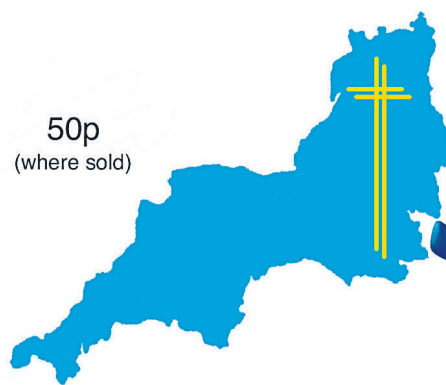


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# Catholic **South West**

Serving the  
Church in the  
South West

December 2021

## Inside



*Young People Pray  
for COP  
Page 2*



*Bishop Mark appointed  
to Pontifical Council  
Page 3*



*World Day of the Poor  
Page 5*



*Virtues, Well-Being  
and God  
Pages 8-9*

## Advent

*The Word became flesh, he lived among us,  
and we saw his glory, the glory that he has  
from the Father as only Son of the Father,  
full of grace and truth.*



**DO NOT LEAVE THIS IN THE CHURCH**  
once you have picked up this paper please take it with you



## **Catholic South West** CONTACTS & DETAILS

Catholic South West is a monthly newspaper for Catholics in the Plymouth, Clifton and Portsmouth Dioceses. It is published by Bellcourt Ltd

### AIMS

To build community in the South West by sharing stories relating to Catholic life around the South West.  
To encourage readers to get more involved in - or start - projects and initiatives in the local area.  
To provide thought-provoking articles to help readers deepen their Faith.

### GET INVOLVED

**We need your help!**

**Articles:** We need your local articles - we can only include what we get. So if you have an article or just a photo with a short description - please send it in.  
**Ideas:** We need your ideas for the paper and we need your ideas in the paper. If you have any thoughts on what we should include - or if you are thinking about starting a new initiative - get in touch - we'd love to support it!  
**Readers:** If you can encourage other readers in your parish please do so.  
**Advertising:** We rely on advertising - if you know of anyone that would benefit from promoting their business, event or anything else to parishioners throughout the South West, do let us know.

### SUBMITTING EDITORIAL

To send in editorial or to get in touch please contact us at:  
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### DATES

Catholic South West goes to parishes on the last full weekend of the month. It is printed around the middle of the month - so if you would like to advertise or send in editorial please do it as early as possible.

## FROM CSW

Thank you again for all the articles you are sending in from around the Diocese. It is inspiring to see what people

are doing and the ways in which our Community is providing support and help. Please continue to send your

stories in so that we can share them throughout the South West.

**CSW TEAM**

## Young people of Plymouth pray for COP26

On Friday 5 November, pupils from Plymouth Roman Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (Plymouth CAST) will come together to reflect and pray about climate change. Pupils from the primary schools of Holy Cross, Keyham Barton, St. Peter's, St. Joseph's, St. Paul's and the Cathedral School of St. Mary as well as pupils from Notre Dame school will come together at Plymouth Cathedral at 10.00am on Friday for a service led by the Rt. Rev Bishop Mark O'Toole.

This Mass takes place as governments from across the world gather in Glasgow to discuss how to tackle the climate emergency at COP26. Pupils from Plymouth CAST have a strong commitment to protecting our environment and want their voice to be heard. They

will share their hopes and aspirations and pray that our leaders act.

"Our young people and children see so clearly that we need to act urgently to protect the earth, our common home. It is good to be with some of them from our Catholic schools, as we pray together for this important intention and all those gathering for COP26. May those gathered in Glasgow, and all of us, do what we can to bring about effective change for the healthy future of all our young people and the preservation of our beautiful common home".

**Bishop Mark O'Toole**

## Well done, Sisters Ruby, Rita and Rosemary



Sisters Ruby, Rita and Rosemary have had their hair cut for the charity The Princess Trust. The Trust take donations of hair and make them into wigs for children who have lost their own hair due to cancer treatment. We are very proud of our young parishioners. Our new priest, Fr Anthony O'Gorman has a very long pony tail but confirmed that he would not be donating his hair at this time!

We have also had a visit from Bishop Mark O'Toole who came to 'Our Lady Star of the sea' in Weymouth to see how Fr Anthony is settling down in his new parish. We were delighted to see the Bishop and thanked him for coming to visit.



### EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

**1) Think of the readers:** If you are writing about an event, think about the readers that don't know anything about it. Outline what happened, but focus on why people go, why it is important to them, or some teaching that was given. Make sure readers learn something from your

article - they don't just want to know who was there and what snacks were available!

**2) Keep it brief:** Make sure you make your point - but keep it brief and punchy.

**3) Pictures:** Send pictures as they are - even if they are very big to email. Don't reduce them in size or put them inside a Word document. They look fine on the screen but terrible in the paper!

### LEGAL INFORMATION

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made to ensure that due acknowledgement, when appropriate, is made to the originator of any image submitted for publication. It is understood that those submitting material for publication in CSW either hold the copyright or have arranged for publication with the appropriate authority.



## Pope Francis has appointed fifteen new Members to the Council

The Bishop of Plymouth, the Right Reverend Mark O'Toole, Chair of the Bishops' Conference's Department for Evangelisation and Discipleship has been named a member of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation's International Council for Catechesis.

The Council has the aim of "studying the most important issues in catechesis and encouraging the sharing of experiences between experts in the field, on the one hand, and the Apostolic See and the Episcopal Conferences, on the other."

The Council has recently assisted the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation's work in preparing the new Directory for Catechesis and the establishment of the Ministry of Catechist.

Pope Francis has appointed fifteen new Members to the Council.

About the appointment, Bishop Mark O'Toole said:

**"I was surprised and humbled to receive the notification that I have been appointed a member of the International Council for Catechesis. Pope Francis has consistently stressed the vital role that catechesis plays in the New Evangelisation. This is close to my heart. I experience this appointment as an invitation to deepen my own encounter with the Lord, to invite others who do not know the beauty of this, to come to know Jesus, and to help all Catholics witness to the wonder of our encounter with Him"**

## Couples for Christ



Bishop Mark recently met with Nick and Renee Salabsab at Bishop's House. They are parishioners at Abbey Road, Torquay and are the Diocesan Coordinators of the ecclesial movement known as "Couples for Christ". Nick Salabsab has written the following about this impressive Catholic movement:

**Couples for Christ (CFC)** is a Christian Catholic Community for the renewal and strengthening of family life and for making the love of God known and experienced among the poor. It started in June 1981 in Manila, Philippines with 16

couples. Now it is a worldwide community in 127 countries with more than a million active members. It is a highly evangelistic community and is officially recognized by the Vatican's Pontifical Council of the Laity. As members we are moved by the Holy Spirit, one with the Catholic Church, blessed to witness to Christ in love and service. We, the Couples for Christ members, are committed to live in God's righteousness and holiness, evangelizing people through a life of love and service. The CFC community offers support "from womb to the tomb", meaning we have ministries

for families and individuals as follows:

1. Kids for Christ (KFC): 0-11 yrs old;
2. Youth for Christ (YFC): 12- 21 yrs old;
3. Singles for Christ (SFC): 22 – 40 yrs old;
4. Handmaids of the Lord (HOLD): 41 years old and above, including widowed women;
5. Servants of the Lord (SOLD): men 41 years old and above, including widowed men.

For further information about Couples for Christ and its different activities, please contact Nick Salabsab on [nsalabsab@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nsalabsab@yahoo.co.uk) or Tel. 01803315628.

## Around the South West

### Synod Meetings at Plymouth Cathedral

We have set aside 4 Mondays during Advent to meet at the cathedral, which will be begin on Monday 29th November. 7-8.30pm. This will be led by lay facilitators. They are time for prayer, reflection, listening to the Word of God, and to each other. Leaflets will be provided for each week which contain passages of scripture, reflections, and questions to ponder. We very much hope you will join us.



### Walking Together: Online Talk

As part of our Diocesan 'Walking Together' we were joined online by Austen Ivereigh on 16 November to explore the topic: "Behind the global synod: why Pope Francis wants you to speak boldly and listen carefully." You can access the recording here, but well worth listening to it for some super inspiration <https://youtu.be/EFfYnJdn8rc>.



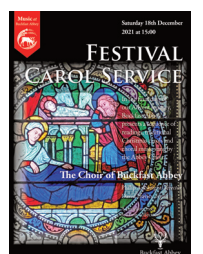
### Catholic Children's Society Christmas Cards

156 entries were received for the second ever Catholic Children's Society Design a Christmas card competition. These entries were received from 9 different Catholic schools throughout the Plymouth Diocese. Their kindness and creativity will help raise valuable funds for the CCSP when packs of Christmas cards are on sale within the next few weeks.



### The Buckfast Abbey Festival Carol Service

In the final days of our Advent journey, Buckfast Abbey presents a sequence of readings, traditional Christmas carols and choral music sung by the Abbey Choir. Our popular carol service, which marks the start of the Christmas period for many, takes place on Saturday 18th December at 3pm.



**Send us your news**  
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# Scripture Focus

By Fr Jeremy Corley



## Waiting for our Saviour's Arrival

December is a time of year when we expect to see cool days and cold nights. The daylight ends quickly, and we can sometimes find the dark evenings long. This can sometimes be a situation we try to escape with activities or entertainment.

But perhaps in the winter gloom we can pause to take stock of our lives. Perhaps we can use this time as an opportunity to enter into the Advent season. Perhaps we can use these December days as a time of real preparation for our Saviour's arrival.

In this time when we can sometimes feel lonely, we await the company of a Loved One, and we long for the Saviour, whose coming the Advent Scriptures announce. In this time when we can sometimes be isolated and separated from others, we await someone who will bring us together.

Many of us have found these months of the pandemic difficult. Even if we face a future with various reasons for apprehension and fear, we await someone who will give us real hope. When we are without music, we await someone who will give us reasons to sing.

In fact, for many people, the experience of these months has been a kind of enforced Advent experience. We have been waiting hopefully for the day when we can freely regather without worrying about infection.

We are often weighed down by our own sadnesses and the sorrows of the world, but we await someone who will lift our spirits and bring us good news. We are often oppressed by the mistakes of our past, but we await someone who will open up a new beginning for us.

The Advent readings use images of desert and exile to depict our need for God's salvation. Some of the Advent readings contrast the emptiness of the desert with the fulness of God's promised salvation. Other readings contrast our sorrowful situation in exile with the joy of being restored to our homeland.

One of the biblical images for the Advent season is the wilderness or desert. John the Baptist in the desert calls us to prepare the way of the Lord and make our hearts ready to receive him. At this season

the commercial world puts pressure on us to spend, spend, spend. Can we find time to pray and reflect, opening our hearts to the coming Saviour?

These weeks before Christmas can get busy with preparations for the festive season and arrangements to make. But the Church calls us to think about the Person we wish to honour in our celebrations, so as to be ready to welcome him.

Another biblical image for the Advent season is the time of exile. We await the day when our Saviour will regather us and bring us home to him. As many families prepare for a hoped-for get-together at Christmas (Covid permitting), we await the joy of celebrating our Saviour's birth.

In the coldness of a December night we await the warmth of a newborn baby. And in the stillness of a December night we await a baby's cry. In this cry we will hear the long-expected Word of God coming to save us.

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## World Day of the Poor

In his message for the fifth World Day of the Poor, which takes place on 14th November 2021, Pope Francis said "If the poor are marginalized, as if they were to blame for their condition, then the very concept of democracy is jeopardized and every social policy will prove bankrupt." We often think of what we should do, or say, when confronted with poverty. "With great humility, we should confess that we are often incompetent when it comes to the poor."

Over 50 people came together to reflect on this message on 9 October at St.Rita's in Honiton, led by Bishop Mark O'Toole and Canon John Deeny. Bishop Mark reflected on the story about Simon the Leper and how Jesus interacted with the poor. He reminded us that Jesus actively reached out to those in need: "we cannot wait for the poor to knock on our door; we need urgently to reach them in their homes, in hospitals and nursing homes, on the streets and in the dark corners where they sometimes hide."

Raymond Friel, Chief Executive of the Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN),

talked about how we can view poverty through a religious lens, and understanding the causes of current poverty. He stressed that we should be "working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor" to break the cycle of deprivation.

Sarah Watts, Children's Catholic Society Plymouth (CCSP) gave examples of the impact of poverty on family life within the Diocese. CCSP offers grant giving, parental advice, and the Good Shepherd programme, which teaches children Christian values through empathy and compassion.

### For More Information:

CSAN Website: [www.csan.org.uk](http://www.csan.org.uk)

Catholic Children Society Website:

[www.ccsplymouth.org.uk](http://www.ccsplymouth.org.uk)

The message from Pope Francis for the day can be found on the Vatican Website

To contact Caritas to be involved in future events, please email us here: [caritas@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:caritas@prcdtr.org.uk) – 01364 645421



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# Is doing something about climate change a moral obligation for Catholics?



In 2015 Pope Francis wrote the encyclical letter Laudato Si (LS). The key idea behind LS is that of “integral ecology”, i.e. that people and planet are part of one family where the Earth is our common home. It

invites people to protect God’s creation for future generations, to embrace a lifestyle change for their own good, and to take care of those who are poor and more vulnerable. The essence of LS builds on a

long history of Catholic teaching. For years, many Catholics along with people of other faiths and none have felt passionate about taking action to deal with the climate crisis, but what LS did was to ground that concern at the core of what it means to be a Catholic.

The current crisis is reflected in the dramatic rise in global temperature due, in large part, to the emission of greenhouse gases that we have been producing since the industrial revolution. Such warming has devastating effects on many levels, including food production, extreme weather events and water shortages alongside rising sea levels. This results in stronger and more devastating natural catastrophes of all kinds, causing death, destruction and displacement of people and animals, overwhelmingly affecting the most vulnerable people.

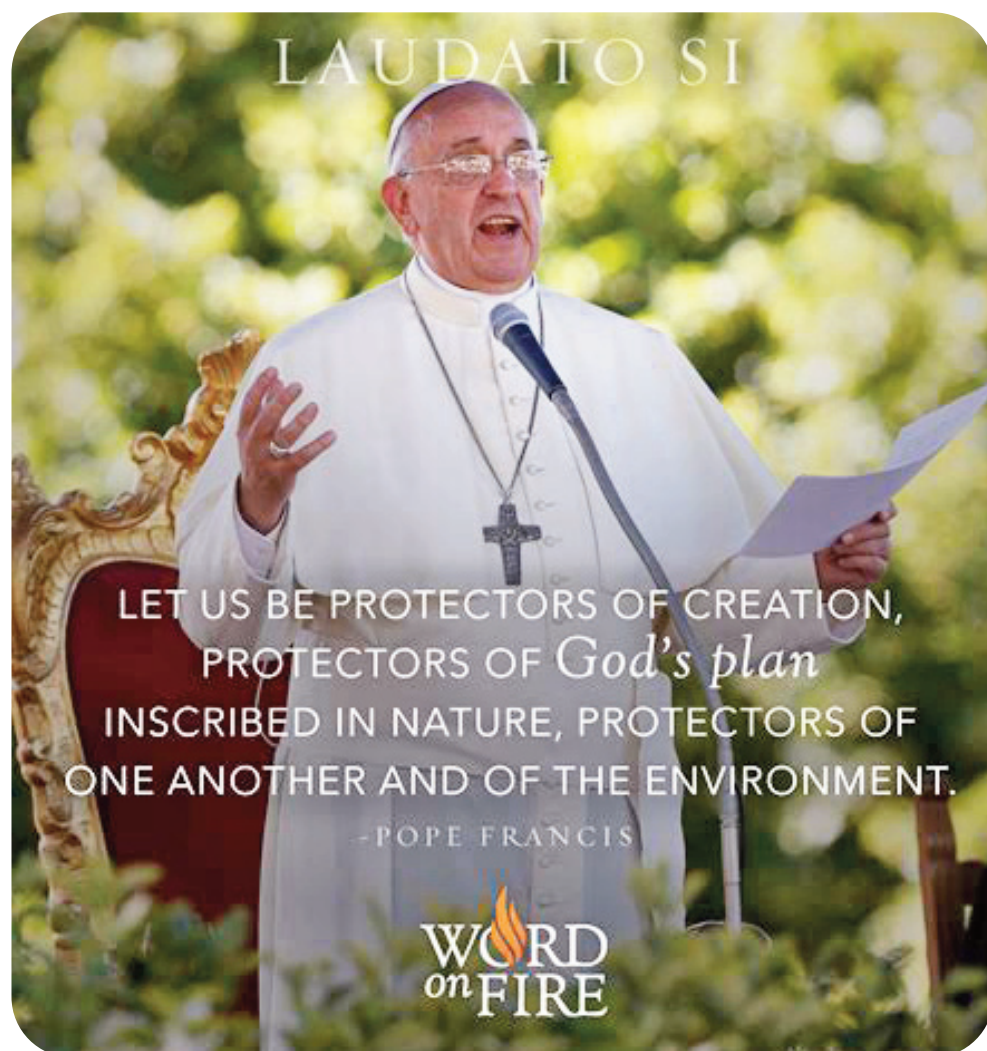
Throughout LS Pope Francis points out that climate change is a moral issue in which all “Everyone’s talents and involvement are needed.” The Pope tells us that to have a true care for the environment, we must also have a care for the most vulnerable. He says “(A) true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” LS [49].

## Catholics are called to act

Some months ago myself and Columba Timmins took the six week on-line programme to become Laudato Si Animators. The free training is provided by the global ‘Laudato Si’ Movement’, formerly known as the ‘Global Catholic Climate Movement’. The course helps Animators feel connected with thousands of passionate and like-minded people during these difficult times. Animators learn from world-renowned experts about the root causes of the climate crisis and the core messages of Laudato Si’ in order to help Catholics, and others, better understand the problem and the possible solutions.

All of us can do something to address the challenge. We can pray. Small gestures and acts can grow into something bigger the more people are involved. So many people are already living their lives within the spirit of the Cafod ‘Live Simply’ message, it would be great to hear what changes, however big or small, people in Dioceses around the country have been making in their own lives. It is easy to feel defeated and downhearted by the huge challenges the world faces but knowing that we are walking alongside like-minded people can sustain us and encourage us on that journey.

Ann Burke





# Synod Poem

Yvonne O'Donovan

## Synod in Synthesis or 'A Road Back'

This is my body broken and pure  
Woven through history, herstory too  
Synodical syntax, so.. What do we do?  
Watch and deliver, Listen and see,  
Break open to piercing  
our own certainty.

'Syn' meaning 'with' and not 'sin' meaning 'bad'  
words have no truth now or not what they had.

Renewal, reversal, reflect and review  
What are we willing to release to redo?  
Were our errors ordained or distractions, deviations?  
Or necessary paths on the roads of salvation?

Use hands, feet and wit to get out of the rut  
Be simple so others may simply not rot,  
Plant your dreams in the bones of ancestors and saints;  
Just like us they were scared and confused and in doubt  
But they plaited new bridges for others to cross.  
They wove cloaks for the frames of the freezing and cold  
Knowing kindness not cash is the true shining gold  
They bound up our wounds and piled cairns on our losses  
And howled at the moon when the sky filled with crosses  
As crows circled high in the sky overhead  
While famines and pestilence piled up our dead.

So reveal who you are and do not be afraid  
Give up obfuscation, put down the charade,  
Of litany unearthed and liturgy sprayed  
In the dead repetition of inanimate decay.

Get out of our aisles and our temples of power  
Go down in the soil and relinquish the tower  
Of ego and greed and denial of the real:  
Notes of the biosphere, the Other, the Us  
We are One, we are all, we are atoms of unity  
Head, heart and Hand aligned in the Trinity.

Light up your own life to offer to all  
Awaken to true hope and stop simply crawling  
The surface of Life on a belly of wishes  
Stand up and be counted, Sell all you have  
For the treasure eternal ..  
Don't stall or wait.  
The gate it is opening.. just push and accept  
You do nothing alone  
Grace has already knocked down the gate.

Whether COVID or plague or some new global dread  
Whether climate or chaos or forest fires red  
Or warfare or AI, genetic mutation  
Or whatever passes for civilization...

Only 'Love one another' can light up the  
skies with warmth, peace and justice...  
Then we might just get by.

As Nature restored to both balance and beauty  
We can showcase our hope of the Way,  
This our Duty.

Synodos, synodic, assembly, communion:  
Unborn generations,  
As in union they stand...  
Down a future we won't live to see,  
May inherit some inherent grace  
Sown in our bones with the seeds we now plant.

This is our body broken and pure  
Woven through history, herstory too.  
In truth, we know what  
To do.

"We recall that the purpose of the Synod, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but "to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands ..."



# Virtues, Well-Being and God

Dr Paul Dixon



What makes for happiness? 56% of children are always worrying about something, and every class has at least three children suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue ([www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk](http://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk)). Research by Leeds Beckett University and Teachwire.net, report that of the 775 teachers surveyed, 54% said they suffered from poor mental health, and 77% believe their own poor mental health is negatively affecting their pupils' education (<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/news/0118-mental-health-survey/>). And based on the 2015 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) Results on Students' Well-being, the UK is reported to have some of the unhappiest pupils in the world ([www.oecd.org/pisa](http://www.oecd.org/pisa)). Can the virtues help to improve the well-being of teachers and pupils? 'Virtue' comes from the Greek word 'arete' meaning an excellent human quality. Early Greek thinkers certainly believed that the flourishing of individuals and society depends upon the possession of the virtues.

In his work *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (384–322 BCE) taught that by acquiring the virtues we would live a well-balanced life, make decisions that lead to our flourishing, what he called *eudaimonia* (a deserved happiness on earth, the by-

product of living well). He identified various virtues and the four that have stood the test of time being: prudence (good judgement), justice (fairness), temperance (self-control) and fortitude (courage).

Within the Christian tradition, Aquinas (1225–1274 CE) built on the Aristotelian virtues and combined them with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (love), the latter orientating humankind to its perfect happiness with God, which he called *beatitudo*.

Much research is being done nowadays on the importance of character virtues for the flourishing of individuals and society. Leading the way in this enterprise is the superb work done by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, led by its Director, Professor James Arthur OBE. The Centre is part of the School of Education at the University of Birmingham ([www.jubileecentre.ac.uk](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk)).

In one of the Centre's many publications, *A Framework for Character Education in Schools* (2017), it states: 'Individuals can respond well, or less well, to the challenges they face in everyday life, and the virtues are those character traits that enable human beings to respond

appropriately to situations in any area of experience' (p.3).

In another of its publications, *The Good Teacher: Understanding Virtues in Practice* (2015), we are informed that many teachers 'saw character education as integral to their teaching', and that '37% of experienced teachers claimed that they do not feel that they have sufficient time to do their job to a standard they believe is right' (p.5).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) states: 'The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God' (CCC 1803, citing St Gregory of Nyssa). In discussing what is known as the 'human virtues', the Catechism, like Aristotle and Aquinas, highlights the pivotal role the virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance (known as the hinge virtues (Latin 'cardo': hinge)). Prudence guides all the other virtues and enables us 'to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it' (CCC 1806). Justice ensures we respect the rights of others and do justice to both neighbour and God (CCC 1807). Fortitude enables us to 'conquer fear . . . and to face trials and persecutions' (CCC 1808). Temperance 'moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created

goods. . . . and keeps desires within the limits of what is honourable' (CCC 1809). There are, of course, many factors affecting the well-being of us all, students and teachers alike. Fundamentally though, what stifles happiness and flourishing is the pursuit of apparent goods, not real goods. Put simply, as Aquinas taught, real goods are those things that lead us closer to God, while apparent goods are those things that take us away from God. And as noted above, it is the virtue of prudence working with the other virtues that enable us to choose wisely.

Within education, there are data-driven obsessions with academic results, insatiable pressures to produce 'all-singing, all-dancing' lessons, and the pandering to the demands of students' 'wants' rather than maintaining a clear focus on their 'needs'. All this leads to teachers jumping through endless hoops trying to meet unrealistic expectations. The research above by Leeds Beckett University and Teachwire.net inform us that 'excessive workload and constant work scrutiny' cause many of the mental issues for teachers. Top marks then for the Education Secretary, Rt Hon. Damian Hinds MP in his recent assessment that 'teachers work too many hours'.

**Continued on page 9**



**Continued from page 8**

The virtue of justice, guided by the overarching virtue of prudence should help to ensure schools stop creating unhealthy workloads for teachers, and students stop expecting too much from teachers. Justice also requires that teachers start achieving a healthier work-life balance by having the courage to resist pressures to be flogged to death in trying to meet unrealistic workloads and expectations. The detrimental effect on well-being, caused by the excessive use of mobile phones and other social media platforms, is widely acknowledged. The virtue of temperance applied here would set appropriate limits for the use of such technology. The virtue of fortitude is also required to enforce these measures accordingly, whether in school or at home—regardless of whatever huffing-and-puffing protestations ensue.

There is increasing attention being given to relationship, sex and health education, as well as the increased interest in virtue education within schools. Catholics ought to remember that, even though we live in an increasingly atheistic and secular society influenced by a 'dictatorship of relativism', the virtues are meant to be used in harmony with natural law principles and hence conform to God's law. A happy creature lives in conformity with the Creator's plans.

As such, the Church's teaching on God's gift of sex as the language of love, confined and limited to within the lifelong commitment of heterosexual marriage is the real good to pursue. It ought to be preached, yes, respectfully, but loudly and unapologetically against those who

champion only apparent goods in this area of moral concern.

The Jubilee Centre has also done notable work concerning the virtue of gratitude. In one of its publication, *An Attitude for Gratitude: How gratitude is understood, experienced and valued by the British public* (2015), it is reported that 80% of people said there was a lack of gratitude in British society, 60% believe gratitude is lacking in schools, and 75% of Christians ranked gratitude as of 'high priority' compared to 65% of atheists (p.5). A more grateful society is, for sure, a happier and healthier one. For theists, a grateful heart is also spoken of as the beginning of the spiritual life.

In respect of the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, the Catechism states that the human virtues are underpinned by these theological virtues which also 'dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity' (CCC 1812). 'By faith, we believe in God and believe all that he has revealed to us and that Holy Church proposes for our belief.' (CCC1842); 'By hope we desire, and with steadfast trust await from God, eternal life and the graces to merit it.' (CCC 1843); 'By charity, we love God above all things and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God.' (CCC 1844).

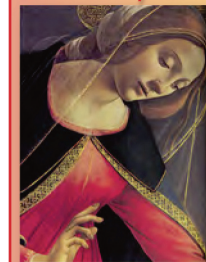
St Augustine of Hippo tells us: 'Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.' Without God at one's centre, there is an unfillable hole. Many pupils in our Catholic schools are Catholic in name only; they don't practise. Indeed, a significant number nowadays do not even complete their Christian initiation and get

confirmed. Furthermore, it is evident that the number of teenagers practising the faith post Confirmation is also getting significantly less and less. While it is encouraging to see the younger generation growing into good, decent human beings, they still need the theological virtues for their personal relationship with God to develop. This personal relationship is key to their well-being.

Father John A. Hardon S.J. offers an Examen on the theological virtues as regards one's spiritual life ('Examination of Conscience' in Catholic Prayer Book with Meditations, 1999, reproduced on Catholic Education Resource Centre (CERC) [www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org)). For example, he writes: 'Do I ever tempt God by relying on my own strength to cope with the trials in my life?' (Faith); 'Do I try to see everything from the viewpoint of eternity?' (Hope); 'Do I see God's love for me in allowing me to prove my love for Him in the crosses He sent me today?' (Charity). Fr Hardon adds that 'One basic virtue on which we should daily examine ourselves is peace of soul. We should ask ourselves, "Have I given in to worry or anxiety?"'

In looking after their own health and well-being, assisted by the virtues, teachers and pupils ought to prudently choose only that which leads to God and reject all that does not.

Pace Bradley Cooper ('Maybe It's Time'), no it's not time to let the old ways die, and yes, some people do still speak to God these days. 'Happy are those who trust the Lord, who do not turn to idols or join those who worship false gods' (Ps. 40:4).

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**definition** /,defɪˈnɪʃən/ noun of the meaning of dictionary **CSW looks at the word "Advent"**

Advent is a season of the liturgical year observed in most Christian denominations as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year in Western Christianity, and is part of the wider Christmas and holiday season.

The term "Advent" is also used in Eastern Orthodoxy for the 40-day Nativity Fast, which has practices different from those in the West.

The name was adopted from Latin *adventus* "coming; arrival", translating Greek *parousia*. In the New Testament, this is the term used for the Second Coming of Christ. Thus, the season of

Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the "coming of Christ" from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the eschatological Second Coming.

**History**

It is not known when the period of preparation for Christmas that is now called Advent began – it was certainly in existence from about 480 – and the novelty introduced by the Council of Tours of 567 was to order monks to fast every day in the month of December until Christmas. It is "impossible to claim with confidence a credible explanation of the origin of Advent".

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### My Christmas List

What I can GIVE to other people	What I can DO for other people

### Advent Paper Chains

**What you'll need:**  
Paper, ruler, scissors, pencils/pens, glue or sticky tape

**Optional**  
You can print off our paper chain design and colour it in.  
Use anything you like to decorate your paper chain

1. Take the paper and draw lines in pencil from the top to the bottom of the page. If you want them all to be identical use a ruler to draw the lines 3cm apart.
2. Decorate the strips of paper first and then cut down the lines so you get strips of paper.
3. Write one thing that you can do for someone on the back of each strip of paper.
5. Take a strip of paper, and use glue or sticky tape to connect one end of the paper to the other to make a circle - with the side you decorated on the outside.
6. Take the next piece and put it through the middle of the first paper chain, stick the ends together so the two pieces of paper are connected to form a chain. Keep going until you have made your chain.



# Make your own Advent Wreath

To start with you will need one wire coat hanger.

Bend the coat hanger so that instead of the triangular shape you now have a circle or as close to a circle as you can manage. Leave the hook intact because you can use it to hang up your finished wreath.

In order to decorate your coat hanger wreath there are several options:

**1. Tinsel** - wrap tinsel around the coat hanger, using sticky tape or string to fix down the ends. You could use more than one colour to create a candy stripe effect.

**2. Fabric scraps** - collect scraps of fabrics in Christmas colours and cut/tear into strips 3cm x 15cm and tie in knots around the circle. The knots will keep the fabric in place and the fabric will fray and add a shabby chic effect.

**3. Small branches** - find some cuttings from a fir tree or anything else green. Use some string to connect them to the coat hanger. You may need to tie each piece in two places and you will have to fill the wreath up to stop them moving around. Once you have covered the wreath with greenery you can decorate it. You could find some berries, pine cones or anything else that is natural. You could also add some Christmas decorations - such as some small baubles or stars.





Email a picture of your wreath to [yourreach@cathcomreach.com](mailto:yourreach@cathcomreach.com)  
Or post it to: CathCom, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre,  
Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, CB9 7BN



# REVIEWS

## LET US DREAM: THE PATH TO A BETTER FUTURE

*Pope Francis in conversation with Austen Ivereigh*

Hardback ISBN: 978-1-3985-0220-8

eBook ISBN: 978-1-3985-0221-5

### LET US DREAM

THE PATH TO  
A BETTER FUTURE

### POPE FRANCIS



This is a truly prophetic work which challenges us as to how we should live as Church in the 21st century in a post Covid world. If we are attached to the idea of 'we've always done it this way so don't ask me to change' then this is definitely a book to avoid. But if you are ready to have your boat well and truly rocked, and to be inspired to live out your faith in new and challenging ways then this is a book that you must get your hands on. In this short but inspiring book, Pope Francis shares his profound faith in the power of God to redeem and to guide us to a better future if we are open to his working: 'Covid 19 is our Noah moment, as long as we can find our way to the Ark of the ties that unite us: of love, and of a common belonging'.

The book is divided into three main sections. In the first section, 'A Time to

people. People I think of and pray for, and sometimes cry with: people with names and faces...' But not stopping with this challenge Pope Francis takes us further still, with an urgent call for us to leave our comfort zones and reach out to the margins, not just out of a sense of charity but because it is at the margins that we find the paths to a new future: 'When God wanted to regenerate creation, He chose to go to the margins - to places of sin and misery, of exclusion and suffering, of illness and solitude - because they were also places of possibility'. And again, 'You have to go to the edges of existence if you want to see the world as it is.... You have to go to the margins if you want to find a new future.'

In the second section, 'A Time to Choose', Pope Francis reminds us of the vital importance of prayerful discernment, so that we, as Church, are truly responding to the guidance of the Holy Spirit: 'We need too, a healthy capacity for silent reflection, places of refuge from the tyranny of the urgent. Most of all we need prayer, to hear the prompts of the Spirit and cultivate dialogue in a community that can hold us and allow us to dream.' And this process discernment is to be undertaken by all in the Church including those whose voices are often not heard: 'To discern of a different future we need to choose fraternity over individualism as

our organising principle.... Such a union preserves and respects plurality, inviting all to contribute from their own distinctiveness, as a community of brothers and sisters concerned for each other.'

In the third section 'A Time to Act' Pope Francis is careful to avoid being prescriptive as the actions that Church communities will take are the fruit of their own discernment process. However, he gives three clear pointers for our guidance. Firstly, our actions should be informed by a spirit of service: 'The Church's role is played out in the service of the Lord and the peoples of the earth where she is sent, not by imposing or dominating but as Christ does, in the washing of feet.' Secondly our actions should reach out to the poor and to those on the margins: 'If the church disowns the poor, she ceases to be the Church of Jesus; she falls back on the temptation to become a moral or intellectual elite. There is only one word for the Church that becomes a stranger to the poor: "scandal". The road to the geographical and existential margins is the route of the incarnation: God chose the peripheries as the place to reveal, in Jesus, His saving action in history.' Thirdly Pope Francis places great emphasis on the importance of community: 'No one is saved alone. Isolation is not part of our faith. God attracts us within a complex web of relationships and sends us out into the middle of the crossroads of history.' This is a book for our times; it speaks powerfully of the need for us to wake up, see the reality of the world around us to reach out in service to all, especially to the poor, to the excluded and to those on the margins of our society. It is a book that bears reading slowly, more than once, reflecting on what it means for us as Church communities in the circumstances in which we find ourselves - rather in the manner of the ancient Christian practice of Lectio Divina.

#### Words to live by...

“

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

- Mother Teresa (St Teresa of Calcutta).

"Advent is the spiritual season of hope par excellence, and in this season, the whole Church is called to be hope, for itself and for the world."

- Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger)

“

"The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord."

- Fr Henri Nouwen.

"The waiting of Advent teaches us to live in increments, in small pieces rather than large chunks. Waiting also teaches us to measure our progress slowly."

- Holly Whitcomb.

“

"Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man."

- Pope Francis.

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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

**CRYPTIC Across**

- 6 Jesus cured her two girls and little boy with drugs (4,9)  
8 Contextual material from the Bible, chapter and verse (4)  
9 Criminal group spotted in pubs (8)  
10 Whisky bottle? (6)  
12 Philistines' camp is 'ere - ignore the 'Ittites! (6)  
13 Pulled up in transport to see Christian in Troas (6)  
15 When during Pentecost there are vacuous litanies (6)  
16 Paul's vision's deserted him, going down this road? (8)  
17 Breather at Christmastide if not commercial... (4)  
19 ...various seasonal hints found in letters from Paul (13)

**CRYPTIC Down**

- 1 Beware in Rome vineyard outlet place (4)  
2 Various psalters, including month and years, used in medieval dramas (7,5)  
3 One who teaches Jews to make the ultimate in meat pies, perhaps (6)  
4 Decorates mariners top in sea-craft after a reception (6)  
5 They cross the frontier when van dries out (8)  
7 Going to party at homes round about, Virginia's made to work hard without reward (6,2,4) 11 Cost went up, it's reported, for types of ruler in Egypt (8)

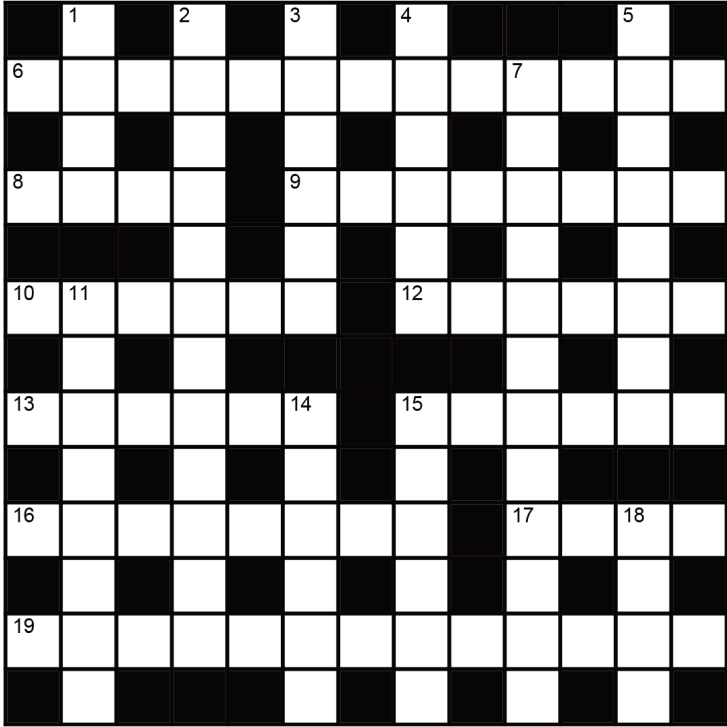
- 14 Samaritan's place is among prissy charlatans (6)  
15 Norman enlightenment? (6)  
18 All over English meet with French negativity, which produces zilch (4)

**QUICK Across**

- 6 KJV name of one of the first people to see Jesus after his resurrection (4,9)  
8 Sermon basis (4)  
9 Robber released by Pilate (8)  
10 Third person of the Trinity (6)  
12 Philistines' camp when Saul set up camp at Gilboa (6)  
13 Paul's affiliate in Troas (6)  
15 Whereas; when (6)  
16 Syrian capital, home to Aramaeans who fought and lost to David (8)  
17 Outlet: express (4)  
19 Macedonians, the object of two letters from Paul (13)

**QUICK Down**

- 1 Landform, the effect of weathering and subject of speleology (4)  
2 Medieval dramas representing episodes from the life of Christ (7,5)  
3 Coney (6)  
4 Decks, dresses (6)



- 5 Vikings, for instance (8)  
7 (Make) fruitless efforts (6,2,4)  
11 Kings of Egypt at the time of the Israelites' confinement (8)  
14 Samaritan town where Jesus spoke to a woman who came to draw water (6)  
15 From Job to Ecclesiasticus/Ben Sira: the '----- Books' (6)  
18 Zero (4)

**SOLUTION**

**Across:** 6 Mary Magdalene, 8 Text, 9 Barabbas, 10 Spirit, 12 Shunem, 13 Carpus, 15 Whilist, 16 Damascus, 17 Vent, 19 Thessalonians. **Down:** 1 Cave, 2 Mystery plays, 3 Rabbit, 4 Adorns, 5 Invaders, 7 Labour in vain, 11 Pharaohs, 14 Sychar, 15 Wisdom, 18 None.

**Facts and Figures**

In the 5th Century, Advent began on 11 November (St Martin's Day) and took the form of a six week fast leading to Christmas. During the 6th century, Advent was reduced to its current length and later the fasting was dropped.

Rainforests are being cut down at a rate of 100 acres per minute. If this trend continues, the world's rainforests will be gone by 2100.

Over the past 100 years, the number of Catholics around the world as tripled from 291 million in 1910 to 1.1 billion in 2010. Percentage wise, the population has remained relatively stable, constituting 17% of the world population in 1910 and 16% in 2010.

About 71% of the earth is water. The oceans hold approximately 96.5% of this water and the ice caps hold about 2%. The remaining water exists in rivers, ponds, glaciers, ice caps, lakes, as water vapor and our taps, among other water bodies. Only 1% of the earth's water is safe for human consumption.

The crime rate in Vatican City is 133.6%, which means there are more annual offenses than there are people in the Vatican (about 500 people). Most of the crimes, though, are committed by visiting tourists.

The fish, or ICHTHUS, is the symbol used by early Christians to identify themselves in times of persecution. In Greek, ICHTHUS is a monogram for the first five letters of the words "Jesus Christ Son of God, Savior."

**Christmas Mass Times and Messages**

**Our Lady of Lourdes & St. Cecilia**  
White Cliff Mill St.,  
Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7BN

Sunday Mass 5.30pm on Saturday and 9am on Sunday.  
Monday to Saturday Mass at 9.30am except Tuesday, when Mass is at 6.30pm.  
Saturday at 9.30 Mass in the Extraordinary Form.

**Most Precious Blood Sidmouth**

Christmas Vigil Mass 7pm on Friday 24th December  
Midnight Mass at Midnight  
Christmas Day Mass at 10:30am  
Sunday Mass on 26th December at 10:30am

**The Latin Mass Society**  
www.lms.org.uk 020 7404 7284

**Masses in the Extraordinary Form in Plymouth Diocese:**  
St. Edward the Confessor, Home Park Avenue, Peverell, PLYMOUTH, Devon PL3 4PG  
Sundays 3pm Sung Mass. Confessions before and after Mass.  
1st Saturdays 11.30am  
Christmas Day Mass 1.30pm  
Blessed Sacrament, Fore St., Heavitree, EXETER, Devon EX1 2QJ  
No Mass December (1)  
St. Cyprian, Ugbrooke House, CHUDLEIGH, Devon TQ13 0AD  
No Mass December (1)  
Holy Angels Shrine Church, Queensway, Chelston, TORQUAY, Devon TQ2 6BP  
Sundays 9.45am-10.15am Confessions. 10.30am Sung Mass. 6pm Vespers & Benediction  
Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays 4.30pm Vespers, 5pm Adoration, 6pm Low Mass  
Tuesdays & Saturdays 8.30am Low Mass  
Christmas Eve 10.30pm High Mass  
Christmas Day 10.30am High Mass  
Boxing Day (St. Stephen) 10.30am Sung Mass  
(Confessions available all services)  
Lanherne Convent, St. Mawgan, NEWQUAY, Cornwall, TR8 4ER  
Sundays 8.30am Low Mass; 10.30am Sung Mass  
Monday - Saturday 8am Low Mass  
Thursday 8am and 6.15pm Low Mass  
Confession Saturday 3pm.  
Christmas Eve Midnight Mass (12 Midnight)  
Christmas Day 8.30am Low Mass and 10.30am Sung Mass  
Our Lady of Lourdes & St. Cecilia, White Cliff Mill St., BLANDFORD FORUM, Dorset DT11 7B  
Saturdays 9.30am Low Mass  
Wednesday December 8th Immaculate Conception 12 noon Low Mass  
Saturdays 9.30am  
For Christmas Day contact the LMS Rep.  
(1) In case of change, contact LMS Rep on 07555536579/devon@lms.org.uk



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