

**PILGRIMAGES
AND JOURNEYS**

Including
Glastonbury, CAFOD
Lenten Walk, St
Albans

ARTICLES

From Zambia's
Community Farm to
Life in Lockdown

REVIEWS

Of Courses, Series,
Apps and Books

Joseph Francis

PARISH MAGAZINE ONLINE VOLUME 2

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REVIEWS

EDITOR'S NOTE



It is very much testament to our parishes, that despite the year that we have all experienced, there has still been so much to go in the Parish Magazine. Some of the events described happened before the pandemic really hit but others took place during lockdowns or in between them or even as we have edged our way out. As before, there is a great mix of interesting topics in the articles as well as more creative contributions. I am very grateful to all the contributors for their hard work, creativity and patience and to Di for co-editing.

I am also thrilled with the number of articles that fit the year of St Joseph. I chose the theme for the front cover illustration to reflect something of our two parishes in this year. I felt that the image of Pope Francis dedicating this year to St Joseph was of wonderful significance to our parishes and, having commissioned this before receiving any articles, I was pleased that the theme was reflected in those articles that came in.

It is also really pleasing to see some of the wonderful things our parish schools have been doing too, despite the difficulties and restrictions this academic year have brought.

We have invited and gratefully received some contributions from our neighbouring parish of Clevedon, which widen the scope of our magazine and celebrate some natural crossovers.

I hope that the new Reviews section aimed at sharing good faith formation will be well received.

Nicola Osman

Front Cover illustration of Pope Francis and Saint Joseph by Lis Jeffery

CAFOD WALK FOR WATER APPEAL

by John McAllister

Simple Requirement:

For our Lenten Sacrifice, Cafod asked that we walk 10 000 steps on each of the 40 to 46 days of Lent. It was for an Ethiopian Project and myself and Elizabeth Rhodes (as well as another dozen from our two parishes) rose to the challenge.

*Let me take you by the hand
For I have much to show
A green, a very pleasant land
Where you and I can go
A country walk- Dr. Taylor*

One of the pleasures of getting out to walk is that there are so many places to go and just walk! I could go out the door and head anywhere and stop and look around and you will find a path which says “public footpath” or “bridle path” or one supplied by our ramblers or other such conservation groups of health addicts and all sorts of groups who love the countryside and want to keep it open for all. And so it was that we set off on our half a million steps.





***“There is a pleasure in the pathless woods
There is a rapture on the lonely shore
I love not man the less but nature more”
Lord Byron- Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage***

Why do we walk? Is it for exercise? Is it to get to our destination? Is it for solitude? Or, the opposite: to walk and talk with friends? I am thinking particularly of our rural walks and not the “towered city walks” which have their own delights. Whatever the reason, and I suspect that for some it is a combination of many factors, for me and many others, it is the sheer delight in the absorption of our Mother Nature.

Where else can you get a free box of goodies?!!

***“Towered cities please us then and the busy hum of men”
John Milton - L’Allegro***

Some of the days were wet and windy and we decided that “mud, mud glorious mud” (Flanders and Allen) should be avoided and we came inland to investigate the streets of our local towns and villages and try as much as possible to avoid the well known areas of Bath and Bristol, instead we did the backstreets of Clifton and had a great experience of visiting Wells, Glastonbury, Frome, Bradford on Avon, Cheddar and Wedmore, as well as our local towns Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea. In all the places we found magnificent buildings, from grand people’s posh houses, which were in many cases, particularly in Clevedon, saved for the nation (!?) by turning them into old folks homes(!!!), to churches, and other public buildings. Unfortunately, many were closed, such as pubs and museums, and maybe just as well as our purpose was WALKING but by and large they were all worth an outside look.





***“Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise
Silent upon a peak in Darien”***

***John Keats- On Looking into Chapman’s
Homer***

In my 38 years in North Somerset I have never climbed Crookes Peak or Brent Knoll but now I have and can share with this Conquistador that sense of achievement of scaling a high peak and viewing a marvellous body of water, in my case the Bristol Channel. And while he also had experience of meeting ancient tribes of South America, he didn't travel through neolithic hill forts on Worlebury, Cadbury, Rowberrow and Dolebury.

***“The curfew tolls the knell of parting day
The paths of glory lead but to the grave
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest
A youth to Fortune and Fame unknown”***
***Thomas Gray- Elegy in a country
churchyard.***

We are extremely fortunate in this part of the country to have so many wonderful medieval churches and for many of our walks we headed to an ancient church to start and end our walk. One reason was that the churches were in small towns and villages and that they had a car park.

The extra bonus was that many of them were open with many magnificent features like the carved pews at Kingston St. Mary and the medieval wall painting of St. Christopher in St. Mary's Wedmore. Particular praise to those that were open at Christon, Puxton, Wedmore, Kingston St. Mary and Bradford on Avon (St Thomas More Catholic Church) and many others. An added extra benefit is that all of these places were so very pretty with their ancient buildings and beautiful cottages and houses.

The graveyards are always interesting, that goes without saying, and the great, the poor, the unknown and the good are there with their headstones slowly decaying.

When all at once I saw a crowd A host of golden daffodils

***William Wordsworth- Daffodils
(as I'm sure you've guessed)***

This has been a fantastic year for nature and flowers in particular. Daffs, Crocus and Snowdrop but also Primroses and Piss-en-lit have been everywhere, though I would have preferred them not on my allotment.

Dog Violet, Shepherd Purse, Daisy, Orchid, Valerium, Stinky Bob to name but a few of Spring's welcome to Summer. What a delight to find a fifty metre patch of Cowslips along an old drove road outside of Wedmore. It has been over 10 years since I had last met them - and that was on the golf course where I had experienced my customary bad round, which was immediately transformed to pleasure at their sight. So we had a similar experience of nature's marvels.

God made the little birds to sing And flit from tree to tree Tis He who sends them in the Spring To sing for you and me.

Anon

I can't count the number of birds that we have seen over the Lenten period but we have seen quite a number of rarish ones or at least rare to us. I think seeing two Peregrine Falcons on the church tower of St. Mary's in Bradford on Avon was particularly exciting as it was my first time seeing them up close. On the sea wall in Clevedon from the pill near the medieval St. Andrew's Church, our walk headed towards W-S-M. We spotted Shelducks and Shovelers splashing at the waters edge and Warblers, Pipits, and Skylarks soaring overhead. As well as Oyster Catchers, Chaffinches, Robins, Ravens, Crows, Rooks, Jackdaws, Starlings, Pheasants, Buzzards

and Gold Finches, (because there are so many dandelions) to name but a few.

And also those we heard but could not see, like the Yellow Hammer, Chiffchaff and Wren.

So many Swans!!!

I didn't see any Swallows in Lent but 50 + of them since then and also the first of the year on the 28th April along the Avalon Marshes.

Where have all the Cuckoos gone? I never heard one, and I may have to invest in a clock.

I never saw a Purple Cow. I never hope to see one But I can tell you anyhow I'd rather see than be one Gelett Burgess

Neither did I but we did see cattle, great big bulls, inquisitive heifers and bullocks, lots of cows: Herefords, Belted Galloways, Jerseys. We also saw rabbits and deer as well as sheep with their lambs and plenty of horses from tiny Shelties to large Shires. We also saw a lot of dogs and that is not surprising as I have been told that we have 10 million of them. I have estimated that we have 40,000 in North Somerset. So I feel a dog license at £500 would give the Council £20M to add to their coffers, better than the £50 green bin charge and it would be around 12% added to their income. Don't let me get started on cats, hamsters and goldfish but there is potential!!!

We also met wonderful people, even ones with dogs, and we chatted and put the world and nature to rights, and they gave us information and put us on the correct path where needed!!!

Exercise apart, it was a wonderful experience; we visited places we had never been to before, some by accident but always a delight. We are already in training for next year.

A Lockdown Diary

Eric Smith has experienced a lengthy lockdown at Waverley Court. Here he gives a taste of that life and the things that kept he and his wife, Pina, going



Before Lockdown Now you see me...

Pina chastises me when I joke with people with a straight face. Unfortunately, some of our parishioners have also experienced this. 9 March 2020, Pina and I were moving some items into Waverley Court to start redecorating. Pina was asked, and confirmed, we were moving in. Passing the same group of ladies on my second trip they were asking each other which flat. I piped up, 106, and continued past and through the security door to the lift.

Lockdown ...Now you don't

Unfortunately, I am one of the 1.5m who have been identified as “clinically extremely vulnerable” and am on immunosuppressants and other smarties which lack the colour of the “real ones”. We have not left the apartment since moving in permanently on the 25 March 2020 I was instructed by Southmead Hospital to stay indoors until the 4 July 2020.

Lockdown At any age

Pina, bless her, saw to the laundry, lugged the bags of groceries when they were delivered to the ground floor and prepared our evening meals. I do the easy work; make the bed and wash the dishes (with my yellow Marigold gloves) and make the tea or coffee, with biscuits of course.

Photograph: Eric and Pina

Pina and I celebrated our birthdays without our family. It's not the birthday, which adds another year of experiences to our lives, it's missing our family, not being able to hug them and particularly our grandchildren. Yes, they visit, them on the path at ground level and us at the second level. Close but far. Our other daughter and her family live in Exeter.

Although we are blessed with digital facilities of broadband which, via our computers or smart phones, offers us Skype, WhatsApp video call, Messenger video call, Zoom and no doubt other apps, the division of a screen between our close family and ourselves is not the same. The physical closeness, hugs, kisses, the nonverbals whilst listening, the gentle touch of affirmation, communicating face to face, the excitement of the grandchildren looking for your attention, sitting round the table having a meal whilst we are talking over each other, the cross talk when we hear snippets and putting our penny ha'penny in.

At the end of first lockdown communion was brought to us by Deacon Didier, the pinnacle of our week. However, you may say we should be grateful, but it does not replace the meeting of people at mass, in a church, celebrating the Word and the Body and Blood of Christ together.



Photographs: Full rosaries and decades for Wild Goose course attendees

Between Lockdown #1 and 2 Self Isolation

With most of us at home, we have been fortunate that we have been able to follow mass on live streaming. This has led to programs been offered via Zoom, in addition to interviews, prayers, reciting the rosary and meeting fellow parishioners for coffee online. We have been advised on how to occupy ourselves: learn a language, try our artistic skills, visit the virtual museums.

We made some decade and full rosaries. We did 2 jigsaw puzzles: one of Varenna in Lake Como, Italy, the other of Marsascala, Malta. We would hazard a guess that like us you would think, "Aahh, that's where we would love to visit", our thoughts were running riot on what we would do. The little coffee shop at the edge of the water, the daily market where we would make our decision for our evening meal and buy the ingredients. An evening "passeggiata", a walk by the side of the water to enjoy the sunset or maybe stop for a nightcap. Wishing and hoping, medicine for comfort and relaxation; good riddance to anxiety, hello to daydreams.



Lockdown ended The Present

End of May 2021. After 14 months of self isolation and lockdown in one form or the other, we are praying that by end of June 2021 the Covid pandemic will be brought under control. An extract from an article in the Vatican News of the 27 April 2021 on 84 year old Jesuit, Fr Stan Swamy, who has been imprisoned in India for a crime of which he knows nothing, reminds us that although we too have been kept inside for something we are not responsible for, our faith and, the knowledge that we will one day be set free keeps us going. A fellow priest observed that 'even though he is in prison... Fr. Stan continues to reach out to fellow prisoners in whatever way he can. He added further comments addressed to Fr Stan,

“You have not allowed the brutal and inhuman system to break you! Instead, you tell us with such positivity and hope, that even a caged bird sings.”

Photographs: Artistic creations for the grandchildren's rooms



At every opportunity, our priests have celebrated mass for those who are unable to attend mass for which we are truly grateful. But those of us who make up part of the 1.5m are waiting for the day we are able to get out of our “cage” and be able to open our hands to receive the Body of Christ and say with great conviction, **AMEN.**

We want to get out and see new growth, smell the scents of flowers and trees and hear the birds call and chatter; to bring our families together in one group, sharing a meal whose smells bring back memories; to see the change in our grandchildren, hear their laughter and talking over each other and to feel the love of our family when we are able to hug.



At the beginning of this article I mentioned my “straight face”. One morning in 2003, my ex-business partner arrives and asks how am I to which I replied “fine thank you”. He replied “Please tell your face that”. Pina has often said, smile! I've often said that I may visit a plastic surgeon and have a perpetual smile procedure. Unfortunately, I would end up looking like a Cheshire cat. But God tells me that I am made in his image and likeness so beware.

The Year of St Joseph

John Haynes shares his memories of Kathleen Evans and gives an account of her latest venture

As we are all aware, Pope Francis has dedicated this year to St Joseph.

Many members of the congregation at St Francis will remember Kathleen Evans, sister of the late John Ronayne.

For a number of years, Kathleen was a headmistress at a number of schools in North London and Hertfordshire. In time, she married and moved with her husband to Canada.

Aware of the value of children reading books, for several summers she drove a vehicle around three or four small Canadian villages, towing a trailer full of library books which were bought at her own expense. She not only provided the children with books during the summer-time, but read to them whilst on her weekly visits (but not during the long winter months when deep snow blocked all the minor roads).

Thirty two years later, after Kathleen's husband passed away, she returned to England and lived in Nailsea, where she joined her brother John and his wife Mary in worshipping at St Francis Church.

Kathleen subsequently moved to Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire. Since living there, she has travelled to India to visit Father Bala, a Priest whom she got to know when he visited England.

Kathleen lives but a short car journey from where my son and his wife live; Ellie and I have been able to visit her on three separate occasions, the first ending up for lunch at a local pub, where former Prime Minister, David Cameron, accidentally left his 8 year old daughter!



Photographs: Above (top): Kathleen pictured recently, Above (bottom): St Joseph icon

Kathleen knows the editor of a magazine named CRAIC, which is produced especially for Irish folk living mainly in the London area (the members of which originally came to England to find work);

she has been a contributor of various articles over recent years.

For the 'Year of St Joseph', Kathleen wrote the main article for the 10,000 readers and was flattered when it was printed on a two sided A4 cardboard sheet. Having received and read a copy from her, I passed it to Clive & Mary Collins at St Francis and then to Father Richard.

I trust this article will be of interest to both our congregations, with its reflections on the life of St Joseph, a wonderful husband to Our Lady and Foster-Father of Our Lord Jesus.

Photographs: Left: Kathleen in India, Below: Advert and Front Cover for Craic magazine



Since writing this article, John has learned that Kathleen is about to embark on another adventure: a move from Princes Risborough to Alberta, Canada, having previously lived in Canada for 32 years. Kathleen is moving into a care home near where her late husband is buried.



Christian Meditation in Nailsea

by Shelagh Layet

This group has been meeting weekly since around 1993. We gather in the meeting room at Saint Francis from 8:00 to 9:00 PM on a Monday, except for Bank Holidays and the month of August.

We are an ecumenical group, explicitly Christian, but welcoming all who come. We pass on the teaching of John Main, who drew his inspiration

from the Desert Fathers in the early centuries of Christianity.

Christian meditation is a prayer without words often called the 'Prayer of the Heart'. It is interior, opening ourselves to the presence of the Spirit of Christ in our hearts. And we continue to open ourselves daily through a practice of silence and stillness. We endeavour to leave all thoughts

behind, all our anxieties, all other preoccupations, simply being present.

We are part of the World Community for Christian meditation. The website (www.wccm.org) shows how much and what variety of material is available to support this path. There are retreats, webinars, lectures, and teaching on how to meditate.



We have regional activity, too. This year, we have two South West retreats; one in July at the Greenhouse, Poole, and one in September at Ammerdown.

In normal times, there is also an evening gathering of a shared meal, preceded by meditation, for all the Christian meditation groups in the Bristol and Bath areas.

Although meditation may seem solitary, it is not always so. Experience shows that meditation creates community; we have a regional meditation online once a month, which is a congenial meeting for those outside our immediate parish.

Photographs from a recent retreat at Ammerdown

Since the pandemic, many of us have continued to gather at the same time on a Monday evening; at home, yet connected to one another. A reflection is sent out to the group by one of our team of five leaders in Nailsea.

We have also 'sprouted' a second online group, which is much appreciated and has been joined by those at a distance. It takes place on a Wednesday evening at 8 pm. A former member who retired to Ireland is able to join us again on Zoom!



Every year we hold an **'Introduction to Meditation'** six-week course, with a special invitation to those new to meditation to come and experience it.

If you would like to be informed about any of this contact shelagh.layet@gmail.com **13**



**Photograph: Ammerdown
retreat centre**

Recollections

Mary Frances has been a writer all her life, publishing her first professional article in 1956 and her first novel in 2005. These childhood recollections were first written in 1975 under the name Mary Langley.



ONE I am in a field with my brothers and sisters. The houses around it are familiar but distant and the tree standing in the middle of it has a thick, barky trunk and a platform built up on a high branch. On one side of the field there is a wall with holes where bricks have been taken out to make footholds. My brothers and sisters are playing rounders. "Come on Mary, catch." The ball comes to me, fast, spinning and hard, growing larger and harder. It will hurt my hands if I try to catch it, so I move away.

They are all running to the wall, shouting something. I run too but not fast enough, and by the time I reach it they have all gone over the top and there is no-one left but me, except the dog which is galloping across the grass. It is a new dog, different, with shiny, carroty hair and a long tail. It barks at me with sharp, excited shouts.

The footholds in the wall are too high and I scramble and cry and swallow salt, while fear and loneliness are hurting my throat. The stones in the wall are tearing my knees and shins and behind me the dog is still barking. I do not remember climbing up, only the feel and smell of the grass growing between the wall and our drive

as I fall into it on the other side. I am shivering and my knees do not want to hold me up.

In the kitchen, my mother and brothers and sisters are sitting at the long table. Their faces all look the same. I tell them about the dog and they laugh.

"He wouldn't have hurt you."

I want to tell them that they ran away and left me alone when they knew – they did know – that I couldn't climb the wall by myself. I want to tell them but the words don't come out and instead I am crying. Someone lifts me onto a chair and they are laughing with kind, warm laughs. They do not know why I am crying. They do not know that I am angry, angry that they left me and angry that they are laughing.

TWO The window is open and the curtains blow in with a soft, shishing sound. Outside there are voices far away of people on the Forest and a dog barking somewhere and the sound of a wheel, a squeaky pushcart, outside in the road. I can hear cars, not all the time, just sometimes, and once the bus as it came past the end of our garden. I can smell the lilac from the tree on the other side of the window and the grass from the lawn where someone has been mowing it.

The room is so familiar I do not even see it but lie on my bed watching the cracks in the ceiling plaster. One looks like a lady's head and another looks like half a dog and half a horse. If I try hard

I might be able to turn that line into a sideways-on face but the nose is a funny shape. I stare at it but cannot change the nose.

On the dressingtable, just to my right, there is a box with a necklace in it. I lined the box yesterday with a piece of dark blue velvet and I remember the feel of it as I put it there, and the jangly touch of the necklace as it dribbled down. The beads are white china ones with dark red and brown patterns in tiny lines like hairs.

The world is very quiet even though there are noises outside. The sounds are peaceful. I love my room, with the peaceful sounds and the smells. I want to hold them together. I shall lie on my bed forever.



THREE We have visitors to tea, a lady with curled up hair and a very clean dress, and my aunt, who is a little like my mother only more thin and solemn. There is a white tablecloth instead of the coloured one we had for dinner, and the pattern around the edge has a stand-up feel, so I can move it through my fingers and count the flowers. The cups and saucers and plates are the pretty white ones with roses on the outside, rosebuds that look as if they have dropped on one by one and are waiting to be picked up. On the inside of each cup there is one little rosebud.

Whenever we have the rose cups there is jelly and I can smell it now, and the cream and the celery. My brothers and sisters are around me and my father is laughing in a big laugh, and saying something to my aunt and the lady. My mother is standing up, pouring tea out of a big silver teapot. She always stands up to pour because she is too small to reach if she sits down. Everyone is talking and eating. On my plate there is a piece of very thin bread and butter and I look at everyone's faces and hear their voices without hearing what they are saying.



The dark curtains are pulled across the windows and the light is on over the table. Across the room the fire is enormous and hot in the grate. The room is warm and large and familiar. And somehow the corners are friendly even where they are dark. The pictures and the big mirror over the fireplace look like pieces of silver where the light falls on them. I am wearing my dark blue velvet dress and my sister Paddy, sitting next to me, is wearing her red one with the white around the neck. I am glad she is sitting next to me. I wonder who the lady is. I have forgotten her name but it doesn't matter. She smiled at me once but now I can look at her as much as I like.



FOUR I love paths and alleyways and twisty places to walk. On the path from the front door to the steps are cracks in the ground and I like to follow them and pretend they are little roads, all the way to the gate, up the steps, round to the terrace where my father is sitting and back again to the door. If I go across the road to the Forest there are paths across the huge open space at the end, paths through the trees at the top and little paths all over the big ones that I can follow and pretend about.

If I go the other way, up the road to the shops where my mother buys the butter and bacon,

there are bumpy, tiny, dark squares in the pavement outside the houses that go between them every now and again. They are called entries and I want to live in a house with an entry, so I can run up the narrow, echoey passage, my feet tapping on the dark, tiny tiles, and find the little gate to the back yard, next to all the other little back gates. My friend Janet lives in a house with an entry and I love to visit her. She has a fairy cycle.

The cracks in the path can be the walls of a house. I make a dining room and a bedroom and a sitting room, and here is the kitchen. And this crack can be the entry.

FIVE My brother has made the big settee into a ship. He has taken off the cushions and there is a tablecloth and a blanket draped over it. At one end is my father's little blue screen which he uses to keep the draught from his armchair. We have turned some dining chairs upside down and there is a flag sticking up for the mast.

My brother is the captain. I am quite happy sitting here watching him. He is very clever. Next time I sit on the arm of the settee I shall pretend it is a pony.



SIX I am under the billiard table. The room is dark, with only the light from the open door to show the edge of the carpet and the bookcases against the wall. Other bookcases make shadowy shapes just a bit darker than the dark itself and I can feel the roughness of the carpet on my knees and ankles. There is a hole in it. On the other side of the door there are people and lights and voices but no-one will come and look for me if I am quiet.

I am wrapped in a mystery, a mood of shivery expectation of something, and the music coming to me from the dining room wireless makes itself a part of my mystery and makes me feel dizzy. I dream of something but I do not know what, nor care as long as the scent of dust and leather and books enclose me.

A voice sings from the wireless. "Lovely, with that smile so warm and that cheek so soft, there is nothing for me but to love you, just the way you look tonight."

I am ecstatically happy but do not know why.



SEVEN It is night. My bedroom door is open and I can see onto the landing where the altar is, with the night-light in its little glass jar making soft in-and-out lights and turning the white cloth underneath it into crisp icing. The light throws moving shadows on the ceiling. I can hear my father snoring. My head and throat feel like fire and my arms and chest hurt. I watch the night-light and the flame looks like a yellow-white star swaying from side to side. I try to swallow and cough.

“Mummy.” I wait, holding my breath to hear if she has heard me. If she hasn’t I shall call again. I cannot go to her. It isn’t safe, there might be someone waiting for me on the landing or on the four stairs you have to go down to get to her. My father’s snores get louder and quicker and then stop. I call again. “Mummy, Mummy.”

There is a soft sound of clothes and I can see my mother’s shadow between the door and the night-light. I cannot see her face but her hand is on my forehead, smoothing back the hair on top of my head. She will make me comfortable again and my throat will stop hurting, and there will be clean sheets and something to drink and the doctor will come tomorrow.

Photographs: All the accompanying photographs were commissioned for the article and planned and photographed by Ellie White, Aged 12





Community Farm, Zambia

by Elizabeth A Rhodes

If you had a spare £1 coin, could you imagine what an amazing difference it could make to someone else's life? Just think of it added to lots more people's £1 coins.

John and I returned from our visit to Southern Africa, one week early and just before the UK went into lockdown last year... March 2020. We left the 'Garden of Eden' in Namibia, watching the sun set over a quiet waterhole, to fly home in the world's 'mad panic' about a crazy pandemic, no one knew anything about.

We had a fantastic time in southern Africa, catching up with Alice Nalwizya, who works tirelessly to support our ladies in [momsandkidsworkingtogether](#) (on FaceBook).

We ate samosas with one group of ladies we support, who were learning to cook in a compound in Lusaka; we worshipped in 'churches' around the country; got soaked by the spray crossing the Knife-Edge Bridge at Victoria Falls; we watched elephants grazing beside the road; got bitten by insects throughout the

night, while trying not to think about the 'jumping spiders' on the wall (that we hadn't been able to re-home!) and paddled peacefully through the Okavango in a Mokoro.

Africa is a magical, fascinating and diverse place.

Since our return, we have been in touch with three people we met whilst in Africa and are now working with them, supporting new groups both in Zambia and Zimbabwe.



Many people in Southern Africa don't have permanent jobs, even when qualified and they're forced to rely on earning a few pounds a week just to pay the rent and eat a little.

They are 'entrepreneurs' ... innovative, persistent and determined... sometimes they take risks and always they work hard. Some travel by 'bus' to buy fish at land locked lakes to sell door to door on their return. Some go to their village to buy sunflower seeds, pay to have them crushed into oil, before returning (on the 'bus') to sell the oil from any containers they can find, at the local street market.

It is through your kindness and donations that we have been able to help women and men like this over the last few years.

'Our charity philosophy is that anyone, with the will and determination, can make a difference for the better in someone else's life.'

We can let our friends know that people they may never meet, in

places they may never visit, actually care about them, love them and want to help. We can even speak to them realtime via WhatsApp in a video call.

Our ladies in their groups in Lusaka and Chipata are doing great, well supported by their Zambian 'Champions' Alice and Rose... and a guy we met in Zimbabwe with a little help started a business buying and selling fish. So John and I didn't imagine we would be branching out into another field... (not supposed to be a pun) However we now find ourselves supporting a whole farm, a community farm!

Ackim, a great priest I have known since I volunteered in Monze some five years ago, and whom both John and I met whilst in Zambia last year, recently told us of a life changing dilemma he was in.

He wrote to tell us of a crisis in his parish in Choma (near to Monze in Zambia) and that his bishop had asked him to take some time out.

Ackim explained that he was devastated, especially as he had received this news on the tenth anniversary of his becoming a priest.

Eventually, he told us he had moved to Lusaka to try and work out what to do next.

After engaging in many discussions with his fellow priests and his friends, and spending lots of time in prayer during his great personal struggle, an idea began to form.

His life's purpose in serving and praising God as a priest, helping his fellow Zambians and especially empowering the youth and the women who work so hard, would still continue... in a slightly different way. God's purpose for us can be fulfilled in many ways.

He had searched for a way to serve his people, the rural poor of Zambia and while pondering this he was working hard to earn, raise and put aside enough money to return to his studies, believing a qualification would help him. As a teenager, he had lived alone in the bush for a year, collecting wood to make charcoal to sell, in order to return to school and finish his education. Hard work and determination was not new to him.

Eventually, the idea was fully formed. He applied for and secured a place at Lusaka University, to study Communication for Development, <https://www.comminit.com/global/content/university-zambia-master-communication-development-mcd>

'The programme goal is to train graduates who will help improve communication for development practices in social, economic, political, and other areas of human endeavour thereby closing the gap thought to be responsible for the lack of progress during the "lost decades" of development in Zambia and other countries.'

And in his own words this is his story.....

"Life in Zambia is hard and so one has to develop some surviving skills. As I am studying, I am also working with a rural community in farming.

The idea of a farm came after prayer and before the university course opportunity. Zambia has a lot of under utilised land and many people, despite working on this land, still remain in poverty."



"So I came up with this idea because we want to utilise the land and make sure that people around us in this rural place should never be poor again. Many people still live on the land in Zambia but individually they struggle to survive.

The farm will become a training centre for villagers, especially woman and young single people. They will learn to grow some crops for food, as well as soya beans and sunflower seeds which can be sold for cash, and crops like ginger, tomatoes, pepper and garlic."



"Perhaps you might think 'But how have the people been surviving?' Well, they survive by only being small farmers, cultivating a small size plot on someone else's land.

We would like to have a broader view. To buy enough land to create a community farm (or a commune)... at the moment we can only afford to rent land. We want to sell what we grow and also make and sell jam, tomato paste, chilli pepper, even keep bees to sell honey and keep chickens for eggs to sell.

As with farming anywhere, we depend on the rains. With a borehole and thus reliable water we could grow crops throughout the year. Our soil is very fertile and our climate warm and sunny.

This farming season we planted soya beans which did very well, and we're now harvesting. So far we have five sacks ready for market. We purchased a tent to dry them under and sacks to pack them in. Soon they will all be off to the market to be sold."

Our project, going forward, for community farm Zambia, has to be a borehole... Some of the crops planted this season (November to March) failed due to lack of rain. Ackim has already obtained a quote for drilling the 60 metre hole, the inner casing and the bricking and we are waiting for the final cost which, of course will include, the hand pump. Many people in Zambia depend solely on borehole water and of course it is very safe for drinking!

So this is how the project stands at the end of May... and we'll keep you updated via the Facebook page until we can resume making coffee after church.

Obviously, being a millionaire or even a billionaire might have its advantages, and you could make a greater impact ... however, we hope you can now see the importance of your love and your £1 or more. :))

John and I are helping to support the farm. On Facebook we are 'Community Farm Zambia' and we have also set up a Justgiving page. https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/communityfarmzambia?utm_id=1&utm_term=z27

May is the Month of Mary

Staff and pupils at St Joseph's school were delighted to be able to celebrate the annual May procession in honour of Our Lady once again and to welcome Fr Richard and Deacon Didier to conduct the service. It was an especial joy after the restrictions of lockdown to be able to share such an important celebration as a school community.





Pilgrimage to Glastonbury

by Roger Layet

The history of Christianity at Glastonbury is fascinating, though mixed with legends. Throughout the early centuries of the Christian era, the population around Glastonbury was Celtic. Not until 658 did the westward invasion of the Saxons succeed in occupying the area permanently. On arrival, the Saxons found an old church dedicated to Our Lady, referred to as a wattle church in a charter of King Ina of 725. Legend has it that a wattle and daub church had been built in

Glastonbury, and dedicated to Our Lady, by Joseph of Arimathea, who, as a merchant, came to SW Britain to trade for tin and lead. That one legend aside (there are many more), it seems clear that there was a monastery at Glastonbury going back to at least the 5th century. In 2016 archaeological digs found about 60 skeletons almost certainly comprising a monastic graveyard. The earliest of these were carbon dated to the 5th century. The site was not the present Abbey site, but nearby – the monks may have moved at some stage.

The earliest documents referring to the origins of the Abbey were destroyed when the Abbey (including a tiny wattle church enclosed within a larger wooden structure) was burnt down in 1184. Despite the loss of these documents, throughout mediaeval times in England the Abbot of Glastonbury was given precedence over other ecclesiastical figures because the church accepted Glastonbury claims to ancient foundation.

Pilgrimage to Our Lady St. Mary of Glastonbury began early. The monk William of Malmesbury writing in the early 12th century records that the early church on the site, though insignificant in stature, was redolent of a mysterious sanctity: **“waves of common people thronging thither flooded every path”** People venerated an old wooden statue of the Virgin. In the fire of 1184 this statue was saved and set

up within the new stone Abbey, consecrated in 1186. The Abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1539 and three monks executed on the Tor for refusing to accept his right to rule the church. The old statue of Our Lady was lost. It was not until 1955 that a new statue bearing the old title of Our Lady Saint Mary of Glastonbury was blessed and the shrine was canonically restored.

Glastonbury again became a magnet for Christian pilgrims. For the annual diocesan pilgrimage most come by coach or car but some have chosen other ways. One of the earliest to do so from Nailsea was Terry Moore, Joyce’s husband. Subsequently Frank Mattos, Michael Ibbetson and others began a tradition of cycling from Saint Francis to the Abbey.

In 1995 the idea of walking from Nailsea was relaunched and since then a group has walked every year up to 2019 (our 25th anniversary). Covid has led the diocese to cancel since. Over the years about 34 people have walked the pilgrimage, mainly parishioners, but also friends or relatives. We are typically about 8-10 each year.

Photographs: Above on title page: At St Francis. Right: En route, day 1, near Priddy. Only three miles left today?



Somerset is blessed with beautiful countryside and in walking from Saint Francis to Glastonbury we are also fortunate to be able to use many field and woodland paths. Little of the route is on road. At 28 miles the distance fits well into a day and a half, with an overnight stop at Westbury- sub-Mendip. Westbury also offers the only shop and the only pub that we pass en route.

One constant over the years has been to stay with Linda and Malcolm and with Mary overnight in Westbury. They do not do B and B any more commercially but have become good friends to us. We now share our evening with them in the village pub. The continuation of the walking pilgrimage probably depends on them still being able to put us up.

We have had much good companionship and fun over the years. Once Paula’s friend in Wrington offered us cold drinks on a hot, hot, day. Another time Peter and Chris Broderick intercepted us on top of Mendip with cold beers and soft drinks in their car. Other highlights include Linda's cakes on arrival in Westbury and the evenings at the hostelry.



Photograph: On the Tor. John has his boots off. Was this one of the years of blisters?

We have lots of in-jokes which readers would not understand but I will share one. The route on day 2 crosses the Somerset levels and in the early days the footpath crossed the rhynes via planks. Once Margaret fell in, not seriously but had to change her shirt. Thereafter we decided she was wearing a new perfume: Eau de Rhyne.

All life can be a spiritual experience and our pilgrimages exemplify that.

But in addition to the companionship and the peace of the countryside our walk begins with a liturgy at the church. During the walk we have occasional readings and prayers, and on each day a section of the walk is in silence. We arrive with prayers in the Lady Chapel at Glastonbury (this being the site of the wattle church destroyed in 1184) before joining the diocesan procession and Mass.

A closing thought. Towards the end of day one we reach a point on Mendip where you can see right across the levels and Bridgwater Bay a beautiful view – and our first view of our destination - Glastonbury Tor. Then we descend the Hill and cannot see our destination again until the following morning we climb one of the small hills on the levels and suddenly there it is. Even then though often in view it is not always – and it takes a long time to seem near. Pilgrimage as a metaphor for life's journey?

“To know you is the end and the beginning.

You carry us and you go before us.

You are the journey and the journey's end.” (Boethius)

(The photographs are selected from John McAllister's archive. Sadly, there is not room to show all 34 walkers!)

Photograph: The Abbey's Lady chapel. Site of the old wattle church.



St Joseph Statue

Thanks to the generosity of a St Joseph's parishioner, a beautiful new statue of St Joseph has been installed in the memorial garden at St Joseph's. As we celebrate this Year of St Joseph, we place ourselves, and our loved ones, under the protection of the Patron of the Church.

It was a great joy to see the statue blessed after mass on a brilliantly sunny Sunday. As much as anything, it was wonderful to be in the 'outdoor' company of fellow parishioners.



St Francis Maintenance

A lush garden scene with a statue of a woman in a long dress, potted plants, and a stone wall. The scene is filled with green foliage and sunlight filtering through the leaves.

By Christopher Elliott

There are many sub-groups in St Francis' wider community. Many focus on the spiritual, some on the social and some on keeping our church usable. Some in this latter category produce beautiful

highly visible results such as the flower arrangers while others' efforts are less visible but really important such as the church cleaners. This must also include the sanitizing works that have had to

be performed after every mass since the pandemic erupted. There is another group whose work you may have noticed and that is the Maintenance Group led by John McAlister.



**Photographs:
Above on title
page: Memorial
Garden**

**Above: Interview
room**

Last autumn when the leaves were falling profusely from the many trees in St Francis' grounds, I asked John whether he would like me to sweep some up. "Come on a Monday afternoon" he said, "that would be really helpful". So I did and received a very friendly welcome from the maintenance

group. We are a small, friendly team who take our direction from John. We have three types of work: projects, routine maintenance and "spur of the moment" things. Since I have been involved we have improved the hard-standing for where the wheelie bins go and reworked the memorial garden.

Routine maintenance always includes sweeping. It is amazing how much appears every week to be swept up. The growing season means the grass needs cutting frequently but it is the autumn that seems to create most work with all those leaves. They seem to get everywhere! The roof gullies and gutters always need clearing out. Spur of the moment jobs can be simple or challenging. Recently we had to reposition a rail that Father uses to hang his vestments on. That took 15 minutes. Just before Christmas there was a leak in the gents' toilets in the hall. That took quite a few hours to sort out.

As to projects, the group has worked on a whole variety of things. The interview room in the main church building was created in the space where the gents' toilets used to be. Next to this ladies and disabled toilets. We are now able to have mass livestreamed into our homes because the maintenance team installed the necessary equipment.

Those that have visited St Francis may have noticed that we are now lit with super energy saving LEDs rather than conventional light bulbs. While the hall now has acoustic panels fitted in an attempt to make listening easier. We have also installed a new shed at the back of the church in which we can keep all our gardening tools.

Over the coming months we will continue to work outside trying to tame our grounds. If you would like to come and join our happy gang, just come along on a Monday at 2 o'clock. John will soon find you a task to do which will match your abilities and interest. There really is a wide variety of jobs to be done.

**Photographs: Top right:
interview room door
Right: Maintenance area**



Arrival at St Joseph's

By Di Castro

Temporal circumstances led my daughters and me to move to Portishead five days before the most recent 'lockdown' commenced. My very human vision of how we would spend our first few weeks and months here dissipated. My daughters had preschool, but I felt cast adrift, self-indulgently ruminating.

Myopic individual that I am, I briefly forgot that our Lord is over all and in all; we are never alone, even in a new town.

I've only been 'officially' Catholic since last August (my confirmation having been delayed due to the first 'lockdown'), but have been attending Mass since my twin daughters were born in 2018. I was incredibly attached to my parish church in my former town (also a St Joseph's), thus, I felt more trepidation about joining a new congregation than any other aspect of moving to a new town. I'd already ascertained that St Joseph's was but a short walk from our new abode, but it took me a couple of weeks to overcome silly nerves and actually attend Mass.

It was very fortunate, therefore, that the parish is so rich in online opportunities, be it Mass, faith courses, or ad hoc events. My former parish had provided online Mass, but there was a paucity of other online opportunities during the first 'lockdown' and subsequent months during which restrictions were still in place. **32**



Thus, during the first few months of residing in Portishead, being able to attend Mass, participate in an online faith course, as well as join a local prayer and worship group via the wonderful technology of Zoom; this is what kept me going during those seemingly endless winter months.

I've found that, in connecting with a new congregation, my faith has deepened and I worship in a more open, vocal way than I used to. I've found that worship can be both meaningful and exciting: I cannot quite articulate the arrant joy I now experience when I join other Catholics in praise and worship.

Photographs: St Joseph's Church and two of its most recent parishioners, Di's twin daughters



I have an appalling singing voice, but I genuinely don't mind what I sound like when singing in praise of our Lord. I also love to see how my daughters now dance when they hear worship music. There is something so beautiful in seeing small children participate in Mass.

I am still at the beginning of my journey in faith, but I feel so immensely blessed to be a part of St Joseph's, Portishead. I truly feel that it is a fantastic parish to be raising my daughters within. We are part of a community who are united by our love for God and His love for us.

Stations of the Resurrection

Pupils at St Francis' School celebrate the hope of Easter

During the Easter season, the children at St Francis' School reflected on the Stations of the Resurrection which begin with the appearance of the Risen Lord to Mary Magdalene and end with Pentecost. The Stations of the Resurrection emphasise the hopeful aspect of the Christian story and can serve to deepen an appreciation of the Easter season.

Each class made models to represent the Stations and, with the help of Fr Richard Elson and Fr Reg Gray, spent some time focussing in a prayerful way on their meanings.

Here are some quotes from the Year 6 children:

"At the station that tells the story of the Road to Emmaus, I thought about the bread and wine and how there are some people in the world who don't have any food or drink. It made me grateful for the things I have."

"At the Ascension Station, we heard about Jesus going up to Heaven to be with his Father. I thought about when my Grampy died. I believe he is in Heaven with God and I know he is in a better place."

"At the Pentecost Station I thought about the disciples in the locked room and Jesus saying he will send a helper - it turned out to be the Holy Spirit. When my Mum was ill, I prayed to the Holy Spirit and it made me have courage and my Mum got better."





Photographs:

Above: Top: Fr Reg blesses one of the stations, Middle: The Risen Lord sends the Holy Spirit, Year 2 Bottom: The Risen Lord Ascends into Heaven, Year 1

This page: Top left: Doubting Thomas by Year 3, Top right: Year 3 with their station, Middle left: Fr Richard helps Year 6 pupils, Middle right: The Empty Tomb, Year 6. Bottom: The Breaking of the Bread, Year 5



St Alban: Britain's first martyr

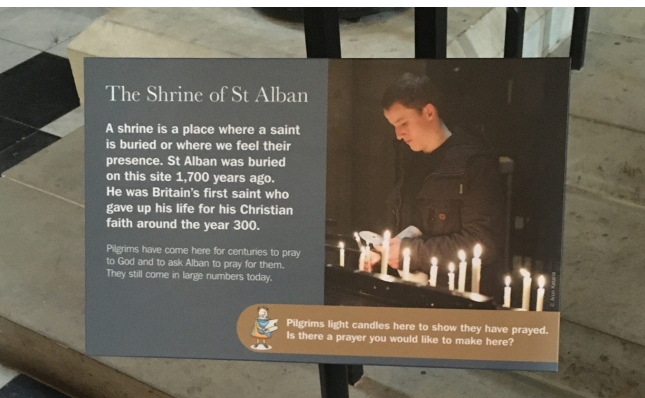
by Nicola Osman

When our son was born we had already selected a name, or so we thought. We were expecting to see him and agree that the name we had chosen would suit and move on. But we didn't. It didn't seem to fit him. So we had several days of trying to come up with an alternative, even trying various names on for size, until one seemed to fit. Alban.

We had first really become aware of Saint Alban when we watched a truly compelling production by Rise Theatre entitled 'Soldier to Saint,' in which they brought the story of St Alban into the present day and left a lasting impression of powerful, self-sacrificing man. It certainly made a lasting impression on us anyway.

One of the things I've learned in the last couple of years, since naming Alban, is the term proto-martyr. This refers to the first Christian martyr in a particular country and this is what St Alban is for Britain. So it will come as no great surprise that Alban lived in about the year 300 and was a Roman. The story goes that he gave shelter to a Christian priest in need and became a Christian himself. Then, in order for his friend and teacher to escape, he switched clothes with him and allowed himself to be arrested.

I have recently learned that the priest he died to protect, Amphibalus, also went on to become a Saint.



Photographs: Top: Icon of Saint Alban, Middle: Sign outside the shrine, Bottom: Medieval Cathedral painting

The story of Alban is recounted by the venerable Bede. When Alban was brought before the magistrate, he was ordered to worship the Roman Gods and the emperor. He refused.

'I am called Alban, he answered and I worship and adore the true and living God.'

Realising that torture wouldn't work, the magistrate sentenced him to immediate execution.

During a recent trip to see family, we were able to go to visit St Albans and the beautiful cathedral where the shrine of St Alban is located. This is where we learned more about his story, although those of you familiar with early hagiography (writings about the Saints) will know that some parts of the legends of the early saints are a little too dramatic to be believed! At least to me, the stream through which he walked on his way to his execution parting like the Red Sea seems to be a possible piece of artistic license. What remains in the case of St Alban, however, when probable human embellishments are stripped away is the story of an ordinary man whose encounter with Christ gave him the strength to stand against everything he'd ever known and sacrifice himself for his faith.

The town of St Albans commemorates its namesake Saint every year with a huge puppet show depicting events from his life. In the Anglican cathedral, we were able to see some of the puppets, as well as read all about him. His shrine is a beautiful part of the Cathedral, open for prayer, and there is a very arresting icon there. Just outside, there are pilgrim badges to collect with Alban's emblem on, which is a T cross with a detached circle, presumably depicting his death by beheading. The cathedral has also been modernised to include a tasteful gift shop and cafe.

And he gave his name to a hot cross bun! This was, as you can imagine, one of the more exciting finds for Ava and Alban, along with the Alban biscuit that was for sale in the cathedral cafe. The Alban bun was reputedly made by a Brother Roccliffe in 1361 and given to the local poor on Good Friday.

St Alban, proto-martyr, pray for us.

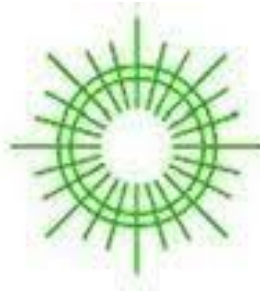
Photographs: Top: Alban by the shrine, Middle: The Alban biscuit, Bottom: Cathedral window



Wellsprings fundraiser

Young people from Portishead, Clevedon, and Yatton parishes raise money for Nailsea-based youth mental health charity

A youth group started meeting in Clevedon in 2019 once a month for Catholic faith exploration, pizza, and drinks, prayer and fundraising together. The young people grew into a group and there was an appetite to continue meeting through lockdown on Zoom. A member of the group has a sibling who has experienced mental health problems, and this is why the group decided to raise charity funds for Wellspring Counselling.



Wellspring Counselling

Wellspring Counselling service offers counselling to young people between 11 and 16 on mental health issues including anxiety, depression and self esteem and comprises a professional team of experienced counsellors and psychotherapists, trainees and wellbeing practitioners

Due to pandemic restrictions, each member of the youth group had to think about their own Covid-safe way of raising money. Despite this difficulty, they raised a collective total of over £300.

Photographs: Sponsored cycle stopping points in Portishead and Clifton



One member of the group, Olly, chose to embark on a sponsored cycle to raise money. He set off with Dad in tow to cover all the parishes that members of the group were in, as well as the Cathedral. Olly set off from Cleeve and cycled to Nailsea, then to Clifton, Portishead, Clevedon and back to Cleeve. The huge circular route was 42 miles long and took almost seven hours. For Olly, an ardent rugby fan and Bristol Bears supporter, the highlight of the journey was spotting a number of Bristol Bears players as he crossed the Clifton suspension bridge. The most challenging part of the journey was cycling back home through dark lanes after sun down.

Another member of the group, Chloe, raised money by making and selling hair scrunchies:

"My material was from old clothes. people donated ol/ripped clothes and I would cut them into the right size and turn them into scrunchies.

The sewing machine I used was my neighbour's and I had a few problems with it because it was so old.

I loved this experience as it taught me loads of new skills. I would do this again in the future and to raise a lot more money for charity in the future."



Photographs: Chloe and the scrunchies she made



Ellie chose to complete a sponsored walk. Her route took her from Cleeve to the Yatton Chapel of St Dunstan's. From there she set off for Clevedon and then returned to Cleeve. Ellie's journey was made in the freezing cold in the company of her dad (who had already earned his stripes accompanying her brother Olly on his cycle ride) and with the help of some much-needed pocket hand warmers. The toughest part of the walk was limping the last few miles but she enjoyed stopping in Clevedon for lunch and some refreshments on-the-go provided by Grandma.





At Lake Kournos

**Turquoise sea and shimmering sand,
Stroll down the beach hand in hand,
Cicadas chirping who questions why,
Kournos Lake, a kingfisher darting by.
The resort is quiet and pleasantly Greek.
The ducks on the river with yellow beak,
The waves do crash from dawn to dusk,
A shower of rain sets off the musk.
Thoughts of home do make us sad,
We will be back again so be glad.**

Maureen Kingston-Lee



Assisi

**Early morning walk through medieval Assisi,
To Mass at the Basilica of St Clare.
Hear the bells ring, listen to the bells sing.
Back for breakfast, then coach to places where St Francis prayed,
Return to Assisi where he is laid.
Flight from Rome, it's time to go home.
AMEN**

Maureen Kingston-Lee

Reviews

Where we invite reviews of faith formation TV, Books, Films or Apps

The Chosen, is a TV series based on the early ministry of Jesus as portrayed through the experiences of those who met him.

The brainchild of American filmmaker, Dallas Jenkins, it is a crowd-funded TV series, using viewer support to create a multi-seasonal series about the life of Jesus, allowing people time to dig deeper into the lives of his disciples in a way that is both more intimate but also more human and mundane in its level of detail.

Season 1 (8 episodes) focuses on the calling of the 'fishers of men', the enquiries of Nicodemus and the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, starting with the wedding feast of Cana. Season 2 (5+ episodes) still being released, commences with the teachings of Jesus in Samaria, the healing of the sick and the calling of the remainder of the disciples.

The series is rich in detail, some stories are old favourites, whilst others are intended to remain faithful to the Gospels but to provide a level of detail and familiarity with the characters not otherwise possible.



It tends to meander along, remaining interesting, but occasionally pushing the key events into the background (like the baptism of Jesus) whilst focusing on the journeys and development of the people around Jesus.

It is rooted in humanity, and we meet the disciples initially as a disparate group with limited common understanding and existing personal difficulties and differences that they struggle to set aside. Occasionally these challenges seem to 'modern' and the distance between, for example, Simon Peter the fisherman and St Peter the Rock may seem too great.

Similarly, the portrayal of Jesus can sometimes be a bit inconsistent in representing him both as the Son of God and the Son of Man, however the episode of Jesus with the

children reminds us of his strength for gentleness.

We have enjoyed the series thus far; it doesn't replace the need to read the Gospels, but it does add colour and texture to an understanding of the story and we would recommend it to anyone interested in immersing themselves in a biblical history told with sufficient time and expanse to allow for the people in the Bible to be brought to life. We will be interested to see how it progresses, although rest safe in the knowledge we know how it ends!

It is available on YouTube, however viewers are encouraged to download the free App 'The Chosen' to access all of the series, interviews and other content, and most importantly the merchandise store!

by Anderson Chaplow



This free app is a wonderful way to start the day prayerfully. The format is the same everyday - it begins with some music and then a reading of one of the readings for the day, followed by a time of reflection led with questions and prompts. However, there is a wide variety of good quality music from many genres chosen and there is also a number of different voices who read on different days - this

keeps things fresh and interesting. Sometimes the format of the reflection changes as well. My husband listens to the daily reflection whilst waking and I listen to it on my journey to work but we both find that it helps to carve out ten to thirteen minutes of prayer at the start of the day and sets the tone for the day to come. The app is produced by Jesuits and based on Ignatian spirituality.

We came across this movie whilst scrolling through an online movie provider with a free movie code from our bank - pickings were slim until we spotted this intriguing title. The movie tells the story of Edith Stein and, whilst it is 'made-for-TV-movie' in its style, we still found her story compelling. The film details parts of her life through the eyes of a journalist sent from America years after the war to investigate her story. As he interviews various significant figures

in her life, the story of her conversion and commitment to holy orders is told. What took me by surprise was the way in which the journalist's story became interesting in its own right. Whilst I have no idea how true a depiction this film achieves, it certainly left me desperate to know more about the life of Edith Stein (St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) and even those who helped to bring her path towards sainthood to light.

