



Can you please help with any of these:

- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ General Maintenance
- ◆ Flower Arranging
- ◆ Church Leaf-let Distribution
- ◆ Cleaning
- ◆ Welcoming People at

Mass

If so, call Bridget Wells on

01487 840146

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND - MARCH 2008

We were privileged to go on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Father Paul Maddison. We were a group of some twenty people, almost all being local parishioners who, over the days of the pilgrimage, formed a cohesive group.

On arrival, we journeyed to Tiberius, the Convent of the Beatitudes, where we stayed for several days, being struck by the lush calmness of the convent sited on the shores of Lake Galilee. The next few days were filled with the experiences of the locations where Jesus called his disciples to Him and performed several miracles. These were brought into context by our excellent guide and mentor Arlette, a local graduate from Bethlehem University, who travelled with us throughout our pilgrimage and whose biblical and local knowledge was outstanding. The group's contribution throughout the pilgrimage, which most of the group did, was to read in turn, at each location, the appropriate reading from the Bible, which Father Paul had carefully selected. These were followed by Mass conducted by Father Paul at the revered sites.

We then journeyed south to the more arid regions of the Holy Land, visiting biblical sites en route. The entry into both Bethlehem and Jerusalem was unforgettable and during the next few days we experienced the presence of Holy Places, again with the astute knowledge of our guide and the Biblical direction of Father Paul. All the locations in Bethlehem and Jerusalem were visited under the guidance and care of both Arlette and Father Paul, the latter giving a graphic description of the capture, imprisonment, prosecution, condemnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

All these experiences brought the Scriptures into both context and focus and gave much food for thought and reflection.

Our stay in Bethlehem and our visit to Aboud provided strong evidence of the State of Israel's control and repression of the Palestinian people. Feelings of frustration, anger and compassion tend

to surface when one sees at first hand the dilemma the Palestinians face.

It was with mixed feelings that we returned home, needing time to digest the events and experiences of the Holy Land, but in all it was a memory of a lifetime and one which should not be missed.

Our thanks go to Father Paul for his care throughout and to Arlette for her dedication under sometimes difficult circumstances, which made our pilgrimage so rewarding.

John Edwards

MARRIAGE

Yvonne Roberts, writing in The Tablet April 5th, examines the decline of marriage and asks 'Should the Church be doing more?' The traditional Church attitude to marriage has always been more proscriptive than encouraging, and the misogynist view of St Paul is actually discouraging, starting with the idea that it would be better if men were all like him, unmarried. If they must marry because of their carnal appetites, says St Paul rather grudgingly, then here are a few rules. Meanwhile the secular view of marriage has developed over the years as a means of controlling inheritance and the transmission of power, using daughters as bargaining tools in the battle for worldly improvement, and the Church has tended to support this attitude because the side-effects were largely acceptable in spiritual terms. But now that this secular view has been swept aside by social changes, perhaps the Church could strengthen its own encouraging attitude, extolling the virtues of marriage on grounds of faith. The key to such an attitude is in the word 'love.'

Love is probably the most abused word in our language. 'I love chocolate', 'I love Mozart', 'I love my Mum'. The worst abuse is when even the most basic animal coupling is described as 'making love'. The truth is that human beings are incapable of generating



My name is Jan-Philipp Bodenbender and I am accepted as a part-time student from September until December 2008 at St Ivo School, High Leys in St. Ives, Cambridgeshire.

So I am looking for a family to stay with during the term.

I want to introduce myself.

I am 16 years old and my hobbies are playing football, badminton, table-tennis and playing the piano.

I live in Marburg. That is a university town at the heart of Germany.

I am committed to politics and I write articles for the local newspaper.

At the moment I am taking part in a climate project by the magazine "Focus". We produced together with the university in Stuttgart a spot which is shown e. g. in the cinema in Marburg. (www.klima-projekt.de.vu)

I am attending a Catholic grammar school in year 10. Our main subjects are Mathematics, English, French and German. The other subjects I have at school are music, art, chemical, history, religious education, politics and economics, physics and physical education. The website of our school is www.stiftsschule.de.

As one possibility among others our family would open its home for a student in return.

Please contact Fr Paul if you can help.

FUN DAY



Our parish has a tradition of generosity when it comes to fundraising whether it be for building church extensions or supporting needy courses. However, as a church community it is important that we also have a generosity of community and welcoming in our own parish. We are looking for ideas for a day to support this ideal, where we can get together as a community for no other reason than to have fun and get to know each other better. It would be fitting to hold the day close to the Feast of the Sacred Heart at the end of May or the beginning of June. It is important that we do not divert funds from the needy courses so the day must cover costs.

We now have the criteria set for the day. What we need now are some ideas to put into action and gauge the level of support we have for the day. Are we in the Presbytery front room or do we book Wembley? What we would like now is to know what **you** would like to do. You can email office@sacredheart-stives.org or michael.sanderson@daimler.com or talk to one of the Parish Steering Committee with your ideas. We will then collate the ideas and try to put together a fun day for all to participate.

.MASS INTENTIONS

*If you would like Mass offered for a particular intention,
please let the office know in good time.
Normally, 2 - 3 weeks is helpful.*

genuine love; we have no mechanism for creating such an emotion. It is meaningless to say, 'I like the look of that Susan - I think I will love her.' Such a thought changes nothing; nothing happens. In a state of high emotion we may decide this is the person for me, but this does nothing to explain where the emotion comes from or how the decision is made. Fortunately, for the Christian, there is a simple explanation for our inability to generate, explain or control love. All our faith tells us that God is Love; the two words are synonymous. If we had not debased the concept so much we could worship Love as just another word for God. No wonder we cannot create or explain Love - we cannot create or explain God.

If we start from this perception, much becomes clear. Whenever we meet another human being God provides us with some of His love to offer to them, a parcel of love appropriate to the nature of the encounter. For the bus conductor it may be a small parcel - a smile, a courteous word. For our mother it will be a huge package, full of so many concerns. When we deliver these parcels the love of God flows through us to its object, extending to the spirit, the mind and the body to a greater or lesser degree according to the relationship. Of course as people of free will we can refuse to deliver, so that the love lies neglected and unused, and equally the other person can reject our offering so that the love is set aside. But if there is offer and acceptance both parties will feel the gentle touch of the love of God and find delight in it. Offer and acceptance can at first be tentative and cautious. But as the relationship between a man and a woman develops the love which God provides can become ever more powerful and compelling until suddenly the miracle takes place and the love no longer flows through each to the other in a controlled way. There is no longer any choice. Each is suddenly plunged deeply into the power of love as though it were a new element; just as fishes are in water, so they are in love. And if in that immersion they cling together then they are with each other in love - they are in love with each other.

They are then on the threshold of a fourth dimension of love which is apart from the general concern for spirit, mind and body. In this fourth dimension each body begins to become the instrument which

God plans to use to bring the other to the full realisation of what it means to be an adult, a fully developed, awakened and completed physical human being. This is the most personal and intimate demonstration of the love of God, and being blessed by God to be the instrument of that love is the most rewarding of earthly experiences, fulfilling beyond measure, and continuing for the rest of natural life. To really love someone is simply to offer them the love of God in all its wonderful richness, an act which sets self aside and concentrates on being God's instrument. And the place in our hearts where that level of love is given and received is our personal Garden of Eden.

The great parable of the Garden of Eden is sadly neglected by the Church. Adam and Eve, had they chosen to obey God's rules, could have spent their lives in the Garden but they disobeyed and were ejected. This is where present teaching ends; it is as though when they left the Garden it was somehow destroyed. But the real lesson of that wonderful parable is that the Garden is available to anyone who is obedient, and moreover it offers a tangible earthly reward. Heaven is our future joy, when the body dies, but the Garden offers a glimpse of that Heavenly joy which we can experience during our human life. It offers each couple a sanctuary into which they can withdraw from the difficulties of the world and immerse themselves in the love of God which, passing abundantly from one to the other, enables them to face the world again, strengthened and renewed.

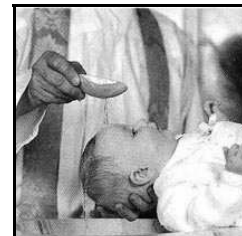
Perhaps the Church could promote the Garden of Eden, not merely as some distant and unreal concept which has long since been lost through sin, but as something tangible, something available now which can be gained through faith. The rules which faith imposes are simple to understand, although often challenging to follow. The bodies must be kept chaste, so that they can be fitting instruments through which God can deliver His love. The instruments must not be touched until God has blessed the union and provided the key to the Garden because God will not work with instruments He has not sanctified. And in the Garden everything which is said or done must be an expression of the love of God. The more closely these rules are followed, the more perfect will be the experience of the Garden. The joys of the Garden are not to be sought by the spirit in the after

A Wet Trinity?

As I drove to church on Trinity Sunday Aled Jones was on the radio - being a confirmed Terry Wogan "TOG" the car radio is regularly tuned to Radio 2! A lady vicar was being interviewed and I inwardly groaned when Aled asked her how she would explain the mystery of the Trinity. Surely St Patrick's shamrock was coming again - or something even less inspiring. Instead she referred to the glass of water in front of her - naturally in its liquid form, but a spell in the freezer would turn it to solid ice or, poured into the kettle, it would quickly become steam. So, she said, we have the same substance appearing in three very different forms, which is a good analogy for the Trinity. I had to agree - and a memorable one too, or I would not be able to repeat her accidentally heard words from memory several months later. I hope you enjoy it, and remember it, too.

*David Kerr - a regular 8 o'clock mass attender
(Aled Jones is on Radio 2 from 7 'til 9 am on Sundays)*

BAPTISM



If you wish your child to be baptised, the parish runs a baptism preparation course and details can be obtained from the parish office. You may join the course before your baby is born and the next course begins in August.

The day out finished about 5.00 pm back at church where photos of some of the guests were taken. Everyone agreed it was a most enjoyable day out. Our next day out will be later in the year when we visit the Collectors World museum in Downham Market.

John Sayer



life but are there to be physically experienced by human beings during their life on earth. The Garden will provide personal fulfilment, offer a sanctuary of joy and strength, and lay a firm foundation for the blessing of children.

This Garden of Eden, freely available to all who seek it, is the wonderful gift of Christian marriage. It is a gift which everyone can be taught to comprehend and encouraged to seek. It is said that the Church has failed to market marriage well; the promise of the Garden gives the Church a marketing tool of compelling power, and the Church should preach that promise at every opportunity. Perhaps the statistics which Ms Roberts presents might then begin to change.

John Bishop

CHRISTIAN LIFE OF PRAYER

Last Tuesday I stayed awhile after Mass to join the RCIA group at their studies. After a little bit of high jinx (“Does that say – break for G+T or cup of tea?”) I was pleased to find that it was indeed a high-minded and serious group led for this session by Elizabeth Barker, our parish catechist. Although there was laughter, we all appreciated the beautiful slides complemented by incisive commentary and lively discussion on the nature of prayer. I was asked to write something on prayer for *The Grapevine* so here it is:

When my husband and I arrived in the parish twenty years ago, it was an unhappy move. We didn’t want to leave much-loved Woodbridge in Suffolk but jobs close down and open elsewhere. Worse still, although we had been married only a year I had undergone extensive bowel surgery in Ipswich. I was told brutally by experts “Don’t have children – you won’t live to see them grow up”. So, with a dark cloud already hanging over married life, one of us bloated on steroids and toxic drugs, we started coming along to Sacred Heart. And we prayed. In our little church, in a modest market town on the edge of Fens, we prayed. At Walsingham we prayed. In cathedrals, churches, chapels all

round the world we lit candles, wrote petitions and we prayed. But mostly I did my praying in front of Our Lady in the Sacred Heart Church, St Ives.

In 1990 I converted to Catholicism after being a lifelong member of the C of E – some of you were probably at the service. Bishop Alan accepted me into the Church and I remember being tickled pink when he gave me a big bear hug afterwards and said “We don’t want to let you escape you know!”...I was filled with an infusion of grace and the sense of excited anticipation that perhaps only a newly converted Catholic adult can feel.

The following spring I gave birth to my first child, Fergus; now a handsome young man of seventeen. Several years, and “wheels on the bussing” later, my daughter Clare followed; now a beautiful young woman of thirteen. “Precious cargoes” indeed (see John Bishop’s excellent article in March’s Grapevine) And though our modest “boat” has sprung more than a leak from time to time (numerous operations and treatments followed the first) I can safely say my prayers were answered beyond all hope, My husband and I are both immensely proud of our two children.

Now, on message, this is what I am supposed to say: at the back of the church is a book in which to write petitions for yourselves and other people. The book is offered up to God during the offertory at Mass and individual requests prayed for. The amazing thing is God listens to the prayers of us ordinary folk, worshipping in our little church on the edge of the Fens, with just the same care and love as if we were a roomful of Cardinals praying in the splendour of the Vatican. We might not always get the answer we seek...but there again we just might; and that’s got to be worth the effort.

Quietly, in front of Our Lady, I still pray. Why not come and join me?

Jackie Tevlin

ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY

AUTUMN CLUB OUTING



On the 28th May 2008 the Autumn Club took sixteen members for a day out to Hunstanton. We hired a mini-bus from a charity in March for the day. This meant that one of the members of the SVP, John Sayer, had to take a day-long Midas Driving test, paid for by the SVP, to obtain a certificate to drive the bus.

We left the church at 11.00 am and arrived in Hunstanton in time for lunch which was paid for by the SVP. The restaurant and the staff were excellent as was the food, most people having fish & chips. After lunch the party split up into groups. Some went shopping, others walked along the promenade, eating ice cream and taking photos.

The party began to assemble sitting on a wall near the sea front. John had to walk to collect the bus from the coach park and everyone was picked up, seated and belted up by 3.30 pm. The journey home was quite eventful. When we stopped for diesel the fuel cap came away and fuel could not be poured in, so it was decided to push on and hope that the fuel gauge was inaccurate. Ely came and went and the red light on the gauge shone like a dreaded beacon. Just before Sutton on the Hill we stopped at a garage in desperation, but a Mick George lorry driver answered our prayers. He was a very large man with arms like tree trunks. He took the complete filler unit in one hand and turned the whole thing and pulled it off, enabling the bus to be filled up.

will not be available from the autumn. As there have been problems identifying a parishioner to play the organ (or keyboard) consideration may need to be given to paying for the services of an organist. The possible use of CDs was raised but not favoured by Fr Paul. It was agreed to publicise the need for an organist and to consider funding if necessary.

Protecting the Child and Vulnerable Adults (PCVA): Jane Landucci (Parish PCVA Officer) highlighted difficulties in getting potential volunteers in the parish to complete the necessary documentation for statutory CRB (police) checks. She requested all groups working with children and vulnerable adults (e.g Youth Group, SVP etc) to inform the volunteer at the outset of the requirements of the Catholic Church with respect to the CRB checking process. It is a mandatory requirement by the Church that CRB checks are performed for anyone working with children or vulnerable adults in the parish.

A full report of the meeting can be found in the porch of the church and the next open meeting will be held in the autumn.

Ellen Kemp

SACRED HEART PARISH		
Summary Accounts 2007 - Church		
Receipts	2007	2006
Collections	£67,566	£78,251
Miscellaneous Income	£13,155	£16,855
Total Receipts	£80,721	£95,106
Payments		
Property Costs	£29,615	£49,307
Diocesan Levies	£24,510	£22,525
Priest and Office Costs	£30,640	£33,717
Miscellaneous	£1,573	£2,214
Total Payments	£86,338	£107,763
Church Surplus	(£5,617)	(£12,657)

BURNING INCENSE

Continuing our series of Catholic practices, we look at the reasons and background for burning incense during some of our services.

What is Incense?

Incense is made from various aromatic resins and gums taken from trees and other plants. When burned it gives off scented smoke. In church it is normally burned in a censer or thurible. Because it is difficult to burn on its own, and to create the maximum amount of smoke, it is burned along with charcoal.

Why burn incense in our liturgies?

Liturgy is the formal public worship of the Church. The Liturgy of the Church is made up of the liturgy of each individual Christian and should be the best that we can possibly offer to God.

Christian worship erupts out of our love of God and our desire to express that love. As such we should worship Him “with all our heart, with all our souls and with all our mind, and with all our strength”. Good liturgy is designed to stimulate just a response in us, by exciting the senses and feeding our imagination.

One of the elements of good liturgy is, for example, the use of colour and movement provided by the colourful vestments, processions etc. The colours of the vestments are not randomly selected by Fr Paul but based on the liturgical seasons, for example purple during Lent and white at Easter.

Singing and chanting is another important element of liturgy, stimulating as it does the sense of hearing. The use of incense enables even fuller participation by stimulating the sense of smell. It also provides colour, movement and sound as the thurible is swung and its chain “chinks” and “tinkles”.

Incense is burnt usually at the main Sunday masses, at Benediction and

at funerals. Sometimes it is used when places or objects are being blessed.

In the Book of Revelation the burning of incense appears to be an important part of the worship of heaven; “golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” Ch5 v8.

When we burn incense we remind ourselves that our prayers, like the incense, ascend to the throne of God and mingle with the Saints in heaven.



Let my prayer
come before
you Lord, as
incense.

The Offering of Incense

At the heart of worship in the Temple at Jerusalem was a sacrifice. The sacrificial offering was usually a living thing like a lamb or a bird, but the fruits of the earth were also offered, including incense. In the Temple there was even an altar specially set aside for the burning of incense.

With the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in AD70 the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament came to an end. The necessity for it had already been brought to an end by the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Our human need to offer thanksgiving and sacrifice to God remains, however. In our daily lives Christians have the opportunity to give the best of themselves back to God in service of each other. In our worship we have the opportunity to offer tokens which represent ourselves (bread, wine and our financial donation) especially during the Offertory at Mass. Incense is a token of the best that we have to offer. In 2 Cor. 2v15 we read “We are indeed the incense offered by Christ to God both for those who are on the way to salvation and for those who are on the way to perdition: to the latter it is a deadly fume that kills, to the former a vital fragrance that brings life”.

provides a concise record of many initiatives being undertaken in the parish that meet or exceed the mandatory requirements of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and provides a useful reference for clergy and lay people on the active life of our parish. It was agreed that a copy should be made available for parishioners and is now at the back of the Church, and that a copy should be sent to Bishop Michael.

Tony Sloan (Parish Accountant) presented a summary on parish finances and highlighted key points for the attention of the meeting and addressed many questions raised. A copy of the summary and notes on the accounts were issued with the weekly newsletter on 25th May and a copy can be found on page 18 of this July edition of “The Grapevine”. Patrick Landucci (Chairman of the Parish Finance and Building Committee) informed the meeting of plans to install an automatic door from the south porch into the Church. He noted that approval for the scheme has been given by the Historic Churches Committee. He showed drawings of the planned scheme and highlighted key issues to be addressed (e.g. removing existing double doors, altering the stone work to permit the new door to open into the south porch rather than the church, provision of a touch panel to allow disabled parishioners to open the door as they enter the south porch etc). Work on removing the double doors and revising the stonework to accept the automatic door is expected to start in June.

Ellen Kemp confirmed that she was stepping down from the committee having served two terms. As there were no nominations for the vacancy, a representative for 5 pm Mass will be sought. Dot Wade and Bridget Wells confirmed that they were happy to serve a second term as representatives for 5 pm and 8 am Masses respectively and were elected unanimously. Mrs Philomena Byrne offered to join the committee to represent 11 am Mass. She was nominated by Elizabeth Barker and elected unanimously. John Bishop, former representative for 11 am Mass, was thanked for his work on behalf of the parish.

On the matter of music at Mass, Fr Paul reported that the organist will be starting university in September. He has provided a very valuable role at 11 am Masses. However, he is not a parishioner and

became customary for me to attend Mass with her and for her to come with me, usually to evensong at the Anglican church. I found, however, the Mass a profoundly more meaningful and spiritual experience which grew stronger as time passed. I eventually made up my mind that I wished to become a Catholic and approached the parish priest in St Ives. He prepared me for confirmation.

One thing I quickly realised was that wherever one is throughout the world, the Mass follows the same general format irrespective of the language in which it is spoken.

So, are there Catholic people in relationships where their spouse/partner/friend is not a Catholic? Of course, every one of us is entitled to his/her faith and it is naturally a very personal thing. But, with a little encouragement would not some people in these relationships find the Catholic faith?

I have a feeling that some people who attend Mass at the Sacred Heart are not Catholic. Would a little dialogue with those they trust and can converse with about what must be a very personal matter provide them with the impetus they need to consider converting to Catholicism?

They may find at present that like those who have moved house or country that they feel on unfamiliar ground.

John Edwards

PARISH OPEN MEETING

The first parish open meeting of 2008 was held on Sunday, 18th May in the church hall. Present were committee members of the Parish Steering Group (PSG) - apologies were noted from John Bishop - and a small number of parishioners. The meeting opened with a prayer and then Ellen Kemp gave a brief introduction to the Parish Plan, the main agenda item of the meeting. In summary, the Parish Plan

In the Eucharistic Sacrifice we join our offering with that of Christ Himself on the cross, as at the hands of the priest He offers Himself to the Father on our behalf. The burning of incense reminds us that Christ's sacrifice is real, and just as effective for us who are alive today as when He died on the cross.

Elizabeth Barker

SACRED HEART YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth Group Retreat 2008

Our annual retreat for our young people and their friends was very successful and this year we looked at the theme **BELIEVE**, which was mainly looking at the Creed.

The Diocesan Youth Mission Team led by Hamish ran the retreat. Hamish introduced the theme of the retreat by showing a clip *from Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and discussing the line "It's time to ask yourself what you believe".

The young people thought and discussed the Creed, through various forms e.g. art, dance, song writing, praise and worship sessions. The young people were a joy and an inspiration and the Parish should be very proud of their young people.

Jo, Dot, Philip and Chris

YOUTH GROUP RETREAT

Each year, the Youth Group holds an annual retreat at Buckden Towers. Since I had been several times previously, I was thoroughly looking forward to this year's retreat.

We arrived at around 6:00 pm, and after greeting our friends and meeting anyone who was new to the retreat, we immediately went to claim our beds.

Next we had time to relax and chat while waiting for everybody to arrive. Once we were all here, the first session began. This started with Hamish introducing us to the topic for the weekend; belief.

We started with a fun game in which we had to decide what we believed. This involved us starting in the middle of the room with a balloon placed between our knees. We were then asked a question and had to waddle to one end of the room or the other, depending on what we believed. There were some serious questions such as 'Do you believe in God?', but there were also some serious questions, such as 'Do you believe in aliens?' or 'Is Elvis really dead?' This game taught us that it is often hard to admit our beliefs, but that it needs to be done.

Next we joined for singing, which was punctuated with outcries of "Oh, I remember this one!" and with those who were new to the retreat looking at us as though we were crazy people when we all joined in with the actions on the chorus!

It was now time for dinner, traditional fish and chips for most but there was also the option of chicken, sausage or vegetarian sausage and chips. We began with a prayer of thanks sung to the tune of the Addams Family, which put us all in a good mood.

The day ended with night prayer, held in a lovely small chapel attached to the church. The room was dimly lit and a few prayers were spoken. We were asked to leave quietly as we also had the option of remaining in the chapel for private prayer, which is something that happens at every

When Zygmunt left the army we moved to Wembley where he became the manager of a photographic business and stayed there for 39 years adding two more daughters to our family. We were very active in the parish of St Joseph's in Wembley, and Zygmunt, who led the parish Scout group, became the first Polish Queen's Scout and received the scouting Medal of Merit.

We moved to Needingworth when Zygmunt retired to be near our daughters, one of whom lives in Cambridge, and also because of the large Polish community in Cambridge.

In 2006 when we celebrated our Diamond Wedding. Fr Paul arranged for us to have a Papal Blessing on this special occasion.

Now because of disability I am no longer able to go to Mass and receive Holy Communion from one of the Parish Eucharistic Ministers who persuaded me to write this article when I was showing her MY ROSARY one day.

Krystyna Kunc



During his sermon on Pentecost Sunday, Fr Paul explained that there are Catholics who lapse simply because they have moved house to another part of the country or have moved here from another country and have therefore lost their familiar parish surroundings. He added that we parishioners would be putting 'fliers' through the doors of newly built housing complexes encouraging newcomers in the area to attend their parish church. True evangelisation!

There is, however, I would suggest, another area of evangelisation which perhaps merits consideration. Take myself, as a case in point. I was brought up an Anglican, was a chorister and a practising church-goer. I became a widower and met a widow who was a Catholic. It

MY ROSARY

In 1937 I went to Ostra Brama on pilgrimage to a shrine of Our Lady. Ostra Brama is near Vilnius, now in Lithuania but then still part of Poland. During that pilgrimage I bought a small pink rosary in a case shaped like a Bible. My rosary has been with me throughout many happy, sad and dangerous periods of my life.

Shortly after my pilgrimage, I went to university but in 1939 this was closed by the German Army and most Polish students continued their education in private homes.

I joined the Resistance Movement as a messenger for the Resistance and after the Warsaw Uprising I was imprisoned in the Oberlangen Women's Camp on the German Border. This camp was run on the same lines as concentration camps and was for all women who were part of the Resistance Movement. My rosary was with me through all these dreadful times.

In 1945 the camp was liberated and I was sent to Italy where I was employed by the British Army again as a messenger during the Uprising.

In 1946 I married an officer in the 2nd Polish Corps, Zygmunt Kunc, in the barracks chapel in Loretto and carried my rosary with me on my wedding day.

I had always hoped to be married in Warsaw Cathedral or at least in one of the village churches in Poland but not in a foreign country!

In August 1946 we arrived in England but Zygmunt was stationed in Anglesey so we spent the first 3 years of our married life in Wales. We then moved to the East End of London in 1948 with our eldest daughter who was a year old.



prayer time during retreat.

Having returned from night prayer, we all gathered on sofas in the hall and passed the time chatting before eventually proceeding to bed.

We woke up reasonably early on Saturday morning and once we had woken up enough, we went down to breakfast and, for some, a well needed tea or coffee.

Next was morning prayer, again held in the small chapel, which looked beautiful because the morning light was streaming through the stained-glass window which fills the side of one wall.

After morning prayer we had to prepare our lunches before beginning another session, this time focusing on the Creed. We were split into groups and each group had to analyse and discuss a part of the Creed and then explain it to the rest of the group. This was an interesting exercise as it helped us to see a new side to the Creed, which before was just a ritual affirmation of our beliefs.

We now had a short break before setting off on our walk, on which we took a shortcut since we could not remember the route!



On returning from the walk, we had the pleasure of watching a professional mime artist at work. He performed sketches along to music. Afterwards he talked to us about the sketches and their meaning, which we could easily relate to.

Now we had our pre-prepared sandwiches for lunch and then went to the hall for the next session. Here we had to choose whether we wanted to do an activity involving art, drama, dance or music. I personally chose to do the art session, in which we designed and painted a mural about the Creed, but accidentally got paint on the tables as it seeped through the fabric!

We then had night prayer, to get to which we had to walk through the chilly garden, before a party in the hall which had been arranged by the adults. They had planned a few games for us; we had to perform a blind taste test, in which pickled onion and Marmite were two of the less favoured choices. There was also a game of passing a balloon along a line without touching it with our hands, which the fastest team won, and we also performed some karaoke and danced to 'YMCA'. After the party some of us proceeded to bed and others stayed up to chat, a choice which was questioned the next morning when we were all quite tired.

After breakfast and morning prayer, we continued with our creative workshops, perfecting our pieces. We then had some time for packing before gathering for singing.

Next we had a Sunday Mass, followed by the presentation of our pieces made in the creative workshop. It was enjoyable to see what the others had created, but we were surprised to find that our parents, who had

arrived to collect us, were watching!

It was now time to say our goodbyes and drag our suitcases down the spiral staircase before eventually tearing ourselves away from the group to return home for a well earned rest.

Each year I enjoy the retreat and would readily recommend it to anyone who is considering coming.

Victoria Redwood

Hi Guys, John here,

I've been coming to Youth Group for 6 years now and frankly if you haven't even been once you are missing out. It's great fun and you can do all sorts of brilliant stuff like archery and kayaking at Mepal, or just turn up on a Wednesday night and join in with the messing around down the park with the guys. Sorry, younger readers, this is an 11 upwards offer only, but I promise we will still be around when you are old enough to join us.

Hopefully see you soon.

John

(If you want to ask any questions about Youth Group, I'm a regular 11.00 Mass altar server - feel free to question me at the end of Mass)

Youth Group is held in the Church Hall on Wednesday evenings 7.30 pm until 9.00 pm