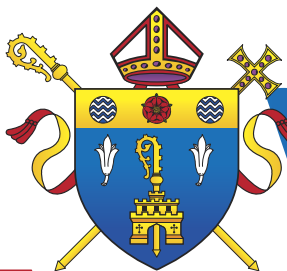


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The Catholic



VOICE

of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 317 + March '20

INSIDE: p06 'The God Who Speaks'
Pastoral Year of the Word

p14 Luke on a Mission in India



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Less than 25%
of Baptised
English Catholics
will attend Mass
this weekend!

Less than 1 in 4 Baptised English Catholics will attend Mass this weekend, a sad and shocking statistic in equal measure. But we should not despair.

Pope Francis said "The spread of the Gospel is not guaranteed either by the number of persons, or by the prestige of the institution, or by the quantity of available resources. What counts is to be permeated by the love of Christ, to let oneself be led by the Holy Spirit and to graft one's own life onto the tree of life, which is the Lord's Cross."

This does not dispense us from our calling through our Baptism to evangelise, we are asked to proclaim the Word of God and live our lives in the manner that Jesus taught us, we should be joyful, not downcast, welcoming not sceptical, loving and compassionate at all times.

An evangeliser must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral! ... And may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the good news not from evangelisers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervour, who have first received the joy of Christ — *Evangelii Gaudium*



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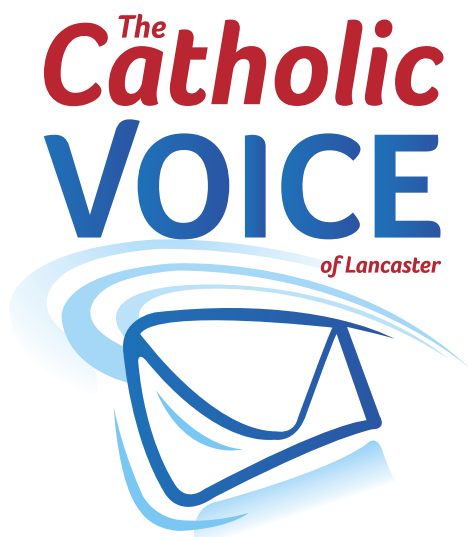
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EDITORIAL

No one could possibly have been unmoved as the witness of so many was recalled on the 75th anniversary of the Holocaust in January; so many lives so brutally destroyed, so much torture, so much deprivation, families broken up and memories that will be carried to the grave.

Here a parishioner from St Joseph's Ansdell records:

On Friday 24 January St Annes Synagogue held a Holocaust Memorial Service. This well attended event had guests from various religions and civic dignitaries from across the Fylde. The guest speaker was a 91-year-old Jewish lady, who was saved by being sent to England as a child. She explained how her relatives and friends were killed in the camps. Only one in ten Jewish children survived the holocaust.

The very emotional message was clear. This should never occur again.

***I believe in the sun even when it is not shining
I believe in love even when I cannot feel it
I believe in God even when He is silent***

Written on a cellar wall in Germany during the Holocaust

75 years after such horrendous violations western Europe is living in peace and people of all faiths are free to worship in their own way, though church attendances across the piece continue to fall as a more secular movement takes hold.

The *Catholic Church* is not exempt from this downward spiral in attendances and in our local parishes in the Diocese of Lancaster we can see empty spaces in our churches that used to be full.

The *Catholic Voice* therefore welcomes the initiative being taken by Our Lady and St Edward's parish in Preston to encourage parishioners to invite family or friends who no longer attend to come to Mass on Mothering Sunday 21/22 March (see Page 3). Other parishes may wish to follow their lead.

The pastoral Year of the Word - '*The God Who Speaks*' is calling us all to listen to the Word, let it transform our lives and bring others to know the love of the Lord.

Love of God and love of neighbour are the first two commandments, it is only when we (*and wider society*) want to 'go it alone' that hatred and all kinds of persecution take hold.





Welcome Back Sunday 21/22 March 2020

Please invite a friend or a member of your family to Mass on **Welcome Back Sunday**. If you're a mum ask your child to come to Mass with you on Mothers' day.

Our Lady's and St Edward's Preston is combining Mothering Sunday with an initiative to encourage people back to church, they are calling it Welcome Back Sunday.

Did you know that this weekend less than 1 in 4 baptised English Catholics will attend Mass – just let that sink in for a moment!

We all have family and friends who have stopped going to church that contribute to this alarming statistic so anything that we can do to reverse the trend is worthwhile.

Pope Francis wants us to evangelise, to spread the Word not just abroad but in our own community and amongst our own family and friends, he wrote:

'Evangelisers thus take on the "smell of the sheep" and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelising community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance (Evangelii Gaudium).

So against this background a group of parishioners with parish priest, Canon Robert Horn, have been considering what we can do to attract people back to the fold.

- We do not despair
- We have a hope
- We have devised a plan

We are asking each of our parishioners to invite at least 1 friend or family member to Mass over the weekend of 21/22 March.

This will be named 'Welcome Back Sunday' which coincides with Mothering Sunday.

We have prepared posters for distribution locally and posts for the social media. Our objective is to promote this initiative. Perhaps other parishes will want to make similar plans to bring friends and family back to church.

Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, is the Mother of the Church. Starting on the 9 March we will say the following prayer for 9 days:

Mary, Our Mother and the Mother of Our Church, please encourage (insert the name) to come to Mass on Welcome Back Sunday.

We don't know how many will join us for Welcome Back Sunday but believe that if only 1 person returns to Sunday Mass our efforts will be worthwhile and in a small way we will be following the lead of Pope Francis.

Frank McGrath

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The Castlerigg team started the New Year with other retreat centres from across the country, gathering in Derbyshire to spend time together in community and prayer. We met the other youth ministry volunteers from different centres around the UK. We all agree that it was an amazing couple of days. It was inspiring to talk to other teams and gain a sense of how the centres vary but have similarities as well.

It was good to catch up with people we already knew as well and be able to have an experience of a retreat with everyone surrounding us within this unique Catholic community we have. We all attended various workshops covering a wide variety of topics including: scripture, art, CAFOD, Aid to the Church in Need, working with LGBT+ young people, games, university chaplaincy and music in youth ministry. These were creative ways for us to learn more about our own faith and come up with new ideas for our own retreat centres.

On Saturday evening we gathered for a ceilidh, an annual highlight. The team enjoyed getting involved, even when we weren't quite sure what the steps were. The ceilidh is particularly fun because everyone joins together and simply have fun as a community, laughing and getting to know each other better!

Amongst the moments of excitement, music and laughter, there were also moments of quiet reflection and silence as we listened to God speaking. Father Paul Farren created many moments of wonderful quiet reflection and silence as we listened to him. One of the main points he made in the talks he gave was about strength in vulnerability. He reminded us that it is important

to notice the magnitude of this strength, to draw from this strength and reflect on it in our lives. He spoke about the uniqueness of communion with Christ. He talked about various points in his life where he realised that we have to enter into communion with the whole of God's creation if we are going to enter into communion with God. By humbling yourself, taking the chance and embracing the people and circumstances around you, you make God's Kingdom stronger. Realising this strength of communion and peace within vulnerability, within others and certain situations is very important. It becomes prevalent and we are reminded of its importance at the Epiphany (*which we celebrated on the weekend of the conference*) as the outsiders, the wise men, took the chance to follow the star to Jesus.

There they were greeted with divinity and humanity. They were greeted with a fragile baby, who was at the same time God himself, and possessed divine strength. They were greeted with the saviour of the world. This baby was welcoming them specifically into the gift of grace and creating an insane moment in history that would still be providing hope two millennia later.

Father Paul also talked about the importance of using your gifts and talents. He asked us to reflect on what is stopping us from losing everything and just focusing on Jesus.

At Castlerigg we discussed different ways that we could make a new start to this year and come together as a community. In what ways could you make some new starts and lose things that distract you from focusing on Jesus?



We work hard to keep the costs as low as possible to enable us to reach as many young people as we can. Two years ago we organised a sponsored walk to raise money to support the Youth Service, and small group spent a challenging day in the hills and raised over £10,000.

Bishop Paul has agreed to join us again and we are putting together a group to climb England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike, on the 13th June. Places are limited and we hoping each participant will be able to raise over £1,000. If you are interested in joining us, or if you might be able to help collect sponsorship for Bishop Paul, Fr John or the other participants, please get in touch: team@castleriggmanor.co.uk

50th Anniversary

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Youth Service's move to Castlerigg Manor, local artist John McNamee painted a new picture of the Manor. Viewed from the north, it shows the front of the Manor, set against Derwent Water and the Lakeland fells. We are delighted to have prints of this picture available for sale, priced £20. Please get in touch to order one, email:

team@castleriggmanor.co.uk

20/21 Gap Year

The Youth Service are currently recruiting volunteers for next year's gap-year team. We are looking for young people (18+) who are excited about their faith and want to share it with others.

This is a great opportunity to gain experience, develop new skills and could lead to so many new opportunities. For more information, please get in touch: team@castleriggmanor.co.uk



Being a Young Catholic Today

– Zoë, Castlerigg

Dates for the Diary >>



I was brought up a Catholic from childhood, attending a Catholic primary school, going to Mass each Sunday and being part of the parish youth groups with other young Catholics. Being a Catholic was an important part of who I was during that time; I used to enjoy being involved in Mass and I began to altar-serve.

When it came to being confirmed, it was something that I was really excited about because I had already chosen my saint's name and learning more about her genuinely interested me. As well as learning more during my preparation for confirmation I also made new friends and became closer to existing ones because my parish twinned with another confirmation group from the neighbouring parish. My faith had started to bring me new friends.

But when I moved to secondary school my faith was more and more pushed out, and I started to miss Mass to go out with friends. I did not attend a Catholic High School so the Religious Education wasn't geared towards the Catholic faith and it wasn't a very important part of the curriculum so I didn't carry on learning new things about my faith. Through most of my secondary school time I wouldn't go to Mass and I had distanced myself completely from my faith. I didn't even know who God was anymore because in my mind I had so many better more exciting things to do.

But despite my straying from my faith I decided to attend the diocese's pilgrimage to Lourdes, and this is where I started coming back to my faith. It wasn't some sort of overnight transformation, I wasn't suddenly living a life of prayer and I didn't know exactly who God was to me. In fact it was completely the opposite. When in Lourdes I felt so much more in touch with my faith and I carried it on at home for a while but soon the buzz wore off and I was back to how I had been for the last few years of my life. However, there was something about Lourdes that kept pulling me back and I returned for a second year and very much repeated the process from the year before, and then I returned for a third year. They always say that the third time is the charm and in this case I couldn't agree more.

When I was in Lourdes this year I felt the closest to God I think I have ever felt in my life and my prayer time became something so special to me and I treasured my time in the Grotto. It is all thanks to that time in the Grotto that I am spending a year here at Castlerigg now.

My faith journey has had lots of twists and turns and if I was to sit here and write it all out then I would be here for hours and there wouldn't be space for it here, I would have to print it as a book. But right here right now at Castlerigg I can safely say that I am firmly back on the path of exploring my faith and carrying on along the path of growing closer to God. My faith has brought me so many amazing memories and so many brilliant friends (some of which I am lucky to have as part of my Castlerigg family). I am grateful for my faith and the path it is taking me along.



20th-22nd March – Young Adults' Retreat

An opportunity to get together with others of a similar age and spend time in prayer and reflection. This year we will be thinking particularly about the place of Scripture in our lives and how God speaks to us. Open to young adults aged 18+.

9th-12th April – Easter Retreat

Take time to celebrate the Easter Triduum with other young people, journeying from the Last Supper to the Cross and on to the Empty Tomb, with times for fun, for prayer and for reflection. Open to young people in year 9 and above.

22nd-24th May – Family Weekend

Bring the family to Castlerigg and spend time with God together. The programme includes family activities, games and workshops, prayer and reflection, and time for the adults to be together. Open to all (children must be accompanied by a responsible adult).

13 June – Sponsored Walk

A repeat of our successful sponsored walk with Bishop Paul two years ago, but with a new route. There are a limited number of places to join us on the walk, with the target of raising £1,000 sponsorship per person. Please get in touch for more info.

23rd July - 1st August 2020 – Lourdes Pilgrimage

Bookings are open for next summer's Lourdes pilgrimage. Joining us on pilgrimage to Lourdes, you will meet new people and make friendships that will last a lifetime; serve others and receive so much more than you can give; find peace and joy in a place where heaven and earth meet; and have an amazing time. Open to current year 10 and above, £595.

For more information about all of the above, and for bookings, please see the What's On section of our website:

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Pastoral Year of the Word
'The God Who Speaks'

As our Bishops encourage us to re-acquaint ourselves with the scriptures the Catholic Voice would like to invite you to share your favourite passage, whether from the old testament, (including the Psalms), or the new testament, explaining how God is speaking to you through the text.

Please send your contribution by e mail or post (see details alongside) keeping your commentary to around 300/400 words including the appropriate reference to the text e.g. John 6 V66-69.



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If your School would like to wish our readers a Happy and Holy Easter in the next edition, please get in touch by Monday 16th March. Contact Charlotte on 07932 248225 or email charlotter@cathcom.org

HEADTEACHERS – If you would like to support the Catholic Voice and promote your school to Catholic families in the area please contact Charlotte on 07932 248225 or 01440 730399 or email charlotter@cathcom.org to book your advert



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Dear Lancaster Voice reader,

Life with cataracts has not been easy for three-year-old Leah, living in East Africa. Unable to see, every morning she sits on an old car tyre, hearing the sounds of her brother and cousins going to school. She feels left out and alone.

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Louise

Louise Shute
CBM Programme Manager

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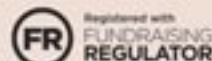
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'Who do you say I am?'

Carmelite Novices Formation Meeting



The Novices and Novice Mistresses from Dolgellau Carmel in Wales, from Quidenham, Notting Hill, Lithuania and Iceland met for our annual Initial Formation Meeting. It was a good opportunity to connect with one another, build friendships and receive quality input. Here are some highlights from each of the main talks.

Jesus through the eyes of our Carmelite Saints

Fr Matt Blake OCD helped us to look at Jesus through the eyes of St John and St Teresa. He gave us her main description of prayer as a 'friendly conversation with the one who we know loves us'. Fr Matt: 'To really enter into that conversation is to engage in radical change'. Jesus wishes to repeat the Incarnation in each one of us. He gives Himself totally to the one who gives herself totally, holding nothing back.

St John tells us to fix our eyes on Him; to have a habitual desire to imitate Christ and to bring our life into conformity with His. He is the motivation of every choice we make. It's all for Jesus. How narrow is the way that leads to life. Following Christ, we were reminded, means denying self – choosing all that is most distasteful as a way of loving God. 'The Cross is the supporting staff that eases the load'. Fr Matt said: 'The Cross is a thicket and in order to know it you have to go into it'.

He painted a picture of asceticism not as a negative thing, but as a way of changing the inclination: it's whatever you need to do to set yourself free. What that is going to look like in practice is going to be different for each one of us, depending on what it is that binds us. If you hold on to even just one thing, you're not free. Fr Matt mentioned the poor Shepherd, who weeps because He has been forgotten, because his love is not reciprocated.

Jesus in the eyes of the four evangelists

Fr Nick King SJ explored the question 'Who do you say I am?' through the eyes of the four evangelists. It is clear that they all believed Jesus was God. To call Jesus 'Lord' (Kyrios) was to use the term used primarily for God, though Caesar Augustus had tried to apply it to himself. Jesus' 'I AM' statements which identify Him with the Father's self-description of Exodus 3.18, are really very exalted.

As the Jews realised, they are either true, or blasphemous, which is why they tried to stone him. The authority Jesus

claims and exercises, His command over nature, His power to forgive sins all point to His divine status. Fr Nick pointed to the number of instances in which people worshipped Jesus, and Jesus never tries to stop them. Matthew is clearly at ease with the idea, notwithstanding the fact that he has put on Jesus' lips the words of Deuteronomy 6.13 which say we may only worship God. The logical conclusion is that Jesus is God. Fr Nick King's translations of the Old and New Testaments complete with interactive study guide are highly recommended.

St Teresa of Avila: Encountering Christ in Prayer

Sr. Jo from Ware Carmel gave us a great synthesis of Teresa's teaching on 'Encountering Christ in Prayer'. A favourite quote was 'we should occupy ourselves in looking at Christ who is looking at us'. Jo recalled St Teresa's emphasis on the need for proper preparation, approaching God through the humanity of Christ, an awareness of Who it is we are speaking to, and intentionality: we should go to prayer fully intending to make contact with God. The closest Teresa comes to giving us a method of prayer is being present to Christ in a particular Gospel setting, looking at Him.

Come and See Weekends

For women who are interested in tentatively exploring vocation to any form of religious life, or to contemplative life, in particular a series of 3 workshops are being hosted at Dolgellau Carmelite Monastery in Wales. There will be input from a speaker, and the chance to meet Carmelite sisters and share in the sisters' cycle of prayer, while staying in our flat/bungalow. The weekends are 'stand alone' but build on one another. You can attend just one, or the whole series.

Sr. Katherine Mary

Book through our website at:

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More info about enclosed contemplative life is available on our youtube page 'Carmel Wales'.

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27-29 March 2020

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'Their eyes were opened' (Lk 24.15)
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Call & Response

If you look up the word Vocation on Google, you find several explanations of the way it is used these days, for example to describe how someone who feels drawn to a particular profession. But they all agree that it comes from Christianity, from the Latin word that means a calling.

The Old Testament offers us so many powerful and unforgettable stories of God calling people to speak and act for God. The Gospels reveal to us how Jesus himself responds to the call of God's Spirit and how he in turn called his first disciples to follow him and share his mission of love. This is what all Christians are called to be and do through their Baptism. For most people their call, their vocation, is lived out day by day as they go about their lives in their homes, at work, and in the local community. For some, however, the call that comes from Baptism draws them to a particular way of life which might be priesthood for some or religious life for others. I want to tell you a little about my call and response.

On March 30th 2019, with another sister, Marie Quayle, we celebrated our Diamond Jubilees, 60 years of our religious profession as members of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. We had both been in the same class for seven years at Layton Hill Convent School, Blackpool, now St Mary's, and together we literally left our families and our homes in Blackpool and Fleetwood in September 1956 to join the Society.

Why?

Because, in spite of all other possibilities open to us, we knew in our hearts that love was inspiring us to follow where God seemed to be calling us.

When did I receive this 'calling'?

Well, I remember vividly when I was about 13 years of age, we had a day retreat in school, led by Father Vincent Whelan. We were in the school chapel and he read to us a short passage from Matthew's gospel - how Jesus was deeply moved, was heart - broken when he saw the crowds of people "harried and abject, like sheep without a shepherd." It was as

if I could see what Jesus saw, hear him speaking, feel what he felt and I wanted to be with him and to share his life and his way. That experience has never left me and has strengthened me over many years since, as I came to discover more and more how to share the life, the love and the mission of Jesus is possible as a religious sister.

Of course any vocation has to be carefully considered and tried out, so wisely there were three stages over seven and a half years in our initial training for us to experience religious life fully before we made our perpetual vows. Both we and the Society we were joining needed to be sure that this was God's will for us. I remember an older sister telling me that a sure sign would be if I felt "at home", and I did!

So the Society became my religious family where I lived and prayed and worked in community and was thoroughly trained to share in the mission of education.

One huge event has affected my religious life profoundly in the sixty years since my profession of vows: the Second Vatican Council and all that has been emerging in the Catholic Church since then as it responds to "the signs of the times". For us religious it was a powerful call to renewal, to return to the Gospel, to the inspiration of our Foundress. It opened up for women religious wonderful opportunities to deepen our faith, our understanding of scripture and theology, learning how more far-reaching and diverse our call was to education beyond the more formal setting of schools. Outwardly people would have seen changes in our dress to make it more appropriate for changed times. Inwardly we were responding anew to the call of the Gospel, as we still are.

Sixty years as a Holy Child sister!

I can never thank God enough for this call that never leaves me and the love he gives me to respond.

Sr. Philomena Grimley SHCJ

See: www.shcj.org for more details about the Society and email: europeanprovince@shcj.org to make any enquiries.



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The Servant of God, Mother Mary Joseph of Jesus CP



*in saeculo Elizabeth Prout,
 1820-1864*

The December 2019 edition of the *Catholic Voice* carried an article and a photograph of happy children from St Edmund's and St Wulstan's schools, near Fleetwood.

I read the article with great interest because our Sisters of the Cross and Passion taught in St Wulstan's primary school for a number of years, as well as in St Mary's and Stella Maris convent school, Fleetwood and the Cardinal Allen secondary school; in St Peter's, Lytham from 1873-1878 and 1896 to 1960, in our convent private school and also from 1954 at the air force camp at Warton where our Sisters went three times each week to teach RE to the children there; in St Mary's elementary school, St Annes-on-Sea from 1898 travelling from Lytham each day until 1923 when we opened a convent there and began to teach also in St Mary's infants' school. Then from 1934 – 1973 we had St Gabriel's Junior Preparatory Private School, in our larger convent on St Anne's Road East, opposite Our Lady's church. We were also associated with Cleveleys from 1941 when the parish priest asked the Sisters in Fleetwood to take charge of the Children of Mary and to do parish visitation, travelling from Fleetwood each time. Then, on 1 May 1946, he asked for two Sisters to take charge of the Cardinal Allen Private School at 4 Luton Road, Cleveleys. For three years they travelled daily from Fleetwood, until in 1949 we opened a temporary convent, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in St Teresa's Parish, at 66 Luton Rd, moving in 1950 to a better property at Willowdene, Cleveleys. Eighteen years later, in 1968, the Diocese of Lancaster asked us to sell Willowdene to the Diocese so that it could become St Teresa's parish school. We agreed and again travelled each day from Fleetwood to the Cardinal Allen Private School until 1972 when a private school was no longer needed. Many readers will know all these places.

This year we will be celebrating the bicentenary of the birth of our Foundress, the Servant of God, Mother Mary Joseph of Jesus, in saeculo Elizabeth Prout. She visited the Fylde coast once or twice, probably about 1855, bringing a sick Sister to recuperate and she would personally have liked to have opened a convent here.

Elizabeth Prout was born in Shrewsbury on 2 September 1820 and was living in Stone, Staffordshire in 1842 when Blessed Dominic Barberi CP arrived there to found the first Passionist Retreat in England. Previously an Anglican, Elizabeth became a Catholic between 1842 and 1848, when she entered a convent in Northampton. She became ill, however, and had to return to Stone. In early 1849 Father Gaudentius Rossi CP gave a Mission in St Chad's, Manchester and heard that the parish priest, Father Robert Croskell was looking for a school mistress to take charge of St Chad's girls' school. When Elizabeth had recovered from her illness but was being pressurised by her mother to abandon her Catholic Faith, Father Gaudentius suggested that she might take that post, as she did about early September 1849.

Shortly afterwards Father Gaudentius invited her to co-operate with him and Father Croskell, with the approval of Bishop William Turner of Salford, in founding a new Congregation to provide a contemplative and active religious life for women who could not afford the dowry required by the established Orders and did not wish to be lay Sisters. She agreed and in 1851 she opened St Joseph's convent at 69 Stocks Street.

In St Chad's Lady Chapel on 2 February 1852 Elizabeth and her first companions held a ceremony with Father Croskell when they began to wear black dresses as a sign of their religious commitment. Then on 21 November 1852, the birthday of the Passionist Congregation founded by St Paul of the Cross in 1720, Father Gaudentius blessed and gave the Religious Habit to Elizabeth Prout and six companions, reminding them that the spirit of the new Congregation was one of recollection and mental prayer, joined with manual labour and other external occupations. Since this contemplative life was the reason why the Congregation was being founded, he did not specify any specific active apostolate but they had to earn their living. Both Bishop Turner and Father Croskell were looking for teachers, for Catholic education, especially in Manchester, it was the greatest political and religious issue of the day. With Irish immigrants' requiring more churches, they were also looking for vestment-making and parish visitation, especially of the lapsed



and the needy. These became the characteristic occupations of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion. Two years later, on 21 November 1854, as Bishop Turner held up the Sacred Host, six of those seven made their Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience in St Mary's church, Levenshulme. From then Elizabeth Prout was known as Mother Mary Joseph.

Next Bishop Turner asked her to open a second house and a school in St Ann's parish, in notoriously anti-Catholic Ashton-under-Lyne, escorting her there himself on 1 January 1855.

Then, at the inspiration of Father Bernardine Carosi CP, Rector of the Passionist monastery in Sutton and in a move that brought the Sisters into the Diocese of Liverpool, the Misses Orrell of Blackbrook asked her to open a convent in Parr Hall, take charge of their select boarding school there and open day and Sunday schools for the working-class children in Blackbrook, in addition to her taking charge of St Anne's day and Sunday schools in Sutton. Reducing the fees at Parr Hall to open the school to middle and upper working-class girls, she admitted day pupils as well as boarders and introduced a school uniform to eradicate class distinctions in dress. She opened a convent in Sutton where she personally taught in St Anne's school and in 1857 opened St Joseph's school, Peasley Cross. In 1857 she had to close the Ashton school but in the Cotton Famine of 1862 the parish priest asked for her Sisters to return to teach the Catholic mill girls in the Government-sponsored industrial schools. While she was there, she and Father Ignatius Spencer CP revised Father Gaudentius Rossi's Rule, at the request of the Holy See, making provision for Homes for factory girls, to protect them from the perils of common mixed lodging houses.

The first Home was opened in Folds Road, Bolton shortly after her death in Sutton on 11 January 1864. After a Requiem Mass sung by the Passionists and Sisters in the Sutton monastery church, she was buried in the adjacent graveyard. In 1973 her coffin was exhumed and her remains were placed in a sepulchre on the right of the Tomb of Blessed Dominic in the new church of St Anne and Blessed Dominic Barberi.

We can imitate Elizabeth Prout in many ways and pray to her with confidence. She was such a practical person; so entirely God-centred; so forgetful of self; so generous in giving herself to others; so willing to suffer in union with Our Lord's Passion, always so that God's Will might be done; and so charitable in protecting the reputations of even her enemies, even at great loss to her own. Pray to her about a practical difficulty and it will be solved in the twinkling of an eye.

To mark the bi-centenary of Elizabeth Prout's birth there will be a pilgrimage in her honour in September to Shrewsbury, Stone, Aston Hall and Sutton. Her biography was written by Dr Edna Hamer (*Sr Dominic Savio CP*), Historian for the Sisters of the Cross and Passion on the Historical Commission appointed by Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool in 1994 to investigate the Cause for the ultimate Canonisation of the Servant of God: Elizabeth Prout, 1820-1864, A Religious Life for Industrial England, published first by Downside Abbey in 1994 and since 2011 by Gracewing Publishers, 2 Southern Ave, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0QF in 2008 Gracewing had already published a shorter, more 'popular' life: With Christ in His Passion, Elizabeth Prout (1820-1864), Foundress of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, written by Sister Dominic Savio Hamer CP; and in 2009 the Catholic Truth Society, London published a booklet, *Sr Elizabeth Prout*, also written by Sister Dominic Savio Hamer CP. All of these are still available.

At present all the material for her Cause presented to the Holy See has been accepted by the competent authorities, including a committee of theologians in Rome but we still await the verdict of the responsible Cardinals and Bishops that she should be entitled 'Venerable'. After that only our successful pleas to her for miracles can raise her to the honours of Beatification and Canonisation. And so please pray to her and when she answers your prayers, send an accurate, detailed account to Father Paul Francis Spencer CP, Vice-Postulator, c/o Sister Dominic Savio Hamer CP, Cross and Passion Convent, 19 East Beach, Lytham, Lancashire, FY8 5EU.

Sister Dominic Savio Hamer CP

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The Mass

Over the last few months at St Joseph's Lancaster, we have run a series called 'The Mass' presented by American Bishop Barron. This has created an opportunity for a few of us from the parish to gather together and take time to unpick some of this sacred mystery. The series follows a simple online DVD format, and afterwards we share our thoughts and ideas on each episode. As Catholics we are obligated to attend Mass each Sunday; but as with many of us in that room we attend at every possible opportunity. But why should we run these kinds of series and preach to the converted? Here's why...

For those not familiar with it, the Mass appears a fixed ritual that never changes. For those of us who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to attend Mass more regularly, we begin to understand that the Mass is the gold dust, the foundation block and the pinnacle of our faith. If you pay attention, participate and actively listen, the Mass comes alive each time, changing and twisting to speak to us and feed us in a way that we need right now.

The opening session addressed our expectations and participation as congregation members. The priest, standing in the middle ground, represents his flock and the whole of humanity before God. But he is also 'in persona Christi', not himself but as Christ. So as the Mass begins and the opening words are spoken, our priest and his personality stand back. From here on until the end of Mass, it is Christ talking to us. The Mass is not a show we watch from the outside with the altar as a stage but it's something that we, the congregation are a vital part of. But how can we provide full active participation when we don't fully understand our own role and how vital it is? There is a call and response in this ritual, and yes God wishes to hear our voice in spoken words and song (*yes song!*)!!

The Mass isn't a random bunch of prayers flung together by higher powers of the Vatican, but a progression of deliberate steps to bring us into unity with each other and our Lord. It's an ancient tradition that pre-dates even the writing on the gospels.

The first thing we do before anything, (*normally*), is sing! While a bunch of poorly performing footballers can't make a successful team, we come together in voices of discord the first mystery unfolds - we join the chorus of angels to form that one voice of praise and worship! But just as a window shows its marks as the rays of the sun beam through it, in the blinding light of God we notice our marks, blemish or sin and ask for forgiveness, united in our brokenness and our humility.

The Liturgy of the Word; has us seated to actively listen. God speaks to us and we get the opportunity to speak back. I particularly love Bishop Barron's response to that age old statement 'I don't have to go to Mass, I find God everywhere, in the beach, in nature'. Valid points, and yes God is there but as he states, why listen to a recording when you can hear Him speak in real life, to 'me and you' right here and now today? Mass provides

the encounter where we can speak to God and have him respond. Through the Liturgy of the Word, God the Father speaks to us through The Word His Son, and it is through the Holy Spirit dwelling in each of our souls that we begin to understand. And then, just in case we haven't quite picked up all we need from the 'Word'; our homilist of the day will direct us through the passage, and bring its meaning to the life and times of today.

The offertory, brings forth, not only the monetary offerings but symbolises us and our lives. The blood, sweat and toil have produced this offering we bring. The bread and wine represent the fruits of the earth, work of humans hands using the elements of the cosmos and creation. Bread, an essential element for daily life, and the wine for good cheer and joy! Who said the Mass and religion need to be boring?!

As we move into the Liturgy of the Eucharist we kneel in adoration on Calvary. Our Lord, Master and King, dies for us and rises each time here right in front of us, the great mystery of faith. And after we, humanity have persecuted and killed Him, His eternal greeting is "peace be with you". It seems that however far we run away from God, whatever we do, He will always offer peace and love in return! Knowing this, yes, if we are able, we should kneel in adoration and praise.

Once communion is through, and we have been united with each other and God, it's time to leave. Not because it's all over, but because it's all just beginning. 'Go!' is the apostolic action of commissioning. It's not good enough that we keep this good feeling to ourselves, we are charged to share it with our families and communities. Here mission truly begins!

The Mass Series has been a fantastic and moving series of talks to facilitate. It has sparked so much debate. As you know, the Catholic Church comprises of a diversity of peoples of all ages. Here in this room, the youngest (*1 month at the start- we have to get them in young!*) and the oldest in her 80's; and we sit together and talk about our experiences. For the older generation this is the first time they have been given the opportunity to ask about their faith. The child inside them is still uncertain that they are allowed to ask questions or think critically about a religion that's been so heavily drilled into them. Now renewed with this new knowledge and insight we can move forward both in our faith and in the world.

So next time someone comments on how boring mass is, and how it's just to same over and over, we can gently respond. And if they are still not convinced... then we can show them. *Lisa Vallente-Osborne*

Football & Religion

'At the end of the storm there's a Golden Sky'

I think it was Sir Alex Ferguson who was reported as saying, *"To some people football is like a religion!"* It is important to stress that he used the word 'like' - he didn't say it WAS a religion. However football has appropriated several aspects of Christian religion and in our very secular world for many people going to a game is the nearest thing in their lives to a religious experience. Having had a foot in both camps, as it were, for over sixty years it is not my intention to offend anyone by looking more closely at these similarities.

Down the years my wife Olive and I have visited numerous churches ranging from the huge imposing Durham Cathedral to St Petrock's in Parracombe Devon, a small village church locked in time that was saved from demolition in 1879 by a group of protestors led by John Ruskin.

It is easy to absorb the history of such churches and, in contrast, I have had the opportunity to be in several Football Club grounds when it was not a match day where you can feel the emotion ingrained in the place and imagine the noise of thousands of studs of bygone players' bootsclattering down the tunnel onto the pitch. The church spires and towers reach up to the heavens and football club's

floodlights announced their presence at evening games the bright lights attracting fans like moths to a flame.

Come Sabbath or Holy Day we share our collective belief at churches of various denominations and on match days at football clubs of different persuasions either wearing our Sunday best or replica team shirt. We sing, caught up in the moment, we praise our God and idolise our playing heroes sometimes to the same tune. My hero was (still is) Denis Law who was tremendous and the phrase 'not fit to undo his laces' comes to mind. We go on Christian pilgrimages and festivals to share our devotion, and we travel to away matches united in our conviction when for 90 minutes nothing else matters. I love the symbolism and rituals of the Catholic Church - the 'smells and bells' - and at a game, particularly at an evening fixture, the sound of the public address system and the smell of the simmering onions on the burger van is evocative and familiar.

The birth of a child brings the joy of a Baptism for the family, and special moments like First Holy Communion and Confirmation are further important steps along our faith journey. Being taken to watch your very first match is similarly

a 'rites of passage' and with it a sense of belonging as J.B. Priestly so eloquently describes in *'The Good Companions'*, *"It turned you into a member of a new community, all brothers together for an hour and a half... and there you were cheering together, thumping one another on the shoulder, swapping judgements like lords of the earth, having pushed your way through a turnstile into another and altogether more splendid kind of life."*

Weddings, these days, take place at a variety of venues but life would be so much simpler if they were banned during the football season - you can't really settle and enjoy 'the day' until you know your team's result - even it is a defeat.

Deaths and tragedies and annual war remembrances are sombrely respected by both sets of supporters prior to the start of a game either by a minute's silence or applause with the same reverence of any church service.

Despite the learned teachings of The Holy Trinity by St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas it's probably fair to say that Trinity Sunday is one of the least favourite days of many children's liturgists. For football fans in the 1960's things were much simpler. At Old Trafford there

was Law, Best & Charlton and across the city at Maine Road were Bell, Lee & Summerbee, whilst down the East Lancs Road the Gwladys Street End of Goodison Park paid allegiance Ball, Harvey & Kendall.

The Catholic Church has its many treasures as has football with its glittering trophies that only a few players ever get to win. A few years ago when working at the National Football Museum I took the FA Cup to two primary schools in Liverpool. As a lifelong fan I had to pinch myself that I was driving about with the FA Cup in the boot of my car. At the first school news of my visit had obviously spread and a number of family members had somehow managed to wangle their way into the school hall. At the end of my presentation a man of about fifty, tears streaming down his face, grabbed me by the shoulders and said, *"I can't thank you enough, I'll never forget today. This morning I have held my first baby grandson for the very first time and I've held the FA Cup!"*

The word 'Religion' comes from the Latin "religare" which means 'to bind together'. It's probably fair to say that Christians join together in faith with God, whilst football fans join together in support of their team.

Dave Yates

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Fridays: 6.30 pm

Shrine Church of St Walburge, Preston
Mondays - Fridays: 8.30 am Low Mass
Saturdays: 10.30 am Low Mass
Sundays: 10.30 am, Sung Mass

Shrine of the English Martyrs, Preston
Monday-Saturday: 12 noon, Low Mass
Sundays: 9.00 am, Low Mass

Our Lady & St Michael, Banklands, Workington
First Fridays at 7.00 pm
(Please always check with Canon Watson before travelling)

No Mass at Hornby until May 2020


No further Masses at St Margaret Mary, Carlisle

Please check our website for up-to-date information.

Mass is also celebrated every Sunday at 8.30 am at St Mary Magdalene, Leyland Road, Penwortham and 11.30 am at St Catherine Labouré, Stanfield Lane, Leyland.
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Out with the old, in with the new

by Julia Beacroft

I was watching television the other day and I was struck by how many insurance adverts are aired; car insurance, house insurance and life insurance. There was 'Compare the Market' (the meercats), Churchill (the dog), Admiral, Direct line (Winston Wolf) and over 50's plans to name but a few. In fact many years ago I used to work in insurance so I'm certainly no stranger to it, but I'm sure that there seems to be both more advertising and more insurance companies than there ever used to be! However, the policy of 'new for old' remains unchanged, I'm glad to see. This essentially means that goods which have been stolen or accidentally damaged will be replaced with new ones to the same value by the insurers. No-one ever knows what is going to happen in the future, so the moral of the story is: make sure your insurance is up-to-date!

Consolation

This idea of 'new for old' though, did cause me to ponder... If only everything in life could be replaced in this way – our health for example. Of course, certain parts of us can indeed be replaced, for example joints and organs, but we are still a long way from being able to replace everything... And there are certain aspects of our lives that it's just impossible to replace, such as the death of a loved one. But there is a huge consolation and this can be found in our spiritual lives...

In baptism our old life is replaced by a new life in Christ, in the Trinity. Indeed, in the early Church where the baptism of adults was the norm, the total immersion in the baptismal waters and the coming up out of them, symbolized the turning away from a life of sin and embracing or replacing this with a spirit-filled life – in the Lord Jesus.

Ad Infinitum

During this time of Lent we also have ample opportunity for 'out with the old and in with the new' as we practice our Lenten observances. Lent is a time for us to take stock, to re-evaluate our secular and, more importantly, our spiritual lives. Lent is a period when we can reflect, re-visit the Sacrament of Reconciliation and find the peace and love of Jesus Christ. Most importantly, as we prepare for the great celebration of Easter during Lent, our 'spiritual spring clean' should include prayer, fasting and almsgiving alongside a determination to serve the Lord more fully.

And so in conclusion: insurance will provide for us if the worst should happen. Christ provides for us ad infinitum and not to mention the idea of new for old...

Julia Beacroft is an author, editor, workshop leader and presenter in Catholic faith formation. Her book 'Sanctifying the Spirit' is available to buy from AMAZON, Waterstones or Book Depository. Please visit www.sanciobooks.com for more information. Follow Julia on Facebook & Twitter. Copyright ©2019 Julia Beacroft. All rights reserved.



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St Stephen's Day Medals at The Holy Cross



Here's Hoping *by Ray Sudlow*

*Hope springs eternal in the mind,
Searching for what it may never find
It doesn't give up and hide away,
It's always there ready to swing and sway.*

*It's always there to lend a listening ear,
Especially at the darkest time of year.
It doesn't turn around nor walk on by,
It's with us and in us, that's no lie.*

*So, take heart for hope is a part of you,
Always searching for great deeds to ensue.
Don't lose sight of what you dream to be,
Out there is more than you can see.*

*There are the signs of strength you witness in a friend,
The kind act, a thoughtful gift that they send.
A moment shared in a warm embrace,
A compliment that's so full of grace.*

*Yes, hope knows no lasting bounds,
No judgements, nor scowls, nor frowns,
Hope always dawns anew.
Waiting for its strength to enter you,
To uplift and inspire too.*

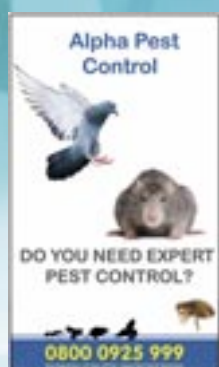


A very special Mass was held on St Stephen's Day at The Willows, Kirkham. Six servers from the Parish of the Holy Cross, which includes St Joseph's Wesham, were inducted into the Archconfraternity (Guild) of St Stephen for altar servers. This exists to encourage the highest standards of serving at the Church's liturgy, and so contribute to a more fruitful worship of God. The Guild seeks to provide altar servers with a greater understanding of what they are doing, so that they may serve with increasing reverence and prayerfulness.

My son Thomas was one of the six, making him the third generation of my family to be inducted into the Guild. In 2018 my Dad Michael received the gold medal for over 50 years' service. Our MC Bernard Pendleton, and myself, received the Silver Medal of Merit for over 20 years' service. The Mass was celebrated by Parish Priest, Fr Andrew Broster, who also presented all of the medals.

Christopher Massey

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