

# CROSSROADS

*The Family Magazine of St Hilda's, Ashford, Middlesex*

No. 704 November 2019

*Free - but donations welcome!*



The Parish of **St Hilda, Ashford** in the Diocese of London  
Charity Reg. No. 1134119

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*An item submitted after the deadline  
may be accepted for inclusion IF the  
Editor has been informed by the dead-  
line that the item is on its way.*

**When is the Vicar not available  
in November?**

Every Saturday: day off



There is a story about an older man who lived in a small village in France. He was well known and respected, a pillar of the community. One of the residents, young and enthusiastic, had a passion for history and enjoyed spending time with the older man, as he was a good storyteller. There were plenty of stories about his fighting during the Second World War., although there was more to it than he said at the time. Over the years, they became good friends, and the past did not seem to

cast a shadow over the present. But things were about to change.

One day, the young man accidentally came across some old newspapers during one of his visits. Although it was written in German, in one of them he recognised the man in an article, he was wearing an SS uniform. Feeling deeply upset and confused, he decided to challenge the man he thought he knew. He did not deny it, and he told his story.

He was stationed at Auschwitz, and although not directly involved with the genocide, always struggled with the atrocities that took place. Refusing to serve was not an option, as he would face court-martial, most likely be shot, and his family would become destitute. At the end of the war, he assumed a different identity and settled in another country. It is thought he was haunted and tormented by everything that he had witnessed. Over the years, the thing that he desired the most was forgiveness, but he dared not ask for it.

Upon hearing this, the young man felt deeply conflicted, torn between a secret that he could not keep, and loyalty towards his old friend. He could not possibly offer forgiveness, as it was not his to provide, and he left feeling distraught. The next day, after a sleepless night, he decided to unburden himself to a family member, asking them not to divulge it. By the evening, the entire village knew, and animus was running high. The memories of the atrocities committed by the Nazis during the war were still within living memory, the wounds too deep, forgiveness not an option. During a general meeting in the village hall, it was decided that they had to take justice into their own hands and do the right thing. The mob was looking for revenge, and everything was planned for the evening. They would go around the older man's place, lock him in, set the house on fire, and burn him alive. The persecuted had now become the persecutors.

The young man tried to argue that if they did this, it would not honour those who had died in concentration camps, and even if they could not forgive, at least they could let the man go. His voice was drowned by angry voices: "Which side are you on?"

Fearing for his own safety, he left and went straight to the older man's house. Once there, he warned of the villager's plans and begged him to leave as soon as possible. The old man stopped, looked him in the eyes and asked: "I will leave, but not before you forgive me for what I did". The young man argued that he could not possibly do this, as it was not his to give. The older man said it is done; I shall face the consequences of my past. The young man implored him to leave, but every time

he would ask the same "please forgive me". Eventually, the young man left, feeling bewildered, but still hoping the older man would leave before the mob arrived.

By the evening, the villagers gathered in the main square and marched with torches towards the older man's house. Once there, they asked him: "Are you guilty?" and he said: "I am, but do you forgive me"? "Never!" was the reply. They locked him in, and he offered no resistance. They shouted, "burn him, burn him". The young man, tormented, left the village that same night and was never seen again.

This story highlights the moral dilemma of how can justice be achieved, and forgiveness given in the midst of highly charged situations? How can reconciliation take place? Is it a binary answer? We often take justice into own hands, we know better, we second guess God, and in all, from the Cross, Jesus cries out: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing". And yet, we have seen in recent times how our nation is deeply divided, on the brink of civil unrest, with rhetoric of division and segregation, based on diverging views, which ultimately conceals something at a deeper level, where social tensions are just waiting for the right conditions to surface. Where does this mirror the Christian values which are so deeply embedded in the social makeup of this country? How can we treat others in a way that we would not like to be treated ourselves?

In a month of remembrance, let us not forget that freedom was achieved through a collective effort: "united we stand, divided we fall".

*Fr. Joseph Fernandes*

### **Capital Vision Prayer**

Generous God, You have called us to be salt and light in this great city;  
Guide us by your Holy Spirit to discern your will for your Church  
as we seek to follow your Son Jesus Christ  
in loving and serving our neighbours.

Give us the wisdom and strength to fulfil the vision you put before us  
and help us to play our part in transforming our earthly city into a sign of the  
Heavenly Jerusalem where you live and reign,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God now and for ever. *Amen*



1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in the Month  
2.30 – 4 pm in the Church  
Tea/coffee, cake and a donation of £1  
All Welcome

7<sup>th</sup> November    The Bible and how we should read it  
5<sup>th</sup> December    The Christmas Stories

## FEELING FLUSHED ?

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November there will be a retiring collection to raise money to twin our church hall toilet(s) with another in a part of the world that doesn't have one.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November is World Toilet day (no I'm not joking) - how much thought do you give to your loo? Can you remember when your Bestie had to hold the door of the school loo because there were never any locks on the door? Do you remember the desperation of needing a loo and there wasn't one? If we raise £60 it will pay for a loo to be built, give access to clean water and teach a community about hygiene. Any extra money could buy toilet roll or soap - £240 would build a toilet block in a school or refugee camp.

*Christine Taylor*

Note that the church toilet has already been twinned with one in Nepal. The details and a picture of it are on the windowsill - go and have a look. *Ed*

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## A BUSY MONTH

What a busy time we have had at St Hilda's recently. On 5<sup>th</sup> October we enjoyed a Harvest Supper: it was a lovely evening and Christine Taylor provided the entertainment in between courses with a brilliant picture quiz that had us all thinking.

The following weekend was taken up with a very successful Jumble Sale and Auction in the church hall. At the same time the Ashford Art Club held an exhibition of their work on Saturday and Sunday in the Church. There were some brilliant paintings and the church was full of visitors not only praising the works of art but also commenting on how lovely St Hilda's is and how they felt welcome. A very successful weekend.

On Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> we held our Autumn Fayre. A few of us were in the church hall until late Friday night setting up the stalls ready for the goods to be laid out for sale on Saturday morning.

We had a great attendance. Many people had come to the Jumble sale and Art Exhibition the week before and returned for the Fayre. The Guides as usual under the supervision of Chris Davenport had a great tombola stall that sold out very quickly. There were some great cakes and preserves on sale, Pauline's jewellery and cards, Christmas decorations, a Craft stall from the women from Bronzefield, and much more. The kitchen was very busy serving tea, coffee and delicious hot meals: we have some very good cooks at St Hilda's.

Altogether three very successful weekends. I would like to say thank you very much to all who helped make these events so successful. Not only all who manned the stalls but all of you who came along and supported them.

It takes a lot of planning and hard work to pull all of these events together and we can always do with more helping hands. Once again, thank you.

*Bobbie Bedford*

# WHAT'S ON in NOVEMBER 2019

SUNDAY			
	8am	Said Eucharist (BCP)	4th before Advent
3rd	9.30am	Family Service	
	4pm	Candles of Remembrance	
10th	} 8am	Said Eucharist	3rd before Advent, Remembrance Sunday
17th	} 9.30am	Eucharist and Junior Church	
24th	}		
			2nd before Advent
			Christ the King
17th	12 noon	Bring and Share lunch	
24th	6pm	iPray (service in church)	
MONDAY:			
TUESDAY			
Every Tuesday	9.45am	<b>Eucharist</b> ; 5th is MU Corporate Communion	
12th	12.45pm	<b>Mothers' Union Lunch</b> in Small Hall: <i>Christmas Craft</i>	
19th		<b>St. Hilda's Day</b> - please pray for the parish, and for our previous Vicars.	
	7.30pm	<b>PCC</b>	
WEDNESDAY			
Every Wednesday	8pm	<b>Bible Study</b> 6th at 21 Rosary Gardens, otherwise at 6 Seaton Drive	
13th, 25th	7.30pm	<b>Ladies' Homegroup</b> at 148 Feltham Hill Road	
THURSDAY			
7th	2.30pm	<b>Feed My Sheep</b> in church: <i>The Bible and how we should read it</i>	
FRIDAY			
Every Friday	7pm	<b>Choir Practice</b> in church	
1st, 15th, 29th	8.15pm	<b>Community Singing</b> in church - all welcome	
SATURDAY			
Every Saturday	9.30am-noon	<b>Church Open</b> , refreshments available; Knitting Project for the Upper Room	
30th	7pm	<b>Curry and Carols</b> (see page 7)	

# NOTICES

THANK YOU to everyone involved with the Jumble Sale on Saturday 12th October - we raised a record £1,024 which will go towards the maintenance of the Church Hall.

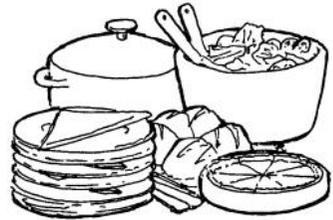


You are invited to a service of  
**Candles of Remembrance**  
in St. Hilda's Church  
on **Sunday 3rd November at 4pm**  
Everyone is welcome



## ST. HILDA'S BRING AND SHARE LUNCH

12 noon Sunday 17th November  
St. Hilda's Church Hall  
See in church for more details



## CURRY & CAROLS - Raising funds for the Baptistry

7pm Saturday 30th November  
St. Hilda's Church Hall

A golden opportunity to enjoy a delicious curry and practice carols for the festive season - by Christmas you'll be word perfect. A non spicy alternative will be available.

Tickets £10 (£5 for children under 12)  
available in Church or from the Parish Office telephone 01784 253525

## ENJOY YOURSELF!

I and my granddaughter were faced with trying to accommodate two fetes and a ballet class all overlapping in time. When we apologised at not being able to make one of the fetes we were told that we should have missed the ballet lesson. I was, to quote, “not amused”!

There’s a song in the 1950’s musical “Salad Days” which comes when the two lead characters leave university. It starts, “ Find yourself something to do dear! Find yourself something to do!” By chance they end up looking after a musical piano which plays automatically and makes those who hear it sing and dance.

Whilst we might smile or even laugh at this, there is something important being said. Not in terms of work, employment or usefulness, but in terms of our own well being.

How many of us have something that we “go and do”, which is just for us? Something that makes us feel good. Maybe you belong to a drama group, help at a Scouting or Guiding group or their wider associations? Perhaps it is bowls or tennis, bridge or knitting group, walking club or art group etc?

We value these sessions in so many ways:

it gets us out of the house

it brings us into contact with other people

And I think the most important reason is: “It’s all about me!” “ It’s what I like doing” “It keeps me going!” “ I don’t have to think/worry about other people.”

Now that might seem selfish, but looking after SELF is immensely important. And guess what! It is okay to say "NO ! Sorry I cannot do that because it’s my ..."

All through my cancer treatment, one of the things I made sure I did was to go to ballet on a Saturday morning. I did as much as I could each class and if there were pirouettes or too many jumps I stood and watched. But what was important was that I was still doing something I loved and had been doing since I was 3 yrs old.

There is a lot of evidence about the benefit of leisure. A couple of quotations are:

“For leisure to exist, one has to be in control of one’s behaviours and have a sense of freedom to pursue willingly a given activity.” (*A psychological analysis of leisure and health* by Seppo E. Iso-Ahola Chapter 9 in *Work, Leisure and Well-Being* by John T Haworth 2006 Routledge, London.)

“Leisure allows for the maintenance of a degree of autonomy and self-determination in the face of other uncontrollable factors.” (*Leisure and health: Why is leisure therapeutic?* LL Caldwell - British Journal of Guidance & Counseling, 2005).

So next time you are faced with being in two places at once. Go on! Risk it! Do the one thing that brings you most pleasure.

Rosalyn Young

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## 6<sup>th</sup> November: WILLIAM TEMPLE - Archbishop of Canterbury

During the Second World War, Winston Churchill was Britain's Prime Minister. At the same time, William Temple was Archbishop of Canterbury. While Churchill led the country against Germany, Temple encouraged the British people to trust the Lord for their deliverance and strength. Like Churchill, Temple was a great leader, a gifted orator and a prolific writer. He was also a theologian and social activist.

Temple was born on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1881 in Exeter, Devon. He was educated at Rugby School and Balliol College, Oxford, from 1900 to 1904. He loved the music of Bach; the poetry of Browning and Shelley, and Shakespeare. He was an avid reader and possessed a near-photographic memory.

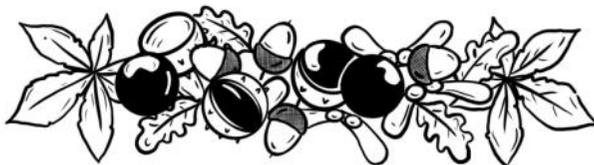
He became president of the Oxford Union and after graduation, was a lecturer in philosophy at Queen's College, Oxford. He was a member of the debating society and was a skilled and balanced debater. Following his ordination in 1909, and priesting in 1910, Temple was headmaster of Repton School for four years. He married Frances Anson in 1916. They were childless.

From 1921-29 Temple was Bishop of Manchester. During this time he was seen as a pioneer of the Ecumenical Movement and gradually became a national figure. In 1926 he urged the British government to seek a negotiated agreement to the General Strike.

Temple excelled as a moderator; a teacher and a preacher and his appointment as Archbishop of York (1929-40) was a popular one. His influence also led to the formation of the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. During the Second World War he jointly founded the Council of Christians and Jews to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice in Britain.

As Archbishop of Canterbury (1942-44) Temple became an outspoken advocate of social reform and became involved in the campaign against unemployment, poverty and poor housing. He believed in the rights of all people, whether rich or poor, and was a leading force for social justice. He was grounded in the problems of the working man and in his book *Christianity and Social Order* (1942) he shared his vision for all to have access to healthcare, education and decent housing. His radical thinking and activism played a foundational role in the formation of the British Welfare State.

Temple died aged 63 at Westgate-on-Sea, Kent on 26th October 1944. He was the first Primate of All England to be cremated and his ashes were buried in the cloister garden of Canterbury Cathedral. He is the last Archbishop of Canterbury to have died while in office.



## CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION - A ROCHA and ECO CHURCH



On Sunday 13th October we had a guest speaker in church: Helen Stephens, the Church Relations manager of A Rocha UK. She gave us an introduction to the Eco Church scheme, of which the following is a summary.

The previous Thursday was World Mental Health Day. It is recognised that contact with nature is important for our own mental well-being. Nature is all around us, but is declining at a frightening rate.

Why does caring for the environment matter to us as Christians?

- God made it all, in all its abundance and diversity - we are still discovering new species (Genesis 1:20-25). "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (Ps 24.1)
- He delights in it: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31)
- God loves it actively, providing for all of creation: "He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. (Ps 104:11-12).
- Creation points us towards the Creator.

We were made in God's image to be stewards of creation (Gen 1:27-30). However, we have emphasised use of creation, forgetting that God also told us to let the land rest (Lev 25:1-7).

God plans a restoration of the earth (Is 11), but we do not have to wait for that - we can start now.

So what can we do? The IPCC Climate Report gives us twelve years before global warming reaches 1.5°C above the pre-industrial global average temperature - and the first of those years is nearly over. The urgency for action is increasing. Glaciers are melting all over the world, causing flooding in the short term and drought when they have gone. The Arctic system is trending away from its twentieth century position to an unprecedented state. We are losing biodiversity: hundreds of species have been identified as at risk of extinction, mainly from the way we produce our food. We need to act now.

These changes are affecting the world's poorest people most, so this is an issue of justice. We need to see the interconnectiveness of all these things. The church is well placed to respond.

A Rocha (Portuguese for the rock) is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world. It was started more than 35 years ago by missionaries working to restore wetlands in Portugal.

How can we respond in our daily life?

We can take joy in what is around us, and celebrate God's creation in our worship.

We can nurture and protect the environment around us, and make changes in our lifestyles:

- grow plants in our gardens which attract wildlife
- use cars less - walk where possible, or use public transport
- if we have money to invest, use an ethical bank such as Triodos
- use a supplier of renewable energy such as Ecotricity or Good Energy
- defend nature with our voices and actions - our children are taking a lead here. Support initiatives such as Tearfund's rubbish campaign against single use plastics.

The local church can take a lead. The fifth Mark of Mission is "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth " which reinforces the other marks of mission. We are more likely to attract children if we are seen to be working for something they believe in. Churchyards can become havens for wildlife. Some churches have opened cafés which have social and economic benefits for the community.

One of A Rocha UK's recent initiatives has been at Wolf Fields near Norwood Green. Working with the local community they have turned three acres which had been abandoned to fly-tipping and anti-social behavior into a multi-purpose wildlife area including a native fruit orchard, a sensory garden with local wild flowers, organic food growing allotments, bee hives, a small woodland for birds, and new paths to increase accessibility. This shows what is possible.

A Rocha runs an on-line scheme, Eco Church, to give churches a framework for action. It covers five areas: teaching, buildings, land, community involvement, and lifestyle - trying to change the culture both for our own sakes and to set an example to the community. More than 2000 churches are signed up.

So - go on celebrating and enjoying the environment. Pray. Take action.

Pray about your next step.



A Rocha UK publishes a bulletin which you can sign up for.

For more details on the charity see <https://arocha.org.uk/>

St. Hilda's is signed up to Eco Church, but we have not yet started working formally towards their awards. We need yours support for that! I have been appointed our Eco Church representative, so see me if you have any questions or ideas.

*Rosemary Greenwood*

## I'M FINE THANKS!

There is nothing the matter with me,  
I'm as healthy as I can be,  
I have arthritis in both my knees,  
And when I talk - I talk with a wheeze.  
My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin,  
But - I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet,  
Or I wouldn't be able to be out on the street.  
Sleep is denied me night after night,  
But every morning I find I'm alright.  
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin,  
But - I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is this - as my tale I unfold,  
That for you and me who are getting old,  
It's better to say 'I'm fine' with a grin,  
Than to let folks know the shape we are in.

How do I know that my youth is all spent?  
Well, my 'get up and go' has got up and went.  
But I really don't mind when I think with a  
grin,  
Of all the grand places my 'got up' has bin.

Old age is golden I've heard it said,  
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed,  
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,  
My specs on a table until I get up.  
Ere sleep overtakes me I say to myself,  
Is there anything else I could lay on the  
shelf?

When I was young my slippers were red,  
I could kick my heels right over my head.  
When I was older my slippers were blue,  
But I still could dance the whole night  
through.

Now I am old my slippers are black,  
I walk to the shop and puff my way back.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,  
And pick up the paper to read the 'obits',  
If my name is still missing I know I'm not  
dead,  
And so I have breakfast and - go back to bed.

*Poem contributed by Margaret Perry. On Internet, attributed to Anon, Constance O'Neon (several times), Diamond C Aloes, and Charlotte (Lottie) Sinclair !*



## ST. HILDA'S ENTERTAINERS

proudly present their  
2019 Pantomime,  
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# Aladdin

at St Hilda's Hall

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December  
at 7.45pm

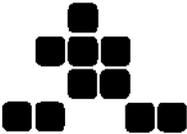
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December  
at 10.30am, 2.30pm and 7.00pm

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December  
at 7.45pm

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# MISCELLANY

*from Parish Pump*

## **75 YEARS AFTER MONTE CASSINO, D-DAY AND KOHIMA AND IMPHAL**

This year The Royal British Legion is asking communities to remember the service, sacrifice, and collaboration of the armed forces of Britain, the Commonwealth and Allied nations who fought together 75 years ago.

In 1944 this collaboration resulted in victory in three critical battles; Monte Cassino, D-Day, and Kohima and Imphal.

At Monte Cassino, an Allied Army over 240,000 strong, with contingents from six continents, opened the way to the liberation of Rome. At D-Day 13 nations collaborated to land 156,000 men in Normandy. At Kohima and Imphal one of the most ethnically diverse Armies in history joined forces to win.

The British Legion points out that “The collaboration of Britain with our Commonwealth friends and Allied nations in 1944 continues to shape our society today. Many communities, whose ancestors served side by side, now live side by side in a multicultural Britain.”

More details at: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

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## **FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL - 30 YEARS AGO**

The Berlin Wall fell 30 years ago this month, on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1989. East Germany reopened its border with West Germany, allowing its citizens to pass freely through the checkpoints. Workers began demolishing the 28-year-old wall the next day.

Earlier that year serious unrest in Eastern Bloc countries such as Poland and Hungary had put pressure on the East German government, which had also been dealing with demands from its own citizens, led by a determined ‘swords into ploughshares’ church movement for peace.

The wall was relatively low but heavily fortified, separating the democratic Western countries and the Communist countries of Eastern Europe throughout the Cold War. East German border guards were authorised to shoot anyone attempting to escape into West Berlin. More than 100 people died in that way, but hundreds more were killed trying to cross at other border points.

German reunification took place formally on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1990.

One of the casualties of the building of the wall in 1961 was the Church of Reconciliation, which was separated from most of its parishioners and eventually demolished to make it easier for guards to shoot potential escapees. The same site now houses the clay-built Chapel of Reconciliation, consecrated in November 2000.

(One of my colleagues visited Berlin as the Wall was being demolished and brought back a piece of it - a nondescript lump of reinforced concrete which signified so much. *Ed*)

## THE TWO MINUTE SILENCE

Schoolgirls in 1918 were warned that they might never be married. So many prospective husbands had been killed in World War 1, that their chances could be slim. It's hard for us to imagine the slaughter. The total number of both civilian and military casualties is estimated at around 37 million people, ending only when the Armistice took effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918.

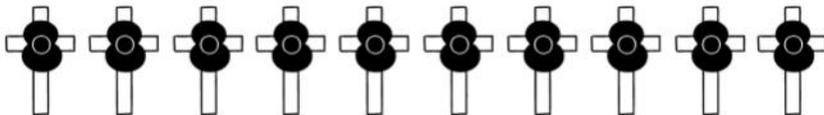
The idea of a 'Two Minute Silence' originated in South Africa. The first minute was to be a time of thanksgiving for those who had returned alive, and the second minute was to remember the fallen. It was taken up by King George V, writing, "it is my desire and hope that at the hour when the Armistice came into force, there may be for the brief space of two minutes a complete suspension of all our normal activities."

It had an immediate impact. An observer wrote, "The whole World Stands to Attention. From the Indian jungles to Alaska, on the trains, on the ships at sea, in every part of the globe where a few British were gathered together, the Two-Minute pause was observed."

The Great War was said to be 'the war to end all wars'. But it wasn't. About three per cent of the world population were to die in World War 2. Today's 11th November commemoration, repeated on the nearest Sunday, now incorporates all wars.

The Royal British Legion describes the Act of Remembrance as a deeply personal act available to everyone, acknowledging the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces and their families, across all conflicts.

In keeping the Two Minute Silence, many will long for the day when, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."



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### 13<sup>th</sup> November: FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI – first 'saint' of New York City

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on America in 2001, many Americans were seen to be 'saintly' in their brave attempts to help save lives. But Frances (1850 – 1917) was the first citizen of the United States to be officially canonised as a saint – by Pope Pius XII in 1946. She founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and worked among orphans, children and the sick of New York.

# BEYOND THE PARISH

*from Parish Pump*

## **BISHOP WELCOMES PM'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

The Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines, the Church of England's Lead Bishop for Foreign Affairs, has welcomed the appointment of Rehman Chishti MP as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, succeeding Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon.

Bishop Nick said: "Everyone has an inherent right to profess any faith or none, yet across the world people continue to be imprisoned or killed for what they believe.

"Given the fundamental importance of this issue we have long called for the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to be made a dedicated role and we are pleased that this step has now been taken."

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## **MINISTRY STATISTICS PUBLISHED**

The number of female clergy in the Church of England continues to rise with more women than men entering training for ordained ministry for the second year running, according to recently published statistics.

More women, 54%, than men began training for ordained ministry in 2018, for the second year running. Just under a third, or 30%, of the estimated 20,000 active clergy in the Church of England were female compared to 27% in 2014, according to Ministry Statistics for 2018.

The report also shows the proportion of senior posts such as dean or bishop occupied by women rose from 23 per cent to 25 per cent over the last year. The figures do not take into account six new appointments of female bishops this year, bringing the total so far to 24.

The proportion of people identifying as from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds starting training for ordained ministry in the Church of England rose to 8% in 2018, compared to 4% in 2016.

Around a third, or 33%, of people beginning their training last year were under 35 years old and more than half, or 53%, were under 45.

Meanwhile the number of men and women ordained as deacon rose from 485 in 2016 to 535 in 2019.

The figures have been released as the Church of England seeks to fulfil a key target of a 50% increase in the number of candidates for ordination as part of its programme of Renewal and Reform.

Mandy Ford, Interim Director of the Ministry Division of the Church of England, said: "I am thankful for the hard work and prayers of the parishes and dioceses in helping us to increase the numbers of people coming forward for ordained ministry, a key aim of the Renewal and Reform programme."

## **INDIA PASSES ANTI-CONVERSION LAW**

The Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly has recently passed a bill to criminalise religious conversion in the northern Indian state.

The Bill intends to extend a law that was introduced in 2006 which criminalised conversion by 'fraud,' 'force' and 'inducement,' by adding 'coercion' to its terms.

Inducement has also been redefined under the new bill as the 'offer of any temptation in the form of any gift or gratification or material benefit, either in cash or kind or employment, free education in reputed school run by any religious body, easy money, better lifestyle, divine pleasure or otherwise.'

The freedom charity Christian Solidarity Worldwide has raised concerns over the wording of the amended terms, saying their loose definition could leave them open to misuse. Anyone found attempting to convert a person from one religion to another in the Himalayan region could face up to seven years in prison, compared to three years under the old law.

The proposed law would also not recognise the marriage of two people from previously different religions, where a conversion has taken place either before or after their wedding day.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas has spoken out against the new legislation, saying: "This Bill is a clear expression of the state's intention to restrict the right to freedom of religion or belief. As a multi-ethnic nation made up of diverse religious groups, India must respect the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion for all people.

Anti-conversion laws, known as 'Freedom of Religion Acts' are currently enforced in seven states in India.

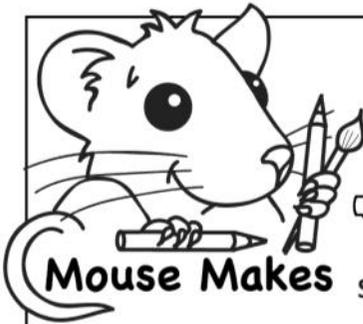
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## **POTHoles – NOW DEEPER THAN THE GRAND CANYON**

If you hate potholes, here is a statistic that will give you grim satisfaction: the combined depth of potholes in England is now 15 times that of the lowest point in the Grand Canyon. Plus, a new pothole is reported every 43 seconds.

In all, nearly 700,000 potholes were reported on the highways over the past year. That is a 13 per cent increase on the previous year, according to data obtained by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). As most local authorities define a pothole as any dip in the road surface that is 40mm deep or more, that means that the combined depth of the past year's potholes would reach 28km. This is 15 times deeper than the Grand Canyon, and three times the height of Mount Everest.

No wonder that last year more than £1.9million was paid as compensation to motorists whose vehicles had been damaged by a pothole.



### BIBLE JOURNEYS

Where did Noah's ark come to rest after it's journey?

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Genesis 8:4

Where did God tell Samuel to travel to to find a new king?

-----  
1 Samuel 16:1-4

To which city did God send Jonah?

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Jonah 1:1-2

Which town did Joseph take Mary to before Jesus was born?

-----  
Luke 2:4

Where did Mary and Joseph flee to to get away from Herod?

-----  
Matthew 2:13

Where was Saul (Paul) going to when Jesus spoke to him?

-----  
Acts 9:1-18



*"Lord,  
If I go east where the sun rises or go to live west beyond the sea, even there you will take my hand and lead me. Your strong right hand will protect me."*  
Psalm 139:9:10

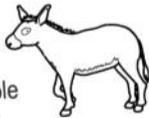
GOD'S WAY

*"God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide even to the end."*  
from Psalm 48:14

*"People can plan what they want to do, but it is the Lord who guides their steps."*  
Proverbs 16:9



What kind of transport goes with each bible character?



NOAH DONKEY  
BAALAM CHARIOT  
MOSES SHIP  
JONAH ARK  
ELIJAH BIG FISH  
PHILIP BASKET  
PAUL WHIRLWIND

Find the travel words in the word search



JOURNEY

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• GOD WITH US •  
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VILLAGE • TOWN • CITY



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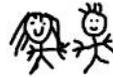
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### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - ESPECIALLY DRIVERS!**

### **Ashford Helping Hands**

is a voluntary organisation which provides help to people in the TW15 postal area. They can always use more volunteers and at the moment are particularly short of drivers to take people to medical appointments etc.

If you can help, please phone

**Olive on 01784 245203**

If you need help, phone  
the AHH Duty Officer on

**07754 083502**

between 10am and noon

Monday - Friday

For more information see:

[www.ashfordhelpinghands.btck.co.uk](http://www.ashfordhelpinghands.btck.co.uk)

WANTED: used British and foreign stamps for Princess Alice Hospice, trimmed ¼" all round. Place in box at back of church or give them to

*Pauline Milton*

### **Our Mission Prayer:**

*Bless our Community.  
Make its people;  
Strong in Faith,  
Steadfast in Hope,  
And Generous in Love.  
Amen.*

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