

Media Questionnaire: Priests

Your name, age and original home village, town or city (i.e. the place where you grew up):

Answer:

Matteo Alessio Zambon. Born in Italy and raised in Brighton.

The church in Blackburn Diocese where you are serving:

Answer:

The Church of the Ascension with St Martin of Tours, Torrisholme and Westgate.

Tell us about your family:

Answer:

God has blessed me with two little girls Arabella and Rosa, and a very tolerant wife, Heather. We are joined in our journey by Woof the dog, and Merlin and JubJub the cats.

If applicable, your former job before entering ministry?

Answer:

In my early teens I discovered a love for martial arts and this resulted in my teaching martial arts alongside my job as a fitness instructor.

After completing my course in private investigation, I signed up for the British Army and served across the UK and abroad in the Royal Military Police, finishing my career in the Special Investigations Branch. It was during my service that I met my wife, Heather.

What led you to take the steps towards ordination?

Answer:

God sent me a few not-so-subtle messages that he had other plans for me, and He finally wore down my stubborn heart enough that I listened!

What's been the best thing about your training?

Answer:

My Training Incumbent requires that I write: 'The irreproachable example of my Training Incumbent'! Ministering to God's children every day, through highs and lows. All the while surrounded by fantastic examples of priesthood.

Can you say what is the most important thing you have learned during your training?

Answer:

Always listen more than you speak. I'm still working on this!

Reflecting on the difficult past year, please share a few thoughts about how the pandemic has impacted on ministry at this time (you could reflect how people have adapted to the circumstances in different ways as part of this response) ...

Answer:

The pandemic has isolated many of our most vulnerable parishioners, and it has been a real focus of the parish to make sure that that isolation (whether voluntary or not) is met with the right Christian support; spiritually, physically, and sacramentally.

Meanwhile, what are some of your personal reflections on ministry in the post-pandemic period that lies ahead; the challenges and the opportunities?

Answer:

We must rise up to the challenge of safely bringing Christians back into Church for regular worship wherever possible. God has kindled the faith of many new Christians during the various lockdowns and we need to take seize the opportunity to proclaim the name of Jesus!

Tell us something people don't know about you that might surprise them?

Answer:

I love martial arts and competed for the Armed Forces and Army teams/squads in Karate, Kendo, and lastly in Thai Boxing for 16 Air Assault Brigade!

What do you view as your most significant personal achievement, before or during training?

Answer:

Convincing my wife not only marry me, but then subsequently tolerate me for years afterwards!

How do you hope to continue to support the Diocesan Vision 2026 at a parish level?

Answer:

To continue to grow the new church community at the church of St Martin of Tours in Westgate which has recently reopened for Anglican Christian worship after seven years of closure! The church is already bearing fruits and growing, and we hope to bring many more people home to Christ through ministry there!

How would you express your own vision for the church?

Answer:

A church found in the centre of God, based in the scriptures, and dedicated to bringing the sacraments and God's love to all those we are able to reach!

Finally, when you get the chance, how do you relax?

Answer:

As the father to two beautiful but very energetic girls I'm afraid I'll have to get back to you when I remember what 'relax' means ... but to wind down I generally head to karate and train!