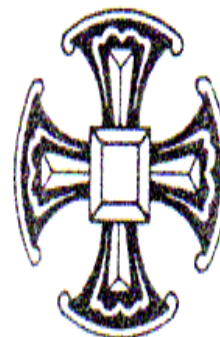


The Catholic Parish of Springfield

The Augustinian

St Augustine of Canterbury - **Springfield**
New Hall Chapel - **Boreham**
Church of Our Saviour - **Chelmer Village**
<http://www.staugustine-springfield.com/>

March 2011 – Lent Issue



Father Frank Writes

My dear friends,

It gives me great pleasure to present the Lent 2011 edition of *The Augustinian*. Many thanks to all our contributors and especially to our hard-working and enthusiastic editor, Nigel Gardener.

Our Parish Magazine is always a good read – and, as I used to say, for only 50p! But now, thanks to the generosity of our sponsor Philip Manson, we can offer it to parishioners free of charge (see Philip's advert on **p.20**).

This month's edition begins with some seasonal pieces on Lent and The Sacred Triduum. Following on from this we have a short piece about our wonderful servers. We have teams to be proud of both at St Augustine's and at New Hall. I cannot sing their praises too highly. You can find out more about the Catenians by reading Paul's article and about the Knights of St Columba by reading Chris's article. To tickle our sense of humour (and, if you're old enough, to revive memories) we have more extracts from Our Lady Immaculate's school log book – this time covering the period of the Second World War. Steve Jarvis, a Prison Officer at Chelmsford Prison ("the establishment") writes a particularly moving piece on the events that led to his Reception into the Church in 2009. Thank you for this wonderful piece, Steve – I found it truly inspiring, and I'm sure you will. It will, of course, be of particular interest to those working through the present RCIA course. Do pray for all those who will be received into the Church this coming Easter. I thought I knew the churches of Rome, but Nigel has inspired me to go on the search for the Basilica di Santa Prassede – it sounds breathtaking.

Whilst we get the odd contribution from parishioners they are few and far between. Don't wait to be invited – do send in your articles, jokes, recipes etc. You can send them to me or to Nigel – by *Word* attachment to email is best...but any format will be welcomed.

Remember, as I always say, it is your magazine!

Happy reading!

With my blessing.

A Prayer for Lent

Almighty and Everlasting God,
You have given the human race
Jesus Christ our Savior as a model of
humility.
He fulfilled Your Will by becoming Man
And giving His life on the Cross.
Help us to bear witness to You
By following His example of suffering
And make us worthy to share in His
Resurrection.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, Your Son.
Amen.

True Lenten Discipline

Fast from judging others;
Feast on Christ dwelling in them.
Fast from emphasis on differences;
Feast on the unity of all life.
Fast from apparent darkness;
Feast on the reality of all light.
Feast on eternal truth.
Fast from discouragement;
Feast on hope.
Fast from facts that depress;
Feast on verities that uplift.
Fast from lethargy;
Feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion;
Feast on truth.
Fast from thoughts that weaken;
Feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from shadows of sorrow;
Feast on the sunlight of serenity.
Fast from idle gossip;
Feast on purposeful silence.
Fast from problems that overwhelm;
Feast on prayer that sustains.

Fast from thoughts of illness;
Feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute;
Feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from discontent;
Feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger;
Feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism;
Feast on optimism.
Fast from worry;
Feast on God's providence.
Fast from complaining;
Feast on appreciation.
Fast from negatives;
Feast on affirmatives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures;
Feast on unceasing prayer.
Fast from hostility;
Feast on non-resistance.
Fast from bitterness;
Feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern;
Feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety;

“The Lord calls each of us by name
and entrusts us to a specific mission
in the Church and in
society...Consider seriously the
divine call to raise a Christian
family and let your youth be the
time in which to build your future
with a sense of responsibility.
Society needs Christian families,
saintly families.
Pope Benedict XVI

“Jesus Christ has taken the lead on the way of the cross. He has suffered first. He does not drive us toward suffering but shares it with us, wanting us to have life and to have it in abundance....with man – with each man, without any exception whatever – Christ is in a way united, even when man is unaware of it.”
Pope John Paul II – Redemption Hominis

Lent in the Catholic Church

http://www.aboutcatholics.com/worship/lent_catholic_church/

Lent, from the Middle English word *Lenten*, meaning springtime - the time of lengthening days, is a period of forty days of fasting, prayer, and penitence before Easter. There is biblical support for doing penance, but the season of Lent, like all Catholic liturgical seasons, developed over time.

The observance of Lent is related to the celebration of Easter. In the first three centuries of the Christian era, most Christians prepared for Easter by fasting and praying for three days. In some places this was extended to the entire week before Easter (now known as "Holy Week"). There is evidence that in Rome, the preparation period was three weeks.

In its early three-week form, Lent was the period of intense spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens before they were baptized at Easter. Many members of the community imitated this period of preparation with the catechumens.

By the fourth century (when Christianity was legalized) Lent had developed into its current length of forty days, the length of the fast and temptation of Jesus in the desert (cf. Luke 4:1-13). Recently, research has suggested that the development of Lent was also influenced by the forty-day period of fasting practiced by many in the early Church (especially monks). This fast, beginning right after Epiphany (January 6th) stressed prayer and penance. Once most people were Christian and baptized as infants, Lent lost the connection to the preparation of catechumens and the themes of repentance and fasting became dominant.



When does Lent begin?

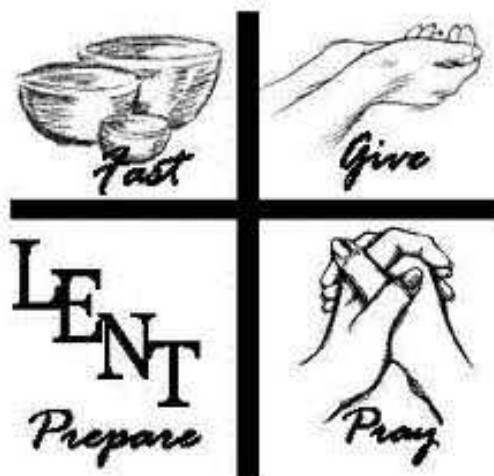
Traditionally, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. Since this is more than forty days, some contend that Sundays are not counted and Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are. Others say that Lent begins on the First Sunday of Lent and Ash Wednesday and the rest of that week are a pre-Lent. No one is exactly sure how Ash Wednesday became the first day of Lent.

Many Catholics were taught as children to "give up something" for Lent. The sacrifices in Lent are really penance, in the same spirit as the Ninevites that repented at the preaching of Jonah. Throughout our history, Christians have found prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to be an important part of repentance and renewal. Many Christians now add something during Lent rather than giving up something, either to address personal habits that need work or to add some outreach to others in need. It is not necessary to "give up something" but it would be a tragedy to do nothing.

Ash Wednesday

It is impossible to determine when the seventh Wednesday before Easter was designated as the beginning of the preparation period before Easter. It does date from at least the fourth century. During that century, penitents looking for forgiveness and re-entry into the community would dress in sackcloth and sprinkle ashes to show their repentance. This custom certainly predates Christianity as can be seen by references in the Hebrew

Scriptures (cf. Esther 4:2-3; Daniel 19:3; Jonah 3:6) and Christian Bible (cf. Matthew 11:21).



There is no doubt that the custom of distributing ashes to everyone on Ash Wednesday came from imitation of the practice of wearing ashes by public penitents. As Lent more and more focused on the themes of repentance and renewal, Christians sensed their own need for repentance. The practice of distribution of ashes to all members of the community is mentioned in official documents of 1091 (Cf. Synod of Benventum, 1091 Manse, XX, 739) although

nearly a hundred years earlier it is already assumed in a homily of the period.

Lenten Regulations – What the BBC says!

The Catholic Church, in an attempt to help Catholics do at least a minimum during Lent, asks all Catholics to fast and abstain from meat on certain days. Fasting means to limit food to one full meal a day with the possibility of two smaller meals (not adding up to a full meal) as needed. Abstinence means not eating meat, although fish is allowed.

Catholics 14 years of age or older are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent. Catholics between the ages of 14 and 59 are also to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. If one's work or health make it inadvisable fast or abstain from meat, they are not obligated to do so.

At one time, people gave up all dairy products and meat during all of Lent. Since chickens continue to produce eggs and cow's milk, the custom developed to make the milk into cheese and colour the eggs so that when Easter arrived, no food would be wasted.

The Sacred Triduum

The highpoint of the Liturgical Year is the celebration of the Sacred Triduum.

The Triduum comprises three interlinked rites creating one great ongoing liturgy lasting from Thursday evening until Saturday night.

In our parish we have three churches, but only one Triduum which is for the whole parish. A feature of our celebration is the participation of musicians, readers, servers and others from every part of the parish.

The opening rite is the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper (this year celebrated on 21st April). No other Mass may be celebrated on this day, and the whole parish is called to gather around the Altar to celebrate Mass on this very special evening – the evening on which we re-live the last supper. It is a tradition that the feet of twelve men are washed by the principal celebrant on this evening. In our parish, this has been changed slightly to reflect the ecumenical nature of the celebration, and each person present has their hands washed and washes the hands of another. This is very powerful as it is with our hands that we serve one another.

After the Mass itself is ended – although it does not actually end, there is no blessing, and no signing of ourselves with the sign of the cross until the Sacred Triduum is over late on Saturday night – the Blessed Sacrament is solemnly carried to the Altar of Repose (our garden of Gethsemane) at the west end of the church and a watch is maintained until midnight.

The Triduum continues on Good Friday with The Passion of the Lord. At this service (it is not, strictly speaking a Mass, although some refer to it as the Mass of the Pre-sanctified as the Blessed Sacrament which has been 'resting' on the Altar of Repose is consumed by the faithful) the true focus is the cross, and after The Passion of the Lord has been proclaimed the cross is venerated. As the Blessed Sacrament is not present in the church until after the Easter Vigil, we genuflect to the cross which remains on the Altar until Saturday. Just prior to the Veneration of the Cross, the crucifix is processed into the church. The priest stops at three stations and proclaims: This is the wood of the cross, on which our Redeemer hung. The people genuflect towards the cross and respond: Come let us adore the Saviour of the World. At the end of the Good Friday Passion there is, again, no blessing or dismissal. The Triduum is not yet over.

The Triduum continues on Saturday evening with The Easter Vigil. This is a Mass with a difference. Before entering church a fire is lit and the Easter (or Pascal) Candle is lit from it. The candle is processed in and the deacon pauses on the same three spots as the cross paused the day before. He sings: The Light of Christ. And we all face the Easter Candle, genuflect, and respond: Thanks be to God. The candle symbolises the risen Christ cancelling out the shame of the cross. This light shows in dramatic form our belief that the crucifixion was not the end – it proclaims our belief in a Risen Christ who is a living presence in our midst. The candle is incensed and the Exultet is sung. After a number of readings: retelling of our salvation history, the Gloria is sung for the first time since before Lent and RCIA candidates are Baptised, Received and Confirmed. The Mass continues and (Alleluia) the Blessed Sacrament is restored to its place in the Tabernacle and we can once again make the sign of the cross as we receive God's blessing from his priest. The Triduum is over for another year.

A three day celebration for the whole parish. Why not come along to the Triduum this year? I guarantee you will learn from the experience, and be changed forever.

With my blessings
Fr Frank

"We must go to this Child, this Man, the Son of God, at whatever inconvenience, at whatever risk to ourselves, because to know and love Him will truly change our lives." Pope John Paul II Homily at Central Park, 1995

An Irish Story for Lent

March 1, 2007 by [Father Joe](#)

An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers.

The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone.

An hour later, the man has finished the three beers and orders three more.

This happens yet again.

The next evening the man again orders and drinks three beers at a time, several times. Soon the entire town is whispering about the Man Who Orders Three Beers.

Finally, a week later, the bartender broaches the subject on behalf of the town. “I don’t mean to pry, but folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers.”

‘Tis odd, isn’t it?” the man replies, “You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond.”

The bartender and soon the whole town was pleased with this answer, and soon the Man Who Orders Three Beers became a local celebrity and source of pride to the hamlet, even to the extent that out-of-towners would come to watch him drink.

Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. The bartender pours them with a heavy heart. This continues for the rest of the evening – he orders only two beers. The word flies around town. Prayers are offered for the soul of one of the brothers.

The next day, the bartender says to the man, “Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know-the two beers and all...”

The man ponders this for a moment, then replies, “You’ll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well... It’s just that I, myself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent.”

Serving the Parish

Sunday 29th August saw an impressive array of servers at 9.00 Mass. There were 16 servers for Fr. Charles’ last Mass of this year’s time with us and the sanctuary was impressively full. Fr. Charles particularly highlighted the contribution of David, Ben, Luke and Laura Hitchen, all four of whom were serving. David was serving almost for the last time before going off to Warwick University and Laura had only just qualified, having received her First Holy Communion in May, and had particularly wanted to start serving as soon as possible.

“I wanted to have the chance to serve with David before he went to University” said Laura.

Fr. Frank also praised their contribution: “the Hitchens are a credit to their Parish; they are always ready to play any part they can,” he said.

Springfield young people play a full part in the broader Catholic Community. David was last year’s Head Prefect at St. John Payne and Gareth Barwick, another of our servers was Deputy Head Boy. Both were Eucharistic Ministers at St. John Payne. On a lighter note, Ben and Laura are played important roles in this year’s pantomime, following Ben’s leading role in last year’s.



New Hall also has a full complement of servers, several of whom also play their full part in the life of St. John Payne or New Hall. As well as serving the School community Parish Masses continue all year and the servers are Parish servers. Those who attend the 10.45 Mass on Sunday will confirm that the serving is to the standard which Springfield Parish is accustomed to. The reputation of our servers is attested to by the fact that the Bishop has specifically asked for us to provide servers for Diocesan events in the past.

Service to the Diocese continues when our teenagers move on. For example, this year’s Youth Day at Aylesford was coordinated by Walsingham House, together with Vincent House from Southwark Diocese. Leading parts in the worship and workshops were played by Michael Barwick and Maria Webb and Laura Hitchen was highlighted nationwide when her picture appeared in the Sunday Times welcoming the Pope in Hyde Park.

The Catenian Association by Paul Newman

The Association was founded in Manchester in 1908 to provide the means for Catholic laymen in responsible positions in the professions, commerce or public service to meet socially and to use the corporate strength, thus engendered, to further their own legitimate interests and to make a proper contribution to the life of the religious and secular community.

However, the Association does not concern itself with political issues as such, nor does it involve corporately in Catholic action, though its members are encouraged, as individuals, to be active citizens and committed Catholics.

Local units of the Association are called “Circles” and these are now established in the major towns and cities of Great Britain where they are grouped into Provinces. There are also Circles in Ireland, Central and Southern Africa, Australia and Goa. The Governing Body of the Association is the Grand Council and a Head Office, with permanent staff, is maintained in Coventry.

The Association’s basic activity is the monthly meeting at which local members are “at home” to visitors from other Circles. Yearly each Circle organises a social and religious programme, much of which is open to family and friends of the members. Catenians, in addition to meeting regularly over dinner, organise varied social events which involve



wives and families, provide support to members and families when in difficulty or need, give to charitable funds and local good causes and hold a number of masses. A fair proportion of the monthly dinners are attended by the Ladies. Social events over the past year have included an evening at Essex County Cricket Club, a river barge trip and a hogroast

Catenians constitute a close brotherhood, the members of which are pledged to help one another whenever reasonably possible and, in particular, at times of difficulty and need. Usually such help will take the form of advice and influence used in a fair and proper manner. Very rarely financial support may be requested and against this contingency all members undertake to contribute realistically to the Association’s official charities.

The local Circle of the Catenians is the Chelmsford Mid-Essex Circle and the monthly meeting, followed by a meal, is normally held on the 1st Monday of each month at 7.30 pm at Pontlands Park Hotel, West Hanningfield Road, Great Baddow. If you would like more information about the Catenian Association please feel free to contact any of the following|:

Roger Sclater
Paul Newman

01245 469458
01245 355451

Eric Hollingworth

01245 463745



The Catenians

*Strengthening family life
through friendship and faith*

The Catenian Association Bursary Fund & Charitable Work

Catenians support their Benevolent and Children’s Fund and the Bursary Fund. The Bursary Fund exists to assist all Catholic young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are prepared to work unpaid overseas to help under-privileged people. The Fund can usually provide a contribution towards the costs of fares, subsistence and special clothing. The Fund also assists with the expenses of young helpers who accompany pilgrimages to Lourdes.

Catenians primarily support local charities which are chosen annually by the Circle President. One example of a charity supported by Chelmsford Mid-Essex Circle is the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. Occasionally the Association has supported wider appeals such as those for "jumbulances" which are a familiar site ferrying to Lourdes those too ill to fly. A memorial for the Catenian centenary year of 2008 was to raise £250,000 to provide clean water to those in desperate need in Africa, especially Zimbabwe, the money being entrusted to CAFOD.

Our Lady Immaculate School

The following items are Log Book entries from Our Lady Immaculate School. They provide a fascinating social insight into the history of Chelmsford and into the activities of the teachers and pupils who worked and attended the school. The Log Book covers random entries from 1890 through to 1959. These entries are taken from 1940 through to the end of the Second World War.

January 16th 1940 – Several children were absent owing to illness, severe weather and dangerous travelling conditions. Some children from country districts were unable to get buses as the services were withdrawn owing to slippery roads.



More months of raids and upheavals!

October 19th 1940 – Three alerts were sounded this morning and the children were in shelter most of the morning.

October 26th 1940 – Hot dinners for children were provided from today: 126 children being supplied.

The records we have been given now jump through to 1943

April 15th 1943 – School children were unable to assemble today owing to unexploded bombs being found in the vicinity. The 2 infant classrooms had been used during the night as a rest centre but these rooms had to be closed owing to being within the danger area. Fifty one people were received during the night but billets were found for all of them by 4.pm today.

April 16th 1943 – School re-opened this morning. Attendance was very low owing to raid damage to homes.

May 14th 1943 – As part of the school was being used as a rest centre to accommodate people rendered homeless by the blitz in the early hours of this morning it was not possible for the children to have lessons.

May 21st 1943 – Alerts have been sounded every night and, on enquiry, I found that about three quarters of the children in each class had spent most of the night in shelters. This resulted in them being tired and listless.

June 14th 1943 – Bertram the Clown entertained the children – the primary children and the children from Friars this afternoon. Over 500 children were present. Our target for “Wings for Victory” week was set at £150. We realised £500.

October 23rd 1943 – Attendance very low among infants owing to colds, whooping cough and mumps.

The records we have been given now jump through to 1945

January 8th 1945 – The school re-opened this morning. The attendance was low owing to severe weather and much sickness.

January 30th 1945 - Attendance very low today. 98 present out of 215 owing to severe weather and heavy snow storms making travelling almost impossible.

March 5th 1945 – The air raid warning sounded at 10.55 this morning and children were at once taken to shelter. The “All Clear” signal was given at 11.20. Just as the children had started dinner at 12.15 an air raid warning was sounded and the children left their dinners and went to shelter. The raid lasted about 25 minutes.

May 8th 1945 – On the proclamation of the cessation of hostilities in Europe all schools in the area were granted 3 days holiday.

November 8th 1945 – While the children were at dinner today a man entered the staff room and took money, coupons, savings books and a platinum ring. The Police were communicated with immediately but the thief has not been traced.

The Knights of St Columba

Some General Background!

At a meeting held in Glasgow on 5th October 1919; attended by twenty-four Catholic gentlemen; Patrick J. O'Callaghan asked those present to agree to the formation of a new organisation, which would ultimately be called the Knights of St. Columba. This proposal was agreed and a further meeting was convened. The new Order was to be modelled, as far as was practicable, on the example of the Knights of Columbus in the USA.



On their official website the KSC are described as “an Order of Catholic Laymen dedicated to the Service of the Church and fellow man. The Organisation, which is non-political and essentially democratic, exists to support the mission of the Catholic Church and at the same time to work for the spiritual and material good of its members and their families.

In accordance with the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church, members will diligently work for the Moral and Social Welfare of our Country and in particular to help young people develop in the likeness of Christ. Members of the Order will strive to achieve these aims through the fundamental virtues of Charity, Unity and Fraternity.” We thought it might be interesting to get the views of our local KSC organiser about the excellent work the Knights do in support of the Parish and the Church in general.

Council 302 – the Chelmsford Knights group – formed on June 7th 1936 and is fast approaching its 75th anniversary. As part of the celebrations an anniversary Mass will be held on 11th June and we are hoping for a really good turn- out. Father Frank Jackson will celebrate Mass and Council Chaplain. Deacon Kevin Lyons, will preach the homily.

The KSC are actively involved in:

- Working with and for the youth of our Catholic community including such events as a regional Youth Day and running an annual award to recognise the commitment of Catholic young people in Chelmsford. Hopefully many of you will recall the awarding of the Canon Manning trophy that recognises the contribution young people make to the work of their Parish or community.
- Helping to raise funds for the many important charities locally, regionally and nationally such as the Brentwood Catholic Children’s Society, Farleigh Hospice and Christian Aid. A major drive this year has been to raise resources for the homeless. The Knights hold an Autumn Walk as a major charity fund-raiser along with support for national charity collections.
- An annual lecture is organised by the Knights and helps reflect on activities that are of interest to local Christians as well as addressing national issues such as the impact of new technology on our faith communities.
- Seeking to change the political and social climate and public opinion to halt the attacks on the Dignity of Life and traditional Christian family values. The Knights were active in helping to oppose the recent bid by a national retail chain to extend the sale time for alcohol.
- Pursuing a variety of religious and social goals the Knights are very proud of their “social” events calendar – as Chris Thompson commented at a recent Mass the Knights have done a great deal of work to support the licensing and catering trade in a time of economic crisis! Other family friendly activities include quizzes, lunches, trips and golf tournaments.
- Actively participating in the fight against poverty, disease, homelessness and social issues that threaten the Gospel values of the Church is crucial for Knights. It is very much an organisation based on Faith in Action to better the lives of people in need.

We have a wide and varied programme of community, spiritual and social activities in addition to the above. We are always looking for new recruits to refresh and renew our Council. If you can help us, contact:

Chris Thompson	469161	thompsoncjt01@blueyonder.co.uk
Mike Hiom	265159	mie@hiom.co.uk
John Holland	476144	hollandfamily@tinyonline.co.uk
Tim Higgins	450581	tim.higgins@bt.com

Reasons Not To Mess With Children

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him."

A primary schoolteacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work.

As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."



A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

After explaining the commandment to "honour" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill."

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, "Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?"

Her mother replied, "Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white."

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, "Mummy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?"

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic primary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray:

"Take only ONE. God is watching."

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

Did I read that sign right?

In an office:

Toilet out of order..... Please use floor below

In a Laundromat:

Automatic Washing Machines: please remove all your clothes when the light goes out!

In a London department store:

Bargain Basement Upstairs



In an office:

Would the person who took the step ladder yesterday please bring it back or further steps will be taken

In an office:

After tea break staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board

Outside a second-hand shop:

We Exchange Anything - bicycles, washing machines, etc. why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain?

Notice In Health Food Shop Window:

Closed Due To Illness

Spotted in a safari park:

Elephants please stay in your car

Notice in a farmer's field:

The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free, but the bull charges.

On a repair shop door:

We Can Repair Anything. (please knock hard on the door - the bell doesn't work)

What did God Ask?

God won't ask you what kind of car you drove...but God may ask how many people you picked up who didn't have transport.

God won't ask how big your house was...but God may ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

God won't ask you about the clothes in your wardrobe ...but God may ask how many people you helped to clothe.

God won't ask how many material possessions you had ...but God may ask if they dictated your life.

God won't ask how many friends you had ...but God may ask how much you were a friend to other people.

God won't ask what you did to protect your rights ...but God may ask what you did to protect the rights of others.

God won't ask about the colour of your skin ...but God may ask about the content of your character.

God won't ask what your job title was ...but God may ask if you performed it to the best of your ability.

My Personal Journey by Steve Jarvis

When I joined the community of St. Augustine's I was blessed with an experience that comes once in a life time for most people. I was blessed to receive these Holy Sacraments, one after the other in sequence Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. I was baptised on 11th April 2009.

Along this journey I made new friends. One of these friends is the reason I am putting finger to key board. Nigel Gardener asked me a while ago if I would like to write an article for the Augustinian, possibly about my journey



from the RCIA to Baptism, at first I said ok. The deadline came and went. I thought no more about writing an article. However I have read other peoples tales and experiences that they had written for the magazine, with out passing any judgement on the articles. As I know how difficult it is to write, as you don't know who in the article you may inadvertently offend. (I will soon find out)

In a general conversation with Nigel recently he asked me again with a little more persuasion, if I would like to write an article for the next addition of the Augustinian.

This time I thought a bit harder and wondered what could I, possibly contribute in an article that would be of interest to a reader of the parish magazine. After all I have not written a personal article before, although I do write many reports and data information, what would I say? How would it be received by the reader? I came to the conclusion it was my own fear that had prevented me writing initially, when Nigel first asked me to write an article for the Augustinian and it was my fear that was preventing me writing for this issue.

I have learnt in my short time within St. Augustine's by listening to Father Frank and the readings from the Gospel, to fear nothing and share what you have .so I will share my short journey to St. Augustine's that took 56 years to complete. With out fear and a little help from the spell check.

One rule I have learnt when writing is keep it simple, don't waffle and if possible add a bit of humour, so here goes my first attempt for the Augustinian. I hope it is of interest to the readers the best place to start is at the beginning of my journey June /July 2009.



I work at a local establishment - at the time of my first introduction to the Catholic faith I was a manager with many responsibilities. I have worked within this organisation for 24 years. During that time I had shown no interest in the Chaplaincy department other than the Carol Service at Christmas time, as this meant extra work for staff, due to large numbers of dignitaries being invited to attend the service.

There was and still is a dedicated team as part of the Chaplaincy, who minister to the catholic community within the establishment (although a Catholic team, they minister to other faiths when required to do so) Deacon Kevin, Sister Philomena and Father Paul - Father Paul works out of South Woodham Ferrers)

The establishment we all work in is at times a very demanding and a challenging place to work mentally and physically.

A quality high up on the competence list required to work in this environment is to possess a genuine a sense of humour and camaraderie. The Chaplaincy department has this quality in abundance in Sister Philomena, Deacon Kevin and Father Paul

At the time of my first real introduction of the chaplaincy department I worked with a small team of staff and the department was visited by Sister Philomena almost daily.

After several visits it became apparent Sister Philomena came in to visit her fellow Catholic friends I was the only one of the group not a Catholic. I must say what a diverse group we were.

These visits by Sister Philomena were by no means religious teachings or banging up business there were no group discussions on religion. as a matter of fact a lot of the time Sister Philomena was one of the gang her favourite words of wisdom and comfort were “keep it real “ her visits did though make me think about the Catholic faith and what struck me the most, was the sense of closeness and friendship there was within the small group.

Over a period of time I got to know sister Philomena as a work colleague and mostly as a friend. I was struck at the way sister Philomena dealt with every day prison problems, never flustered, never a cross word and compassion for those who were in need. This applied to all working within the chaplaincy department.

I began to think about the reason why prisoners needed or depended on the Chaplaincy department I began thinking about God and the contents of the Bible. My own understanding and thoughts and my personal input. These were very challenging times as I was now talking to my self. To my shame, I had three life changing and life saving experiences which at the time changed the way I thought and did put materialistic beliefs in to some sort of order of importance in my life (materialistic being near the bottom of the list)

At these times although not a church goer I did turn to God and prayed and made promises if only everything was back to what I call normal , over a period of time most promises broken. (My wife calls these pie crust promise’s “easily made easily broken”) in the past but now being restored. God had heard and answered my prayers, yet I gave nothing back in return. These events that changed my life may be of interest to a few only .so I have not included them in my article.

One day Sister Philomena came into my office, there was plenty of laughter and leg pulling I said to Sister Philomena your faith is very close and friendly how do I become a Catholic. Nothing was said and I dismissed what I had said as a joke,

Sister Philomena did not take it as a joke, lightly said. In fact. Sister Philomena brought me literature to read, not heavy stuff just easy reading and on returning from a trip to Lourdes she gave me a rosary and blessed water.

I was on the road it was the beginning although I did not know that at the time.

Sister Philomena must have spoken to Deacon



Kevin and Father Paul about my request to join the Catholic faith. Sister Philomena must have seen something in me worthwhile.

Father Paul came to see me. After what I would call an interview, one to one very direct questions and honest answers. This was the first time apart from getting married that I had sat down to tea with a man of the cloth. 33 years to be precise.

As previously stated I had begun to think more about God and my own faith and beliefs. The single most thought that struck me the most was "I was born and automatically was given a religious label as Church of England. My parents were church of England they also were non church going people although my father went to A Church of England School however after a few years he asked his parents if he could change schools and attend a local school that was very good at football, after constant request from my father his parents agreed to the change. His later encounter with the church was during the war.

I was good at history in my school days a subject I had not thought of until now and realised it was the Act of A king Henry the VIII for personal gain he decided he wanted to change the rules, the rest as they say is History.

I now had a choice I prayed I choose the right step forward and was not deserting a faith I had believed in up to this time. for the first time in my life I was facing a decision that I knew would change my life .I have no hesitation in saying if Sister Philomena had been of another faith I would not be writing this article for St Augustine's . I did have one issue that had made my change from C of E to R.C I had not been baptised or

christened in to the C of E faith .again this is another personal crisis in my life that would not be of interest so I have left it out.



This destined meeting with the chaplaincy team at Chelmsford has changed and enriched my life. This was just the beginning of my short journey from Springlefield to St Augustine's. I did not know what to expect or what the process would be for joining the Catholic faith, Sister Philomena explained that I would be required to attend the RCIA to start at the end of October and go through to Easter the following year, to attend church regularly , to be confirmed and Baptised , to attend the Cathedral in Brentwood. I was beginning to feel a little scared and

uneasy, out of my comfort zone.

The RCIA tutorials were my first real encounter of what God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were and questioned what my understanding was of topics I had not even dreamt of,.

My first attendance to a Friday RCIA was where I met Father Frank the only other Catholic priest I could think of was Father Ted of T.V fame and Nigel who had

sympathy for my feeling nervous as he had gone through the same process the year previously, this made me feel very much at ease although I have attended many interviews and been on the board of interviews never the less I was still very unsure of what was to come. I accompanied by Sister Philomena and Deacon Kevin the first session was a truly memorable experience. Each RCIA session was positive and not once did I think “am I doing the right thing.

Towards the end of October there came a dark time for me, my mother had been diagnosed with Cancer within two months I had lost both my Parents whom I loved and miss dearly.

One visit to my mother when she was in her local Hospice I was going to tell her I was changing my faith from C of E to R.C. I was not sure how she would receive this news. As with all the advise my mother had given me through out my life, it was simple and honest, she said “ Steve you do what you believe is right and stick with it” - It was during this dark period that I realised had I found God or had God found me.

My not yet Catholic Faith and support given by my new found friends helped me and guided me to deal with emotions and feelings that were and still are tearing me apart to this day. They helped me move on

The RCIA. I have decided this needed a chapter on its own. not because I like typing but there are 11 dates that lead me to the final date on 11th April 2009 not including the occasions I was presented to the Church of St Augustine’s and the Bishop of Brentwood.(nearly finished) The RCIA group meetings showed me the way and helped understand this new phenomena I was entering into due to the content of each session they would be worthy of a separate article for each subject. However from my perception if it had not been for the DVDs I would not have had much to say and to me this was what the sessions were all about. I could have my say and I did somewhat restricted due to my lack of knowledge and understanding or more sinister were the DVDs a diversion from the cold as it was winter and the heating was not on in the room we used. I know it to be the former. The RCIA prepared me for my day on the 11th of April. The big day arrived .my wife and youngest daughter accompanied me, I know had my parents been alive they would have been there also and would have been proud that I had stuck with what I know was right I have not mentioned my family so far This has been my personal journey, my wife and family have been very supportive. My wife I thank for her understanding and tolerance. I am sure she thinks I go to church Sunday morning to get out helping do the house work. (Just joking Jan in case you read this article)

At the beginning a mentioned the rule of waffling. There were so many new experiences, new achievements. The one thing I am sorry about is that it took 56 years to make this journey; I am now starting as the new kid on the block with lots to learn and much to understand. One person has had the greatest effect on me as to. How to understand the miracles, the stories, which are contained in the Scriptures and the Bible. This was done by Father Frank when he explained during a SUNDAY MASS. He does not know how electricity works but when you turn on the light switch, there is light. *It works,*

As I said at the beginning keep it simple. I hope you have found the brief description of my journey not to waffle I did not know how to put 5 thousand years of history into one page in the Augustine.

Basilica di Santa Prassede

On a recent half term trip to Rome my wife and I enjoyed an evening meal with Father Stephen Myers of Holy Trinity Parish in Dagenham. Over a very pleasant glass to red wine he introduced us to some of the “hidden gems” that he was very pleased to recommend. This is my perceptions of one such “gem”

Very near to Santa Maria Maggiore and tucked away in a side street – the main entrance is now closed for repair – is the Church of Santa Prassede. The Church is dedicated to St Prassede ho, according to our Thomas Cook guidebook, was declared invalid in 1969. Prassede was the daughter of Prudens who was a friend of St. Paul and in whose house Paul stayed while in Rome.



The Church itself looks pretty shabby from the outside and there is nothing on the exterior that would suggest that it is worth a visit. However, on Father Stephen’s strong recommendation we “bit the bullet” and walked through the back door! The phrase “gob-smacked” has been used by many but; in all honesty, we were totally lost for words! The inside of the Church is truly amazing. This 9th century building houses some of the most stunning mosaics imaginable

over the altar. Clearly there is much of interest to see here, but the most impressive feature of Santa Prassede by far are the mosaics, which cover the apse, the triumphal arch and the entire interior of the Chapel of St. Zeno. All are original to the 9th-century basilica. They are made almost exclusively of fine glass *tesserae*, which may have been taken from earlier mosaics.

The outer face of the triumphal arch features mosaics of the New Jerusalem, with doors guarded by angels. On the right side, an angel guides the saved. The inner face of the arch has Christ flanked by a row of saints.

The mosaics of the apse arch feature the Lamb of God with seven gold candlesticks, the Four Evangelists; and the 24 elders.

The apse mosaics depict Christ at his Second Coming, with Saints Peter, Pudenziana and Zeno on the right and Saints Paul, Prassede and Pope Paschal I (with square nimbus and model of the church) on the left. Above Christ is a phoenix, symbol of the resurrection, perched on a palm branch. On the intrados is the monogram of Paschal. This imagery is quite similar to that of the apse mosaics of Santa Cecilia and Santi Cosma e Damiano. There is an image of Pope Paschal 1 who dedicated the Church and it is really unusual as the head of the image is surrounded by a blue square halo. Pope

Paschal is seen holding a building that represents the Church itself and is seen offering it to Jesus. There are some suggestions that the blue square halo represents the idea of a living Saint – although it has been difficult to find any confirmation of this fact.

The Cappella del Crocefisso (Chapel of the Crucifix) contains a medieval crucifix, dated sometime between the 13th and the 15th centuries. According to tradition, St. Bridget of



Sweden used to pray here in the 14th century and the crucifix once spoke to her. (St. Francis of Assisi had the same experience.)

In a niche on the right side of the chapel is a large piece of a black granite column, said to be the Column of Flagellation (the pillar to which Christ was tied as he was scourged before the crucifixion). The relic is said to have been brought from Constantinople by the papal legate Giovanni Colonna, titular cardinal of Santa Prassede, in 1223.

Many of the Churches we visited during our stay had turned to “electronic” candles – a way of trying to protect the artwork, mosaics and frescos from smoke damage. Clearly conservation of the precious artworks is essential

but much of the atmosphere in Santa Prassede was retained by their use of “real” candles set around the side-chapels. They certainly provide a focus for private prayer and add to the real of antiquity in this “hidden gem”. If you are in Rome it is well worth a visit and the little gift shop have some fantastic postcards that really show the artwork in its full glory.



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