

# SOCIAL NEWSLETTER

July 2025

**Hello everyone,** We hadn't planned to do another Newsletter until perhaps the end of the Summer, but June was such a glorious month – in terms of Parish activities as well as the warm weather! – that we just didn't want to wait until then!

As well as the regular gatherings at our 2 churches, June was blessed with a visit from Bishop Peter to officiate at the Sacrament of Confirmation of some of our young people in OLSE; a parish pilgrimage to Bury St Edmunds; and the best Strawberry Fair ever!

As always, do please let us know if you have any views or thoughts about our Parish Social Newsletters

Contact: [pat.fuchter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pat.fuchter@hotmail.co.uk) 07867 318438

## Strawberry Tea 2025

*We are sure everyone will agree that this year's Strawberry Fair was the very best yet! On a glorious Saturday afternoon, scores of parishioners and others locally arrived at St Cecilia's to see what was on offer this year. And they were not disappointed! From delicious cakes to a huge array of plants; from books to puzzles - there was so much to tempt everyone. Not to mention the usual Raffle and Tombola offerings! And all this on top of tables laden with scones and strawberries to satisfy even the most discerning of appetites!*



*It was a truly wonderful and successful event which raised an outstanding amount of £1000 (rounded up by a very generous parishioner) for The British Red Cross.*

*As usual, this would not have been possible without all the people who selflessly gave up their time to help on the day. Our warmest thanks to them - particularly to Maureen Vernon who organised the whole event - and to everyone who attended and contributed so generously.*

## The Sacrament of Confirmation

**at OLSE** – the evening of 16<sup>th</sup> June was a very special one for the parish: for the first time in many years, we came together to witness the Confirmation of four young men: Oliver Gaca and Daniel Gaca who have been Altar Servers at OLSE for some time, were joined by Heston Appleton and Freddy Appleton as they declared their full commitment to Christ. It was a beautiful service of prayer, music and spirituality presided over by Bishop Peter.



It was Bishop Peter's first visit and introduction to our parish. After the Mass, he joined the boys and their families as well as many others from our community for a continued celebration in the Garnett Room - with a lavish spread provided mostly by Maya (Oliver and Daniel's mother). It was a joyous occasion for everyone marking the start of the next stage of the Christian journey being undertaken by our young men.

Congratulations too and thanks to Sr Mary who helped prepare the boys to receive the sacrament.

**Whybelonely** - *This opportunity for an afternoon of fun and community has continued over the last couple of months and is proving popular. If you are not already attending, why not give it a go? They are held on the first Friday of each month between 2.00pm and 4.00pm at St Cecilia's. All are welcome.*

## Parish Pilgrimage to Bury St Edmunds

In this Jubilee year of Pilgrims of Hope, we chose to base our pilgrimage programme on the 6 themes of Hope, embracing the Prayers, information, insights and reflections specifically provided for this Jubilee. The journey began prayerfully (on the coach) with a full Rosary incorporating the Hopeful Mysteries followed by reflections on the first theme for the day: Car for Creation.

In Bury St Edmunds, our day of prayer, hymns and reflections continued with Canon Peter and Fr Henry celebrating Mass at the church of St Edmund. There, as well as during visits to the Cathedral, to the church of St Mary, and to the Abbey Gardens, we reflected on one of each of the themes of the Jubilee. So that by the time we got home all six themes - Care for Creation, Food Poverty, Managing Debt, Modern Slavery, Forgiveness, and Rest and Worship – had been covered.

*An open-air short service of prayer and song at the Holocaust Memorial was a particularly poignant place to reflect on the theme of Forgiveness.*



Feedback from the pilgrims who took part was all very positive, and many spoke of the thought that had been put into the programme for the day to really instil the message that we are Pilgrims of Hope. Sr Francis, in particular, commented:

*"The programme was so different from any pilgrimage that I have been on. It was full of inspiration and a call to prayer within the theme of Hope. I have not heard of the rosary of hope before and I will pass it on to all our Sisters.*

*Every detail was so well organised in a most relaxed way. Your patience was appreciated. It must have required a great deal of planning to find the sites for each 'Hope filled moment'.*

*Thanks for the little extras: water, chairs, the guitar accompaniment, and cake on the return journey. I HOPE that this is the first of many pilgrimages. It was truly inspirational and spiritual.*

Well, Sr Francis, Canon Peter already has some thoughts of potential future pilgrimage locations– so watch this space!

## Ecumenical

Our relationship with other Christian Churches in Hunstanton and Heacham, continues to grow. There are regular services/events held by some of these churches to which there is always an open invitation. Please do keep an eye on the Ecumenical Board in both our churches which will give you up to date information on what is going on. In particular, look out for prayer meetings, and things like the Men's Breakfast (and the new Ladies afternoon tea) at the Union Church.

Also of course, the services and events which are a joint effort by the Hunstanton Churches Together. For example, the regular Faith Service and lunch programme is ongoing; the last one was held at the Union Church at the end of June – we took the opportunity to use this as our Spiritual Formation event for that month and several people from our parish rushed from the Mass at OLSE celebrating Our Lady (and The Sacred Heart) to the Union Church service and lunch. The next Faith Meal will be at the Methodist Church in the early autumn to celebrate the Harvest. Date to be confirmed.

The other main joint event in Hunstanton this summer will be Songs of Praise on 17<sup>th</sup> August from 4:00pm. As last year, this service will be held at the Bandstand on The Green and include prayers, readings and hymns, with music being provided by the Salvation Army Band. This year we are encouraging people to bring a picnic and make an afternoon of it. Please put this date in your diary!

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## Other Dates for your diary

**13 September – Parish Harvest lunch** – details to be confirmed at later date

**29 November Or 6 December - Christmas Fair** at OLSE (please note corrected dates)

**11 December - Parish Pre-Christmas tea** – venue to be confirmed

