



SPAN Quiz night

Save the date

Date: Friday 9th February 2024

Time: Doors open 7:30pm for 8pm start

Theme: 50 years

Ticket price: £ 5 (youth £ 1)

Proceeds to: Friends of the Holy Land

Quiz, bar, raffle and good company

Young families

Social morning for young families on Saturday 3rd February from 10am until noon in Our Lady's Church Hall. Activities and refreshments will be provided

Jo Mander

OUR LADY'S 100⁰ CLUB

A reminder that we have started a **100 club** with proceeds going towards the church maintenance fund. If you would like to join I will be in the church hall each Sunday after Mass or you can contact me on 07950 144450. The cost will be £12 per year for each number you have. There will be two prizes each month; 1st prize is £25; 2nd prize £15

Each draw will take place on the fourth Sunday of the month starting January 28th. The more numbers you have, the better chance of winning

Sue Sugars



Quiz on the general theme of 50 years

SPAN is celebrating 50 years since its founding year.

In that time Catholic Leamington have raised over £1.25 million for local and overseas causes, a wonderful achievement - well done!

There will be some displays about our recent projects including how the Frank Garvey Legacy has been allocated. Chris Connors from Coco's Foundation plans to attend

Tickets on sale after Sunday Masses in our three churches on January 28th and February 4th. Let Jenny know if you have any raffle prizes? Unwanted chocolates or bottles?

Contact *Jenny Armstrong* to reserve tickets at the door. jenarmstrong@talktalk.net

Proceeds to Friends of the Holy Land: "We are heartbroken by the recent events in Gaza and southern Israel. Through our contacts on the ground we are doing our best to react quickly to get immediate help to those sheltering in the Christian churches and buildings, largely in Gaza City."

Paul Hayden

Continuing our celebrations in our 50th year: on Friday 7th June we are planning a World Foods evening with updates on our projects and a social evening for our parishes. Could you prepare a cultural dish for 10-12 people? Contact Jenny with suggestions for the evening / offers.

Fr Christopher Greaney RIP

Fr Chris's sudden and unexpected death at home, late on Wednesday 27 December, has come as a great shock to us all. Fr Chris had been active celebrating Mass at St Peter's on 23, 24 and 26 December, and enjoying meals out with friends on each of those days too. We missed his appearance at Mass on 28 December and after phone messages went unanswered and he failed to answer his door on Thursday lunchtime for a lift to a routine hospital appointment, it was discovered what had happened

Fr Chris had had a career in teaching at first, finally becoming deputy head of Arnold Lodge prep school in Leamington. He left that job to pursue his vocation to the priesthood and was sent to the Beda in Rome, the seminary for English-speaking mature vocations. A fellow student was Fr John Cross, the previous parish priest of St Peter's. Fr Chris was ordained to the priesthood in 1993 in St Peter's Church and served first at St Chad's Cathedral during which time he also helped to set up a diocesan newspaper. From there he went on to Handsworth, Norton-le-Moors, Kidlington and Stourport. Fr Chris retired to Leamington, a town he knew well, six years ago and immediately set about supporting the local priests in their ministries as well as renewing old friendships and creating new ones. He had an active ministry based at St Peter's Church and school, although the altar steps at Our Lady's proved too much for him eventually. He readily helped in recent times such as at Whitnash when there was no priest, and in the local parishes to provide cover for ill or holidaying parish priests

He was an active Catenian, a rarity among priests since once ordained no priest may join, but his membership came from his time in teaching and he was delighted to maintain it. He belonged to several prayer groups and was a committed member of the Carmelite group that meets in Coventry. Travelling was an interest too but increasing health and mobility problems made that more difficult. Trips to Medjugorje and Oberammergau last year, although much enjoyed, were made with considerable discomfort and consequent lasting tiredness

I am one of many of us who will have wonderful memories of Fr Chris and will miss him greatly. On a personal note, he was a great support to me beyond simply helping out but also with his wisdom, knowledge, friendship and encouragement. His sense of humour lightened many a problem! He was a welcome and frequent visitor to the presbytery, and he enjoyed good food, wine and conversation. I am immensely grateful for having known him, and I know that others will feel the same

Please pray for his sister and brother

The Catholic Leamington facebook page has a recent photo and a video of Fr Chris processing into church for the start of the Christmas Eve Mass last month. There are many lovely comments and tributes there too. Please have a look

'Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your Master'. Matthew 25:23

Fr Stephen



Parish Facebook Pages

Catholic Leamington: <https://www.facebook.com/RCatholicLeamington/photos>

Our Lady's: <https://www.facebook.com/ourladyslillington>

St Joseph's: <https://www.facebook.com/stjosephswhitnash>

Study Group for Sunday Readings

As many Catholic Leamington parishioners know, in 2023 the second stage of our 'Walking Together' programme examined four areas identified in stage one as priorities for the Church in general, and in particular for our own parishes, to improve our practice as a truly Christian community:

- building community by getting to know one another better and to recognize our gifts;
- becoming more inclusive and welcoming;
- deepening and sharing our faith; and
- prioritizing young people

In our discernment sessions last May we listed a large number of practical actions we could take to put these objectives into effect, many of which have been implemented since then

In the area of deepening and sharing our faith, two suggested actions were to set up a *Bible study group*, which I am glad to say has already started at St Joseph's, and a *group studying the following Sunday's mass readings*, which I would like to get going early in 2024. For it to work I think we need a core of four or five people who would hope to attend every week, at least for the first four months. Then we can be quite flexible in accommodating others who would like to turn up occasionally, provided they give me (or the group leader in my absence) advance notice of when they are coming. In broad terms, I could hold these meetings on Wednesday afternoons or evenings or any time on Fridays. The meetings could be in St Peter's Parish Hall or possibly at my home depending on how many want to come and the availability of a suitable room

The format I envisage is: a brief introduction by me (or an alternative group leader) of the background or context of the scripture passages; then a reading and short discussion of each in turn of the first reading, second reading and Gospel for the following Sunday, focussing on what the inspired writer was trying to convey to his readers or listeners at the time; finally a short 'Conversation in the Spirit' (as practised in our Walking Together sessions, and at the Synod of Bishops in Rome last October) sharing our ideas on what God is saying to us today in any or all of the passages

This approach has some of the merits of traditional Bible study in learning more about the books of the Bible and their relevance to us today, but also gives us new insights as others share how the Holy Spirit has interacted with their experiences in understanding what the scriptural passages are telling them, and also deepens our engagement with the Liturgy of the Word in the Sunday Mass

If you would like to join this group on a regular basis, please contact me at jaholden@virginmedia.com or 01926 420045 and let me know which day and time would suit you best

Jonathan Holden

Christmas is coming!

St. Peter's Pastimes hub held a Christmas floral arrangement session on Tuesday 12th December lead by Margaret Russell one of the church flower arrangers. A good time was had by all



Mary Holden





A review of 2023 and looking forward to 2024

In 2023 the Live Simply group continued to encourage parishioners to live more simply and to look after the world that God has given us for future generations. With a new member, Katherine, joining in 2023, the group hopes to continue this work in 2024

Here's a brief look back at what we did in 2023:

- Helped at St Mark's church's Eco Fair in June – a great way to share ideas with other like-minded groups in Leamington!
- Had a stall at Warwick District Council's annual Eco Fest in the Pump Room gardens in September – had lots of interesting conversations with people who stopped to look at our displays, gave away delicious Fair Trade bananas and our colouring tables had a steady stream of little visitors!
- Continued the Recycling for Good Causes campaign with a box for parishioners to leave items in church
- Celebrated the Season of Creation in church with displays on the altars and bidding prayers
- Encouraged parishioners to try a simpler Christmas with bidding prayers throughout Advent

In 2024 it will be ten years since we became a Live Simply parish! Therefore we hope to celebrate this and continue to spread the message and encourage more people to take steps to live more simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor

We are always on the lookout for new ideas and members to help with this work. If you are interested or want to come to one of our meetings (usually held on Zoom) then contact *Sioned Harper* at sioned_hammondjones@yahoo.co.uk

Churches Together in Leamington Spa

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Service**

Time: Sunday 21st January 6:30pm

Location: Life Community Church,
Charlotte Street, CV31 3EB

Join us as we gather together with Churches across Leamington Spa and the surrounding areas to worship God and consider our Gospel calling to love our neighbours.

Refreshments will be served afterwards.



EXTRA is primarily for information that we do not have room for in the weekly newsletter

But we can only publish what you send in; please send notices in Microsoft Word to hathawayfamily@aol.com by 31 January for the February edition

The EXTRA team is Jane Rebikah and Martyn Hathaway