

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, TIMBERHILL with ST JULIAN, NORWICH

May 2021



PARISH PEOPLE

Parish Priest

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Liz Kilshaw

PCC Treasurer

Chris Bushnell

Gift Aid Secretary

Michael Watson

Organist

Keith Buxton

Head Server

John Foottit

Electoral Roll Secretary

Elizabeth Sutherland

Safeguarding Officer

Shirley Buxton

Deanery Synod representatives

Liz Kilshaw, Rhys Lewis

Parochial Church Council

Mary Barnes-Clay, Fr Peter Barnes-Clay, Andrew Knights, Susan Snasdell, Elizabeth Sutherland, Melissa Symes, Nigel Waller

Sidespeople

Garret Cronin, Barbara Donnelly, Andrew Knights (*Senior Sidesman*), Michael Rayner, Wendy Rayner, Nichola Rose, Diane Sheen, Susan Snasdell, Dorothy Tinkler, Richard Tinkler, Stuart Tinkler, John Woodrow

The Julian Centre Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1QT
01603 767380 • www.julianofnorwich.org

The Centre is currently closed for refurbishment

Alleluia, without interruption

Dear friends,

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

'From holy Easter until Pentecost, without interruption, let "Alleluia" be said!' So says chapter fifteen of the Rule of St Benedict, and Easter Alleluias continue to resound in our worship Sunday by Sunday and day by day as we rejoice in the light of Christ's Resurrection, his victory over sin and death and the share in it which he extends to us through the gift of our Baptism.

The fifty days of Eastertide, 'from holy Easter until Pentecost', situate us in the 'land flowing with milk and honey' to which Christ our Passover has brought us by his Cross and Passion. Throughout these days, our worship is unmistakably joyful, focussed on the Paschal Mystery and celebrating 'the memory of the wonderful works... [by which] Christ has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of the Father's glory.' Rightly did St Augustine say that we are an Easter people, and 'Alleluia' is our song.

What a joy it was to receive an email from a Church Family member, coming to Mass, who said, 'On entering the church we were immediately impressed how St John's looked so beautifully fresh and sparkling.' Thanks to the care and diligence of our daily cleaners, our sacristy team and our flower arrangers, both our churches truly speak of Easter welcome and joy, whether they're empty and quiet on some weekday afternoon or full and vibrant on a Sunday morning.



Servers Bev Standing and Rhys Lewis lead the procession out of St John's and into the churchyard on Easter Day



The People of God attend to the proclamation of the Gospel on Easter Day 2021

During the last month, from April 1st to 30th, 132 individuals participated 'in person' in at least one act of regular public worship in our two churches. Of these 132, 60 were women and 72 were men (a significant departure from all trends nationally in the Church of England). You don't see them all at once, of course – we're still physically-distanced during services and can't accommodate congregations of any great size. But I share this statistic with you so that you can realise, with me, that what we offer in this place does speak to people, does meet people's needs, does enable them to 'worship in spirit and in truth' – and (beyond those at services) unseen, uncounted, unrecognised are those who come and go quietly throughout the hours when our churches are open, day by day, slipping in for a few moments of prayer, or to light a candle, or to absorb the peace of this place. 'This is Jesus's house,' said one young woman to her small daughter as they were wandering round St John's just after Morning Prayer one day during Holy Week, after a picnic breakfast on the steps. 'Isn't it lovely?'

Openness is the key to all this – open doors and open hearts. Again and again over the past months, people have said to me, 'Thank you for being open, thank you for being here.' I pass those thanks on to you, since it is you, our Church Family, who make our churches what they are. I wish we could be open even more than we are: bit by bit, we'll get there.

During May we have a particular opportunity to celebrate and consider the life of our Church Family with the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, which takes place on Saturday 22 May (the Eve of Pentecost) at 10.30am in St John's. Please come! We begin with the Election of Churchwardens, then move on to elect PCC members (there are five places to fill: could you serve?), receive our accounts and reports and discuss matters of common interest. There's much for which to be thankful, not least the reinvigorated and deeply generous giving of so many which enabled us to weather last year's storms comparatively unscathed – and, if you're one of the 132 who shared in our worship last month but, for whatever reason, you're not yet part of our planned giving scheme which supports the life and witness of our churches, could this be the time to consider it? We're always happy to answer questions and to help: the amount is not important; your involvement certainly is.

We are engaged in a work of reshaping and renewing, you and I: we haven't chosen it, but the circumstances which have been thrust upon us by the past fourteen months demand it of us. What are we to make of the new world into which we are entering? Will it be (as we pray in the May Crowning of our Lady) 'a Christ-centred age, in which people will hear the word of God and do it'? If it *is* to be that, how can we make a start, here, now, today? What ought we to do, and to be, if the Kingdom for which we pray is to be recognised among us?

Openness is for me a keynote of these days of Eastertide, as we give thanks for Christ our Risen Lord who 'brake the age-bound chains of hell', who shattered the bars and trod down the doors which barred the way to eternal life. We give thanks for the freedom into which he has led us – and we pray for the grace and courage to live more faithfully in its light.

Openness to one another – openness to new ideas, fresh gifts and new opportunities – openness to the needs and insights of the world around us – openness to the Holy Spirit for whose quickening and empowering we pray and whose presence in the Church we celebrate on Whitsunday, the great Feast of Pentecost, as it completes and crowns the Easter season. So do we cry eagerly: ***Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful people: and kindle in us the fire of thy love!***

Your friend and parish priest,

R. Richard

Mary's month of May



Sunday 2 May • Fifth Sunday of Easter

11am Solemn Mass with the May Procession
Preacher: The Parish Priest

Monday 3 May • SS Philip and James, Apostles

10am Low Mass (*St Julian's*) followed by the Rosary

Saturday 8 May • Feast of the Lady Julian of Norwich

10.30am High Mass (*St Julian's*) with the Bishop of Norwich:
attendance sadly restricted owing to physical distancing;
Mass will be livestreamed at www.julianofnorwich.org

12 noon Low Mass (*St John's*)

3pm Julian Lecture (Professor Vincent Gillespie, University of Oxford)
to be livestreamed at www.julianofnorwich.org

Sunday 9 May • Sixth Sunday of Easter: Rogation Sunday

11am Litany of the Saints in Procession and Solemn Mass
Preacher: Edwin Wilton-Morgan, ordinand on attachment

Monday 10 to Sunday 16 May • Christian Aid Week

Thursday 13 May • Ascension Day

10am Low Mass (*St John's*)

12 noon Low Mass (*St John's*)

7pm Deanery Eucharist (*St Stephen's, Rampant Horse Street*) with the
Revd Lorna Allies celebrating and Canon Edward Carter preaching

Friday 14 May • St Matthias the Apostle

5pm Low Mass (*St Julian's*)

Saturday 15 May

10am to Sale of pre-loved household goods in *St Julian's* garden

11.30am (Proceeds for Christian Aid Week)

Saturday 22 May

10.30am Election of Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
followed by Low Mass for the Vigil of Pentecost at noon

Sunday 23 May • Whit Sunday: Feast of Pentecost

11am High Mass

Preacher: Canon Andrew Greany SSC, Chantry Priest of the Guild of All Souls and formerly Vicar of Little St Mary's, Cambridge

6pm Choral Evensong and Benediction

Monday 31 May • Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

10am Low Mass (*St Julian's*) followed by the Rosary

12 noon Low Mass (*St John's*)

From the Parish Registers

Communicants and collections

	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Collection</i>
<i>Week beginning</i> 4 April	110	40	
11 April	59	67	tbc
18 April	55	42	
25 April	46	35	

Standing orders for our Church average £3,000 a month.



Our Church Family supports the Norwich Foodbank.

Current needs at the Foodbank include long life fruit juice, tinned sponge pudding, tinned custard, teabags, tinned fruit and nappies (sizes 6 and 7). Contributions may be brought to St John's or to the Rectory at any time.

In the twelve months to 28 February, Norwich Foodbank gave 15,059 food parcels to local people, including 5,319 children.

New sets of boxed envelopes for regular weekly giving are available for the year April 2021 to April 2022. If you don't give by standing order, the weekly envelopes are a convenient and efficient method. Several people asked for them in the Stewardship Campaign eighteen months ago, so we reintroduced them on a trial basis. If you pay tax, please ensure you've also completed a blue Gift Aid form which increases the value of your gift at no extra cost to you. (You then don't need to fill in a yellow envelope each time you give!)



Every last drop: Rose's story

Rose is caught in a cycle of climate chaos. She lives in Dili village in the Kitui region of Kenya. From severe drought to flooding, extreme weather robs her of what she needs to survive: a reliable source of water.

When she was a child, Rose remembers how often the rains would fall, giving fruit to the baobab trees and providing plenty of nutritious food to eat.

'When I was a young girl, there was plenty of food,' Rose says. Now, the rains are totally unreliable. The climate crisis has galvanised extreme weather and Rose's community are feeling the brunt of it. For months at a time, Rose and her family lives with drought.

Rose strives to provide for her grandchildren who live with her. She does all she can to give them happy childhoods, like the times she remembers when there was plenty of food. But the climate crisis is driving her to the brink.

In times of drought, Rose sets out on a long and dangerous journey every morning to collect water for her family. She walks on an empty stomach.

'Because I am old, I can't walk very fast. When I get home I just rest in the evening. I have no energy to do anything else,' Rose says. Even when the rains do come, relief for Rose is often short lived.

There is a nearby earth dam just minutes away from Rose's home. It should be a lifeline. But it's not wide enough or deep enough for everyone's needs. It runs out of water too quickly. Imagine how dispirited Rose must feel watching the rain fall for days, only to find the dam empty just a short while later. What's more, the rains are much heavier than they should be, putting Rose's community at risk of flooding.

Rose is over 60 years old and simply won't have the strength to fetch water from further afield for much longer. We need to fight this climate crisis together.

With a reliable source of water, people like Rose would be free from long, painful journeys. They would be able to grow fresh vegetables to eat. And they would be able to protect themselves from the dangers of Coronavirus. With such dire need, every last drop of water that falls in Rose's community is precious.

Our gifts this Christian Aid Week will help us to stand with people like Rose to help them tackle the climate crisis. Our gifts could help communities in Kenya and around the world build better earth dams to harvest more water; sow drought-tolerant crops that grow even with the fewest of drops; or set up an advocacy group to demand change at the highest level and work to reduce the effects of the climate crisis.

Climate change affects us all, but people living in poverty around the world fight the worst of it every day. **This Christian Aid Week, our praying and our giving can help to change lives.**



Christian Aid Week • Monday 10 to Sunday 16 May

Envelopes for your Christian Aid Week gifts will be distributed in church, and you can also give online at www.christianaid.org.uk

On **Saturday 15 May** we're having a sale of pre-loved household goods and gifts in St Julian's churchyard from 10am to 11.30am. All proceeds to Christian Aid. Volunteer help will be gratefully received!

May 2021

1	Sat	St Joseph the Worker
2	Sun	The Fifth Sunday of Easter
3	Mon	SS Philip and James, Apostles 10am LM
4	Tue	The English Martyrs
5	Wed	Feria of Eastertide
6	Thu	St John before the Latin Gate
7	Fri	St John of Beverley
8	Sat	The Lady Julian of Norwich
9	Sun	The Sixth Sunday of Easter: Rogation Sunday
10	Mon	Rogation Day (<i>Christian Aid Week begins today</i>)
11	Tue	Rogation Day
12	Wed	Rogation Day
13	Thu	ASCENSION DAY 10am LM; 12 noon LM
14	Fri	St Matthias the Apostle 5pm LM
15	Sat	of the BVM, Queen of the Apostles
16	Sun	The Seventh Sunday of Easter
17	Mon	Feria of Eastertide
18	Tue	Feria of Eastertide
19	Wed	St Dunstan
20	Thu	St Bernardine of Siena
21	Fri	Feria of Eastertide
22	Sat	Vigil of Pentecost
23	Sun	WHITSUNDAY: FEAST OF PENTECOST
		9am LM; 11am HM; 6pm Choral Evensong & Benediction
24	Mon	Mary, Mother of the Church
25	Tue	St Bede the Venerable
26	Wed	St Philip Neri (Ember Day)
27	Thu	St Augustine of Canterbury
28	Fri	Ember Day
29	Sat	Our Lady on Saturday (Ember Day)
30	Sun	THE HOLY AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY
31	Mon	Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary 10am LM; 12 noon LM

**Novena to the
Holy Spirit:
Friday 14 to
Saturday 22 May**

*‘Send again, we
pray, that
blessed Spirit
into our hearts’*

We pray for...

All who work in our parish	1
Our Parish and People	2
Norman and Graham, our Bishops	3
Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue	4
That we may continue in the Risen Life of Christ	5
Persecuted Christians	6
Friends of Julian of Norwich	7
The witness of the Julian Shrine	8
Our Parish and People	9
Those who work on land or sea	10
Those who work in industry or commerce	11
Reverence for creation	12
Thanksgiving for our ascended Lord	13
Christian Aid (<i>This is Christian Aid Week</i>)	14
Come, Holy Spirit!	15
Our Parish and People	16
The homeless in our city	17
The Departed: Year's Minds for May	18
Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury	19
Deeper reverence for the Holy Name of Jesus	20
Renewal through the Holy Spirit	21
Openness to the Holy Spirit in our churches	22
Our Parish and People: Thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Spirit	23
True love for Mary	24
Historians	25
The Congregation of the Oratory	26
The conversion of England	27
Those preparing for Ordination	28
An increase in vocations to the Sacred Ministry	29
Our Parish and People	30
Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham	31

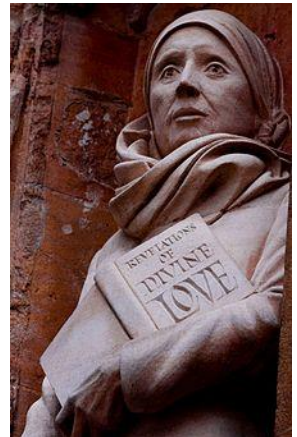
Parish notes

Requiem for the Duke of Edinburgh

On Saturday 17 April, the day of his funeral at Windsor, we celebrated a Solemn Mass of Requiem at St John's Timberhill for the repose of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. There was Greek incense to honour his roots, fine organ music including Vaughan Williams' Prelude on *Rhosymedre* at the offertory (which was played at the funeral later), lovely flowers, *Pie Jesu* from Fauré's *Requiem* beautifully sung during Holy Communion, and the National Anthem was played at the end, following the prayers of Commendation. The Paschal Candle dominated proceedings, a sign of our Resurrection hope as we continue to rejoice in these days of Eastertide.

Julian Festival 2021

On **Saturday 8 May** the Church gives thanks for the Lady Julian of Norwich on the 648th anniversary of the 'Shewings' which she received on 8 May 1373. The Bishop of Norwich will celebrate **High Mass** at St Julian's at 10.30am. The **Julian Lecture** at 3pm will be given by Professor Vincent Gillespie, J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English Literature & Language at the University of Oxford: his title is '**Julian in Troubled Times**'. Owing to the current restrictions, 'in person' attendance at the High Mass and the Lecture is sadly not possible, but both will be livestreamed at www.julianofnorwich.org.



There'll also be Low Mass, as usual, at 12 noon at St John's. The Lady Julian's feast should be kept with real thanksgiving in this, her own parish.

Come, Holy Spirit!

During the nine days between **Ascension Day** (13 May) and **Whit Sunday** (23 May), we keep a novena to the Holy Spirit, in the same way as the apostles, the Mother of Jesus and the holy women returned to the Upper Room after the Lord's Ascension and waited there in prayer 'for the promise of the Father'. Whit Sunday, Pentecost, is one of the three great feasts of the year and we will celebrate it with great joy on May 23. At the 11am High Mass we welcome as our guest preacher **Canon Andrew Greany SSC**, Chantry Priest of the Guild of All Souls and formerly Vicar of Little St Mary's, Cambridge. At 6pm there'll be **Choral Evensong and Benediction**.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Saturday 22 May

10.30am • St John's Timberhill
followed by Mass for the Vigil of Pentecost at 12 noon

**If you're on the Electoral Roll,
you're warmly encouraged to come to our Annual Meeting!**

At the Annual Meeting we will be electing new representatives for our PCC (Parochial Church Council): **three** members to serve for **three years**, **one** member to serve for **two years** and **one** member to serve for **one year**. A diverse and energetic PCC makes a huge difference to the life and wellbeing of any Church Family: might you be willing to serve?
Nomination forms will be available from Sunday 9 May.

Who desires entry?

A Sermon preached by Fr Richard Stanton, Parish Priest,
at the Solemn Mass of Requiem for HRH the Duke of Edinburgh:
17 April 2021

Lections Job 19.23-27a: *I know that my Redeemer lives*
Romans 8.31-end: *Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*
St John 11.17-27: *I am the Resurrection and the Life*

'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' (*St John 11.24*)

Nowadays, almost everything I learn, I learn at the church door. Standing on the path after services greeting the congregation one acquires the most extraordinary range of knowledge, about people's personal circumstances, relatives, work, holiday plans (back in the day), about science, technology, culture, food, history, trivia, about the number of handbags Indira owns (that was last week), about the role of the Portuguese in the First World War (that was last night) and so on. Last Sunday while we were outside our preacher Fr John told me about the funeral customs of the Austro-Hungarian Imperial Family. After a Requiem Mass in St Stephen's

Cathedral in Vienna, the coffin of the deceased is carried to the Capuchin Cloister, where the Imperial Crypt is sited, and the Master of Ceremonies knocks on the door.

'Who desires entry?' asks the Prior, from within. The Master of Ceremonies replies (for instance), 'Otto of Austria, once Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary, Royal Prince of Hungary and Bohemia, of Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia; Grand Duke of Tuscany and Cracow; Duke of Lorraine, Salzburg...' and so on for a number of lines. You will hear a similar recitation of styles and titles at the end of the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral today. In Vienna, when the MC has finished his recitation, the Prior simply says 'We do not know him,' and refuses to admit the coffin.

So the MC knocks again. 'Who desires entry?' asks the Prior. The MC tries a different tack, this time listing civil, political, academic and ecclesiastical achievements: 'Dr Otto van Habsburg, President and Honorary President of the Paneuropean Union, honorary doctor of many universities, honorary citizen, of many cities, member of numerous venerable academies and institutes...' But the Prior, unmoved, responds, 'We do not know him' and refuses admission.



Accompanied by John Footitt (Master of Ceremonies) and Jackie Hazell (thurifer), the celebrant censes the altar at the Solemn Requiem for Prince Philip

A third time the MC knocks. 'Who desires entry?' asks the patient Prior. The MC responds: 'Otto, a mortal and sinful man.' 'Then,' says the Prior, 'let him come in.'

We offer the Requiem today, that most profoundly honest and Christian of services, filled as it is with the twin recognition of our mortality and our need of salvation and of our conviction that Christ has conquered sin and death, for the repose of the soul of Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, yes, but more than that for Philip, a mortal and sinful man, that he may 'come in' to the kingdom of the redeemed. If absolute power corrupts absolutely then, to be sure, the members of the British Royal Family are safe indeed from absolute corruption, since the days of absolute power are long receded into history; but constant proximity for over seventy years to the most influential and important events which shape nations and states, and a life lived ceaselessly in the public gaze, brings not only the tremendous worldly status and material comfort which is far beyond the imagination of most of us, but brings also a curiously lonely existence and many temptations, just as each one of us struggles with the temptations and burdens of our own vocation, our own calling in the world for the sake of the Gospel.

Our prayer for the Duke of Edinburgh as we offer the sacrifice of Christ for him today is that the Lord will continue to work in him the good purposes of his perfect will, that he will be cleansed in the blood of that Lamb who was slain to take away the sins of the world and receive a spotless wedding garment to wear at the marriage supper of the Lamb. For neither the coronet of a Duke who stood faithfully by the side of his Sovereign as the sun set on the British Empire, nor the countless distinctions this world can bestow, avail us anything when our eyes are met by that Face, once bruised and blooded, which is to us the face of judgement and mercy. Except, said the voice from heaven to St John on Patmos, 'blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'they will rest from their labours, for their *deeds* follow them.'

The life each of us lives here below presents us with numerous opportunities each day to choose the way of Christ (or to reject it) to enter into those good deeds which will follow us when we go to rest – *not* that those deeds will work our salvation for us, but they will be a sign of our having cooperated with the love of God revealed to us, extended to us, offered to us in Christ Jesus, that love from which (said St Paul in the second lesson) nothing can separate us, not even death itself. We give thanks today for all that was good in the life of Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and for the blessings which God has bestowed through him on peoples and nations, on causes and needs – we

give thanks for his unwavering loyalty to his Queen and wife, his service to the nation and the Commonwealth, his courage, military service, fortitude and Christian faith, his work for young people over decades, and for the personal qualities of which, rightly, only hints emerge from behind the Palace curtains. And, yes, we pray him, and for all the departed, especially those who have died unknown or unmourned. We are praying that (as the priest sometimes says to the penitent at the end of a confession) ‘the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, whatsoever good you have done or evil you have endured [may] be to you for the remission of sins, the increase of grace, and the reward of eternal life.’



The Elevation of the Chalice

You don't have to scratch around much in the history of this or any other nation to find examples of Royalty failing to live up to the mystique and majesty with which those anointed for service are traditionally surrounded. It is a high calling and it comes, like all callings, to those with clay feet. Elizabeth I and her half-sister Mary made quite a hash of getting on with each other in real life, as did many Christians in those turbulent and disgraceful years of the English Reformation. They are, however, interred together in Westminster, with an inscription which reads: ‘Partners both in throne and grave, here rest we two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, in hope of one Resurrection.’

That hope of one Resurrection, of our own final and decisive share in Christ's Easter victory which the great Paschal Candle triumphantly proclaims and which we anticipate in every Mass, undergirds our celebration of this Requiem today and our prayer for Philip and for all the Faithful Departed. It is a hope grounded on our faith in Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life of all who believe.

In an ancient homily for Holy Saturday, the preacher places these words on the lips of our crucified Lord as he descends to the dead and harrows even hell itself: ‘Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light... The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift

and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.'

*To that glory of the blest
By their prayers and faith confessed
Us, us too, when death hath freed us
Christ of his good mercy lead us.*

Witnesses to the Resurrection

A Sermon preached by Fr Richard Stanton, Parish Priest,
at the Solemn Mass on the Third Sunday of Easter:
18 April 2021

Lections Acts 3.13-15, 17-19: *God raised him from the dead and we are witnesses*
1 John 2.1-5: *Our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ*
St Luke 24.35-48: *Yes, it is I indeed*

'You are witnesses to this.' (*St Luke 24.48*)

Amid all the sombre and understated pageantry of the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral yesterday, the brilliance of the military uniforms relieved against the blue sky on a clear English spring afternoon, surely the most iconic image of the day is the photograph of Her Majesty The Queen, in black and masked, sitting entirely alone in the choir of St George's Chapel, with three empty rows stretched around her. Described yesterday as 'among the most moving public Christian images in a long while', it will become one of the defining images of this part of our century. A sovereign and a widow, sitting in private grief at the funeral of her husband and confidant of 73 years, but muted and isolated because of the pandemic through which we have been living: somehow, this image expressed the griefs that have come to a nation and a world over the past year, the disrupted patterns of mourning and our inability to minister to one another's needs in ways that feel natural or normal.

I myself have officiated at funerals over the past year where solitary mourners have sat in the same way as the Queen did yesterday; her experience does not validate theirs or make it more real than it was before, but by enduring her private grief in such a public way before a global audience, she articulated and embodied the very sadness and loss of which she spoke in her Christmas broadcast, when she said: 'Of course for many,

this time of year will be tinged with sadness – some mourning the loss of those dear to them and others missing friends and family members distanced for safety, when all they really want for Christmas is a simple hug or a squeeze of the hand. If you are among them, you are not alone, and let me assure you of my thoughts and prayers.'

This is what grief does, writ large: it isolates, it cuts us off, it makes us feel alone, locked in the prison of memory, adrift on the sea of loss – not just grief and sorrow for events which *have* happened, but even anticipated grief, grief which fears the worst, grief which knows that even now I am in the process of losing something which I cannot hold onto. It was to such grieving and loss-stricken disciples that the Risen Lord came with his greeting: 'Peace be with you.'

The most abject crew, they had betrayed him and (to be frank) suspected, I imagine, that he had betrayed them – betrayed them with empty promises and cheap ambitions: 'We *had* thought,' they said on the road to Emmaus, 'that he would be one to redeem Israel.' Shown up in the public sphere as losers in every sense of the word, they only really had each other left and yet what possession is that when the Person around whom you gathered has gone? Who gathers around a vacuum?

'Peace be with you,' he said; 'Pax'. Let there be peace among us. Alarmed and frightened now, 'they thought they were seeing a ghost' – but he showed them his hands and feet, wounded by the nails, to demonstrate that he was no *new* Jesus, nor an imposter, but the same Jesus who had lived with them before, with the same body, though now transformed and alive in a new way, having been sown in weakness and raised in power. What the Risen Lord does in appearing to his disciples, to whom he unfolds the scriptures and with whom he eats, is to create a new community, a community shaped by the experience of his death and resurrection, able now to advance in understanding of the Scriptures which foretold 'that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.'

'You are witnesses to this,' says Jesus to them, and to us too, who have been baptised and given new life in Christ, and witnessing to the death and resurrection of Christ, and to repentance for the forgiveness of sins, is the work of the Church, the believing community of companions who have eaten and drunk with the Risen Lord. St Peter says much the same in the first lesson: 'You demanded the reprieve of a murderer while you killed the Prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are the witnesses.'

Communities such as this one, our own Church Family, exist simply to bear witness to the Resurrection. We do this through public worship and sacramental living, through growth in holiness, through mutual love and bearing of one another's burdens, through service and generosity in the world. Everything we do in this place ought to be a testimony to the power and reality of the Resurrection, God's decisive action which meets us at the point of our grief, our atomisation and our fear and gives us a new identity as adopted brothers and sisters of the Risen Lord. The life we are trying to live together as Christians, based on 'knowledge' of Jesus – that is, concrete, interpersonal relations with a merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother – is a life which bears fruit in love, the kind of love of which St John spoke in the second reading when he said, 'When anyone obeys what God has said, God's love comes to perfection in him.' This is the work of the Resurrection within us, and it is this that makes our witness credible.

The Jesuit Fr Martin D'Arcy expressed this dynamic at work within us like this: 'Saint Paul never saw Christ in the flesh, and yet he has the same conviction as those first witnesses: *If Christ be not risen from the dead we are the most miserable of men.* We are like Saint Paul in not having seen with our own eyes the wounds in the hands and feet of Christ; but like him we can grow a sure conviction that the man lifted up on his cross was truly the Son of God, and that God, who with majestic love reigns from a cross, continues to defeat evil and give life, and nothing man can do will thwart him.'

A Christian community such as our own, which rejoices to express the fullness of the Catholic Faith as the Church of England has received it, has a particular vocation to live out the Risen Life of Christ with a fullness which marks it as authentic; not simply through the powerful presentation of the liturgy on Sundays and great festivals, but through regular encounter with the Risen Lord in Word and Sacrament 'seven whole days not one in seven', through a serious and patient approach to our own discipleship, through attentiveness to the needs of the community within which we are set and to which we have a responsibility and a mission, through our mutual love and compassion, through a keen awareness of our participation in a global family of faith which transcends the surface particularities which can so often become the tools of exclusion. To take steps along this road, in the company of Jesus risen from the dead who unfolds us to his Word and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread, is to allow ourselves to be moved away from the isolation and fear within which grief locks us, and open ourselves to the joys of this Risen Existence.

WORSHIP WITH US

We warmly welcome you.

Sundays	9am Low Mass	<i>St Julian's</i>
	11am Solemn Mass and Sermon	<i>St John's</i>
	6pm Low Mass and Benediction	<i>St John's</i>

Weekdays

<i>The Mass</i>	Monday 10am	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Tuesday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>
	Wednesday 10am	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Thursday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>
	Friday 5pm	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Saturday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>

<i>The Rosary</i>	Monday 10.30am	<i>St Julian's</i>
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Morning and Evening Prayer

The Daily Office is currently said privately in church, before opening and after closing

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Physically-distanced Confessions may be heard at any time by arrangement with the Parish Priest

St John's and St Julian's are both **open daily** for prayer, quiet and visiting (except St John's which is currently closed on Mondays). The Blessed Sacrament is reserved on the High Altar of both churches for the Communion of the Sick and the devotion of the faithful.

We warmly welcome enquiries about **baptisms and weddings**. We will be pleased to help you in any way we can.



stjohnstimberhill.org



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On the cover:

The bell of St John's against a clear Easter sky.
Photo: Jeremy Warren.