

THE PORTICO



Christmas Greetings!

- ★ Greetings for A Happy Christmas and Healthy 2021 *Jill and Jurek*
- ★ Best wishes for a very Happy Christmas *Sue A*
- ★ Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. *From Sam*
- ★ My very best wishes to all readers of the Portico. Hopes also for a much better 2021! *Jean*
- ★ May the Peace & Joy of Christmas be with all my church family. *Pamela*
- ★ Sending every good wish and Christmas Blessings to all in the parish, and may the New Year bring good health to all. *from Barbara Bramford.*
- ★ Good wishes to all in the parish *from Ben and Emily Dytor* - who are expecting their 3rd baby in March.
- ★ "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, 'God is with us'." (Matt. 1:23.) Wishing you a very happy Christmas & peaceful New Year. *Love from Deacon Andrew & Margaret*
- ★ Just wanted to wish everyone a happy Christmas despite the difficulties and hoping that it won't be too long before we are all able to meet and greet each other again. Here's to a better 2021. *Love, Nan xx*
- ★ Hope you enjoy the festive season with all its restrictions! *from Kay Money*
- ★ A Joyful Christmas to everyone, and thanks for all your support. *Peter and Jenny*

Prayers

Lucy Fanning RIP

Those who visited Lucy in Mountford House knew her as the gentlest of people, with a child-like love of our Lord.

Please keep Arlana in your prayers this Christmas, she is waiting for a date for an urgent operation.

Congratulations!

to Emma and Luke on the birth of Lara Felicity this week - (and to Nan of course!)

Messages

" Sorry to hear about Sr Kathleen, who was very highly regarded by parents and students alike (at Notre Dame)" *Kay M*

Thank you's and blessings from Mags, Sue, Jill and Kay.

Welcome to Samantha F the most recent addition to our mailing list.



Pope Francis
@Pontifex

The Christmas tree and the Nativity scene are signs of hope, especially in this difficult time. Let us be sure we do not stop at the sign, but get to the meaning, that is, to Jesus, to the love of God that He revealed to us, the infinite goodness that he made shine on the world.

12:30 · 19/12/2020 · TweetDeck

A parish self-audit

Look back, to move forward better



Footsteps, from Paul V

Fr John assembled a small group of parishioners last week, to test how best to engage the parish in the self-audit to be carried out here in Truro, as requested in Bishop Mark's "A Precious Place". The aim is for our community to assess realistically our ability "to fulfil and develop the fundamental aspects of parish life and mission." and to provide feedback to the Bishop by end of January 2021.

Evening Prayer:

Mondays at 6pm

Deacon Andrew is hosting Evening Prayer of the Church, by Zoom, on Mondays at 6pm. All welcome, no experience necessary! E-mail to andrewshute@prcdtr.org.uk

Truro Men's Retreat

The Men's Retreat Group held another Zoom session last week. Again, it was a small and relaxed discussion, this time led by Andrew.

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Jenny & Peter Kwee can be contacted at theportico@icloud.com

A Precious Place: a reflection

Editorial Note: thanks to all who have commented on A Precious Place. We wait for arrangements to discuss and feed back to our Parish Priest and Bishop - see article on A parish self-audit. Meanwhile, here are one reader's thoughts

Bishop Mark's recent document on re organisation within the Diocese, makes regular reference to 'The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community', which was issued from the Vatican during the summer. On Christian initiation it says 'It is a journey that is ongoing' 'not as a duty to fulfil, a rite of passage' as 'an ongoing proclamation of the Mystery of Christ.' (para 23) This seems especially relevant to the preparation of young people for 1st Holy Communion, and for Confirmation, and for the reception of adults into the Church. We have so many sessions of preparation, then the big day comes, and that's it, and then we complain that so many don't come back to Mass afterwards. And we need ongoing adult formation as well. To give an illustration, many of us will have learned our prayers from our mothers and stick with that formula for the rest of our adult lives.

A little further, (para 25) we read "The 'culture of encounter' is conducive to dialogue, solidarity and openness to others, 'a Parish must be a place that brings people together and fosters long term personal relationships, thereby giving people a sense of belonging and being wanted.' And isn't this encounter at least a partial answer to our ongoing formation, something which we can do with and for each other?"

'Pastoral Conversion' and 'A Precious Place' also discuss grouping of Parishes working together, and this seems especially helpful in the preparation of children and young adults who may be few in one parish and feel such a tiny and isolated minority without the friendship of others, and where their catechists or leader could share too.

From Frances McWilliams

A Mid-Winter Dawn



Fiery December dawn over Truro last week, as we approach tomorrow's Winter Solstice and the turning of the year. The Cathedral is hiding behind the tallest trees! Let us pray for a better new year for everyone!



“Let Us Dream” (Tony Barber)

If you are looking for a last minute stocking filler for the thinking person in your life, can I recommend *Let us Dream: a Path to a Better Future* by Pope Francis. This is a very readable discussion of some of the problems facing us today: Covid, refugees, climate change, arms race, women in the church and others. As you can tell from the title, it not only analyses the present crisis but offers guidance and hope for the future, following themes from two recent papal documents *Fratelli Tutti* and *Laudato Si’*.

The book came out of a discussion between the Pope and Austen Ivereigh, who parishioners may



(Austen Ivereigh with Stuart and Evelyn)

remember visited the parish some years ago to talk about his earlier biography of the Pope.

A slim book, but it has many profound thoughts.

Puzzle

One of Santa's Elves, on his way home carrying a bag of coins representing his Christmas bonus, had to cross ten bridges, each guarded by a troll. Before he was allowed to pass he had to give up half of his coins as a passage fee. Since the trolls were still full of Christmas spirit each of them gave one of the coins back. When the Elf got home he just had two coins left. How many coins do you suppose he started with?

(email your answer to THE PORTICO at theportico@icloud.com for a Secret Santa prize!)

COVID Christmas Cracker:

Q: Why couldn't Mary and Joseph see the rest of the family at Christmas?

A: There was no Zoom at the Inn.

Overheard in Court:

Q: What was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that morning?

A: He said, "Where am I, Doris?"

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: My name is Susan.



The Wicked Fairy At The Manger
(by U.A. Fanthorpe)

My gift for the child:
No wife, kids, home;
No money sense. Unemployable.
Friends, yes. But the wrong sort-
The work-shy, women, wimps,
Petty infringers of the law,
persons
With notifiable diseases,
Poll tax collectors, tarts;
The bottom rung.
His end?
I think we'll make it
Public, prolonged, painful.
Right, said the baby. *That was roughly*
What we had in mind.

The Advent Journey Poems 2020
(excerpts) by Fr Mark Skelton

The One she bears in love and quiet calm,
Whose limbs and heart are moulded secretly
Will, when he grows to walk His adult life,
Find ways to heal and set the damaged free.

The silence of the Covid gathered crowds,
Who cannot sing together of their Lord,
Can still find ways to share their joy in Him,
Who, from a stable, whispered soft His Word.



Christmas illuminations on Trafalgar Roundabout by Our Lady of the Portal church, for those who have not recently ventured out in the dark!

