

The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 318 + April '20

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of Sr. Pauline
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the Common Good



CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid

- John 14:27

This global virus is threatening to disrupt our daily lives so it is important to follow all the official guidance on personal hygiene:

- Wash your hands often with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you feel unwell, stay at home, do not attend work or school.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash hands with soap and water.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.

Large sways of people have already contracted the virus across the world so everyone needs to take every precaution to minimise its transmission.

Pope Francis said:

"I unite myself to my brother Bishops in encouraging the faithful to live this difficult moment with the strength of the faith, the certainty of hope and the ardour of charity".

Let Us Pray

Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages 'curing every disease and illness'. At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.
Kerry Weber (America – The Jesuit Review)



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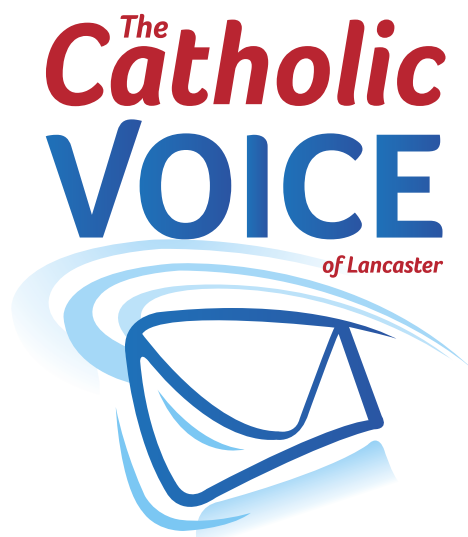
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**EDITORIAL****THE ABORTION LAW**

On Page 3 of this edition we report on the 'Don't Screen Us Out' campaign which is challenging the existing law that allows the legal abortion of a baby that has a disability, including Down's syndrome, cleft lip and club foot, right up to birth. The campaign claims discrimination as it distinguishes between a baby with a disability and a baby without a disability. The **Catholic Voice** fully supports this campaign and urges readers to do what they can to support it by prayer, lobbying their MP or by financial contribution.

COVID - 19

It is in our own hands (*if you will pardon the pun*)! The **Catholic Voice** urges readers to thoroughly wash their hands at every opportunity and instead of singing Happy Birthday to recite three Hail Marys. This measure not just to help to curtail the spread of the COVID - 19 virus, it is simply good hygiene and an excellent habit to adopt to prevent the spread of all diseases. At the time of writing the COVID - 19 virus has not reached epidemic proportions in the UK and yet already the virus is stirring up panic amongst many people intent upon clearing supermarket shelves. We must be careful not to jump on the bandwagon and consider the impact of stockpiling for our needs on those unable to take a similar action, often the poor and vulnerable.

As the virus, inevitably, spreads; we should be prepared for

a period of widespread disruption; we should listen to public health advice and stay focused on what the experts are saying; and we should be mindful and sensitive to those who may need some extra help to get them through.

If you find that you have to self-isolate or are quarantined at home or in hospital and can't have the assistance of a priest you can still have access to the forgiveness of God and consolation of the Blessed Sacrament. Deacon Nick Donnelly has published an essay on the subject which is available at:

<https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2020/03/a-catholic-survival-guide-for-covid-19.html>, excerpts of which are published below:

PERFECT CONTRITION AND SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**What to do if you cannot go to Confession or Holy Communion due to the COVID-19 coronavirus**

If you have to self-isolate or are quarantined due to the COVID-19 coronavirus, it is unlikely that you will be able to receive the sacraments as normal.

In these circumstances, there are devotions through which you can receive absolution for your sins, (under certain conditions), and the consolation of Eucharistic grace.

These devotions are officially encouraged by the Church and have been practiced by saints.

**HOW TO MAKE AN ACT OF PERFECT CONTRITION**

Through an act of Perfect Contrition, you receive pardon for your sins outside of confession, even mortal sins, on condition that you determine to amend your life and make a firm resolution to go to sacramental confession as soon as this becomes possible for you.

Perfect Contrition is a grace from God, so sincerely ask for this gift throughout the day prior to making your act of contrition: **"My God, grant me perfect contrition for all my sins".**

1. In reality or imagination kneel at the foot of a crucifix and say to yourself:
"Jesus, my God and my Saviour, in the midst of your agony, you remembered me, you suffered for me, you wished to wipe away my sins".
2. Contrition is 'perfect' if you repent of your sins because you love God and are sorry for offending Him and causing the sufferings of Christ on the cross. Before the Crucified Christ remember your sins, repent of them because they have brought our Lord to His sufferings on the Cross. Promise him, that with His help, you will not sin again.
3. Recite, slowly and sincerely, an act of contrition focused on the goodness of God and your love of Jesus:
"O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you and by the help of your grace I will not sin again. Amen".
4. Make a firm resolution to go to sacramental confession as soon as practically possible.

HOW TO MAKE A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

The key to Spiritual Communion is to grow in your heart a constant desire for the Blessed Sacrament.

1. If you are aware of serious or mortal sin, make an Act of Perfect Contrition.
2. Imagine the sacred words and actions of the Mass or watch online or on TV.
3. Make all those acts of faith, humility, sorrow, adoration, love and desire that you usually express before Holy Communion.
4. Desire, with earnest longing, to receive our Lord present — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity — in the Blessed Sacrament.
5. Say this prayer of St. Alphonsus de' Ligouri:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You are already there, I embrace You and unite myself wholly to You; do not let me ever be separated from You. Amen.

6. After moments of silent adoration make all those acts of faith, humility, love, thanksgiving and offering that you usually express through prayers after Holy Communion.



Cheryl with big sister Tilly and Hector.

Don't Screen Us Out!

Shockingly published figures highlight that 90% of babies who are prenatally diagnosed with Down's Syndrome are aborted.

Heidi Crowter, a 24-year-old woman from Coventry who has Down's syndrome, has joined forces with Cheryl Bilsborrow of St Mary's parish in Great Eccleston, to launch a landmark case against the UK Government under the banner 'Don't Screen Us Out' over the current discriminatory abortion law which allows abortion up to birth for Down's syndrome. Cheryl has a two year-old son Hector with Down's syndrome. Cheryl recounted a conversation she had following a prenatal test when she was offered a termination for Hector at 38 weeks gestation because Hector happened to have Down's Syndrome. Cheryl replied in shock and disgust "I'll pretend I didn't hear that."

Currently in England, Wales and Scotland, there is a general 24-week time limit for abortion, but if the baby has a disability, including Down's syndrome, cleft lip and club foot, abortion is legal right up to birth.

Appearing with Cheryl on the Victoria Derbyshire show in February and doing several media interviews Heidi said: "At the moment in the UK, babies can be aborted right up to birth if they are considered to be "seriously handicapped". They include me in

that definition of being seriously handicapped – just because I have an extra chromosome! Can you believe that?

What it says to me is that my life just isn't as valuable as others, and I don't think that's right. I think it's downright discrimination!

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recently said that the United Kingdom should change its abortion law to make sure that people like me aren't singled out because of our disabilities.

Sadly, the Government decided to ignore their recommendations and didn't change the law. So now, I am going to take the Government to court with other members of the Down's syndrome community to make sure that people aren't treated differently because of their disabilities."

Can you help Heidi and Cheryl?
Heidi and her legal team have set up a CrowdJustice crowdfunding page to help raise the initial £20,000 to start legal proceedings, pay for legal advice and begin the preparation of the case. To find out more and to make a contribution to the case please visit:

www.crowdjustice.com/case/downright-discrimination/



Photo courtesy of Paul Woodhouse.

On a very blustery February evening St Kentigern's hosted the Annual Feast Day Mass for the patroness of the Diocese, Our Lady of Lourdes. Bishop Paul was the principal celebrant with nine other priests concelebrating the Mass which included the anointing of the sick. In his homily Bishop Paul reminded us that, despite our ailments and anything that we feel is wrong with our lives, 'the best is yet to come' and that we should appreciate all that God has given us. Thanks to everyone who came and especially to those who helped organise this Mass.

Fr Andrew Dawson



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Team Retreat

As a team we've just been enjoying our half term break and a well-deserved rest. But just before we left each other for our break we went on a retreat of our own down to Soli House in the village of Alton.

It was refreshing to experience a retreat together as a community and to be able to spend time together in prayer and fun, outside of work. Six months into our year at Castlerigg we are used to the routine of prepping for retreats and leading retreats, and it was exciting to be on a retreat of our own.

On the first night we learnt a lot more about how our senses impact our prayer, from focusing on the scent of incense and it carrying our prayers, all the way to using our sense of touch to focus on our surroundings, and recognising the significance of our surroundings in Mass or at any time when we're talking to

God. Later on that night we worked on our team bonding skills, completing a number of fun challenges in groups as a way to work and co-operate as a team.

Even though we thought we already knew each other as well as we could imagine, we learnt that Chris can do a pretty amazing impression of Ruben, during our 'dressing up as your partner' challenge. We ended our night with night prayer in the chapel as a team. Just like being back at Castlerigg, our time in the chapel as a team was so special and meaningful, and taking that time out of our day to sit and reflect together really ended our first day at Soli in a positive way.

The second day began with a walk before breakfast, as a way for us as a team to recognise the beauty of God's creation that is all around us. We had morning prayer in the outdoors overlooking fields and forests. A little later on we looked at

how prayer can impact our lives and that sometimes it's not as simple as it seems; although it may feel that God isn't with us, he is always guiding us and although we might not recognise it at the time, God is always answering our prayers, just sometimes not in the way we wanted or expected. That afternoon we were taken on a walk and were partnered up with someone else on team for a section of the walk (*inspired by Jesus walking with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus*) and spoke about what we thought of the retreat so far and what we want to get out of our time at the retreat. We then finished our walk off with a few matches of bubble football, ending in a showdown between Alex and Ruben (*Ruben won*) and it was a really great way to spend time with the team and a time to de-stress from pressures of the outside world by burning off some steam. That night we had a team game of hide and seek all around the house followed by praise

and worship in the chapel. Praise and worship was such an amazing part of the retreat and was a great chance to spend time as a team reflecting on our faith, and the night prayer on the final night had a deep community feel and really brought us all together and was one of the highlights of the retreat for us as a team. On the last morning we attended parish mass next to Alton Castle and met some of the parishioners from the local area. Then we said our thankyou's and goodbyes to our hosts and headed back up north.

For all of us as a team, the team retreat to Soli house was a really good way to spend time together as a team praying and having fun. It's fair to say we have all benefited from this retreat and it has brought us all so much closer as a team and has allowed us to start of this next term refreshed and ready to complete more retreats with a joyful attitude!



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



Come to Castlerigg Manor (or we can come to you)

We are blessed to have our residential centre in such a beautiful part of the world. School groups are our main users, and we welcome young people from far and wide, for day-retreats and residential retreats of two to four nights.

Recently we have also been pleased to welcome parish groups, youth groups, confirmation programmes and adult groups, including Alpha retreats and a walking group, and there is a long history of extended-family groups booking to come for a family get together. There are gaps in our diary and it seems a shame not to make the most of such a great resource. Please get in touch if you would like to know more or to explore the possibilities for



bringing a group to Castlerigg. We have seventy beds across eighteen rooms, including rooms designed for disabled access, and a few en-suite rooms, and all the catering is included.

For schools and youth groups who can't come to us, we are also happy to arrange for our team to come to you, to work with a small group, a year group or even more. To find out more, please visit our website www.castleriggmanor.co.uk or email team@castleriggmanor.co.uk

Dates for the Diary

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 this 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:

www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/events-whats-on

Improvements at Castlerigg Manor



BEFORE



AFTER

With a building like Castlerigg Manor there is always something to do, and we've been busy over the last few months to ensure that it is a welcoming and comfortable place for all of the young people who come here. We've just completed a refit of Lake View (formerly the bar), making it a much lighter and more comfortable space, and more adaptable for our programme and other groups too.

For the coming year we have a lot more planned – we'll soon be putting scaffolding up on the roadside façade for much needed redecoration, and we're looking for funding to refurbish the Games Room, to name just a couple.



Support our Work

Please help us to continue the work of the Youth Service. If you feel you might be able to help in any way please get in touch. If you are able to make a donation this would be greatly appreciated: www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/donate And most importantly, please keep us in your prayers.



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**Christ be near me every single day.
Christ hear me as I kneel down to pray.
Christ who bore the cross
And all its torment and pain,
Reach out and touch us
So we may feel strong again.**

**Christ, our guide and listener too.
Christ, whose message is meant for me and you.
You are no judge, just a trusting friend.
To You our love we send.**

**Christ you taught us to love and care for all.
Sometimes we find this hard and fall.
Give us each day a level head.
So that we might plant the right seed instead.**

Easter Mass Times

St. Bernadette's Bispham

Maunday Thursday

7pm Mass of the Lords Supper.
9.50pm Night prayer

Friday

10am Stations of the Cross 3pm
Solemn Celebration of the Passion of

Our Lord and Holy Saturday

7pm Vigil and Service of Light

Easter Sunday

10am Easter Sunday Mass

St Wilfrid's, Preston

Holy Thursday

No Masses during the day
11am-12 noon & 2.30pm-3.30pm
Confessions

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper -
Watching at the Altar of Repose
until 10.45pm

Good Friday

10.30am Stations of the Cross
10.30am-12 noon Confessions
3.00pm Service of the Lord's Passion

Holy Saturday

No Masses during the day
11am-12 noon & 2.30pm-3.30pm
Confessions

Church closes at 4pm

8.30pm Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday

7.00am, 10.15am Mass
(No evening Mass)
Church closes at 5pm

St Peter's Lytham

Palm Sunday 5th April

Mass 10.30am with blessing of the
Palms.

4.00pm Stations of the Cross.

Holy Thursday 9th April

7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
'Watching' until 10.00pm.

Good Friday 10th April

10.30am Stations of the Cross
3.00pm Celebration of the Lord's
Passion.

Holy Saturday 11th April

Easter Vigil Mass 8.00pm.

Easter Sunday 12th April

Mass 10.30am.

Our Lady And St. Edward's, Fulwood

Palm Sunday April 5th

(Saturday 6pm) Mass, with Palms
8.45am Palms procession & Mass

Monday April 6th

7.30pm Reconciliation Service
(at St. Clare's)

Holy Thursday April 9th

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper,
Good Friday April 10th

10.00am Stations of the Cross
3.00pm The Lord's Passion and
Death

Holy Saturday April 11th

8.30pm Easter Vigil: Mass of Easter
Night

Easter Sunday April 12th

8.45am Easter Morning Mass
(10.30am (at St. Mary', Station Lane,
Barton) Easter Mass

Holy Trinity and St. George, Kendal

Maundy Thursday

7.00 pm (Kendal)

Good Friday

3.00 pm (Kendal)

Holy Saturday

9.00 pm (Kendal) – Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday

Morning 10.00 (Kendal)
Easter Sunday 12.00 noon
(Sedbergh St. Andrews
C.of E. Church)

Ansdell, St Joseph's Woodlands Road FY8 4EP

Palm Sunday 4/5 April

6pm Vigil Mass (Saturday)
10am Procession of Palms
and Family Mass
5.05 pm Mass

Holy Thursday 9 April

7pm Mass of the Lord's Supper -
Watching at the Altar of Repose
until 10pm

Good Friday 10 April

9.30am St Paul's Shop for walk of
witness to St Pauls, Fairhaven and
Joint Service at 10am

3.00pm Solemn Celebration of the
Lord's Passion

Holy Saturday 11 April

8.00pm Easter Vigil and first Mass
of Easter

Easter Sunday 12 April

10am Family Mass
5.05pm Mass

Our Lady Star of the Sea, St Anne's on the Sea

Holy Saturday

8.00pm Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday

9.30am (Family Mass)
11.00am Mass
6.30pm Mass



FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT MINSTERACRES

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Monday 1 (6.30pm) - Friday 5 June (2pm)

Suggested Donation: £395

Three Day Walking Retreat

Three days with walks of eight to ten miles through the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres. Every day starts with a reflection. You will need suitable walking boots and weatherproof clothing.

Tuesday 23 (10am) - Thursday 25 June (5pm)

Suggested Donation: £140

The Beauty and Power of the Word of God

This preached retreat will offer a series of reflections on one of the most fundamental motifs of the Scriptures, that of the Word of God. From Genesis through to the Gospels and the writings of Paul, the Word of God is portrayed as powerful, creative, compassionate and nourishing. Viewing the Scriptures from this vantage point can be a source of inspiration and strength for us in our contemporary Christian life. Fr Donald Senior is a Passionist priest and one of the Catholicism's leading New Testament scholars. He is President Emeritus of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where, he is also a professor of the New Testament and has served on the Pontifical Biblical Commission since 2001. In addition to having written books and articles too numerous to list Fr Senior is the general editor of The Bible Today and The Catholic Study Bible, as well as coeditor of the 22-volume commentary series New Testament Message.

Monday 13 (6.30pm) - Monday 20 July (10am)

Suggested Donation: £520

Minsteracres Retreat Centre, Nr Consett, County Durham DH8 9RT.
For information and bookings Email: info@minsteracres.org Tel: 01434 673248.
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Mass Listings - April 2020

St John Vianney, Marton, Blackpool

Mondays: 12.00 noon;
Fridays: 6.30 pm

Shrine Church of St Walborge, 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.
Local Representatives: Bob & Jane Latin
Telephone: 01524 412987
Email: lancaster@lms.org.uk
Website: latinmasslancaster.blogspot.com

Divine Mercy adverts see page 15

Day to Celebrate Consecrated Life



There was a log fire blazing and a warm welcome from the community in Boarbank Hall, Cumbria on Saturday, February 1st when about 50 religious, and members of secular institutes of consecrated life and priests from all over the diocese gathered to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life.

Each year this Day is closely linked with the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord when we acclaim Christ as the Light of the world. So, too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the Light of

Christ to all peoples. Thanks to the generous hospitality of the Canonesses of St Augustine, we were able to share a lively day of inspiration, prayer, liturgical celebration and the enjoyment of one another's company.

At three times in the course of the day Father John Farrell OP spoke to us powerfully and memorably and challengingly about the gift we have been given, the gift we are called to be in the Church for the world. He drew rich inspiration from the gospel of the Feast

and then focused on Jesus' own words of consecration in the Last Supper discourse in St John's gospel. For here Jesus speaks to every disciple and shows us how we are to live eucharistically and share his joy.

At midday Bishop Paul came to concelebrate the Mass of the Feast with us after we processed into the beautiful chapel with our candles lit to symbolise the Light of Christ. Over lunch there was time to meet the Bishop as well as our old friends and make new ones! Time to chat

and share news. In the afternoon Father Farrell offered us more rich thought for reflection, his talk was followed by Exposition, Vespers of the Presentation and Benediction.

We were not allowed to leave for our journeys home without a hot drink and delicious cakes.

Altogether it had truly been a day of celebration, blessing, enrichment, encouragement and joy.

Philomena Grimley SHCJ

First Profession of Sr. Pauline



On Saturday 11th January 2020, Sr. Pauline celebrated her first profession, making vows for three years, during Mass at the Monastery of Notre Dame de La Plaine, the Mother House of the Bernardine Cistercians based in Lille in the north of France. On this joyous occasion she was surrounded by the La Plaine community, the novitiate of Hyning who travelled across the Channel especially for the profession, her family and some close friends. Among the celebrants were her uncle Fr Emmanuel and Fr Bernard Willem who had accompanied her on her faith journey when she was a member of the 'Pastorale des Migrants'.

Sr Pauline is French and entered with the Bernardine Cistercians in France but has lived at the Monastery of Our Lady of Hyning for the past year and a half so that she has the opportunity of being formed with a small group in the novitiate. The English language is not an

obstacle for her as she formerly lived in the UK as an 'au pair' for two years and later worked at the reception desk of Les Beaux Arts in Lille welcoming English visitors.

For her profession readings Sr. Pauline chose the call of Samuel, psalm 26 'Of you my heart has spoken, seek his face' and the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus in John's Gospel. She will celebrate her feast day on 29th June, the solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul identifying with the conversion of St Paul, having had a similar experience when she was on pilgrimage at Lourdes before she entered. From that time she started to live her faith seriously and then discovered that she had an attraction to the monastic life after having visited the community at La Plaine.

A reception followed the Mass during which Sr. Pauline thanked everyone for coming to support her in this next step of her vocational journey.

Pastoral Year of the Word

The God Who Speaks



Pick up your Bible and Read!

This year has been designated by our bishops as a Pastoral Year of the Word, with the title: *The God who Speaks*. It is a year in which we are encouraged to read our Bible more. Over the coming months the *Catholic Voice* will run a series of short articles to assist and encourage you to engage with the Bible. The series will be written by a Diocesan Priest.

Where to Begin?

As with anything we read, whether a magazine, a poster or even a tweet, we begin with a 'mindset', for want of a better word. Most of the time we do not even consider our mindset nor register that we have entered into it; but we have. This 'mindset' is how we approach what we are about to read and it helps us to get the most out of the text. We do not complain that a tweet is too short nor that a magazine has too many pictures - it is what we want and expect. The 'mindset' determines our expectations. We want and expect a poster to be snappy and provide essential information. If it doesn't, we turn off.

What 'mindset' and expectations should we try to bring to our Bible reading?

We know that, whatever the translation, the Bible is an ancient text originating in a culture far removed from our own, with a different outlook and written in a strange language. It is very different from anything else you may read. But what

it has in common with us is deeper and more fundamental than the differences. The Bible comes from human beings just like you. It explores those unchanging aspects of humanity and addresses the most important human questions such as: who am I? What can I hope for? How is God active in my life? What must I do and where does happiness lie? So, when it comes to your 'mindset', do not be afraid to read the Bible. It is written by people just like you and it tells the stories and dramas of people just like you.

There is one great principle to keep in mind as you approach the Bible: it is the Word of God written in human words. This is an obvious point for any believer, but it is essential that we consider its implications. In this we differ from our Muslim brothers and sisters in the way they approach their holy scriptures. According to Islamic scholarly accounts the Angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad in Mecca and recited to him verses of the Quran. We, in contrast, hold that the Bible is inspired. This is not the same as saying that the words were recited or dictated by God or any other being to a human author. Inspiration means that in composing the words and books of the Bible God worked through human beings, and all the while these human beings used their own abilities.

The Bible is inspired; it is not recited to the human authors nor dictated. The human words are to be reflected upon, pondered, wrestled with and explored in order to open our hearts to hear the 'still small voice' of God's speaking.

This means that there are two creative impulses bringing about the words of the Bible; one divine and one human. God, as the creative origin ensures that the words of scripture communicate everything and only those things that He wants. The human being, as the inspired individual or community, creatively communicates what they experience through inspiration. In so doing they use their own gifts, background, culture, turn of phrase and personality. In other words, they 'put it in their own words'.

We are comfortable with this outlook because we meet it when we contemplate Our Lord Jesus. He is True God and True Man. Sometimes in the Gospels His divinity (*being God*) is to the fore, such as when He walks on water or gives sublime teaching. Before the resurrection, perhaps His divinity is most clearly seen in the Transfiguration. At other times His humanity (*being man*) is to the fore such as when he is sleeping in the boat or asking for water. Perhaps His humanity is most clearly seen when He is a small baby, wrapped up and fed by Mary.

We can approach the Bible with a similar, if modified, outlook. When we read, sometimes the Divine Word is clearly to the fore, at other times the manner of human telling will strike the reader sharply. For example, in his letter to the Ephesians St Paul talks of the Church as Christ's body united to its head. The

analogy is from marriage and it strikes us as beautiful, intimate, warm and encouraging. At the same time, St Paul is a man of his time and his description of the place of women in the analogy can jar with modern expectations. The key for the reader is to be open to the Word of God and patient with the human words expressing the divine message. At other times, such as in the poetry of the Song of Songs, it is the human words themselves that lead us to a deeper reflection on our intimacy with God.

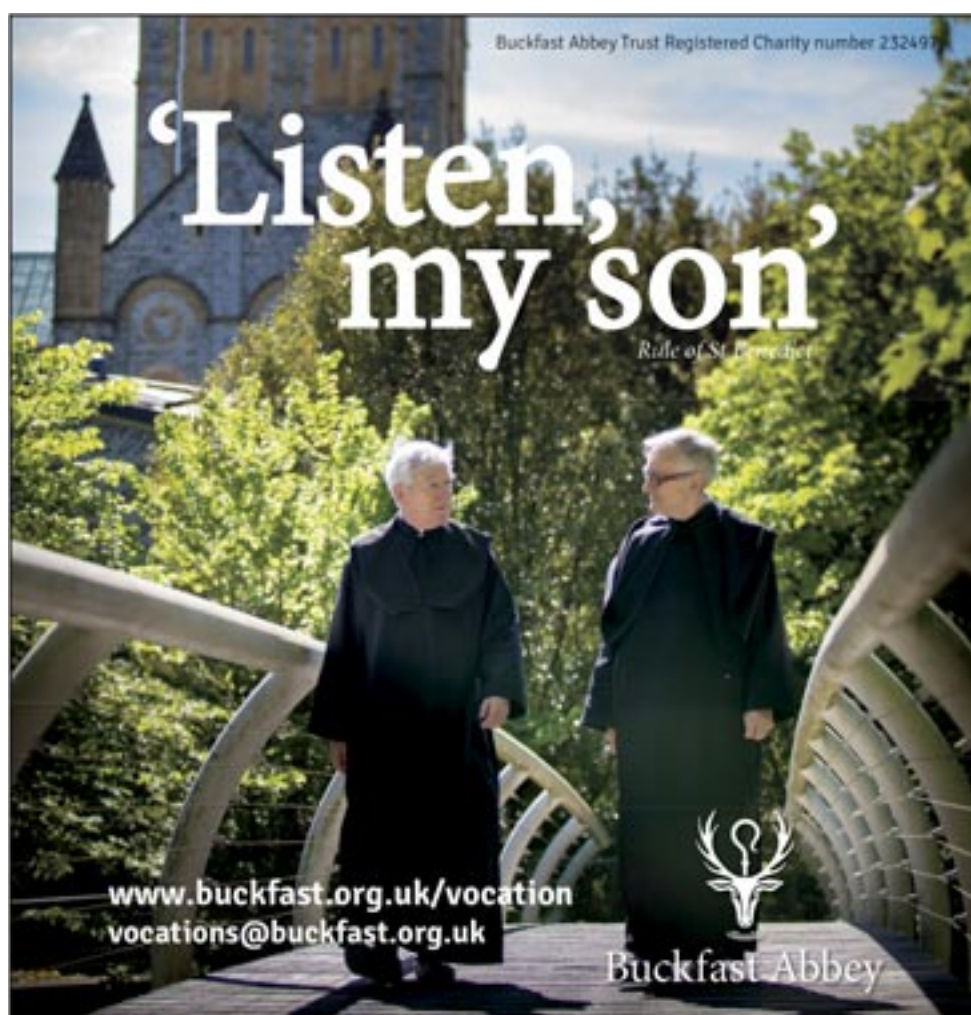
The Bible is inspired; it is not recited to the human authors nor dictated. The human words are to be reflected upon, pondered, wrestled with and explored in order to open our hearts to hear the 'still small voice' of God's speaking.

You may ask, why did God do it in this way and not simply dictate, for clarity, what He wants to tell us? We cannot presume to answer for God. But it is striking that when God chose to meet us, He did so as one of us, Jesus Christ, a human being. God's manner of communication and work with us human beings is certainly consistent. When people looked into the eyes of Jesus they saw God looking back at them. His presence continues in the Sacraments today so that when we touch, taste, smell, hear and see physical things we know that we are hearing, touching and being fed by God. So too with the Bible. The words are human words and they communicate God's Word.

Armed with this 'mindset', pick up your Bible and read! Here are a few pointers just by way of encouragement.

- **Don't be afraid:** What you will read has been written by human beings just like you, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Ask the same Spirit to inspire your reading.
- **Start easy:** Begin with the Gospels and Acts.
- **Be open:** Allow yourself to be challenged and enlightened.
- **Chew the cud:** The Bible is not a book to be 'got through' and completed like an instruction manual (*although it contains instructions*) or a novel (*although it contains stories*). It is a book to be poured over.
- **Don't give up:** If there's something you can't get your head round, don't worry, don't be discouraged and don't stop. In this respect the Bible is like people; you can't grasp everything about them on first encounter.
- **Try a Good-Book club:** sharing with and listening to others can bring further insights, just like any good book-club. Why not gather in small groups?

Future articles in the *Catholic Voice* will explore other aspects of the Bible including a little background to the books that make up the Old and New Testaments. We will also look at some of those passages where the human words seem all too human and jarring, and the 'still small voice' of the Divine seems to struggle to be heard.



God calls to us constantly, longing to guide those who yearn for life and desire to see good days into the way of peace. The Rule of Saint Benedict helps us to hear God's voice, in the Holy Scriptures, in the sacred liturgy and in our brothers in community. If you are a single man longing to live your Catholic faith in a way which brings great joy as it demands the best of you, consider whether God is calling you to be a Benedictine monk at Buckfast Abbey. Please reach out to us, and we will do all we can to help you.



**Help people in the world's poorest places
See the Way to a brighter future – give
before 12th May 2020 and every £1 you
donate to our See the Way appeal will be
doubled by the UK government.**

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.

Leah's mother is heartbroken that her daughter is needlessly blind. She told us, "Sometimes she cries because of the discomfort. It is as if she sees stones instead of light in her eyes." Cataract surgery to restore sight can take just 45 minutes, but many families in low-income countries cannot afford the £95 for surgery.

You can change that with a gift to CBM today. £95 could fund cataract surgery for **not one but two** children like Leah. That's because every pound you give will have double the impact - you could fund twice as much equipment and medical supplies, medication and a skilled surgeon's time, as well as any follow-up care, including eye drops and glasses.

Give before 12th May 2020 and every £1 you donate to our See the Way appeal will be doubled by the UK government.

God bless you,

Louise

Louise Shute
CBM Programme Manager

Public donations will support CBM's work preventing blindness and transforming lives wherever the need is greatest. Match funding from the UK government will improve access to sight saving eye-health services in Malawi.

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We will send you an update on Leah's surgery.

We'd love to keep you informed about our life-changing work and how you can support it by making a donation. By giving your email address or phone number below you give CBM UK consent to contact you using these methods:

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Until 12th May 2020, the UK government will double all public donations to our See the Way appeal up to £2 million.



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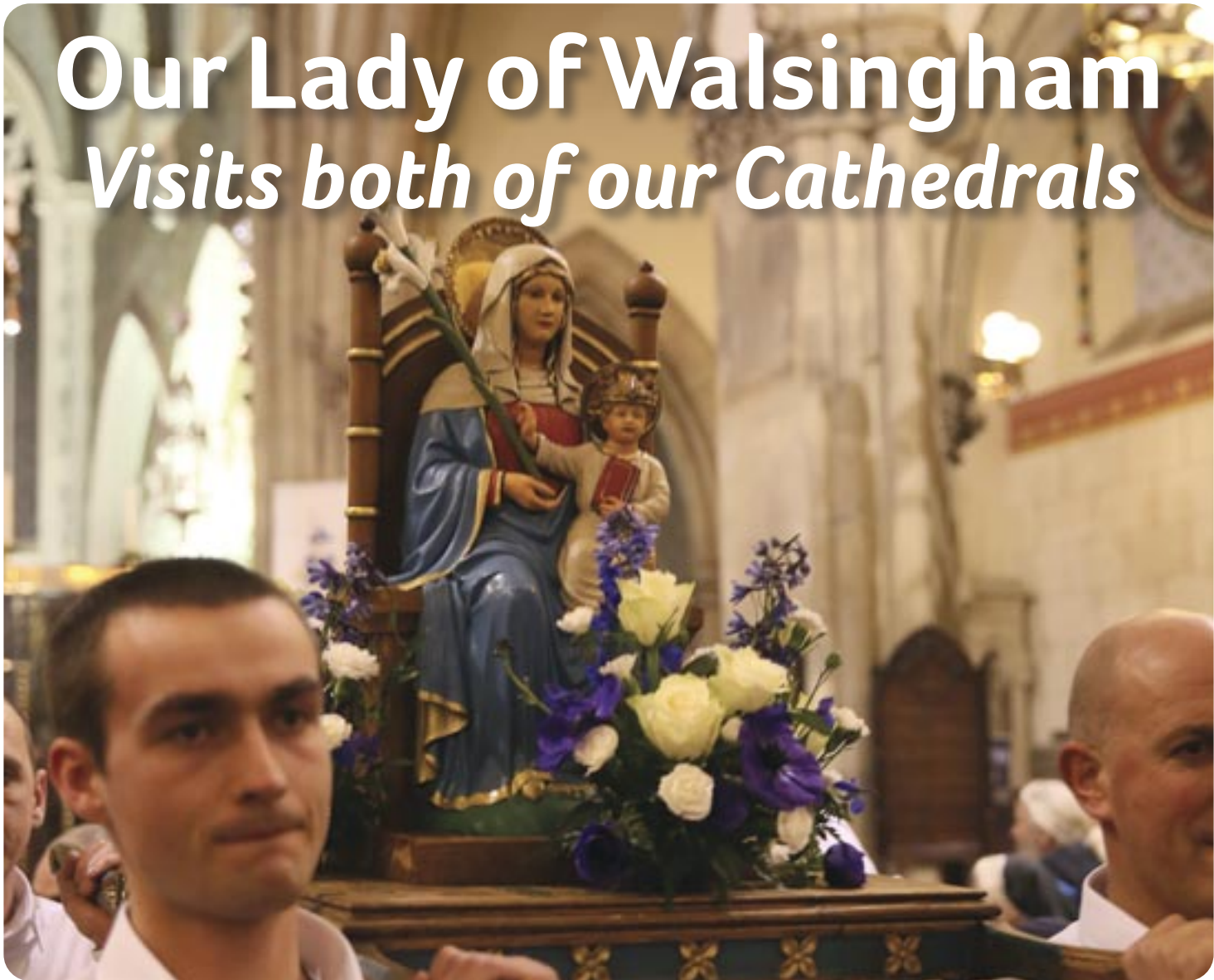
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Earlier last month the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham visited our Diocesan Cathedral of St Peter in Lancaster and the Syro Malabar Cathedral of St Alphonsa in Preston.

The date had been in the Diocesan Cathedral diary since 2018. The statue of the Madonna and child from the famous Slipper chapel at Walsingham was to be making a grand progress to all the Catholic Cathedrals across England, and the dates for St Peter’s Lancaster were to be February 6th till February 8th 2020. At that time...the date was way, way in the future!

As the dates for Lancaster drew nearer, the name for the event had become “The Dowry Tour”, because our Bishops of England and Wales wanted to rededicate England once again as “The Dowry of Mary”, a pious connection certainly dating back to 1381 when the then King of England, Richard II, looked to the protection of Our Blessed Lady to help him overcome the Peasants Revolt. He survived the Revolt!

As the dates drew nearer for the visit to Lancaster, we at the Cathedral began negotiating with the team in Walsingham about how the time and prayer for the visit was to be structured. We took advice from the arrangements put in place for visits

to other Cathedrals. Finally the programme was in place and the posters and advertising for the event was agreed and distributed. Two solemn Masses with Bishop Paul, including processions honouring Our Lady, other events during the daytimes: it was to be a full programme.

Then we were there. February 6th the team arrived in Lancaster, set up their exhibitions in the Cathedral (*I think they were presuming a bigger building!*), the holy statue of our Lady of Walsingham was unpacked, and all the arrangements began to fall into place. By the way the statue, which dates from 1896 when the Slipper chapel in Walsingham was restored by the impressive Charlotte Pearson Boyd (*what a good combination of surnames*) was made in Oberammergau in Germany following the designs from pilgrim badges of medieval times. The modern copy of the Holy House was erected in the Cathedral, and almost immediately modern day pilgrims to Our Lady of Walsingham began to gather.

It is worth remembering that devotion to the Holy House and to Our Lady at Walsingham came about as a result of three visions given to Richeldis de Faverches, a devout English noble woman. In these visions she was shown the holy house of Nazareth



and was requested to build a replica of it where people could give honour to the Blessed Virgin who is reported to have said: "Whoever seeks my help there will not go away empty-handed". Devotion to Our Lady grew, and despite Walsingham's relative isolation in Norfolk (and I write this as a proud Barrovian!), the number of pilgrims to the little town grew, so that just before the reformation it was the fourth most important pilgrimage across Europe.

They came to pray, to ask for help, to be challenged by the gospel message and ultimately to be loved by the Mother of Christ.

The Holy House came to Lancaster. So too did its beautiful statue. So too did modern day pilgrims. They came to pray, to ask for help, to be challenged by the gospel message and ultimately to be loved by the Mother of Christ. The numbers of pilgrims exceeded all our expectations, and they came not just from the diocese but from across Lancashire and even from southern Scotland. The prayerful dignity of the Masses

was memorable, and many people were impressed by the bier bearers from the Cenacolo community near Kendal. On the Friday morning we welcomed children from primary and high schools across the Diocese...at one point over 400 of them gently exploring the Holy House, the exhibition and the Cathedral with a low-noise devotion which I for one found very moving. Bishop Paul, teachers and helpers moving among the children with time and faith to share. It was for me, perhaps the highlight of the Dowry tour in Lancaster.

After the final Mass the exhibition was dismantled, and Walsingham team were fed, then some of them made their way to the Cathedral of St Alphonsa in Preston to be welcomed by the Syro-Malabar community there, while others made their way back to Walsingham with storm Chiara pressing down upon us. But there was a gentle glow of love and faith which hadn't been there in the same way before and for this we were all grateful. The rededication of England to Our Lady which will happen in Masses across the land on March 29th 2020, 639 years after Richard II's last dedication, should bring us the loving confidence to follow ever more closely our Saviour Jesus Christ following the example Mary of Nazareth...his first disciple.

Fr Stephen Pearson, Cathedral Dean



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A SONG FOR UNITY

Christian Unity - a pipe dream or reality?

Christian Unity - a pipe dream or something attainable? Sometimes we feel worlds apart from our fellow Christian brothers and sisters, other times we are so close and so similar. After all our goals and purpose are the same, even if our methods can somewhat differ. It's easy to focus on the valleys that divide us instead of looking for unity which holds us as one family.

Normally we'd all be praying for unity. Something out there far off, something that feels so unattainable but actually it's a little easier than we think to achieve. Our church was packed to celebrate our annual 'Song for Unity' event, welcoming Christians from all over Lancaster and beyond. Housed in those pews sat side by side were Catholics (from other churches in Lancaster and Morecambe- which in itself is a wonder!) Anglicans, Protestants, Methodists and other Christian brothers and sisters from at least 14 different churches! Not only did we have Christian diversity, we had a global mix of visitors too, from Peru, China, Singapore, as well as Dent and sunny exotic Barrow-in-Furness! Together in a little Catholic Church in Lancaster, we stood, sat and prayed. Together we stayed for some time, breathing the same air for the entire evening, laughing, smiling, crying, honouring and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our regular 'Forever Amen' praise & worship band swelled taking on more musicians from the University of Lancaster, the New Life Church and more 'free people' (as one of the congregation leaders put it!) Free Methodists. Promoted this time through Churches Together in Lancaster, we took to the front of house after a short and beautiful impromptu

prayer of unity in the sacristy. We were supported by a local firm of sound engineers (Audioworks).

The night began with a welcome from Fr. Philip Conner and an opening prayer from Rt Rev Bishop Jill Duff of Lancaster. The music was coordinated and set by Emily Boyd, our Prayer and Worship leader for St Joseph's. The music was spaced out to hold time for the larger sound of praise and worship, but also slower softer lower sounds for reflection, contemplation and prayer. A large screen provided the words for the congregational songs as well as scripture quotes from St Paul for reflective prayer. Our theme was 'Forgiven & Redeemed'. The lights went down, the stage lighting switched on, and the band began!

'How amazing, isn't He wonderful, sing Hallelujah Christ is Risen!' (Come to the Altar).

It's easy to focus on the valleys that divide us instead of looking for unity which holds us as one family.

'He is Risen!' and tonight He joined us and made His presence felt. Our voices were filled with the Spirit and he taught us how to honour and adore Him, not to just sing but spirit filled to praise and worship Him. We raised our eyes and hearts to heaven, and heaven came to meet us. The Holy Spirit worked in us, through us and we sat or stood in awe, knowing and feeling the Kingdom present, here and now!

This is what unity looks like! This!! Not a pipe dream of Christians agreeing with

every doctrine, although that would be nice. No but this!!! A night where those divided stand side by side; a time to unite, pray enjoying fellowship and the belonging to one Kingdom. A night when we let Him work through us and unite our voices with those of the heavens. We were made for this. This is why Christ died, and rose! We sometimes forget what the celebration of the resurrection looks and feels like.

At the end, of the music we concluded with Colossians 3:12-17, a letter from St Paul on prayer, unity, love and the use of music for the praise and glory of the Lord. A prayer of love expressed through psalms and hymns and songs from our voices! Our voices weren't given to us to shy away from, they are there to use! Our voices weren't given to us so we can judge and condemn, or be ashamed of ourselves and others. Our voices were given to us so we can join the angels in praise and prayer! We can all sing! Never think you're tone deaf just have the courage and faith to sing!

'Father, creator of unfailing light, give that same light to those who call to you. May our lips praise you; our lives proclaim your goodness; our work give you honour, and our voices celebrate you forever.'

Our band didn't sing and perform, they led us all in praise and prayer. It wasn't a show of ego or precise timing, and certainly wasn't a perfect performance, but it was Spirit filled. The band led the congregation to sing, and how they did! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the event. All left elated, filled with hope and encouragement for life's journey ahead. Bishop Jill stated that there was a gentleness in the Spirit present, that the spacing of the songs created easy

moments for prayer and being with Jesus. In her words *"it literally was the most moving service I have been to as Bishop of Lancaster"*.

So going back the opening statement, Christian Unity- a pipe dream or reality? Admittedly we all have differences, beliefs and different doctrines. It does break my heart when my sister-in-law, an Anglican priest comes with me to Mass, and can participate in everything but can't receive communion. It breaks my heart to see division and defence. It would be easy to feel anger and resentment and be scarred by this. It would be easy to close the door to faith and judge stating that *'our faith is the one true faith'* and then turn our backs on the rest.

But if we stop and talk and listen, we realise our goals and purpose are the same. If we take a moment and breathe, we realise that there's so much we can share in! If we let our guards down, we realise we all have our faces turned to Christ, we just have a different way to express it.

Are you hurting and broken within? Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin? Jesus is calling. Our redemption is certain, whatever denomination we are. United we are all children and beloved and blessed sons and daughters of the Father.

*"O come to the altar
The Father's arms are open wide
Forgiveness was bought with
The precious blood of Jesus Christ"*

Don't lose hope. Unity is very much alive and the Kingdom is here in all of us, just look within!
Lisa Vallente-Osborne

Lourdes 2020

"I am the Immaculate Conception"



The Pastoral Theme for this year's pilgrimage are the words that the Lady of Massabielle spoke to Bernadette Soubirous during the 16th Apparition on 25th March 1858 "I am the Immaculate Conception".

During our planning meeting in Lourdes earlier last month we learned that the relics of St Bernadette have been welcomed in many Dioceses throughout France, Italy and Spain. We heard that Poland will host them in June and Ireland in September. Cardinal Vincent Nichols has made an application on behalf of the Dioceses in England and Wales to host the relics of St Bernadette in 2021. This will be a wonderful witness throughout our country, especially as this year we witness the re-dedication of England as the Dowry of Mary. So watch this space!!

Meanwhile preparations for this year's Pilgrimage to Lourdes is well under way and Bishop Paul invites you to join him this year, in what is the biggest annual event of the Diocese.

The date of the pilgrimage is 24th – 31st July 2020 and flights are direct from Manchester to Lourdes.

Our tour operator for 2020 is Joe Walsh Tours and I am delighted to announce a substantial discount from previous years. The Hotel Eliseo is £819 and the Hotel St George £789 per person, full board based on sharing (*inclusive of flights and transfers*). You can save another £10 if you are internet savvy and can book online!! To book, contact Joe Walsh Tours on 0161 820 8790, e-mail: info@joewalshstours.ie or check out: www.joewalshstours.ie/holidays/pilgrimages-lourdes-lancaster

We are blessed in this Diocese with a wonderful group of pilgrims who travel each year to Lourdes. However, new faces and ongoing recruitment is crucial for its continued success. Have you ever considered coming on pilgrimage? If not, why not consider it this year – you will not be disappointed.

SICK PILGRIMS

To be cared for by the Medical Team on the pilgrimage you must

be a Registered Sick Pilgrim and you will be accommodated in The Hotel Eliseo. The form to register as a sick pilgrim is available from: the Chief Nurse: Nikki Wisdom 07872468743 e-mail: chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk Applications for sick must be received by 1st May 2020. Don't forget if you are in need of a wheelchair the diocese can provide one for you!

AN INVITATION GOES OUT TO ALL PRIESTS IN THE DIOCESE! Bring 15 parishioners and receive a special rate! Contact Linda: operationsdirector@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

CALLING ALL LOURDES HELPERS OLD AND NEW!!

Our care for sick pilgrims are second to none and are totally reliant on our volunteer Nurses, Carers and Brancardier (*Male helpers*). Many of you will know what a rewarding, wonderful experience working at the service of the sick pilgrims in Lourdes is.

Anyone who would like to be a volunteer in any of our teams would be more than welcome to apply. Please contact me on 07738022054 or operationsdirector@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

YOUTH TEAM

All young people are now invited to register. Training is essential and will be given prior to pilgrimage – for further information please visit: www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/new-events/lourdes-2020

DO YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OR SING?

There is an organist and group to lead the music for Masses and other services during the week in Lourdes. If you would like to take part contact: operationsdirector@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

Posters and information can be found in all parishes or you can check out our website: www.lancasterlourdes.co.uk

I hope to see as many of you as possibly in Lourdes this year – you will be most welcome!!

Linda Wisdom, Director of Operations
Diocese of Lancaster Lourdes Pilgrimage.



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Earlier this year The Dioceses of Middlesbrough and Lancaster announced their commitment to divest from fossil fuels, becoming the first Catholic dioceses in England and Wales to do so. The announcement was made on the Feast of the Epiphany 6 January.

Fr Hugh Pollock, Chair of our Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission explains the background to this momentous decision:

Many of us are aware that how we spend our money in the supermarket has an effect elsewhere. There is a moral side to everything that we do, the choices we make.

For over ten years now our diocese (*the first in the country*) has been carefully looking at how it invests the money it holds, screening its investments so that as far as we can, and no investment is ‘pure’, we place our money where it serves the diocese but with as much care for society and creation.

We have an ethical investment policy that guides us, which is regularly reviewed, and from this forms a questionnaire for the investing company to help them screen how they invest our money.

So when Operation Noah (<https://operationnoah.org/>) came to us and asked us to join them and the Diocese of Middlesborough and some religious orders in signing up to say we would divest from fossil fuels we were ready to join them.

So what is Operation Noah? Simply a Christian organisation, inspired by a love for creation and Pope Francis’s letter *Laudato Si*, who know that time is running out in the face of rapid climate change and that we need to act. They have started what they call their ‘*Bright Now Campaign*’ for churches to divest

from fossil fuel extraction and you can find their announcement at <https://operationnoah.org/news-events/news/press-release-20-christian-institutions-divest-from-fossil-fuels/>

Whenever the government does something positive to tackle climate change we should applaud and encourage them to go further.

Will divesting from fossil fuels make a difference? The lack of our money may not dent the oil industry too much. I doubt Shell is shaking in its boots. But it is urgent that each of us does what we can in order to create the momentum we need to change our way of life, and to persuade the Prime Minister to use the opportunity of the Climate Change Conference, COP 26, in Glasgow this coming November to bring the countries of the world together forcefully and really put their decisions achieved in Paris in 2015 into effect. Whenever the government does something positive to tackle climate change we should applaud and encourage them to go further.

Some might say, ‘*Why not invest and then turn up to the AGMs and make your voice heard?*’ and this we can do too through the Churches Investors Group where with the Church of England’s larger resources our voice sounds louder.

Some might think that enough has been done. Yet fossil fuels are the biggest contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions. Despite lots of advertising about how ‘green’ they are Shell is still increasing their fossil fuel extraction not reducing it. We need to act. Our Diocese is showing great leadership here and we need to add both our moral and practical support.

Fr. Hugh Pollock



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Reaching Out

Young People's Health and Wellbeing Conference



I was privileged to be invited by young people to a conference designed to promote open discussion around health and wellbeing with a focus upon mental health. This was a youth-led conference and my role and intention was to record the key features of the day and highlight the impressive work that young people are engaged in.

The conference was held in February at the Xaverian Centre, Preston and was attended by young people from High Schools in Preston, Longridge and Lytham St Annes as well as further afield. It was organised by the young people through the Social Action Project, with funding from EmpowHER, an arm of the YCW/ Impact youth group.

An interesting dynamic I observed was the lack of hierarchy amongst the attendees, the young people shared power and control and naturally the facilitated discussions themselves. There was a high level of engagement and participation and their insights into the various topics around social justice and mental health was incredible.

The young people fed back on their real-life perspectives on stereotyping, diversity and inclusion. An in-depth activity on the labelling process and the impact on mental wellbeing were raised and the need to share the findings from the activity are very important. The identification of the need for safeguarding training for young people

was noted as an ongoing aspiration.

Connecting and being together and sharing the importance of openly talking.

On-going actions such as the development of peer listening networks in schools are currently planned to recruit and train more young people as volunteers. Lunch time drop in sessions have been established creating space by young people to listen to their peers with a sign posting role for the active listeners. Young people delivering in the assembly to the broader school including teaching staff has been initiated with

a theme each month to develop the movement and importance. 'Exam de-stresser' activities to enable young people a space to break from the drive for exam success and take it easy have also been introduced.

For more information, networking and partnership; Reach Out to the following for more information, resources or co-delivery.

Steve Walker, University of Cumbria

Impact:

Preston Impact Youth Group
www.prestonimpactgroup.co.uk
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19th April 2020
Lancaster Cathedral



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6.30 Parish Mass

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Deus io vult, which translates into English as “God wills it” was the Vulgar Latin motto of the Crusades and is still used as the motto of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (EOHSJ).

The EOHSJ is a legal entity in Canon Law as a Religious (*but not Pontifical*) Order of Chivalry under the protection of the Holy See with the Pope as its sovereign. It is one of only two such recognised by the Holy See, the other is the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

History

The Order dates its origin to the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 at the culmination of the First Crusade launched by Pope Urban II to prevent the destruction of

Christianity in the land of Christ’s birth by Fatimid (*Shia*) Caliphate Turks and the desecration of the church of Jesus’ empty tomb on the site of His death and resurrection.

The Church had been split by the Great Schism of 1054 into Latin, based on Rome and the West, and Greek based on Constantinople and the East. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, a Greek named Simeon, had been forced into exile by the Turks and the victorious crusaders led by Godfrey of Bouillon appointed Daibert, one of their own and a Latin, as the new Patriarch for both Greek and Latin Rites with the right to appoint Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. These had the role of defending the newly established Canons of the Holy Sepulchre who were forbidden

by Canon Law to take up arms. The knights came under the direct service of the crown when Godfrey died in 1100 and was succeeded by his brother Baldwin who took the title of King of Jerusalem, which Godfrey had declined.

In later texts Godfrey of Bouillon was listed with Charlemagne and his son Louis the Pious of France among those who took the cross and founded the Military Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre; the latter two posthumously! Godfrey’s sword is still on display in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

After the crusaders were finally expelled from the Holy Land in 1291 there was no longer any Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem but a small number of Franciscan Friars Minor who had remained in Cyprus returned in 1336. Their superior, the “Custos”, assumed the right to appoint new knights from among suitable men who had undertaken the extremely hazardous trials of a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. In this way, over the centuries 1,835 knights were invested into what was considered the most perfect form of knighthood.

Development of the Order

In 1847, the first year of his papacy, Pius IX restored the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (LPJ). The new Patriarch was given the right to invest new knights. Today the LPJ (lpj.org) is effectively the Diocese of the Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus.

In 1868 Pius IX reconstituted the EOHSJ to support the Church in the Holy Land by Prayer, Presence on Pilgrimage and by Financial Contributions.

In 1888 Pope Leo XIII approved the admission of women as Dames of the Holy Sepulchre; it wasn’t until 1918 that a highly limited number of women were given the vote in UK.

Today there are, worldwide, 30,000 Knights, Dames and Clerics from 40 countries in 60 Lieutenancies. They are headed by the Cardinal Grand Master who is appointed by the Pope; Cardinal Fernando Filoni succeeded Cardinal Edwin O’Brien in 2019.

The Lieutenancy of England and Wales (khs.org.uk) was established in 1954. As at 1 January 2020 there were 599 members in 8 Sections. The Northern Section, comprising the Dioceses of Lancaster, Liverpool, Salford and Shrewsbury was established in 1976 and has 102 members: 65 Knights, 26 Dames, and 11 Ecclesiastics

The Holy Land today

Christians were a majority in the Holy Land from the 5th century to the 11th despite the 7th century Islamic conquest. After this their numbers gradually declined to become about 10% of the population by 1948. Today they constitute at most 2% of the population west of the Jordan and about 4% in Jordan where numbers are affected by the influx of refugees from Iraq and Syria.

These local Christians are largely Arabs and are still divided between Greek and Latin traditions. Half are Orthodox and

the rest Catholics of either the Roman or various Eastern Rites. The Reformation did not happen within the Ottoman Empire so the Protestant presence is small.

As of December 2019, Israel’s population stood at 9,136,000 of whom 2% (177,000) are Christian.

In a 2017 census, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics said the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza was 4,780,978 of whom 1.0–2.5% were Christian. (*Note: approximately 391,000 Israeli settlers lived in the West Bank {2016}; approximately 201,000 Israeli settlers lived in East Jerusalem {2014}. Of the Old City’s 40,000 residents, 6,000 are Christian, with 3,000 of those Catholics, a number three times lower than it was 70 years ago.*)

In 2019 the population of Jordan was estimated (due to the increased flow of refugees) at 10,458,413 of whom 4% (416,000) were Christian including 222,000 Catholics.

In 2018 the population of Cyprus was estimated at 1,189,265 with 78% Christian and around 1% Catholic.

The EOHSJ’s role today

The buildings of the Holy Places are no longer threatened as they were in the 11th century but are now a tourist attraction and even in danger of becoming lifeless museums. Meanwhile, the ages-old Christian Community, the “Living Stones”, are very much in danger of extinction.

The Order has the responsibility of ensuring that this does not happen. Through its frequent pilgrimages solidarity is demonstrated with the “Living Stones”.

Through its financial contributions support goes to: poor families; 41 primary and secondary schools which are open to all regardless of religion; Bethlehem University run by the De La Salle brothers with 3259 students; the Seminary in the Beit Jala district of Bethlehem with 30 minor and 20 major Palestinian and Jordanian seminarians; health care institutions; and today refugees.

Membership of the Order is by invitation only; it is offered to Roman Catholic men and women, lay or clerical, aged over 25, whose record of service to the Church and community indicates that they can be expected to make a significant contribution to the Order’s work. As such it should be seen not as an honour but rather as a privileged opportunity for service.

Usually, though not always, a candidate is put forward by an existing Member of the Order.

Nowadays new members are invested in their own Lieutenancy but undertake to make, as soon as practically possible, the pilgrimage to Jerusalem where they receive their Pilgrim Shell from the Patriarch.

Any membership enquiry in regard to the Order can be directed to the national membership officer by emailing membership@eohsj.org.uk **John Leneghan**



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29-3 Family Week	18-20 Healing Weekend, Fr Antoine Coelho & Max Ford
Jul: 6-10 Family Week	25-27 Ros Powell
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Alpha.

– a new beginning

St Andrew & Blessed George Haydock Parish in Cottam formed a mission group in late summer 2019. The aim of the group was to help move the parish from maintenance, doing what we'd always done, to mission, evangelising and going outside our normal comfort zone, with inspiration from Father James Mallon's book *'Divine Renovation'*.

One of Father James' many suggestions is the introduction of an Alpha Course. We asked Richard Teasdale from Mission Lancaster to help us.

Over the course of the next few issues Richard will give a report on what Alpha is and how this worked in our parish.

John Lord, Cottam

The Alpha Course in Cottam

Most of what I know of Alpha is partly through experience, partly through mistakes I've made, and massively down to the life changing things I have witnessed.

I love Alpha and seeing what happens when a parish takes the brave step to begin running it so when I was asked to help a parish set up Alpha in Preston I jumped at the chance. I met a group of parishioners who were keen to try something new. They had tried different things but wanted a way of inviting people to something to bridge the gap between worry and doubt and our Church. Alpha seemed to be the answer they were looking for.

When I met with the group I shared the stories of what I'd witnessed on Alpha for the last 4 years. Stories of people rediscovering their faith and finding faith for the first time. Stories of people being dragged along by their partners and leaving filled with joy. Stories of healing and stories of people finding peace. I only had to share a few of those before the parish mission group were sold. Not because of anything I said but because changed lives speak for themselves and this parish wanted to give that same experience to their local community. Changed lives change lives after all.

Alpha is a tool to help change people's lives by bringing them to a personal encounter with Jesus, and it really isn't as hard as it sounds to get it going!

What is Alpha?

Alpha is an 11 week journey which offers people a relaxed environment to come and discuss life's big questions. It starts each week with a meal where we eat together, this is followed by a talk which is on a different topic each week and takes us on a deeper and deeper journey. After the talk there is a chance to discuss what we've heard and ask any questions we might have. In the Alpha small group, it's not about teacher and student, but about a host with guests.

What do we need to set up Alpha?

The first thing you need is a desire to see change. Alpha can have a huge impact on the life of a parish. Alpha allows us to invite people, helps us build leaders, and most importantly gives us a tool to introduce others to Jesus.

Secondly you need a team of volunteers, there are lots of different roles to fill in the Alpha team, so there's something for everyone. It's important that volunteers know what Alpha is all about and do the Alpha training, but they don't need to know anything beforehand.

Finally, and maybe most importantly, we need guests. Alpha only works when people attend. Find a way of inviting people to your Alpha, challenge parishioners to attend themselves and bring a friend along. In Preston, parishioners gave out flyers after Christmas Mass, spoke to parents in the local schools and invited those who had just moved to the new housing in the area. There's lots of ways you can try but personal invites are always the best method!

Is there a cost?

There's no cost for guests who attend Alpha, we aim to create a welcoming relaxed atmosphere that anyone can be a part of.

As a parish there is a time commitment and a cost for providing the meal for the guests. Some people will volunteer to cook, whereas some parishes buy in catering. There's no right or wrong way of going about this but it all contributes to making people feel welcome.

What will we get out of it?

As has already been mentioned, Alpha can change the life of a parish by equipping people with the skills they need to lead, by reinvigorating faith and bringing people in to the Church for the first time. Seeing lives changed its hugely rewarding and changed lives change lives, so it never ends after just 1 Alpha!

Is Alpha Catholic?

Alpha covers the basic teachings of Jesus, scripture, prayer and the Holy Spirit. Although it was developed in the Church of England there's nothing we wouldn't teach in the Catholic Church. If we give people a good experience and they want to come to Church following the Alpha course, the first place they will turn is the place they attended Alpha.

Interested in setting up Alpha in your parish? Contact info@missionlancaster.co.uk for more information and let us help you to start your Alpha journey!


If you see Alpha being run in a church near you, take the leap of faith and go along, you never know what is going to happen.

Richard Teasdale




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Sr. Mary of Grace RIP



As Christians our vocation is to show the image of God with our lives. We are called to portray how God looks, to display the very nature of God, to let others see God ...

We are called to show the face of God in our deeds, in our words, in our kindness and compassion; to draw a picture of God by drawing people to see God through us. In her own humble, unassuming way Sr. Mary of Grace (Carmelite Sister, Preston) tried to do that, to show the world a wee bit of what God is like.

Our readings for her Requiem Mass tell us how we are called to be God for others while on our earthly journey. To be God's

goodness for all those we meet. To let others glimpse God by how we are.

Better known among the sisters as Gracie, Sr. Mary of Grace was born in Sidcup, Kent on July 4th 1934, the youngest of three sisters (Pamela, Joy and Shirley, who became our Gracie.) The family was nominally Anglican, but Shirley was sent to a Convent school run by French nuns despite her mother's atheistic leanings. She became convinced she should become a Catholic and was received into the Catholic Church at the age of 16 with her father's consent.

On leaving school, Shirley went to Training College and became an infant's

teacher. She grew aware of a calling to Carmel and entered the Carmel at Saffron Walden when she was 24. She was there for 15 years till that Carmel closed. She then transferred to Salford Carmel and was there for 19 years when another closure forced her to move again. (*I don't know if she was a bit of a jinx with all these closures.*) This time she came to Preston and was here until she was called to a better and more perfect dwelling.

As well as being virtuous Gracie was a woman of a strong faith and a deep personal relationship with God.

The sisters told me that Gracie's main work was prayer, and although very prayerful she wasn't one for pious devotions. As well as encountering the person of Christ in prayer she also saw Christ in her service and in looking after others and another great work of hers was in the infirmary, helping to look after the frail and elderly sisters. Her faith was seen in her deeds. She was also a dedicated refectorian and portress, answering the phone and welcoming people at the door.

I was told Gracie was a "quite a character" (*as a religious living in community, "character" can mean a multitude of things...*) and her ways were probably shaped by the fact her mother died when she was only 13 and she was brought up by her two older "bossy" sisters. Although sometimes described as eccentric with a posh voice she had a great sense of humour and this often came out in her poetry and her stories.

The last time I spoke with her she told

me of her illness and her readiness to enter that new stage of her life. She was prepared to meet the Master she served and loved and even in her time in hospital she was well liked by those whose lives she touched - she even wrote them all a poem.

The Gospels tell us that those who believe will never die, and in a world that's filled with false promises and deceptions we are consoled with the Word that comes from God. God makes and doesn't break promises, he speaks and keeps his word; he gives and lives his assurances! Gracie lived this and believed it with all her heart and we know she is now being rewarded for this faith...for that is the promise of Jesus with the words ... "I am the way, the truth and the life and where I am you too will be."

I have no doubt that Gracie sent only good things Heaven's way and Jesus promises us "there are many rooms in my father's house...and I am going to prepare one for you!"

So Gracie's room will be full of books, handicrafts and gardening tools, the kettle will be boiling, the poems and stories will be being told, there will be laughter, she'll be playing her weekly game of scrabble, and there may even be a pet or two to keep her company as she loved her animals. (*She even saw the beauty in a slug*). But she will be at peace in the house of the God whom she loved and whom she served with her whole life. Her good deeds certainly will have gone before her.

*Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord
Fr. Jim Clarke, s.x.*

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Three of a Kind *by Julia Beacroft*

April is quite an expensive time for me each year as we have three family birthdays that month – my daughter-in-law and my own twins. It may be twenty-seven years since they were born, but I can distinctly remember an episode that occurred when I was expecting them...

Disappointed

Accompanied by my husband, we had gone to the hospital for my second scan. We had just about recovered from the shock of the first one, when we were told that we were going to be the proud parents of twins! Then my husband told me that he was disappointed that they hadn't found a third baby at that second scan – and he was serious!

Needless to say, I was astounded and also very relieved that this hadn't, in fact, happened!

Not by chance

There is a school of thought which suggests that both bad things and good things can come in threes. I'm not too sure of the veracity of this, but it is true that trilogies work well, ornamental groupings always look better in threes and a three-course meal is usually a recipe for success! The number three is a highly significant biblical and theological number, of course. God calls Samuel three times, the Magi brought the infant Jesus three gifts; Jesus goes back to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray three times; and he also repeats the phrase

'feed my sheep' to Peter three times. Peter, of course, had previously denied Christ three times.

It further goes without saying that we can't talk about the number three in this context without referring to the significant fact of Jesus rising from the dead after a period of three days. In fact, in Jewish culture at that time, three days after the time of death indicated that a person was truly dead, so this made Jesus' resurrection all the more remarkable for the people of that era – and obviously this didn't happen by chance.

Significant

Finally, we can't consider the number three without looking at the Trinity. God is three in one – the Godhead – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And so, whether our

good and bad things come in ones, twos or threes, we can always be assured and reassured that we worship, adore and give thanks to a God who is three-in-one.

I myself, may not have received three babies for the price of one, (*two was quite enough!*) but my faith shows me that three is, and continues to be, a significant number in our lives. Thanks be to God!

Copyright ©2020 Julia Beacroft. All rights reserved. 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. Her first children's book 'Monsieur Claude's Great French Adventure' is also out NOW! Follow Julia on Facebook & Twitter.





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 Judged as Good at Section 48 with Outstanding Catholic Life
Mission Statement
*Our children are all unique, beautiful individuals but together we are a masterpiece, brothers and sisters in Christ.
 Judged to have an Outstanding Catholic Life Section 48, March 19*


**St Joseph's Catholic
High School**
 Harrington Road
 Workington CA14 3EE
 Headteacher Jacky Kennedy
 Tel: 01900 873290
 Email: office@sjchs.uk
*'Living, Loving and Learning
 through Christ'*

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



For thousands of years leprosy has been the scourge of poverty-stricken communities across the world and, sadly, it still exists in many countries today. The disease frequently leads to severe, life-changing disabilities and those who suffer from it are often excluded by their community, and struggle to fend for themselves.

124 years dedicated to the relief of suffering

St Francis Leprosy Guild has been dedicated to the relief of suffering caused by leprosy



for more than a century, during which time many religious sisters, brothers and priests have made it their life's vocation to care for those with the disease. Today we are determined to build on their legacy and seize our opportunity to help beat leprosy once and for all.

A leprosy-free world is finally within sight

Just a few decades ago, more than five million people were being diagnosed with leprosy every year, their lives destroyed physically, emotionally and socially by the disease. Today, this number has reduced significantly but remains stubbornly at over 200,000 new cases annually, worldwide. St Francis Leprosy Guild is committed to achieving a leprosy-free world and we genuinely believe that it is now within sight, if only people like you are prepared to help.

Early detection can stop leprosy in its tracks

Leprosy is curable and since the World Health Organisation made multi-drug treatments freely available 16 million people have been cured of the disease. New cases of leprosy tend to

be concentrated in isolated communities where people are still living in dire poverty and have little or no access to healthcare. If leprosy is to be stamped out for good, your support is needed to train local healthcare workers who can reach out to these communities. By supporting early detection and treatment - before the disease takes hold - you can help to prevent untold suffering.



If you are able to send a donation of just £30 today, you will help us support around 30 inspirational partners, such as the Bombay Leprosy Project. This is training local healthcare volunteers to work both in the slums of Mumbai and surrounding rural areas, so they can monitor people for early symptoms and provide prompt medication.

Help to beat leprosy for good

St Francis Leprosy Guild and its partners are working with remote and marginalised communities across Asia, Africa and South America. Please send £30 today using the form below or donate online at www.justgiving.com/stfrancisleprosyguild. Together, let's seize the opportunity to create a leprosy-free world and help put an end to people's suffering at last.

Donate at www.justgiving.com/stfrancisleprosyguild

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

First Name

Surname

Address

Postcode

Email

Telephone

Here is my gift of: £30 ☐ £60 ☐ £100 ☐ Other £

DA2017

By Cheque/Postal Order/CAF Voucher (to St Francis Leprosy Guild) Visa/MasterCard/Amex/Maestro (delete as appropriate)

Card no.

Issue no. (Maestro only)

Expiry date

Issue date

Security code

(3 digits on the back of your card, 4 on front of Amex)

THANK YOU!

Name on card

Date

Please return this form with your gift to:
St Francis Leprosy Guild, 73 St Charles Square,
London W10 6EJ.

SFLG ST FRANCIS LEPROSY GUILD

Please fill in your name and address. We will never pass on your details to any other organisation and will treat them with respect.

We will use the personal information you have provided to process your donation and to contact you with news of our work. If you would prefer not to receive further communications please tick this box ☐ or you can call us on 020 8969 1345 to let us know which communications you would like to receive. To read more about how we value your privacy, visit www.stfrancisleprosy.org

This appeal has been made possible thanks to a supporter's kind legacy