

# PILGRIMAGE

**Did you know** that pilgrims have been journeying to Walsingham since the Middle Ages? So you're not the first to make this journey!

**Think spot...** has anyone ever made a pilgrimage from where you live before? Find out... where have they been to? How long ago? How many times? Why?

**Are you ready?** Pilgrimage has always involved preparation.

**They often made a will!**

**Prepared a gift to bring with them**

**Thought long and hard about their reasons for going**

**Checked out their route. Found a group to travel with. Found a responsible leader**

**Received a blessing from their Priest**

**Got their kit together (not too much if they had to walk all the way)**

**Said sorry to anyone they'd upset before they left home.**

**Prepared prayers to take with them—Who to pray for at the Shrine**

**Did you know?...** Medieval pilgrims made various preparations before setting off on a pilgrimage.

**So think about it...**

**have you anything in common with those pilgrims of yester year?**

# WALSINGHAM

## Fact file.....

How much does you know about the place?... this is your chance to swot up on the background knowledge.

**Where is it?.....** It is in Norfolk, or East Anglia which is another name for the region.

It is a village with a population of about 800 people, historical records of the village go back to Saxon times and it is listed in the Domesday Book where it goes under the name of Walsingham Parva.

**MAP FACTS....** If you log on to AA route finder or any other CD rom/ internet facility you will find it situated approximately four miles from the market town of Fakenham. Look for the B road B1105.

It is also five miles from the town of Wells-next-the-Sea – **yes it is close to the Coast!...** beaches, sand dunes, arcades etc... so get your shades, swim kit and sun oil ready.

Other sea side resorts close by are Hunstanton and Sheringham where there are leisure pools and the usual seaside facilities.

## Facilities in the village

### Useful Info for basic survival during a visit to Walsingham

Walsingham is a small rural village, in the depths of the countryside. It is mainly surrounded by farmland – so prepare yourself for that!  
There isn't a MacDonalDs nearby!

#### **SHOPS**

There is only one small village store in the High Street which stocks a variety of everyday items such as: newspapers, mags and food.

**BEWARE....**The nearest Chemist is in Fakenham.

There's a Woollies there and other stores too. There's also a Safeway supermarket on the outskirts of Fakenham – Veggies and Vegans are especially advised to stock up here as choice is limited in the village.

There is a range of shops in Wells.

**There are unusual gift shops and shops** which stock religious artefacts such as Icons and statues etc. in Walsingham High Street.

There is a village **School** and a **Doctor's Surgery**.



# THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM..... The History Bit



## Why Walsingham?

When you head towards the village you soon realise you are right off the beaten track, some would even say in the middle of nowhere! But... keep cool, fear not, nearly everyone leaves the place saying things like:

'It's a real cool place to chill out'  
'It's totally different to anywhere else I've been'  
'It's sooooo beautiful round here, and it's such a Holy place'  
'I don't want to go home'

(These are comments made by previous students and youth pilgrims.)

So it's a special place to spend time in with all the different churches – DID YOU KNOW?... that there is a Russian Orthodox Church, a Methodist Church and the C. of E. Parish Church of St. Mary in the village.

It is surrounded by lovely countryside.

**BUT... most people get hooked on the STORY and the EXPERIENCE of being in the Shrine and village TODAY.** There aren't many pilgrims who leave without saying that the story and the amazing history of the place has affected them, and that they feel the place is really special and Holy. This is why so many pilgrims, young and old want to come back again and again.

## SO WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

It all started back in Saxon times and the year that has been written down for us in the legend of Walsingham is 1061.

**A MATTER OF FACT.....** If you go to the Magdalen College Library in Cambridge you can find the ancient document on which is written the Legend of Walsingham!

# SING A SONG OF WALSINGHAM... HISTORY...

In 1493 a man named *Richard Pynson* wrote a BALLAD – that's a type of song... a song which tells a story. The song told the story of the Walsingham legend. To this day when pilgrims come on pilgrimage to Walsingham they sing a special pilgrim hymn and it too tells the story.

Lady Richeldis de Faverches the woman Pynson and others wrote about, is listed in the DOMESDAY BOOK..... find out about what this was if you do not know already!



## ***Log on to the legend.....***

In the story we are told that a woman – *Lady Richeldis de Faverches*, a rich widow with a small son Geoffrey, lived in a Manor House in the village of Walsingham Parva.

The story points out that Lady Richeldis was a lady of *prayer* and that she especially loved Mary the Mother of Jesus. Each day, we are told, she would pray to Mary asking her to pray for her to Jesus. Also we are told that Richeldis often asked Mary how she could do something special for her to honour her in some way.



*The window of Walsingham Parva*

# DRAMA.....DRAMA....DRAMA

To find out more about the Walsingham legend..... get together, decide who the budding actors are in your group.... Give out the parts and read this script together...

## **Characters:**

***Narrator***

***Lady Richeldis de Faverches***

***Mary, Our Lady of Walsingham ( star part!)***

***Carpenter 1.***

***Carpenter 2.***

***Augustinian Canon ( a Monk who lived in Walsingham Priory).***

***Narrator:***

Hey dudes, get down here for a tale that's made up of cool and funky stuff. Yes, it's old, it's ancient, it is a tale that has stood the test of time...but... it is a tale that today would be the ultimate text message. It has been passed down from generation to generation. It is story of faith, courage and truth, and..... dudes, amazingly, it is a tale that still affects ordinary 21<sup>st</sup> century people like you and me today.

So hang around, log on to this...one day a long time a go, back in the year 1061 Lady Richeldis the Lady of the Manor was kneeling alone in her room. She was saying her rosary prayers. Every day she prayed and asked blessed Mary, the Mother of Jesus to pray for her. Richeldis was a lady who had great faith in God, and a great love for Mary. Her husband had died and left her with a young son to care for named Geoffrey. Sometimes life was very lonely. Why, here she is, let's tune in to what's going on here!

***Lady Richeldis:***

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for me. Blessed Mother, your prayers have upheld me so many times when life has been difficult. You cared for your Son Jesus throughout his earthly life, how sad it must have been for you to watch Him die. Yet now you live with Him in heaven. If only I could do some thing for you, is there something blessed Mother that you would like me to do to honour you here in this village?

***Narrator:***

Richeldis often prayed this prayer, life was tough being a single Mum, even though she was really rich with servants and everything. On this particular day something was about to happen which would change her life for ever.... Hold on, here she is again...

***Richeldis:***

Holy Mary, Mother of God, show me what I could do to show my love for you?

***Narrator:***

Things really started to happen....suddenly Richeldis became aware that she was no longer alone in her room, she could see someone standing in front of her...

***Richeldis:***

Who's this I see before me?

***Mary:***

Richeldis keep cool, it is me, Mary. Come with me in spirit to my dear home in Nazareth. See the house you see before you.... Do you recognise it?

***Richeldis:***

I see a house, but surely it can't be....?

Narrator: As suddenly as it had appeared, the vision vanished, Mary and the house were no longer to be seen. Lady Richeldis was puzzled by what had happened. But that's not the end dudes, the next day she was praying again when the same thing happened...

***Mary:***

Richeldis, come with me to my precious house in Nazareth. It is the house where the Annunciation took place. How can I ever forget that special day when the Angel Gabriel came to tell me news that was to change my life forever. It was a mighty shock though I can tell you when I suddenly found out I was to give birth to Jesus, God's Son!

This house is special for another reason too, remember it's where Joseph and I brought Jesus up.

***Richeldis:***

Oh blessed Mother, why is it that you are showing me this house?.....

***Narrator:***

But that was that dudes, again the house and Mary disappeared from sight and Richeldis was alone in the room once more. She was still unsure about what had happened. The next day though when she was praying, exactly the same thing took place.

***Mary:***

Richeldis, come with me to Nazareth, to our holy house. This house could be yours too right here in Walsingham to share with all who pass this way.

***Narrator:***

The penny dropped dudes, Richeldis suddenly realised what she must do...

***Richeldis:***

Cool stuff, I've got it! Now I see why you are showing me the Holy House of Nazareth because this is something I could do to honour you forever here in Walsingham. I could build a house just like that one. It would be *England's Nazareth!*

This is what I'll do, I'll get the house built, I could put a statue of Mary our Lady in it to remind everyone that she appeared right here in Walsingham. I feel sure that everyone who prays in this house will be richly blessed! I can't believe it! Mary appeared to me to show me that this is what I should do to honour her!

***Narrator:***

Well dudes, Lady R. got cracking straight away. She called in a couple of carpenters and gave them the exact measurements of the house she'd seen in her vision. She told them to get hold of the best quality wood and get started on it straight away. Mind you, they thought she was one short of a six pack.....

***Carpenter 1.***

Now look `ere my lady..... don't you think this is a bit daft? I mean... what do you need a little house like this in the middle of a field for?

***Carpenter 2.***

He's right my lady, who's gonna want to come and visit a place like this (turning to his friend he says...) I think she's gone off her head George!!

***Narrator***



Our Lady R. was having none of it.....

***Lady Richeldis***

Now listen gentlemen, I have told you what I want you to do, so cut the wise cracks and get on with the job will you? You'll be paid well, so make sure you get some good quality wood, OK??

***Carpenter 1.***

Alright my lady, if you say so! Come on Bill let's do as the lady says!

***Narrator***

So that's what they did, they set off to get their stuff together and made a start. Things did not go as planned however, and after a couple of days they began to realise that something was wrong....

***Carpenter 1.***

I don't know about you Bill but there's something not right 'ere. I mean, look at that roof it won't meet the walls 'ere.

***Carpenter 2.***

I know what you mean George, I can't work it out. The plans are perfect and the measurement but it just won't go together will it?

***Carpenter 1.***

I knew this was a daft idea from the start, come on, I'm sick of it. Let's go and tell our ladyship we can't do the job, maybe she'll have second thoughts with a bit of luck!

***Narrator***

So our two wood working boffins went off to see Lady Richeldis. She was not too pleased when they told her the sorry tale!

***Lady Richeldis***

What do you mean gentlemen? Are you telling me that you are giving up? I thought you were made of stronger stuff than this! Now look, I want you to go home to bed and in the morning get back out there and get this job done. Do I make myself clear?

***Carpenter 1***

Clear as mud my lady! O.K. but if it does not work out then we'll pack it in! Good night my lady.

***Narrator***

Off they went dudes to get some beauty sleep. But Lady R., well she had other ideas. She knelt down by her bed with her rosary and she prayed and prayed to Our Lady all night long the story says. She was so certain that if Mary wanted this house built then she would surely help her.

Next morning, early, the two carpenters returned to the field. At first they thought someone had been doing a bit of removal work during the night. They looked for their wood and tools.....

***Carpenter 2.***

Oi cop hold of this..... THEY'VE BEEN NICKED!!! Where's it all gone George? This just well and truly sucks this does!

***Carpenter 1.***

Wait a minute Bill, look over there..... I can't believe it!!

***Narrator***

When they looked across the field dudes they saw it.... The house, completely finished and perfectly built! They rushed over to the manor house to fetch LADY R.

***Lady Richeldis***

Gentlemen, gentlemen, cool it will you.... Take me to the field so that I can see what's what.

***Narrator***

They led her to the field straight away.

***Carpenter 1.***

There it is my lady, just the way you wanted it, but who's done it my lady? We were at home snoring our heads off!

***Lady Richeldis***

Gentleman this is not the work of men, this is the work of angels. I knew Mary would help us! I believe that as a result of her prayers, God sent his angels last night to build this house. This house will be a special **holy** place from now on. It will be a place of prayer. Everyone who prays here will be blessed I am sure. This is the Holy House – England’s Nazareth!

Now I must set to work getting news far and wide about this house so that pilgrims might come here to see it for themselves.

***Narrator***

As if this wasn’t enough dudes, as they were walking away from the house, some thing else happened that blew the socks off them!

***Carpenter 1.***

Blimey O’ Reilly Ma’am, we’ve sprung a leak!

***Lady Richeldis***

My goodness gentlemen, it’s water, fresh clear spring water. Look how it gushes up through the earth! It is an underwater spring which has sprung forth as another special sign from God that this spot is **HOLY GROUND**.

Gentlemen, set to work immediately and make it into a well. Everyone who visits this place will be able to drink from this well and I am sure they will receive special blessings and answers to their prayers.

***Narrator***

So, dudes, our story is almost at an end, or should I say it’s really the beginning! It didn’t all end there...oh no! The Holy House did become a famous place of pilgrimage and prayer just as Lady Richeldis said it would. People came to Walsingham from far and wide. Many had their prayers answered after praying in the Holy House. Many told wonderful stories of how they were healed of terrible illnesses after praying and drinking the water at the well.

Over the years more and more pilgrims headed to England’s Nazareth to experience these things for themselves. In 1153 Lady Richeldis’s son Geoffrey gave money to some Augustinian Canons and asked them to come to Walsingham to build a chapel around the Holy House to keep it safe. He was about to leave England to go off and fight in the Crusades.

A community of Augustinian Canons (Monks) came to Walsingham and built a stone chapel around the Holy House. They also built a magnificent Priory church next door to it and a monastery to live in. They continued to care for the Holy House which by

now had become a ***Shrine*** to Mary Our Lady of Walsingham.

The Canons welcomed hundreds of pilgrims to the Shrine, even Kings came to pray there. Hold on a minute dudes..... here's one now to tell you what happened...

### ***Augustinian Canon***

I lived here with my fellow brothers until 1538. That was the saddest year of my entire life. It was the year when our beautiful Priory and the Holy House were destroyed. Henry the eighth ordered the closure and destruction of all monasteries throughout the country.

Remember those history lessons dudes? The Dissolution of the Monasteries it was called...when he wanted that divorce from Catherine of Aragon... remember?? Well, Walsingham came under the hammer in 1538.

I'll never forget the day the King's Commissioners arrived at the Priory to order us all out. It was not long before a load of men arrived to smash up the Holy House and Priory. King Henry made sure that all the beautiful riches given to us by pilgrims were taken away before that though! He needed money for the Treasury. The statue of Our Lady was taken to London, so they say, and burned on a bonfire for all to see. The well was filled up with earth, pilgrims were not allowed to come here any more.

I was one of the lucky ones, I managed to escape. I went off to Norwich and got a job as a teacher. Some of my fellow brothers were killed because they refused to leave. So that was that.

### ***Narrator***

Pilgrims did not return to Walsingham until 1897 when the Slipper Chapel was restored. But more about that later...remember, when you come to Walsingham on the youth pilgrimage you are following in the footsteps of those pilgrims who came all those years ago. *They believed, they had faith and they prayed..* if you do the same, who knows what may happen??

**THE END**

## GAP FILLER FACTS...



### THE SLIPPER CHAPEL

This beautiful chapel is situated at Houghton St Giles. It is now known as the Roman Catholic Church's National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Thousands of Roman Catholic pilgrims visit here each year to offer their prayers. There is a special statue of Our Lady of Walsingham in there.

It was built in 1338 and it is dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria who is the Patron Saint of pilgrims.

Back in medieval times pilgrims used to stop at the Slipper Chapel to give thanks to God for a safe journey and to have a rest! They would then take off their slippers/shoes before walking the last mile to the Holy House and Priory in the village. This mile became known as the Holy Mile and pilgrims still walk it to this day!

Be sure to visit the Slipper chapel and the beautiful little Chapel of the Holy Spirit next door to it whilst you are in Walsingham.

### **Are you up to the BAREFOOT CHALLENGE??**

***Like the pilgrims of old, you too can walk the Holy Mile barefoot!! Think you can do it?***

Nowadays we have a new Anglican Shrine in Walsingham. It opened in 1931. The



## SHRINE FACTS FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY PILGRIM...

Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church in Walsingham, Father Alfred Hope Patten, who came to the village in 1922, had the idea of building a new Shrine with a new Holy House.

No doubt, like Lady Richeldis when she decided to get the first Holy House built, folks thought he was off his head! Where would he find the money? Where could it be built? Would pilgrims want to visit a Holy House any more?

Fr Hope Patten **believed** that he could do it with God's help and with Mary's prayers! He believed that pilgrims would come to visit a new Shrine. He said lots of prayers about it. ***He had enough faith to have a go*** and he persuaded a lot of other people to help him.



### THE SEAL OF APPROVAL.....

First of all he had a wooden statue carved of Mary Our Lady of Walsingham with Jesus on her knee. Fr. Patten had to go to the British Museum in London to find out what the original statue from the first Holy House looked like. In the museum he found the original Priory Seal, used by the monks to seal documents. It would have been printed on hot wax. On the seal was an outline of Our Lady of Walsingham sitting on a throne, crowned Queen of

Heaven, with the infant Jesus on her knee. The statue was copied from this.

### NEW SHRINE.....NEW CHURCH

The statue was placed in a side chapel in St Mary's Parish Church. Flowers and candles were placed all around it and it became a tiny Shrine to Our Lady. Fr. Hope Patten began to invite Priests to bring their Parishioners to Walsingham on day pilgrimages. Everyone began raising money in their parishes around the country.

Eventually enough money was raised and plans were drawn up to build a new church. The most special part of his plans was to build a Holy House in the centre of the church to remind everyone of the original Holy House which stood in the Priory Grounds. It opened in 1931 and what a day of celebration it was the day this happened! A huge procession made its way from St Mary's church and down the High St. to the new Shrine. Our Lady's statue was carried and escorted by girls carrying flower baskets. A Bishop named Bishop O'Rourke consecrated (blessed) the new church.



### WELL PLEASED!

Another special feature in the new Shrine which was only discovered during building was the Holy Well. The builders came across a fresh water spring which began spurting out water when they unearthed it. Fr. Hope Patten called in a team of archaeologists to examine it after some very unusual

objects were found in the earth. There was pottery, pieces of carved wood, old bottles and soles from old leather shoes. These objects were found to date back to Tudor times. The archaeologists said they must have been used to block up the well when Henry V111 sent his men to close down the monastery in 1538.

When they dug down deeper they found the remains of a Saxon well! At this point Fr. Patten became very interested. The experts all agreed that this must have been a well used by medieval pilgrims. Maybe there were so many visiting the Shrine in the Priory grounds that other water springs were unearthed and turned into wells to cope with the crowds of pilgrims who came to pray for healing.

Fr. Patten believed that finding this well

was no accident. He felt that God had led them to this special water spring. Who knows, it could have even been the original water spring that sprang up after the Holy House miracle took place when Lady Richeldis had her vision? This is quite possible because it is very close to where the original Holy House stood. Fr. Patten gave instructions for the well to be re-built. It is still in use today, but we now have an electric pump to pump the water up from deep underground! The water from the well is pure, fresh and clear. Many pilgrims each year visit it to say prayers there and drink its water. Many tell of healing which they have received. There is a special service each day called ***Sprinkling at the Well***. This is led by a Priest who offers pilgrims water to drink and leads them in special prayers.

## UP2U PILGRIM CHALLENGE.....

***Discuss the topic of healing in your group. What kinds of healing do you think people might pray for.***

**When you visit the Shrine during your stay in Walsingham, be sure to visit the Holy Well near the main doors of the church. Think carefully about what you would like to pray for when you drink its water. You might want to pray for some kind of healing of body, mind or spirit, either for yourself or for someone you know.**

**You could bring a list with you of people back home who need your prayers for healing.**

***TAKE SOME HOME WITH YOU... But remember to keep yourself WELL the water needs to be drunk fairly soon after you get it home, or else bugs will grow in it and you could catch something very nasty!!!***

**We are not suggesting you bring a hose pipe or bucket! BUT you may wish to bring a bottle or buy one from a shop in the village to fill with well water. You may wish to take some home in a bottle for someone who is ill or in any kind of need? Some pilgrims take water home to be used in Baptisms.**

***LOOK FOR... special plaques on the walls*** around the main doors of the church. These tell of many answers to prayer which pilgrims have received after drinking water from the well.

***REMEMBER... it is not magic water!*** It is your prayers and the way you offer yourself or those you wish to pray for, to God that counts. Pilgrims usually ask Mary to pray for them when they receive the water too.

## EXTRA! EXTRA!... Extra Information about Pilgrimage

### **Did you know?**

There were Shrines all over the country in medieval times. For example....the place where St Thomas of Canterbury was killed on the steps of Canterbury Cathedral became one. His tomb became a place of pilgrimage and prayer and it still is today.

**FIND OUT SOME MORE...** Log on to the internet or invade you local library to find out about other famous Shrines. There are lots of Shrines abroad.... Find out about ***Lourdes*** in France.

### **WORLD FAITHS AND PILGRIMAGE**

You may already know that other world faiths such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism have Shrines and their followers make pilgrimages. So it is not just something Christians do. The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham sometimes welcomes Muslims and others. Often they visit our well or light candles in the Holy House. Many Muslim, Sikh and Hindu school students find it a very holy place.



***RESEARCH SOME SHRINES IN OTHER FAITHS FOR YOURSELF!***



## So I'm going to Walsingham..... what does that mean?

You might want to spend some time in school and on your own thinking and talking about this question.

Here are some pointers to get you started:-

- ☺ You are making a journey from the familiar i.e. your home, parish and family to a special place – COULD THIS BE HELPFUL DO YOU THINK?
- ☺ Do you ever long for 'space', somewhere to just 'chill out'? Somewhere where you are away from your usual routine with all its stresses and problems?
- ☺ Do you ever wish you could meet other young Christians and share thoughts and questions? What would you want to get from this?
- ☺ Do you ever wonder how others worship in their churches, e.g. what songs they sing? New modern music? Different ways of praying etc etc?

**Coming to WALSINGHAM could help you explore these things.**

***MAKE A PILGRIM TASK LIST..... YOU COULD DESIGN  
A TASK LIST TEMPLATE ON THE COMPUTER OR BY HAND  
WHICH YOU COULD EACH FILL IN TO EXPLORE  
WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO FOCUS ON/GET OUT OF YOUR  
PILGRIMAGE***

For many, many people, young and old alike, Walsingham becomes a precious space they can retreat to when they need to. Everyone needs HOLIDAYS... remember this comes from the words HOLY-DAYS!!

**When did you last have a proper HOLY DAY?? What should HOLY DAYS consist of?**

## WHEN DID THE FIRST PILGRIMAGES TAKE PLACE?

### FACTS TO IMPRESS YOUR MATES!

- There are some records of Christians visiting the Holy Land in the first few centuries after Jesus died.
- The first recorded Christian pilgrim to Jerusalem was Melito of Sardis in around AD 170 – he wanted to see the places written about in the Bible to test out their meaning for himself.
- The Emperor Constantine's mother Helena made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem after her son came to power.
- Many early pilgrims were Monks and Nuns
- One famous nun who made a pilgrimage to Palestine was Egeria in the fourth century, she kept a diary of her visit.
- So many Monks and Nuns were travelling around Europe on pilgrimages that some medieval monarchs insisted they gain permission from their superior in the monastery before setting off!
- Celtic pilgrims used to set sail in boats called coracles – they would set sail then leave it to the wind of the spirit to lead them to an unknown destination!
- Criminals and even murderers were sent off on pilgrimages as punishments regularly in medieval times!
- Some wandered around NAKED as part of their punishment!!!
- Rome is one of the most ancient of pilgrimage places.
- Special Holy days have always been connected with pilgrimage, for example, pilgrims have always aimed to arrive at the Shrine of St James – Santiago de Compostela, in Spain, on St James' day 25<sup>th</sup> July.
- Jesus himself went on pilgrimage when he was twelve with Mary and Joseph – find out where they went? ( Luke3:41-52).
- Taize in France welcomes thousands of teenage pilgrims each year... *log on to the internet* to find out about Brother Roger and Taize.
- Jesus was a constant traveller – he spent most of his time as an adult travelling from place to place teaching and meeting people.
- In the third century a person called Origen wrote about visiting the birth place of Jesus in Bethlehem.

**Here are some comments made by real life pilgrims about why they go on pilgrimage.....**

**' A pilgrim is a wanderer with a purpose. A pilgrimage can be to a place but it can also be for a thing. Mine is for peace, I am a pilgrim of peace. I walk until given shelter, fast until given food. I have no money.'**  
**Anonymous peace pilgrim (1983)**  
**What is your opinion on this?**

**' I come to Walsingham to be peaceful and quiet, to say my prayers and meet other people'** Yorkshire lady.

**' I come when I need to know where I am going next in my life '** Priest from Surrey.

**' My wife's mother had bound herself by a vow, that, if her daughter had a son born alive, I should in person salute St James at his Shrine in Compostela, and offer our thanks. I have also visited the seaside Virgin so famous with the English'**  
**The Scholar Erasmus – who do think the *seaside Virgin* was?**

**Dolores, aged 54, wrote this about her pilgrimages to a place called Juazeiro...**

**' I've made twenty pilgrimages to Juazeiro, walking all the way. The first time was in 1940. Each journey takes me three weeks. The Mother of God called me, so I came.'**



**Why are you going  
on yours?**

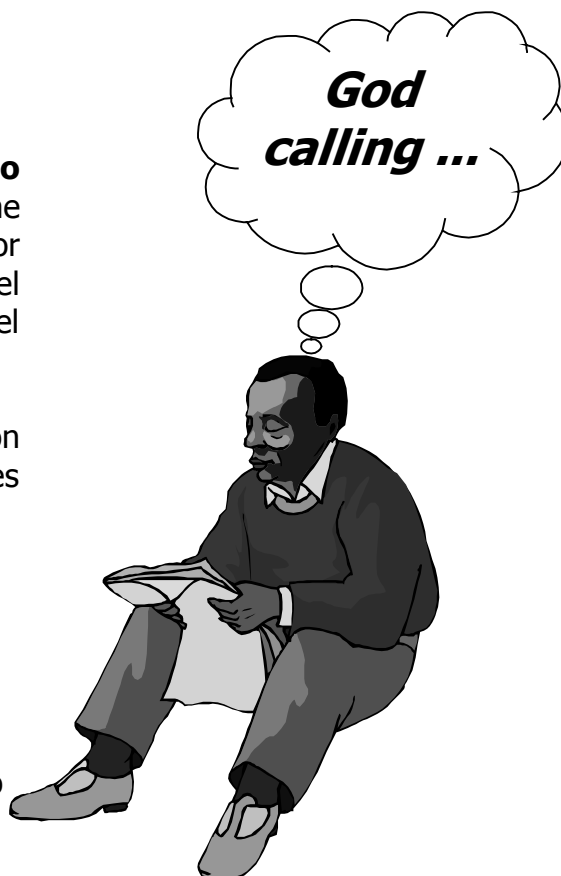
## Vocation

**This words means 'called by God' to live your life in a certain way.** Some describe their job as a vocation. For example, nurses and doctors may feel called to their profession, they may feel called to help and care for people.

Many Christians say that their vocation enables them to serve God in their lives by helping others in different ways.

**Can you think of particular jobs or professions which help and care for people or animals?**

Priests, Nuns, Monks, often say they feel God called them to dedicate their lives to Him by living their lives in this role.



## BRAINSTORM TIME

**Discuss between yourselves...** Would you say that all jobs are vocations?

Is being a parent a vocation?

Do children / young people who are in full time education have a vocation?

**CALLED BY GOD.....WHAT ON EARTH DOES IT MEAN????**

Some are able to tell dramatic stories about times in their lives when God has called them. Some just say that when they look back over their lives so far, they can see that God was leading them in particular ways.

Some people experience visions like Lady Richeldis did, or receive messages from Jesus or from Mary. They are known as Mystics. A famous mystic is Mother Julian of Norwich who wrote about all her visions of Jesus.

**Mother Teresa of Calcutta..... find out more about her from books or the internet.** How did she feel called to serve God in her life as a Nun? Did she inspire others to follow the same calling and do the same??

**How do we know God is calling us in our lives?**

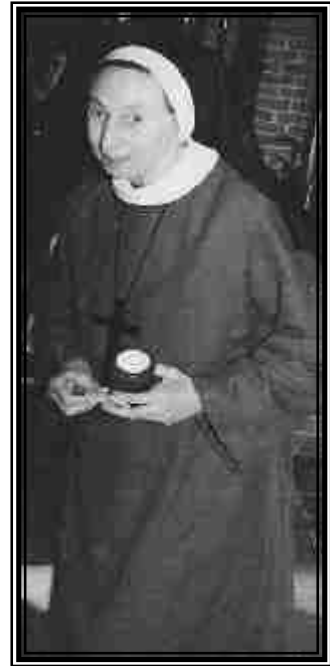
Many Christians say that by praying, and trying to listen to what God might be trying to say to them is a way of finding out what he wants them to do in their lives.

What do you think about this? Discuss this in your group.

Many Christians find it helpful to talk to other people, especially to their Priest to explore what God might be calling them to do. This person will then pray for them and help to guide them.

Reading the Bible and other books which have been written to help understand the Bible and the Christian faith, helps many Christians to discover how God wants them to live their lives.

***How do you feel about this? Do you feel you should be thinking along these lines? How might you help one another?***



**Cool fact.....** Did you know that there is a Community of Sisters who live in a house next door to the Shrine in Walsingham? It is called the Priory of Our Lady of Walsingham. They belong to an order of Sisters called the *Society of St. Margaret*. One of the main things they feel they are called by God to do is to pray. Their daily lives revolve around prayer. They also get involved in helping people in the local community and local churches.

### **Famous people with special Vocations**

**Time to do some research again...** can you think of any famous people who you think are committed to different vocations?  
e.g. music, sport, medicine, politics..... do you all agree in your group that these are vocations?  
Is it possible to be committed to something without it being called a vocation?

# PRAYER



Is it important for Christians to pray?

Prayer is often described as *talking to God*, and it is a way that Christians can share their lives with God.

## Communication – a two way process...**DISCUSSION ZONE**

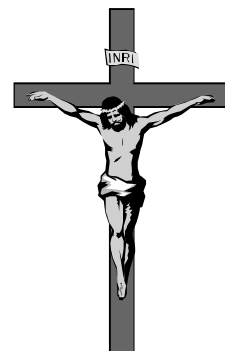
Think about how you communicate with your family and friends?  
How do you know if communication has broken down?  
Is good communication important in our relationships with others?  
How do you make friends with a person? Do you have to find out things about them?

Is listening necessary in communication with a person.... What about with God? Is prayer just about talking or should we listen to God too?

**FIND OUT...** are there any Christians in your Church who can tell you about times when they believe God gave them an answer to a prayer? How did their prayer get answered?

## JESUS CHRIST – A MAN OF PRAYER

Jesus grew up saying his prayers to his father, God. He was brought up in the Jewish faith, so going to pray and worship God in the Temple was part of his daily and weekly routine as he grew up. He would read the Torah (Hebrew scriptures) regularly and study them so that he learned about the history of his Jewish faith.



The famous story about the time Jesus got lost whilst on pilgrimage in Jerusalem when he was twelve years old, shows us that he knew a lot about the scriptures. His parents found him teaching the Priests about the scriptures!

There were also times when Jesus spent time alone praying. These were usually times when he felt confused and unsure of what God wanted him to do.

**FIND OUT...** what happened when Jesus went off to the wilderness to pray...what happened?

Before Jesus was arrested and led to his death on the cross he prayed in a garden... find out where this is in the New Testament.

How was Jesus feeling at this time and do you think he had his prayers answered by God?

How can these examples help Christians today in their lives?



## **INTERCESSIONS**

These are prayers that Christians offer for others. There may be individuals who need prayers or places in the town/village or city where we live, or in the world which need our prayers.

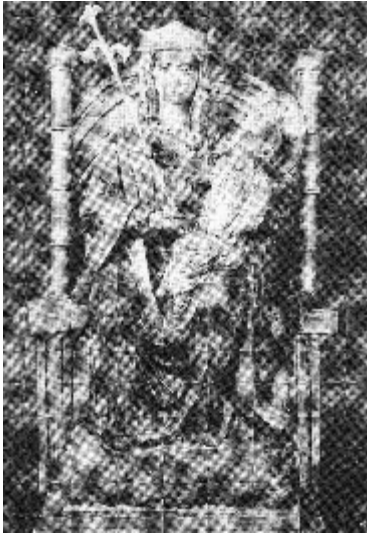
The Shrine at Walsingham, in the Holy House, has always been a place where Pilgrims say prayers for others. Many pilgrims who visit today light candles or leave names of people who need prayers.

Shrine Prayers are said every evening in the Shrine. A Priest reads out all the prayers that are sent in. These prayers are said using the Rosary. Rosary beads are a special way of remembering the life of Jesus and Mary whilst saying your prayers.



# MARY AND THE SAINTS.....

Our friends and supporters in heaven.



Ever since Mary appeared in Walsingham back in the Middle Ages, people have visited the village to ask her to pray to Jesus on their behalf. Thousands of pilgrims throughout the ages have had great faith in Mary's prayers. Many tell of how they feel very close to Mary when they are in the Shrine knowing that she will hear their prayers and pray for them. Christians do not only pray to her in Walsingham however, they do this in their own homes or in their local churches. This is the same for other saints too.

## MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN



When you visit the Shrine church in Walsingham look out for two ceiling paintings.....one can be found above the Altar in the Holy House and the other is painted on the dome shaped roof on the balcony above the High Altar, which is the Blessed Sacrament chapel.

These paintings are both painted in different styles but they both show St Mary being crowned Queen of Heaven by her son Jesus. This is something very special for Christians and these paintings are there to remind pilgrims that Jesus gave his mother Mary a special place in heaven with him.

Each year at the Shrine and in many churches around the world the Assumption festival is celebrated on August 15<sup>th</sup>. On this day Christians remember a very strange and wonderful thing which is believed to have taken place, when Mary's body was 'assumed' or 'taken up' into heaven after her death.

## SAINTS AND CHAPELS

Around the Shrine church are chapels named after Saints. For hundreds of years Christians have also prayed to other Saints in heaven asking them to pray for them to Jesus. The chapels in the Shrine are special holy corners where people can be quiet and alone to say their prayers. Often they light a candle when they pray, this is a way of recording that prayer. It is a sign of the prayer they have offered there which remains after they have left the place. St Joseph's chapel is particularly special because St Joseph was the husband of Mary and the person who was a sort of step father to Jesus.

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE SAINTS...

the history bit.

If we go back in history we find that the earliest of the saints were **MARTYRS**. The word martyr means **witness**. The Apostles of Jesus were witnesses of his resurrection and they became saints after their deaths. Martyrs are also people who have been prepared to die for their beliefs rather than turn their backs on Jesus. St Peter and many other Christians were martyred ( put to death) for their faith.

The earliest groups of Christians began to hold special Masses to remember these martyrs. They also began to place bones of martyrs under their Altars so that they would always be remembered whenever the Altar was being used for Mass.

By the fourth century the tombs of martyrs were becoming very special places which Christians would visit to pray and remember the person. This became known as veneration. These tombs became shrines.

By the late twelfth century and early thirteenth century it became the job of the Pope, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Rome, to decide who should become a saint. This became known as Canonisation.

To become a saint it had to be proved that this person had done great things in their life for God. For example they may have suffered or died for their faith, they may have healed people or in Mary's case, she was chosen by God and agreed to become the mother of his Son Jesus.

A special list of saints and shrines was drawn up in the fourteenth century with lots of information in it about them; it was called the Catalogus Sanctorum Pausantium in Anglia. In England people began to write lists of saints too.

### **DO SOME SAINTS FACT FINDING... Can you find a particular saint you feel did some particularly cool things during his or her life time?**

Often Monks and Nuns take on the name of a saint when they make their vows. A sister who once worked at the Shrine took on the name of Luke after her own Christian name because she loved the story of St Luke who is the patron saint of medicine. She was a nurse before she became a Sister and felt called to help others, so St Luke was very special to her. She often asked him to pray for her.

### **Who would be your special Saint?**

**Can you think of any people alive today who you think should be saints after they have died? Why?**

# Spotlight on Mary

## The story so far.....

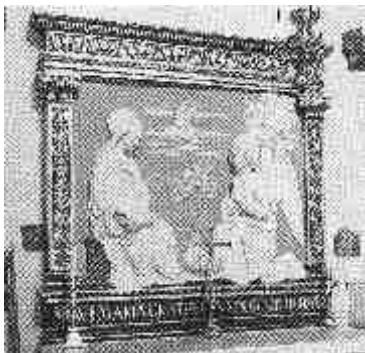


By now you have pieced together quite a lot of information about this special lady. You know why Walsingham became such a special place due to the fact that Mary appeared there in the eleventh century. You know that to this day Mary is honoured and remembered in Walsingham and in many, many other places across the world. Most of all she is a saint in heaven with her son and is there to hear our prayers and support us in our lives.

Called = H.S.P.C.U.

**This is a code that you may find useful to log on to IN YOUR MIND as you prepare to visit Walsingham.**

Mary was called by God and unlike most of us who take time to think when someone calls and asks us to do something .....should I? What about....? Have I got time?..... what will my mates think of me if?.....



**SHE JUST SAID YES, I'LL DO IT!**

**She was called to.....**

**HEAR – H**

**SERVE – S**

**PRAY – P (FOR US)**

**And what is more she is CALLING US – C.U.....now!**

**H.S.P.C.U.**

## *In search of St. Mary - UP2U INVESTIGATION*

**Time to get your Bibles out to do some swatting!**

**Look up the story of Jesus' birth etc. in Matthew's Gospel Chapters 1&2 and in Luke's Gospel Chapters 1&2.**

***Think about what sort of person Mary comes across as in these stories – discuss in your group.***

***BEAT THE CLOCK....who can find other parts of the Gospels where Mary is mentioned? Ask your Priest for help with this one if you get stuck!***

***Who can find the info first??***

***Find the Easter story – what effect did this have on Mary do you think?***

***In what ways was Mary called to  
SERVE God in her life?***

### **THE STATUE OF MARY OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM**

This is very special to us at the Shrine. When you come to Walsingham you will see it in the Holy House, you can't miss it, it is above the Altar, on a shelf.

## ***STATUE FACTS...***

- It was carved from a single piece of wood by a Carmelite Nun back in the nineteen twenties.
- Fr. Alfred Hope Patten had it carved and it is based on the engraving of the original statue from the first Holy House, which was engraved on the Priory Seal
- The statue helps pilgrims to focus on Mary and Jesus ready to say their prayers.
- It reminds pilgrims about how special both of these people are.
- Jesus sits on Mary's knee... what is he holding? What do you think this represents?
- Mary is sitting on a throne with a crown on her head – this reminds us that she is special – Queen of Heaven. It is believed that after she died Mary was taken up to heaven, (the Assumption), given a place there with her son Jesus, and crowned by him.
- Mary holds a lily flower in her right hand – this is a symbol of her purity.
- Mary looks out at us all in the world – this reminds us that she is there caring for us and will pray for us to Jesus.
- One hand also points us to Jesus on her knee – this is reminding us that this is who she wants us to follow in our lives.
- Mary's feet rest on a rock – this represents the world. Mary is there to pray for our world which rests under her care. On some statues there is a toad and snake on the rock which represents evil that is being pushed away by Mary's feet /prayers.

## **SO THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT ABOUT A STATUE !**

### **Many Christians find all this helps them say their prayers.**

Many have statues in their own homes to help them to remember and focus every day on these two most special people.

## **DISCUSSION POINTS...**

Do you find statues helpful? If not, what could you design to help you pray?

Check out your own church....what is there around to help you pray there?

# MARY .....CALLING PILGRIMS NOW!

## **A Pilgrim's personal testimony....**

*'I never used to think much about Mary. I came on pilgrimage to Walsingham throughout my early adult life. I could always see why Mary was so very special. I always found the Holy House a very precious, holy place. Looking at the statue has always helped me remember that Mary gave us Jesus.*

*As I have got older, lots of things have happened to me in my life. My mother died and my wife died. I have suffered a serious illness myself recently. I felt very sad and alone when these special people in my life died, and very worried about my health when I was ill.*

*It was then that I began to realise how special Mary is to me. I began to offer my prayers to her every day, asking her to pray for me and those I love. I began to think more and more about everything she went through, having Jesus, watching him suffer and die.*

*I began to realise that Mary knows exactly how I am feeling. I began to feel really close to her. It is as if she's there for me now my own dear ones are gone. She's there with me in all the ups and downs of life. I have so much to thank her for. She's a real friend to me.*

*Coming to Walsingham helps remind me even more of this and I feel I can relax and spend time really close to Jesus and Mary when I pray in the Shrine.'*