

# FIGHT FOR LIFE

*The unborn face  
their greatest peril for 50 years*



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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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Sales Manager: Janet Took  
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**PUBLISHER & DISTRIBUTOR**

Published by: CathCom Limited,  
N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre  
Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, CB9 7BN  
Tel. 020 7112 6710  
Website: [www.cathcom.org](http://www.cathcom.org)

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**COPY DEADLINE:**

9th February, March Edition

Please note that opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Publishers, Editor, any Diocese or the wide Roman Catholic Church.



# Editor's Thoughts.....

**LEAVE ME BREATHLESS**

Corrs, the Irish family pop band, recently reappeared – after a long hiatus – with a new single: the insanely catchy 'Breathless'. Maybe you have heard it? Maybe you have just managed to get it out of your mind and here I am reminding you again?

Recently, I had very close and indeed personal experience of the kindness of strangers and the power of prayer. A friend who was facing severe financial pressures was desperately seeking a new job. Having seen through to its conclusion a very busy period, I was in something of a similar position. I suggested, lightly, that we should have our own prayer wheel: I would pray that they got the job they were after and asked them to do the same.

It came to pass: my friend didn't get the actual job they sought but was offered others. I got an offer of an assignment in the USA and will be packing my bags mid-April.

The Quakers talk of 'trembling in the presence of the Lord'; I know what they mean! When you see the manifestation of prayers being answered, it does leave you breathless, as the Corrs said.

**NEW YEAR, NEW YOU?**

I hope it's not too late to wish you a very Happy New Year! I hope 2018 brings all the blessings you desire.

A New Year always offers new hope and the chance of a fresh start – a bit of Spring cleaning maybe, even in the depths of Winter. We seem to be having a lot of start lines rushing up on us, one after another. We're all used to Epiphany following hot on the heels of Christmas but this year is an 'early' Easter, which means Lent starts soon, as well. Ash Wednesday is February 14th – make sure it's in your diary!

**THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES**

I had intended to publish a sermon from a "Facebook friend", Fr Paddy McCafferty, in the last edition. Circumstances conspired against me. However, maybe it was just as well; the message could have been lost in all the excitement and busy-ness of Christmas. He delivered it in the context of the mass praying of the Rosary around the coast of Ireland on the Feast of Christ the King, for the renewal of the Faith and the protection of unborn life in Ireland.

We face redoubled efforts from the 'death cult', the 'enemies of life', the 'pro-choice' brigade – whatever you want to call them. In the Republic of Ireland, the fight is over Article 8 of the Constitution, which gives protection to the unborn. The 'pro choicers' want to repeal it. In this country, it's about the attempt to remove all remaining sanctions controlling abortion and have it, effectively, up to birth. It also raises the dreadful spectre of 'gendercide': killing an unborn child because of their sex – usually, female. And there is the creeping eugenics of screening for imperfections. I have a relative with cleft lip and palate, who is living



a full and very active life in a senior position in a large organisation. If these people had their way, that condition would have made them 'unworthy of life'.

Then there are the attempts to create 'buffer zones' around abortion clinics - attempts to snuff out the last chance the unborn will have of survival, and to keep women in distress and difficulty away from anyone who will help them.

I make no apology for featuring the fight for life strongly in this edition; 2018 is going to be a year of great struggle, for light against the darkness, for life against death.

Let us redouble our efforts and do whatever we can to support the cause of life, of light, There is a SPUC group in Plymouth; there is the Life organisation around the country. At the time of writing, SPUC's White Flower appeal is at its height. Don't let its struggle be compartmentalised to a dark Sunday in January.

Be inspired by Fr Paddy's words (page 5) and stand for what is right, even if the whole world – or all your friends - are against you.

Make today a new start in the March for Life.

## We need your input!

Please send news, updates and information about events to [csw@cathcom.org](mailto:csw@cathcom.org)

If you don't see anything about your parish in Catholic South West then it's because we don't know about it! Make sure we do!

Electronic documents (Word, Pages) and photos (jpegs, png, even gif) are preferred. When sending photos, please make sure they are print ready: at least 200dpi resolution. (If you don't know what that means, ask a 10-year-old!)

### FEEDBACK ON BISHOPS' YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE: INFORMING OCT 2018 SYNOD IN ROME

The Bishops of England and Wales heard a summary at their recent meeting of the exercise completed by over 3000 young people across the two countries, who had taken time to complete and return the Youth Questionnaire. Among that number were representatives from our own diocese. The questionnaire was issued prior to the next Rome Synod, which will focus on youth, faith and vocational discernment.

The themes coming out of the returns were clear:

- 1 young people are struggling with how to deal with a highly pressured and changing, fragmented society
- 2 they want to reach out to the future with hope, and
- 3 they want to be listened to, so that they can be effectively accompanied on their life journeys.

They are asking for "a monumental change of attitude, orientation and practice", to help them see their lives as a lives of faith.

They recognise a culture of vocation in which they all can fulfil the dream that God has for them.

They want to see an interest in them and what they want to contribute, in local parishes/communities.

This challenges and inspires us in equal measure, let us give thanks for this feedback and the opportunity it provides all of us to respond.



# Glasgow man Charlie McCluskey invested as a Papal Knight of St Gregory the Great

On Sunday, 14th January, a large congregation gathered in St Andrew's Metropolitan Cathedral, Glasgow, to celebrate the solemnity of St Kentigern, also known as St Mungo. Archbishop Philip Tartaglia spoke of how the Saint was the founder of the Diocese and the City of Glasgow and is the patron Saint of the City and the Church.

He said: "Many of you here today are not native to the city and will not know the history of St Mungo. He performed four miracles in his lifetime and was responsible for the motto of the City: 'Let Glasgow Flourish through the preaching of Thy word and the praising of Thy name.'" The Archbishop welcomed members of the Knights of St Columba Order to the Cathedral. He said the Order

was an association of Catholic men which was founded in Glasgow almost a century ago. It supports Catholic young people, Pro Life causes, marriage and the family.

"The last Supreme Knight, Charlie McCluskey, has just completed his three year term as leader of the Order," he added. "It has become the custom that a Supreme Knight, when demitting office, receives a Papal Knighthood. Charlie has been sponsored by his former Supreme Knight, Pat Leyden, who is a Knight Commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great."

Pat Leyden then made the formal request to Archbishop Tartaglia who installed Charlie McCluskey as a



*John Doran KSG, Pat Leyden KCSG, KHS, Bertie Grogan Supreme Knight of the Knights of St Columba, Charlie McCluskey KSG, Archbishop Tartaglia, Ken Hargreaves KSG, John McVey KHS and John Deighan, KSG.*

*Picture by Tom Knight*

Knight of St Gregory the Great, calling on the intercession and blessing of St Kentigern and saying that he would surely approve of why we are here today.

After the Mass the present Supreme Knight of the Knights of St Columba, Bertie Grogan, remarked on how lovely it was to be in Glasgow when Archbishop Tartaglia presented Charlie with his Papal Knighthood. "I was privileged to be here, along with four past Supreme Knights and members of the Order, not just from

Glasgow but from all across Scotland and the United Kingdom," he said. Charlie McCluskey was at least as happy and honoured.

"This is a wonderful, humbling occasion and a great honour. I appreciate the attendance of Brothers from throughout the Order," he said. "Without the Knights of St Columba and the help and support of my wife Sandra, I would not have received this great honour."

*Tom Knight*

## Winter Warmth meals helpers

Taunton Salvation Army seeks helpers with the weekly meals provided for the marginalised at their South Street premises from 4.00 pm – 6.00 pm on Saturdays until April. Contact Lt Theresa Torr for more information on 07962 538 230 or email [theresa.torr@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:theresa.torr@salvationarmy.org.uk)

## Housing required for refugees

Taunton Welcomes Refugees (TWR) are urgently looking for landlords in the Taunton area with a two or three-bedroom house or flat which they would be willing to rent to a Syrian Refugee family.

## Chamberlains A Taunton Vineyard Church Compassion ministry

Chamberlains is located at the rear of North Street Church and serves some of the most vulnerable people in our community. You can refer anyone who is street homeless with confidence that they will be welcomed and helped. Food runs operate on Sunday 1.15 pm – 2.00 pm; Monday 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm and Wednesday 1.00 pm – 2.00pm. On Thursdays from 5.00 – 7.30 pm coffee, biscuits and a chat are followed by a talk and discussion with a hot meal provided. For enquiries please contact Shirley Brooke on 07516 252 924.

## Around the Parishes: Dorset Deanery Holy Trinity, Dorchester



Here in Dorchester we celebrated the Epiphany again this year with a Crib Fest. The church was open all day so that people could pop in and look around and it was warm and welcoming with candles lighting up the many cribs brought in by parishioners. Probably the favourite was one brought in by the Bradley family with everything having been knitted by Rebecca's Aunty Roisin living in Ireland. Many other members of the family have the same crib and Roisin continues to knit them. I particularly liked the rotund smiling angel who looked as if she had been feasting in heaven to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

*Anita Finnigan  
Holy Trinity Dorchester*

## Plymouth Epiphany at St Boniface



We celebrated Epiphany at St Boniface College in Plymouth with a special International Mass on Friday January 5th where we paraded the flags of the nations represented in the college. The college gathered in St Peter's Church, Crownhill and twenty four boys and staff carried their flags. Some of the boys wrote bidding prayers in French, Spanish, Polish, Bangladeshi, Bulgarian and English. It was a great reminder for us all of the diverse nature of our community where cultures come together to enrich our lives.

It was our last occasion to sing Christmas Carols and so with great gusto we sang out, 'Go Tell It on the Mountain, Over the Hills and Everywhere.'

Many thanks to Blessed Sacrament Parish Exeter for the loan of the flags.

*Fiona Hutchings  
(Chaplaincy Team at St Boniface's College)*

### Marnhull and Gillingham

Twenty-seven Christmas Boxes were delivered to the Trussell Trust depot in Salisbury before Christmas Day for dispatch to Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Romania). This is the second year the parish has contributed to this project.

They included presents for girls, boys, men and women and were packed under Annette's supervision at the Mackain Bremner's house with the enthusiastic help of children of the parish.

Each shoe box was packed with a variety of appropriate gifts donated by parishioners, which were items recommended by the Trust based on their experience of what the recipients most needed or would appreciate (treats as well as practical items).

A video is available on the Trussell Trust site of boxes being distributed in a hall in Bulgaria in 2016, which shows the profound impact this project has on recipients.

A lot of love was invested in this parish activity: assembling the right mix of gifts, obtaining the empty shoe boxes, sorting items appropriate for the age and sex of each recipient and the wrapping and labelling of each box.

**St Catherine's Wimborne** intends to hold a regular period of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday afternoon. "This is important to the life of our Parish," they say. "We want to resume our period of Adoration lasting from 4.00 pm to 6.30 pm and ask parishioners to sign the list in the porch for a half hour period. We need at least THREE people to cover each period. The appeal for names is especially made to those of you who are retired and therefore not at work or dealing with children during this time.

The late Cardinal Hume wrote: "We need just to be with Christ and to pray. Some may be as Peter, James and John when Our Lord was transfigured

on Mount Tabor: hearts full of admiration and joy. But your mood might be quite different, more at ease with Him as he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, bringing your pain, suffering and anxieties. Whatever your mood, whatever your concerns, you can in His presence enjoy being with Him on Mount Tabor, or suffer with Him in Gethsemane. Your mood may be in between those two, a mixture of both. But just being with Him, allowing your thoughts and affections to unfurl in prayer in his presence, this will allow those concerns of mind and heart to be blessed and sanctified by Him. We need in the Church today to recapture our devotion to the Blessed Sacrament."

**BISHOP MARK** wrote after his Visitation to St Catherine's: "It was good to experience the different liturgies and to see that they are very well attended and prepared. The communities at each Mass struck me as strong and welcoming, with a very real sense of gratitude for their parish."

## South Hams Catenians

The South Hams Catenian Circle held their 31st meeting on Monday the 18th December 2017 at Thurlstone Golf Club. This was followed by a very enjoyable dinner with our ladies and guests. After dinner we had a draw for the Brain Tumour Research charity. Brother President Trevor's daughter, Sue, had just had the first of two operations to remove her brain tumour. We then had a Quiz and as you can see by the photo a great deal of head scratching and concentration went into getting the correct answers. This was followed by Carols and a few jokes, as always, from Trevor. A great Catenian night had by all.

## BRIGHTENING UP "BLUE MONDAY"

January 15th, now dubbed 'Blue Monday', has been identified as the most difficult day of the year. A new partnership between the British Transport Police, GWR and volunteers drawn from Taunton's local churches was launched on that day to provide additional support to passengers at Taunton Station.

From Monday 15 January 'Rail Responders' will patrol the railway station and the surrounding area seeking to offer a caring, listening and reassuring presence. Their approach is to reach out to people in moments of crisis, to offer compassion and understanding. The new team is an initiative of Taunton Team Chaplaincy which has a good record of community engagement and support for over eight years. Its volunteer chaplains currently serve in Care Homes, Retail premises, Offices and Public spaces. Fourteen local volunteers have received training and during the spring of 2018 they will start to patrol the station and surrounding environment.

Similar schemes elsewhere in the UK have brought the added bonus of a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour on and near the stations they visit.



# Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham – Our Lady of Walsingham with St Cuthbert Mayne, Torbay

The Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham is, for those who are unaware, the special group of former members of the Anglican churches, called to the Catholic Church and established on 15 January 2011 as a direct result of Pope Benedict's Apostolic Constitution, Anglicanorum coetibus, promulgated in November 2009.

The Ordinariate's mission and part in the New Evangelisation is constantly being mapped out and put into practice.

More than 80 former Anglican clergymen have joined the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham since it was erected, with most being ordained as Catholic deacons and priests. So far, members of some 40 Anglican parishes have also corporally joined the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, forming stable ordinariate 'groups' within the Roman Catholic Church. For the first time in its history, Anglican services, such as Evensong, are now being celebrated in the Catholic Church by canonically recognised groups of former Anglicans. Members of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham rejoice in the full peace and communion of the Catholic Church.

## Ordinariate in the South West

Torbay's Ordinariate mission is based at The Catholic Church of Our Lady of Walsingham with St Cuthbert Mayne, Old Mill Road, Torquay. Its pastor, Father David Lashbrooke, is married to Lizzie and has four children. He serves the wider Catholic community in HMP Exeter and HMP Channings Wood and is also a member of The Governing Council of the Ordinariate and co-ordinating pastor for the South West. He has recently been appointed Dean for The South West region.

Father Mike Cain is one of the Assistant Priests at Our Lady of Walsingham and St Cuthbert Mayne Church. He is Married to Wendy and Has six grown up children, a white Boxer dog and a cat. He enjoys a wide range of music, from Folk to Punk! Loves gardening, walking and reading.

He believes that social Justice and Evangelism are two sides of the same coin, that there are some things that are essential for humans to live well, and that they are both material and spiritual,

intellectual and sacramental.

He lists J R R Tolkein, C S Lewis, St Thomas Aquinas, Dorothy Day, and G K Chesterton amongst his influences

Torbay has a particularly energetic and successful mission; it is one of very few groups to have purchased its own building. Work is proceeding to modernise the structure and bring it up to standard for use as a church



## Obituary: Sylvia Handford – 4th April 1928 to 29th October 2017

Born in Wilton Street, Plymouth, Sylvia Handford moved to St Budeaux at the age of three. St Budeaux was a different place then, with open fields behind their house in the early years; to the extent that her mum periodically lost her in the long grass! She also spoke of the time before St Paul's had even been built and celebrating Mass in the front room of the St Paul's presbytery!

In 1941 Sylvia was one of the many children evacuated to Teignmouth for three years to avoid the Plymouth Blitz. She had happy memories of the time and made some lifelong friends, including another pupil who went on to become a nun at Syon Abbey. She considered becoming a nun herself, but decided that it would be too selfish of her because her mother would have missed her too much, so she dedicated her life to helping others instead. This dedication was noticed during her time in Teignmouth, where Sylvia was given a prayer card from a Sister Teresa, expressing thanks "for many acts of unobtrusive charity".

In 1944, at the age of sixteen, she followed her parents in to working in the dockyard with the civil service. Her mother had been a telephonist in Devonport and her father a Leading Recorder. She stayed with the civil service until she took early retirement so that she would be able to spend more time looking after her mother. Sadly her mother passed away in 1987, which left an enormous hole in her life. Sylvia filled this hole by putting her time and effort into

working for the parish and she acted as Sacristan at St Paul's for most of the last thirty five years. Beyond her duties as Sacristan Sylvia also helped look after many priests (including their pets and miscellaneous others!)

Her mother passed on to Sylvia her strong faith and beliefs; faith and belief that would remain with Sylvia throughout her life and would form the basis of all the works she did at St Paul's. She was devoted to the Church and to helping others.

Her travels abroad reflected her life and beliefs and she enjoyed visits and pilgrimages to the Holy Land, Rome, Fatima and Lourdes. Even a knee replacement in 2015 did little to slow Sylvia down and she continued to perform many of the tasks she had done before. She continued to attend Mass daily and even travelled to other local Churches in order to achieve this, often offering lifts to others who wanted to join her. Even when she was no longer able to drive you would often see her, with walking frame, catching the bus to the City Centre so that she could go to Mass at Christ the King. It was only during 2016 that Sylvia began to show and feel her age; she stopped driving and was feeling less able to be mobile. Even so, it was still common to find her weeding her garden, with the aid of a walking frame! You can almost imagine her telling her consultant at the hospital that her main occupation was visiting the elderly and she must have found it very difficult when she was no



*Sylvia Handford puts her trust in the Lord, and Father Tim's motorcycling skills*

longer able to do this.

Sylvia was a very determined lady with a very strong sense of duty and of belief. She never judged others and was unusually open minded in circumstances where many of us are often not. In 2002 Sylvia received the Diocesan Medal, in recognition of her loyalty and faithful service to the Church; a hugely well-deserved honour.

She was always so well organised and wanted to make as little fuss as possible; she even planned ahead so that she would cause as little inconvenience as possible after she died.

Sylvia's death is an immense loss to the Church. She spent her life serving God and our parish and has been part of our parish for her whole life, giving untiringly of her time and energy as Sacristan and Eucharistic Minister. Her loyalty to her priest was wholehearted and unhesitating and her kindness to those she visited meant they greatly looked forward to her bringing them the Blessed Sacrament. Above all, it is this her great care for others and thoughtfulness to all that shone through: a truly charitable person who had a strong faith in God.

Thank you, Sylvia, and may God in his mercy grant you your eternal reward.



## Alabaré

You may or may not have heard of Alabaré. Founded in 1991, it is a registered charity that supports vulnerable, homeless and marginalised people. It goes beyond simply providing short-term shelter: it helps transform their lives, providing accommodation and helping them gain the skills, confidence and opportunities to live a fulfilled life.

Alabaré was founded by Rev John Proctor and his wife Alicia after they befriended and offered a home to a series of people in crisis. They realised that the need was far greater than they alone could meet and, in partnership with a Christian community, founded Alabaré. After a year of fundraising it opened its first home: Barnabas House.

25 years later, Alabaré now offers support to over 3,000 people in need through its homes and services across the South and South West of England and Wales.

### Plymouth

Its Plymouth Homes for Veterans offers housing and support to up to seven ex-Service personnel who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. The team can help access appropriate agencies, including counselling services, drug & alcohol agencies and support groups, CAB and NHS services.

Within the Plymouth Homes for Veterans, training and skills needed for independent living are made available, including; budgeting, healthy eating, shopping, and life skills. Training courses are also available through the local Learn Direct centre.

Residents can stay within the Plymouth Homes for Veterans for a maximum of 1 year, before moving on to independent accommodation or transferring to Veterans Move On.

Referrals to Plymouth Homes for Veterans are accepted from local support agencies, The Royal British Legion, local prisons and other charities.

### Dorset – Weymouth

Alabaré's two Weymouth Homes for Veterans also offer housing and support to ex-Service personnel who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

### Preventing homelessness

Alabaré runs a range of homes, drop in centres and support services dedicated to helping the homeless and vulnerable.

Anyone can be affected by homelessness. Relationship breakdowns, loss of employment and ill health are all common reasons why someone can become homeless, but there are many others.

### Jobs, volunteering

Alabaré is currently recruiting for a range of jobs including fundraising, young people support, care support, and Emproum shop manager – currently all in Salisbury and Wiltshire. See <http://www.alabaré.co.uk/about/jobs> or call 01722 322882

Volunteers also help at charity events as well as being a crucial part of our retail teams, central services and fundraising activities. Email [volunteering@alabaré.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@alabaré.co.uk) or call us on 01722 344470.

A huge range of volunteer posts are currently available across the organisation's locations, from photographer to 'mender', van driver and befriender. Visit [www.alabaré.co.uk/volunteer](http://www.alabaré.co.uk/volunteer)



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# THE FIGHT FOR LIFE

## *Father Paddy McCafferty's sermon, Feast of Christ the King, 2017*

This Sunday, when we celebrate Our Lord Jesus Christ's Kingship over the Universe, we pledge our entire allegiance, once more, to Him. Our belonging to Him, to His Church, to His Kingdom, takes precedence over all other loyalties and allegiances.

Jesus is our first and unique Love. Nothing else in life has any meaning or purpose apart from Him. Jesus is the lens through Whom we view all of reality – His Love, His Truth, His Justice, His Cause, His Mercy, His Judgements. Jesus our King and Lord has first claim over everything that we are and have. All other considerations come after we have considered Him, His Will, His claim over our minds, hearts, wills and lives.

Our loyalty to this Great King of kings and Lord of lords is absolutely central and non-negotiable. We stand for Him. We stand for His love and truth, in every circumstance, no matter what the cost, no matter who is pleased or displeased. No compromise. There can be no compromise.

Our King, unlike powerful earthly powers and rulers, has identified Himself with the poorest and lowliest. Those who have the least influence and power are the very ones among whom Jesus takes His place: "I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, I was naked, I was sick, I was in prison .... In so far as you did this to the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me. Whatsoever you neglected to do to the least of these, you neglected to do to me".

Who is there, who loves the King, who would refuse to serve Him, would refuse to recognise Him in the least of His sisters and brothers? Jesus stands before us identified with the most helpless and vulnerable in our midst.

There is a further class of person who can be properly added to those identified by Jesus as most in need of our loving service: those brothers and sisters of His and ours, who have not yet seen the light of day in the wombs of their mothers.

Deliberate abortion has always been condemned,

since the time of the apostles, as an act of murder perpetrated against a human being who is entirely defenceless and vulnerable. The Word of God, in several places in Sacred Scripture, makes it abundantly clear, that the unborn child, growing in his or her mother's womb, belongs to God and has been given life by God, by the One who has commanded in the 5th Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit murder!"

Nowadays, however, abortion is an industry and it is being called a "right". We hear everywhere the lie about "the right to choose". No man or woman has 'the right to choose' to deliberately bring to an end the life of another human being, at any stage of his or her life – before birth or after birth. "Thou shalt not kill" means "Thou shalt not kill".

Never before in human history has the abortionist agenda been so militantly and shamelessly pursued and pushed. The powerful pro-abortionist lobby now has Ireland intently in its sights. The Irish media, North and South, those who influence public opinion and those form the opinions of young people, politicians and political parties, are mostly aggressive advocates for abortion on demand.

Since the 1967 Abortion Act was made law in England, almost 9,000,000 infants have been slaughtered in hospitals and clinics. Do not be taken in by the abortion lobby's pretended compassion and the invention of the so-called "fatal foetal abnormalities" excuse for killing unborn children.

Abortion on demand is their end game. Abortion is, in their view, "a human right". People, in their twisted view, have the "right" to dispose of the life of another person. God has said, 'woe to those who call evil good and good evil' (Isiah 5:20) – those who twist right and wrong out of shape to mean the exact opposite of the truth.

The powerful abortionist lobby, with its many friends in high and influential places, is hell bent upon making abortion on demand available in Ireland. Don't be taken in by politicians speaking out of both sides of their mouths, saying, 'oh, well,

we don't really agree with abortion but .....'. There can be no compromise on abortion – no equivocating. Intentional abortion is always evil. Nothing can change that reality. Abortion will always be evil.

The reality is, dear sisters and brothers, the powerful abortionist lobby may very well get their way in Ireland. How will that affect our Christian stand and witness to the truth of the sanctity of human life? Not one iota. And I say to you all, 'do not be afraid'. Are you surprised that the Lord has enemies? We know that He does and we know what will become of them.

The Son of Man will come in His glory escorted by all the angels and He will take His seat on His Throne of Glory – not 'might come', or 'perhaps He will come', but WHEN He comes! And "He must be King until He has put all His enemies under His feet". The forces of Death, which animate the abortionist lobby and industry, will lie defeated under His feet.

Until He comes, we will continue to bear witness to His Truth and to maintain His cause. We may be swimming against the tide. So what? Swimming against the tide makes you a stronger swimmer. It is better than going with the flow towards destruction, with the accursed ones, to whom the Lord will say on the Last Day, 'Go away from me with your curse upon you, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels'.

It is better to fight the Lord's battles with the whole world against you, than to have this world on your side and be found fighting against God. May we stand firm on the King's right hand side, serving Him faithfully, ministering to Him in the poorest and most vulnerable, including those unborn, who are entirely defenceless and, against whom, powerful and cunning forces are now ranged, on the shores of this Emerald Isle.



## *THE RIGHT TO LIFE – UNDER ATTACK*

# White Flower Appeal

Every year, SPUC holds the White Flower Appeal: our largest single educational exercise and major source of financial support.

This year, the Society for the Protection of Unborn children (SPUC) held its annual appeal on the weekend of the 13th-14th January 2018. By the time you read this, the weekend will have passed but the need will not.

The need is probably greater than ever. Anti-life forces are redoubling their efforts to increase the harvest of dead unborn children.

In Ireland, we see the campaign to 'Repeal the 8th' – to tear out of the Constitution the article that guarantees the right to life of unborn children.

In the UK, several local councils are trying to introduce 'buffer zones' around abortion clinics, which will remove the last hope for the unborn, and for their mothers who are often desperate and only need a helping hand to be offered to turn away from the dreadful fate awaiting inside.

At the same time, abortion organisations such as BPAS and Marie Stokes International (an affiliate of the notorious Planned Parenthood organization in America) are campaigning and pressing for abortion to be 'decriminalised' – a fundamentally dishonest campaign that is trying to legalise unrestricted, unregulated and unmonitored abortion, right up to birth.

SPUC is currently campaigning to stop the so-called 'decriminalisation' of abortion, which is the most dangerous threat to unborn children and their mothers in decades.

Please be as generous as you can to help us defeat this latest attack on unborn babies and their mothers, and to stop abortion getting even worse in this country by decriminalisation.

SPUC relies on your donations to continue our vital pro-life work, and so we thank you for your generosity.

**The annual White Flower Appeal is a major source of income for SPUC and our largest single educational exercise. For the past 30 years, thousands of churches have supported our work in this way.**

People often ask why our annual appeal is called the 'White Flower' and what that means.

The origins of the name were actually inspired by the work of the Weiße Rose (White Rose) movement, a non-violent, intellectual resistance in Germany at the height of the Second World War. They became known for an anonymous leafleting and graffiti campaign that lasted eight months between 1942 and 1943.

In February 1943 Hans and Sophie Scholl, two of the group's core active members were caught and arrested. Following interrogation, they were tried by the Gestapo and beheaded, along with four others. The White Rose and Sophie Scholl have been the subject of a number of films retelling the story of their bravery to new generations.

The White Rose still serves as an example to us of what can be achieved by standing up for what is right peacefully but with determination, even in the face of hostility and oppression.

*Continued on page 6*



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## Youth Conference

What is the Youth Conference?

The annual SPUC Youth Conference, which will take place 9-11 March 2018 at the Yarnfield Park Training & Conference Centre, Yarnfield, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL is a weekend filled with pro-life talks, workshops and many chances to meet other young pro-life people. The aim of the weekend is to bring young pro-life people together, to educate ourselves on the current pro-life issues and to recharge our batteries so that we are ready for the coming year.

As well as being a fantastically informative weekend, the conference is always great fun - a chance to make new friends and catch up with old ones at the bar, or at our famous Saturday night ceilidh. To get an idea, you can check out the line-up of the 2017 Conference, and take a look at the photos and videos, online at www.spuc.org.uk.

## Abortion

The numbers are horrific

A digital counter is illustrating the horrifying scale of abortion around the world. Less than two weeks into 2018, over 1.2 million babies have been killed by abortion.

The Worldometers website has real-time counters showing dozens of different statistics, including births, deaths, and public expenditure. It also has one for abortion. On 11 January 2018, the number passed 1.2 million, meaning the one million mark would have been passed in the morning of Tuesday 9 January. The number increases every second or so, each one representing the death of an innocent unborn child.

The website uses data from the World Health Organisation, which estimates that there are 40-50 million abortions in the world every year, corresponding to approximately 125,000 abortions per day. These figures are disputed, as the WHO's recent worldwide report, produced in consultation with the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, has been accused of "wildly inflating" the number of illegal abortions taking place in developing countries.

Stark reminder

However, while the statistics may not be completely reliable (and bear in mind that although Guttmacher might exaggerate illegal abortions, it doesn't include those

caused by abortifacient contraception), the counter serves as a stark reminder of the vast scale of the slaughter of the innocents happening across the world.

SPUC CEO John Smeaton said: "On this, the 51st anniversary of the founding of SPUC, it spurs us to work harder than ever, in co-operation with all like-minded organisations, to put an end to the evil of abortion, both here in Britain and around the world."

## March for Life

The March for Life UK is a mass annual rally for all pro-lifers in the United Kingdom. This national day-out is really a celebration of the pro-life message, with music and inspiring talks from famous pro-life speakers.

At the heart of it all is the march itself, a stewarded walk through the busy city centre of Birmingham, witnessing to shoppers and members of the general public and culminating in the city centre with a huge rally. The theme of the march is "Life from Conception – No Exception!"

Throughout the day, marchers have the opportunity to meet and talk to representatives from all the different UK pro-life groups.

Keep your eye on <http://www.marchfor-life.co.uk> and make every effort to get there, if you can. It also has details of a

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# Keeping in touch with the Church around the world

## Prince Charles reaches out to suffering Christians

*John Pontifex*

HRH The Prince of Wales offered a heart-felt message of compassion for Christians persecuted because of their faith at an event where he met families who have escaped terror and upheaval.

The Prince was guest-of-honour on 19 December at St Barnabas Church, in London's Pimlico district, at a service organised by the local Eastern-rite Melkite Greek Catholic community in cooperation with the parish Church. He was welcomed to the church by Father John Pearson-Hicks, Priest in Charge at St Barnabas Church, and Father Shafiq Abouzayd, representing the local Melkite community.

Before the service, HRH met Church leaders and individuals with first-hand experience of persecution, a number of them supported by Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need, which arranged for them to take part in the event.

"As someone who, throughout my life, has tried, in whatever small way I can, to foster understanding between people of faith, and to build bridges between the great religions of the world, it is heart-

breaking beyond words to see just how much pain and suffering is being endured by Christians, in this day and age, simply because of their faith," Prince said, in a speech to the congregation.

HRH met Sameer Polus, his wife, Ban, and their children, Jolia, 20, Peter, 17, and 16-year-old Sofia. The family began life in Baghdad, Iraq, but fled to Syria in 2004 following extremist attacks on Christians. They returned to their country of origin 11 years later only to find themselves fleeing Daesh (IS) before finally gaining settlement in the UK, through a UN resettlement scheme.

The packed congregation also heard a talk given by Melkite Greek Catholic Archbishop Issam John Darwish of Zahle, Furzol and Bekaa in eastern Lebanon, who travelled to specially London to take part in the event on Tuesday.

"In Iraq and Syria and other parts of the Middle East, the ever-dwindling Christian community is now hanging by a thread," the Archbishop said, as he highlighted the number of refugees in Lebanon, and the support given by Aid to the Church in



**HRH The Prince of Wales during the service at St Barnabas Church, Pimlico, London**

Need. "Another blast of extremist terror could extinguish the light of Christian presence that was first lit when... Christ was born.

"May I please convey my special thanks to you, Your Royal Highness, for hearing our cry, for responding to our needs, for supporting us here and now with your presence amongst us."

## Mass comes back to Mosul

*John Pontifex*

Amidst all the killing and the huge refugee crisis, there was good news from Mosul at Christmas. The bells rang out for the first time in more than three years when a church in Iraq's second city opened its doors for Christmas Midnight Mass.

Up to the last minute, plans for the service at Mar Pulse Church in Mosul's Al-Mundshen suburb hung in the balance – until a group of young Muslims helped clean the church and make it ready, including erecting the cross.

About 400 families – up to 2,000 people – attended the service, travelling to Mosul from displacement camps near Erbil, the capital of Kurdish northern Iraq. It is still unsafe for Christians to go back and live in Mosul, which was only recently liberated from Daesh (IS), although there are reports of a few families going back.

Presiding at the Mass was Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Louis Raphael I Sako of Baghdad. In a sign of growing ecumenical relations, Syriac Catholic Archbishop Butros Moshe of Mosul and Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Nicodemus Douad of



**Maronite Archbishop Samir Nassar, none the worse for his near-death experience.**

Mosul also attended. Muslim representatives were also present at the service, as well, which went ahead amid high security.

"Let us hope that the light of Jesus may shine in their hearts and bring light to our wounded world," said Father Najeeb Michael. When Mosul was taken by Daesh in June 2014, almost all of the city's Christians left after being given an ultimatum of either converting to Islam or being killed. For the first time in almost 1800 years, no Mass was celebrated in the city.

Daesh seized Christian homes, marking them with an Arabic 'n' symbol denoting 'Nazarene' – Christian.

With Daesh now flushed out of Iraq, Aid to the Church in Need is committed to helping Christians return to their towns and villages, rebuilding homes and other vital structures which were badly damaged during the Islamists' occupation. ACN's work has helped stem the exodus of Christians from Iraq, with numbers reportedly now down to below 250,000.



**Some of the congregation attending Midnight Mass in Mosul. They had travelled and attended at great personal risk.**

## Bishop miraculously avoids death – as bomb lands in his bedroom

**Church building on the only street named in New Testament suffers damage during bombardment. Sisters in nearby convent also have narrow escape**  
*John Newton*

Maronite Archbishop Samir Nassar narrowly avoided death when a bomb landed on his bed, during a bombardment of Syria's capital Damascus. His life was saved only because he interrupted his afternoon nap to use the bathroom.



**Maronite Archbishop Samir Nassar, none the worse for his near-death experience.**

"A shell fell on my bed on Monday, 8th January 2018, at 1.20 pm when I had retired for a little siesta – a few seconds at the sink saved my life!" he wrote to Aid to the Church in Need. His bed was riddled with shrapnel and priests and staff at the Maronite Patriarchate feared he had been killed in the blast.

"They cried with joy when they saw me coming out alive of the smoke and rubble," he continued. "Providence watches over his little servant but now I am exiled, like 12 million Syrian refugees who have nothing left." Ten shells were estimated to have fallen in areas of Damascus including Bab Sharqi, Bab Touma and Al-Qassaa.

The Melkite Patriarchate on Straight Street – the only road mentioned in the New Testament and the place where St Paul stayed – suffered damage when a bomb fell on the courtyard. The neighbouring Sisters of Jesus and Mary convent was also partially destroyed.

Sister Annie Demerjian told Aid to the Church in Need that it was the providence of God that they were not in the room. She also asked for prayers for seven people in hospital who were injured during the bombing.

Archbishop Nassar reported that the Maronite cathedral has sustained major damage. Its doors and 43 windows will have to be replaced, holes need to be filled, fuel tanks and water tanks need repairing, as does the electricity network.

"Violence is the only master," he said. "Innocents are being sacrificed every day."

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# HEAVEN SCENT ...

MY FATHER WAS a wonderful man but as he grew older he started to develop a few foibles and fancies that hadn't previously existed.

Always a neat and tidy man, (ex-Army), he became quite obsessed with wiping down the front of the kitchen cupboards every day without fail and he also claimed that he was unable to eat without something to drink to accompany the food. Yet another flight of fancy was his detestation for candles – especially the scented variety. Despite my habit of always having two or three candles in my fireplace which I like to light each evening, this routine would be totally stymied if Dad was visiting. ‘They’ll choke me to death!’ he used to dramatically exclaim, and no amount of reasoning with him would make the slightest iota of difference.

## THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

As Christians the candle remains for us highly symbolic of the light of Christ in our lives. The candle flame, which can be so easily extinguished, further reminds us of the fragility of our faith which requires careful and constant nurturing. And candles are frequently used as an aid to prayer and meditation and a traditional part of many of our sacramental practices.

On the second of February we celebrate the wonderful feast of Candlemas, also known as the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord Jesus which is a Christian Holy Day commemorating the presentation of Jesus at the Temple.

## CANDLE FEVER

It has also become a tradition for many Christians to bring their candles to their local church where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year, especially during prayer.



## BEAUTY AND AROMA

As diverse and flawed humans we all exhibit our own personal likes and dislikes of objects, people and places and of course this is both natural and normal. It would seem that candles are synonymous with our Christian faith but clearly not every single person will appreciate this fact or indeed their beauty and aroma. The Feast of Candlemas reminds us of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed candles continue to do so. These traditional candles are meant to be fragrance-free but no matter – all of God's children cannot help but appreciate the beautiful essence and fragrance of Christ himself.



**PRAY-AS-YOU-GO** is a daily prayer session designed for use on portable MP3 players, iPods and PCs to help you pray whilst travelling to and from work, study, etc. A new prayer session is produced every weekday. It is not a Thought for the Day<sup>1</sup>, a sermon or a bible- study, but rather a framework for your own prayer. Lasting between ten and thirteen minutes, it combines music, scripture and some questions for reflection. The aim is to help you to: become more aware of God's presence in your life, listen to and reflect on God's word, grow in your relationship with God.

It is produced by Jesuit Media Initiatives, with material written by a number of British Jesuits and other experts in the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola. Although the content is different every day, it keeps to the same basic format. You can find it at <http://www.pray-as-you-go.org>.

**SACRED SPACE** is similar to Pray-as-you-go but PC-based. The compilers invite you to make a 'Sacred Space' in your day, and spend ten minutes praying here and now as you sit at your computer with the help of on-screen guidance and scripture chosen specially every day. Find it online at [sacredspace.ie](http://sacredspace.ie)



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# ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY....

The Pope's visit to Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) was not undertaken at an easy time.

The Holy Father was greeted at Yangon's airport as he arrived for his Visit by the Apostolic Nuncio to Myanmar, Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam, and the country's bishops.

Also welcoming the Pope was a state delegate representing Myanmar's President Htin Kyaw.

The headlines across the world at the time of the Pope's visit to Myanmar were about the displaced Rohingya people – and rightly so. A brutal military action, amounting to ethnic cleansing, had cleared hundreds of thousands of people from NW Burma into refugee camps in already poverty-stricken Bangladesh.

The previously feted Ayn Sung Suu-Kyi, civilian leader of the country, was coming in for a great deal of criticism. She seemed to be either unable or unwilling to order the Army to desist or to speak supportively to people plunged into suffering.

The Pope visited the country and Bangladesh, to see the extent of the problem for himself. As is his habit, he got down and mixed with the people. How much was immediately achieved is hard to say, but the impact of Papal actions, prayers and interventions sometimes take a while to become apparent – just think of how long it took for the Soviet regime to fall, and how influential Pope St John Paul II was in its ultimate crumbling.

It wasn't all difficult news.

Philippa Hitchen who was in Myanmar to report on

the Pope's visit for Vatican News, spoke to Sr. Genevieve Khin Mu of the Good Shepherd Congregation. Sister Genevieve has been in the Congregation for almost 30 years. She described the gradual transformation she has observed in the village of Magyikwin, Bago Division.

The original Church and the Convent buildings were small and old; they are now much newer, and a lot bigger, too!

The people of the village have realized the importance of education and most now are graduated. The old days of hand-to-mouth existence is in the past. They are higher skilled and have learned the importance of saving money.

A cordial relationship exists between the Catholics, Baptists and the Buddhists in the Magyikwin Village. The Good Shepherd Sisters arrived in Myanmar in 1865 and have been there ever since, except for a short break from 1967 to 1973. They established a community in Magyikwin village in 1976 to take care of village development programs and pastoral work.

Their current ministries are in education, vocational skills and leadership, training for women and girls at risk of being trafficked, healthcare, programmes for single mothers, prison ministry and pastoral work.

The Good Shepherd Sisters network with NGOs, GOs, FBOs (Faith Based Organizations), especially Buddhist monks, and with Church and Religious Social Services Organizations in order to reach out more effectively to people in need.



*The Pope's visit to Myanmar and Burma coincided with the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people. The world's attention proved embarrassing for Ayn Sung Suu-Kyi, civilian leader of the country.*

*Credit: Franciscan Media*

## CHILE CON CARNIVAL

*The Pope spent a short time in Rome after his trip to SE Asia and was then on the plane again, heading off to South America and Apostolic visits to Chile and Peru.*

The Pope's busy schedule on his visit to Chile and Peru took him to meet religious, university students, academics, miners, victims of sexual abuse, and the ordinary people who are so close to his heart.

Pope Francis apologised to victims of clerical abuse in his address to members of the government, the diplomatic corps, and the civil authorities in Chile. He also told them they are a nation that has grown and thrived, but reminded them that it's also important not to forget those who suffer situations of injustice.

Democracy in action

He noted that "each new generation must take up the struggles and attainments of past generations, while setting its own sights even higher."

The Holy Father added that there was no room for complacency when many people still endure situations of injustice.

Be a nation that listens

He went on to say that Chile needed to listen to the unemployed, to migrants, to its native people often forgotten, to its young people and to the elderly who, he said have much wisdom to impart.

The damage of child abuse

There was a round of applause when Pope Francis expressed his "pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by some ministers of the Church. I am one with my brother bishops, he said, for it is right to ask for forgiveness and make every effort to support the victims, even as we commit ourselves to ensuring that such things do not happen again."

The Pope met a small group of victims of clerical sexual abuse after lunch on Tuesday in the Apostolic Nunciature in Santiago. The Director of the Vatican Press Office, Greg Burke, said in a statement that the meeting was strictly private. No one else was present only the Pope and the victims. This was so they could tell their sufferings to Pope Francis, who listened to them and prayed and cried with them.



*The Pope meets a delegation of miners in Chile.*

*Credit: Franciscan Media*

During his encounter with priests, religious, and seminarians at Santiago Cathedral on Tuesday evening the Holy Father particularly spoke about

the "pain resulting from cases of abuse of minors" in the Church of Chile, which he said cause harm and sufferings to the victims and their families, to

ecclesial communities and also to priests and religious themselves.



# FUNDRAISING FOR THE JESUIT MISSIONS: A MARATHON TASK!

Tackashmah “Kash” Langthorne is planning to the London Marathon on the 22nd of April to raise funds for the wonderful work of the Jesuit Missions. It won’t be the first time she has put herself through this trial, in a good cause: in October 2017 she ran the Eden Project Marathon for “Valued Lives – supporting Mental Health in Cornwall” (see photo). As if running a Marathon itself isn’t enough. She is setting herself another challenge: to cut her time to around 4hrs 15mins.

Kash wants to raise at least £2000 for the Jesuit Missions. That works out at about £450 an hour, which is a pretty good rate of pay – but a painful way of doing it!

“Since we were young, my mother has always

taught me, my brothers and sister about the important work that missionary priests do,” Kash says. “I’m interested in international development and I love reading the Jesuit Missions magazine. Wonderful work is being done in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean helping those most in need to have improved access to medical care, social justice and overall building stability in vulnerable people’s lives.”

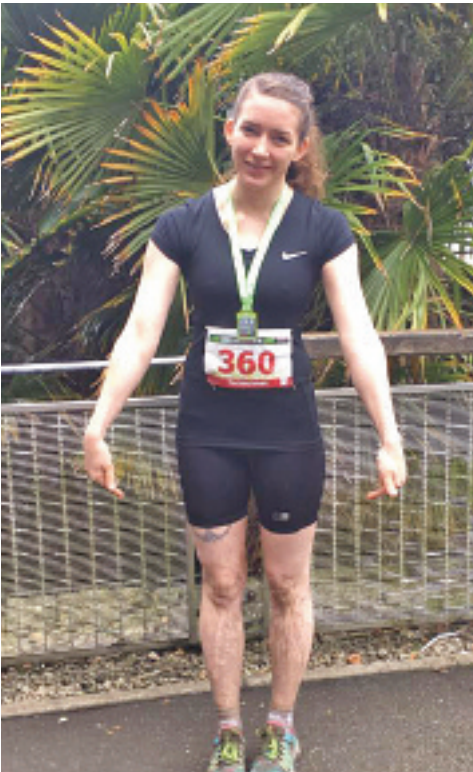
The missionary works include education and skill development for work and building homes, improving access to essential health care and food and advocating for human rights and dignity. As well as addressing these ongoing issues, Jesuit Missions also provide support in emergency situations, such as responding to food shortages,

the refugee crisis and natural disasters.

“I’m very excited to have been given the opportunity to run the London Marathon for Jesuit Missions,” says Kash. “I would be very grateful if you could help me raise money for this worthwhile work. You can sponsor me via this link: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/TackashmahLangthorne>

Virgin Money Giving is a not for profit organisation and will claim gift aid on a charity's behalf where the donor is eligible.

**Eden Marathon. Caption: Tackashmah Langthorne at the Edne Marathon, October 2017.**



## Christianity in Albania 2017

### Annual report from Albania

Some Missions and Charities have closed or handed over their work to non-English speakers..

The Albanian Evangelical Mission is now the longest-serving group of its kind in Albania. It has recently extended its reach to Kosovo. David Young is reported to have retired and Paul Davies is now in the ‘chair’ In Albania and Kosovo. They have small worship groups, now frequently led by Albanians, across the country, according to their December newsletter.

The Seventh Day Adventists (SDA - not to be confused with Jehovah’s Witness or Mormons). During the 1990s/2000s the Adventists ran the ADRA charity, separately from their religious work. John Arthur OBE, who suffered a severe stroke shortly after his retirement, is now living in Scotland. He has not lost touch, despite having to use a computer with one finger in upper case!

He says that there are now 437 SDA in Albania, mainly younger members, who worship in one of eight locations, including Korçe. The ‘new’ large church and buildings there are now known as The Daniel Lewis Memorial Church. Lewis was an American-Albanian pharmacist who returned to his native country as a missionary. He was imprisoned and died under the Hoxha regime.



There are a number of male and female Orders working in Albania, from a variety of overseas countries. With the arrival of an Italian priest at Bilisht, the Korçe R.C. church position has seen an increased numbers of communicants, including those from the Maltese School, local people, and a few with connections to the Mary Potter Centre for cancer patients. Two British L.C.M. Sisters who visited this recently reported positively.

### Drita’s Christmas

Some of you will have heard of Drita – the Tirana ‘garbage lady’ introduced by a charity as being in desperate need. She and thousands of other older Albanians live in such poverty beyond the general experience in the UK.

Drita was given gifts in kind and money for Christmas 2016 and Easter 2017. She is a nominal Muslim, originally from near Korçe, is aged 63, with a disabled husband. Recently her cat was killed by a vindictive neighbour, which was very upsetting. The sale of a painting this year enabled a donation of £100.00. Drita gained a new waterproof over suit to replace a bin-bag, two parcels of new socks, gloves and other smalls, plus about £200.00 in Lek sent by a reliable charity intermediary.

Next Year - A £20.00 donation is in the Drita box, and I have been commissioned to produce one of my cartoons for an official Christmas Card. So hopefully Drita will have a 3rd happy Christmas.

Primrose Peacock

## INTO THE LIGHT



A concert at Buckfast Abbey will present some of the music written for Lent and Easter by Orlande de Lassus (1532-1594), a towering genius of 16th-century choral music. The concert, by early-music choir VOCES under the direction of Martyn Warren, will start at 7.30pm on Saturday 24 February.

With Easter being early this year, Lent is already nearly upon us. Although a sombre time, designated as a period of fasting and penitence, it has provided plenty of inspiration for church composers over the centuries. No more so than in the last three days of Holy Week, reflecting the events leading up to and beyond the Crucifixion, when the pre-dawn office of Matins acquired the name ‘Tenebrae’, Latin for ‘darkness’. The bleakness of these services, and the music composed for them, dissolves in a blaze of light at dusk on Easter Saturday, when the celebration of the Resurrection begins.

The concert reflects this passage from darkness to light through a small proportion of the music

that Lassus wrote for Lent and Easter, starting with Ash Wednesday and the early days of Lent before dwelling on the offices of Holy Week, including settings of the Lamentations of Jeremiah and Tenebrae Responsories. The climax of the concert will be provided by the Easter motet Surrexit pastor bonus (The Good Shepherd has arisen) and the ten-voice hymn Aurora lucis rutilat (Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky); an appropriate celebration of light emerging from the shadows. Complementing the choral music will be organ interludes composed by Dom. Sebastian Wolff, monk of Buckfast Abbey, played by Richard Lea, Assistant Organist at the Abbey.

Tickets are £10 from [www.buckfast.org.uk/boxoffice](http://www.buckfast.org.uk/boxoffice), from the Abbey Bookshop and on the door. The Grange Restaurant at Buckfast Abbey will be open from 6pm, and a pre-concert two-course menu can be booked for £19.75. For details go to [www.buckfast.org.uk/concertdinners](http://www.buckfast.org.uk/concertdinners) or phone 01364 645504.

#### The Albanian Orthodox Church

This is, numerically, the largest branch of Christianity in the country and is found particularly in the south and Tirana, where it makes up about 20% nominally of the population. This may not sound much but Albania is a nominally Muslim country.

The new Cathedral in Tirana is completed and running, as are a number of ‘new’ (and ancient) churches. Archbishop Anastasios is reported to be still in post; now in his 90s, he took a prominent role in the 2016 Crete Symposium.

#### The Roman Catholic Church

Thanks to Malta, the Catholics are doing rather well in their traditional territories of north and central Albania. The Tirana Cathedral was completed some years ago and was reported to be packed for this year’s Christmas Masses. Celebrations included a meal for the poor, which attracted twice the expected 200. There are now officially six cathedrals in the country. Shkodra continues to operate a seminary – although getting recruits is a permanent problem. Albanians dislike celibacy!

The Dominican Mission in Durres now has a Social Services Centre in addition to their main church, one at Porto Romano (which FoA built) and a smaller ‘Mass Centre’ on the plain.

## News in brief

**Pope Francis writes about children at Mass:** "Children cry, they are noisy, they don't stop moving. God's voice is in a child's tears." so let us welcome all children to Mass.

**The sound of young children is the sound of the future of the Church.** What a joy it is to hear so many children at Mass! They will one day become the priests and mothers of priests that we pray for when we pray for vocations.

**Plymouth Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage, Lourdes 2018.** 2–8 August, led by Bishop Mark. £495 pp inclusive. Contact Anthony.O’Gorman@prcdtr.org.uk 01637 851697

**Catholic Marriage Enrichment Day to be held at Dorchester Parish Centre on 27th Jan 18.** This is similar to the very successful and well attended day held in Plymouth in October. It is for all couples who may be interested - it is free of charge.





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- Island of Saints – the lives of some very English Saints
- Vocations – laypersons, religious and priests talk about their faith and lives
- Sunday Praise – Readings, prayers and music for Sunday
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Visit [www.heavensroadfm.com/live-masses/](http://www.heavensroadfm.com/live-masses/). This brings enormous comfort to people who are house-bound or otherwise unable to get to Mass.

#### Help by donating

We have no guaranteed income and we rely on the generosity of our listeners to continue. Our volunteers are unpaid, but we need to pay for licences, internet services and a host of other things. So, any contribution you can make, however tiny, would be greatly appreciated! It will enable us to continue in our Mission. You can give by sending a cheque to the address below or go to our website and follow the links for on-line banking and giving.



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The Radio is run entirely by unpaid volunteers who live all over the UK and as far away as Canada and Singapore. Would you like to get involved? We're always happy to welcome people to our team and love to train them in new skills. Especially people who:

- have the personality and motivation to make and produce their own programmes
- experience in recording and editing audio files
- people wanting to gain social media experience
- fund raisers and people to apply for grants/funds

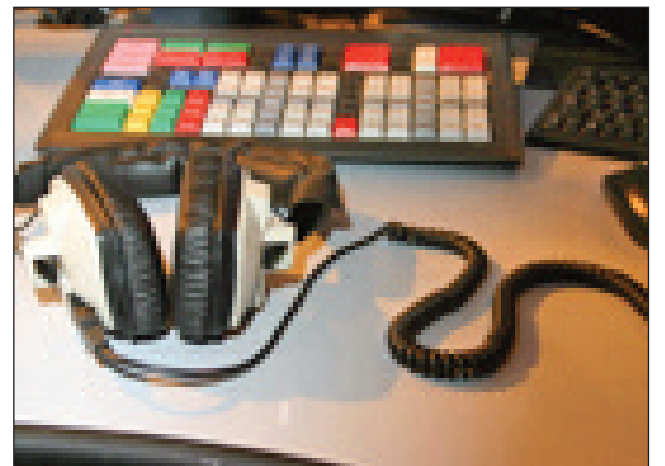
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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same. So, if you want to try the CRYPTIC puzzle, for instance, but are unsure, use the QUICK clues to help you work out the solution. Similarly, if you try the QUICK clues, use the CRYPTIC clues to help you prove the solution

CRYPTIC Across

- 1 Four assaults, shocking for one converted (4,2,6)
- 8 Spartan has the wind from the south and east... (7)
- 9 ...part of Greece where those with self-discipline repress the Greek character (5)
- 10 One writing in to paper vacuously endorses three goddesses (5)
- 11 Immigrant's diatribe, being sent to furthest part of hospital (7)
- 12 In a stony-faced way in Daniel (KJV) how is God designated? (7,2,4)
- 15 Shady, sick – one contrary jerk (7)
- 17 Medici victories have partly to do with a city (5)
- 19 Look around Rhode Island for a vantage point (5)
- 20 Unreliably solved a murder or two he committed in Boston (7)
- 21 Kind of cake one samples first off is named in a book (12)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Legalise a foe to negotiate for water in the Bible (3,2,7)
- 2 Unexpected sports outcome as regular exercise disrupts American team at the start (5)
- 3 Supervise beyond diocese (7)
- 4 Is it acceptable to die, not live, in a band? There are mixed blessings (3,10)
- 5 Sunday lunch eaten by Zoroastrians (5)
- 6 Church and hospital are barred from Chihuahua's ravaged southernmost town (7)

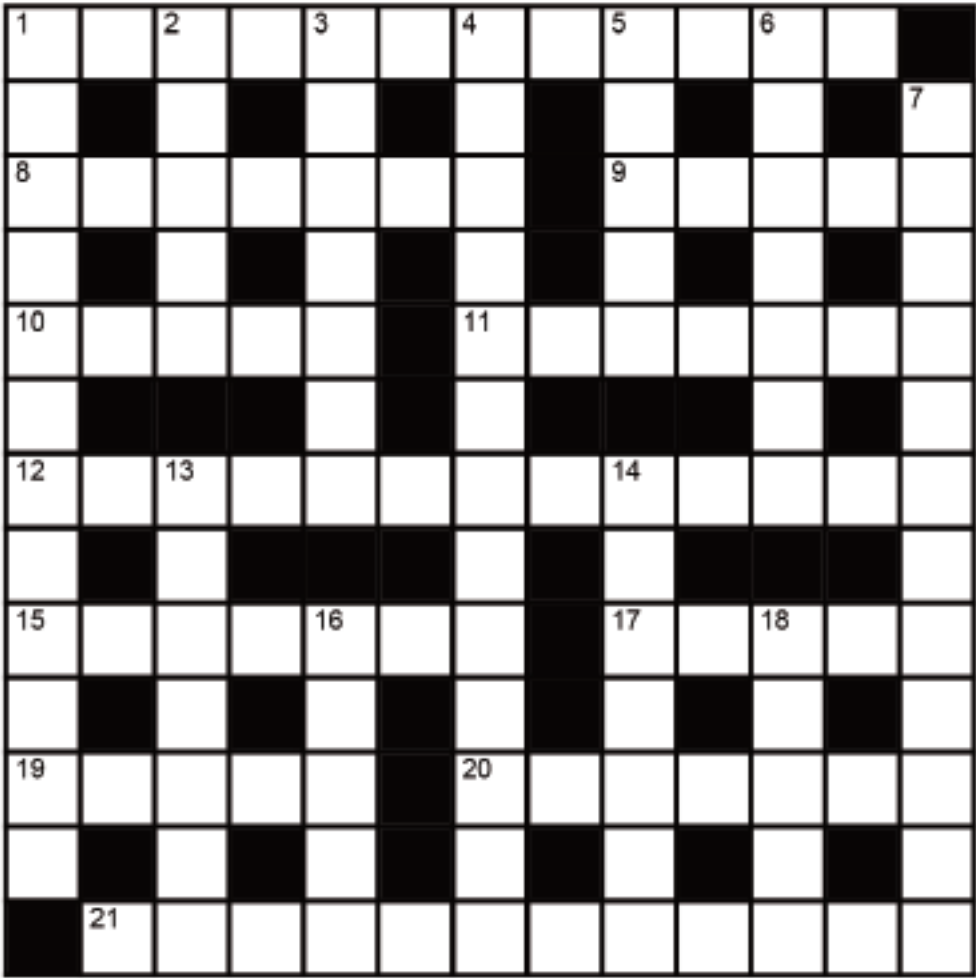
- 7 Islanders angry at badge used by some knights (7,5)
- 13 Acid in aborted Orly blast is contained in style (7)
- 14 Half-full church is in need of a lift – a show of flowers (7)
- 16 Basket of fish – one type of fish – under top half of crab (5)
- 18 Tax the Parisian's 'living-in' servant (5)

QUICK Across

- 1 Paul, as he was known before his conversion (4,2,6)
- 8 Frugal, puritanical (7)
- 9 Roman province of Greece, capital Corinth (5)
- 10 In Classical times, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos: 'The ----' (5)
- 11 Competitor, candidate (7)
- 12 KJV epithet for God, as found in Daniel (7,2,4)
- 15 Bootleg, clandestine (7)
- 17 Relating or belonging to a city (5)
- 19 Eagle's lair (5)
- 20 Albert -----, 'The Boston Strangler' (7)
- 21 Old Testament book that reflects on human vanity (12)

QUICK Down

- 1 Lake focus of many Gospel stories (3,2,7)
- 2 Move deeply in a negative way (5)
- 3 Direct; monitor (7)
- 4 Christ's promise of coming blessings (3,10)
- 5 Criticize in no uncertain terms (5)
- 6 World's most southern 'town', on Tierra del



- 7 Fuego, Argentina (7)
- 13 Symbol of the Knights Hospitaller (7,5)
- 16 Particularly devastating acid (7)
- 18 Showy plants of the evening primrose family (7)
- 19 Angler's wicker basket (5)
- 20 Jeeves, for instance (5)

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