

DIOCESE OF
CHICHESTER



2024

Year of the New Testament



Join us for a year of study, reflection and discovery

Proclaiming the
Mystery of Faith
2023-2025



Celebrations continue

Our themed years leading up to 2025 as the Year of Faith continue.

2024 is the Year of the New Testament.

Indeed 2025 will be 1700 years since the Council of Nicaea gave us what became the Nicene Creed. It also marks 950 years of Christian mission in a diocese based in Chichester. Last year, 2023, our focus was firmly on the Hebrew Scriptures as we reflected on how they point us towards Jesus Christ and the gospel, and to our own knowledge of him in the history of his body, the Church.

An introduction from Bishop Martin



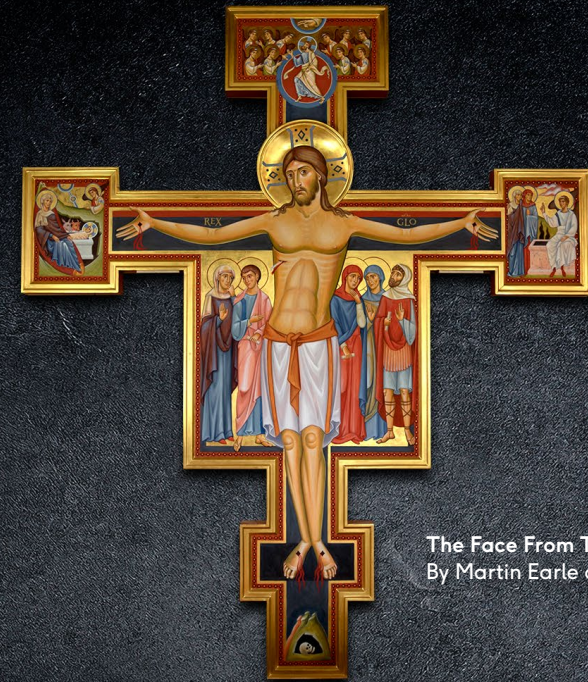
Learning how to read and write is a complex and exciting process. In the very early stages of life, we need lots of help from others. The same is true, even when we become older, and innovation speeds up the pace of change.

When the Church assembles for worship, especially for the Eucharist, we become a school of learning.

This is a shared experience, expertly tailored by the Holy Spirit for the needs of each person. The Spirit draws from the authoritative instruments of the Bible, the prayers and the breaking of the bread, overseen by the facilitation of the ordained members of the people of God.

This year's Lent course helps us to set our learning from the New Testament in the context of worship. This is the school of learning that uniquely connects the assembly on earth with the assembly of saints and angels in heaven.

Fresh attention to the Bible as it shapes our worship helps us to see how proclaiming the mystery of faith in the Eucharistic assembly re-evangelises us and gives us the material with which to fulfil our missionary discipleship.



The Face From The Cross
By Martin Earle and Jim Blackstone

Jesus the Lord

The focus in 2024 falls on the full revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ (the Word made flesh), in his saving death and resurrection and on the Holy Spirit (the gift of the Father and the Son), attested in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament – thus the fuller unfolding of the Old Testament (2 Timothy 3.16 17).

This year's Lent Course invites us to consider the vital question of who Jesus is and helps us to answer in faith: Jesus is the Christ, the Lord's anointed Saviour, the light and hope of all the world (Matthew 16.13 20).

Each section of the specially commissioned Lent course has biblical references on some facet of this theme for our personal and communal reading. These are followed by a selection of much-loved prayers from the Book of Common Prayer, with a short commentary to help us understand them better.

A profound reflection on the theme, written by a priest of this diocese then follows. You are also invited to reflect on artist Martin Earle's depiction of the cross of Jesus and, as the weeks go by, to ponder individual aspects of the cross as they interpret key moments in the life of Our Lord.

In this way, God's Word in Scripture is unpacked through prayer and worship, to lead us deeper into the mystery of faith (1 Timothy 3.9) into closer relationship with Christ our Lord, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2.3)

Year of the New Testament Seminars

Leading on from our series of seminars for the Year of the Old Testament we are offering in 2024 a series on New Testament themes and topics to encourage deeper understanding of the Bible's unity.

Once again, they will be open to all. We began with the theology of St John's Gospel and will continue with a presentation on the spirituality of St Paul as expressed in his letters. The place of the psalms in the Church's daily prayer will be explored as a reminder that the writers of the New Testament found the Mystery of Christ revealed in Old Testament texts and bequeathed them to the worship life of the Church.

Further seminars will explore the profound theology of Christ and the Church in Colossians and Ephesians. The Book of Revelation, one of the most fascinating if difficult books in the Canon of Scripture, will also be examined with a view to making it more intelligible for worship and preaching. Toward the end of the series, two seminars will look at the Church's handing on of the faith in doctrine, theology, worship and spirituality.

Online book sessions

This group will meet fortnightly on Zoom (excluding Lent, Advent, and August). It will be led by the Revd Benjamin Lucas, Associate Vicar of All Saints' Lindfield.

As well as pastoral duties Ben has taught biblical Greek and will soon begin teaching Mth students in theology. If some would like to read John in Greek this year (even if you have rusty Greek!) the group will convene before the main discussion to do so (email: ben.lucas@lindfield.info).

We will read John's Gospel with and for the church, seeking not only to understand the text of Scripture as an historical document but to hear God's voice as he addresses his people today. The sessions will be interactive with plenty of time given to question and discussion."

The zoom link will be issued to participants ahead of the session.

Books to encourage

The Diocese is grateful to St Olav Christian Bookshop in Chichester, for offering to provide a weekly book suggestion as a resource to encourage and guide you throughout 2024, the Year of the New Testament.

Take a look here: www.chichester.anglican.org/books-to-encourage/