



ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY  
Woodford Green



# TheWord TheWord TheWord

ISSUE 13 - May 2021

Welcome to this 13th issue of *The Word*.

In this issue we have an article by Br Chris on the Feast of the Ascension. We also include articles relating to Catholic organisations which are putting our faith into action. In addition we have the Pope's prayer for this month as well as an item on prayer. And Fr Austin explains "Why Mary".

There is a CAFOD Coronavirus appeal and articles on Fairtrade and climate change and new Fairtrade products to try this Spring. We end with a short note about the important work of *The Passage* homeless charity based at Westminster Cathedral.

If you would like to make any contribution to future issues please email [parishnews@btinternet.com](mailto:parishnews@btinternet.com)

Mike Eggleton

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## Learning from Christ's Ascension

*Br. Chris Dyczek OFM*

In the middle of May, we celebrate Christ's Ascension (13th May this year) after listening to several weeks of readings from Acts of the Apostles. These are interrelated, because the Ascension is an event in keeping with Jesus' words, "I go to the Father, and you will see me no more" (Jn. 16:10), "and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning" (Jn 15:27); "you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy" (Jn 16:20).

It is a feast-day for rejoicing in those best memories we have of Jesus, which we know can become joyful when they are shared with many people known to us, who need to replace depression and sadness with hope. For this reason, the following Sunday is now called 'World Communications Day (16th May). With our Zoom meetings, websites and social media messages, we are all becoming, in small ways perhaps, world-wide communicators. This can get uncomfortable, our motives unclear even to us. So we do need to send out our communications in words that 'seem to come from God'.

It is hard to keep reminding ourselves of this. We have to pray that what we tell ourselves and then pass on to others should have compassion, love and mercy at its heart. These gifts and others of this sort all come to us from God, so long as we are open to receiving them in our prayer and meditation times. This requires us to take account of our daily dispositions and receptiveness. It cannot happen in a casual, half-hearted mental state, so regular honesty about how our changes of heart can develop is essential. Conversion is a commitment. We have to 'begin again' (as St. Francis called it) with improved forgiveness, with more generous caring on frequent occasions.

This is why the feast of the Ascension of Jesus is a valuable and helpful opportunity to be full of joy about our communion together. Take a look at passages which show us it was valued by the early Christians. For St. Luke in his gospel the resurrection appearance of Jesus to two followers at Emmaus (LK 24:13-49) ends with the words "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you." Then he led them to Bethany and blessed them, and "parted from them and was carried up into heaven."

Acts of the Apostles was also written by St. Luke, and begins with the Ascension: "Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up." (Acts 1:2-5)... "presented himself alive... charged them not to depart... but to wait for the promise of the Father... but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit"... 'you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses'... and when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight' (Acts 1:8-10). They were mentally empowered and made ready. This was discussed by the early

followers and led to a third passage about the Ascension, written by St. Paul's disciple Timothy, who uses a short hymn that was also a creed for the community gathering to memorize.

In this way at 1 Tim. 3:16 we get a glimpse into the style of praise and thanksgiving that happened after the Ascension. These words show us Timothy's thoughts, based on a quote from the community's usual style of singing:

'Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion:

"He was manifested in the flesh,

Vindicated in the Spirit,

Seen by angels,

Preached among the nations,

Believed on in the world,

Taken up in glory".'

Paul and Timothy will probably have known each other in Corinth. Bible scholars know a lot about Corinth and the other early communities, so we can give some explanations of the phrases found here. In this song, Christians were encouraged to ask how the cruel death and marvellous resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth show him as a hero for God, who battled against dangerous forces and came through victorious.

Corinth had been just another Greek city, but it was situated on an isthmus, a narrow stretch of land with the Mediterranean on both sides, the best place in that sea for making money. It meant you had a street there through the middle of the town where you could offload goods from a ship at one end, store them, and move them to the other end of the street and load them there onto a different ship. The Corinthians were very confident of their sailing and navigation skills, watching the movements of tides and stars. The world was an ideal set-up, they thought, with the spheres of planetary movement like a musical instrument, revolving with beautiful precision and regularity.

However, a larger empire, in Rome, had grown up beside them, using Latin, with a range of heavy technology, building roads and establishing army bases over large areas. They took over Corinth, bringing in their governors, centurions, regulations and taxes. Very soon the movements of stars and planets came to look a great deal less harmonious and attractive. The machinery of the universe felt creaky and oppressive, like a claustrophobic prison. The delight had been lost, and the heavens seemed to be moved now by negative forces called cosmocrats and dominions. The angels seemed to be fallen and dangerous beings.

So it was important for Christians to say that the resurrection of Jesus made him victorious over such harmful powers. This is the subject of this hymn. Christ has ascended up through all the spheres into the skies and has broken open that oppressiveness so that we can all experience God's joy. Christ's Spirit has filled the entire universe, bringing hope to life once more, and removing fears and anger.

This is what 'seen by angels' means. 'Vindicated in the Spirit' refers to the Resurrection, and that victory becomes the message to be preached across all nations by our missionary voices. The whole world is being put on a path of conversion that leads to home life with God. If we take this as our Creed, we can repeat it whenever we feel dragged down by life. We should recover our loving relationship with the God who made us and intends us to thrive. Our faith is not just about individual conversions. It is shared membership of communities of hope.

The light of the risen Lord is what overcomes all sorts of inner gloom and darkness, and brings to life different gifts in the community's many members. We should be capable of seeing and appreciating the gifts at work in the lives of our fellow Christians, and be ready to nurture them. We may even find outlets for them in building up the charitable spirit of new life across all gatherings of our fellow worshippers.

Patience is a helpful gift because in this we become good listeners to the worries and aspirations within the faith of others. They can discover that we want their best prospects to shape up in the love they have. If we let our good will permeate our personalities, we can become mirrors of God's presence and his healing peace. Are we ready to take up such a challenging role? Will we let our whole personalities become channels for transmitting the light of mercy from God?

No one becomes a saint overnight, of course. We start, in small ways, discovering what a conversation based on liberation from Christ will do for us and do to us. We can begin in ways which make most sense to us, in aspects of Christian community where we already feel we have a little experience and readiness to contribute. It might be in visiting the sick, or in visiting prisoners who feel trapped and in need of companionship. It might be that we have strong feelings about pollution, and the importance of helping the environment to recover from the abuses of chemical technology and the fierce impact of modern means of transport. We can look for Christians who agree with us and are willing to form environmentally non-destructive networks of faith in which the gifts of God the creator are treated with sensitivity.

Charity towards neighbours can include respect for what makes life free from horrors and destitution. This respect ought to take on energies which aim to replace the horrors with graced patterns of experience. We can

be the ones enabling that to happen by the character of freedom which we take from the Lord Jesus and offer as a reality to others.

We can be agents of God's kindness and mercy when we admire and praise the beauty of various gifts which we observe in the hearts of others. This may be the main way we should give thanks for the feast of the Ascension: by bringing trust alive between ourselves and the other children of God that we meet during times of prayer and community witness.✠

## The Holy Father's prayer intentions for May

Universal intention: The world of finance

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate financial markets and protect citizens from its dangers.

### Further thoughts from the Pope

#### **Living with a happy sobriety:**

The constant accumulation of possibilities to consume distracts the heart and prevents us from valuing each thing and each moment" (Pope Francis). Stop to recognize and value the things you have. Francis invites us to: "Value the small, be grateful for the possibilities that life offers without clinging to what we have or being sad about what we do not have" (Laudato Si, 222).

#### **Share your goods:**

Pope Francis states: "economic institutions and social channels are not being developed quickly enough to allow the poorest to have regular access to basic resources" (Laudato Si, 109). Look for a charitable organization or institution with which you can collaborate at this time through a donation to help support their activities.

#### **Act for the common good:**

Pope Francis states: "An integral ecology implies dedicating some time to recover the serene harmony with creation, to reflect on our lifestyle and our ideals" (Laudato Si 225). Reflect and propose ways that you can collaborate in the care of our common home. Find out about actions you can take to take care of the environment and work for an integral ecology.

#### **Use money wisely:**

Pope Francis states: "since the market tends to create a compulsive consumer mechanism to place its products, people end up immersed in the whirlpool of unnecessary purchases and expenses" (Laudato Si 203). Take some time to think about what you spend your money on every day. What things do you spend the most money on and how could you financially help those who need it most? ✠

## On Prayer - Prayer of the Heart

### *Mike Eggleton*

There are many ways of prayer. In this article I would like to look at one form of silent prayer – Christian Meditation.

John Main discovered meditation whilst working as a Foreign Office official and being sent to visit a Hindu monk on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. Some years later on becoming a Benedictine monk he was told by his novice master that this was 'not a Christian way of prayer'. However, through his readings of the teachings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, in particular in the Conferences of John Cassian he rediscovered the path.

So what is this meditation? Meditation, or contemplative prayer, is often described as the prayer of the heart. In contemplative prayer one is silent, still and simple. It is to be centred. As Psalm 46:10 tells us – Be still and know that I am God. There are many other such scriptural references. To quote just one more in Romans 8:26 St Paul says - "We do not even know how to pray but the Spirit himself prays within us". In essence we are still and silent so that we might enter the depths of our being and there encounter the presence of Christ.

In meditation we are putting aside everything and just spending this time with God. However, we are not talking to God, we are not presenting our needs or wishes, we are not even presenting our problems or difficulties, we are not even meditating on God. We are just being. In order to do this we sit still and silent, ideally for about 20-30 minutes twice per day. It may help us to recite a mantra. One such mantra is the ancient Aramaic word – Maranatha. It means 'Come Lord'. We do not think about the word, nor its meaning. If we get distracted we just come back to it. In meditating we have no expectations nor demands neither do we judge our practice. We just be.

If you would be interested in finding out more please send an email to [parishnews@btinternet.com](mailto:parishnews@btinternet.com) ✠

# Lectio Divina (or Reading With God)

**Mike Eggleton**

One of many ways of prayer is Lectio Divina. I wrote about this a year ago but want here to update the article, to make it more straightforward.

Lectio Divina is an ancient monastic practice which is usually translated as Divine or Sacred Reading and there are many good books on this subject as well as plentiful internet resources. In this article it is only possible to skim the surface of meaning and, hopefully, whet appetites for further discovery about this practice. The practice consists in using scripture to listen to God, to hear what He has to say to us as individuals.

Guigo, the Prior of the Grande Chartreuse initiated what was known as the Ladder of Monks which divided Lectio Divina into 4 stages. However, before explanation a note of caution is needed. This is not a mechanical scheme and the 4 stages need not occur in strict order. Indeed they may not even occur within the same time frame – they could be days or even weeks apart.

It is good to read aloud because we want to slow down our reading – not rush through to the end. Similarly it is good practice to take one book of scripture at a time and stay with it. This avoids ‘cherry picking’ – i.e. picking our favourite bits of scripture and leaving aside those we dislike or find to be too difficult.

This traditional pattern is said to consist of: lectio – meditatio – oratio – contemplatio. Lectio is to read the words of scripture – a small passage is enough as we are not seeking to ‘finish a book’ – and take the words into our mind and heart. We listen to God who speaks to us.

Then in meditatio we repeat the words to ourselves. We begin to chew them over – much as cows chew cud – and digest them. Perhaps we will respond in prayer (oratio) to God who has spoken these words to us. It may be that we find ourselves in a freer and more spontaneous time of adoration (contemplatio) – something that is beyond prayer. Once again to caution these are not 4 mechanical steps occurring in strict order within a set time frame. They may happen in a different order and at different times. God is constantly speaking to us but we are not always ready to listen.

However, having listened to what God has to say is not the end of the process and we are encouraged by experts on the subject to reach a stage of conclusion. One of the stages of conclusion is said to be ‘doing’ the Word of God or ‘living’ the Word of God. In Lectio Divina we are not partaking in bible study. We are not seeking to understand the meaning of the passages we read except in terms of what they say to us about our own life at this particular time. We are seeking to listen to what God is saying to us through His Word and then to do something with that. We take action.

Often we find that God’s message can challenge us, often it will reveal something to us about ourselves or our situation but whatever it is we are listening to God’s voice and hearing what He has to say to us at this moment. Therefore, if we read the same passage at a different time we may discover something different. However, it will always be what God knows that we need.

Lectio Divina can be carried out in a group but (and a big but!) it is always personal. If we participate in group Lectio we may want to share what God has revealed to us. However, it may be deeply personal and we may not wish to share. Even if we do then anything that is said at a time of sharing is strictly confidential. There is also no discussion, no agreement, no disagreement. If God has spoken to me He has spoken to me and it is not for anyone else to comment upon in any way.

If you would be interested in finding out more please send an email to [parishnews@btinternet.com](mailto:parishnews@btinternet.com) ☩

THURSDAY, MAY 6, 2021

“The practice of meditation has received a great deal of attention in recent years. It is not only Christians who talk about it: the practice of meditation exists in almost all the world’s religions... We all need to meditate, to reflect, to discover ourselves, it is a human dynamic... Here, then, is the image of young people and adults sitting in recollection, in silence, with eyes half closed... It is a phenomenon to be looked on favourably. Indeed, we are not made for rushing all the time, we have an inner life that cannot always be trampled on. Meditating is therefore a need for everyone. Meditating, so to speak, is like stopping and taking a breath in life.”

Pope Francis

GENERAL AUDIENCE APRIL 28, 2021

## Why Mary

**Fr Austin OFM**

Scripture has the angel address her as full of Grace. Mary is not an optional extra – not a bonus God adds-on; she is an active player in the everyday drama of salvation. Mother of the Church is not just a devotional title, but a planned and active role, as one to whom we have direct access. I have used the expression active player deliberately.



Take the example of a Shakespeare play – God is Shakespeare, we are the audience gathered to watch *A Winter's Tale* – [which I saw many years ago with Judi Dench playing Beverley] – from the moment the play starts, Shakespeare is everywhere, his words permeating everything – yet Shakespeare is not visible, but there in every cadence and gesture. The words come through Judi, who is really incarnating Beverley, and the more she puts herself into this, the more engaging do Shakespeare's words become.

The play finishes and Judi received rapturous applause. Imagine someone saying that's not right that she is applauded – they should be applauding Shakespeare. In fact, what she did was what Shakespeare created. Her performance was Shakespeare in 3D, filling out the full potential of the words.

In the Magnificat we say: My soul magnifies the Lord... God is literally made bigger for us through Mary; just as the words penned by Shakespeare are magnified when proclaimed by Beverley; how sad that so many still see God threatened by Mary [Mary worship] who in no way is ousting God.

The second line speaks of this as joy and rejoicing – just think how many hymns to Mary have the word *Gaude* – Rejoice! How the traditional May-day was always party time – sadly now become a bank holiday!

Take the analogy a step further – there is evidence that Shakespeare actually appeared in some of his plays – minor parts, joining the run-of-the-mill ordinary folk. In the Incarnation the presence of the author [God] as a character on stage does not upstage fellow performers – rather does it add brilliance to ordinary folk doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.

It is here that we leave the auditorium and come out into everyday life. God is not just on stage, but everywhere, and we are no longer spectators but sharers in this new way – *Opus Dei* in its real sense, not in the appropriated way. In accepting the invitation, we are part of a live show with members of the original cast; truly I say to you, whoever believes will do the things I do; and even greater, because I go the Father. Whatever you ask in my name I will do it, that *Abba* may be glorified... Jn.14.12.

We can only tell stories whose end we already know – we tell them forwards, but remember them backwards; if we don't know the end then it is not clear what we are talking about. The end of this story – our salvation – is the Assumption; the optimum sign of God's victory in Christ.

Of course the victory was won the moment heaven became forever the human story, when Christ ascended, taking a lived human story. The fullness of this is when it becomes clear not merely that we have been saved, but what is it to be saved, what it looks like.

What it looks like is Creation made new and totally alive. There is somebody who was entirely part of creation, made able to participate in the birth of the new creation in such a way that there was no opposition from her to it [Immaculate]; and because of this, there is an uninterrupted continuity between creation and new creation.

This means that creation is good; everything human is good and is to be brought to a good end. The whole of Mary's life from beginning to end was good – which says, in principle, so is ours too. There is nothing intrinsically evil about any part of our human life. The normal strains and stresses and learning get mixed up with all kinds of fears, which have us resist being led into the fullness of creation – which is where we differ from Mary.

Her life was a continuous becoming a sharer in the life of the Creator, without any resistance or rupture. This doesn't mean she didn't make mistakes, nor that she didn't need to learn, or that she didn't find things difficult to understand. It does mean that she was without any sense of comparing herself with anyone; she was totally committed to becoming her own God-given self.

So we see not only what someone has done for us – which is Jesus' role; we now see what it is like to have that something done for us; and there is more – that the story has come to an end does not mean it is over and done with. It means that Mary, and all who have gone to God are not just part of the story, but share the life of resurrection available to all of us here and now.

They are not just the lucky ones already safe on the other side, with us still stuck here. The whole point is of Resurrection life being already lived by real people with real names, a life imaged for us in creation through the Assumption. The other side is already reaching out to us – telling us our salvation is assured. This story had many dress rehearsals before it was performed by Mary.

St Luke says the Spirit will over-shadow her – rehearsed in the Ark of the Covenant being over-shadowed by the Cherubim – the presence overshadowing the Tabernacle in Exodus. All dress-rehearsals need some fine tuning. Luke suggests the Ark and the Tabernacle were figures of Mary. In Revelation the Ark is associated with the woman who is to give birth. The significance of this is that it is the holy place that God made creation.

Conception by a virgin has nothing to do with down-playing sex. Virginal conception has everything to do with creation out of nothing. Mary was being invited to be the link between the Creator and nothing and the coming into being of everything.

But where did the extra chromosome come from which enables a male child to be conceived? The only answer seems to be not from any human paternity. It seems it came as creation came, as something out of nothing.

Mary is living-out virgin creation, ripe with creative possibilities, not run by us, not tied down. In Mary we see the Holy Place made alive as the Creator prepares to become flesh. Luke shows how Creation out of nothing is becoming history. There were times when she does not understand, and has to tuck things away until such times as they reveal themselves.

In John, Jesus does not talk about Our Father as though he has a father in common with any other human being. Jesus' words to Magdalen - not to cling onto him - suggest that until his death, resurrection and ascension creates a new space in which death, common to all has its proper place in this new life – and then Abba is now shared by all.

It is in going into death that he opens up access to God as Abba. In committing Mary and John to each other's care he uses the word woman not mother; as he did in Cana. In dying he gives her, in the person of John, a son, the first of many and names her as the disciple's mother for the first time – a new shape to the maternity of Mary and the Paternity of Abba.

Jesus is making available the paternity of God as something to be shared by others than himself, but who in time, would become one with him – note how he speaks of his brethren after the Resurrection.

This isn't elevation to some celestial realm, it is being inducted into a family, a living family of faith, with a real woman as mother, who makes the paternity of God available to us. Mary has a centre of gravity all her own, one unaffected by ecclesiastical constructs of what her Son would want. In letting her be herself Mary indeed magnifies the Lord. ✙

## Faith in Action

**Mike Eggleton**

In his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* Pope Francis introduces the parable of the Good Samaritan. He then returns to this again and again emphasising different aspects of the story. The message is very clear.

The Samaritan, as we know, is the one who went to the aid of his neighbour whilst others passed by.

In this section we highlight some of the organisations that exist to offer support to their neighbours whether locally, nationally or internationally. If you would like to know more about what they do and perhaps find a way to offer your support please contact the organisation directly using the details shown in their articles below.

### Aid to the Church in Need

Each year we fund over 5,000 projects in more than 140 countries around world, helping to support the Church in its mission, and bringing hope and solidarity to millions of people. From priests to catechists and seminarians to Sisters, you enable us to help persecuted and suffering Christians live out their faith.



Aid to the  
Church in Need  
ACN UNITED KINGDOM

The projects that we support have the specific aim of providing pastoral and spiritual support to Christians in parishes and communities all over the world. Often they witness to Christ in the face of persecution, oppression or poverty. In their hour of need it is the hope of Christ that sustains them – as well as your prayers and solidarity.

Examples of current projects: Brazil – to support victims of Covid-19; Pakistan - to support victims who may be girls as young as 12 suffering abduction, forced conversion and marriage – as well as gang rape and enslavement. To find out more about our work please go to [www.acnuk.org](http://www.acnuk.org) ✙

# CAF<sup>+</sup>D

## Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

**EMERGENCY**  
Coronavirus Appeal

With India fighting a second wave of Covid-19, at this time of crisis we continue to work with local experts in hard-to-reach communities around the world.

**CLICK [HERE](#) TO DONATE ONLINE  
NOW**





## Fairtrade and climate change

*Stefan Donnelly, Campaigns Team, Fairtrade Foundation*

Fairtrade campaigners have done a brilliant job growing public support for the farmers and workers already facing the worst effects of the climate crisis.

Whether it's been sharing messages online, joining in Fairtrade Fortnight, writing to MPs or speaking to community, friends and family, it's all made a difference! These efforts have helped win a major change in government policy. A change that gives us hope. Hope which, together, we can turn into a *Wave of Hope* world leaders won't be able to ignore.

Last week, the UK government announced a change to the way we calculate the country's carbon footprint. The new commitment says we will start counting the carbon caused by transporting products to the UK as part of our own national carbon footprint.

This sends a strong signal that companies need to take responsibility for the carbon footprint caused by the foods and goods we enjoy in this country. To truly green those foods and goods though, farmers and workers will need more support to reduce the climate impact on their farms and plantations.

But since a big chunk of the climate impact is in how this produce is transported, last week's announcement is a big step in the right direction. And it gives us hope because it shows politicians can be convinced to listen to farmers and workers living with the reality of a climate crisis they did so little cause.

Now we have a valuable chance to build on this, and make sure farmers get that critical support to build a sustainable future. Can you help start a Wave of Hope at a major international summit coming to the UK in June?

As part of the Crack the Crises coalition, we're linking up with dozens of charities, campaigners and community groups to send a message to world leaders attending the G7 summit in Cornwall next month.

Join in to tell some of the world's most powerful leaders it's time for radical action on the inseparable crises of climate, Covid-19, and the unacceptable global injustice our Fairtrade community is fighting against every day.

To get involved, create your own 'Wave of Hope' message and share it with us, or on social media with #WaveOfHope. Find out more at this link:

<https://crackthecrises.org/wave/>

It's so important our Fairtrade community speaks up in conversations about how to tackle the climate crisis. Because the people behind our foods and goods can and must be part of building the fairer, greener, low-carbon world we all want.



But centuries of unfair trade means governments and businesses in countries like the UK need to make major financial commitments now, so farmers and workers can earn enough to take on the climate crisis they face, and build a sustainable future for their communities.

As hosts of the G7 summit in June and the COP 26 climate summit this Autumn, the UK has the chance to lead the world this year. To convince the world's wealthiest nations that it's time to take responsibility for the climate crisis they have largely caused, and that those farmers and workers living with the consequences of climate change must have the power to shape a better future. Find out more about Fairtrade and climate change [here](#).

## Nine exciting new Fairtrade products to try this Spring

A new season means a fresh collection of Fairtrade products hitting our favourite stores. This spring look out for cosy clothing for ultimate Zoom call comfort, sweet treats and flavoursome wine for your upcoming socially-distanced picnic and a possible Fairtrade first with the Waitrose chocolate cake mix. Plus we have an exclusive discount on a new coffee!

Some you'll find online, some in your local stores but all the featured products share two common themes: farmers and the planet. Buying Fairtrade means a fairer deal for farmers and workers who produce the products we all enjoy, using sustainable production methods to protect the environment. So when you treat yourself you can rest assured that you're supporting Fairtrade farmers and workers and our planet too.

Click [here](#) to find more about these products from Ben & Jerry's, Clipper Teas, Coop wine, Waitrose, M&S and more. ☸







In 1980, at the suggestion of Cardinal Hume, the Daughters of Charity opened a day centre at Westminster Cathedral – now the Resource Centre – with a single paid employee and a handful of volunteers.

Now the UK's largest centre for homeless and insecurely housed people, **The Passage** not only offers immediate help and longer-term support, but also provides and develops a wide range of value-led support services, including innovative accommodation projects.

We welcome and treat clients with respect and dignity, and find out what they need and want. We offer professional and appropriate advice and help according to the client's needs and aspirations. We agree an action plan with clients which is time limited with the aim of supporting clients out of homelessness.

**The Passage** offers a wide range of services, all year round, to meet the needs of homeless and vulnerable people. Our aim is to help people to address the issues that have contributed to them becoming homeless, and to enable them to move on to live safe, happy and fulfilling lives.

Our services are split between our Resource Centre, which provides more immediate support, our three residential projects which provide accommodation while we secure long term solutions for people and our homelessness prevention projects which reduce the risk of repeat homelessness.

Fundraising events are a vital way of supporting our wider work. That's why we organise as many different types of fundraisers as possible.

Want to run a marathon? Walk in the beautiful Countryside? Attend a Garden Party in the summer or listen to live classical music? You can do all these things for **The Passage** and more.

[Read more about our services](#) ✚

## Web Resources

- St. Thomas Parish Website: <http://www.stthomaswoodford.org>
- The Prayer App: Pray with the Pope – 'Click to Pray' prayer app – available on Android and iOS.
- Steward of the Gospel – The Vision Document and other documents related to our Parish Partnership are available on our website. To view go to:  
<https://www.stthomaswoodford.org/steward-of-the-gospel>
- Parish Facebook: [@STOCWoodford](#)
- Parish Twitter: [@STOCWoodford](#)
- Pope Francis at the Vatican: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>
- Follow Pope Francis on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Pontifex>
- The Art of Dying Well - what does the church say about death?  
<http://www.artofdyingwell.org/>
- Order of Friars Minor in Great Britain: <http://www.friar.org/home>