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'Catholic South West' is the monthly newspaper which serves the communications needs of the clergy, organisations and people of the Diocese of Plymouth.

EDITORIAL

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Your articles are most welcome.

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Editor's Thoughts.....

CHRISTMAS: NEW BEGINNINGS

I have had the privilege of hearing a few good sermons, lately. Fr Keith – well, that's to be expected. Fr Dylan – likewise. Erudite, penetrating and very much to the point.

Two I am thinking of in particular stand out, because they so very much hit today's nails on the head. By today, I really do mean: these last few weeks. I am reproducing Fr Paddy's homily in its entirety, elsewhere. It is addressing the challenge that the people of Ireland are facing right now – the drive to repeal Constitutional protection for children yet unborn. Can you imagine? Ireland is considering repealing its legal protection for unborn children. Who speaks up for the voiceless and who will defend the defenceless now, if not us?

Read his sermon and, despite the setbacks that the pro-life movement has suffered this year, take heart. If you are appalled by the attacks on the unborn, the attempt to commoditise them and turn them into industrial raw material: take heart. You are not alone; plenty of others feel the same away and Fr Paddy is prepared to give voice to those who fear their words would be too quiet, and lost in the anti-life whirlwind.

Start again

The other homily I found particularly striking was by Mgr Fitzgerald, in Salisbury. It was on the first Sunday of Advent and he talked of new beginnings.

Every day is a new beginning, he said. Every week. Every time we go to Mass. Every time we go to Confession – and we should go to Confession, much more than we currently do, as a Church.

That is very much what the Season of Advent is about: new beginnings. Specifically, new beginnings at around Christmas, the new year of the Church, and the Nativity of Our Lord, but also the season itself. Preparation. Making ready.

We are surrounded with secular images of Christmas; there's even an advert currently on the telly that says of a 60-inch TV: "it's what Christmas is all about".

As Catholics, I sincerely hope we all know that is not the case!

Funnily enough, although they are the most likely to be materialistic, to look forward to the presents

to be opened on Christmas Day, it is our children who are most open to the spirit of the season – to think of others, to want to give, to be fascinated by the story of the First Christmas. To be most ready to identify with the Christ-child, helpless and totally dependent on His parents for everything, from food and warmth to love and comfort.

A clear insight from a flawed man

Years ago, when I was not as regular a Churchgoer as I could and should have been, I read a story written by that most brilliant, complex and flawed of writers who happen to be Catholic: Graham Green. He was capable of searing perception and description of the banality of Evil – in Brighton Rock – the glamour (in the old-fashioned sense) of Evil – in The Third Man (my favourite film) - and the monstrosity and lifedenying evil of Evil, in The Power and the Glory.

This particular tale — A Visit to Morin — was a bit different. It was a short story and it had only two characters: Morin, a bit of a burned-out case of a formerly celebrated Catholic writer, and Dunlop, a non-Catholic who had become interested in Catholicism paradoxically because of his enthusiasm for Morin and his work. Dunlop has stopped by a Catholic Church for Midnight Mass — partly out of curiosity, partly because he is being drawn to the Church. The only two people in the congregation who do not go up for Communion are Dunlop himself, and an older man he recognises as this Morin chap.

Born again

For me, the most amazing lines are about Midnight Mass. Morin describes it as the 'first Mass of childhood', the one that introduces children to the mysticism of the Church. If you have come to regard Sunday Mass as routine, Midnight Mass brings back those magical evenings of childhood, when Midnight Mass was celebrated at midnight. When you were small, it was rite of passage; the proof that you were growing up. I don't know if you did but I and my sister had to go to bed a little earlier - no matter how excited we were - and, although we were determined to stay awake - we knew we could not sleep, because it was Christmas Eve! - we would find ourselves gently shaken out of deepest slumber by our mother. She would encourage us out of bed, into our clothes and make sure we took our warmest coat, "against



If we were lucky, the moon was shining in a clear sky and the frost crunched gently underfoot. We arrived at an already-crowded church, a shadow against the starry sky, with the light shining through stained-glass windows and the sound of the midnight carol service flowing out of the open doors.

Wide-eyed, we entered, and someone would be legless, carried out by friends and neighbours to recover his senses in the cold car park. We were shocked but what caught our attention was the light on the Stable, the Christ-child now present in the manger, the shuffling in the pews as the early arrivals made room for our family.

It was a rite of passage and making it 'easier', bringing the 'First Mass of Christmas' – Midnight Mass no more – forward to as early as 8pm or even sooner, to accommodate the 'little ones' robs it of its magic, and of that feeling of transition for children themselves. In making it 'easier', it is stripped of its meaning and wonder – and even, yes, that feeling of specialness when we attend for the first time. A hard toffee is no substitute when it comes to feeling 'very special'.

Coming home

'The first Mass of childhood', Morin called it – but also the 'last Mass of the lapsed'. When all else has fallen away, when the waters of the secular world have eroded faith and eliminated belief, the two things that kept us coming back were the Power of the Holy Spirit, gained in Confirmation, and – crucially – Midnight Mass.

This is a time of new beginning, of turning our back on the troubles of the past year. If you have Midnight Mass in your Parish, at Midnight, treasure it and attend it. If you don't – have a look around and see if there is a reachable parish that does, and give it a shot. Refresh your mind and your spirit with the first Mass of childhood, remember what it did, all those years ago, and join again with the new Life, the redemption and rebirth, brought to the world by the Christ-child, two Millennia ago.

A Visit to Morin' is currently published as one of a collection of four stories under the title 'A Sense of Reality

Have a very merry and blessed Christmas, and a happy New Year.

Around the South West				
WE NEED YOUR PARISH NEWS TO GO HERE!				
No parish news? Maybe you should start something!				

PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST **TOPICS 2018**

- 1. Education makes us what we are
- Being young is overrated
- Good manners and politeness are so yesterday
- What ever happened to.....?
- It is good to talk
- Do we learn from history?
- All the world is a stage...
- My biggest concern for the future is
- 10. The courage of your convictions
- 11. Carpe Diem
- 12. Discipline is not a dirty word.
- 13. The most important lesson of my life so far
- 14. The truth is rarely pure and never simple (Wilde)
- 15. The games people play



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Or your local representative

Author: Robin Daniels

by Robin Daniels

The Virgin Eye by Robin Daniels inspires us to see the world anew through the innocent eyes of a child, so as to become more aware of God's presence in everyday life

This book offers insights into contemplative prayer and mindfulness; making wise decisions; tive relationship enjoying a creative relationance; stowing down; and managing change and stress. Daniels demonstrates how we can put St Paul's challenge request to 'pray without ceasing' into practice. He explores how we can turn suffering and trial into opportunity and growth, as we learn to see God, ourselves and other people with a pure heart and a pure eye

This book is a treasure.

Publisher: Instant Apostle ISBN-10: 1909728527 ISBN-13: 978-1909728523

For trade orders call Marston: 01235 465500

For review copies and media enquiries contact Manoj: info@instantapostle.com I wish it had been available years ago. It should be required reading. Highly recommended! It is less a book and more a journey which will not fail to transform your relationship with God, self and others. It will be a blessing for all into whose hands

This wonderful book is a fount of wisdom.





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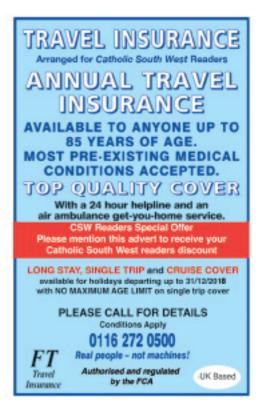
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18th - 22nd June 2018 Cost £856.00

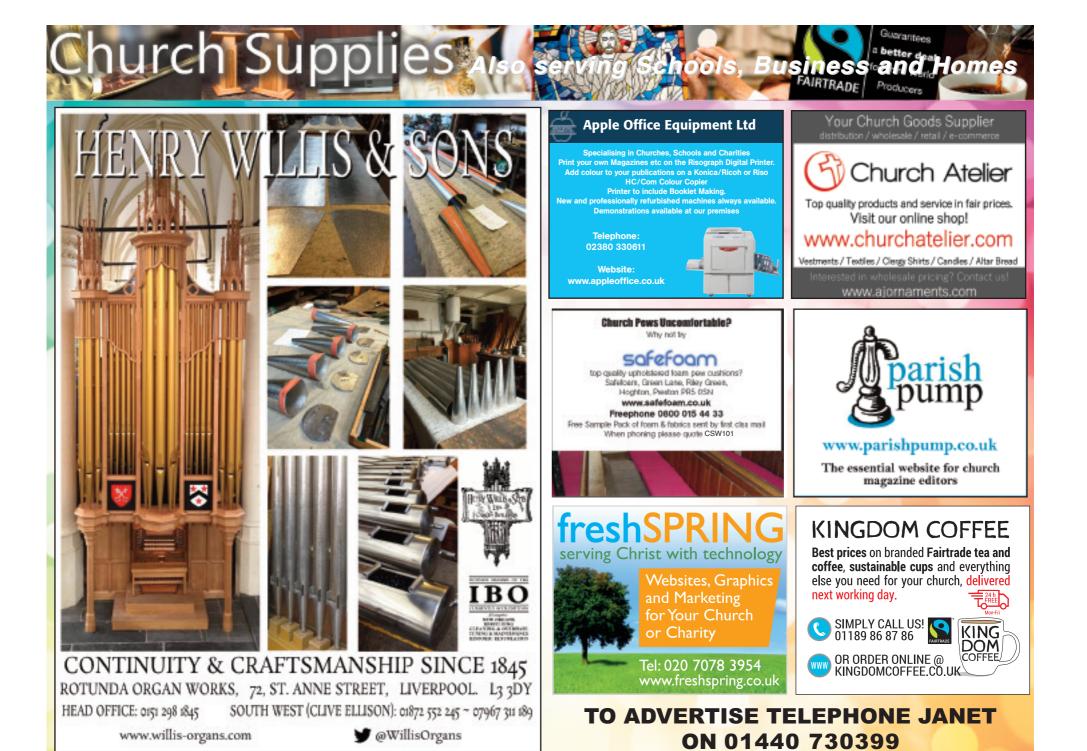
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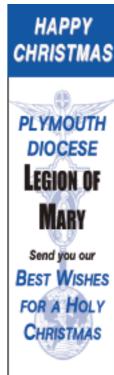


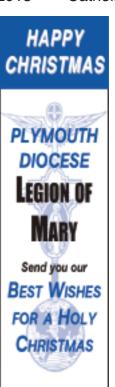


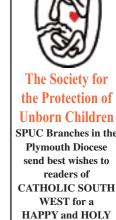












CHRISTMAS 2017 50 years of defending life from conception to natural death. October 2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act

www.spuc.org.uk



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Christmas Eve 17.30 Christmas day 12 noon Confessions available every day on request. Carols at all Masses Bryan with prayers

Most Precious Blood Sidmouth

Christmas Vigil Mass 7pm on Sunday 24th December, Midnight Mass at Midnight, Christmas Day Mass at 10:30am, Vigil Mass Saturday 30th December at 5:30pm, Sunday Mass on Sunday 31st January at 10:30am



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES SUNDAY 24th Dec - CHRISTMAS EVE

8.30 am - Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Agnes. 10.30 am - Most Holy Trinity, Newquay. 12.00 Noon - Christ the King, Perranporth. 5.00 pm - Christmas Children's Ma (Most Holy Trinity) 8.30 pm - Christmas Eve Carols (Most Holy Trinity) 9.00 pm - Vigil Mass (Most Holy Trinity) **MONDAY 25th Dec - CHRISTMAS DAY** 8.30 am - Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Agnes 10.30 am - Most Holy Trinity, Newquay 12.00 Noon - Christ the King, Perranporth TUESDAY 26th Dec - ST. STEPHENS 9.30 am - Most Holy Trinity, Newquay SUNDAY 31ST DEC - NEW YEARS EVE 10.30 am – Most Holy Trinity, Newquay 4.00 pm - Christ the King, Perranporth 6.00 pm - Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Agnes MONDAY 1st JANUARY - NEW YEARS DAY 10.30 am - Most Holy Trinity, Newquay

For other Masses and Service times during the week please see our website www.mostholytrinity.co.uk



Davis is living his childhood in darkness. Will you help a child see the wonder of God's creation?

Dear Catholic South West reader,

As a fellow Christian, I wanted to share with you how incredibly powerful it is to witness a child seeing for the first time, after eye surgery.

As we carry out our work with Christian Blind Mission, we are constantly moved by the astonishment and wonder on the faces of children when the bandages are removed and they get their first clear look at their smiling loved ones.

8-year-old Davis has cataracts. He has been barely able to see. But we know that a simple 45-minute procedure could restore his sight.

Just think, in under an hour his entire life could be transformed. Instead of living with darkness, frustration and exclusion he could have light, colour and a future filled with opportunity. He could do well at school and find a way out of poverty.

The cataract removal surgery costs £95, but his family can barely afford even basic necessities, so I am turning to you in the hope that you can help.

If you could send a gift of £95 today, you could pay for a child like Davis' surgery. You could open his eyes to the beauty of God's creation. And we'll send you an update on how Davis' surgery goes.

God bless you,

Andrea Brandt von Lindau Programme Manager for Inclusive Eye Health



Davis' cataracts means he's been living in darkness



He can hardly see objects in front of him



Your gift could help a child see and transform a life

Christian Blind Mission is a huge inspiration to me. It works in more than 60 countries, including some of the world's poorest communities, to restore sight, mobility and independence to people living with disability. It's putting Christ's love into action for the most marginalised people. Will you join Christian Blind Mission by supporting this amazing work?

Diane Louise Jordan, Friend of CBM



Yes, I will give £95 to make a blind child see the wonder of God's creation.						
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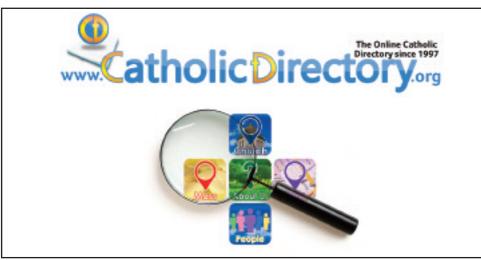
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