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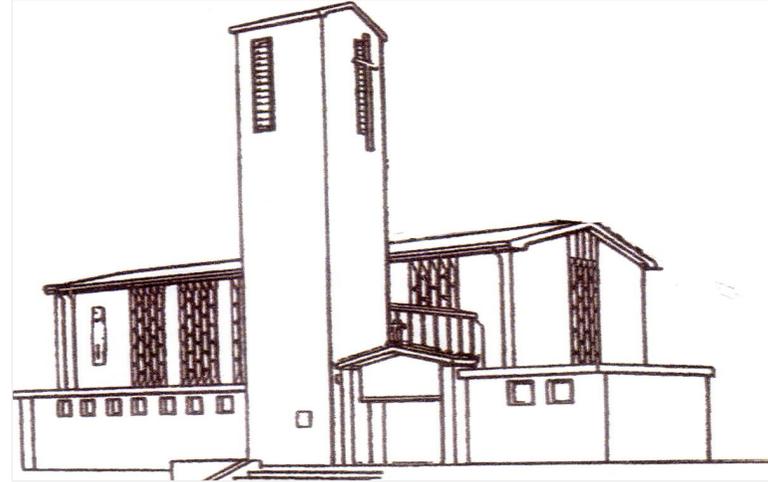
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CATHOLIC PARISH OF RAINHAM PARISH MAGAZINE



St. Thomas of Canterbury Church
61 London Road, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 7RH

Parish Website www.rcrainham.co.uk
Fr Tom McElhone - 2 Century Road, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent,
ME8 0BG Telephone - 01634 232972

Deacon James Coleman - Telephone 01634 306558

Deacon Arthur Champ – Telephone 01634 360521

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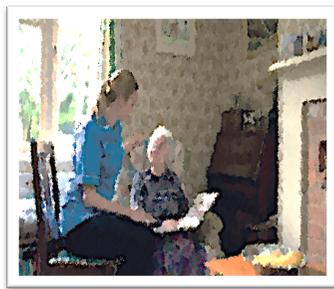
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FOOTPRINTS

FOOTPRINTS by Margaret Fishback Powers

One night I dreamed a dream.

I was walking along the beach with my Lord.

Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.

For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand -

One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

When the last scene of my life shot before me,

I looked back at the footprints in the sand.

There was only one set of footprints.

I realised that this was at the lowest and saddest of times of my life.

This bothered me, so I questioned the Lord about my dilemma

Lord, you told me when I decided to follow You,

You would walk and talk with me all the way,

But during the most troublesome times of my life,

There was only one set of footprints.

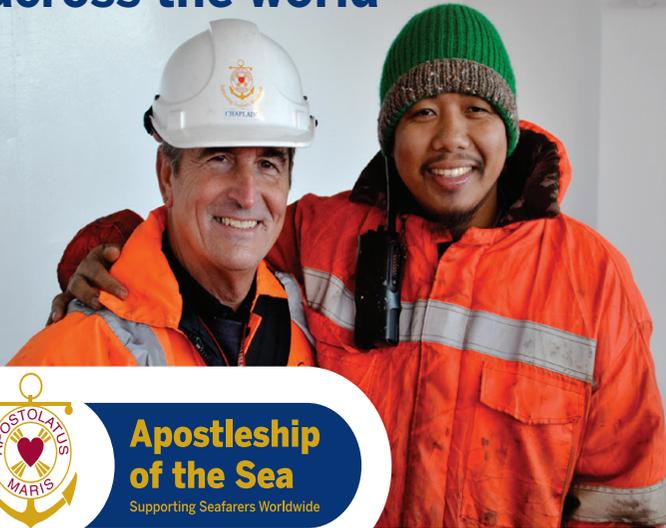
"I just don't understand why,

When I needed you most,

You left me."

He whispered, "My child, I love you and will never leave you

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Never, ever, during your trials and testings.

When you saw only one set of footprints,

It was then that I carried you."

PRE Sept 2007



Mary's Meals:



Our UCM charity is, for the second year running, Mary's Meals and although we probably are not going to have the opportunity to run any (or many) fundraising activities this year we will hopefully be able to raise some money for them.

Mary's Meals is a global hunger charity, founded by Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow OBE, FRSGS, Chief Executive of the charity, whose aim is to provide meals for more than one million of the world's poorest children in a place of education. This milestone was reached in 2015.

The charity also has a history of providing emergency relief to disaster areas and also sends aid to many of the poorest countries in the world.

The hungry children in these poor areas are attracted to the classroom because they will be fed and then have the energy to learn. This then gives them the opportunity make a better future for themselves and their families.

Alma Payne
Secretary – UCM Rainham
Tel: 01634 362896

??????????? **PUZZLE PAGE** ???????????

Can you identify the Capitals of the countries listed below?

Answers are in the word square listed horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

F	K	E	C	A	I	R	O	T	L
O	S	L	O	N	R	M	L	U	O
U	L	B	P	B	C	E	O	D	O
B	L	E	E	D	R	E	V	T	P
O	Y	D	N	R	S	A	B	L	E
S	A	T	H	E	N	S	Z	N	L
O	R	R	A	Y	I	A	A	D	A
F	H	A	G	L	I	M	A	E	G
I	O	I	E	T	M	E	N	A	O
A	E	S	N	A	S	A	Y	N	S

1. Switzerland
2. Peru
3. Greece
4. South Korea
5. Denmark
6. Nigeria
7. Bulgaria
8. Norway
9. Jordan
10. Egypt

ANSWERS NEAR THE BACK

???????? QUIZ ???????

St Vincent De Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is an international Christian voluntary organisation providing practical assistance to anyone in need and also offer the hand of friendship to people through befriending visits. We have a group (known as a conference by the SVP) active in the parish for several years. During the present crisis we are continuing to help our beneficiaries with visits and give material help when necessary. This has included providing a bed, white goods, help with financing utility bills, urgent food supplies and clothes. We are keeping in touch by phone where face to face visits are not possible.

We have still been holding our regular meetings but via teleconference calls. These are not very easy due to delays in the system. We had one Zoom meeting and are hoping to move to this when initial problems are sorted out.

In the past few months a particular focus of our efforts has been on helping a family who have settled in Rainham. Thanks to donations from the Parish these efforts have enabled them to furnish their home and become more independent.

As well publicised, the reliance on food banks continues to increase. This is very much the case in our area where the Medway Food Bank is doing amazing work. Although the outlet centres have been closed, supplies are being delivered by their volunteers. We continue to issue vouchers where necessary and because of this we sent a donation from our funds to help them with their running costs. Before the lockdown, together with the Knights, we were hoping to have quarterly collections of food and household items for the bank. This has not been possible, but with the limited re-opening of the church, it is hoped to re-start some form of collection soon.

Normally we would be supporting the SVP/St John Bosco camps, Yvonne would be spending time there and we would usually sponsor children to attend. As you all know the camps have been suspended and maintenance work is being carried out. Hopefully

next year will be back to normal. Please contact us if you would like your child to attend one of the camps during the Summer holidays.

We continue to help our twinned Parish in India with a yearly donation. Together with many other Conferences in the Diocese, what we give really does help them, all areas are affected badly by the virus. Our "twin" is St. Josephs, Kochera, Kerala. The parish is in an isolated area among the hills near the border between Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

We are also sponsoring a student to undertake a three-year vocational training course leading to a B.Tech. The cost for the course is £360 which is amazingly good value considering fees in the UK. It is hoped that all students who the Society supports will stay in their area for the good of the local population.

Usually at this time we would be organizing our September awareness month. Obviously the ever-popular draw cannot go ahead, together with the fundraising walk which we were planning. However, we do plan to have a walk at the end of the month, but due to the restrictions, this will unfortunately be for members only. As awareness month is one of our main sources of income we invite parishioners to make a donation to help us continue our work. Please read the Parish Newsletter for further details.

Fortunately, we are all staying free of the virus and are as active as we can be during these difficult times. If you are feeling lonely or have other needs, we would be happy to help you. Give us a call on the number below. We can chat by phone, visit, help with food etc. If you have any spare time and would like to help us in our work, please call on the same number and find out more about us

John Morley

07743 383 577.





Relationships are hard to do at the best of times but, right now, the Coronavirus is leading to massive changes in the way we live our lives. Healthy marriages and relationships are going to be hugely important for getting us through self-isolation, social distancing and the income security pressures that so many of us will be facing.

So that we can continue to offer support to individuals and couples, from now, and until the current emergency is over, all our Counselling and will be delivered online using secure webcam and video conferencing technology. This is just like having face-to-face support, except you talk to a trained Counsellor or Marriage Preparation Facilitator online using a secure video link (similar to Skype or FaceTime).

Research shows us that conflict between parents can have a very negative effect on children's development in terms of mental and physical health. With families forced to isolate and children no longer able to go to school, problems are potentially going to quickly escalate with no immediate prospect of relief. We urge people to seek expert help before they reach the breaking point. Marriage Care offers a donation-only counselling service so that anyone can access support whatever their financial circumstances.

www.marriagecare.org.uk

I have walked the long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

From the Registers

Funerals:

- 16.04.2020 Patricia Daunt
- 26.05.2020 Monica Eileen Mary Flanagan
- 24.07.2020 Arline May Angus
- 27.08.2020 Kevin Wilson

Anniversary List:

July:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 03.7.18 Michael Smith | 06.7.18 Anthony John White |
| 19.7.18 Charles Boulton | 22.7.18 Patricia Watkins |
| 27.7.16 Ann O'Neill | 27.7.18 Sheila Sims |
| 30.7.15 Elizabeth Willock | 30.7.17 Michael De Marco |

August:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 01.8.18 Edna Punyer | 03.8.16 Patrick Miller |
| 03.8.18 Margaret Hutchinson | 06.8.15 Ellen Hacket |
| 06.8.16 Brenda Sheridan | 14.8.16 Charles Saré |
| 12.8.15 Christopher Middleton | 15.8.15 Peter O'Brien |
| 13.8.16 Norah Kathleen Moore | 18.8.17 Nina Palitta |
| 15.8.15 Joan Stubberfield | 21.8.18 Kathleen Graham |
| 24.8.16 Doreen Whitehorn | 24.8.18 Pauline Gould |
| 26.8.17 John O'Neill | |

September:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 03.9.15 Marion Feegrade | 04.9.16 Pamela Hollands |
| 09.9.18 Electra Dalmedo | 13.9.17 Cherrie Burgess |
| 14.9.18 Katrina White | 15.9.17 Thomas Bowden |
| 16.9.15 Janine Marciniak | 27.9.15 Edith Holloway |
| 30.9.15 Martin Dante | |



May they rest in peace

(I have not, unfortunately, got access to the church registers so this list may not be up to date. 2019 anniversaries are not listed).

Weekly Offertory Collections



Remember Your Offerings

We are aware that parishioners have expressed concern that they are unable to support the ongoing costs of the parish through their regular offertory collections at this time while the church is closed. If you wish to provide your regular support you can do so by setting up a Bankers Order or by donating to

the church accounts by Bank Transfer. If you wish to do so please contact me by email on chrisiles311@gmail.com or by phone on 01634 373840 [please leave a message if the answer phone cuts in] and I will provide bank details. Alternatively make a single donation when the church is reopened.

Thank you for your concern

Take care and keep safe

Chris Iles

Parish Finance Chairman



*I asked for Strength, and I was given difficulties to make me strong.
I asked for Wisdom and I was given problems to solve.
I asked for Prosperity and I was given brain and brawn to work.
I asked for Courage and I was given obstacles to overcome.
I asked for Love, and I was given troubled people to help.
I asked for favours, and I was given opportunities.*

I received nothing I wanted,
But I received what I needed.

PRE Source unknown

The Butterfly

One day a small opening appeared in a cocoon.
A man sat and watched for the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to free its body through that little hole.

Then it appeared to be making progress.
It appeared as if it had gone as far as it could and it could not go any further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly.
He took a pair of scissors and opened the cocoon.
The butterfly then emerged easily.
But it had a withered body, it was tiny with shriveled wings.

The man continued to wait;
because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would open, enlarge and expand to be able to support the butterfly's body and become firm.

Neither happened!
In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life creeping around with a withered body and shriveled wings.
It was never able to fly.

What the man, in his kindness and his goodwill did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings, so that it would be ready for flight once it had achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in life.
If we were allowed to go through life without any obstacles, it would cripple us.
We would not be as strong as we could have been.
Never able to fly.

Editor's Note:

I find it hard to see where the weeks have gone to since the last magazine. The summer seems to have passed by really quickly and I expect we will all soon be moaning about the cold and rain but, for the moment, it's just nice to have some relief from the extremely hot weather that we suffered a few weeks ago.

At the moment the magazine is just going out on line (on the Parish website and on the Parish Facebook page). The information on the pages relating to the Parish Register are not up-to-date. Any anniversaries from last year will not be appearing as I am unable to access the register in the church.

I am still following lock-down rules as best I can due to our own family situation. I have managed a few walks but a lot of the places I would normally go to have been quite crowded. It's nice just to wonder through Cozenton Park which is quite close and doesn't get too busy.

We are so lucky to have a garden which has kept me sane and proved useful for a self-distancing coffee. I feel very sorry for anyone in these high-rise flats. The internet can be a very mixed blessing but it has been good to be able to watch Mass from so many different places. We quite often end up at Fr Doug's church in Bexley on a Sunday.

I had intended to do so much clearing out during lockdown and although I have achieved quite a bit I've still not managed to do it all. I have a feeling that I will never get to the end of it but there's going to be a massive bonfire one of these days!

Please would some of you think about writing something for the magazine. I see on Facebook that a lot of you have been away, very often camping, on holiday, or maybe share with everyone your impressions of life during lockdown.

*Alma Payne – Editor, Parish Magazine
Tel: 01634 362896
e-mail: almapayne1@gmail.com*

An Act of Faith

A vicar was trying to help his people see the difference between fact and faith. He said, "That I am standing here in this pulpit is fact; that you are sitting in the pews is also fact; but that any of you is listening to what I am saying is an act of faith."

TEACHERS ARE REMEMBERED

Below is a copy of a letter written to Maura Downes some thirty years ago when she retired after a lifetime of teaching. It was found among her papers when she died at the age of 93 and was read at her funeral. All we know about the writer is that she was in the top year of the Junior School.

To Miss Downes
With love

Long before any of us children were born you came to our school and for fourteen years you helped so many children to learn so many things.

We did not know very much about the beauty of words but you helped us to enjoy poetry. To write poems ourselves, to write stories about the world around us. Stories about ourselves and our friends that we might know each other better.

Not only about our own lives did we think but, about people who lived long before us or in faraway places and strange lands. Eskimos in Australia, Aborigines in the Arctic or was it the other way around?

We had lots of fun, but sometimes we had tummy-aches, headaches or toe-aches, or other aches and pains. Especially when it came to percentages, fractions, decimals and other ghastly mathematical things.

You had to explain, and explain again until at last we saw the light.

Even mathematics can be fun! Once you know it.

Most important of all you told us about the life of Our Lord that we might know of His love. That we might learn to serve Him. That we might have faith in Him who made us all.

Maybe he chose you to be a teacher so that you could make so many children happy for forty-two years. Many of them are now grown-ups.

We have still got a long way to go, but you prepared us and we will try to do our best.

We shall never forget you, and we cannot repay you for all you have done for us, so today we ask Him, Our Lord, to keep you always in his care.

PRE

*Lord Jesus
When you walked with us on earth
you spread your healing power.
We place in your loving care [named petition]
and all who are affected by Coronavirus.
Keep us strong in faith, hope and love.
Bring relief to our sick,
console our bereaved,
protect those who care for us.
We lift our prayers to you Lord,
and trust in your infinite mercy.
Amen*

We ask Mary Our Mother to intercede for us, as we say:

Hail Mary, full of grace



STILL PUZZLED?? STILL PUZZLED?? STILL PUZZLED??

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