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# The CatholicPost



May: The Month of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The UK's first Carbon Neutral Catholic Newspaper



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## Coronation of King Charles III

HM King Charles III will be crowned alongside Queen Camilla on Saturday 6th May 2023 in Westminster Abbey

In 1953, in the week preceding the Coronation of the late Queen Elizabeth II, Cardinal Griffin, on behalf of the Bishops of England and Wales asked for a "Triduum of Prayer" that "God may bless Her Majesty and her realms." The culmination of the Triduum, on the Friday evening immediately before the Coronation on Saturday 2nd June, was that "In every public Catholic church throughout the country, Mass will be celebrated at 8pm." He continued "it will be the supreme moment at which the Catholics of England and Wales will be asking God's blessing upon our Queen." A commemorative booklet for the Mass was produced and distributed.

HM King Charles III will be crowned alongside Queen Camilla on Saturday 6th May 2023 in Westminster Abbey. The Bishops of England

and Wales have proposed that an act of prayer similar to that of seventy years ago should be requested of all the faithful in our countries to pray for the King as he is crowned. To this effect:

i. A Triduum of Prayer (from Wednesday 3rd to Friday 5th May) when in each community, people are encouraged to pray for the King as he assumes the fulness of his responsibility. This can be in any form that the community thinks best.

ii. On Friday evening 5th May, a Mass for the intentions of the King should be celebrated where possible.

iii. On Sunday 7th May, the day after the Coronation, a Prayer of Intercession for the



King should be included in the Universal Prayer along with the option for saying (or singing) the Domine, salvum fac in English or Latin and/or the National Anthem at the end of Mass.

From Wreccam Clarion

## Sisters leave the Dowry House Retreat Centre in Walsingham after ten years

rcdea.org.uk

They will continue to work with the National Shrine at particular events.

The Sisters of the Community of our Lady of Walsingham have announced that they are leaving the Dowry House Retreat Centre in Walsingham after ten years, but they will continue to work with the National Shrine at particular events being held there.

The Community of Our Lady of Walsingham has been serving in Walsingham for over ten years; initially by helping at the Shrine at weekends and major pilgrimages and, since 2016, by running retreats and hosting pilgrims at Dowry House Retreat on behalf of the Walsingham Trust.

Bishop Peter Collins, on behalf of the Walsingham Trust, said: "The COLW sisters will continue to work with the Shrine at future events, while being based in their mother house in Dereham, rather than at Dowry House. Their ministry at the Shrine continues to be highly valued."

Sr Camilla Oberding, from COLW, said: "It has been a fruitful ministry and one which we have enjoyed immensely.

"Whilst saddened by the thought of leaving Walsingham, we know that, "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28). We trust that God, in his loving Providence, has arranged that we should all be based at our formation house in Dereham for the time being. This will give us time to focus on the formation of our new members, the

accompaniment of more candidates and to expand other areas of mission.

"We assure all staff, villagers and pilgrims of our prayers, especially during this time of transition as the Shrine awaits a new rector." Picture below is the COLW Sisters in Walsingham. Picture courtesy of COLW.



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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 editor@catholicpost.co.uk 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. Source information -

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# Anointing With Oil

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

The oil of catechumens in the sacrament of baptism is a symbol of the person being strengthened for Christian service and in their efforts to turn away from sin

I was recently watching a Time Team Special about Westminster Abbey, the presenter was Tony Robinson, and inevitably the programme focused on the significance of the coronation ceremony which traditionally takes place in the Abbey and in particular the anointing of the monarch - perhaps the most solemn part of the ceremony.

Whenever I celebrate a baptism, before anointing the baby with chrism I always explain that chrism is a special oil consecrated by the bishop in Holy Week and which the Church uses at baptisms, confirmations and ordinations, and the Church of England uses at the coronation of kings and queens. I also explain the symbolism of oil as something we use in various forms to put new life into wood and leather and our skin.

As the Catechism points out: sacred chrism signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly baptised, who has taken on the new life of a Christian, that is, one 'anointed' [the meaning of the name Christ and of chrism] by the Holy Spirit.

When the bishop consecrates the oil of chrism, he calls down the Holy Spirit into the oil to make it not just blessed, but sacred. This is why chrism should perhaps be kept in an honoured and secure place in church, to acknowledge that it is sacred through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The principle sign of the sacrament of baptism is the pouring of water and the words of the Trinitarian formula ("I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.") The anointing with chrism confirms the coming of the Holy Spirit into that person in and through the sacrament, and their new identity and mandate as a member of the body of Christ. Over time we have separated the celebration of baptism from that of the sacrament of confirmation, the latter now having become in a sense a personal reaffirmation of the candidate's commitment to their faith and a 'confirmation' of the presence with them of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of (the

bishop's) hands and sacramental anointing once again.

In each case we become fundamentally a different person; it's the presence of the Holy Spirit in us after being anointed that gives us this new and indelible character, which is why those sacraments cannot be repeated. We are also commissioned to act with the authority received from God, a commission received through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And we would therefore have to say the same about the anointing of kings and queens - which brings us back to that documentary.

Tony Robinson made this comment about the anointing of the Queen during her coronation: Back in 1953, a time when Britain was a very Christian country, the moment of anointing made some kind of sense. One-in-three people in England thought the Queen had actually been chosen by God. Today we live in a very different society and yet for the Church of England the anointing remains a core part of the making of a monarch.

His problem seemed to be the fact that the act of anointing the Queen symbolises a God-given right to rule the country as monarch whereas he sees the authority to govern as being democratically determined by the people. How many of those people would even believe in God these days?

I am presuming that Tony Robinson probably doesn't understand the concept of the oil of chrism being consecrated by the presence of the Holy Spirit and therefore, as we said, that the Spirit then comes down on the person being anointed giving their lives thereafter a divine purpose. This was reflected in the conversation that he had with the Dean of Westminster in which he asked why the anointing of the monarch seems to be more important, certainly more sacred than the crowning. The Dean's answer was: It's saying that God gives people particular functions and roles within national life, and monarchs feel that they are set apart by God in their role. The question that is most

profound is who is ultimately in charge? Who is the sovereign ultimately responsible to? It's who we are all ultimately responsible to - God.

King Charles has already said that instead of being given the title "Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England" - as sovereigns have been since Henry VIII - he wants to be crowned simply as "Defender of Faith" (not even the Christian Faith) and no mention of his position relative to the Church of England even though he will be being crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, principle leader of the Church of England, in Westminster Abbey, principle place of worship of the Church of England. Clearly he appears to share Tony Robinson's lack of understanding of the implications of being anointed with sacred chrism and therefore the Holy Spirit. And if he doesn't accept all that that implies, then maybe he shouldn't be being crowned in church in the first place, and certainly not be anointed with sacred chrism the very sign of what it seems he isn't prepared to accept as king.

Coronation aside, there is therefore, as we have seen, great significance to the action of being anointed with oil. The oil of catechumens in the sacrament of baptism is a symbol of the person being strengthened for Christian service and in their efforts to turn away from sin - a symbolism that obviously has greater meaning for adults being baptised than for babies and young children. Being anointed with oil in the sacrament of the sick has that same symbolism of being strengthened - in this case in the struggle against illness. In both cases being anointed is a physical action with an underlying spiritual symbolism. On the other hand being specifically anointed with chrism (whether at baptism, confirmation, or ordination) has a much more profound purpose in that it involves reception of the Holy Spirit in the consecrated oil by the person being anointed, who thereby receives the gifts of the Spirit for the service of God to which they are being called - whether Christian service in general, or ordained ministerial service. And it surely helps us to appreciate the particular nature and purpose of chrism, and the presence in it of the Holy Spirit, that, as the Church recommends, it be kept securely and in a place of honour. It isn't just olive oil, nor is it the specially blessed oil of catechumens or of the sick. It is consecrated oil of chrism with all that that implies and all that it invites us to acknowledge in faith.

# Stella Maris appoints new CEO

Stella Maris

It is a huge honour to be selected as the CEO for Stella Maris. It is an amazing organisation dedicated to the People of the Sea and their families, I look forward immensely to working with industry partners, supporters and the Trustees, staff and our many wonderful chaplains, ship visitors and volunteers

Stella Maris has announced that Tim Hill MBE has been appointed as the charity's new National Director and CEO, effective from 1st June 2023.

Tim is a proven leader focused on empowering individuals and developing people, with considerable experience in complex strategic thinking, decision-making, planning and effecting transformational change. He has served in the British Army for the last 35 years in all corners of the world, exercising in the USA, Canada, Europe, Africa, Australia and the Far East, with operational service in Northern Ireland, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. He was awarded the MBE in 1995.

Tim has commanded different units, including an Army Training Regiment where he was responsible for training men and women joining the Army. Tim was promoted to Colonel in 2016. His last appointment from 2019 to 2023 was commanding the British Army's contingent in Germany, leading a diverse mix of military personnel, UK civil servants, locally employed staff, and their dependents.

Tim owes his grounding in the Catholic faith to his late mother and a very happy education at Worth Abbey School. Throughout his 35 years in the Army, his faith has been central in his life and service to others. It has provided him with the strength and courage to do God's will and through Jesus' teaching, it has helped him to do the right thing on a difficult day. In dangerous times, separated from family and loved ones, Tim and his soldiers were able to seek comfort in God's love from their shared Christian faith and values. Tim has recently returned from six years in Germany and is now a member of his local parish of St Augustine's, Tunbridge Wells.

He is a keen ocean yacht skipper and RYA instructor, with several transatlantic and Southern Ocean crossings under his belt. Tim succeeds Martin Foley who has held the post for the last 13 years and has moved on to be the CEO of Arise, an anti-slavery NGO. Stella Maris Chair, Captain Esteban Pacha, said: "On behalf of the Board of Trustees, it is a privilege to welcome Tim to Stella Maris as our new CEO.

"Tim has had years of outstanding service in the British Army, serving soldiers and their families throughout the world, and we know that he will bring that same passion to serving seafarers, fishers and their families. Tim has significant strategic planning and operational delivery expertise. We look forward to his leadership in developing the vital work that Stella Maris currently provides, as we strive to



grow and reach more seafarers, fishers, and their families worldwide.

"We thank Martin for 13 years of sterling service and dedication to Stella Maris. We wish him all the best in his new role as CEO of Arise. We look forward to our continued work with Arise as we tackle the global fight against slavery and human trafficking in the maritime industry."

Tim said: "It is a huge honour to be selected as the CEO for Stella Maris. It is an amazing organisation dedicated to the People of the Sea and their families, I look forward immensely to working with industry partners, supporters and the Trustees, staff and our many wonderful chaplains, ship visitors and volunteers, who work tirelessly in the service of others. I hope that I can play my part in

extending Stella Maris' outreach and support, both nationally and internationally."

As Tim leads Stella Maris into its second century of existence, the charity renews its commitment to promoting and advancing the general and pastoral welfare of the People of the Sea worldwide. Stella Maris works with seafarers, fishers and their families regardless of their creed, gender or ethnic origin in ways consistent with Christian principles and the recognised practices of the Catholic Church. Stella Maris, (formerly known as Apostleship of the Sea), is a registered UK charity. It relies on voluntary donations to continue its work. 90% of world trade is transported by ship. However, the life of a seafarer can be dangerous and lonely. Seafarers may spend up to a year at a time away from home, separated from their families and loved ones, often working in harsh conditions.

## President Biden visits Knock Shrine

ICN

US President Joe Biden visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock on his last day in Ireland on Friday. During the visit Biden had an unexpected meeting with Father Richard Gibbons, the priest who administered the Last Rites to his son Beau who died of brain cancer. Fr Richard told reporters afterwards that the meeting had been a "wonderful spontaneous event." He said President Biden had been very emotional and they prayed a decade of the Rosary for the Biden family.



## The Rosary and the work of Crown of Thorns

It is thirty years since the charity's first rosary cards were printed at the request of a young man working in war torn Yugoslavia. As aid-workers we had all been affected by the realities of the war and of the huge need for prayer for peace. This was to be the beginning of the work of Crown of Thorns. The Holy Rosary is not only a comfort, but as a prayer requested so often by Our Lady, a tremendously powerful yet perfectly peaceful weapon against war. Crown of Thorns relies on experienced personnel giving their time free of charge to carry out the work of the charity. We are grateful to all, including specialist professionals, who have given of their time so generously and especially to all our donors who make this work possible. All donations to the charity are used in their entirety for the work in hand. Many years ago a small parcel arrived with our post. It enclosed a woven stole bearing a simple message that touched us deeply. It simply read 'Crown of Thorns - Mission of Hope'.

Pledge to Our Lady and to the Holy Rosary  
O Blessed Rosary of Mary,  
sweet chain which unites us to God,  
bond of love which unites us to the angels,  
tower of salvation against the assaults of hell,  
safe port in our universal shipwreck,  
we will never abandon you.  
You will be our comfort in the hour of death:  
Yours our final kiss as life ebbs away.  
And the last word from our lips will be your name.

O Queen of the Rosary,  
O dearest Mother,  
O Refuge of Sinners,  
O Sovereign Consoler of the Afflicted.  
May you be everywhere blessed,  
today and always,  
on earth and in Heaven.  
(Blessed Bartolo Longo)

[www.crownofthorns.org.uk](http://www.crownofthorns.org.uk)  
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**Crown  
of  
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Mission of Hope

**Promoting the Holy Rosary** in the U.K. & throughout the world to bring hope, comfort and peace to the marginalised, the oppressed and the imprisoned, enabling wounded hearts to find healing and shattered lives to find breath and space to renew.

**Supporting priests** and chaplains in their ministry, outreach and welfare.

**Response from parish priests:** "The rosary cards that you sent me have had a tremendous effect on the devotion and prayer life of the parish."

[www.crownofthorns.org.uk](http://www.crownofthorns.org.uk)  
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# A timely but neglected encyclical

[cbcew.org.uk](http://cbcew.org.uk)

We seem to have lost a full realization of how devastating a nuclear war would be – an understanding that was vitally present to those who were alive in April 1963.

“Men nowadays are becoming more and more convinced that any disputes which may arise between nations must be resolved by negotiation and agreement, and not by recourse to arms.” Sixty years ago, the saintly Pope John XXIII, as his life was drawing to an end, shared his encyclical *Pacem in terris*, on peace in the world, as a contribution toward the first steps towards disarmament and détente.

The doctrine of a ‘just war’ was finished, and with great realism, the Pope from Bergamo warned of the risks of the new and powerful nuclear weapons. Sixty years later, that text is still relevant but sadly unheeded. Today we seem to have lost a full realization of how devastating a nuclear war would be – an understanding that was vitally present to those who were alive in April 1963. Today, the world is torn apart by dozens of forgotten conflicts, and a terrible war that began with Russia’s aggression against Ukraine continues in the very heart of Christian Europe. The culture of non-violence is struggling to find its place, while many people seem to consider even the words ‘negotiation’ or ‘talks’ to be almost blasphemous. Even the idea of strengthening a world political authority capable of fostering

the peaceful resolution of international disputes has given way to scepticism. Diplomacy appears muted, while war and an insane arms race are seen as inevitable.

And yet, despite this bleak picture, the principles listed by Pope John in *Pacem in terris*, continue not only to challenge consciences but are put into practice daily by those who do not surrender to the inevitability of hatred, violence, prevarication, and war. They are witnessed by those ‘artisans of peace’ who today undertake their missions in Ukraine and in so many other parts of the world, often putting their lives at risk. They are witnessed to by all those who take seriously the words that



Pope Francis spoke in the nunciature in Kinshasa when meeting the victims of unspeakable violence: “To say ‘no’ to violence it is not enough to avoid acts of violence. We

also need to eliminate the roots of violence, greed, envy, and, above all, resentment.” One must have “the courage to disarm the heart.”

## Parish Matters

*Willie Slavin MBE*

### “The world is (indeed) charged with the glory of God” *Gerard Manley Hopkins*

I am frequently asked if I never get bored doing the same walk every morning and, while I invariably insist that I don’t, I occasionally stop and ponder the reason why? The spontaneous answer points to the location (easy access to the countryside), the seasonal cycle and the weather. I might add my own mood or sense of wellbeing but that leads seamlessly to the further question about the effect of the location, the season or the weather on the said mood. Am I indeed as changeable as the weather, as the old saying goes?

As there is a risk of disappearing down a vortex of sequential Q and As, I am minded to simply contemplate the experience of my well-trodden circular route through a maturing woodland, reclaimed from a long closed coal mine, and then along a ‘Beeching-ised’ disused railway line back into a village that still has evidence of the back to back housing provided by a Victorian Mine Owner but now outnumbered three or four to one by modern housing. A community that has, in a real sense, endured a cycle of death and regeneration.

Every single day the natural canvas reveals a nuanced ritual of life ebbing and flowing in

its flora and fauna against a backdrop of a sky endlessly proclaiming this small community’s vulnerabilities in the face of meteorological turbulence crossing the Atlantic from the west or, less frequently, the gentle warmth of a Sahara breeze emanating from the south.

It was notable this year that in Holy Week we enjoyed an extended period of bright sunny mornings revealing the blazing of yellow of the flowering gorse, the delicately ephemeral white Blackthorn blossom and the vivid green leafage of the vibrant hawthorn each in their togetherness removing the wintered monochrome from the canvas. Add the cacophony of birdsong now at crescendo level and try to resist the temptation to take time to absorb the effect on the soul, especially as there is a handy bench beside a stream itself fully alive from draining off the saturating effects of winter snow and rain.

Was there ever a place more conducive to prayerful contemplation of the wonder of God’s creation? The mind immediately recalls how our liturgy talks about: “You are indeed holy O Lord and all creation rightly gives you praise.” and we sing “Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosannah in the highest.” Is it any wonder that “Like the deer that longs for

running water, so my soul longs for you my God.” Psalm 42:1.

It is no accident that the in-Church celebrations of the Sacred Mysteries in the Triduum, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Saturday’s Easter Vigil mirrors and resonates with the seasonal cycle experienced by the natural world. The dramatic re-living of the cycle of Jesus’ Passion, Death and Resurrection in the narrative being conveyed ritually in the sequential liturgical celebrations.

Every morning walk carries the same pattern, the same rhythm and the same promise of life renewed stretching across the year. Is it any wonder that as the light emerges from the darkness in the Easter Vigil that we can warm to the intoning of the Exultet: Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!

Exult, all creation around God’s throne! Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendour, radiant in the brightness of your King! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation!

## Can you help The Big Help Out?

[dioceseofleeds.org.uk](http://dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) are asking Catholic parishes, charities and voluntary groups to consider how they might become involved in The Big Help Out (BHO), one of the official projects of the Coronation Weekend of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen.

The Big Help Out, on Coronation Bank Holiday Monday 8 May, is a huge public engagement campaign to promote, champion and showcase volunteering. Led by the Together Coalition, the BHO includes some of Britain’s largest volunteer-involving charities and is co-chaired by Scouts and Royal Voluntary Service. As such, charities are being encouraged to promote volunteering events (either as one-offs or regularly) on the Big Help Out app. Many of the UK’s best-known charities are already part of it, so groups are being encouraged to sign up and advertise their volunteering opportunities. The app can be found at <https://www.thebighelpout.com/>.

# Boring is the new Interesting!

[dioceseofleeds.org.uk](http://dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

## Parish Priest asked to bless the machine before tunneling began



Holy Helpers including a 3rd century saint and one of our priests have blessed a remote-controlled tunneling machine which has begun boring under the A65 as part of Yorkshire Water's scheme to reduce sewage discharges into the River Wharfe during periods of bad weather.

A small statue of Saint Barbara – the patron saint of tunnelers – was erected at the site and Yorkshire Water asked Fr Christopher Angel (Parish Priest of St Stephen's, Skipton) to bless the machine before tunneling began.

The story goes that when St Barbara converted to Christianity, she was martyred by her own father – who was subsequently struck by lightning and consumed by fire! She since became one of the Church's 'Fourteen Holy Helpers' and Patron Saint of all who face the possibility of sudden death through explosions, including miners, engineers and anyone else involved in tunneling.

At the site in Ilkley, contractors Ward and Burke are using trenchless technology 5-8m

underground, with boring machinery controlled remotely to keep disruption in Ilkley to a minimum while laying 800m of new sewer. This reduces the need to close the road as it lays pipework behind it and sends the earth back to the staging site where it is cleaned and recycled for use in other projects in the area. Ben Roche is director of wastewater at Yorkshire Water, and said: 'Laying a new sewer to accommodate higher flows of wastewater during periods of heavy and prolonged rainfall will ultimately reduce the number and volume of discharges from Rivadale CSO, helping to improve water quality in the Wharfe.'

While the work is carried out Ilkley Wharfe View car park will be closed until the project's planned completion date in January 2024.



# Alive Young Catholics!

*Fr Jonathan Cotton*

## 150 young people from across the UK took time out to enter into an environment of encouragement

In preparation for the World Youth Day this year in Lisbon, Portugal, during the first week of August, the Pope urges young people to thirst for horizons in their lives rather than put up walls that turn us in on ourselves. The Pope urges young people to expand their horizons and look beyond because horizons help us grow. With this in mind, there was no better response to Pope Francis' words that the Joel's Bar Conference for young people, called The Heart of the King, held at Worth Abbey during Easter Week in April.

I joined 150 young people from across the UK who took time out to enter into an environment of encouragement, friendship and faith. Participants were urged to delve into their own hearts so as to be open to the heart of our King, the risen Lord Jesus. To facilitate this, there were inspiring talks and workshops,

adoration and worship both powerful and reflective, daily Mass and Reconciliation, personal prayer ministry and spiritual direction. We were welcomed by the Monks to join them for Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church, and the extensive grounds provided a beautiful, even though rain-sodden, environment. Sporting activities, team games and karaoke added to the relaxation. Excellent food was provided three times a day.

Joel's Bar was part of the Celebrate Family Conference held in Ilfracombe every Easter Week for over 20 years and is now continuing a separate Conference with its own skilled and experienced young Catholic Leaders. With the help of excellent speakers and workshop leaders, they provided an opportunity for the participants to encounter afresh the risen Jesus of Easter, to understand more and go deeper

into Jesus' open and aching heart for each one of us. Out of this encounter we cannot help but want to share with others what is awaiting them. And so, says Pope Francis, like Mary, the Mother of Jesus, we arise and go in haste [Luke 1:39], with renewed minds and hearts, to fulfil our vocation in life and welcome others into the heart of our King, Jesus.

Speakers included Ian Yardley, a business entrepreneur with many years of experience in youth ministry in the Catholic Church; Ashley Johny, a echocardiographer from Sheffield who loves to share details of Eucharistic Miracles and their links to Cardiology; Javier Campos, a member of the Cor et Lumen Christi Community and ministers in evangelisation, healing and supernatural prophecy; Lauren Windle, a journalist and powerful public speaker, now freed from addictions, has qualifications in Neuroscience & Addiction Studies; Paul Kidd, the Director of the Craig Lodge Mission House in Scotland, where young people are equipped to share the Gospel; Pippa Baker, a full-time missionary and part on the One Hope Project; and Dr Johannes Hartl, founder of the House of Prayer in Augsburg, Germany, and a philosopher, theologian and

author of many books including on prayer and the spiritual life.

The week was so attractive that young people who had booked in for a day or two extended their stay for the week. A-level revision and dissertations were put on one side for the week and many young people spoke of their inner spiritual lives renewed and an eagerness to get involved in church life and anxious to find opportunities.

It seems to me that through events like Joel's Bar and the experience of World Youth Day, with over 400,000 young people already booked, we have a secret army of alive Catholic young people, blessed with the fire of the Holy Spirit. The Ascent Programme, Youth2000 and Net Ministries Scotland are further examples. I see a growing army longing to be accepted, listened to and allowed to exercise their leadership skills in ministry. A useful resource here is: [www.catholicyouthwork.com](http://www.catholicyouthwork.com). As well as the umbrella body: [cymfed.org.uk](http://cymfed.org.uk). I pray that the small number of opportunities for our young people increases, filling all of us full of hope for the future.

# Fusion of Charismatic and Institutional brings new life

ICN

We have been so grateful for their generous response and the new connections we have made in the process

Kristina Cooper reports on exciting Life in the Spirit Seminars coming up this Easter-tide History has proved, whether in Latin America or elsewhere, that where the institutional and charismatic dimensions of the Church work together, the power of the Spirit is unleashed with new force and fruitfulness.

We are seeing this in an amazing way this year in Southwark as our Catholic Charismatic Renewal team prepares to run Life in the Spirit seminars live at our cathedral, St George's 2nd May -6th June on Tuesday evenings with a Pentecost retreat day on Saturday 27th May 2023.

As well as the live evenings, the talks will be streamed to about 8-10 hubs round the diocese and to a couple of parishes in Westminster and Shrewsbury dioceses. There is also the opportunity to follow the seminars purely on line, as we have done over the last two years on zoom attracting people all over the country.

It all began with a couple of disappointments, and a reminder that God works for good in all things. First we found out that Aylesford Priory where we had held last year's Life in the Spirit Pentecost retreat day was not available. Then the date for our second annual Healing day was suddenly pulled for a diocesan event. As a result we went to speak to Fr Michael Branch, the new dean about our plans and to ensure good communications were established with the cathedral for the future and to see if there might be any synergy in the future of us working together.

In a very anointed meeting with him, where there was a tangible sense of the Holy Spirit, Fr Michael Branch, suddenly asked us if we might like to run the Life in the Spirit seminars for his cathedral parish. He saw them a possible tool to help with the renewal of life in his parish following the devastating affects of Covid. He said he felt called to do the Life in the Spirit

Continued on Page 15



## Bishop Christopher Budd R.I.P.

[dioceseofleeds.org.uk](http://dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

"I know that you will join me in praying for Bishop Christopher's eternal joy"

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of our dear Bishop Christopher Budd, the retired bishop for the Diocese of Plymouth. Bishop Christopher died in the early hours at his home in Lyme Regis. He was 85. Canon Paul Cummins, the Diocesan Administrator said:

bishop's ministry should not principally focus on the person of the bishop. The proper focus is God's gift of episcopacy to the diocese; the particular bishop is always secondary to that... ..The source of our ability to minister is the wisdom of Christ made available in his community."

"Bishop Christopher was a faithful servant of the Lord and of the Church. He was an inspiration and a friend.

"I know that you will join me in praying for Bishop Christopher's eternal joy with the risen Christ as his good and faithful servant - and in offering his family and friends our heartfelt condolences and our prayers over the coming days."

"On his Silver Jubilee as Bishop of the Diocese of Plymouth in 2011, reflecting on his ministry, Bishop Christopher said: "The celebration of a



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# UK Aid: UK Government is robbing Peter to pay Paul, Christian Aid warns

Christian Aid

"We need a government that will release new resources, not just by restoring the aid budget but also by getting private creditors

Responding to government figures that confirm the UK is spending more than three times the amount of aid money used to alleviate poverty in Africa on asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, Chief of UK Advocacy at Christian Aid Sophie Powell said: "Today's figures provide a further stark reminder that this is a government robbing Peter to pay Paul. As clear as day, the UK's already depleted aid pot continues to be raided by other government departments.

"We must reject the false choice between responding at home and fulfilling the UK's responsibilities to the world's most in need.

"We need a government that will release new resources, not just by restoring the aid budget but also by getting private creditors such as the big banks to cancel the debt of countries on the frontline of these crises."

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) provisional statistics report on how UK aid was spent in 2022 can be found here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/statistics-on-international-development](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/statistics-on-international-development)

This annual publication provides an overview of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) spend in calendar year 2022 and has revealed that the UK is spending more UK aid in the UK on refugee costs than in both Africa and Asia. 9% of UK ODA in 2022 was spent on in-donor refugee costs (£3.7bn). This is an increase of 250% (£2.6bn) between 2021 and 2022 and 487% (£3.1bn) from 2020 to 2022.

- The UK spent £3.7 billion of the ODA budget on in-donor refugee costs in 2022 compared to £2,047 million spent by the FCDO bilaterally in both Africa and Asia.



- FCDO spend to Africa decreased by £256 million and to Asia by £134 million, as part of FCDO's overall budget reduction. Spend to Europe increased by £249 million (an increase of 405%) due to our increased spend in Ukraine.

- The Home Office spent £2,397million of ODA in 2022, an increase of £1,356 million (130.2%).  
- The FCDO accounted for 59.8% of UK ODA

in 2022, compared to 71.6% in 2021. This is the smallest share of UK ODA reported for FCDO and the first time it's fallen below 70%.

- The total ODA spend for 2022 was £12.8bn, equating to 0.5% GNI. Had the UK met their commitment to 0.7% GNI, the total ODA would have been approximately £17.5 billion. This equates to a cut of £4.7 billion.

## Open Evening at St James

[westminstercathedral.org.uk](http://westminstercathedral.org.uk)

On Wednesday 17 May, there will be an open evening at St James, Spanish Place, for any men interested in learning about or discerning a vocation to priesthood. The regular evening Mass will be at 6pm, followed by a gathering in the Social Centre for a short presentation and informal conversations and refreshments. Do come and join us if you can. The nearest tube stations are Bond Street and Baker Street





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# Restoration of the Ukrainian Madonna and Child

Maria Kirk

## I want to return the painting to Ukraine and I know the Madonna will guide me

This story begins around 1890 in a small village in Western Ukraine, where the parish Priest of the Ukrainian Catholic Church Dioniziy Bilinski and wife Albina, were preparing for the forthcoming ordination of their son Joseph. They had a beautiful gift for him and his wife Halyna, a painting of Our Blessed Lady feeding the infant Jesus. Sadly there are no details of where it came from or the artist. Both Joseph and his father had studied in Vienna, so perhaps it came from there, but we will never know.

As Joseph and Halyna settled into their new life in the small village of Skowyatyn, they hung the painting in the village church where he was the new parish Priest.

They had three children, Roman, Stefania and Irena who was my mother. The village was rather isolated so they managed to survive both the first world war and the holodomor the enforced famine by Stalin of 1932-33. Father Joseph died around 1930 but the family continued to live in the family house. Terror struck again with the outbreak of the WW2 in 1939. The family had been warned that the Soviet army was approaching and anyone with either religious connections or educated people were being killed or taken prisoners to Siberia. They decided to escape to Poland and quickly packed a few possessions, and went

into the church, removed the painting of Our Lady, rolled it up and stitched it into the hem of a winter coat.

As they were fleeing they were captured by the Nazis loaded onto cattle trucks and taken to a camp somewhere in Poland. By a miracle they managed to keep together and hold onto the coat. Mum recalled that they had to sew on blue patches saying Oster, meaning Oster arbeiten, East European slave labour, she refused to sew it on, but her mother told her to do it, saying was only a patch and what was on the outside of the coat was not important. What was important was inside the coat, the picture.

That would protect and strengthen them in days. So the guards did not take much notice, the three women took it in turns to wear the coat and used it as a blanket.

During their internment they were taken to various camps and it was in one of those camps that Halyna my grandmother died from starvation and exhaustion. In the morning a wooden barrow was wheeled round and any bodies were thrown onto the cart and either buried in a pit or burned. Sadly my grandmother has no grave, no marker.

After the war mum did not want to stay in Germany so she came to England while my aunt stayed in Germany. They decided as Stefania was the eldest she should take the coat with the painting. Mum came to a camp in Nottinghamshire where eventually she met my Polish father, they married and settled down. Mum and her sister lost touch but mum would often recall the beautiful painting, she died in 1989. I managed to trace my aunt and we met in 1994. I visited her a few times, she told me



The Reveal

after her death, I had to take the painting and look after it. So I became the custodian, it was very badly damaged and I was unsure what to do with it, as I felt it needed a true expert. After the sudden death of my husband, it was quite a while before I thought of the painting again. Eventually I applied to the TV programme, the Repair Shop, and was accepted. In 2022 I took the painting and met Lucia Scalisi the restorer, eventually the call came to return for the reveal. Lucia had left the damaged paint around the outside of the picture because we both felt that it told the story, but the central figures just took my breath away, it was very emotional, I was totally overwhelmed. She explained that not only had it been rolled but it had also been folded which had actually protected the faces. Lucia also recommended Derek Tanous in London to make the frame, which we all chose together to compliment the beautiful restoration. The journey now continues. I want to return the painting to Ukraine and I know the Madonna will guide me in what I have to do. I am merely the custodian. This painting and its story have touched very many people, because so many have asked, I will place it on display for a while so people may come to see it.

I will always be grateful to everyone at the Repair Shop and the Tanous family for all their kindness and support, and especially to Lucia for her skill and faith.

If you would like to see the restoration episode, it is the first program in the new series and is available on iPlayer.



Before Restoration

## Archdiocese of Liverpool install bleed control packs in every parish centre

Life-saving bleed control packs have been installed in all 37 parish centres across the archdiocese after being inspired by the work that Ava White's family have been doing since her tragic death in 2021.

Since Ava's fatal stabbing, her family have been raising awareness through the Ava White Foundation of the benefits of public places having the packs that could potentially save lives if a person suffers a catastrophic bleed. The packs are designed to help blood loss in the critical moments before professional medical help arrives.

All parish centre managers will complete training in using the bleed control packs. Jill Boggan, director of finance at the

Archdiocese of Liverpool said: "We were all shocked and devastated at Ava's death and as she was part of our archdiocesan community and we very much support the family in their quest to encourage public venues to have this life-saving equipment.

"Our parish centres are very much embedded in their local communities so they seemed like an ideal location to have the packs installed.

"The operational management team, Brian Lowry and Kim Schofield, delivered the kits and all parish centre managers are very much behind the initiative. We want to raise awareness with the local community that they are there in case they ever do need to use them during an emergency."

[liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)

Ava's mum Leeann White said: "We are so proud to hear that the Archdiocese of Liverpool has installed 37 lifesaving bleed control kits in Ava's memory. We can't thank you enough for all the love and support you have shown us."

Ava's family have set up a petition to make it a legal requirement to have bleed control kits in all public places. You can sign the petition by searching 'Petition 636046' online. A list of the archdiocesan parish centres can be found by visiting [liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://liverpoolcatholic.org.uk) and searching for 'Parish Centres'

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### Bea's Beaus, or INFANTICIDE A Novella

"Get on your knees," I said. "That's it. Never mind the litter on the carpet, just push it to one side. Good. Now, you're to take my right hand..."

He knelt, he took the paw, as per instruction...

"Now, repeat after me. 'I love you, Beatrice, and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you do me the inexpressible honour of consenting to be my wife...?'" I stopped dead at that point. I think it was articulating the word "wife" that did it. What a wonderful little word that is! The thought that I might myself actually be one... It was too much. Fred was still on his knees, awaiting the rest of his instructions. They didn't come...

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# Thetford parish writes to King Charles

rcdea.org.uk

Many of the community of Thetford remember the visit of the then Prince Charles to Thetford in 1999

St Mary's in Thetford has written a letter to Buckingham Palace upon the occasion of HM Charles III's Coronation.

In the letter, the parish community express their heartfelt good wishes and prayers for their majesties for the occasion and wish them all the best and happiness for the future.

Fr Pat Cleary, parish priest and Paul Gilbert, Chairman of the parish council worked closely together in the wording and as such felt that it was great that something could be sent from a small parish to mark the historic event next month.

Many of the community of Thetford remember the visit of the then Prince Charles to Thetford in 1999 and thought it would be great way to bring the past back to the present.

Built in 1826 by Fr John Holden before the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 and solemnly blessed by Bishop Thomas Walsh, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, on July 6th 1827, St Mary's was the first Catholic Church to be used for public worship in Thetford since the Reformation and is the oldest remaining free-standing Catholic Church in East Anglia.



## Frank Goulding

On Saturday May 6th most of the country will witness a new experience. The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla will be relayed to a worldwide audience from Westminster Abbey. Aged 9 at the time of the last crowning, I still have some memories of that rather wet day in June 1953 when the same Westminster Abbey celebrated the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

A small screen black and white television was a rare luxury that a few homes had, and my mother persuaded the village shop to stock Tea bags rather than loose tea. The local Catholic and Anglican schools allowed their children to join together on a recreation ground to have a "sports day" which included egg and spoon races. Young men in their late teens could still be called up for National Service.

The military implication of the last sentence is a useful lead to how the world has

changed as we prepare for a newly crowned monarch. In 1953 Joseph Stalin had just died, in 2023 Finland has just joined NATO. The map of Eastern Europe is now so different as we continue to pray for Ukraine with its loss of life

There is not space to fully comment on our young people who are unable to make progress in life not least to afford good quality housing or even afford to rent a property. The new king will be aware of this In Britain we had a flurry of political announcements in Holy Week which did coincide with local election campaigning. We will not get any comment from the King on this but the plight of our senior citizens and of young people is clearly different from 1953. The announcement of funding for our social care workforce being reduced is surely a backward step after so many promises over so many years. Those who care for others do a difficult but essential act of humility and are surely allowing God to work in their lives, they surely should be rewarded better.



The coronation will be a Christian service but we will have to see how it differs from 1953. The world is changing fast and with 24 hour news and the internet we now have much more knowledge of world affairs. In his loyal address on behalf of the Catholic Community of England and Wales Cardinal Vincent Nichols assured King Charles of our support and prayers and he spoke of people of different nationalities, languages and cultures. The month of May is not only dedicated to Our Blessed Lady but we also celebrate many feast days of our great saints who will surely help us to pray for the human dignity of those most in need in our world today not least in our own country.



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# Shrines in England

## Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Grace

[ladychapel.org.uk](http://ladychapel.org.uk)

The Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Grace, known locally as “The Lady Chapel”.

This holy and historic chapel is the diocesan shrine for the Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough.

Located on the edge of the North York Moors National Park and overlooking the scenic village of Osmotherley, the site affords panoramic views over Teesside, Bilsdale and, on a clear day, as far as the Pennine hills. Built by Carthusian monks from nearby Mount Grace Priory in the 15th century, it was until recently cared for, on behalf of the Diocese of Middlesbrough, by Benedictine monks from Ampleforth Abbey. It is now under the pastoral care of St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.

In 1942 two young priests, Father Peter Storey and Father Michael O’Sullivan, cycled out from

Middlesbrough intent on exploring the remains of Mount Grace Priory. Poring over their map while resting in the ruins, they spotted a notation reading “Lady Chapel (ruin).” Scrambling up through the woods, they discovered the ruined chapel and the cottage which was locked. Fascinated by their find, they set out to investigate the history of the place. In 1948, Marist Fathers accompanying a scout troop camped at the site and celebrated Holy Mass in the ruins for perhaps the first time since the Dissolution.

Then in 1952 Sir Hugh Bell, faced with heavy death duties, was forced to consider the future of the Ingleby estate. It was hoped that the Carthusians might return and restore the Priory, but due to lack of funds as well as monks, the idea was abandoned and in 1953 the Priory ruins at the foot of the hill were taken over by the National Trust. As for the Lady Chapel site, Lord Eldon and Ralph Scrope purchased this at Father Peter Storey’s instigation, and a trust was established to oversee the rebuilding of the chapel.

In the summer of 1954 John and Ordie McComb and their young family became the new tenants.



Ralph Scrope then asked Mr Robson, the York architect who had restored the Shrine of Margaret Clitheroe, to draw up plans for the restoration of the Lady Chapel. These were approved in 1956 and planning permission was granted the following year.

In 1958 the Lady Chapel was established as a National Monument, and the first diocesan pilgrimage for the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady was organised, since becoming an annual event.

Restoration work began in 1959, using closely matching stone from the remains of Rosedale Abbey and building on existing foundations. The slightly larger stones of the original chapel reaching about two metres in height are easily discernible, while those of the original east wall, weathered over the centuries, have remained mostly intact. On the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8 1961, the rebuilt chapel was re-dedicated by Cardinal William Godfrey, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. Within the chapel today, a clear focus of devotion is the 17th-century statue of the Madonna and Child given by Lady Eldon. Above the altar hangs a carved wooden crucifix, also a gift of Lady Eldon.

Visiting Germany in the early years of Hitler’s regime, she admired it in an antique shop and approached the proprietor. He offered it to her as a free gift, if she could procure his emigration – for he was a Jew. This she duly did. It thus hangs as a reminder of the Holocaust, and as a precious symbol of liberation. The stained glass windows carry the arms of Queen Katharine of Aragon and of the Scrope and Eldon families in whose memorial the chapel stands restored.

Besides the presence of mason’s marks at ground level, there are remnants of inscriptions, initials and prayers of pilgrims, incised into the old stone during penal times. Most common among these are Calvary crosses, associated with pilgrimage to the Holy

Land – that is, a cross mounted on two sloping steps, and with or without initials on either flank. Of the earliest to be dated is one on the inside north wall, 1647. Fragments of prayers are also visible, such as “mercy on me”, “to thy cross I flee”, “Son of Mary hear”, along with initials such as IHS, IW and WB. Around the south doorway, on the inside, are incised the names of a man and his wife.

In 1965 the Franciscan Friars returned to Osmotherley to resume their ministry supporting pilgrims to the restored shrine. Under Father Dunstan Baker OFM additional facilities were built to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims, and a window was cut between the chapel and the adjacent barn to provide an extension to the chapel. In 1985 a Blessed Sacrament Chapel was constructed using the footings of the old hermitage with a small cloister connecting it to the barn and the Lady Chapel.

However, in 1994 the friars again had to withdraw due to dwindling numbers and the Bishop of Middlesbrough, The Rt Rev John Crowley, invited Benedictine monks from nearby Ampleforth Abbey to take their place.

Monks, assisted by lay volunteers, looked after the buildings and helped care for pilgrims visiting the shrine. It was returned to the Diocese of Middlesbrough’s care in 2013 and is now within the pastoral responsibilities of Saint Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.

Regular Masses and services take place during the year, with a Vigil Mass being offered at 3pm on Saturdays (fulfilling the Sunday obligation) and on feasts of Our Lady. The chapel remains open at all times, and every day pilgrims come, singly and in groups, to ask Our Lady to intercede for their various intentions.

All are welcome at the shrine.  
OUR LADY OF MOUNT GRACE  
- PRAY FOR US!



# HCPT Easter Pilgrimage

Ellen Teague

The start off point was Versailles on Saturday, in wind and the rain!

HCPT Lourdes Cycle 2023 arrived in Lourdes on Good Friday in time for the first arrivals of groups for this year's HCPT Easter Pilgrimage. The final stretch for the cycle team of 21 was 75 miles and they were clapped on their arrival after covering more than 500 miles. The start off point was Versailles on Saturday, 1 April, in wind and the rain!

On Saturday the first groups arrive after weeks of preparations, training days, fund-raising and family events where children meet everyone in their group.

Around 2,340 people - from England, Scotland and Wales - are travelling with HCPT. Another 1,000 are coming from sister organisations in Ireland, Belgium, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland, the West Indies and the USA. Nearly 1,000 disabled and disadvantaged children and young people are travelling.

The week-long pilgrimage holiday will be the biggest since the Covid pandemic halted trips for most groups for three years. And it is a

youthful pilgrimage with more than half the participants under the age of 30. Faith formation and young people engaged with reaching out to and learning from the vulnerable are part of the HCPT experience.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon of Liverpool will be the main celebrant at the Trust Mass next Thursday, where all the pilgrimage gathers. The Merseyside region is taking the lead on liturgy under the theme 'The Good Shepherd'. Music will be led by Dr Marie Giles, with musicians and singers from Merseyside. Archbishop Leo Cushley of St Andrews and Edinburgh in Scotland (HCPT's president) will be there too and eight other bishops from England, Scotland, Ireland, and the USA.

Memorable group Masses will be held at such chapels as the Sheepfold, St Gabriel's and Mater Misericordiae, and groups undertake the Stations of the Cross by the shimmering River Gave. The Torchlight Procession is another favourite in the week. HCPT's favourite music such as 'As I kneel before you' and 'Sing it in the Valleys' will be heard throughout the town. Groups can be seen moving through the Grotto at all times. They wear bright and distinctive colours so that groups can spot their own members easily at a distance and in crowds, as well as heighten fun and group solidarity for the children. Children themselves are always inspired when they visit the prison

cell where St Bernadette lived at the time of the apparitions in 1858, and discover that she was a sickly uneducated girl from perhaps the town's poorest family.

The Easter pilgrimage of HCPT (Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust) is the start of a busy year for the charity, which also offers pilgrimages to Hosanna House, HCPT's retreat centre in the hills above Lourdes, from May to October. Its first Easter pilgrimage was in 1956.



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## Join the Catholic Association Pilgrimage



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# Palm Sunday Pilgrimage

*Hayfield Christians Together*

A cross was carried from St Matthew's Church in Hayfield to the top of Lantern Pike

Hayfield Christians Together had their annual Palm Sunday Pilgrimage Way of the Cross, when a cross was carried from St Matthew's Church in Hayfield Derbyshire to the top of Lantern Pike on the outskirts of Hayfield. After erection a short service of hymns and prayers followed. Around 20 Christians from surrounding churches took part.



## Latin Mass Society

The Latin Mass Society, founded in 1965, is an association of Catholic faithful dedicated to the traditional Latin liturgy of the Catholic Church, the teachings and practices integral to it, the musical tradition which serves it, and the Latin language in which it is celebrated.

By joining the Latin Mass Society you would be supporting our work, joining a community of like-minded people, and receiving membership benefits such as the delivery of our quarterly magazine, Mass of Ages.



 The Latin Mass Society OF ENGLAND & WALES

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Our Members are our most treasured resource.

If you share our aims, join us!

[www.lms.org.uk/membership](http://www.lms.org.uk/membership)

**Membership rates are:**

**single/priest £33;**

**joint membership £43;**

**student £18;**

**lifetime member £675.**

Visit [www.lms.org.uk/membership](http://www.lms.org.uk/membership)

to sign up.



# Pope at Easter Urbi et Orbi: Christ is truly risen, hope is reborn for all.

cbcew

Over 100 thousand pilgrims filled the Square and surrounding avenues.

Following the Easter morning Mass in Saint Peter's Square, the Pope presided over the Mass of Easter Day to give his traditional "Urbi et Orbi" (from the Latin, to the city and the world) Easter message. Over 100 thousand pilgrims filled the Square and surrounding avenues. Close to thirty thousand flowers adorned the square and the balcony of the loggia, recalling the theme of new life, hope, and joy at Easter.

In his Easter message, Pope Francis began by proclaiming the joyous message of this day, "Christ is risen; he is truly risen!". The Pope declared that in Jesus, the passage of humanity from death to life, sin to grace, fear to confidence and desolation to communion has been made, wishing everyone a Happy Easter. In particular, he greeted the sick, the poor, the elderly and all those suffering that they may experience the passage from affliction to consolation.



## Faith Primary Academy hosts special service for Fr Denis Blackledge

liverpoolcatholic.org.uk

As the children filed out of the service, pupils gave Fr Denis hugs and lots of high fives

Staff and pupils at Faith Primary Academy held a special retirement service for its parish priest, Father Denis Blackledge SJ.

The dedicated assembly took place at the school, located on Prince Edwin Street, and saw Fr Denis honoured for his dedication over the past seven years.

Pupils sang 'Our God is a great big God' and presented Fr Denis with gifts, whilst headteacher, Miss Sarah Williams, and RE lead, Mrs Ashleigh Martin, gave heartfelt speeches and talked movingly about how much Fr Denis means to the school and how he has been a key pillar in the Everton community.

As the children filed out of the service, pupils gave Fr Denis hugs and lots of high fives.

Father Denis Blackledge SJ said: "One of the greatest blessings of being parish priest here

at St Francis Xavier's Church is the vital link with Faith Primary Academy. Relations with the head and staff are excellent, and a credit to all concerned. There is plenty of opportunity for lively ecumenical, and growing inter-faith, worship and practical co-operation.

"Our pastoral associate, Debbie Reynolds, has developed a rich vein of friendship with children and families through her presence and work at Faith week by week."

Miss Sarah Williams, headteacher of Faith Primary Academy, added: "The service was the perfect opportunity to give thanks to Fr Denis and show him how well loved he is by the school community. Over the years the children have developed an incredible bond with him and they would always be excited when he came into school or if we went to St Francis Xavier's Church



"Fr Denis has touched the lives of many here at Faith and although we're very sad to see him retire, we wish him nothing but the best for the future."

The parish has been served by Jesuit brothers and priests for 175 years. Last year, it was confirmed that the Jesuits will leave the parish

after Easter. They will leave a lasting legacy in Everton and are confident in the knowledge that the community has strong roots and a commitment to the Gospel.

Faith Primary Academy is proudly part of the All Saints Multi Academy Trust.

# Our Global Community



## US diocese protests at bill to allow executions by firing squad

ICN

“I’ve seen the aftermath of shootings, and it’s psychologically damaging”

The Idaho state legislature has passed a bill that would allow the state to execute individuals by firing squad if lethal injection drugs are unavailable. Idaho is among several other states that have struggled to obtain lethal injection drugs as a growing number of pharmaceutical companies refuse to sell their products to correctional facilities for the purpose of executions.

Only four other states currently have laws permitting execution by firing squad: Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Utah.

Campaigners believe this bill was prompted, at least in part, by the state’s ongoing efforts to execute Gerald Pizzuto, Jr, a man who is dying from terminal bladder cancer. Idaho has previously set three execution dates for Mr Pizzuto, but all have been stayed due to the state’s inability to acquire the necessary drugs. As Idaho Senator Dan Foreman noted, the burden of trauma that will be placed on all who participate in a firing squad execution is undeniable.

“I’ve seen the aftermath of shootings, and it’s psychologically damaging to anybody who

witnesses it,” Foreman said. “The use of the firing squad is, in my opinion, beneath the dignity of the state of Idaho.”

The Catholic Diocese of Boise said in a statement: “The death penalty has not proven to be a deterrent against crime; discriminates against the poor and minorities who usually cannot afford effective counsel; sometimes results in the execution of innocent people; and, most importantly, it deprives the guilty of whatever time God allows them for personal redemption. The Catholic Church advocates for more restorative responses to harm that prioritize healing, accountability, and upholding the human dignity of all individuals, no matter the harm they may have caused or suffered.”

Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, director of the Catholic Mobilizing Network said: “There is a clear need for redemption in our capital punishment system. We see it as Idaho state legislators actively seek new ways to kill their citizens, passing a bill to conduct executions by firing squads. We see it in the new Florida legislation that would remove the requirement for a jury to make a unanimous recommendation in a capital trial - if passed, a vote of 8-4 is all it would take to sentence someone to death.

“With these grave violations against human life all around, where are we to seek redemption? The refrain gives us our answer: through the mercy of the Lord.

Let us welcome God’s mercy into our lives and allow it to redeem our hearts, systems, and structures from the sins of injustice.”

## WCC expresses serious concern about restrictions imposed on celebration of Holy Fire ceremony

WCC

WCC calls on the Israeli authorities to reconsider these heavy-handed restrictions

The World Council of Churches (WCC) joined the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Custody of the Holy Land, and Armenian Patriarchate in expressing serious concern about the restrictions imposed by the Israel Police on the celebration of the ceremony of Holy Fire, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Holy Saturday.

“This Easter ceremony is one of the most important for the Orthodox and other Eastern churches, for the wider Christian community in the Holy Land, and for pilgrims attending from all over the world,” said WCC general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay. “The restrictions

include a limit of 2,000 on the number of worshippers (down from 10,000 in previous years), 200 police stationed inside the church, and security checkpoints throughout Jerusalem’s Old City (impeding access for worshippers and the subsequent procession).” Pillay said that these restrictions affecting the Holy Fire ceremony are seen by the churches and Holy Land Christians as unnecessary and of profound impact on their religious freedom, spiritual wellbeing, and morale.

“Church leaders in Jerusalem have in recent years made several joint statements highlighting the growing threat to the Christian community of the Holy Land from radical extremist elements in Israeli society,” said Pillay. “The WCC calls on the Israeli authorities to reconsider these heavy-handed restrictions, and to refrain from measures that further imperil the continuity of Christian worship, life and community in the city and region from which our faith springs.”

## Friday turns black

ACN

According to Father Ihyula, the attackers destroyed property including vehicles

MORE than 35 people in Nigeria’s Middle Belt died on Good Friday when gunmen opened fire at a camp for internally displaced people. In a message sent to Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), Father Remigius Ihyula from Makurdi diocese said: “Fulani [herdsmen] came to an IDP camp to kill these innocent souls.”

Reports from the region, in Benue State, stated that the suspected herdsmen “invaded” the compound of a primary school, where the IDPs were camping, and began shooting indiscriminately, leaving nearly 40 people seriously injured.

Of those killed, local reports claimed the vast majority were women.

Father Ihyula said: “The [place] is well known and used as a haven for people from neighbouring settlements such as Udei, who, from time to time, come to the school to sleep [or] stay due to fear and insecurity in their villages.

“Beside the school is the house of Zaki Bernard Shawa, who also lost two children in the attack, while in front of the school is the Makurdi-Lafia highway with a police checkpoint.”

Mr Shawa, district head of Nyiev, the area where the attack took place, was quoted in local reports saying: “Some of [those who

were killed] were shot right in their rooms, while they were sleeping, and others, including two of my children, were caught running and killed.”

According to Father Ihyula, the attackers destroyed property including vehicles. Makurdi diocese alone has 2 million IDPs – most of them Christian – spread across seven camps.

Father Ihyula told ACN that most of the IDPs used to be self-sufficient but now rely entirely on hand-outs. The camps lack basic equipment, such as beds, with the vast majority of IDPs having to sleep on the floor. There is longstanding animosity between nomadic herdsmen and farmers but the conflict has been made worse by automatic weapons from Libya flooding the black market.

The situation has been aggravated by religious differences, as most Fulani are herdsmen and the majority of farmers in the region are Christian. There is a fear that the Fulani violence is being stoked by those who want to eliminate Christians from the region. Nigeria is a priority country for Aid to the Church in Need which has provided pastoral and emergency support, focusing on the Middle Belt and elsewhere in the north of the country.

Felipe D’Avillez and John Pontife



An IDP camp in the Guma area of Benue state where the attack took place on Good Friday

# Book Reviews



## Looking Ahead: A Catholic Handbook for School Students

Catholic Truth Society, The Association of Catholic Women  
£14.95  
<https://www.ctsbooks.org>

Looking Ahead answers big questions about life, God, and the world. Full of useful information, quirky facts, assorted prayers, stories of saints and heroes, and beautiful illustrations, this is a



book to help you make sense of your amazing calling to follow Jesus Christ.

## Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life

Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life  
£6.95  
<https://www.ctsbooks.org>

By providing pastoral guidelines for clergy, couples, and those involved in marriage preparation or family ministry, this document is intended to offer support to the local Churches "in thinking about or rethinking their pathways to marriage preparation and pastoral accompaniment during the first years of married life."



### Continued from Page 6

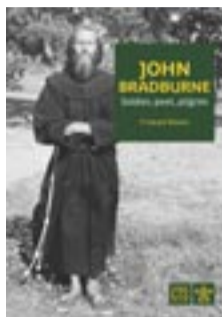
seminars himself too as he had never done them before, which was a further encouragement. We couldn't believe it. It was Fr Michael who arranged the dates, and this led to the Life in the Spirit retreat day ending up being at the cathedral on Pentecost Saturday, which had long been a dream of mine. We are hoping that many participants will stay on for the 6pm cathedral vigil Mass celebrated by bishop Philip Moger and provide a joyful Pentecost atmosphere for the regular mass goers.

We have been so grateful for their generous response and the new connections we have made in the process. As a possible follow up we will be looking at the Called and Gifted programme, which helps people to discern their personal charisms. This was created by Sherry Weddell some years ago, but has been developed in recent years and led in this country by a committed team from

## John Bradburne

Fr Gerard Skinner  
£6.95  
<https://www.ctsbooks.org>

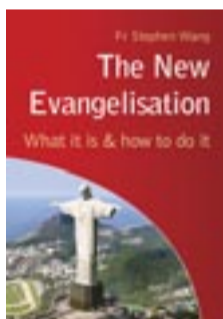
A Secular Franciscan from Cumbria, Servant of God John Bradburne poured himself out in love for the lepers he served, unwilling to abandon them even to save his life. His legacy offers a striking example of authentic holiness in the modern, conflict-stricken world.



## The New Evangelisation

Fr Stephen Wang  
£3.50  
<https://www.ctsbooks.org>

Why do we need a New Evangelisation? What is the history and theology of this idea? What does it look like in practice? How can we engage in the New Evangelisation in our parishes and communities? What are the key documents we can turn to for inspiration? These are some of the questions explored in this booklet, which also collects the most important writings about the New Evangelisation by Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.



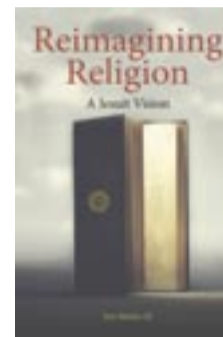
Portsmouth. This was the initiative of Bishop Philip Egan, but many people from a CCR background have been the ones supplying the personnel to lead it forward. Another example of the institutional and charismatic dimensions working together. A couple of leaders from Portsmouth were among those who have volunteered as small group leaders to help with our online seminars. For more information, search for 'Southwark Life in the Spirit' online.

All this feels the fulfilment of Pope Francis' call to the Charismatic Renewal to run the Life in the Spirit seminars throughout the Church and spread the knowledge and experience of Baptism in the Spirit everywhere. In 1998 Pope John Paul II, speaking to a world wide gathering of movements on the vigil of Pentecost, called them to embrace new ecclesial maturity and bring their charisms to the heart of the Church. In these days we seem to be seeing this. Thanks be to God! Please pray for us!

## Reimagining Religion: A Jesuit Vision

by Jim Maher SJ  
€19.95/£18.95  
published in Ireland and the UK by Messenger Publications

'Proactive, engaged, reflective yet outward-looking' – one could be forgiven for assuming that this describes a social enterprise of some sort and not a spirituality and religiosity founded on Ignatian principles. In



a new book, Jim Maher SJ sets the bar high for himself in the task of reversing the contemporary perception of Christianity as irrelevant, useless and an heirloom from the past. He highlights the value of spirituality and religion, how they complement one another and their role in providing purpose and meaning to life.

In Reimagining Religion: A Jesuit Vision Maher

starts from the premise that to be human is to be in relationship. However, he notes that the prevailing norm in our society has become individualism rather than community and as a result we have become distanced from each other, from our environment, from our responsibilities and from our own true identities.

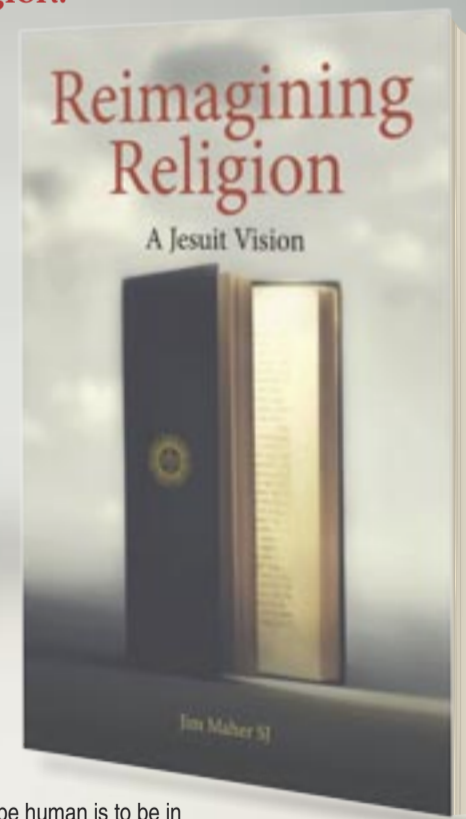
Maher offers four guiding principles or 'apostolic preferences' identified by the Jesuits as a way of reconsidering the religious and spiritual quest so that it has relevance and traction in our twenty-first century. The foundations of reflective living, social and climate justice and creating a hope-filled world for our young people can influence values, attitudes and beliefs and guide our behaviour and actions so we can both fully live our potential as 'persons in relationship' and rediscover the Christianity we need.

Jim Maher SJ is a Jesuit priest, born in Limerick. He has spent most of his Jesuit life ministering and teaching at Crescent College Comprehensive SJ. He managed the Fifth Year social outreach programmes and led Sixth Year pilgrimage retreats and continues to provide pastoral support at the school. This is his second book with Messenger Publications.

## Reimagining Religion: A Jesuit Vision

Jim Maher SJ  
192pp £18.95

This book reimagines Christianity in a modern guise by highlighting how spirituality and religion complement one another.



Starting from the premise that to be human is to be in relationship, it draws out the importance of living not in splendid isolation, but in relationships with others, with our planet and with God

Messenger Publications  
www.messenger.ie

Available from your local bookshop.  
Also directly from our website: [www.messenger.ie](http://www.messenger.ie)  
or T: +353 1 676 7491

# Migrants and refugees are human beings not just statistics, says Bishop as Bishops' Conference releases new publication

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

## Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants and refugees as people

In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms.

Love the Stranger is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' Department for International Affairs that articulates our Christian duty to look beyond such labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life.

Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the Bishops' Conference, emphasises the need to uphold their innate human dignity:

"Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants and refugees as people. We need to understand their stories, their reasons for leaving their homelands and hopes for building a future here.

"We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have

a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities.

"People are driven to leave their countries, sometimes making dangerous journeys or risking exploitation, because of conflict, poverty, oppression, or lack of opportunities. Looking beyond our own borders, we have a duty to help people flourish in their homelands, as well as welcoming those who leave in search of a better life."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Bishops' Conference, welcomed the publication:

"Love the Stranger draws together more than one hundred years of Catholic teaching to guide our response to migration in England and Wales today. While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems, it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements."

### Vatican endorsement

Father Fabio Baggio CS, the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, praised Love the Stranger's rich review of, and reflection on, Catholic social teaching:

"The text promotes an authentic culture of encounter at all levels and among all the actors involved. As we live in times in which the defence of the dignity of each human person may seem under threat, Love the Stranger invites us to not give up on the opportunity to live our catholicity ever more fully, to build more just and equal societies for the benefit of each and every person, and to be open to the contribution that strangers can offer as we care for their integral human development and ours."

### Protection of migrants and refugees a shared goal

Fr Manuel Barrios Prieto, the Secretary General of COMECE (Commission of Catholic Episcopal Conferences of the European Union) welcomes the publication as an important step forward towards the promotion and protection of migrants:

"This advocacy document on the Catholic response to migrants and refugees is a timely reference and guidance in our polarised European societies. It offers sound orientations on migration and asylum not only for Catholics, but for any person of good who considers

human dignity as the basis for a harmonious social coexistence. It is not a mere compilation of principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church on the matter, but a reflection on how these principles should be applied to the current challenges faced by our states and societies."

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, stresses that people have a right to flourish in their homelands:

"People around the world continue to be tormented by conflict, which drives them from their homes as they seek safety. Communities are also losing their homes and their livelihoods to a climate crisis they did not cause.

"Working toward peace and tackling the climate crisis are the defining challenges of our time and we must show solidarity to those in need. The UK government can rise to these shared global challenges by reversing the counter-productive cuts to the aid budget, and prioritising countries impacted by conflict and climate change.

"Failure to act will mean people around the world continue to see their lives turned upside down and their homes destroyed by conflict and climate change."

You can download the document here: [cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger](http://cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger)



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

### CRYPTIC

#### Across

- 7 Dead set, if else fails, to make 18 when in Rome (6,7)
- 8 I am the Spanish waiter in Messiah! (8)
- 9 Mountain in Joshua can be seen in section of Horeb, altitudinally (4)
- 10 Friend from Troy, one leaving an ecclesiastic band (7)
- 12 Drama queen's back to support the lead in Dallas - the Dynasty chap? (5)
- 14 Youngster gets sophisticated in front of the king... (5)
- 16 ... one in Judah has Henry bound by kinky Joe to tree (7)
- 19 It's the first name in jeans for Matthew! (4)
- 20 Early Christian sect which barely made it out of 21? (8)
- 22 To which place did Jesus ride a girl's horse? (5,2,6)

### CRYPTIC

#### Down

- 1 Esau's people's place, where style's in ascendant (4)
- 2 First of Issachar's successors really annexed extra land here (6)
- 3 Exist, being raised in African surroundings, to name brother of 2 (7)
- 4 Passage from article is on the Spanish uprising (5)
- 5 Missionary's desirable little home in Darjeeling? (6)
- 6 Drugs prisoner detained by the Pope is ascetic (8)
- 11 Get trees from 11 or 16 by the thousand, to rebuild lone Philistine city... (8)
- 13 ... and cedars from here to build Jerusalem, the French and British find later (7)
- 15 Queensland site's stop-start finish confused CIA and the Navy (6)
- 17 God's pupil is confronted by a very large introduction (6)
- 18 Is she, looking up, last one raising any cash at Christmas? (5)

- 21 First family's home study is situated below, note (4)

### QUICK

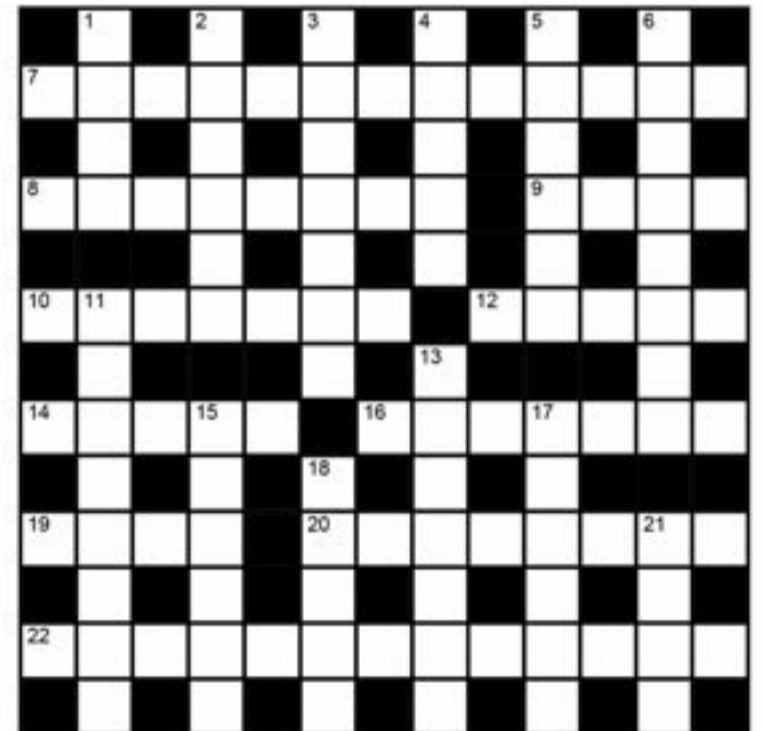
#### Across

- 7 Latin hymn translated into a popular carol by a canon of Westminster Cathedral (6,7)
- 8 Christ or the Messiah, as named from a reference in Isaiah (8)
- 9 Where Moses commanded Joshua to build an altar (4)
- 10 White vestment like a double-Y embroidered with crosses, worn by the Pope (7)
- 12 Dynast and hymnodist from humble origins, integral to both Testaments (5)
- 14 Young bird, especially of domestic fowl (5)
- 16 Kings of Israel and Judah sharing the same name (7)
- 19 Son of Jacob cursed by his father for attacking Shechem (4)
- 20 Early Christians who aimed to return to man's primitive innocence (8)
- 22 Hill overlooking Jerusalem where Solomon built an altar (5,2,6)

### QUICK

#### Down

- 1 Mountainous region south of the Dead Sea in OT times, also called Seir (4)
- 2 Name God gave to Jacob... (6)
- 3 ... and one of Jacob's twelve sons (7)
- 4 Extension of the nave in a church (5)
- 5 Nun and missionary dedicated to helping the poor in India (1910-1997) (6)
- 6 Ascetic 5th century British theologian (8)
- 11 One of the five Philistine cities (8)
- 13 Area north of biblical Israel famous for its cedar



- 15 trees (7)
- 15 Queensland resort city facing the Great Barrier Reef (6)
- 17 Greatest of all the gods of ancient Egypt (6)
- 18 Joyful religious song celebrating the birth of Christ (5)
- 21 Land west of Nod (4)

### SOLUTION

Across: 7 Adeste fideles, 8 Immanuel, 9 Ebal, 10 Pallium, 11 Ashkelon, 12 David, 13 Lebanon, 14 Chick, 15 Pelagius, 16 Jehoshaphat, 17 Ostris, 18 Mount of Olives, 19 Levi, 20 Adamites, 21 Edom, 22 Teresa of Avila, 23 Cairns, 24 Aisle, 25 Teresa of Avila, 26 Ebal, 27 Eden.