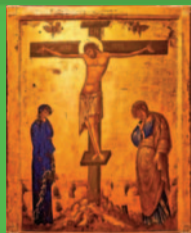


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Christ has died
Good Friday

15th April



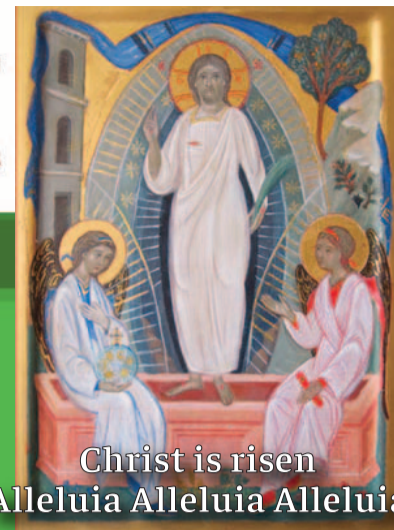
Rite of Election at
Westminster
Cathedral

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pilgrimage

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Christ is risen
Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia

A warm welcome to a new priest



Diocese of Leeds

Fr Sean's association with Leeds Cathedral goes back a long way, to the days when he was a member of the Cathedral Choir

On the eve of the most important penitential season of the Church's year, the Cathedral witnessed a weekend of joy on 26-27 February, as the venue for the Ordination to the Priesthood of Fr Sean Elliott, by Bishop Marcus, and the celebration of Fr Sean's First Mass.

Fr Sean's association with Leeds Cathedral goes back a long way, to the days when he was a member of the Cathedral Choir. He subsequently studied for the priesthood at the Venerable English College in Rome. Following the completion of his studies he has been assisting Mgr Michael McQuinn at St Columba's and St Malachy's parishes in Halifax. He was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Marcus at St Malachy's in April last year. Fr Sean's first appointment as Assistant Priest is to St Mary's, Halifax where he will support the Dean of Halifax, Fr Martin Kelly.

All the photos from the Ordination and First Mass can be viewed online at <https://www.patricksicephotography.co.uk/blog/>

Video recordings of the Ordination on Saturday 26 February and Fr Sean's First Mass the following day can be viewed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel by typing 'Leeds Cathedral YouTube' into your browser.

Rite of Election at Westminster Cathedral

Archbishops House

Candidates of each parish present came forward to be greeted by the Cardinal and the Bishops

The Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates which took place at Westminster Cathedral on the 5th and 6th March 2022, saw 149 candidates and 148 catechumens welcomed by Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bishops John Sherrington, Nicholas Hudson and Paul McAleenan.

Continued on page 4



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Please send articles for publication by email, supplying any photos separate to the text We welcome contributions
Here are answers to some basic questions about writing for The Catholic Post
How long should articles be?
Usually it seems to work out best if contributors simply say what they have to say and let us worry about finding a spot for it in the paper.

What is the submission procedure?

Please send as a Word file attached to an e-mail. To submit articles for publication, contact John Clawson by email at johnclwson@icloud.com Charts, graphs, and photos should be submitted as separate PDFs. Electronic photos should not be embedded or pasted into a Word document as this reduces their quality.

Photographs and Illustrations

Photographs and Illustrations should be supplied electronically as high resolution JPEG (*.JPG) files.
Photographs and illustrations should be sent in colour with a resolution of 300 dpi and a minimum size of 100 mm x 100 mm when printed (approx. 1200 pixels wide on-screen).

Computer print-outs are not acceptable. Screen captures are not ideal as they are usually not very high
Parental permission should be sought before submitting photographs of minors.
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The Age of Reason

From the presbytery..... by Fr Neil McNicholas

Every first communicant should have at least an elementary grasp of what it means to sin.

One way or another – often out of necessity – we have taken away freedoms from our children and with those freedoms life experiences that used to be part of the learning process growing up. Many kids are driven everywhere they go, or at least accompanied, because of potential threats to their safety which weren't quite as immediate once upon a time. Health & Safety regimens in our schools have removed so many “live and learn” experiences that used to be part of childhood.

All of this becomes important as we look at a child's celebration of the sacraments of confession and holy communion and we run into the concept of the “age of reason” traditionally established at age seven. I have been unable to trace when this was first defined, but the accepted age of reason in both common law and Church law continues to be seven as it has been for a very long time.

The Catechism makes the point that “children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time”. The canonlawmadeeasy.com website offers the thought that:¹

It may be objected that children [aged 7] are too young to understand what sin is all about and so it makes no sense for an innocent child to be confessing their “sins”. But the fact is, if a child is deemed ready to receive the Eucharist, it means they have attained a use of reason sufficient to understand that it is Jesus who is present in the consecrated Host. Thus every first communicant should have at least an elementary grasp of what it means to sin.

The Catechism further requires priests “to exercise vigilance so that children who have not attained the use of reason, or whom he judges are not sufficiently disposed, do not approach Holy Communion.”

What got me started on this reflection was my recent experience of helping out with first confessions in a couple of neighbouring parishes. You know what they say about the fact that you know you are getting old when police officers look young, however I don't believe that can also be applied to my experience of the children making their first confession – they are simply looking younger than traditional confessional age, too young in fact, and I made that comment to another priest who was there and he was of the same opinion. And not only do they look too young to be going to confession, but their sins are hardly confessional matter and could be taken care of by a good Act of Contrition: being cheeky to their mother, hitting their little sister, telling lies, and so on.

The average seven-year-old child can't be expected to fully understand the nature of sin as such - he or she may know that something is right or wrong, but not through the exercise of their conscience which, at that age, is still fairly immature. So, does a seven-year-old fully understand what the sacrament of confession is about, or are we simply trying to introduce them to the sacrament as early as possible in the hope that “something will stick”? That may well have been the policy back when I was seven, a time when you were taught (wrongly as it turns out) that you had to go to confession before you could receive communion and therefore that meant weekly, or at the most, fortnightly confession whether you had committed any sins or not. Many adults of that generation will admit to making up sins in the confessional because they didn't have any actual sins to confess!

The other thing is, of course, that we will never see these kids at confession again because that's how it goes. Children of that age have to rely on their parents to take them to church these days and, certainly as far as the sacrament of confession is concerned, if

parents aren't going then their kids can't go either even if they wanted to or needed to. A child is unlikely to say to their parents, nor should they have to, “Please can you take me to confession” implying they've committed a sin. They are as entitled to their privacy in such matters as adults are. The trouble is that not getting to the sacrament on a regular basis can get like the stuff that furs up your kettle – more and more builds up over time though you may not notice it happening, but eventually it starts taking twice as long to boil and only then do you realise there's a problem.

If the Church teaches that first confession is necessary prior to first holy communion, and if kids making their first confession at age seven really are too young these days, and if they can't go to church by themselves – whether to Mass and communion or to confession - then maybe we should be delaying these sacraments until they are at least a year older and possibly able to go to church by themselves. Many parishes are now starting first communion preparation when the children are eight so that, if the programme is as long as it should be in preparing for such an important sacrament, they will be going on nine by the time they make their first confession and communion.² By then they should also be a lot more aware of their sins and of the process by which they are forgiven, and, as I've said, they may also be better able by that age to get to church by themselves if the practice of their sacramental life is as important to them as it should be in order for them to have been admitted to the programme and the sacrament in the first place, and even if, sadly, it isn't that important to their parents.

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church, para 1457*
² *And this begs the question as to whether preparation programmes are held in the parish rather than school, which makes it easier for the parish priest to monitor who is going to Mass regularly. He is also better able to oversee the quality and content of the preparation.*

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9

CAFOD joins the DEC's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal + reports from Caritas partners on the ground

cafod.org.uk

DEC charities are in Ukraine and neighbouring countries meeting the needs of all refugees and families made homeless inside the country.



As Russia's invasion of Ukraine brings destruction and death to its cities, forcing hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians to flee their homes, CAFOD has joined with the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to bring help in a rapidly worsening humanitarian crisis.

Ahead of a recent DEC appeal, CAFOD has already committed £100,000 in funds to its partners in Caritas Internationalis, one of the world's largest aid networks. Caritas Ukraine, Caritas Spes Ukraine and partners in neighbouring countries are on the ground, supporting families caught up in the conflict. On Tuesday a Caritas Spes shelter in Kharkiv was hit by shelling while families sheltered on a lower floor of the building.

CAFOD's local Caritas partners have sent reports from the ground in Ukraine.

Tetiana Stawnychy, President of Caritas Ukraine, said: "The current crisis will inevitably lead to a colossal humanitarian catastrophe. I am truly proud of our team that are working hard to look to the needs of the most vulnerable, while managing their own circumstances as well. We are grateful for the outpouring of support from our partners and people of good will from abroad.

"This is a huge trauma. I see a lot of parents struggling to shepherd their children through this and running them down to the basement whenever the air raid sirens go off.

"People are moving. We have 25 welcome centres throughout Ukraine that have been providing hot food, shelter, psychosocial support, and a warm place to sleep, and then help people on their way. We've also been helping along the borders – providing tents, heaters, hot food and drinks, and psychosocial support to women and children who are scared."

Father Vyacheslav Grynevych, Director of Caritas Spes Ukraine, said: "War makes both adults and children cry. We learn this when hiding in basements during air strikes. War-wounded hearts will never be healed. Aside from material losses that can be rebuilt over time, the pain and fear that people experience will take a long time to recover.

"In Kyiv, most grocery shops are empty and at this time when the city is closed, we cannot leave our houses. We have to remain inside in a safe place.

"In my house we have 37 people, children usually, with their mothers, and they have this space in our Church, in our house. Usually these people come from our neighbourhood. They also have dogs, they have birds, they have cats, so we have a little zoo.

"We understand that these are only the first days of a terrible war, that like a terrible dream has enwrapped our society."

Since Russian armed forces began their attacks on 24 February, hundreds of people have been killed and over 750,000 have fled the country. Fears are growing that the bombardment of cities will be stepped up in coming days.

DEC charities are in Ukraine and neighbouring countries meeting the needs of all refugees and families made homeless inside the country.

£30 could provide essential hygiene supplies for three people for one month
£50 could provide blankets for four families
£100 could provide emergency food for two families for one month

Supporting seafarers caught up in Ukraine-Russia war

www.stellamaris.org.uk

It is not just the Ukrainian seafarers who are worried about getting home

Stella Maris chaplains have been speaking about the dilemmas and worries of both Ukrainian and Russian seafarers as the war in Ukraine deepens.

Wojciech Holub, Stella Maris regional port chaplain in Tilbury and London Gateway, said several Ukrainian seafarers he has met are incredibly anxious about not being able to return back home or see their families.

"One Ukrainian ship master I spoke to at Tilbury port told me that his contract had ended, and a replacement captain had already joined the ship. However, he has had to remain on board because of the difficulties getting flights home," said Wojciech.

He said, "Another young seafarer was on a vessel heading for drydock in Gdansk, Poland. He comes from Crimea and has Russian and Ukrainian nationality. He said he hoped to find safe accommodation in Gdansk as he feels he has no chance of getting home. His sister and other relatives have escaped to Turkey."

"Through tears another seafarer from Kyiv spoke of his grief and told me he was thinking of his home and family, and cannot wait to get home," Wojciech added.

It is not just the Ukrainian seafarers who are worried about getting home, said Wojciech, but also those from Russia and the

surrounding countries such as Georgia and Armenia.

Wojciech said both Ukrainian and Russian seafarers are shocked and horrified by what they are seeing and hearing about the war. On board vessels of mixed Russian and Ukrainian crew, they are united and have no animosity towards each other, he said.

This sentiment is echoed by Deacon John Fogarty, Stella Maris regional chaplain for Kent and the Medway ports, who spoke to the Russian captain of a vessel with 13 Russian crew members.

"The captain, whose mother was half Ukrainian was almost apologetic, as were the crew members, simply for being Russian. It struck me that there may be many more seafarers feeling the very same. Russian seafarers who are really struggling at this time as well as for their brothers and sisters in the Ukraine," said John, adding, "It was very humbling, although saddening, to be taken into their confidence on how they are feeling."

Deacon Doug Duncan, Stella Maris Northeast Scotland regional port chaplain met with three Ukrainian seafarers who had finished their contracts in the oil and gas sector. Their employer was looking at placing them on another vessel, the men told Doug.



"Three of them have decided to go home, while the three who are staying know that if they return home, they probably would not be able come back to the UK to work. They have advised their families to flee while they would carry on working and supporting their families in some way."

Recognising the anguish of Ukrainian seafarers at this time, anxious for the safety of their family and friends at home, Stella Maris is making phone cards and data SIMs available to Ukrainian seafarers free of charge.

Martin Foley, Stella Maris chief executive officer said, "Stella Maris chaplains in the UK and around the world will redouble their efforts to support all seafarers affected by this war. It is desperately unfortunate that Ukrainian, Russian, and other seafarers are getting caught up in this war."

"Stella Maris urges all governments to ensure the safety of all seafarers caught up in this war, their entitlement to adequate shore leave and their access to our welfare services."

Cardinal ordains former Anglican Bishop Jonathan Goodall to the Catholic priesthood



cbcew

Fr Jonathan Goodall will serve as Parish Priest of St William of York, Stanmore

His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols has ordained the former Church of England Bishop of Ebbsfleet, Jonathan Goodall to the Catholic priesthood. The ordination Mass took place in Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 12 March.

Concelebrating were Archbishops George Stack, Leo Cushley and Kevin McDonald alongside Bishops Marcus Stock, John Sherrington and over 20 priests.

Also concelebrating was the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Eparchial Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, who was present as the war in Ukraine continues to rage. We pray for peace and an end to hostilities causing this humanitarian crisis. Ecumenical guests in choir included the Bishop of Richborough Norman Banks, Bishop of Fulham Jonathan Baker and retired Church of England Bishops Nicholas Reade and John Hind. Following his ordination, Fr Jonathan Goodall will serve as Parish Priest of St William of York, Stanmore.

Continued from page 1

Episcopal Vicars, Fr Gerard Quinn and Canon Paschal Ryan joined on Saturday and Sunday. This joyful occasion in the life of the diocese is an opportunity to pray for God's protection and care for those who seek to be more fully a part of the life of his Church. In his homily, Cardinal Vincent encouraged the catechumens and candidates to think on the questions, "Just why are you here this afternoon? What brings you to be here?"

He explained that, especially in the context of Lent, a large part of being a member of the Church is that it is within it we learn how to pray more consistently, richly and fully. This happens as we pray in and through Jesus, in the sacrifice of the Mass which is the highest form of prayer we have. We also pray through Mary and through being in communion with the saints. Cardinal Vincent encouraged those present to think on their Christian name, or the name of the saint they have chosen, and the example of their life.

The Cardinal reminded those present that in Lent we try and rein in our desires. When we deny ourselves those desires, we slowly realise what our deepest desire is: to be united with

God. For those who have been summoned by the mystery of God, our response can only be prayer.

He also made a special plea to pray for an end to the assault, destruction and conflict in Ukraine.

After the homily, the deans called out the names of parishes in their deanery, and the Elect and the Candidates of each parish present came forward to be greeted by the Cardinal and the Bishops. At the end of the service, the Book of the Elect, containing the names of this year's catechumens, who, at the ceremony, became the Elect, was placed in the Baptistry of Westminster Cathedral where all visitors can pray for them as they journey towards Easter when they will receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion.

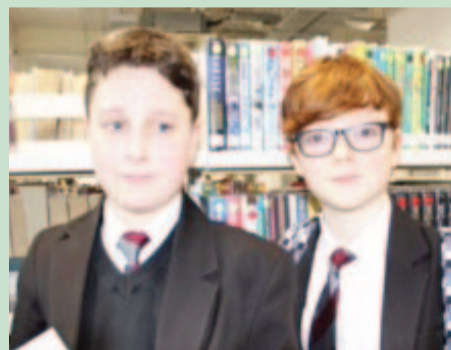
Along with those present in the Cathedral at the weekend, there are many more people preparing to be received at Easter - in parishes around Westminster - and in all dioceses around the country. We pray for them all, that they are strengthened in their vocation and sealed with the Spirit of God's promise.



World Book Day Celebrated at Saint Paul's

Saint Paul's Catholic High School

World Book Day is the perfect opportunity to raise the profile of reading for pleasure and engage our students in reading activities



Students at Saint Paul's Catholic High School in Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester took part in the biggest celebration of books and reading in the world when they participated in a fantastic World Book Day.

World Book Day was designated by UNESCO as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, and is marked in over 100 countries around the globe. The main aim of World Book Day is to encourage children to explore the pleasures of books and reading.

With the aim of inspiring and developing their students' interest in reading, the school organised a full week of reading related activities including design a book cover, puzzles, story-times, a Harry Potter quiz and

a "Guess how many books there are in the Library" competition.

"World Book Day is the perfect opportunity to raise the profile of reading for pleasure and engage our students in reading activities," explained Ms Irena Savova, the school librarian. "The students become engrossed in the various competitions and activities and we know from past experience that the events will encourage them to further develop their love of reading.

Pre-Synodal gathering at Westminster Cathedral

Westminster Diocese/ICN

Although a great deal has been achieved already, it really is only a beginning

There was a vibrant atmosphere at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday, 19 February, when hundreds of people from more than 90 parishes and 20 schools, as well as representatives from other communities, braved the aftermath of Storm Eunice to attend a day-long gathering, to "pray, listen, reflect and discern" together the synodal pathway for the diocese. Refreshments were served by a team of volunteers in the hall. As people came into the Cathedral, there was wonderful opening music and prayer from the parish music group of St Michael and St Martin, Hounslow, led by Mary Pierre-Harvey.

Bishop Nicholas Hudson introduced the day by saying that "although a great deal has been achieved already, it really is only a beginning" and that "the work we've done up to this point will now move forward in two directions." The synodal pathway was launched with listening events that took place all around the diocese in November and December. Bishop Nicholas explained that the report from Westminster diocese is being sent to the Bishops' Conference, who will collect the findings from all dioceses in England and Wales. This report will in turn contribute to the submission to be prepared by the Bishops of Europe, which in turn will form part of the discussion at the World Synod in Rome in 2023. He said: "We shall seek to capture for ourselves what the Spirit is saying to us as a diocese, by coming together at the end of 2022 or the beginning of 2023 for a diocesan gathering where we will review our priorities for evangelization, informed by all that we have collected from the synodal process thus far."

Bishop Nicholas thanked Danny Curtin for the work he had done to facilitate the process, and handed over to him to share the feedback from the listening process with the assembly. Danny gave a comprehensive summary of responses. He said there were many positive experiences of life in the Church: shared worship, supportive communities, caring for one another, diversity in liturgy, parish activities and communities. But there were also negative comments and sadness about those who were missing from the Church. "For many our diverse Church does not feel like an inclusive Church. Not everyone is valued: women, young people, those who are LGBT+, those with disabilities, people who are deaf, those on the peripheries and those who may feel 'outcast.'" The responses emphasised the importance of accompanying each other and listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, so as to accompany one another as we journey together. The presentation of the findings was followed by small group discussions. Later these were shared with the assembly.

In his reflection the Cardinal summed up the responses and reflected on what was said that day. He explained that, for him, there were four themes.

The first was a golden thread that has emerged from this process of a deep love for the Church. "It is utterly central to how we go forward together," he said. "Only this love of the Lord and of the Church can keep us together and responsive to each other, and to the Holy Spirit."

The second theme was the "great sensitivity towards those people and ventures who are 'missing', who feel left out or distanced." He acknowledged that "these aspects of our life together are not well-known and they are certainly not embedded in the entire life of the diocese," that "there is much to do," and, "there is experience and achievements to help us to do so."

He spoke of the desire to listen to each other, but that there are "many other voices that we hear and listen to", that there is an opportunity



to learn from these voices, but that 'we want to do it in a way that points to the person of Jesus as our model and our grace.'

Finally he pointed to the day's Gospel reading about the Transfiguration, which teaches us that Jesus is the source of all we are and do. The day concluded with a Liturgy of the Word. Preaching on the the Gospel Reading of the feeding of the multitude, the Cardinal noted

that St John 'addresses the seeming impossibility of the mission given to the Church by Jesus.' Like the small boy whose resources are sufficient to feed a great multitude, 'this great sign and demonstration of God's faithfulness' shows that, while we have so little, "we are granted so much!" This, he said, "enables us to resolve to be as faithful as possible to that invitation, to that mission."

The Jesuits and Stonyhurst Collections launch the 'Hot, Holy Ladies' exhibition

Stonyhurst College

These women used their intelligence and skills to enable the dangerous work of underground priests

The Jesuits and Stonyhurst College Collections invite you to discover the 'Hot, Holy Ladies' who caused a religious and political stir in 16th and 17th century England and Scotland.

The phrase 'Hot, Holy Ladies' was first used as a sarcastic insult in 1602, aimed at an impressive and effective group of strong-minded female supporters of the Jesuit Catholic mission.

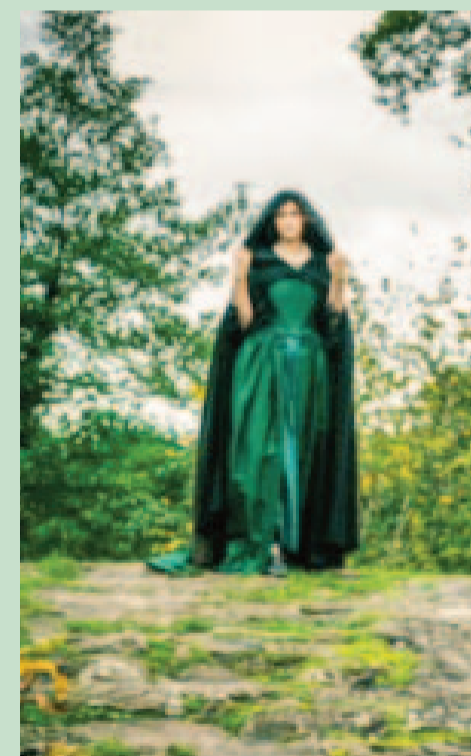
Disavowing the traditional restrictions on the movements and interests of their sex, these women used their intelligence and skills to enable the dangerous work of underground priests, and create widespread practical and spiritual community support networks during a time of massive upheaval for their families and society.

Blazing a trail through these islands' religious turmoil, and witnessing some of its most dramatic events, the Hot Holy Ladies nurtured and preserved Catholicism, even as England's ties with Rome were cut and those around them faced persecution and death. Their stories reflect the ingenuity and startling courage of a wide variety of women, from young girls to elderly widows.

Chief among them was Helena Wintour, whose male family members were deeply involved in the Gunpowder Plot, the plan to assassinate King James I by blowing up the Houses of Parliament. Orphaned at a young age as a result of this failed plot, Helena nevertheless went on to become the heart of a network of Catholic women who defied the authorities. Allied to the Jesuits, Helena deployed her wealth to help those less fortunate than herself, sheltered priests risking capital penalties, and used her skills in highly sophisticated, symbolic embroidery to create beautiful vestments for clergy who had to practice their faith in secret. Defying the severe state penalties for sewing these subversive chasubles, Helena further dared to sign many of them with her name and family crest.

In this exhibition, Helena's entire surviving life's work will be on display, illustrating the life, inspiration and legacy of this extraordinary woman.

The exhibition will also feature high profile relics such as Mary Queen of Scots' Thorn. Artistic commissions associated with royal women from the 16th to the 17th centuries such as the sumptuous Henry VII Cope, and Elizabeth of York's Prayer Book will also be on



display, alongside a gold, enamelled and pearl crucifix belonging to Thomas More's wife, Lady Alice and a series of silver gilt reliquaries commissioned by Anne Vaux, who was instrumental in rescuing the Jesuit missionary, John Gerard, in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot.

The artefacts draw on the rich collections of the Jesuit Province and Stonyhurst College, with significant loans from Douai Abbey Library. The exhibition will open online on 16th April, and for visitors at Stonyhurst in July and August 2022, with supporting films and podcasts online from March 8th onwards.

Our places of pilgrimage

Why do we go on a pilgrimage? Is it a holiday?

Well, yes - but a holiday with a difference. A pilgrimage is a devotional practice consisting of a prolonged journey, often on foot towards a specific destination of significance. The means or motivations in undertaking a pilgrimage might vary, but the act, however performed, blends the physical and the spiritual into a unified experience.

The origins of pilgrimage are difficult to determine, but deliberately visiting powerful sites is a practice that predates antiquity. Pilgrimages have long been a common feature of many world religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Shinto.

A believer might undertake a pilgrimage in fulfilment of a vow, as atonement for sins, as a gesture of thanks for positive events, or as a means of intercession, among other reasons. Prior to the age of exploration in Europe, pilgrimage was a primary impetus for travel, especially among non-elites, and played a significant role in local economies and the transmission of culture.

In the Christian pilgrimage tradition, the practice revolves around visiting either sites significant in the Bible – particularly those concerning the life of Christ – or in the lives of saints, or paying reverence to holy relics.

The three main destinations of Christian pilgrimage are Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela, and for most pilgrims throughout history reaching these sites was a prolonged and possibly dangerous endeavour. However, smaller and more local pilgrimage sites – such as Canterbury Cathedral in England or the Holy House of Loreto in Italy – also enjoyed great popularity.



Although the twelfth century is largely considered to have been the golden age of Christian pilgrimage, it remained a devotional practice throughout the following centuries.

Evidence of pilgrimages throughout history still surrounds us, if one knows where and how to look. In art, pilgrims are often recognizable by their attributes: staff, cloak, large-brimmed hat, small satchel (a "scrip"), flask, worn boots, and the scallop shell. Many museum collections also include the types of small,

personal items that a pilgrim would have brought back from his or her journey, such as badges, or flasks (called "ampullae") filled with holy water or oil.

Pilgrimages still enjoy great popularity today, although the definition of what constitutes an 'authentic' pilgrim is debated. The modern pilgrimage, while still a strictly religious exercise for many, has also been embraced as a more fluidly spiritual experience, open to all participants, regardless of their beliefs.

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Diocese of Nottingham's Annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham

Staying overnight on Friday 10th June at Dowry House, Walsingham

The Diocese of Nottingham's Annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham will be returning after a 2 year absence on Saturday 11th June. Walsingham, known as England's Nazareth, is an incredible place. So we are offering for Young Adults a mini retreat starting on Friday 10th June and finishing after the pilgrimage on Saturday 11th.

The cost of the stay will be £60 which includes Lunch and dinner on Friday, and breakfast and lunch on Saturday 11th and of course accommodation (a twin room). You can secure your place with a £30 deposit.

Limited spaces available.

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Parish Priest and Vocations Director
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TANGNEY TOURS The Pilgrim's Choice, since 1974
www.tangney-tours.com

During this Holy time of year, from all our team, wish you a Happy and Holy Easter!

ALLELUIA

Here at Tangney Tours whilst not many of you have had the opportunity to travel or go on pilgrimage with us, we have been busy keeping in touch with you!
With travel restrictions easing even further, this is the year whereby you can return on pilgrimage to the places that we all love.
Our dedication to pilgrimage has not faltered and our team remain ready to welcome you back!

We cannot wait to welcome you on pilgrimage once again!

The Lourdes Theme for 2022 is "Go and tell the priests ..."

Join some of our following pilgrimages to Lourdes, Spring: The Society or our Lady of Lourdes, Birmingham & Middlesbrough. Then in the summer: Leeds, Nottingham, Westminster, Brentwood, departure for Newcastle, East Anglia, Southwark, Northampton, the CA, Raphael and more... scan the QR code to find more:

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PUBLICATION THEMES FOR 2022

- May: Vocations
- June: World Refugee Day
- July: Climate Change
- August: World Health Organisation
- September: Education Sunday
- October: World Mission Day
- November: Food Systems
- December: TBC

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Sr Letizia honoured for a life of service

Diocese of East Anglia

There was no shortage of moments of celebration, which the sisters were willing to join in

Bishop Alan Hopes has awarded the long-serving, Peterborough based, Italian missionary Sr Letizia Conati with a Diocesan Medal for her exemplary life.

“Sr Letizia arrived in England for the first time in 1963 at the age of 24,” writes Fr Adam Sowa, “having just entered the Congregation of the Working Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth.

“After 55 years of missionary work among us, she has returned to the Mother House of the Working Sisters in Botticino (Brescia), in Northern Italy where their Order was originally founded.”

In 1966 she made her First Religious Profession in Italy and continued to study there for a further two years. When she returned to England, she joined the Peterborough Mission and remained there for 11 years. She then went back to Italy again for another three years, after which she returned to England, this time in the Bedford Mission, carrying out her service for 15 years. From the very beginning of her time in England she worked in a day nursery and continued to do so for over 35 years. The nursery school was open from 6am to 6pm, in order to accommodate the children of parents who worked in the local factories.

In addition to her working week, Sr Letizia collaborated closely with the Scalabrinian Fathers carrying out pastoral care duties on different fronts: catechesis, meetings and prayer groups with young people, preparation for the various sacraments, visits to families, organising and supporting of Masses in various cities around England. Every Sunday or at least once a month, the sisters travelled for hours to reach smaller Italian communities, for example in Ipswich, in order to celebrate Mass with them.

There was no shortage of moments of celebration, which the sisters were willing to join in: sharing moments of joy with families who celebrated weddings, baptisms and other joyful occasions. In the same way, sharing moments of pain and mourning.

In 1999, after the closure of the Community of Bedford, Sr Letizia moved to the community in Peterborough and worked for a short time in a factory, and then at St Joseph Day Nursery until her retirement in 2009.

However, she didn't stop being of service to the Italian community, especially as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, reaching out to the elderly and the sick, the house-bound and as a volunteer chaplain at



the Peterborough hospital. In the small community of Gladstone Street, she was a welcoming presence, both for those who knocked on the door to greet her or sought support and comfort in her and ask for advice; and for young people and friends who came from Italy to study English and learn about the English culture. For her community sisters, she was a point of reference and a testimony of life given with simplicity, humility and love.

Bishop Alan awarded Sr Letizia with the Diocesan Medal in November 2021 at St Peters and All Souls Peterborough.

“It was, without a single doubt, wholly deserved,” says Fr Adam Sowa. “She has always been part of the Italian community and the wider community of St Peter and All Souls parish and will remain forever in their hearts and prayers.”

The Rosary: Our Lady invites us to Extraordinary Prayer

The Holy Rosary is an invitation to dialogue, reconciliation and peace.

The road to peace lies deep within each one of us. Once discovered, it is for each of us to take the first step along it; to build the foundations of a bridge over which others will safely walk.

As a result of many years of aid work two things have stood out clearly in my mind. The first is that wars can be averted through prayer. The second is that prayer itself is a two-way conversation. We ourselves must be willing to change to allow God to work.

It is through recalling the wonders and mercies of God that we are brought into union with him. Through our meditations on the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary, we dwell on the realisation that the Holy Family walked where we walk, sharing most completely in the joys and sorrows of humanity.

It is for these reasons that Our Lady has repeatedly asked us to pray the Rosary, assuring us that we will receive the answer to our prayers if we remain faithful to it.

As a private devotion the Rosary can be explored and adapted for any intention or occasion, using scriptural texts, one decade or more, and choice of additional prayers.

Enjoy your Rosary, share the leading of it and benefit from each other's friendship and company.

The Rosary is such a tremendously powerful weapon against Satan that armed with the Rosary in our hearts, and the beads in our hands, we can even stop wars. If we but knew how powerful this prayer is – we would never want to put the beads down.

Miracles still happen – and they start with you!

Lisa de Quay

Vatican invites entries for Jubilee 2025 official logo

Vatican News

The motto, 'Pilgrims of hope' is the favoured theme from which participants will draw inspiration

Calling all artists and designers. The Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization has launched a competition for the creation of the Official Logo for the Jubilee 2025. The contest, which is open to all, began Tuesday, 22 February and ends on Friday, 20 May, 2022. The Holy Year 2025 will have the motto: 'Pilgrims of Hope.'

The Council says in their statement that the choice of the official logo, with which the "identity and the particular spiritual theme of each Holy Year is expressed, embracing the theological meaning around which this historic event is developed and realised," is among the first activities to be carried out as part of the preparations for the Jubilee.

Pope Francis's letter on 11 February, addressed to the President of the Dicastery, contains some useful themes that can be used to compose the Logo.

The motto, 'Pilgrims of hope' is the favoured theme from which participants will draw inspiration. The new logo will: "symbolically convey a message in an immediate and fitting

way, and is an expression both of the universality of the Church's message and of the particular spiritual needs of our contemporaries, who find comfort in this message, inspired by the theme of hope."

In addition, the logo "makes official the initiatives, projects, communications and events that will be proposed for the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee 2025."

Rules for submissions

Submissions are subject to acceptance of the Rules and Regulations that contain all the information necessary to turn in one's entry to the selection committee. Further information will be available on a website for the Jubilee logo, where it will soon be possible to upload digital files of submissions.

Recalling the Jubilee Year 2000, the statement notes that the winner of the competition was Emanuela Rocchi, a 22-year-old student from Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, whose entry has become part of history.

A Holy Year, or Jubilee, in the Roman Catholic

tradition is a great religious event. It is a year of forgiveness of sins and also the punishment due to sin; of reconciliation between adversaries, conversion, reconciliation and solidarity. It is, above all, the year of Christ who brings life and grace to humanity.

It is called a holy year not only because it begins, is marked and ends with solemn holy acts, but also because its purpose is to encourage holiness of life.

A Jubilee is 'ordinary' if it falls after the customary 25-year period, and 'extraordinary' when it is proclaimed for some outstanding event. The last ordinary Jubilee took place in the year 2000 which ushered the Church into the third millennium. In 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed an extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy. The forthcoming 2025 Jubilee will take place in line with the 25-year gap period.



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Letters to the Editor



All correspondence to Letters to the Editor to be sent by e-mail to johnclwson@icloud.com and must give a contact name and place of residence. Anonymous correspondence will not be considered for publication.

Dear Editor

I was delighted to see The February Catholic Post in our Parish today. (Diocese of Leeds.) I was interested to read Fr Neil McNicholas' article: "Clericalism v Accountability." Thank you.

Fr Neil encourages us to think about the joint responsibilities of lay people and priests to listen, dialogue and work together in parishes. This is important, but particularly now, as we are contributing in our dioceses to the worldwide Synod of "Communion, Participation and Mission" to be held in Rome in 2023.

And as we come out of the Covid pandemic I believe we lay people have a co-responsibility with our priests, religious and bishops to continue to build up our Church together.

Already priests are often pastors in more than one parish. With ageing priests and apparently too few priestly vocations to maintain the existing situation, in a few years time will they be rushing around even more Mass Centres? What about sacramental care? Pastoral care? There seems an increasing necessity for lay people to offer their God-given gifts to their parishes as a positive move forward. Is there an invitation to discern those lay gifts with our priests?

Many lay people have become passive or walked away, disappointed they have not been listened to or encouraged to be involved in their parishes. Many have felt excluded. I believe we all have a responsibility to try to keep listening and seek involvement in our Church. In our Parish during Covid times we have had a zoom Parish Forum that has included Parish Pastoral Council members plus all interested parishioners. Numbers are growing. Will this collaborative, inclusive venture continue in our parish and others?

More lay involvement may also mean providing accessible adult education to develop knowledge and skills useful in our dioceses. And if priests have a co-responsibility to work with their parishioners there may be education courses needed for them too to explore ways of becoming more inclusive, managing diverse opinions constructively and share some of the work of the Parish. So, what about joint courses in dioceses for priests and lay people together? There is existing material on which to build, so courses need not be too expensive.

What happens if we lay people try to be involved but our offering is rejected? What happens if the priests and bishops wish to do it all by themselves?

Pippa Bonner, Harrogate

Dear Editor

Preaching on Racial Justice Sunday, Archbishop Wilson of Southwark said, '...we need to broaden our minds to understand and to recognise that in the cultures of others, in the languages and traditions of others, there is something enormously enriching for the whole of the world.' ('No Place for Racism' Page 1 March 2022 edition).

It was therefore disappointing, at least, to turn the page and see an article headed 'Chinese Whispers' In it Father McNicholas describes 'the parlour game where someone whispers a phrase to a neighbour who in turn whispers it to another and concludes with a very different phrase. It shows how things get distorted as a result of each person's perception of what they heard.' The implication being that that the Chinese language is garbled, incoherent and inferior yet some of the most subtle works of human thought have been expressed in it. (See, for instance, the early chapters of Karen Armstrong's The Lost Art of Scripture). A better name for the game is 'Rumours'.

Father McNicholas goes to on describe the penny catechism 'as the "rule book" of what it meant to be a Catholic' and its being 'confined to the waste basket' as contributing to the 'liberalism' creeping in to the way children and adults are taught about the faith, not helped by priests being required to preach on the Sunday gospel and not on doctrine(!). Well, he could start by comparing the readings with the Index of Sacred Citations at the back The Catechism of the Catholic Church where every article of catholic faith is referenced to the bible. From where did the Fathers of the Church draw their inspiration? As for rules, my understanding of the gospel stories is that Jesus seemed most at home with rule breakers, calling them to fellowship with Himself and His Father and reserving his anger to those who scrupulously kept rules but had no charity.

If the penny catechism were to be reintroduced a better way to present it would be not as rules but as tools to live a Catholic Christian life where the questions are there to be pondered and the answers savoured. Mgr Gilbey's We Believe is a classic of this approach. The opening exchange 'Who made me? God made me. Why did God make you? God made me to know him, to love him and serve Him in this life, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next' is alone worthy of a lifetime's meditation.

Harold Mozley, York

Dear Editor

Firstly, it is lovely to read this paper. I just rather wonder if one should dare to question as to why we are still constantly expected to wear masks in churches for Mass.

With the current national situation and knowledge, it seems to me like a displayed lack of faith to be before consubstantial Jesus with a piece of cloth over one's face.

They are even generally removed straight after Mass and placed within pockets as same people are together. Surely, we should now call "time". God bless your work.

Martine Norman (Mrs), Essex

Dear Editor

I read with growing discomfort the article "From the presbytery" in issue 3 of The Catholic Post and began to wonder why there is such a desire in some parts of the Church for a return to the 'old ways'. I am of an age to remember the 'penny catechism' together with the rote learning and the penalties for getting it wrong. I can honestly say that I am glad that that particular 'baby went out with the bath-water'. At the age of five I certainly did not know 'where I stood' as asserted by the article writer. I didn't even understand some of the language, though I could repeat the words faultlessly. (I preferred to avoid the penalties for getting it wrong!)

The Second Vatican Council stressed the need to listen to the Word as proclaimed at each Mass day by day. God is present in those who choose to hear it. Clergy are asked to help us all to come to some understanding of what we are hearing and to preach appropriately to that end. I contend that it is this preaching which serves as one of the primary means of developing our faith to love God and our neighbour, whoever that might be. The imposition, by the author, of a judgement about Mass attendance, Marriage and the accurate rendition of the ten commandments smacks of 'Phariseism' and we know what Jesus thought about that!

God loves a sinner, cf parable of The Lost Sheep and, in that love is ever open to a sinner's return to the fold. Jesus ate and stayed with us sinners and continues to do that because it is with us that the Good News can be fruitful. Hopefully, in return, we strive as best as we are able to be in communion with him and with the rest of humanity safe in the knowledge that our Father knows each of us for what we are and is ever ready to love us back to spiritual health.

Frank Cole, Shrewsbury

Dear Editor

I read the February 2022 edition of the Catholic Post. Perhaps I missed it, but I did not see the word 'synodality' or reference to this current universal church process mentioned anywhere. Is this editorial policy?

Vincent Borg, Leeds

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor

I cannot be alone in being mightily impressed with the new Catholic Post, having picked up my first copy this morning. (Edition 3, March 2022) I am particularly taken with the way you seem to be dealing with issues directly, avoiding flannel of any sort and certainly not appearing to feel the need to cater for all at every opportunity. Articles by Fr Neil McNicholas and Fr Denis Blackledge were particularly resonant in that regard, albeit for quite different reasons.

In the former case, (Chinese Whispers), the direct, no-holds-barred approach was refreshing and really summed up the mess we have got into as far as the provision of a truly Catholic education in schools in this country is concerned. The latter article, (Growing into the collar), is clearly less pivotal but the whole story happens to have relevance to me in at least two ways, maybe more.

On our frequent visits to my home city, Liverpool, my wife and I always make sure that we stay somewhere central and go to Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral, (usually on the Sunday), and St. Francis Xavier's Church on Shaw Street, (usually for one of the weekday Masses). This was where I went to school, served on the altar and later read for the priests as they had their lunch when the school, but thankfully not the church, moved out to Woolton on the outskirts.

It was at one such SFX visit that we noticed something strange going on, the priest robing near the door having something familiar about him. There were also a lot of people milling about, arc lights, smoke and recording equipment. A person who turned out to be a technician on the set informed me that the 'priest' was in fact Sean Bean and the church was the set of 'Broken'.

We adjourned to the Sodality Chapel for the midday Mass and after this were delighted to meet Sean Bean himself. He was a pleasure to meet and we had a most engaging conversation with him. As a postscript to all of this, I should add that Jimmy McGovern, the playwright, who was not there that day, was a classmate and good friend of my dear brother Paul and even went so far as to name one of the characters 'Spragg' in another series he wrote.

I think you can see why I am a big fan of the Catholic Post already. With every good wish and hopes for a long journalistic life for the newspaper.

Mike Spragg, Great Yarmoiut

Dear Editor

I had not come across your publication until sent a copy by my friend Mo in Goole. I am very pleased to see another attempt at doing the job properly, and I hope you don't mind if I share some of my long-standing thought about what a Catholic paper should be like. Back in the 1990's and a bit later I used to write letters for the CATHOLIC TIMES, but after their failure to "follow Peter" as their page head proclaimed by including all sorts of ideas at odds with Catholic teaching. I cancelled my subscription and began to think where they had gone wrong.

1. A Catholic paper should take the opportunity of explaining Catholic Truth - not a potted version but actually as one would have it, difficulties and all, in a RCIA programme (I helped with RCIA for a while) One TRUTH per issue, however briefly, would be refreshing.

2. The Editors should not be afraid to refuse an item, or suggest improvements, if it fails to follow Catholic teaching. I used to find it very

wearing writing to the CATHOLIC TIMES again and again just to explain the orthodox position, when article after article was reaching something else.

3. It is useful if a Catholic paper is literary - recognises praise as an ART FORM and encourages GOOD WRITING which entertains as it informs. People will pick up and buy a Catholic paper out of sense of duty - what is needed is something so entertaining and amusing that they seek it for pleasure. The crossword is a good step in the direction. That after my recent discovery of Chesterton and Bellow. I see that a deeper involvement in the cultural together with good quality writing could do so much more! Jokes and light-hearted fun are also suitable for those who walk with the Lord, and knew that at bottom He is in control!

4. Avoid middle-class preoccupations - such as the ecology. I write as one converted to respecting the planet and created nature in the 1950's, when I was brought up next to a coal-fired power-station. Rather than being worried about buying too much non-reusable pastic, many people (including readers maybe) are more worried about being able to afford the food inside the packages. Catholic social teaching suggests that we should not be shy of pestering politicians or becoming political to try and do something about it. This is central to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, but is very underdeveloped in UK culture - a Catholic paper could help redress the balance. Some of the kind of dynamic directed at pro-life work might be offered for the sake of social justice in general.

Joseph Biddulph, Pontypridd

'Reimagining Human Dignity in Dark Times'

Theresa Alessandro

'The first principle of human dignity... is relationship

"The first principle of human dignity therefore is relationship." So said Professor Anna Rowlands addressing a large audience at Pact's 2022 Sir Harold Hood Memorial Lecture. Since the pandemic, perhaps we can feel in our bones the essential nature of relationship, our connectedness with each other, more than we did before. Turning her attention to the criminal justice system, Professor Rowlands went on to highlight, "the gift of relationship, the need for it, and the problems that accrue when we deny it, for ourselves or for others." A key part of the work of Pact, the national Catholic prison charity, is in supporting prisoners and their families to make a fresh start. We understand the value of what Lord



Andy Keen-Downs, Pact CEO, Bishop Richard Moth, Professor Anna Rowlands, Writer Frank Cottrell Boyce.

Image Andy Aitchison

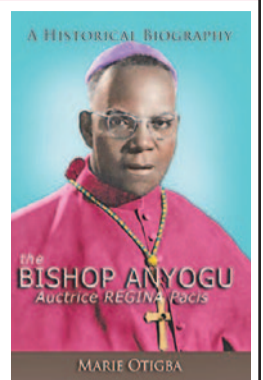
Farmer called the 'golden thread' of family relationships.

Former prisoner and Pact volunteer, Lewis Gibson gave a powerful performance of his own poem, 'I didn't want to say what I'm thinking.' Professor Rowlands referenced the dignity both in his words and also in his

performance of them. Lewis and another former prisoner, Jamie, featured in Pact's short film called Redemption Stories, shown to an audience for the first time. In the film, the two men speak with moving insight about their lives before prison, in prison and afterwards. They share how their faith transformed them - or 'melted the bars', as Lewis put it.

the BISHOP ANYOGU
Auctrice REGINA Pacis
A HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY

"...as my New Year's resolution, I want to serve God all my life. I want to be a priest." "Can a black man be a priest?" asked Jacob his father. "Why not?" asked Shanahan, the Roman Catholic Prefect of the Holy Ghost Fathers at Onitsha in 1910. "Has a black man not got a soul?"



...the obstacles, trials and challenges began for the twelve-year-old native-born in the late 19th century Victorian colony of Nigeria - the defining period when the Anyogu family legacy became embedded in the Archivum Secretum Apostolicum Vaticanum in Rome.

With century-old journals and newspapers put into perspective, this biography reveals a towering figure and one of, if not the most influential personality ever in Nigerian history.

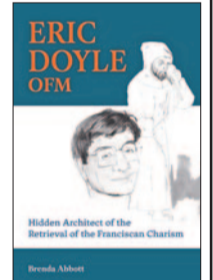
And so, I present to you,
The BISHOP JOHN CROSS ANYOGU
www.amazon.co.uk/Bishop-Anyogu
Marie Otigba, the author is a great niece of Bishop Anyogu and a parishioner at the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady Of Muswell, London.



This new publishing company is providing books on Franciscan theology and spirituality, continuing the tradition of the charism in the UK.

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Eric Doyle OFM:
Hidden Architect of the Retrieval of the Franciscan Charism



Few books arrest and liberate in equal measure. Just as St. Francis expressed his theology of creation in song, this scholarly yet lyrical study of Eric Doyle OFM attests to the prophetic-poetic power of both his life and thought. Essential reading for anyone interested in Franciscan thinking, Vatican II and the Ecological turn, Brenda Abbott fathoms the depth of Doyle's genius and scopes the cosmic reach of his extraordinary intellect.
Professor Anthony Towey, St Mary's University, London.

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St Thomas Aquinas Doctor of the Church - on the Eucharist in the Summa

Dr David Evans

A sacrament is so-called because it contains the sacred and the Eucharist is sacred because it contains the sacred nature of Christ's own body

Thomas Aquinas defines the Eucharist alongside the other sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. He states that Baptism is for spiritual generation-a sort of spiritual start-up ignition; Confirmation is for spiritual growth and the Eucharist sustains growth in providing spiritual food and refreshment. He explains that the bread and wine produce their spiritual effect by virtue of Christ's true body.

A sacrament is so-called because it contains the sacred and the Eucharist is sacred because it contains the sacred nature of Christ's own body. Aquinas says that although it is a sign, it is much more than a sign. It seems to me that the difference with regard to the Eucharist between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian Churches is essentially in the difference between the Eucharist as a sign or as a substance in other words between the external and the internal. I think that Eucharist in many churches is an external sign of remembrance according to Jesus's words at the Last Supper 'Do this in memory of me'. However, Aquinas says that in the Church (only Catholic at the time in the west) it is both sign and substance, so that as well as being an external sign for remembering it is also an internal substance containing Christ's body. It is the consecration of matter therefore of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. We know this to be 'Transubstantiation' being the transformation of one substance into another, although Aquinas himself does not appear to use this terminology in the Summa.

We might be called to question how this is possible that the church wine in the chalice and the wafers become the blood and body of Christ and if we ever establish a theology discussion group, this doctrine could be a point of debate because there is no visible change of substance. Aquinas himself, as we see towards the end of this article, addresses this question as a point of faith. We see with the eyes of faith.

Aquinas justifies his statements from the bible and particularly the Gospel of John where Jesus states ' My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed.

Is the sacrament of the Eucharist necessary for salvation?

Again Aquinas quotes the Gospel of John 6:54 where Jesus states, ' Except you eat the flesh of the son of Man and drink His blood, you shall

not have life in you'. So, without the Eucharist we just have our current physical life and that's it. For spiritual life and that also means life outside the body one needs the Eucharist. So, also for Aquinas there is no salvation outside the Church. Well at the time in the west that was just the Roman Catholic Church before the Reformation. Now of course we have in this country the Church of England and other Christian denominations.

There is however a caveat for those of us, and that currently means all of us, who are unable to receive the Eucharist due to the pandemic. There will also be other adverse circumstances in people's lives where, for no fault of their own, they cannot access the Eucharist. Aquinas clearly states that 'the reality of the sacrament can be had through the very desire of receiving the sacrament'. This is because 'an end is possessed in desire and intention'.

Therefore, the desire of the sacrament is sufficient for salvation and periods in life where the sacrament is not available do not affect salvation.

What is the substance of bread and wine?

In the Middle Ages there was an argument by theologians such as Augustine that the sacrament of the Eucharist is only a sign- therefore external to the bread and wine in themselves. Therefore, as a sign they serve to remind us of Christ's Passion, Resurrection, and our salvation. This argument states that, as Christ's body is in Heaven it cannot possibly also reside multiply in all the celebrations of the Eucharist that are taking place. Therefore, it cannot possibly be in more than one place at the same time. Augustine justifies this quoting the Gospel of John where Jesus says, ' Except I go the Paraclete will not come to you', meaning that Christ's body has truly gone and now we have in its place the Holy Spirit- we cannot possibly then have his body with us in the Eucharist.

Aquinas's view however is that firstly yes, Christ's body and blood are in the Eucharist sacrament and this can only be detected through faith. The Divine Presence is stated in Luke 22:19 'This is my body which is given for you'. Jesus also states in the same verse 'this do in remembrance of me'. So, for me these two statements of the same verse indicate both the internal substance of divine presence and the external sign for remembrance.

Secondly Christ assumes a body of our nature in the Eucharist of His Body in order to unite us with Himself. He declares again in the gospel of John, ' He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him'. This is then the height of our union with Christ.

Thirdly and lastly but very importantly is that Christ's invisible bodily presence in the Eucharist contains the perfection of our Faith in the unseen presence of the Divine. Christ, through the eyes of Faith shows us the invisible Godhead in his body in the sacrament. So, faith is the gift one prays for so that one



can believe in order to see rather than see in order to believe.

Parishioner of St Paul's Catholic Church
Dover, Kent

Diocese welcomes Apostolic Nuncio

Diocese of Nottingham

The first 'in-person' Rite of Election to be celebrated post-pandemic was an occasion of great joy

The Nottingham diocese was pleased to welcome the Apostolic Nuncio of Great Britain, His Excellency Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, recently. His visit opened with a drinks reception at Bishop's House on Saturday evening where amongst those in attendance, were the Lord Lieutenant Sir John Peace, Nottinghamshire Police Chief Constable Craig Guildford and His Honour Michael Stokes, QC, DL. It was a pleasant occasion and provided an opportunity to share something of the life and mission of the diocese with local dignitaries and the Apostolic Nuncio. His Excellency emphasised the role of the Church to be at the service of people in the region and Sir John Peace echoed this, thanking the bishop for the witness and work of the Diocese of Nottingham locally.



The Archbishop's last engagement was to join Bishop Patrick in celebrating the Rite of Election at St Barnabas Cathedral on Sunday afternoon. It was the first 'in-person' Rite of Election to be celebrated post-pandemic and was an occasion of great joy. Over 300 people attended the service, those hoping to be baptised and those to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church this Easter, and also priests and people supporting them on their journeys.



On Sunday morning, the Archbishop celebrated Mass at the University of Nottingham for the Catholic Community of staff and students.



Book Reviews

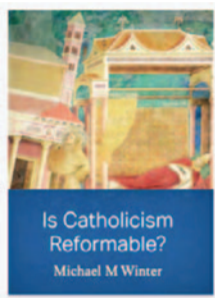


Is Catholicism Reformable

By Michael M Winter
ISBN: 978178456774
£8.99 - Upfront

Michael Winter was ordained priest for the Catholic diocese of Southwark in 1955. He worked for nine years as curate and parish priest in a variety of parishes.

Later he pursued further studies in theology at the universities of London, Cambridge, and Fribourg (Switzerland), where he was awarded the Doctorate in Theology in 1977. He resigned from the clergy in 1986 and turned to university teaching, and writing.



Like many members of the Church, my attention was immediately caught by the title of this book and the promise it held of a forensic examination of the case for reform. The evidence presented is wide ranging, insightful and informative and, in a real sense, leaves no stone unturned. There is no doubting that Michael Winter, as his credentials indicate, has a comprehensive understanding of the Church in action and a breadth of scholarship that allows him to build the case for reform convincingly and incisively.

In what is in reality a quest to envision the Church of the future, what better place to begin than with an extensive examination of Church history? Is this not a Church that has ridden many a storm and overcome many a crisis and, indeed, is this not just the way it is? This is hardly the first time the Church has had to face a challenge to its future existence.

However, when it comes to examine the present day Church there seems to be an overwhelming choice of topics to be scrutinised, of which a first chapter devoted to adolescents abandoning the Mass has the appearance of a symptom of decline rather than a cause. The second chapter dealing with Catholicism's Lost Opportunities suggests that there is a history of failure by the institution in spite of the heroic individual efforts to witness to a gospel of service to a suffering humanity.

Chapter 3 on De-Clericalising the Clergy has much to be admired in its exposition of the historical development of the priestly ministry. Thus far, so good. It is, however, in his consideration of the sexual abuse of children by clergy and in his subsequent denunciation of clericalism that he writes in the most excoriating terms. In his mind, these two

phenomena are intrinsically linked and, for that reason, identify this particular era as requiring the most radical reform.

While displaying a profound knowledge and understanding of the heart of the Church, his concerns and ire, aroused by the machinations of the Roman Curia and their deleterious effect on the governance of the Church, is to a degree devalued by an almost prurient emphasis on the part played by 'an unhealthy network of deviant homosexuality in the Vatican.' To the best of my knowledge there is no established causal link between child abuse and homosexuality.

While not many people would disagree with his demand for reform, this perceived lack of balance creates an unease that the case is being further devalued by such overstatement. And yet, one can find genuine evidence of balance and some real gems which are all but lost in a book that is crying out for some rigorous attention by a skilled literary editor.

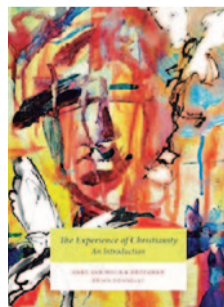
When it does get to identifying the critical element of the reform process in its final Epilogue chapter, a lucidity emerges, which can be available only to the reader who perseveres through some rather glutinous text. This reader is tempted to recommend, not entirely frivolously, the concluding chapter but that would be to overlook the wealth of knowledge and understanding of a Church that is all the better for having scholars like Michael M Winter who generously offers his (long) lived experience and loving critique of an institution that, warts and all, is still capable of fulfilling its mission of genuine service to the world.

Willie Slavin

The Experience of Christianity

Hans van Mourik Broekman
and Brian Donnelly
£9.95 - LC Press

This is a textbook which can be used in Religious Education with different age-groups in secondary schools. In ten short chapters readers are introduced to key features of the experience of Christians. There are no texts that suit every teacher and every class. However, this one provides an interesting, original and very worthwhile contribution, one which seems likely to invite students to think carefully and authentically about important aspects of Christianity.



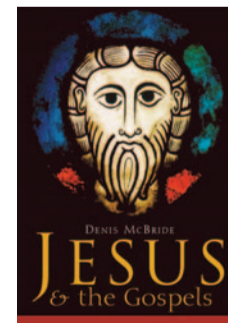
The author and the artist whose work illustrates the book in bright and striking colours both teach in Liverpool. No prior knowledge of Christianity is assumed. Several features mark out this book as original, refreshing and relevant for classroom use: its use of the personal voice is very effective; it invites readers into a dialogue and stimulates them to think for themselves; the language is clear, accessible and straightforward; it is not burdened by religious jargon or off-putting technical terms; the way it begins by exploring the experience of meeting and being changed by such meetings is a fertile entry-point for the accessing the experience of the first disciples. The Food for Thought sections pose excellent questions. The scripture passages, along with straightforward commentaries, really do open up the text. Down-to-earth examples ensure the book is engaging. The treatment of such topics as mystery, Spirit and Holy Spirit, following Jesus and the role of the Church is rarely done as well as it is here. There is doctrinal substance in this book but it is (thankfully) not over-emphasized, nor is it introduced in daunting detail. There are many factors which influence the teacher-learner relationship and how students engage with the material put before them. So much depends on the relationship between teacher and pupil and the assumptions, the outlook and attitudes brought to the classroom; also a great deal depends on what is experienced in the rest of the school, as well as outside it (in the home and in society). However, this stand-alone volume succeeds admirably in introducing pupils (and often their teachers) to central aspects of the experience of being a Christian.

John Sullivan,
Emeritus Professor (Christian Education),
Liverpool Hope University

Jesus and the Gospels

By Fr Denis McBride
RRP: £13.95 - rpbooks.co.uk

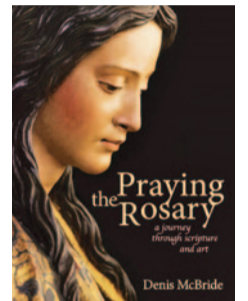
This book reflects on the key moments of the Jesus story as the four evangelists present them. It is an excellent workbook for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of the person of Jesus and the writing of the Gospels. Written and compiled by Fr Denis to accompany the lectures for Jesus and the Gospels it is full of artwork and key scripture with charts and graphs to help provide context for the reader.



Praying the Rosary: A Journey through Scripture & Art

By Fr Denis McBride
ISBN NO: 9780852314159
£12.95 rpbooks.co.uk

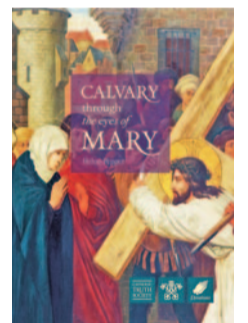
Fr McBride takes a fresh look at the Rosary in this beautifully illustrated book. Through the four sets of mysteries he takes us on a leisurely journey through twenty episodes in the lives of Jesus and Mary, offering us prayerful insights on the way. The format for each decade is simple: first there is a reading from scripture, which is followed by a reflection on the passage; a painting is also included which offers its own take on the subject, accompanied by a brief reflection; finally there is a prayer on some aspect of the mystery. Focusing on a scriptural understanding of the mysteries, this prayerful book will prove a sure companion for everyone who loves the Rosary.



Calvary Through the Eyes of Mary

Helen Pepper
£3.50 - ctsbooks.org

Stopping with Mary at each of the fourteen locations that mark events in the final days of Jesus's life, we share her sentiments and bear witness to her sorrow as she suffers alongside her son.



It has been a Catholic tradition through the centuries to meditate on the Stations of the Cross so that it becomes our way of life. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, made that first way of the cross. The stations in this booklet present that viewpoint.

Stopping with Mary at each of the fourteen locations that mark events in the final days of Jesus's life, we share her sentiments and bear witness to her sorrow as she suffers alongside her son.

As we go deeper into her suffering we will come out of this spiritual journey with a deeper love for Mary, a greater appreciation of what her son did for us, and find an example of how to take up our own cross to follow Christ in a spirit of total love.

Students receive blessed ashes distributed by their peers

www.cafod.org.uk

I don't want the two countries to be against each other, I want them to live in harmony like two countries would do



Across the Diocese of Nottingham, thousands gathered in Churches and Schools on Ash Wednesday to receive blessed ashes whilst holding Ukraine in prayer, following the call from Pope Francis to offer Wednesday 2nd March 2022 as a 'Global Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace in Ukraine'.

Hundreds gathered at St Barnabas Cathedral for the 1:00PM Ash Wednesday Mass, in which Bishop Patrick McKinney reminded the congregation of the global call to pray and fast for peace in Ukraine.

The students and staff of Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy, a primary school in Loughborough, received ashes in school, distributed by their peers in the school Chaplaincy Team who led the whole school in an Ash Wednesday Act of Worship.

Mrs Boyd, who was part of the service, said: "The Chaplains led the Ash Wednesday Service with such reverence and respect. They were excellent role models for the whole school to duplicate and they revelled in their mission to distribute the ashes to both children and staff. The whole school congregation from Reception to Year 6 engaged in the prayer, reflection, receiving ashes and hymn singing. It was a wonderful whole school act of worship."

Another Primary School in our diocese, St Mary's Catholic Academy in Hyson Green, Nottingham, featured on BBC East Midlands News, having spent time on making a 'Wall of Peace' on the perimeter fence of their premises. The display featured personal prayers for those affected by war especially those in Ukraine. Hanya Postolan, a teacher at St Mary's, shared to the BBC that she had family in Ukraine, "My Father lives in Ukraine, I'm 3rd generation Ukrainian so my Mum's family and extended family live there as well, and we've got some family in the Ukrainian Army. The school felt as a whole it [the wall of peace] was something we could do, a small gesture, a small token"

Joanna, a student at St Mary's told the reporter, "It means a lot to me because my family is Polish, and they are welcoming refugees with warm hands and with things for them. I'm sad that I can't help."

Hanya continued, "We've tried to explain things on a basic level for them [the students], we just want them to feel safe and secure, but we've got to teach the reality that there are injustices in the world and that's important for them to learn about and to know about. We're hoping to display them not just in the school grounds

but out in the community as well so perhaps some in the tram stop or near our local church, for people - not only our parents, as we have lot from eastern Europe - but for the community in Nottingham, for them to know that everyone is supporting Ukraine."

One other student added, "I don't want the two countries to be against each other, I want them to live in harmony like two countries would do."

Families affected by the conflict in Ukraine urgently need food, water, and shelter. CAFOD is working closely with Caritas Ukraine, Caritas Poland and others, who are already there delivering practical help to those most in need. You can be part of the Church's response by giving to CAFOD's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal at cafod.org.uk/Ukraine

CAFOD's Community Walk Against Hunger

Diocese of Salford

Thank you to all those who took part

In bright sunshine and blue skies, a group of some 40 parishioners and friends from the linked parishes of St Mary's, Brownedge, Bamber Bridge and Our Lady of Lourdes and St Gerard Majella, Lostock Hall, together with Parish Priest, Fr Mark Harold and Assistant Priest, Fr Colin Battell OSB, took part in CAFOD's Community Walk Against Hunger on Saturday 12 March. Following a group photograph around the Shrine to Our Lady in the grounds, we set off from St Mary's Church after the 9.30am Mass and Exposition with the majority following a circular route of approximately 2.5km around part of Bamber



Bridge, whilst a number walked a lap of the extensive church grounds. A smaller group of those feeling most energetic then repeated the circular route, completing approximately 5km. Once everybody had returned safe and sound, we enjoyed tea, coffee, toast and a chat in the church narthex. Fr Mark then led us in CAFOD's prayer for Ukraine, thanked all those who had taken part, and in particular our CAFOD co-ordinator Linda Swarbrick and her willing band of helpers, and referred to a conversation he had recently had with Bishop John Arnold in which the Bishop referred to all the good things to support CAFOD in the parish he had heard about! Thank you to all those who took part, all those who organised the walk and refreshments and all those who support CAFOD with their donations".



Dave Gorman
St Mary's, Brownedge, Bamber Bridge

Parish Matters

Peter Boylan KSG



Easter : A time for Hope

Just less than twenty years ago, I responded to an invitation to visit Kyiv, to see some of the schools in the city. That week now brings remembrances of what was seen and the people met. The visit came about some ten years after Ukraine had broken free of the former Soviet Union but behaviour among the generations that had lived through that period, reflected a culture embedded from that time. The younger generation who we talked with in the schools had no such inhibitions. They were well informed on many global issues and queried such things as soccer, music, books and films. Their knowledge was built from global television providers, or in some case, from their own travel.

The people of Kyiv were people of Faith. Orthodox Christian traditions were the principle form of worship alongside the smaller Western rite. Cathedrals, Churches, monasteries, with their golden domes seemed everywhere. Our guide leading us through one monastery halted at each icon, blessed herself and kissed the icon before explaining its history. One senior teacher spotted a cross on a magazine I held and exclaimed that she was also a Christian. Pulling aside a row of text books she showed

her own bible hidden behind them saying that she didn't want them to know. Christianity had clearly survived many repressions.

Each school visited had a 'Peace Museum.' These contained military artefacts held from the second world war. Revolvers, grenades, bayonets and such were reminders of past events. Similarly the 'Peace Park' for the city was like a military scrap yard with tanks, field guns, fighter aircraft and such. Peace was presented as an absence of war but also presented a reminder that this could be repeated.

The Soviet residue showed itself in many ways. Residences in blocks of flats had communal heating centrally controlled. There was no ability to turn on the heating when required, either summer or winter. The school catchment area was one of these blocks of flats. School text books were supplied from the Ministry. When asked about their accuracy the reply was that they must be accurate because they came from the Ministry.

The Sunday mass we attended was celebrated in English as it was in the central

Cathedral and available for many English speakers. When we returned from communion, standing alongside each row were parishioners waiting for the next mass. As the celebration was completed, it was made plain to us that we should vacate seats quickly ready for the next mass.

In Pope Francis's appeal before Ash Wednesday he said 'Jesus taught us that the diabolical senselessness of violence is answered with God's weapons, with prayer and fasting.' We are continually told of the power of prayer; surely this is a time, more than most, when the people of the Ukraine, our Christian sisters and brothers, need that help of prayer.

As we approach the liturgies of Holy week and Easter, we may recognise the sufferings of Christ repeated in those suffering in Ukraine. But the crucifixion was followed by the glorious Resurrection. Whatever the final outcome, given the destruction, the people of Ukraine will continue to suffer. But like Christ's resurrection, a time of despair followed by a time of hope. Our united Christian Faith tells us that Easter is a time for Hope.

Our Global Community



Stanislas Kambashi, SJ - Vatican City with Jean-Baptiste Malenge, OMI -Kinshasa, DRC.
The Church for PWA in the Diocese of Lisala, DRC

DRC: Diocese of Lisala organises the first-ever gathering of persons with albinism

Albinism, they said, was not who they were but the condition they lived with. It is dehumanising when the community looks only at their skin condition, forgetting their uniqueness as persons.

The Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Lisala in DRC recently organised the first-ever meeting of persons with albinism. The aim was to call for greater participation and integration of albinism in society and in the Church.

Last week, in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Diocese of Lisala, the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission brought together persons with albinism.

Full integration of the albinism community

For the first time ever, the main hall of the University of Lisala was filled with men and women, adults and children -all persons with albinism (PWA). Participants came from all over the province's three territories of Bumba, Bongandanga and Lisala. The meeting was intended to lead to greater participation and the integration of PWA in the Church and community.

The city of Lisala is the capital of the Mongala Province in the northwestern Democratic Republic of Congo. The Congo River flows through the town.

The meeting was the initiative of the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission in conjunction with the Council for the Apostolate of the Catholic Laity in Congo. At the meeting, the right of persons with albinism to organise was re-affirmed.

Eradicating stigma in society

Faustin Onombili spoke to the importance and right of PWA to seek acceptance, support and fellowship in the Church and in wider society. He encouraged PWA to freely advocate and voice their concerns within the Catholic lay structures.

Remy Egwembe and Jean Remy Elemba, speaking on behalf of persons with albinism, explained the need for an affirmed identity and educating society about their condition. Albinism, they said, was not who they were but the condition they lived with. It is dehumanising when the community looks only at their skin condition, forgetting their uniqueness as persons.

The albinism community has since called for eradicating stigma and re-echoed the need to be empowered and recognised as dignified and full members of society.

Texas bishops call for mercy for mother facing death penalty

Vatican News

Justice is not suddenly restored because another person dies

Bishops in the US State of Texas have appealed for mercy to be offered to a mother of 14 and grandmother sentenced to die on April 27, following what has been called a flawed process and conviction.

Vatican News staff writer. The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops has asked the State of Texas to spare the life of Melissa Lucio, sentenced to death in 2008 for the death of her two-year-old daughter, Mariah. Lucio claims Mariah died after a tragic fall down a staircase. The Bishops noted that Lucio was convicted on the basis of a forced confession following a rigorous interrogation the night her daughter died, in the absence of evidence or witnesses. Many other organizations are rallying around Melissa Lucio's case, including domestic violence and battered women's organizations, and former prosecutors.

The bishops write: "We ask the state to commute Melissa Lucio's sentence of death and re-examine the case to consider her history as a victim of sexual abuse and domestic violence, her troubling interrogation by law enforcement, and the lingering questions regarding the manner of her daughter Mariah's death." They also note that

she has undertaken a spiritual journey while in prison, "accompanying others to a deeper faith in Christ."

The bishops echo the words of Bishop Daniel Flores, who shepherds the Diocese of Brownsville, where the Lucio family lives. "One tragedy is not somehow made better by killing someone else," they say. "Justice is not suddenly restored because another person dies.

Executing Melissa will not bring peace to her surviving children, it will only bring more pain and suffering." They add that this case again shows why the death penalty process in Texas "cannot be trusted to provide justice to all," since it is a deeply flawed process "rife with human error and inconsistency."

They conclude by offering their prayers for all affected by the tragic loss of Mariah's life, for her mother Melissa, and for her family, beseeching "the State of Texas to commute her death sentence and conduct a meaningful review of her case to enable this family to continue the hard work of restorative justice and healing."

Vatican Cardinals dispatched to Ukraine to stand in solidarity with the suffering

www.cbcew.org.uk

Pope Francis has sent two Cardinals to Ukraine as an expression of the Church's solidarity with the suffering people of the eastern European country

In service of a mission of peace, Pope Francis has announced that he has sent two Cardinals to Ukraine as an expression of the Church's solidarity with the suffering people of the eastern European country. Polish Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the Almoner of His Holiness, the Pope's official almsgiver, has departed for the border between Poland and Ukraine. He will visit refugees and volunteers in shelters and homes. Meanwhile, Cardinal Michael Czerny, the Prefect ad interim of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, is heading to Hungary to visit reception centres for migrants crossing the border. He is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday, 8 March. Both Cardinals are directed to Ukraine and, depending on the situation, they intend to



reach the country in the coming days. The Cardinals will bring aid to the needy and serve as "the presence not only of the Pope, but of all the Christian people who express solidarity with the people of Ukraine and say: 'War is madness! Stop, please! Look at this cruelty! Rivers of blood and tears are flowing in Ukraine. It is not merely a 'military operation', but a war, which sows death, destruction and misery.'"

Our Global Community



Spain moves a step closer to prison sentences for those who offer support outside abortion clinics

righttolife.org.uk

Legislation already exists to prevent harassment and wherever genuine harassment occurs, it should be prevented under existing legislation

Spanish legislators in the Congress of Deputies have approved legislation that will make offers of assistance, practical support and prayer outside abortion clinics punishable by imprisonment.

The Congress of Deputies voted by 204 to 144 in favour of an amendment to the country's penal code.

The legislation will now move on to the Senate and, if passed, could see those who pray and/or offer assistance outside abortion clinics facing imprisonment. The penalty can range from three months to one year in prison or community service from 31 to 80 days. Furthermore, those who are prosecuted could be forbidden from returning to the abortion facilities for up to three years.

María Teresa Angulo Romero of the People's Party said that the proposed law is not about preventing coercion but penalises "fundamental rights such as freedom of speech or assembly because what underlies is a sectarian limitation of rights because of the ideas of those who exercise them".

She added: "You don't want to penalise supposed coercion. If so, your proposal would be unnecessary because the Penal Code already covers coercion. You want to prohibit the right of assembly or free speech where and by whom you don't like".

"The majority of activities are more passive in nature".

There have been a number of calls in the UK from abortion campaigners over the past few years to introduce censorship zones outside abortion clinics with similar arguments being offered both for and against their introduction.

In 2018, the then Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, announced that the Home Office could not find adequate reason to introduce censorship zones, stating that: "...introducing national buffer zones would not be a proportionate response, considering the experiences of the majority of hospitals and clinics, and considering that the majority of activities are more passive in nature. In making my decision, I am also aware that legislation already exists to restrict protest activities that cause harm to others".

More recently, the women's health minister in Scotland has said that the Scottish Government will not support the introduction of "a blanket buffer zone around all abortion clinics".

Right To Life UK spokesperson, Catherine Robinson, said: "Legislation already exists to prevent harassment and wherever genuine harassment occurs, it should be prevented under existing legislation. This holds true in the UK as well as Spain, which also has laws preventing harassment. Laws that create censorship zones outside abortion clinics are a targeted attack on those who hold a specific view and want to persuade others of it. They are a direct and discriminatory attack on the freedom of belief and expression".

Pakistan: Online event celebrates life and legacy of Shahbaz Bhatti

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

When I met Shahbaz, I knew I was meeting a man of God. He was a man of great courage and compassion, a man of peace and reconciliation



Shahbaz Bhatti

The 11th anniversary of the assassination of Pakistan's former Federal Minister for Minority Affairs, Shahbaz Bhatti, was marked with an online event yesterday, celebrating his life and legacy in the struggle for freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in Pakistan.

Shahbaz Bhatti was assassinated in Islamabad on 2 March 2011 after many years of campaigning for FoRB in Pakistan. He was particularly critical of the country's controversial blasphemy laws, and had continued his advocacy despite receiving multiple death threats from Islamic extremists.

The online event was organised by CSW in partnership with the Cecil and Iris Chaudhry Foundation (CICF), International Christian Voice and the Institute for Global Engagement. It was hosted by CSW's Senior Analyst for East Asia Benedict Rogers and featured contributions from Fr Michael Nazir Ali, CICF President Michelle Chaudhry, CSW's Founder President Mervyn Thomas, Mr Bhatti's niece Nitasha Bhatti, and Asia Bibi, who was visited by Shahbaz Bhatti while imprisoned on blasphemy charges.

CICF President Michelle Chaudhry paid tribute to one of her best friends, and described Shahbaz Bhatti's life of activism: "It was Shahbaz's unwavering belief in Jinnah's Pakistan that made him dedicate 28 years of his life to strive to create the Pakistan that the father of the nation, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had envisioned - to ensure an enlightened and moderate Pakistan where every citizen could enjoy equal rights, opportunities and complete religious freedom."

Nitasha Bhatti shared memories of Shahbaz Bhatti as the youngest of his siblings and "family favourite" who shared his love of Pakistan with his wider family: "Growing up, my uncle had his fair share of struggles as a religious minority. He had every reason to despise his country and had every opportunity to leave and be successful abroad. Yet the love that he had for his country never wavered, despite the hardships that the country threw at him. He believed in the Pakistan that was created by its founding father, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. A Pakistan that was free for all to worship as they pleased, a Pakistan that was home to every religious minority."

CSW's Founder President Mervyn Thomas said: "When I met Shahbaz I knew I was meeting a

man of God. He was a man of great courage and compassion, a man of peace and reconciliation. Above all he was a man of justice. He was a dear friend. It was a great achievement for him to become the Federal Minister for Minorities, but he never forgot the people he was representing, he was a man of the people who stood up for those who were downtrodden. I'm so thrilled that we continue to remember Shahbaz's life and work, and I thank God that his memory lives on."

The event also featured a panel discussion with Jan Figel, former Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion outside the EU, Knox Thames, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Global Engagement, Peter Bhatti, Founder and Chairman of International Christian Voice in Canada, Pakistani human rights activist Tahira Abdullah and CSW's Founder President Mervyn Thomas.

Video tributes about Shahbaz Bhatti included messages from, among others, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, US Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain, Peter Van Dalen MEP, the Chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom Nadine Maenza, Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Sean Fraser, and Voice of the Martyrs CEO Floyd Brobbel.

Psalm 31

In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.
Turn your ear to me,
come quickly to my rescue;
be my rock of refuge,
a strong fortress to save me.
Since you are my rock and my fortress,
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.
Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,
for you are my refuge.
Into your hands I commit my spirit.



OBITUARIES

Tributes paid to Fr Francis, devoted St Pancras priest

Eldred Willey

Had it not been for Sam I doubt I'd be a priest today so I owe him a lot, I'm sure many would say the same for a variety of reasons



Fr Leeder marking his 80th birthday

Fr Francis 'Sam' Leeder, who served as a priest at St Pancras in Ipswich for almost 45 years, died on Sunday 13th February aged 82.

Bishop Alan Hopes writes: "In the death of Fr Sam Leeder we have lost an example of a true pastor who gave himself totally to the people of his parish, St Pancras in Ipswich, where he served both as an Assistant and later as the Parish Priest for a total of 45 years. The Diocese is grateful to him for his deep commitment to the Church and to the priesthood and offer their prayers and sympathy to his niece and nephew who survive him. May he rest in peace."

Fr Leeder was recovering in Ipswich Hospital following a knee operation and was undergoing physiotherapy when he died unexpectedly from a heart attack. He had received Communion from Bishop Alan on the day before he died.

He had first gone to St Pancras in 1963 before moving to St John's, Norwich (now the cathedral) in 1970 and then to Woodbridge in 1973 before returning to St Pancras where he served as parish priest until retiring in 2019, aged 80, to live in Melton.

Fr Joseph Welch, the current parish priest at St Pancras writes: "Fr Leeder was a very devoted and much-loved parish priest. His first placement as a curate was at St Pancras under, first, Canon John Thompson, then Fr Edward McBride, and finally Fr Norman Smith, during which time he re-formed the 12th Ipswich Scout Group.

"How even to begin to recount the countless thousands of kindnesses and amusing anecdotes? Stories about about railways, boating, scouting, pubs, Tavern Evenings, and roundabouts. His quirky ways will be

remembered by many, and for years to come."

"Sam had a strong faith which led him to be totally committed to his parishioners," remembers Fr Pat Cleary, "especially those less fortunate. Those who were sick were always well looked after as well as those who sought his wise council. He was always generous, perhaps over generous to people at the door looking for help.

"Had it not been for Sam I doubt I'd be a priest today so I owe him a lot, I'm sure many would say the same for a variety of reasons."

At the time of his retirement Fr Leeder said: "I have had a great life. People have been so kind to me. I shall leave St Pancras with many happy memories and warm feelings as a result of the support that I have enjoyed from parishioners."

"He was reluctant to retire," writes Stephen Griggs, who served as parish chairman for many years. "I recall him saying he would have been happy to leave St Pancras when they carry me out in a box. He possessed an ability to uphold the teachings of the Catholic faith without being judgemental and exuded unlimited compassion. Never fearful of mixing with the secular world, he was well known in the world of sailing on the Deben."

"Fr Leeder was a real role model," writes Julian Wong. "He kept the church open all the time. I went there to pray a lot, and that was how I became a Catholic."

"Many people in the town will remember him," writes Stephen Donaghy. "His good humour and twinkling smile. May he rest in peace."

A requiem Mass for Fr Leeder was celebrated on February 16 at St Pancras in Ipswich.

Father John passes away in Redcar care home

Michael Morrissey

He chuckled and chatted his way along the 200 yards from his terraced home to the town centre.

A popular retired priest has died in a Redcar care home after being in ill-health for some months. He was 86.

Monsignor John Heslin was a well-known figure in Saltburn's town centre and lived in Garnet Street for nearly 20 years ago after retiring. Known as Father John, he was a "Father Christmas" figure with a strong white beard. He chuckled and chatted his way along the 200 yards from his terraced home to the town centre.

He usually "held court" on the bench, opposite Sainsbury's entrance, giving his opinion on affairs. He was a wise man, well-respected by many in Saltburn. He also celebrated Mass at Catholic churches in the area when parish priests were not available.

Father John was ordained on February 21 1959 and his first parish appointment was at Sacred Heart in Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, where he served from 1959 to 1965. He was next appointed to St Michael and the Holy Angels in West Bromwich from 1965 to 1968. From there, he was appointed to the Diocesan Youth Council at Soli House from 1968 to 1976.

Father John was appointed parish priest of St Patrick's in Stafford in 1976 and remained there until his retirement in 2000.



Monsignor John, right, with the late Canon Bill Madden



Monsignor John Heslin, who passed away in a Redcar care home in February

He was also a chaplain to the town's jail and several ex-prisoners kept in touch by phone with him, seeking his advice.

His holidays were spent on cruises to Hawaii, where the leprosy island of Molokai can be found. He relieved the Molokai-based priest for a few weeks. His hero was Father Damien, the "lepers' priest". A personal touch he mentioned once was that he knew he talked at length about his faith during homilies.

His mother had a system of scratching the outside of her nose in church to indicate he had spoken for 15 minutes.

Once at Saltburn he admitted he had talked for too long (probably about leprosy) and joked that listeners were excused his next homily. Father John moved to Saltburn because his sister, Elizabeth, and her family lived in the town when he arrived. He often said Mass in his small first-floor chapel at his terraced home.

His funeral took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Saltburn, on Monday February 28 at 11.30am. Bishop Stephen Wright was present to represent the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

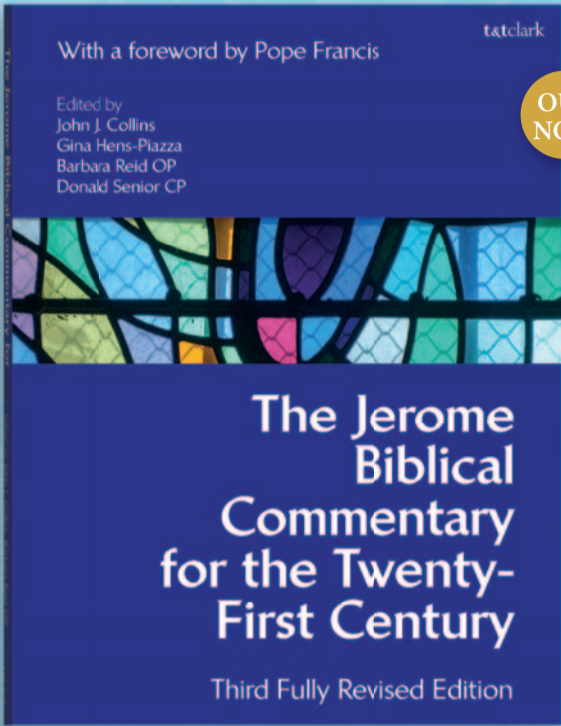
We pray for Father John's family, friends, former parishioners and all those who mourn him.

May he rest in peace.

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FRANK GOULDING



An authoritarian state has become a totalitarian one

Ukraine can never be the same again and neither can Russia

Just before Lent commenced the world and Europe in particular was confronted with the news that many had feared.

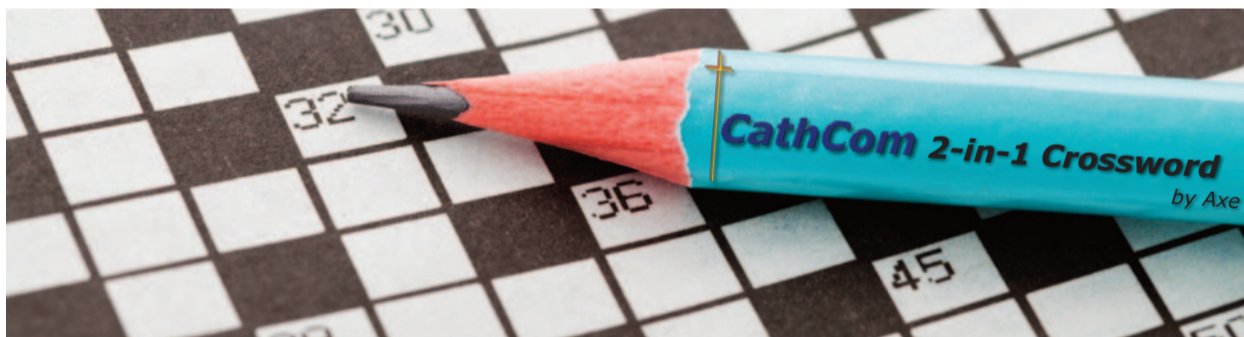
Despite many appeals and apparent manoeuvres Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th. To say this has produced heartbreak and utter misery to the victims of this invasion can only be explained by the comment that “an authoritarian state has become a totalitarian one.” Ukraine can never be the same again and neither can Russia.

Christians can only be greatly concerned what the consequences of this action will be for the poor and destitute in both Russia and Ukraine with the latter sadly leading to one million refugees at the time I am writing this article. The implementation of the sanctions on Russia may well be a knock on effect to other parts of the world including other nations who so far have abstained from comment on what Moscow has instigated.

Like many others I knew little about Ukraine prior to the recent tragic confrontation. Historians have commented on its Christian roots notably in the 19th century. We have also been reminded of a great famine in 1932-3 which claimed the deaths of 3.9 million people and was not reported to the western world. In more recent times when there has been a great will to live together in Ukraine, we now have an unfolding tragedy which the world will have to sort out.

In the normal course of events this article would be around the time of Mothering Sunday. Perhaps this year we who have our mothers or just fond memories can allocate some time and prayers to the families in Ukraine.

I hope all readers will have a peaceful Easter at this difficult time.



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

CRYPTIC Across

- 5 Cavort with miners about a place in Galilee (9)
- 8 Good little boy Scots defile (4)
- 9 Impossible poet Noah employed (3,1,4)
- 10 Book comfortable-sounding passage to a Baltic port (7)
- 12 Regular Bishop's oddly dismissed in retrospect from West Country town (5)
- 14 Ultimate craft leading seaman needs to cross unknown depths (5)
- 15 President's vital new study's reviewed internally (7)
- 17 Embarrassed girl in front of the king (8)
- 18 Cheese one finds in buffet areas (4)
- 19 Jerk attending university in jeans is in the book (9)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 He was a killer in California's north (4)
- 2 Hero lover's name appears in editorial (7)
- 3 Number in party keeled over, getting bugs (5)
- 4 He reformed instrument to capture the earliest piece of Handel performed (8)
- 6 She's on coins - one or two sovereigns, for instance? (9)
- 7 The goddess Portia he'd metamorphosed (9)
- 11 Spielberg's limited knowledge about a part of Lincolnshire (8)
- 13 Demise comes in a short time (at ten to one) earlier, for

the guitarist (7)

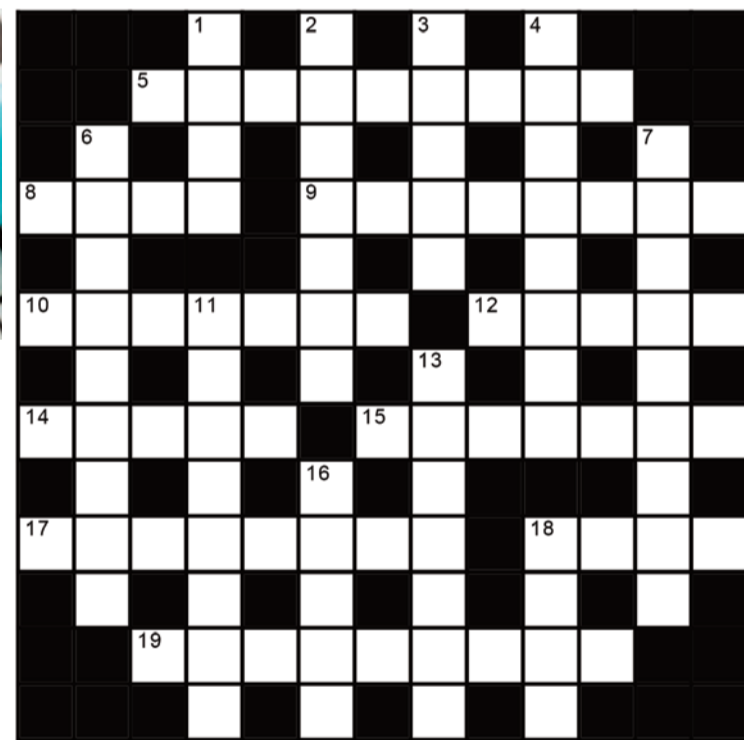
- 16 Pagan priest is an odd fake, receiving scripture training throughout (5)
- 18 Amusement one gained seeing a spirited old goat (4)

QUICK Across

- 5 Jesus' base when he was teaching in Galilee (9)
- 8 Secluded valley (4)
- 9 Without a prayer; forget it! (3,1,4)
- 10 Book and major prophet of the OT (7)
- 12 County town of Cornwall (5)
- 14 Bottomlesspit;chasm(5)
- 15 US President inaugurated in 1961 (7)
- 17 King of Wessex (865-871), succeeded by Alfred the Great (8)
- 18 Greek, sheep and/or goat, salad cheese (4)
- 19 Third book of the Torah (9)

QUICK Down

- 1 FirstchildofAdamandEve(4)
- 2 Lover of the priestess Hero in Greek myth (7)
- 3 In some Bibles an Egyptian plague equating to 'Mosquitoes' (5)
- 4 Of a form of Protestantism outlawed by a particular Diet in 1521 (8)



- 6 English settlement in New Jersey where Princeton University was founded in 1746 (9)
- 7 Greek goddess of love and beauty (9)
- 11 One of the three historic Lincolnshire 'ridings'; administrative centre, Sleaford (8) 13 Jimi -----, US R&B/Rock legend (1942-1970) (7)
- 16 AncientCelticpriest(5)
- 18 Roman woodland deity close to the Greek satyr (4)

SOLUTION

Down: 1 Cain, 2 Leander, 3 Gnats, 4 Luther, 6 Elizabeth, 7 Truro, 14 Abyss, 15 Kennedy, 17 Ethelred, 18 Feta, 19 Leviticus. **Across:** 5 Capernaum, 8 Glen, 9 Not a hope, 10 Ezekiel, 12 Aphrodite, 11 Kesteven, 13 Hendrix, 16 Druid, 18 Faun.