in front of the altar (which should have been reserved for the priests!).

It was decided to move all the musicians out of the way to the other end of the church – and so, in 1912, a large choir gallery was built over the west door.

Behind it, in front of the west window, the church commissioned a new organ from one of England’s best organ-builders, J.W. Walker & Sons. Walkers had recently rebuilt the organs in York Minster and Bristol Cathedral, and they designed the new instrument for the Sacred Heart on the same lavish scale.

‘Wondrous machine’ is how George Frideric Handel described the organ in his *Ode for St Cecilia’s Day*, and that is just what Walkers built for us here.

Our organ boasts an amazing 2,669 individual pipes of all shapes and sizes. The largest pipe is 32 feet high – big enough to contain five tall men standing on each other’s shoulders – and the smallest is the size of a tiny pencil.



Dating from 1912, our organ just predates the age of reliable electricity, and, apart from the modern blowers in the south tower, it is entirely operated by air, stored in eight big wind reservoirs. One and a half tons of heavy weights sit on top of the reservoirs to keep the air under high pressure.

Linking the keys and stops to the pipes is the ‘tubular pneumatic’ action: when notes are played on one of the three keyboards, hundreds of metres of thin metal tubing convey the pressurised air to the right place, and set in motion a labyrinth of wooden rods, levers, and small inflatable ‘motors’ that admit air into the pipes.

During the 20th century, most of these old pneumatic organs were modernised, and their tubing replaced with electric contacts and wiring. Miraculously, our organ survived intact with only a few running repairs but, by 2010, it was in danger of total collapse. With generous financial support from the parish and the Heritage Lottery Fund, we were able to commission a complete cleaning and restoration – a mammoth undertaking which took 18 months to complete.

Since the electrification of Bristol Cathedral’s organ last year, ours is now one of a handful of survivors from a Golden Age of British organ-building that still have all their original mechanism and pipework intact.

If you walk around the apse behind the high altar, you will see the old church organ - now taking a well-earned rest!

**David Gammie**
Parish Organist

**For videos on the organ removal and restoration project, please visit youtube.com/@sacredheartwimbledon.**





SACRED HEART CHORUS FUNDRAISER

# ALE TASTING EVENING



SIP. DISCOVER. SUPPORT.

## SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2026

8-10pm | Sacred Heart Church Lounge

**£15 PER TICKET**

## EXPERT-LED ALE TASTING

Discover four ales with Andrew, manager of the Hand in Hand in Wimbledon

Includes four Tasting Ales and a Master Taster menu

## LIVE MUSIC (WITH A COMIC TWIST) • MARK LESTER

Enjoy original pieces performed by one of the chorus' own!

**POTLUCK RAFFLE**

**Every ticket wins a prize!**

Non-alcoholic and soft drinks available

**GET YOUR TICKETS EARLY**

Limited tickets • No tickets sold on the door

**sacredheartmusic.co.uk/concerts/fundraising**



# Edge Hill Players win four NODA district awards

Edge Hill Players, our parish theatre group, won four awards at the National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) London 2026 Awards Ceremony:

- Joe Putnam Award for Best Musical – won by Edge Hill Players' September 2025 production of *Annie!*
- The Molly Harle Award for Best Female Character in a Musical – won by Flopsy Dalling for her leading role in *Annie!*
- The Nigel Gravette Award for Best Performance in a Pantomime – won by Duncan Rodger for his leading role in this year's panto, *Puss in Boots*.
- NODA Flame Award – a prestigious award for the pursuit of excellence in theatre and enhancement of the overall theatrical experience, won by Edge Hill Players.

In his review of *Annie!*, Des Wilby, NODA Regional Representative, wrote: 'From start to finish the amount of time, effort and attention to detail were obvious to see. I found the whole production to be highly polished, heartfelt and a resounding success.'

NODA described Duncan Rodger in *Puss in Boots* as a consummate performer and highly talented actor, who filled the leading role with warmth and charisma. Duncan said that he found his award to be 'totally unexpected', but that he was very flattered.

Marie-Claire Lindsay, who directed *Annie!*, said: 'I was blessed with the most fantastic team working on Annie – part of what makes the Edge Hill Players so great is the blend of natural talent and passion for performing, that we are lucky to have in our community, and our resulting




awards are a reflection of the hard work everyone put into these to create something truly special'.

First formed nearly 50 years ago, Edge Hill Players was revived in 2016 to offer inexpensive musicals, pantomimes, and other performances for all the family.

In 2023, Edge Hill Players won two NODA London awards for its production of *The Sound of Music*: the Joe Putnam Award for Best Musical and the Molly Harle Award for Best Female Character in a Musical, awarded to Tempe Nell for her fantastic portrayal of Maria.

NODA celebrates, connects, and supports theatre groups across the United Kingdom. You can read its reports on Edge Hill Players' past performances at noda.org.uk/societies/edge-hill-players.

**Edge Hill Players always welcomes new members: all you need is enthusiasm! To learn more and to join, please visit edgehillplayers.com.**

# Edge Hill Players presents ... *Guys & Dolls*

From Thursday 10 to Saturday 12 September, Edge Hill Players, our parish theatre group, performed *Guys & Dolls*, the celebrated musical comedy about rolling the dice and falling in love under the bright lights of Broadway. *Photographs by John Stone.*





























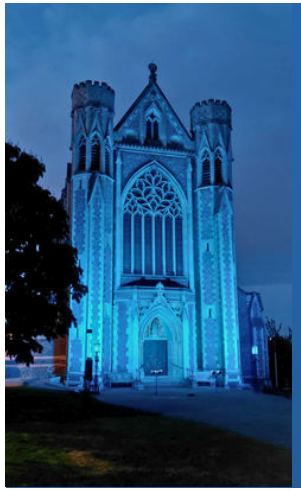










On Sunday 17 May, our church was one of 230 buildings in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and one of some 600 worldwide, to 'shine a light on NF' for World NF Awareness Day.

NF is the medical group name for Neurofibromatosis Type 1, NF2- related Schwannomatosis and Schwannomatosis. It is an incurable neurogenetic condition that causes tumours to grow on nerve endings, affecting over 26,500 children and adults in the United Kingdom.

Parishioners Karen Cockburn and Alison Lobo work for Nerve Tumours UK (nervetumours.org.uk), the leading voice and support network for individuals with NF in the UK. Thank you to Joe Ruston, Canon David, and Leo Nicolaou for enabling the church to shine a light on NF this year. *Photograph by Alison Lobo.*





On Friday 12 June, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, many dozens of parish volunteers were welcomed at a special 'Thank You Reception' in the Upper Hall after the 6.30pm Mass. *Photographs by Matteo Baccaglini and Siobhan Pettit.*




Dr Cinzia Pezzolesi, Consultant Clinical Psychologist at Cognacity, posed for a photo with Graham Kennedy, our Be Well Hub Coordinator, at the Be Well Hub talk on 'The Mental Health Spectrum', which was hosted in the Lounge on Tuesday 22 September.

# Catholic Schools Inspectorate: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is 'Outstanding'



The Catholic Schools Inspectorate, the national body for the inspection of Catholic schools, has awarded Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, our parish's primary school, a grade of 1 ('Outstanding') in its July 2026 inspection.

This rating reflects the overall quality of the school's Catholic education. Of the nine subcategories evaluated, the school received 1 ('Outstanding') in eight and 2 ('Good') in one.

The inspection found that pupils 'value the Catholic character, mission, and unique charism of love and compassion inspired by the Sacred Heart', which 'drives all aspects of school life'.

The report consistently highlights the school's strong community spirit, 'based on love and compassion'. The inspection found that pupils 'appreciate the [school's] strong sense of community, welcome, and inclusion'; they 'know that they are loved and valued' and they 'show kindness and respect to each other'. Parents appreciate how older pupils look out for younger ones; one parent told inspectors that 'the school is like a 'little village' around our child'.

Pupils of all abilities make 'exceptional progress' in Religious Education, which 'senior leaders and governors recognise ... as the 'core of the core curriculum''. Teachers show 'highly developed' subject knowledge and pedagogy and 'successfully adapt activities [so that] pupils of all abilities thrive'. Pupils 'say that they enjoy Religious Education' and are 'fully engaged in lessons'.

On the school's links with the parish, the report noted: 'Leaders and governors recognise that the school is of service to the local Church. Consequently, the school has strong links to the parish. The Parish Priest knows the school well and is closely involved in its life.' Pupils 'describe with pride their visits to the Memory Lane Club, a parish activity for people living with forms of dementia'.

The report praised the Headteacher, leaders, and governors for developing a culture that builds on the school's heritage and 'support[s] those in greatest need', with 'the highest levels of pastoral care'. Teachers are 'exceptional role models', showing exemplary care and compassion towards pupils, and pupils feel they can 'talk to any adult' if something is wrong.

Though pupils 'are fully engaged in the prayer and liturgical life' of the Church, the report suggested broadening their exposure to different ways of praying to build their confidence and skill to lead worship, and developing a systematic approach to involve pupils in evaluations of the school's Catholic life and mission.

The school said that the inspection result is 'the highest possible recognition and a true reflection of the dedication, care, and ambition that define our school community. This achievement is ... a powerful affirmation of who we are, what we stand for, and, most importantly, what we provide for every pupil who walks through our doors.'

At its previous denominational inspection in November 2019, the school was also rated 1 ('Outstanding') overall, with two subcategories rated 2 ('Good').

Edgeways congratulates all pupils, staff, parents, and governors on their great achievement. You can read the report at **catholiceducation.org.uk/school/102668**.

### What the school does well

- Senior leaders and governors provide inspirational leadership to ensure staff are highly motivated to provide education built on the principles of Catholic education.
- There is a strong sense of community where pupils, parents, staff, governors and visitors feel welcomed, included and valued.
- Leaders provide effective induction and ongoing support to all staff that enable them to contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress in Religious Education.
- Pupils actively respond to Catholic social teaching through a range of charitable and service activities that contribute positively to the life of the school and wider community.

## Playground fundraiser update




*'Thank you' by George, Year 4*

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery are very grateful to *Edgeways* readers and parishioners for their generous donations towards their playground appeal.

In April–May 2026 Edgeways *(pp.16–17)*, Mrs Sarah Norville, Headteacher, wrote that the school needs to raise £10,000 to fix chronic playground flooding – which, especially during winter, means that children have up to half as much outdoor space to play, run, socialise, and enjoy the fresh air. Parishioners have helped to raise £6,500 so far.

# Jesuit school headteachers gather in Rome



In early June, headteachers from Jesuit schools across Britain, including Donhead Preparatory School and Wimbledon College, travelled to Rome for a conference that brought together school leaders from our Jesuit educational community.

The gathering provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the mission of Jesuit education, share experiences from our schools, and strengthen the bonds that unite us in a common apostolate.

A particular highlight of the visit was the opportunity to meet Fr Arturo Sosa SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, together with other senior Jesuit leaders. Discussions focussed on how our schools can remain faithful to the vision of St Ignatius while responding to the needs of young people in a rapidly changing society.

The conference also provided time for headteachers to share the joys and challenges of school leadership, to learn from one another, and to consider practical ways in which the Global Identifiers of Jesuit Education can be lived out in our school communities.

For Donhead, the conference was an opportunity to contribute to the wider Jesuit educational mission and to showcase initiatives taking place within our own community. During the week, I presented the school's work in promoting Care for Our Common Home and helping pupils to become responsible stewards of the future.

Gathering in Rome – at the heart of the universal Church, and close to the places associated with St Ignatius himself – was a powerful reminder that our schools are part of a worldwide mission.

The conference strengthened friendships, renewed a sense of purpose and encouraged all those present to continue forming young people who are compassionate, faith-filled and committed to serving others.

**Catherine Hitchcock**
Headteacher,
Donhead Preparatory School





# Celebrating exams success at Ursuline High School and Wimbledon College



This summer brought fantastic news from our parish's two Catholic secondary schools. Congratulations to all the pupils, teachers, staff, and families on hard work rewarded!

At Ursuline High School, 49% of all GCSE grades were Grade 7+, the school's highest ever result. Students achieved 193 Grade 9s across subjects, and 12 students earned Grades 8 and 9 in all their subjects.

At A-level, 60% of A-level and T-level grades were A*–B or equivalent, and 19 students achieved three As or more. Special congratulations are due to History and Geography students and teachers, with 43% of grades at A*/A. Meanwhile, 100% of T-level students passed the equivalent of three A-levels: every student achieved Distinction to Merit (equivalent to A–B), and all have progressed to university or apprenticeships.

The school said: 'Congratulations to all our Year 11 students on their achievements. The Ursuline Community is very proud of you. Your hard work, commitment and resilience have paid off. Well done.'

At Wimbledon College, 34% of all GCSE grades were Grade 7+ and 69% were Grade 5+. 74% of pupils achieved Grade 5+ in English and 78% in Maths, and 69% achieved at least two Grade 5s in Science. 12 pupils achieved ten or more Grade 7+s, including two pupils with eight Grade 9s.

The A-level pass rate exceeded 99%, with over 27% of grades at A*/A, 65% at A*–B, and 89% at A*–C. Vocational course results were equally impressive, with a 100% pass rate and just under half of all grades at least Distinction. Two students are taking up places at the University of Oxford, reading Physics and Biochemistry.

> 'It is wonderful to see so many outstanding personal achievements that are the culmination of the students' time with us. Such successes are only achieved through the students' commitment and hard work and the support that they receive from their parents, subject teachers, and our Sixth Form team.'
>
> – Adrian Laing
> Headteacher, Wimbledon College

## Interfaith!







In June, Year 5 at Donhead Preparatory School visited the Baitul Futuh Mosque. All children at Donhead learn about a variety of world religions and faiths and enjoy visits to places of worship. *Adapted from Donhead Preparatory School via Instagram.*

## Wimbledon College dedicates a new year



In September, Wimbledon College celebrated Ascensio Scholarum Masses, a global Jesuit tradition of celebrating the Mass of the Holy Spirit as pupils progress from one year to the next. At the Masses, the school prayed for God's blessing on its pupils, staff, and families, entrusting the year ahead to the greater glory of God.

The Figures (Year 7) Welcome Mass was particularly special. Many families joined to watch boys make their Pledge of Enrolment – a fitting way to mark the start of their journey at Wimbledon College and to celebrate the importance of the school's wider community.

Wimbledon College thanks Fr Dave Smolira SJ, an Old Wimbledonian, and Fr John Moffat SJ, a former member of the College staff, for celebrating these special Masses. *Adapted from Wimbledon College via LinkedIn.*





# Ursuline High School and Wimbledon College raise money for Christians in the Holy Land



On Thursday 1 October, students at Ursuline High School and Wimbledon College hosted an evening of choral and solo instrumental music in our church.

The Concert for Hope in the Holy Land was in support of Aid to the Church in Need's (ACN) work with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Roman Catholic diocese covering the Holy Land. ACN is one of the main contributors to aid programmes organised by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, including schooling, job creation schemes, food coupons for struggling families, Christian formation, and spiritual outreach to families on the margins of society.

The evening included a firsthand testimony about life for Christians in the Holy Land. John Pontifex, Head of Press at ACN, wrote to say how inspiring the concert was, and how impressive the talent and dedication of the students were. The ACN stall and online fundraiser raised £3,464, which will be sent to Fr Bashar in Taybeh, the West Bank's last remaining entirely Christian village.






James Potter, Chaplain at Wimbledon College, said: 'As a Jesuit school, we talk a lot about being 'Men and Women for Others', and we aspire to let Catholic Social Teaching guide our decisions. When we first heard the idea of a solidarity concert for the Christians of Taybeh, it was clear that this was something we needed to throw all our support behind.'

*Photographs by James Potter.*



For the Feast of SS John Fisher and Thomas More, Canon David joined Monsignor Michael Nazir-Ali to celebrate Mass at Wimbledon College's Chapel for members of the school's Fisher and More houses.

Monsignor Michael served as the 106th Bishop of Rochester from 1994 to 2009. St John Fisher was the 65th Bishop of Rochester, from 1504 until his martyrdom in 1535. *Wimbledon College via Instagram.*

## Andrew David Kennedy KSG

20 May 1943 – 19 September 2026



Andrew served as a Governor of Wimbledon College for 25 years, including 10 years as Chair of Governors. A humble and honest gentleman, Andrew gave generously of his time, energy, and wisdom. His commitment to others, to the College, and the Society of Jesus made a lasting difference to Catholic education and to the lives of so many.

In recognition of his services to Catholic education, Andrew was appointed a Knight of the Order of St Gregory the Great. Characteristically, he never sought to publicise this honour. Andrew was also a member of the Sacred Heart Chorus, singing at its annual June concerts. He was, in the words of his great friend and former College Headmaster, Fr Michael Holman SJ, 'a tower of strength'.

Andrew's Funeral Mass was held at our church on Thursday 22 October. At the end of his homily, Fr Michael summed up what so many of us would wish to say in just three words: 'Thank you, Andrew.' *Wimbledon College via LinkedIn.*



# The Parable of the Good Samaritan inspires Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School pupils

Earlier this year, pupils in St Elizabeth class at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School explored the Parable of the Good Samaritan and how it teaches us to love everyone because everyone is our neighbour. St Elizabeth class also discussed ways in which we can be good neighbours, look after our community, and take care of our planet. Here's what they came up with!





Isaac said: 'The story of the Lost Sheep tells us that everyone deserves to get a second chance and to be forgiven so we should forgive our neighbours!'





Celine said: 'We should give to those in need like when Jesus fed the 5,000!'



Evangeline said: 'We can be good neighbours by taking care of our world!'

Anishaa said: 'When someone falls down, I will be a good neighbour by helping them up!'



Harry said: 'Jesus wants us to be helpful like the Good Samaritan was. WE can do this by sharing our toys and giving to charity.'

Melisa said: 'We can be good neighbours by giving someone a compliment!'




Mattia said: 'God made the world so it is our job to recycle, grow plants, and take care of it!'



*This article was adapted from the original, published in the school's Sacred Heart Herald (issue of 12 June 2026).*



## Would you like to write for Edgeways?

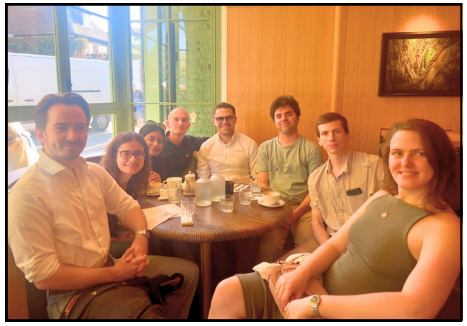
Do you have an article that you think would be a great addition to YOUR parish magazine? We're always open to contributions! Please contact the editor at **wimbledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk**.

# The fastest growing Catholic young adults community in London



... or so we think! Our parish's young adults group, for those aged 18 to 35, has exploded in recent months.





The group now meets almost every Thursday, attending the 6.30pm Mass and then meeting from 7.00pm. Regular Thursday events include:

- **Long Conversations** in the Youth Room (deep theological discussions);
- **Prayer & A Pint** in the Lounge (a social evening on the second Thursday of every month); and
- **Beacon** in the Youth Room (exploring the Catholic faith through guided questions).

The Group also meets for coffees after the 12 noon Mass on Sundays.

To join the WhatsApp community, from which these photos come, and where you can find the details of upcoming events, please send your phone number to wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk.













# Graham Kennedy interviewed for a spotlight on our parish's Be Well Hub

NHS South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust

South London Listens

**In June, our parish's Be Well Hub was the first of a series spotlighted by South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust and South London Listens.**

We are delighted to reproduce Graham's interview for *Edgeways* readers. You can read the full, original case study on the website of South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust at tinyurl.com/4d7y6a44.

Be Well is a South London Listens programme which was set up to tackle loneliness and poor mental health by creating safe spaces in the community. These spaces are local places where people can find connection and support from trusted organisations, such as community centres, schools, libraries, faith groups, health centres and cafés.

In this series, we're spotlighting Be Well Hubs across south west London, starting with Sacred Heart Wimbledon. Hear from the Be Well Lead for Sacred Heart Wimbledon, **Graham Kennedy**, about why they joined Be Well and how they're using it to support their parishioners.



**Tell us about Sacred Heart Wimbledon**

Sacred Heart Wimbledon is the largest Catholic parish in England without a cathedral. Around 1,300 people attend Mass each Sunday, approximately 6,000 receive our weekly newsletter, and around 9,000 are registered as parishioners.

Parishioners value Sacred Heart as a place to deepen and practise their faith, and as a vibrant community where people find friendship, purpose and support. Through more than 50 social, spiritual, and wellbeing groups, and a wide programme of parish events, Sacred Heart Wimbledon already plays a significant role in strengthening community life, reducing isolation, helping people navigate life-changing events, and supporting people living with long-term conditions such as dementia. The parish also helps families from outside the parish to integrate into local life.

Although Sacred Heart Wimbledon is a large parish, our Be Well journey has taught us lessons that are transferable to parishes and faith communities of many sizes: start with what already exists, listen carefully, train a small group of willing people, work safely, and build gradually.

**Why did you become part of Be Well?**

Care for people's wellbeing sits at the heart of the Church's mission. In the Gospels, Jesus draws close to people who are sick, grieving, anxious, isolated or excluded. The Church continues that mission today by offering prayer, community, practical support, and compassionate accompaniment.

For a Catholic parish, concern for wellbeing is not an optional extra or a separate social project. It flows from our faith in Christ, who meets people in their suffering and calls the Church to be a place of compassion, healing and hope. Be Well offers us a practical way to live this mission in parish life. Parishioners and members of the wider community often approach the Church at moments of vulnerability: bereavement, loneliness, family breakdown, unemployment, anxiety, illness, migration or major life change. Sometimes what people need is spiritual support. Sometimes they also need practical help, community connection, or professional services. Be Well helps us to respond more confidently and safely by listening well, accompanying people with dignity, and signposting them to appropriate support.

We did not become part of Be Well because we thought the parish could become a mental health service. We wanted clergy, staff and volunteers to be better equipped to respond pastorally, practically, and safely to people when life becomes difficult.

Be Well also resonates with the wider mission of the Archdiocese of Southwark and Caritas Southwark: putting the love of Christ into action through service, collaboration, and care for those who are vulnerable, isolated, or disadvantaged. Becoming a Be Well Hub has helped Sacred Heart Wimbledon build on what was already strong – our worshipping community, clergy, staff, volunteers, parish groups and relationships with local partners – and connect these more effectively to people's real needs.

> 'In the confessional, I can help people spiritually, but often they go away unfulfilled. Signposting them to resources which address their fundamental wellbeing problems means they go away full of hope and contentment.'
>
> — Fr Peter Mudu Frank
> Assistant Priest and Be Well Champion

This captures why Be Well matters. It does not replace the spiritual life of the parish; it helps the parish express that spiritual life more fully. It enables us to become a stronger community where people can encounter Christ's compassion, find belonging, and be helped towards hope.

**How did you bring Be Well to life in the parish?**

We were well positioned to bring Be Well to life. Wimbledon College, one of the local schools with which the parish has strong links, was in the vanguard of the Be Well initiative and was one of the first organisations to be recognised as a Be Well Hub; Merton Talking Therapies had been encouraging stronger links between the parish and South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust; a

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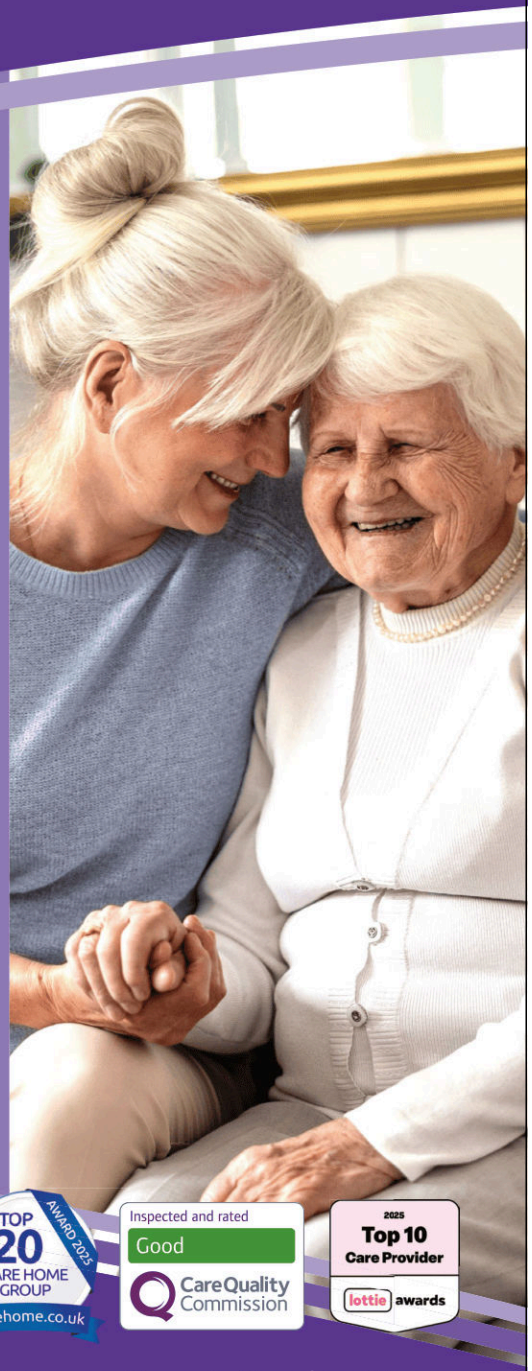
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member of parish staff had previously begun exploring the benefits of becoming a Be Well Hub; the parish had recently engaged a qualified psychotherapist to offer free counselling; and Sacred Heart was already a member of Merton Citizens. The Parish Priest and Parish Pastoral Council therefore welcomed a proposal to assess the benefits and feasibility of Sacred Heart becoming a recognised Be Well Hub, including by running a pilot.

South London Listens and Citizens UK trained a small group of enthusiastic volunteers, including me, as Be Well Champions and in community organising. This training gave us the confidence to start. From the beginning, parishioners were enthusiastic and encouraging.

Early conversations at the parish's monthly continental breakfasts, which Be Well Champions continue to attend, showed that parishioners were dealing with a wide range of wellbeing concerns, including relationship difficulties, worklessness, isolation and unresolved mental health issues. These conversations also surfaced more volunteers interested in being trained as Be Well Champions or supporting the initiative in other ways.

**What does Be Well look like for you?**

We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Archbishop's Appeal in the Archdiocese of Southwark to support social outreach. We used this momentum to publish a parish-specific signposting booklet, which has been very well received, and launch a programme of wellbeing talks.

Other parish groups are already benefitting from Be Well. Memory Lane Club, which supports people with dementia and their carers, has trained volunteers as Be Well Champions.

> 'Be Well, especially the training, coaching and signposting, has helped me elevate the service I provide to new levels. I am much better equipped to help parishioners and members of the community address their emotional needs when they approach me after a life-changing event, such as the loss of a loved one. Debbie Dixon, the principal trainer, is fantastic – she is always so calm and so willing to share her knowledge and wisdom.'
>
> — Thelma D'Costa
> Executive Assistant and Be Well Champion

We have trained almost all our clergy and parish staff, which is especially important because frontline staff and clergy are often the first people approached by those experiencing difficulty.

Be Well is now becoming part of the fabric of the parish. A conversation with a trained Champion may seem small, but it can help a person or family take the next step towards support, healing and hope.

> 'During the pandemic, my mother became suspicious that my father was pursuing interests outside their marriage. Their relationship deteriorated, and this started to affect the harmony and wellbeing of the whole family. Following a conversation with a Be Well Champion, my siblings and I were able to persuade my mother to engage a counsellor. We can already see the positive difference this is making to our family and, more importantly, to my parents' relationship.'
>
> — A Be Well beneficiary

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

# Maintaining mental wellbeing balance

**Lounge, Sacred Heart Wimbledon**
(Edge Hill, SW19 4LU)

**Tuesday 24 November 2026**

**7.15pm** refreshments
**7.30pm – 8.30pm** talk

Join **Tim Tweedy,** Operations Manager at CDARS, a charity which champions health and wellbeing in South West London, for a stimulating talk on how to maintain a mental wellbeing balance.

*Connect:* Foster relationships to build a sense of belonging and support. *Be Active:* Regular physical activity releases endorphins, reduces stress, and improves sleep. *Keep Learning:* Engaging in new skills boosts confidence and provides a sense of achievement. *Give to Others:* Acts of kindness, volunteering, or simply saying thank you and 'paying it forward'. *Mindfulness:* Pay attention to the present moment, which allows you to change how you approach challenges.



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

**How are you working with the wider community?**

We are grateful that organisations outside the parish have taken a keen interest in the development of Be Well at Sacred Heart. These include South London Listens, Merton Citizens, Wimbledon College, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Caritas Westminster, and Caritas Southwark. Their encouragement, expertise, and opportunities for connection have helped us see Be Well not as a standalone parish project, but an opportunity to be part of a wider movement of community organising, social action, and compassionate care.

Our encouragement to other parishes and faith communities is simple: start small, listen well, work safely, and build on the gifts already present in your community. Becoming a Be Well Hub can help turn compassion into practical action – and help more people encounter support, dignity, and hope.

**About South London Listens**

Launched in 2020, South London Listens (**southlondonlistens.org**) is a unique partnership between the three mental health trusts in South London, Citizens UK, local authorities, and community organisations, who together are using community organising to tackle the root causes of poor mental health.



**NEIL BALMER · Programme Lead for South London Listens**
**4 months ago on LinkedIn**

Great to be at the South West London mental health conference again — three years running now, and this South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust and NHS South West London event continues to be such an important moment in the calendar.

I was really pleased to see Be Well leaders contributing to the workshop on Faith, Culture & Mental Health – Jojo Sangrado Ford from St Barnabas, Mitcham, Madeleine Jarratt and Robert Hitchcock from Sacred Heart Wimbledon, and Ravi Arora from Multicultural Richmond brought real insight into the opportunities and learnings in working with faith communities to support good mental health and wellbeing. We're proud to be working alongside them.

The session was expertly chaired by Dr Iram Sattar, chair of the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust Health Inequality Advisory Panel. She reflected on the importance of spirituality, not just in terms of faith, but the shared values that bring people together. It felt like an important and grounding message for the day.

What came through most clearly was the importance of relationships — across NHS partners, across sectors, and with communities at the heart. It's something we hold close in South London Listens. Tackling health inequalities can't be done alone: it has to be built on partnership, trust, and shared purpose.

# HOPSA UK celebrates Holy Child, Ghana, at 80




Around 200 members of HOPSA (Holy Child Past Students Association) from across the United Kingdom gathered at our church on Saturday 25 April to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Holy Child institutions, Ghana, in a vibrant show of unity, heritage, and pride.

Founded in March 1946, Holy Child has shaped generations of women whose achievements continue to resonate across professions, communities and countries.

The commemoration was intentionally scheduled after the main celebrations in Ghana, allowing alumnae who had travelled to Cape Coast for the school-based anniversary events to also take part in the London gathering. Although rain had been forecast, the day unfolded under bright sunshine, adding to the sense of occasion.

As one congratulatory message noted: 'Beyond academics, Holy Child gave us a lifelong community of friends and mentors who have influenced our personal and professional lives in meaningful ways'. That sentiment came to life in our parish church, where alumnae representing every decade from the 1950s to the 2010s came together — an inspiring testament to the school's lasting legacy and its power to connect generations.

The celebration opened with a Thanksgiving Mass before moving to a reception in the Upper Hall, where the grounds and venue were awash in Holy Child Ghana's signature brown and yellow as alumnae proudly wore the school cloth. The striking display of colour and solidarity underscored the enduring bond shared by the HOPSA community.

Other alumni associations and supporters also attended and participated in the celebrations, including APSU UK (St Augustine's Past Student Union), the Catholic boys' equivalent of HOPSA UK; representatives from Holy Child College, Nigeria; and Associate Celia Capstick.

The HOPSA community cannot thank Cornelia Connelly enough for her vision, which brought everyone together. *Facta non verba* – actions, not words.

*This article was adapted from the original, published on the website of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus at* **shcj.org/hopsa-uk-celebrates-holy-child-ghana-at-80/**.



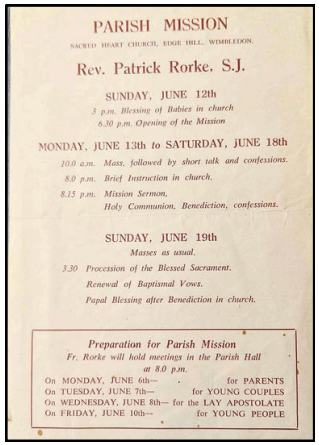

## Gregorian Chant Workshop Day
## 10.45am – 7.30pm Saturday 28 November



This special day is organised by the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge in the Lower Hall. Everyone is welcome; the repertoire is uniquely adapted to beginners and experienced singers. We will rehearse and explore the ancient chants of the Church both historically and musically, considering aspects of modality and stylistic interpretation. The day will culminate in the celebration of First Vespers and the 6.30pm Vigil Mass of the First Sunday of Advent in our church, sung by participants. Please bring a packed lunch. For more details and to book, please visit **tinyurl.com/67nw6ebv** or contact Deacon Julian.

# From the archives of Peter Connellan

Andy Connellan has been digging through the archives of his late father, the much-missed Peter Connellan. Andy has kindly shared with parishioners the following images and posters he has found of our church and Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School.


PARISH MISSION

SACRED HEART CHURCH, EDGE HILL, WIMBLEDON.

Rev. Patrick Rorke, S.J.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12th

3 p.m. Blessing of Babies in church

6.30 p.m. Opening of the Mission

MONDAY, JUNE 13th to SATURDAY, JUNE 18th

10.0 a.m. Mass, followed by short talk and confessions.

8.0 p.m. Brief Instruction in church.

8.15 p.m. Mission Sermon, Holy Communion, Benediction, confessions.

SUNDAY, JUNE 19th

Masses as usual.

3.30 Procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

Renewal of Baptismal Vows.

Papal Blessing after Benediction in church.

Preparation for Parish Mission

Fr. Rorke will hold meetings in the Parish Hall at 8.0 p.m.

On MONDAY, JUNE 6th— for PARENTS

On TUESDAY, JUNE 7th— for YOUNG COUPLES

On WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8th— for the LAY APOSTOLATE

On FRIDAY, JUNE 10th— for YOUNG PEOPLE


"YOUR PARISH FAIR"

17th October, 1970

SACRED HEART CHURCH, EDGE HILL, SW19

1.30 p.m.

Admission 1/- by programme


1886 1962

SACRED HEART CHURCH WIMBLEDON

OPENING OF THE PARISH HALL

27th. OCTOBER 1962



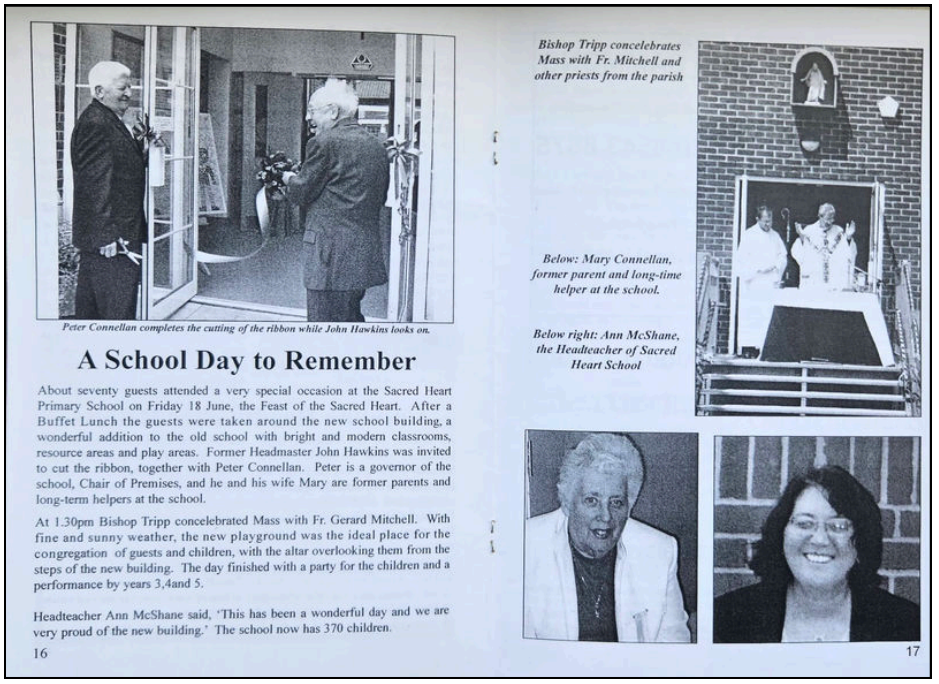











Peter Connellan completes the cutting of the ribbon while John Hawkins looks on.

## A School Day to Remember

About seventy guests attended a very special occasion at the Sacred Heart Primary School on Friday 18 June, the Feast of the Sacred Heart. After a Buffet Lunch the guests were taken around the new school building, a wonderful addition to the old school with bright and modern classrooms, resource areas and play areas. Former Headmaster John Hawkins was invited to cut the ribbon, together with Peter Connellan. Peter is a governor of the school, Chair of Premises, and he and his wife Mary are former parents and long-term helpers at the school.

At 1.30pm Bishop Tripp concelebrated Mass with Fr. Gerard Mitchell. With fine and sunny weather, the new playground was the ideal place for the congregation of guests and children, with the altar overlooking them from the steps of the new building. The day finished with a party for the children and a performance by years 3,4and 5.

Headteacher Ann McShane said, 'This has been a wonderful day and we are very proud of the new building.' The school now has 370 children.

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*Bishop Tripp concelebrates Mass with Fr. Mitchell and other priests from the parish*

*Below: Mary Connellan, former parent and long-time helper at the school.*

*Below right: Ann McShane, the Headteacher of Sacred Heart School*

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# Taizé: A community of inclusive LOVE

*Edgeways' new international correspondent,* **Ken Clahane** *from Nova Scotia (see April–May 2026 Edgeways, p.7), writes on his travels from Taizé.*

The bus from Mâcon stops in front of a small rural village in the Burgundy region of France. In 1940, Brother Roger purchased a property where he would start the Taizé community of brothers in the monastic tradition, though the term 'monks' isn't used.

Brother Roger envisioned a brotherhood of men who would live, pray, and die together. The community was a safe refuge for the marginalised displaced by the Nazis. The brothers replaced hatred with inclusive love for all.

In May, I spent 7 days in the arms of this community, being blessed with the love of Jesus Christ. Young people aged under 35 are the primary focus of the community, though several-times-older adults are invited to attend.

After getting off the bus, you find the welcome centre and, immediately, the intentionality of community building begins. You wait with others – in our case two hours – talking, sharing, and getting to know your family, speaking different languages and from all over the world.



Parishioner Anne Remedios *(centre)* with Ken *(left)* and Pat *(right)* Clahane



Three times a day, perhaps 3,000 or more gather at the church. Prayers are sung in simple, repetitive chants, often in four-part harmony. Everything, from your room assignment and mealcard to the invitation to contribute to YOUR community with your labour and a donativo offering – the rooms, meals, and jobs – are simple but fulfil the vision of Brother Roger's community.

Bible Study follows immediately after breakfast and morning prayers, led by one of the brothers. During our week, we looked at the Gospel of John. Afterwards, smaller groups get together to discuss the questions raised by the larger group. Your group meets twice a day; you also have time for individual prayer and rest by the gardens or the pond.

Each day follows the pattern: eat, pray, reflect, sleep, and repeat. The Brothers offer opportunities to talk and hear individual Confessions, and they lead smaller informal discussions.

The first day, the brothers ask each person: 'What are you seeking?' At the end of the week, you realise that the answer is and always has been there – the 'clutter' just needs to be removed.



# Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

**We welcome into the family of the Church those who have recently been baptised:**

Matilda Mora Ruda • Eliza Rose Kenny • Leighton Valentine Parry
Clementine Elizabeth Martin • Maximillian Joseph Wittern • Henry Abhiraj Guly
Kaspian Gonzalo-Martiniano • Callum Fred Peters • Emilia Adela Peters
Chloe Berthet-Bohorquez • Thomas Berthet-Bohorquez
Benjamin Berthet-Bohorquez • Edward Andrew Drake • Giuliana Madikwe Verot
Theodore Lashmar-Lewis • Freddie Jan McGeever • Lucy Thérèse de Quay
Marissa Lucy Poderoso • Elena Louise Poderoso • Davina Russell
Alfred John Bolland • Milo Mackenzie Száz-Hales • Alfie Száz-Hales
Aurora Ibolya Száz-Hales • Cassian Vincent Menezes • Sophie Bardhoshi
Lewis Bardhoshi • Roy Alexander Aitken • Iris Mary Selvadurai
Clara Sophia Walker • Emily Marnie Walker • Marina Fiona Vaughan-Fowler
Tatyana Winifred Paul • Lewis Eric Moore • Leonardo Nathaniel Soria
Emilia Rose Haywood • Bruce Valentine Corbett-Graham
Giovana Tremain Marques • Rory Andrew Johnson
Celina Iris Duxbury • Rocco Douglas Rayment

**We congratulate those who have recently been married in our church:**

Sebasteen Sebamalainathan & Jathika Jeyapalan
Ravindra Nagenthiran & Beth Spackman
Roache Boateng-Abraham & Elizabeth Asomaning-Bimpong
Mexin Sebiyachan & Hannah Miranda • Alfred Windsor & Jessica Walker
Akkilash Raveenthiran & Roshini Kootumatha Reji
Fadi Siman & Erika Tituana Nunez • Kabildev Kajendran & Magaaline Milroy Callistus
Tom Johnson & Catherine Reynolds • Joseph Witchalls & Angela Byrne
Sebastian Cobbold & Claire McCarthy • Shawn Coutino & Grace Oskiera-Voogt
Finian Peter & Lorraine Wesley • Jake Davis & Micaela Lello

**We offer sympathies to the families and friends of those who have died recently:**

Teresa Mary O'Connell • Dennis Konopka • Mary Rose Fripp
Brendan Ignatius Geoghegan • John Patrick McBrien • Paul Nicholas Thirlwall
Caroline Sally Pilkington • Pilar Giner • Violet Lucy Jones • George Tabor
Rupert Edward Jones • Marie Thérèse Fitzgerald • Edna Rose Heinrich
Jesse Maxmillian Davis • Mary Geoghegan • William Russell
Alejandro de Leon Nieves • Mumtaz Tokatly

To be married in the Church, you must give at least six months' notice. Please contact the Parish Office. You can learn more about how to get married on our website, **sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk**, under 'Faith and the Sacraments' → 'Marriage'.

# CALLING ALL SINGERS!

## Can you help us create a Big Choir of 100+ voices?

Katy's Songbirds

**Katy Lees and Giles Kennedy**

**Invite you to lend us your voice for an evening of festive music …**

# A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION CONCERT

**Tuesday 15 December 2026 – 7.45pm**

**Sacred Heart Hall & Church, Edge Hill, Wimbledon SW19 4LU**

## REHEARSALS

**Mondays: 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 Nov; 7 & 14 Dec**

**(Come to as many as you like!)**

**8.30pm—9.30pm**

**Sacred Heart School, Burlington Road, New Malden, KT3 4ND**

**TO REGISTER CONTACT:**

**Katylees3009@gmail.com**

**Whatever your experience, join us to raise the roof together, proving that music has the power to change lives.**

Supporting

## 22nd Wimbledon Scout Group