

An Invitation and Welcome to St Henry Morse Church, Shelfanger Road, Diss with the Carmel Monastery at Quidenham



Jesus said;

'In my Father's house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you.'

John 14:2



Welcome

A very warm welcome if you wish to explore becoming a member of our Catholic community. We are delighted to offer you this free leaflet which we hope you'll find interesting and helpful

Different Reasons

People drift away from the practice of their faith and perhaps attend church infrequently, for all kinds of reasons.

- Some never really started, because they were baptised or made their First Holy Communion and then no one in their family came at other times.
- For others, teenage years may have marked a turning point because the Mass seemed boring and irrelevant.
- Sadly, others may have been hurt by something said or done by someone at church. You may still feel very angry about this.
- Maybe some failure or experience in your life made you feel unworthy or ashamed. It may have been that, deep down, you felt that you were doing wrong or that the Church disapproved.
- Many suffer the trauma of a marriage breakdown. They may have married again or are in a new relationship.
- Some find it difficult to accept the Church's teachings on a number of different issues.
- Perhaps you just gradually stopped coming.

Whatever your reasons or situation, we would like to invite you to take a fresh look and give it another go. You are a vital part of God's family and would be made very welcome.

Jesus Speaks

Jesus welcomes back everyone who has drifted away.

'Come back to me, with all your heart. Don't let fear keep us apart.'

Adapted from the Book of Hosea

Please don't let anything prevent you from coming back.

The Catholic Church is made up of sinners and saints. We are called to be holy, but are part of a broken family made up of fragile human beings who are trying to be authentic. The Church always needs renewal. You and your story could help us to become more Christ-like. Your contribution is very valuable as are your God-given gifts, and we are incomplete without them.

'We are all sinners! Let us take advantage of this moment that is coming and cross the threshold of this mercy of God, who never tires of forgiving, never tires of waiting for us! He looks at us, He is always beside us. Courage! Let us go in through this door.'

Pope Francis

'And if the door of God's mercy is always open, the doors of our churches, of our communities, of our parishes, of our institutions, of our dioceses, must also be open, so that we can all go out to bring God's mercy'

Pope Francis

Prayer

Jesus, send your Holy Spirit into my heart in this moment.

I need to experience your healing and forgiveness.

Enter my heart now.

Many different memories, emotions and experiences lie hidden there.

Please come with your light.

Thank you that you are near.

Give me the courage to respond to the invitation which is being given to me. AMEN.

Profiles:

Reconciliation * It's never too late to return home I would like to share with fellow Catholics who have forsaken their faith, how I came to rediscover mine. Baptised and confirmed a Catholic I ceased practising my religion on leaving school to go up to university in the late fifties. During the next fifty-nine years I gave scant attention to my faith and, in turn, abrogated responsibility for my children's upbringing as Catholics. Attending Mass always seemed to clash with other interests and this selfish attitude continued unabated. Having lost my wonderful wife with Alzheimer's to a care home in 2014, I was for the first time 'alone'. As her condition worsened I experienced guilt that perhaps, I could have done more to help her following onset of the disease. Support from family and friends that my self-condemnation was unwarranted still failed to diminish this guilt. Powerless to help also contributed to feelings of despondency and dejection.

It was during this latter low period of need that I started to think about God. I began to experience a strong feeling that some strange force was drawing me to the Heavenly Father. And the catalyst that finally led to reunion with my Church was a meeting with a fellow dog walker in woods at West Harling in February 2016. Learning I was a lapsed Catholic the lady offered to introduce me to her church, St Henry Morse at Diss, Norfolk. I thanked her and said I would think about her offer.

The next Sunday, at St Henry Morse, I attended my first Mass since 1957. The beauty of the Mass was a truly wonderful and moving experience. Following my meeting with the parish priest, Father David Bagstaff, a staged return to the Church culminating in Holy Communion at Easter was arranged. Return to the Sacraments and my relationship with Jesus Christ had at last been re-established.

At St Henry Morse I have been warmly welcomed by fellow parishioners, made new friends and participated in the church's many activities. I have achieved an inner peace and found solace through my faith. I have come home. Any lapsed Catholic can do the same, but I wish I had done it much sooner.

I also believe there is truth in the saying: 'Once a Catholic, always a Catholic.'

Richard

I first became drawn to religion in my pre-teenage years as I used to go to church with my grandmother. Both my grandparents were committed Anglican churchgoers. In my teenage years I lost interest. Other things became more important. It wasn't until I was in my early 30's that I became drawn to the Catholic Church. I don't why; there was no obvious reason. I visited St. Edmunds Catholic Church in Bury and stayed for Mass. I felt comfortable and at home, but it wasn't until I was in my 50's I felt the strong call to be part of that community. One winter evening I knocked on the presbytery door in Diss and said to the priest, 'I want to become a Catholic'. Brian and Ann became my 'shepherds' so to speak. Since being received into the church I have felt surrounded by friends and a warm community. I have become a Eucharistic Minister, Reader, Flower arranger and I enjoy all of it. Seriously though the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit are what holds me together and influence my everyday life

Elaine

How I wanted to become a Catholic was I searched every other religion and was drawn to become a Catholic. My daughter found the Henry Morse at Diss and when I first met Father David I felt at peace and when entered the doors of St Henry Morse I felt it was home. I had a feeling inside of me I cannot describe but I felt very different everything in my body felt calm and at ease. I feel now that I have faith, hope and love which I never felt before and I feel Jesus now is guiding and is with me every day now which for me is a wonderful gift that I could ever wish for and I will love Jesus for ever.

Stella

Coming from a non-religious background, I struggled with what it was I believed when it came to spirituality. Though my father is a firm atheist, my mother is agnostic and I found myself at the occasional Easter service or Sunday mass. I began to learn bits and pieces about Christianity and what it meant to be a Christian - though as a child I found myself with questions that no one seemed to be able to fully answer for me.

I attended a Catholic secondary school and weekly masses were compulsory. I learned the doctrines well, though still didn't feel as though I fully understood faith. At sixteen years old I changed schools and it was here that I met Tom. As you might expect at sixteen, we fell in love very deeply and very quickly. I learnt early on that Tom was a practicing Catholic and it really struck me that his faith was so unwavering. I began to ask the questions about faith that I hadn't felt comfortable asking anyone else until then. We spent a lot of time talking about it and over time I began to feel something click which I had

never felt before. His influence on me was to show that faith provides comfort, and confidence, and that while the doctrines are useful, it's what isn't seen that is most important in faith.

After two years together, we went to different universities and it was here that I began to discover what faith meant to me individually. I would attend masses on my own and was occasionally invited to take part in the mass in small ways - taking up the offertory or reading a short prayer. Spending three years apart was incredibly difficult, but attending mass made me stronger, and allowed me to believe that everything was being taken care of and we would be fine.

In 2013 we left university. We were engaged and ready to start our life together. Before we got married, I knew that I wanted to complete my journey into the faith and become baptised. We attended our marriage course and shortly afterwards I began preparation classes for my baptism. Our wedding felt like not only a celebration of our love, but also of our journey of faith together.

In May 2016 we welcomed our little girl into the world and we are thoroughly looking forward to helping her learn what faith means to her.

Stephanie

What Next – small steps to explore

If you feel you would like to know more you could:-

- Look at our website - email us if you feel you would like to get to know us better. We will be sure to get back to you. www.sthenrymorse.com
- Phone us on the contact number below. If you get an answerphone we will return your call (01379 642914)
- Come with a Catholic friend or relative to a Mass or Social event
- Just drop in. Mass times etc. are posted on the church porch door.

Local Contact

Name: Father David Bagstaff

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