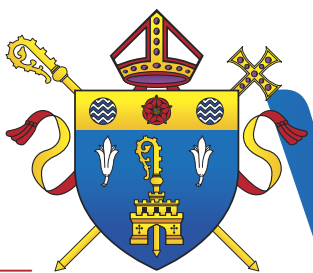


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The **Catholic**



VOICE *of Lancaster*

*The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster*

Issue 349 + May '23

INSIDE: pg4-5
*Youth Matters –
Sponsor a Youth Minister*



WE NEED YOU!!!

YOUNG PEOPLE



Our Youth Section of the diocesan pilgrimage travel overland Thursday 20th – Saturday 29th July 2023. There will be pick-up points in the North and South of the Diocese. Applications are open to all young people aged 15 (Y10) - 21 The cost is £695 which includes travel, meals, Sanctuary levy and Youth programme. A training date has been scheduled for Saturday 17th June 2023 (*venue to be announced*).

Do you wish to serve others? Learn more about your faith? Meet other young people? If so, then Youth to Lourdes could be for you...

“

*You find time to
explore your faith, to
learn about yourself
and to make friends
you will have for life*

Young Pilgrim

”

Calling our faithful Supporters

Could you support a young person to go on pilgrimage? All donations for the Youth Section of the pilgrimage should be sent to HSBC, Account Name: Lancaster Diocesan Pilgrimage Trust, Sort Code: 40-27-02, Account No: 81656430.

All cheques should be made payable to Lancaster Diocesan Pilgrimage Trust, and sent to The Director of Operations, 22 Clifton Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire FY4 1NX. Reg Charity no. 106099.

**Read more about this Lourdes 2023 on
Pages 8, 9 and 10 >>**

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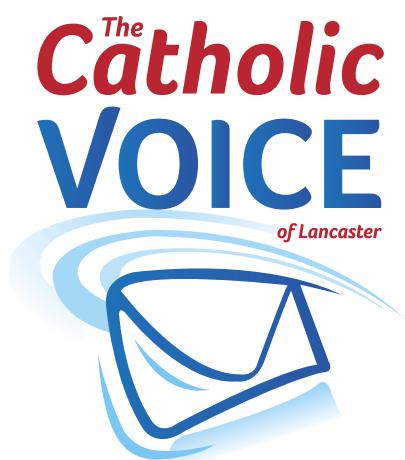
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The Holy Spirit Shines Brightly in Westby

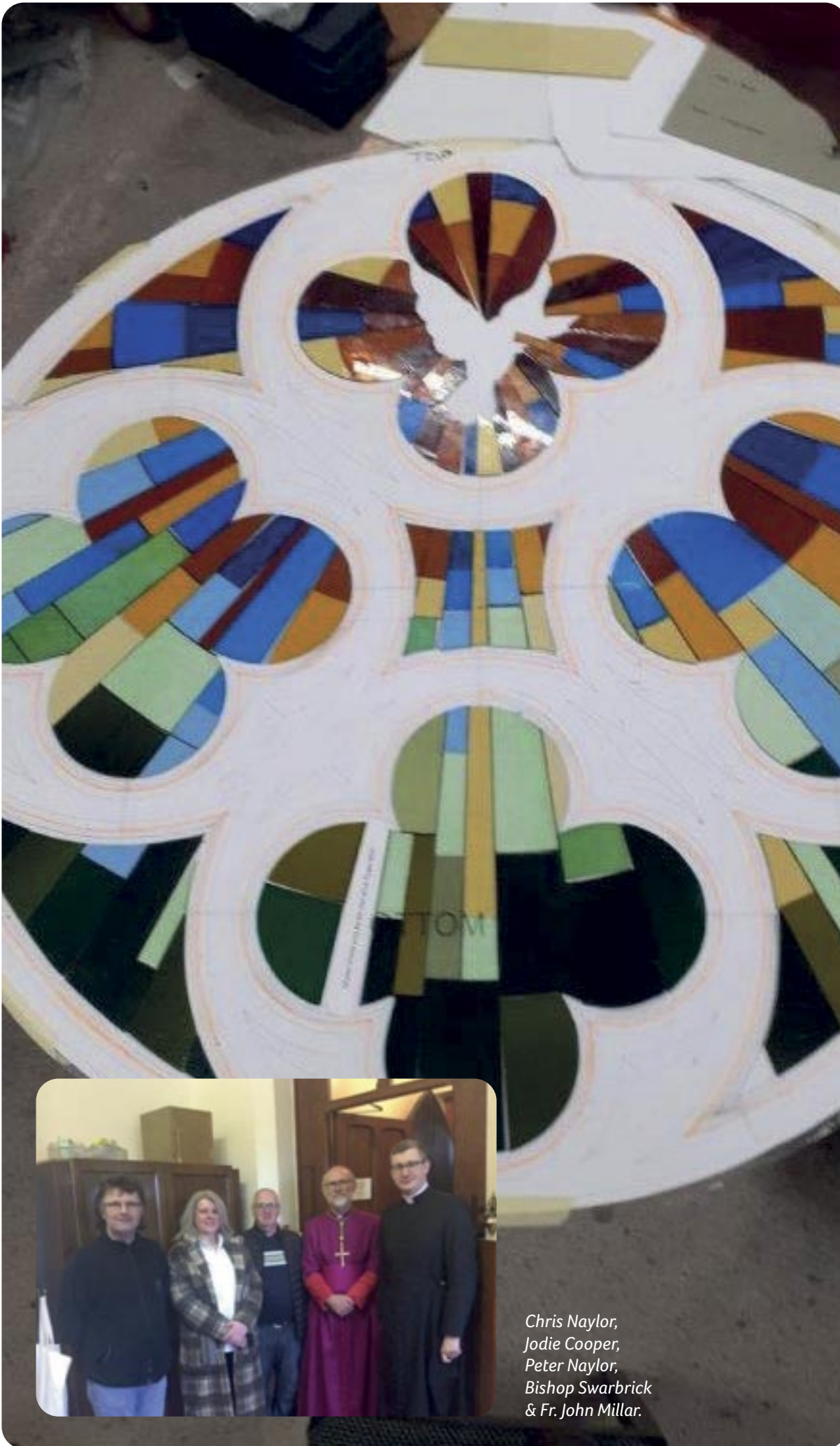
During the 1960s the masonry began to disintegrate around the original E.W.Pugin designed window high on the south gable wall of St Anne's Westby Church. The whole window, situated high in the organ loft, had to be removed and replaced. The replacement had a simple large plain circular design featuring a large wooden cross that supported the plain panes of glass.

By the beginning of the 21st Century, time and the elements had also taken their toll on the replacement. Despite some remedial repair, it too needed to be replaced.

Having applied, we were delighted in being awarded two grants toward the costs. One from the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation and the other from the Community Foundation for

Lancashire and Liverpool with the support of our local Parish Council of Westby with Plumpton. So, we were finally able to start the project to install a more appropriately designed window. The enclosing masonry of the new window would be a replica of E.W.Pugin's original Gothic design. The plain lead simple glass design would also be replaced by a contemporary stained-glass design.

Mather and and Ellis of Manchester were the key contractors in manufacturing the Stone Quatrefoil Window surround and liaising with the local stained-glass craftsman for its installation with Chris Naylor, who designed the window and cut the glass having previously designed and installed our Millennium Window. On one glass slither he engraved the name of Les Fragle who was an earlier benefactor to the church.



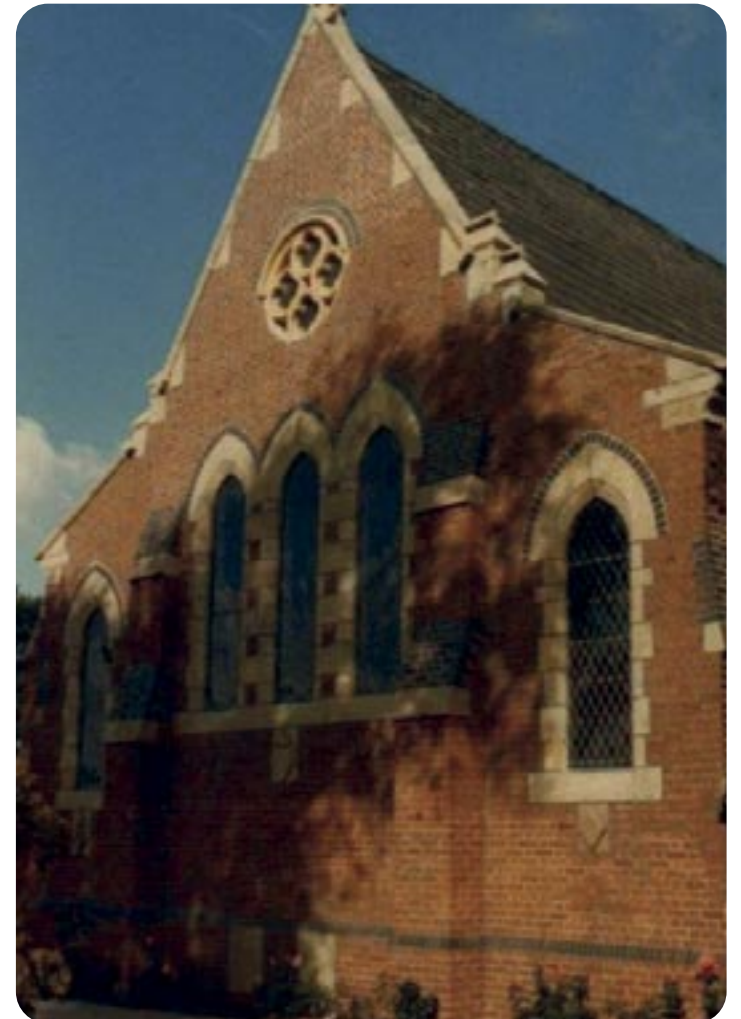
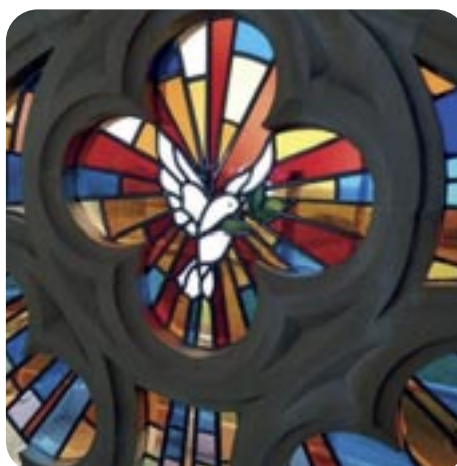
Chris Naylor,
Jodie Cooper,
Peter Naylor,
Bishop Swarbrick
& Fr. John Millar.

Unfortunately, soon after designing the window and cutting the glass, Chris became very ill. So, he invited a friend from the Cathedral Glass Company to install the window which she did in January 2023.

Now, on bright days, southern light glows through the jewel like colours of this design and the white dove in the design that depicts the Holy Spirit. In addition to this work, Mather and Ellis were also contracted to repoint the west and south facing external walls. This was a significant task and has ensured that the church fabric is protected for many years to come.

On 27 February this year Bishop Paul came to bless the window which is a tangible symbol of the faith in the future of St Anne's Westby Church.

Paddy Parker with input from Mike King



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YOUTH MATTERS

**Sponsor
a Youth
Minister!**



There is a lot happening in the Youth Service at the moment and we will get to all of that but we have decided to devote most of our words in this edition to something rather exciting that has just been launched...

Sponsor a Youth Minister!

We are excited to launch our brand-new Sponsor a Youth Minister scheme. It gives parishioners a chance to get involved with the work of Castlerigg Manor and the Youth Service by directly supporting a member of our team. Here's a little more:

How does it work?

It's very simple. People sign up and then pay £10 a month. They will be assigned to one of our volunteers or leaders. If that team member leaves, their sponsors will be assigned to another member of the team.

Each month, every team member will write to the people sponsoring them, letting them know what they've been up to that month so that sponsors can see where their money is going.

How do you sign up?

You can either fill in a form and send it to us or set up a standing order. Details for both are on our website - **castleriggmanor.com**

If you're not a website person though, don't worry. Just give us a call and we'll sort you out over the phone.

Where does the money go?

It costs around £5,000 per year to support one of our volunteers and it costs

many times more for one of our paid leaders. To support the entire ministry team in the work that they do, it's more than a hundred grand a year! In the past the vast majority of that – and our other costs – has been covered by the revenue Castlerigg generates from retreats, with a small grant from the diocese each year making up the rest.

These days though, with massively rising energy bills and a host of other financial pressures, supporting our staff is getting harder and so we're asking for a little help!

The money we raise from sponsorship will, of course, help us out with the more basic costs of employing, housing, and feeding somebody but we are hoping that it will help us with a few extras too – those things we also like to give our staff such as training opportunities, retreats, days out and other things that will be useful to draw on in the future.

We really want our staff – and especially our volunteers – to have a great experience with us. We want them to learn, to grow, to go deeper in their faith, and we want them to leave having had one of the best experiences of their lives, and ready to move forward in their lives with joy and confidence. You can help us to make this happen!

What do Castlerigg and the Youth Service do?

Most of you will have a good idea of what we do, but in case you don't, here's a quick rundown...

The Youth Service is a department of the Diocese, responsible for helping the Church to better minister to young people. We don't do the most work with young people, by any means – our schools do far more and our parishes also have a huge amount of contact, but we have a crucial role to play. The Youth Service helps schools by giving young people focused experiences that aren't really possible in the normal school setting. We also help parishes in a number of ways too and we are hoping to get out into local communities more and more in the months and years ahead.

In practice, most of the work of the youth service is done via the school retreats that we run at Castlerigg Manor. Something like three thousand young people come to Castlerigg during a typical year. Many will be from our own diocese, but a fair few come from further afield, as far as Stoke to the South and Glasgow to the North!

Our retreats typically last for two nights, with some older groups staying for four nights, and the retreats have a clear aim to them.

The purpose of our retreats is to let young people know that there is a God who loves them and who has an awesome plan for their lives. More than that, it's about giving young people confidence, bringing them closer together as a group, helping them to reflect on their own lives and the world around them, and also basically just giving them a really enjoyable week.

We are often contacted by people who came to Castlerigg years ago – in some cases even decades ago – telling us what a memorable experience it was. The point being, the work of the youth service has a lasting impact and we are keen for it to continue.

If this all feels like something you can support, and you can spare ten pounds a month, please consider signing up.

What's Coming Up?

LIT // May 26-28 // Our Open Confirmation Retreat is just around the corner. It's a weekend for anybody who has been confirmed recently or anybody who is about to be. Open to anyone in Year 6 or above.

Lourdes Youth // The Youth Section of the Lourdes Pilgrimage are still looking for people, so if you're interested, contact Joe Walsh Tours on 0808 1890458

Advent Retreat 2023 // The next open retreat for young people at Castlerigg will be our Advent Retreat. We're not taking bookings just yet, but put the (provisional) date in your diary – December 8-10th 2023.

We Are Hiring!

It's that time of year again. Sadly, we will lose a few team members in the summer and we're looking to replace them. We're looking for volunteers but also for a few paid leaders. Head to our website for more details and hit 'Current Vacancies' for more information.

JOIN THE TEAM // 2023-24
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World Day of Prayer

'I have heard about your faith'

On the first Friday of March well over one hundred people including His Worship the Mayor and Mayoress of Fylde took part in a World Day of Prayer service at St. Joseph's Ansdell. The service was prepared by the women of Taiwan during the hard days of the pandemic. The theme was 'I have heard about your faith'. We learned a little about the beautiful island of Taiwan also known as the kingdom of the orchids and some of the issues they face.

We began by greeting one another in Taiwanese: "Ping-an" which means "May God grant you peace, a peaceful relationship with God and with one another."

Our reading was taken from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians 1: 15-19 followed by a Meditation and Letters of Encouragement to women facing suffering and injustice outlining actions being taken day to day on the island. And our display depicted the beautiful sky and sea, trees and mountains of the island plus many orchids alongside a map of Taiwan

We were blessed with readers and women from the many churches in Lytham St. Annes; by the singing and energy of the children of St. Peter's school, Lytham, accompanied by two guitars; beautiful organ accompaniment by Nigel Ogden and a final blessing by Fr. Peter Clarke.

Following the service there was time to sit and chat and make new friends over a cup of tea and freshly baked cakes.

Next year the service will be at the United Reformed Church in St. Annes and the theme will be "I beg you, bear with one another in love" prepared by the Christian women of Palestine.

Wanda Kruszynska

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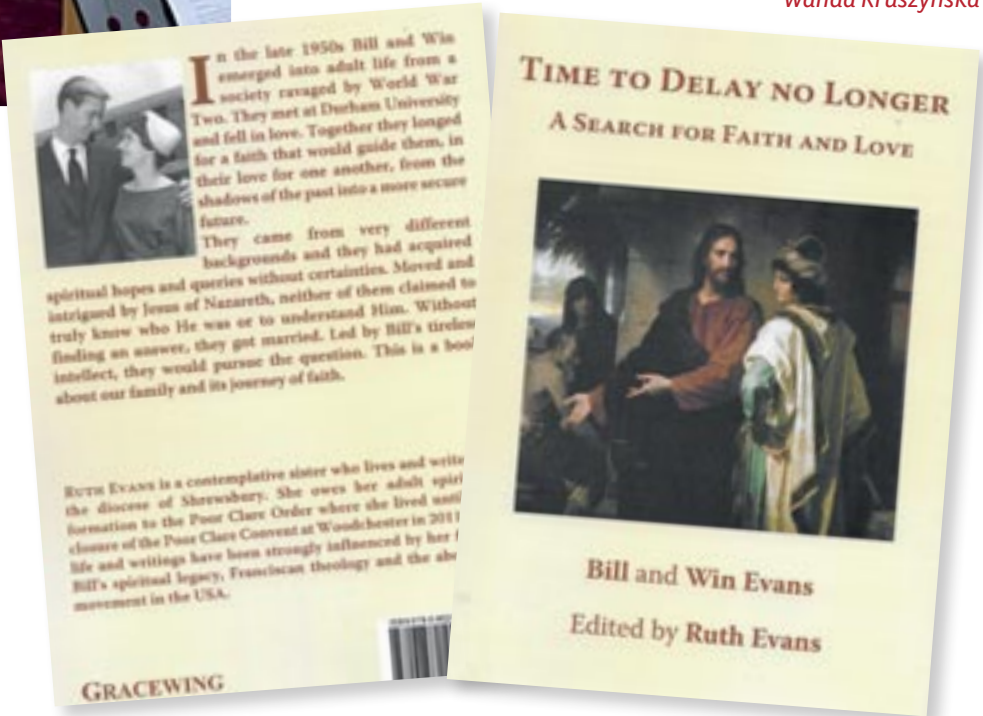
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Time To Delay No Longer A Search for Faith and Love

Time To Delay No Longer is a book written in part by Bill Evans before his death and completed by his widow Win Evans and second daughter Ruth Evans.

The book has diocesan interest and fondly acknowledges the help and support provided to Bill whilst living in Barrow -in - Furness particularly during his final days.

Bill and Win were not born into the Catholic Church and in fact married in a Registry Office before being received into the Church and reaffirming their vows before God. The early part of the book

charts their early lives and the bumpy road they encountered on their individual spiritual journeys into the Catholic faith.

Bill had a thirst for knowledge and truth. He read extensively and in the later chapters he examines various aspects of the Catholic tradition in detail but in a way that holds the reader as if in a conversation.

This is a book combines family insights with clarity into various aspects of the Catholic tradition.

Published by Gracewing it is available from Amazon.

KNOW Your Faith

Why is the Church one?

The Church is one because she has as her source and exemplar the unity of the Trinity of Persons in one God. As her Founder and Head, Jesus Christ re-established the unity of all people in one body. As her soul, the Holy Spirit unites all the faithful in communion with Christ. The Church has but one faith, one sacramental life, one apostolic succession, one common hope, and one

and the same charity.
Further reading: CCC 813-815, 866

Where does the one Church of Christ subsist?

The one Church of Christ, as a society constituted and organized in the world, subsists in (*subsistit in*) the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him. Only through this Church can one obtain the fullness of the means of salvation since the Lord has entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant to the apostolic college among whose head is Peter.

Further reading: CCC 816, 870

How are non-Catholic Christians to be considered?

In the churches and ecclesial communities which are separated from full communion with the Catholic Church, many elements of sanctification and truth can be found. All of these blessings come from Christ and lead to Catholic unity. Members of these churches and communities are incorporated into Christ by Baptism and so we recognize them as brothers.

Why is the Church called "Catholic"?

The Church is catholic, that is universal, insofar as Christ is present in her: "Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church" (Saint Ignatius of Antioch). The

Church proclaims the fullness and the totality of the faith; she bears and administers the fullness of the means of salvation; she is sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race.
Further reading: CCC 830-831, 868

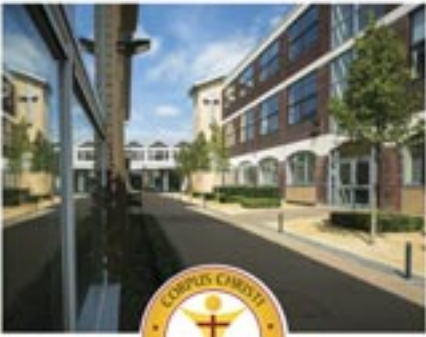

Is the particular Church catholic?

Every particular Church (*that is, a diocese or eparchy*) is catholic. It is formed by a community of Christians who are in communion of faith and of the sacraments both with their Bishop, who is ordained in apostolic succession, and with the Church of Rome which "presides in charity" (Saint Ignatius of Antioch).
Further reading: CCC 832-835




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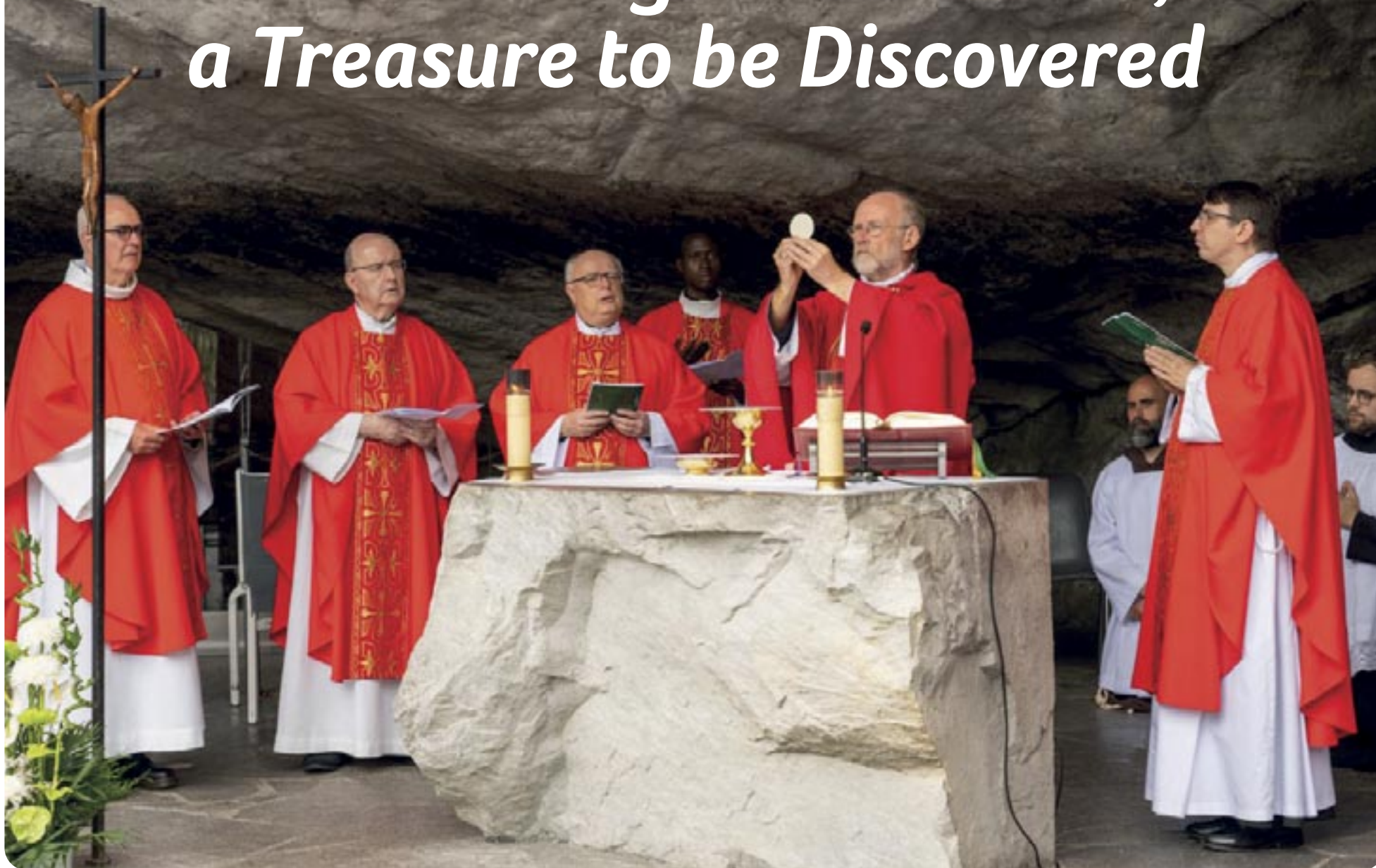
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The Message of Lourdes, a Treasure to be Discovered



Since the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in 1858, millions of people from all over the world have flocked to Lourdes every year to experience the grace of this place. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is above all the place of healing of bodies and hearts where one comes to pray humbly to the one who revealed her name to Bernadette Soubirous: “*I am the Immaculate Conception*”.

“Go and Tell the Priests to Build a Chapel Here....”

Go and tell - It is a mission

The mission that Mary passed on to Bernadette, she herself had received from God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Mary had participated in this mission since her Immaculate Conception but was also the object of it. In order to participate fully in the offering of her Son for the salvation of the world, Mary gave her whole life to God for her brothers and sisters in humanity, in her capacity as “*the handmaid of the Lord*” (Lk. 1:38).

To the priests - Who are the priests?

There is only one priest, Jesus Christ the high priest (Hebrews 7). All those who are baptised into his death to share in his resurrection (Rom 6:5) and who are

called followers of Christ, or lay people, signifying their belonging to the people of God, are priests, prophets and kings. This is the grace we receive at baptism

To build - A vital request

Building requires foundations. Here in Lourdes, the foundations already existed.

On the material level, it was the Grotto. And it was on the Grotto that the chapel requested by Our Lady would be built, the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

On the spiritual level, it was the essence of the relationship that Mary established with Bernadette, which constituted the foundation of the chapel and therefore of the pilgrimage to Lourdes. This essence is the grace that God gives to Mary, which she in turn distributes freely at the Grotto of Lourdes. Healings and miracles are just the visible part of this grace. The great miracles of Lourdes are not found in the healings of individual people, but in the grace of acceptance, something that so many people receive from Mary, the Immaculate Virgin. The fruit of this is conversion, that is, a change in our lives and the acceptance of the salvation which Christ Jesus offers us.

Here - A specific place

Mary addressed this request to

Bernadette while they were together inside the Grotto. Here therefore means at the Grotto. It is important to understand this because what is constructed around the Grotto therefore has the Grotto at its heart. This clarification is important for two reasons.

The first one. In 1858, there had been a parish church in Lourdes for a very long time. And now the “*Lady*” was asking for a church to be built on the outskirts, in a place that nobody ever visited.

The second reason. When we say, “*the Grotto*”, we should also think of the treasure (Matt. 13:44). The treasure is the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which is the essence of the relationship between Mary and Bernadette, for the conversion of sinners and the salvation of the world. The sign of this treasure is the spring. When we think of the building that was requested, we need to take into account the missionary dimension – we are sent – and the invitation addressed to us to sow the Gospel where there is nothing and no-one, so that we may reap a harvest that belongs only to God.

A chapel - The place of the Alliance

The term ‘*chapel*’ has two meanings. It can either be part of a church with its

own altar for celebrating Mass, or a non-parochial church. The latter is the case for pilgrimage chapels, or sanctuaries.

The request, which Bernadette had to pass on, was therefore to build a chapel so that the Grotto would become a sanctuary, a place of pilgrimage where people could pray and celebrate the sacrament of the Covenant, the Eucharist, and the sacraments of Mercy.

If we put this request in the context of the relationship between Mary and Bernadette, we see that this Mother-daughter relationship was always lived out under the gaze of God. The “*Lady*” and the child were always focused on God.

Coming to Lourdes for the first time means looking at and discovering this place where the Virgin Mary appeared eighteen times in 1858. It means feeling the faith of the thousands of pilgrims who respond to Our Lady’s call to “*come here in procession*” and observing the hope of all the sick pilgrims who come to the Grotto for a little comfort and – why not – the grace of healing.

Seeing the charity of all those, volunteers and hospitaliers, who come to serve others, means experiencing the Message of Lourdes in practice.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

21-28 July 2023



Preparations for the 2023 Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes are well under way and Bishop Paul Swarbrick invites you to join him for our annual pilgrimage.

The pastoral theme for 3 years 2022-24 are the word's that Mary, the Mother of God, entrusted to Bernadette Soubirous on 2nd March 1858: ***"Go tell the priests to build a chapel here and that people should come in procession"***.

2022 – ***'Go and tell the priests...'***

2023 – ***'...to build a chapel here...'***

2024 – ***'...and that people should come in procession.'***

The Relics of St Bernadette's visit to the UK has inspired many pilgrims to join us on our 2023 Lourdes Pilgrimage for the first time. You are most welcome. We also look forward to welcoming back pilgrims who have been many times to Lourdes. New faces, new life and new targets are essential each year if the pilgrimage is to continue to grow therefore I ask you, if you have not yet booked then please to consider coming on pilgrimage with us in 2023.

Medical and Brancardier Teams

Our care for the sick pilgrims is second to none and is totally reliant on volunteer helpers. As a volunteer you will be assisting the sick, infirm and lonely of our diocese. Therefore, we appeal for nurses and carers throughout the diocese. If you or anyone you know is willing to be part of the Medical team please contact Nikki Wisdom (Chief Nurse) at chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk Many of you will know what a rewarding, wonderful experience working at the service of the sick pilgrims in Lourdes is.

If you would like to join our Brancardier Team (male 23+) please contact Sean

McMahon (Chief Brancardier at chiefbrancardier@lancasterlourdes.co.uk)

Sick Pilgrims

If you would like to come to Lourdes as a Sick pilgrim, cared for by the Medical Team then you MUST apply before the 1 May 2023. All registered sick will stay in the Hotel Eliseo where the Medical Team & Youth are based. You should contact Nikki Wisdom (Chief Nurse) at chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk, prior to filling out a booking form. Should you require wheelchair assistance then please tick the form to say so – please note you do not need to contact the Chief Nurse for wheelchair allocation.

Youth Teams

This year our Pilgrimage Director of Youth will be Katie O'Donnell. You can read about Katie's experiences of Lourdes on Page 10. Katie will be supported by Team leaders who will ensure our young people have a spiritual and uplifting week. We call upon young people in the diocese 15+ to consider coming on pilgrimage. You will be given all the preparation, support and training you need. Many young people make decisions about future careers whilst in Lourdes. This is a quote received from a young person a few years ago: - ***"You find time to explore your faith, to learn about yourself and to make friends you will have for life"***. Many often say ***"you don't 'go' to Lourdes, you are 'called'"***. Please answer the call in 2023!

All young people are asked to register as soon as possible. Forms are available through Joe Walsh Tours or contact: youth@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

If you need any further information please contact Joe Walsh Tours at www.joewalstours.co.uk/pilgrimages or call Freephone: **0808 1890468**

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Lark Hill Association



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Ever since I can remember, Lourdes has been a familiar place to me, yet I don't remember the first time I visited. Neither do I remember the moment Lourdes was woven into the fabric of my faith. My love for Lourdes was ignited by my mother and father, and my grandparents before them, and my relationship with this place has evolved over the years. But Lourdes is more than just a place.

When I was a child, Lourdes was a special place for me. Walking hand in hand with my brothers and sisters to visit The Grotto of the Apparitions at Massabielle, I didn't fully understand what it was all about, but a seed was planted, and the many childhood visits that followed fed a passion within me and nurtured its growth. At night, we would be taken to The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception to watch a sea of light shift beneath us as the Torchlight Procession moved through the Sanctuaire Notre-Dame. I remember learning that this incredible display, that took place every day, was in response to the words Our Lady spoke to Bernadette, "come in procession". I think this is when I experienced awe for the first time and felt a sense of belonging, sharing in this moment with so many others.

I returned to Lourdes later in life as a Team Leader for the Youth Section. Lourdes became more than just a special place; it became a community for me. I met new people and fostered life-long friendships. This time, I took trips to The Grotto alone, or with friends and began to develop independence in my faith. It felt empowering to speak to people my own age about my faith and share in truly authentic prayer. I took my own petitions and lit candles for the intentions of the ones I love. Inspired by my parents and grandparents, I visited Lourdes because I

wanted to and developed a sincere love for, and closeness with, Mary.

As an adult, I have returned to Lourdes in the capacity of Carer. This special place, this community of which I felt such belonging, became for me, an act of service. I am reminded of the washing of the disciples' feet at the last supper and the example of service Jesus gave us. Being a carer for my fellow pilgrims was a privilege and allowed me to appreciate a deepness of service that I had never previously experienced. Taking sick and vulnerable pilgrims to wash in The Baths and witnessing the strength of their faith was moving and inspiring.

In each of the different roles I have taken on during my many visits to Lourdes, I have, first and foremost, been a pilgrim. I have visited the spring that Our Lady of Lourdes invites us "to drink and wash ourselves" from. I have prayed at The Grotto and contemplated the apparitions of Mary to Bernadette, sharing in the immense closeness with Our Blessed Mother. I have lit candles in the Chapels of Light and placed them among the thousands of others, knowing that my prayers and petitions will be heard. Every time, I have come away with my faith enriched and my soul fed.

Now, as I prepare to join the Lancaster Diocese Pilgrimage to Lourdes as Director of the Youth, it takes on a new meaning once again. Lourdes is a special place, a community, an act of service and now, my mission. My mission to nurture a new generation of pilgrims and foster in them a belief and understanding, that Lourdes is more than just a place.

Katie O Donnell, Director of Youth Lancaster Diocesan Pilgrimage



The Relics of Saint Bernadette

Photo courtesy
of Mike March
Pilgrimage
Photography.

The visit of the St Bernadette relics to the UK in September & October 2022 reached out to a quarter of a million people with 1 in 4 UK Catholics visiting the relics in person during the 2 month tour and many more participating in prayer services, vigils and special Masses on-line.

52 venues were visited, including 1 hospital, 2 convents, 2 abbeys, and a prison. 300 kilos of petitions were delivered to the Grotto in Lourdes by Relic Tour drivers Gerry & Bob.

To commemorate the visit and to offer a small glimpse of the many graces made possible during the pilgrimage, the team behind the Relic Tour have released a special legacy film on YouTube. You can watch the Relic Tour Legacy film at youtu.be/3HY8iT2GioM

If you are inspired by the video to go to Lourdes, please join the Diocesan pilgrimage in July. Booking forms and more details are available from lancasterlourdes.co.uk or joewalshtours.co.uk/tours/diocese-of-lancaster-lourdes-pilgrimage-2023-07-21/

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Prayer of Saint Bernadette

Let the crucifix be not
only in my eyes and on my
breast, but in my heart.
O Jesus! Release all my
affections and draw them
upwards. Let my crucified
heart sink forever into
Thine and bury itself in the
mysterious wound made by
the entry of the lance.
Amen.



Love the Stranger

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

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

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

You can download the document at: cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger

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

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

"We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be

solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities.

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

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

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

Vatican endorsement

Father Fabio Baggio CS, the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development,

praised Love the Stranger's rich review of, and reflection on, Catholic social teaching:

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

Protection of migrants and refugees a shared goal

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our Lady's High School Preston

On Friday, 17 March, the pupils and staff enjoyed a visit from representatives of Kathe Kollwitz Schule from Germany. Preston has enjoyed links with the town of Recklinghausen, Germany since 1956 through the Town Twinning Partnership.

Head teacher, Michael Neckenig along with teachers, Lisa Ten Eicken and Katharina Baumeister met different groups of children throughout the day following their meeting with

Mayor Neil Derby, at Preston Town Hall. Terry Mattinson, Our Lady's Youth Worker, introduced the staff to different groups of pupils from different year groups. They asked about life at Our Lady's High School and what the children enjoyed most. The students were really excited to share what they have been learning and the extra curricular activities they take part in. Students listened intently as they compared their school days, learning experiences and exams with those of students in Germany.



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Following the Inspirations of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit dwells within us: *'Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?' (1 Cor. 3.16).* He can be our great friend. His action is to guide, and teach us everything, to bring to our minds the words of Christ, to pray in us, to console, heal, strengthen, sanctify, reproach and encourage us. Jesus told His disciples: *'He will teach you everything' (Jn 14.26).*

The Holy Spirit can give us inspirations about literally anything. We need only read the Gospels (*which He inspired*) to get a sense of His guidance on any subject, especially in the words of Jesus, since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. He will *'remind you of everything I have told you' (Jn 14.26).*

His action is to give tailored guidance to the individual in the unique circumstances now at hand. He is the one who makes you turn your life around; He is the one who convinces you that Jesus is the Lord; He is the one who convinces you of Church teaching. He especially guides one to exercise the virtues, to pray, and interests Himself in the minute details of our most ordinary acts and choices.

He tells one

- what to say, and what not to say;
- where to go;
- what company to keep or avoid;
- what to read or decline to read, write or not write;
- where to go or not go;
- how to witness to Christ.
- It might be that He directed you to particular studies, or talks, or a Church, or a person, a place or job, to a vocation.

His inspirations will always guide one to obey, to serve, to do one's duty faithfully and with care. His action will generally be towards temperance and self-control, rather than self-indulgence. *'Just a*

little', He says. *'Be generous,'* He urges, *'Give.'* *'Bear with situations patiently, with meekness.'* *'Forgive. Seek unity,'* *'Don't say anything'* or *'be bold, speak up'.*

He reveals to us that Jesus is Lord, and through Him, He guides us to the Father, and makes us realise we are His children: *'you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"' (Rom. 8.15).*

He prompts us to pray, and teaches us how to pray: *'We don't know we ought to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words' (Rom. 8.26).*

He tends to inspire contemplatives in the direction of solitude and silence, to simplifying their lives, to *'stay in'* rather than *'go out'*, to *'less'* rather than *'more'*, to stability and quietness, to pray and to serve. His inspirations tend to go against our inclination for ease, rest and pleasure. However He does not always ask us to do the less palatable thing. Sometimes our attraction, e.g. to read a holy book, or make a retreat, is His inspiration.

He inspired Jesus to offer His life for us on the Cross, and He will inspire us to make this same gift of self. Some He inspires to give their whole lives to God in religious life.

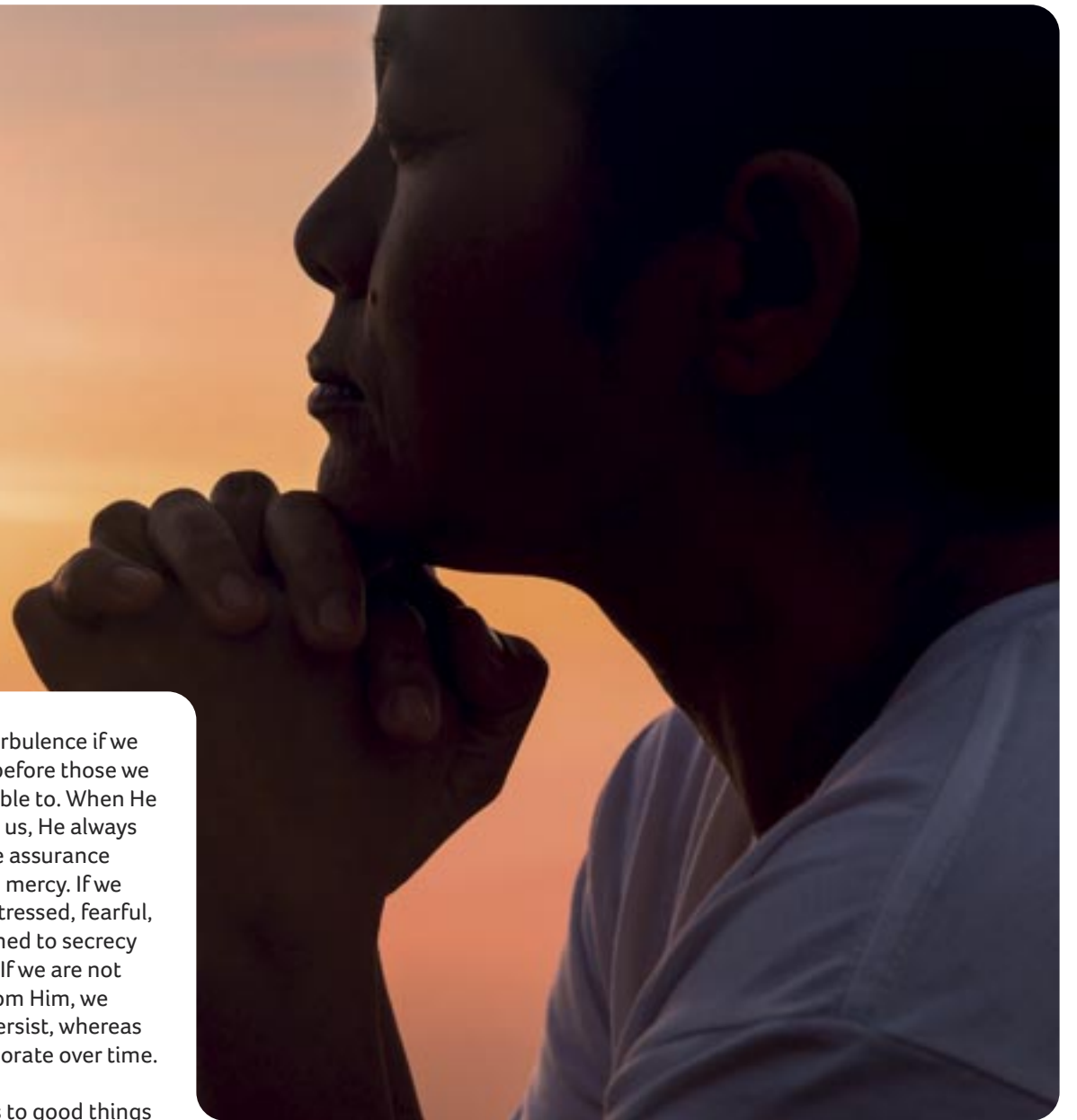
How can we become more receptive to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit?

- We can become more receptive to His inspirations if we make more space for silence in order to listen to Him.
- If He finds us alone, He will come to be our guide and Companion.
- If we do not clutter our airwaves with too many stimuli from the Internet, from social encounters and work projects we will be more mentally still and able to hear Him.
- If we are detached, we will be more open to recognising His voice and more able to follow it.
- If we love Jesus, we will attract the Holy Spirit to ourselves.

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- If we invite Our Lady to be our Mother and guide, she will ask Him to come, and will attract Him to us. *'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' (Luke 1.34)*. If we say our fiat, He will bring to birth Christ in us, as He did in her.
- Humility is the magnet that attracted the Holy Spirit to Mary, and will draw Him to us.
- Surrender: If we give ourselves to God, we almost force God to come to us.
- If we are faithful in following one inspiration, He will send others.
- Share inspirations with a spiritual director/ confessor to test they are of God.
- Preserve inner peace in order to hear clearly.
- Thank God for every grace, and He will send more.
- Desire and ask for inspirations and for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Desire the Spirit Himself.
- Realise that you can't achieve holiness by your own efforts, then He will come and, if you ask Him, take over the main initiative and governance of your life, giving you the strength to fulfil what He prompts you to do.
- Act on the advice given to you by those with authority whose advice you seek.
- To discern what is uncertain, obey in what is certain (Church teaching, duties, commands of superiors).
- Pray and then do what comes to you after prayer.

Signs of the Holy Spirit

These include the fruits – Love, joy, peace, tranquillity, joy, strength, self-control, justice, generosity, faithfulness, kindness, gentleness (*Gal. 5.22*). We might add purity, humility, light, constancy and

stability over time, and turbulence if we resist, and transparency before those we make ourselves accountable to. When He convicts us or reproaches us, He always follows up with peaceable assurance that we can trust in God's mercy. If we are left overwhelmed, distressed, fearful, ashamed, confused, inclined to secrecy it was not the Holy Spirit. If we are not sure if an inspiration is from Him, we can wait as He tends to persist, whereas temptations tend to evaporate over time.

An inspiration will lead us to good things we could never foresee. To neglect an inspiration and follow a temptation instead could lead to jumble of negative consequences that unfold and tie us up in knots. It is therefore best to follow that gentle nudge of God.

The hallmarks of temptations are that we might rather do them in the dark, that they incline us to be covert, to over-complicate, they impose false and pressing deadlines, they force us down lines of reasoning that are convoluted, confusing, demanding. They leave us in knots. One temptation can lead to a problem that leads to a string of pseudo-solutions that only create further problems, until the only solution is to manifest the problem and put an axe to it.

Conversely the Holy's Spirit's voice is gentle, powerful, insistent, pure, clear, a whisper, respectful, not pushing, never driving. It comes when needed. He doesn't swamp us with more inspirations than we can handle. Often however it is not recognising the inspiration that is the difficulty, but acting on it! It is following inspirations that made the Saints saints.

Dare we invite Him to take the driving seat in our lives?

Further Reading

- *Père Jacques-Philippe*, In the School of the Holy Spirit
- *St Francis de Sales*, Introduction to the Devout Life and Treatise on the Love of God

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My secret is quite simple: I pray. And through my prayer I become one with the love of Christ and see that praying is loving him, that praying is living with him, and that means making his words come true.... For me praying means being one with the will of Jesus twenty-four hours a day, living for him, through him, and with him.
” *St Teresa of Calcutta*

Prayer what the Church Teaches

How can my everyday routine be a school of prayer? Everything that happens, every encounter can become the occasion for prayer. For the more deeply we live in union with God, the deeper we understand the world around us.

Those who already seek union with Jesus in the morning can be a blessing to the people they meet, even their opponents and enemies. Over the course of the day they cast all their cares on the Lord. They have more peace within themselves and radiate it. They make their judgements and decisions by asking Him how Jesus would act at that moment. They overcome fear by staying close to God. In desperate situations they are not without support. They carry the peace of heaven within them and thereby bring it into the world. They are full of gratitude and joy for the beautiful things, but also endure the difficult things that they encounter. The attentiveness to God is possible even at work.

*Source:
Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church*

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