



## NEWSLETTER ADVENT 2012

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever does.  
*(Margaret Mead)*



### ADVENT REFLECTION

In these days of Advent waiting and hoping we become aware of the defenceless presence of the Incarnate God, shocking and precarious in weakness, over-turning all our ideas about the nature of God. It is in this sacred silence, during these Advent days, that the hard thoughts within us can soften, that the unforgiving walls of judgement and blame can crumble, that the cold shadows of our pride can be melted by the warmth of our hope.



As R. S. Thomas says:  
When we are weak, we are strong.  
When our eyes close on the world,  
then somewhere within us the bush  
burns.  
When we are poor and aware of the  
inadequacy of our table, it is to that,  
uninvited, the guest comes.

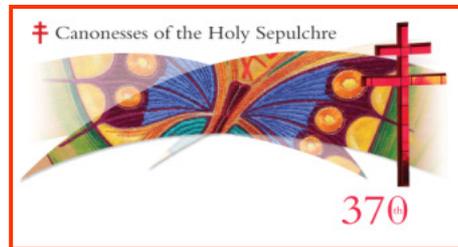
### ART EXHIBITION

S. Mary Magdalene is part of a Painting Group in Greenstead which held its pre-Christmas Exhibition on Saturday 24th November. The Exhibition was open to all with coffee/tea, cakes and biscuits on arrival. There was considerable admiration of the work done by the group which grew from having eleven members to its current membership of twenty.



The group itself is the inspiration of Ann Bates, ably assisted by her husband David. Ann is a considerable artist herself and shares her gift, time and expertise without stint every Monday morning.

## THE LAUNCH OF THE CELEBRATIONS FOR 370 YEARS SINCE OUR FOUNDATION 1642-2012



On the 7th October we were delighted to welcome so many friends, new and old, and past pupils of New Hall to the Launch of our Jubilee Year. After some words of welcome and a festive tea there was an opportunity to catch up on news, visit the Exhibition of our past and present life and buy copies of 'Fishy Tales' and our Jubilee Calendar. This was followed by a moving Liturgy in the Chapel at New Hall which ended with a path of light being created on its way to an immense lit double cross outside the Chapel doors. It was a wonderful beginning to our Celebrations and has laid a good foundation for the rest of the year's events.

The pictures below show some aspects of the Opening, the Tea, the Exhibition and the end of the Liturgy.



## WITH NEW HALL YEAR 12

Several members of the Community led a Day of Reflection with Year 12 at New Hall immediately prior to Foundation Day. The students were helped to reflect on the founding spirituality and lived experience of the Community, in order to help them realise the particular ethos of their School. The day ended with a Liturgy which involved weaving bracelets of Solidarity, and writing their hopes for the world on a red double cross.



## THE SITUATION IN THE DR CONGO

The situation in the Eastern Regions of the Congo has hit the headlines in England in recent weeks. The Rebel Army took control of Goma and has plans to advance to Bukavu. This has come with considerable bloodshed and displacements of people. It is the area where our Sisters live and we have been very concerned for their safety, especially the twenty Sisters who live in Goma. Please keep abreast of the situation and keep them all in your prayer.

O God, loving parent of all, comfort all those people who are being attacked, abused and displaced by this current conflict in the Congo; and give the people of that country courage to seek enduring peace with justice and freedom, that their children might grow up without fear.



## NEWS FROM RWANDA

In October S. Moira spent two weeks working with the new Priory in Rwanda, and with some Sisters from the DR Congo, who had to come to Rwanda for the meetings because it was not safe even at that time to cross the border into the Congo.



The newly established Literacy Centre at the Priory in Masaka is working well and has regular groups of people from the surrounding villages coming to learn basic skills of reading and writing. There are also lessons in dressmaking, which help women to earn small amounts of money.

## FUNDRAISING FOR THE NUTRITION CENTRE IN DR CONGO

The final leg of the Triathlon of Fundraising Events was a most enjoyable Quiz Night which raised just over £2,000.



This means that altogether we raised £7,000 which has gone directly to the Prioress of the DR Congo and has been used to start building the Nutrition Centre near Bukavu. In the present situation in that Country the need to feed orphans and displaced people is ever more acute.

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR SUCH GENEROSITY!**

## "Preparing for Advent"

Clips from the early scenes with the Magi from the BBC film "The Nativity" opened the theme of our **Quiet Day** held on the 23rd November. The time is now, a journey is entailed and needs preparation.

"What do you think we'll find when we get to the land of the Jews?" Balthazar asks. Melchior replies, "If I knew that I wouldn't be making the journey." The star was significant throughout our day. Following it we found waiting time is rich in purpose and promise.



## St AUGUSTINE



Even so, it was not enough for God to send his Son to point out the way - he made his Son the way itself, so that we can go on our journey guided by him as he walks along his own way.

Note: As Canonical Communities, all the Pories of the Association follow the Rule of St Augustine as do all the Norbertine Canons (and many other Communities).

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**8th December:** Quiet Day led by S. Angela at Canning Town Parish on an Advent theme.

**19th December:** Blessed Sacrament Church, Melbourne, Chelmsford, 7:00pm Evening of Reflection on an Advent theme.

**First Three Sundays in Advent:** You are welcome to Advent Vespers at 74 Howe Close, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3XD, preceded by tea at 4:00pm.

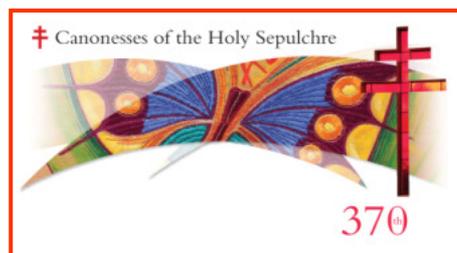
**18th January and 22nd March:** Quiet Days at 74 Howe Close, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3XD, 10:00am-3:00pm.

## 370TH EVENTS

**1st and 2nd March:** Exhibition at Castle Methodist Church, Colchester.

**9th March:** Musical Event at New Hall, Chelmsford, Fauré's Requiem from scratch.

**14th April:** Tina Beattie 'Living Easter' at New Hall, Chelmsford.



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