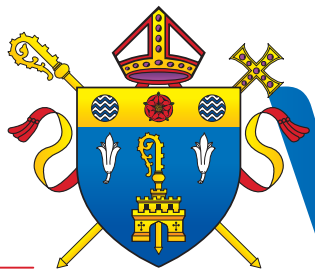


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The Catholic



VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 367 + March '25

INSIDE: Pages 8-12

Diocese Jubilee  
Pilgrimage Special



# Our Jubilee Journey begins... Pilgrims of hope with Mary



“  
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finds its  
supreme  
witness in  
the Mother  
of God  
(SnC, 24)

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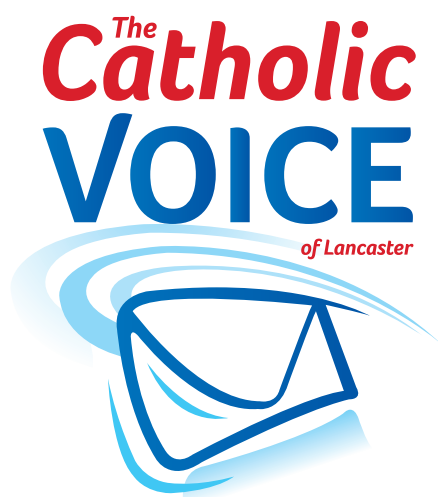
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### CONTACT US:

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#### EDITOR:

Pearl Mina  
07901 696 490  
CatholicVoiceNews@lrcd.org.uk

#### EDITORIAL TEAM

Frances Wygladala  
Distribution & Editorial Contributor  
Andrew Wygladala  
Distribution & Assistant Editor

#### ADVERTISING:

Charlotte Rosbrooke / CathCom Ltd.  
01440 730399  
charlotter@cathcom.org  
www.cathcom.org

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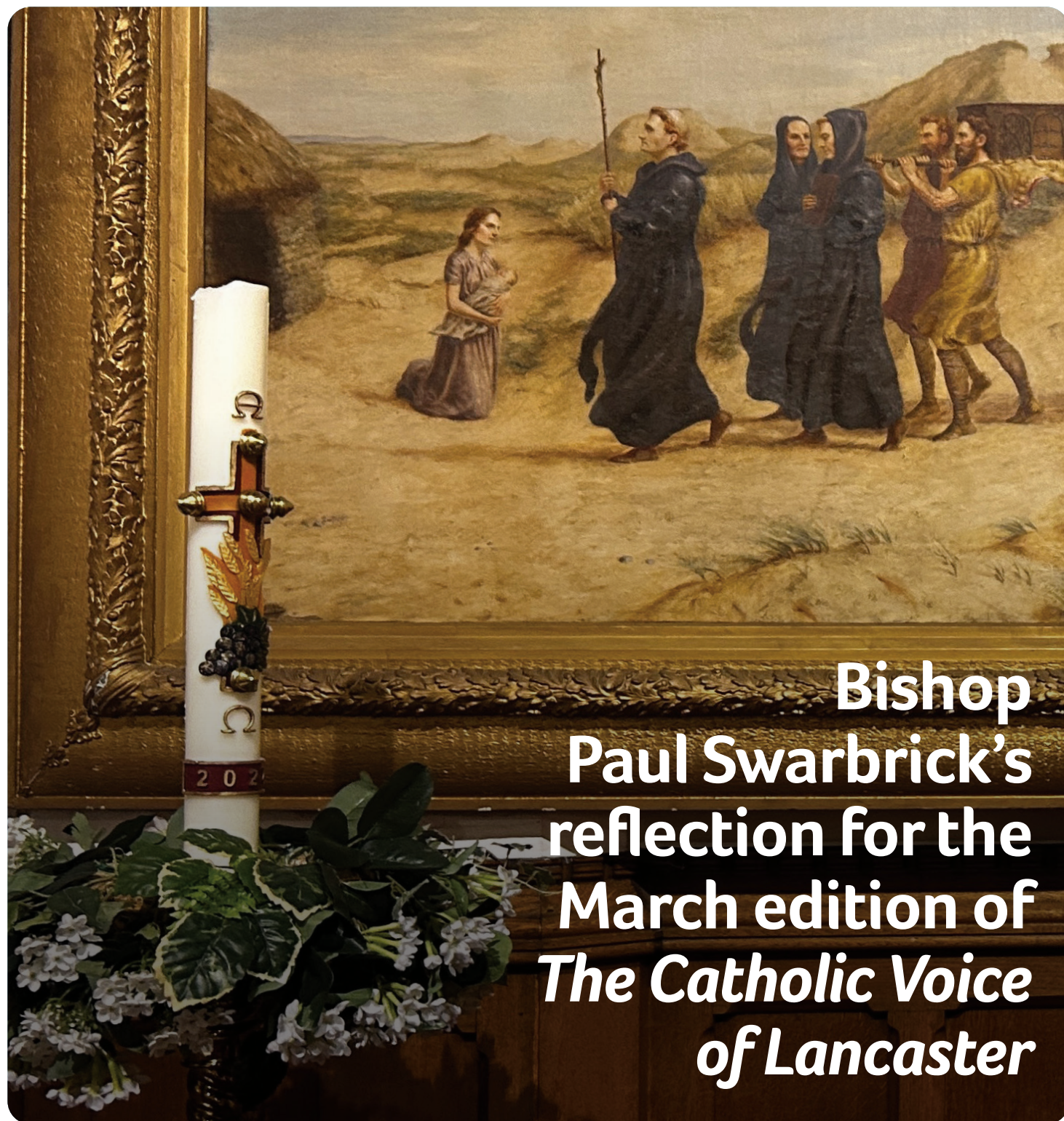
#### Articles & Letters to:

**CatholicVoiceNews@lrcd.org.uk**

#### POSTAL ADDRESS:

FAO Father Stephen Pearson  
The Catholic Voice of Lancaster  
C/o Holy Family Catholic Church  
1 Lytham Road  
Freckleton  
Preston PR4 1AD

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## Bishop Paul Swarbrick's reflection for the March edition of *The Catholic Voice of Lancaster*

***"To be a pilgrim involves movement, to go on pilgrimage. It involves above all a movement of the heart."***

**P**ilgrims of Hope' is the theme and focus given to the Holy Year by Pope Francis. I am pleased to hear of various initiatives in Parishes and schools across the Diocese being planned to mark the Holy Year as well as the Diocesan Centenary. Thank you to those of you who are exercising your creative and imaginative skills to enrich the year. As well as the Lourdes Pilgrimage in July, there are local pilgrimages organised to Ladyewell and St Mary's, Cleator and a short pilgrimage to Lindisfarne as well as our autumn pilgrimage to Walsingham. Our martyrs will accompany us!

In its origins, a Holy Year ought to be marked by a reduction of activity rather than an increase. We are reminded how fields were left fallow, to rest, and the People of God left various works undone in order to give time and attention to their relationship with the Lord. And that is what we must be drawn to do: focusing more closely and intently on our relationship with God. Any pilgrimage can fall into the trap of being a sort of holy tourist trip, visiting famous sights, purchasing gift-shop items not essential, doing a lot of talking and eating! None of these might be bad in themselves – some could be helpful – but the heart of this year of Grace is to connect and build a deeper intimacy with the Lord.

We have been given this time by the Lord so that we may know Him with more confidence, that we may be moved to address our personal faults through penance and reconciliation and that we may come to serve Him with greater humility and joy.

To be a pilgrim involves movement, to go on pilgrimage. It involves above all a movement of the heart. That is where the first and most essential shift happens. We place our hope in Him who has loved us to the end.

The Church continues the Mission of Christ. In order to do that, certain things in my life need to change in a particular direction. That direction is key. He offers Himself as our Guide. If we do not follow Him who are we following and where are we heading, and what are our efforts achieving?

May this be a true Holy Year for each of you and for our beautiful Diocese. May the Lord help us to be worthy successors of our parents and of earlier generations of Catholic Christians.

With my blessing,  
+ Paul, Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick, Bishop Of Lancaster







Bishop Paul stood with the painting of St Cuthbert and the Linisfsarne monks at St Joseph's RC Church, Ansdell.

# Welcome Father Stephen Pearson

## The Catholic Voice's new Ecclesiastical Editor

**H**ello, as many of you might recognise from the photo, I am Fr Stephen Pearson, and I've been a priest of our Diocese for nearly 35 years.

In that time I've been involved in several part of Diocesan life including the Faith and Justice Commission, serving the Deaf community, University Chaplaincy, school chaplaincy and serving as parish priest in Preston, Bispham, Lancaster and now at Holy Family Warton-Freckleton with St Ann's Westby. Currently I am also the Diocesan Press Officer.

I am looking forward to working with, and getting to know, the new committee supporting The Catholic Voice of Lancaster (we already knew each other from previous collaborations) and hopefully I can contribute to the sharing of the good news that is present in our Diocese.

**Fr Father Stephen Pearson**  
Ecclesiastical Adviser



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# Jack Regan, Director of Castlerigg Youth Service launches exciting new retreats

**I**t's a new year and luckily nothing in our Garden was damaged by last months storms and the 90mph winds. Yes – we're surprised too!

We confidently predict that 2025 will be our busiest for a very long time and a year with some of the most vibrant work we have ever done. We've got a great team who are looking forward to welcoming people in and meeting them out and about around the diocese and beyond!

### YEAR 12 RETREAT // JULY 4-6

For the past few years, we haven't been able to offer a Sixth Form retreat at Castlerigg. While we've welcomed plenty of 16-18-year-olds from Scotland (*where the education system differs slightly*), we've seen a gap in our provision for English students. To address this, we've put our heads together, and the result is an open Year 12 retreat, scheduled for July 2025. This

retreat is designed for schools and colleges to either bring small groups accompanied by a teacher or to encourage individual students to attend, where they'll be cared for by the Castlerigg team. We've chosen a weekend in July to avoid disrupting lessons and to give students something to look forward to after their exams. We've reached out to all Catholic Sixth Form Colleges in the Northwest, as well as schools with Sixth Forms, to share this.

### YOUNG ADULTS RETREAT // MAY 9-11

Another exciting addition for 2025 is the revival of our Young Adults Retreat. Our first YA Retreat in some time is happening from May 9-11, 2025. It's open to anyone aged 18-30, with a ticket price of £65, and concessions available for students or those out of work. The retreat theme will be "What do Catholics Believe?" – a straightforward dive into the essentials of the faith. Oh, and we'll have Karaoke too!



### OPEN WEEKENDS AND QUIET RETREATS // A NEW INITIATIVE

This year, we're launching an exciting new idea for adults and families. On weekends when we have availability, we'll offer either a 'Quiet Weekend' or a 'Family Weekend.'

Quiet weekends are perfect for adults looking for a peaceful, reflective escape in the Lakes. Guests will enjoy a single room and breakfast, with plenty of time for quiet prayer or relaxation.

Family weekends are similar but with a livelier feel! These are open to families, and if enough people sign up, we'll host activities like a quiz night to bring everyone together.

These weekends will be announced around six weeks in advance, so keep an eye on our website and social media for updates!

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE TEAM?

We're always on the lookout for young Christians (*usually aged 18-22*) to join our Youth Ministry Internship Scheme.

This programme offers fantastic training, qualifications, and experience in youth ministry. We've moved to a rolling recruitment system, which means new interns (*previously called Gap Year volunteers*) can join at different points throughout the year.

We're also looking to hire a paid Programme Leader to join our leadership team. If you have relevant experience and feel called to this role, we'd love to hear from you! For more details, contact [jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk](mailto:jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk), visit [castleriggmanor.com](http://castleriggmanor.com), or follow us on Instagram [@castleriggmanor](https://www.instagram.com/castleriggmanor) and [@team\\_castlerigg](https://www.instagram.com/team_castlerigg).







## A Sacred Renewal Major Restoration Breathes New Life into St. Francis Church, Hill Chapel

**Mike Bryan, parish property group chair at St. Francis Church, Hill Chapel, charts the ongoing restoration of the heritage landmark.**

**T**he historic St. Francis Church, Hill Chapel in Goosnargh, a Grade 2 listed building, is undergoing a major restoration. While the church is temporarily closed for repairs, Mass is being held in the adjacent school hall, providing a temporary home for the parish community.

Hill Chapel holds great significance in Catholic history. It was built at a time when English Catholics faced harsh persecution under the penal laws, which sought to suppress their faith. Despite the risks, the Catholics of Lancashire continued to meet in secret for Mass, often in private homes, and Hill Chapel served as one of these “safe houses.” The chapel is also notable as the birthplace of Blessed George Beesley, born in 1562. After training for the priesthood abroad, Beesley returned to England in disguise to minister to Catholics. Unfortunately, he was captured, executed in 1591, and later beatified as a martyr. In the early 18th century, the Franciscan Order decided to build a chapel in Goosnargh. They chose a site on high ground, far from the village, to ensure safety from detection. Completed in 1755, the chapel was designed to resemble a barn to blend in with the rural landscape. It was further expanded during the 19th century as the Catholic population grew.

In 2009, the church underwent significant repairs, including strengthening the roof and replacing the roof slates. Unfortunately, by 2019, problems began to arise. The ceiling started to crack and sag, and it was discovered that the roof trusses had failed. Slates began to fall, and the asbestos cement ceiling began to deteriorate, releasing harmful dust onto the pews below. With cracks appearing regularly, it became clear that immediate action was required to prevent further damage.

In early 2024, the parish property group appointed structural engineers and a conservation architect to assess the building and design a restoration plan. Work began in October 2024, focusing on removing

the asbestos ceiling, repairing and reinforcing the roof structure, and replacing the Brazilian roof slates with top-quality English slates. In addition to the structural work, the church will be rewired, and a new eco-friendly lighting system will be installed. The entire interior will also be redecorated to restore its original charm.

The cost of the restoration project is substantial, but the parish has received generous support. Grants totaling £131,000 have been provided by the Albert Gubay Foundation, the National Churches Trust, and Goosnargh Parish Council. In addition, the parish community has worked hard to raise £54,000 through various fundraising events. These include concerts, raffles, garden open days, and parish socials, showcasing the commitment and unity of the local Catholic community.

The restoration is expected to take 25 weeks, with the work currently in its fifteenth week. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2025. At that time, Fr. Sony Joseph, the parish priest, hopes to invite Bishop Paul Swarbrick to preside over a rededication Mass, celebrating the completion of the restoration in time for Easter.

This major restoration project will preserve the historical and architectural integrity of Hill Chapel for future generations. The chapel, which has played such a vital role in the history of English Catholicism, will continue to serve as a place of worship, reflection, and prayer for many years to come. The restoration is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the parish community, who have come together to safeguard their church and its history.

Grateful acknowledgment is given to Anthony Stubenrauch for the design of the stained glass, the drawing of the church in the header and for the millenium plaque in the church grounds. Sadly Anthony passed away 13 January 2016.

A picture of a stained glass display within the church of Blessed George Beesley, a martyr, who was born about 1562 in the farmhouse that became our Presbytery. He died on 2 July 1591, his feast day is 1 July.



**David Pope** dip FD MBIFD

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# Celebrating Christian Unity in Blackpool



On Thursday, January 23rd Christ the King and St Kentigern's parish hosted a Service for Christian Unity in St Kentigern's Church. All the Christian churches in Layton Churches Together were invited and representatives from each church helped to lead different parts of the service.

Young people from St Mary's Catholic Academy also took an active part, reading the gospel in a very challenging way and helping to share the Light of Christ amongst us when we were each given a candle, lit from the Paschal Candle, and all together recited the Nicene Creed. The Service was adapted from resources provided by Churches Together in England and Wales.

This year in the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity we are commemorating

the formulation of the Nicene Creed by the Council of Nicea in AD 325.

After 1,700 years this creed is still shared and prayed by Christian everywhere, in spite of all that has happened historically to divide us. It still calls us to our common faith in our loving triune God, Creator, Saviour and Spirit and to the mission that baptism has conferred on each of us to put that creed into practice in actions of love and service.

After this time of prayer and praise we gathered in the Parish Centre with welcome refreshments and opportunity to renew our friendships and simply enjoy each other's company. A very real friendship in Christ is the hallmark of our Layton Churches Together group and it was a joy to celebrate that on this cold winter evening. *Sr Philomena Grimley, SHCJ*



Celebrating Christian Unity in Blackpool  
Fr Andrew Dawson and  
Fr Mathew Minisare at  
St Kentigerns Parish.



Sister Philomena Grimley, SHCJ.





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# Our Lady's Catholic College Advent Fundraising Success



**T**hroughout the second half term of 2024 and 2025, the Our Lady's Catholic College community have been busy raising money and awareness for Lancaster District Homeless Action Service (LDHAS).

In case you may not be aware, LDHAS is a charity that provides services for people experiencing homelessness and people experiencing housing poverty in the Lancaster district. This includes providing laundry services, IT access, Citizens Advice, health services, a care of address for correspondence, and much more.

In November, a record number of 32 of

our sixth formers and 7 teaching staff spent a cold and wet night sleeping out in the school's entrance courtyard in solidarity with those who are homeless and in support of LDHAS.

Over the course of the evening, we hosted a fascinating talk and Q&A session with Phil Moore, manager of LDHAS, which was fascinating and gave us some great ideas about how we can help locally. We also made Christmas cards to give out with the LDHAS care packs we collected later on in the term.

It was a testing but wonderful experience for all involved, especially as we bedded


down on the unforgiving hard floor, but the students maintained a positive outlook until the end and their incredible fundraising efforts saw them raise over £1,707.50 for LDHAS, which will make a huge difference to their work, especially as the demand for services increases over the winter months. As a whole school, we collected items to make "Care Packs" for those experiencing homelessness, which were given out over the Christmas period by LDHAS. These contained a collection of essentials, some treats, and a handmade Christmas card from the pupils at Our Lady's, all in a useful carry-around bag. Altogether, we managed to make over 50 care

packs, with three big boxes full of extra donations that wouldn't fit in the packs too! Finally, on the last day of term, Mr. Teasdale (*our new Head of Learning Support*) had his head shaved by Mrs. Hartley (*our outgoing Assistant Headteacher*) in aid of our LDHAS campaign, adding a further £1067 to our total, meaning we raised £2774.50 altogether, which is absolutely amazing!

Thank you to everyone who donated and supported the appeal in any way, we and LDHAS really appreciate everything and it will make a huge difference to so many people in the Lancaster and district area. *Ben O'Flynn Lay Chaplain*



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Tel: 01253 396286  
Email: [admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk](http://www.st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk)  
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## Diocesan Jubilee Pilgrimage Special

# Celebrating the Jubilee of Hope in the Diocese of Lancaster

With Mary  
Pilgrims of Hope  
*Our Lady of Lourdes*  
*Patroness of Our Diocese*

**T**he Holy Father, Pope Francis has written that Mary is the supreme witness of hope, as she never abandoned her hope and trust in God even when her Son was being violently crucified.

As part of the Jubilee celebrations and pilgrimages, our Marian shrines will be special places for the rebirth of hope during the jubilee year.

In addition to Lourdes, there is a range of local pilgrimage opportunities in our own Diocese. Pilgrims will also be invited to travel to Walsingham and Lindisfarne this year.



# Diocese of Lancaster Lourdes Pilgrimage 23rd – 30th July 2025

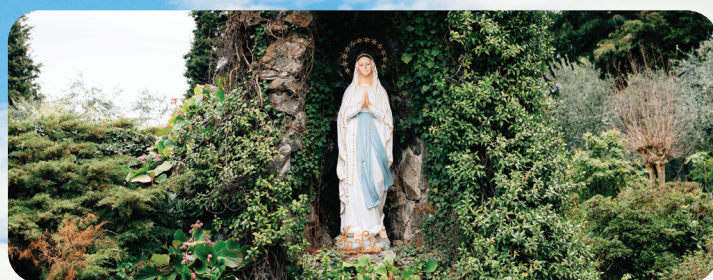
**Coming to Lourdes on pilgrimage during the Jubilee Year, is to set out on a journey. A journey we hope you will be part of.**

**Despite life's difficulties, we will journey with each other, and become, with Mary, 'Pilgrims of Hope', in Lourdes, this Jubilee Year 2025.**

## Linda Wisdom, Pilgrimage Director Launches the Diocese of Lancaster Lourdes Pilgrimage

**I**n this Centenary Year of Lancaster Diocese and Jubilee year we have been called to be Pilgrims of Hope.... 'a year of grace' (Is. 61:2) Come and receive the graces offered to us during the 2025 Pilgrimage.

Bishop Paul Swarbrick invites you to join him on this 2025 Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. The pilgrimage provides us with a unique opportunity to gather as a Diocese with our Bishop, to pray and journey together in faith. It is a time to stand apart from the rigours of life and seek the peace, healing, and grace which a pilgrimage experience can afford.



Flying from Liverpool airport on 23rd July 2025, pilgrims will be accommodated in either the Hotel Eliseo, Hotel St George or Hotel Agena where breakfast, lunch and evening meal are included. The youth will be accommodated in the Hotel Louis de France.

An Itinerary for the week will be provided which includes Masses, Stations of the Cross, Eucharistic Procession, and the highlight of the week for many pilgrims, the Marian Torchlight Procession.

Besides the religious side of the pilgrimage, there is always time for some fun, there is also the option of a day trip to the Lake of Lourdes. This is always a great day out with the youth (and some of our more daring pilgrims) boating, swimming and sunbathing at the lake. The less adventurous simply sitting and enjoying the views and soaking up the sunshine whilst eating their packed lunches and getting to know each other....the Lancaster Lourdes family.

Yes, many lifelong friendships, relationships and marriages have grown through the Lourdes Pilgrimage and continue to do so each year!

**On this 100th Anniversary of the Lancaster Diocese please consider joining the pilgrimage and belonging to that Lancaster Lourdes family.**

**Why not make this a parish event and come as a group?**







# helpers

## CALLING ALL LOURDES HELPERS OLD AND NEW!!

**O**ur care for the sick pilgrims is second to none and we are totally reliant on our volunteer helpers, nurses, carers, brancardier (*male helpers 21+*) and a wonderful team of young people.

I invite you to do something special this year and volunteer to help – you will receive all the training you require.

You will be placed in a team and will work alongside other like-minded volunteers, under the guidance of an experienced team leader on a rota devised by the Chief Nurse. For many, the experience of volunteering is life changing. Spending time with the pilgrims and enabling them to feel a part of the Lancaster Lourdes family is both fulfilling and rewarding and the reason why so many come back year after year. We hope that you'll join us in Lourdes, we promise it will be a satisfying and wonderful experience that you will never forget. Please contact Nikki at: [chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk](mailto:chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk)

## SICK PILGRIMS

**T**o be cared for by the medical and nursing team on the pilgrimage you must be registered as a Registered Sick Pilgrim and you will be accommodated in The Hotel Eliseo where the Medical team are based. You should complete the Joe Walsh booking form with the relevant information and the Chief Nurse, Nikki Wisdom will make contact with you regards your needs. The Diocese can provide wheelchairs for all pilgrims who require them.

If there is someone sick in your parish or local care home that you know of who would benefit from going on pilgrimage, please encourage him or her to come this year.

## YOUTH TEAM

**T**he Youth Director, Katie O Donnell, will be assisted with a wonderful team of Group Leaders who will make this pilgrimage memorable for the young people. The Youth Section will fly to Lourdes and will be accommodated in the Hotel Louis de France. If you know of a young person in your parish/school that would like to be part of this amazing team then please encourage them to come.

It may be that Fundraising will take place in your parishes to support young people going on pilgrimage – please help if you can.

Catenian Bursary's are available to young person – For further information please contact: [youth@lancasterlourdes.co.uk](mailto:youth@lancasterlourdes.co.uk)

## CALLING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE – BOOK NOW!!

## DO YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OR SING?

**D**eacon Stephen Pendlebury will lead the Lourdes musicians and choir for Masses and other services during the week in Lourdes.

If you play a musical instrument or would like to be part of the choir please contact Stephen at: [stephenpendlebury@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenpendlebury@hotmail.com)







## All roads lead to Hope...

**P**ilgrims from all over the world will be converging on Rome to pass through the Holy Door, but it will also be possible to experience the grace of the Jubilee at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The Vatican has announced that plenary indulgences will be granted as part of the 2025 Jubilee Year. By granting a plenary indulgence, the Catholic Church expresses its desire for the faithful to experience God's mercy. The granting of a plenary indulgence constitutes a declaration of the remission or forgiveness of sins.

### ***The conditions for receiving the grace of a plenary indulgence:***

To obtain a plenary indulgence, the following conditions must be met – carry out the works attached to the indulgence (*going to the cathedral or the Sanctuary of Lourdes*), and no more than seven days later, receive forgiveness through sacramental confession, receive Eucharistic Communion, pray for the Pope's intentions.



### ***Works to be performed to receive the grace of the Plenary Indulgence:***

The faithful may receive the indulgence by performing one of the following works – Participating in the Stations of the Cross, praying the Rosary, participating in a Marian Procession at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, completing the Sanctuary's Jubilee Way. Since divine mercy will be offered on a large scale during the Jubilee Year, the '*chapelains*' will be making themselves generously available to celebrate the sacrament of Penance.

### ***All the pathways of Lourdes lead to Hope:***

- Carry the flame of hope in procession with our sick brothers and sisters.
- Sing the song of hope in every language.
- Pray to Mary, the Way of Hope.

POSTERS AND INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN ALL PARISHES THROUGHOUT THE DIOCESE or look on the Joe Walsh website:

**[www.joewalstours.ie](http://www.joewalstours.ie)**

Or Lancaster Lourdes website:

**[www.lancasterlourdes.co.uk](http://www.lancasterlourdes.co.uk)**





Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lindisfarne  
Following in the footsteps of St Cuthbert

- Pilgrimage to Lindisfarne & Holy Island: 21-23 May 2025.
- Led by Bishop Paul Swarbrick, taking in Holy Island, Bamburgh & Durham Cathedral, staying at Ushaw College. Cost: £310 shared accommodation and £340 single rooms, all inc. (coach pick-ups at Workington and Carlisle). Email: [info@christ-the-good-shepherd.co.uk](mailto:info@christ-the-good-shepherd.co.uk) for a booking form.



Jubilee Pilgrimage to Walsingham

*“As we journey towards the Jubilee Year 2025, I encourage you, as individuals, families, parishes, groups of parishes, dioceses, and Catholic organisations to make a special pilgrimage to Walsingham in the footsteps of kings, saints, and holy people of times gone by to deepen your faith and reliance on our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Fr Robert Billing, Rector of the Catholic National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady, Walsingham

The Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham, the National Shrine to Our Blessed Lady will take place on 20th - 24th October 2025. The all inclusive cost is £475.00 - £500.00 (dependent on accommodation type) Coach collection drop off will take place in Workington, Carlisle, Penrith, Lancaster and Preston. Bishop of Lancaster, Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick is leading the pilgrimage and it has a special meaning for the Diocese:



Dear brothers and sisters,

In this Jubilee Year our annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham, the National Shrine to Our Blessed Lady, will take place 20-24 October 2025. I invite you to join me! A Jubilee Year is a moment of grace in the life of the Church. The practice finds its roots in the Old Testament covenant made between God and his people, Israel. *It was a time of redemption, a moment when land and property were returned to their original owners and slaves were set free (Leviticus 25).*

In Luke’s Gospel it is no small thing that Jesus’ first public proclamation, which took place in the Synagogue in Nazareth, recalls the prophetic words of Isaiah with the promise of a “year of favour from the Lord” (Is 61:1-2). This year of favour, this Jubilee Year, will find the Church proclaiming the Gospel afresh, *proclaiming liberty from the darkness of sin and healing, both physical and spiritual, for those who are oppressed (Lk 4:18- 19).* Our pilgrimage to Walsingham is therefore an excellent way to mark this time of grace, both as a diocese and individually. Some of you are familiar with Walsingham. For others, it will be your first visit. In the Middle Ages, the Shrine was one of the great ancient Marian places of pilgrimage in the whole of Christendom. It is known as England’s very own Nazareth and is a place where the incarnation of Jesus is particularly remembered. Therefore, for the modern pilgrim, it is a place for all who would rejoice with Mary at ‘the great joy of the Annunciation.’ Like Lourdes in France, it is a place of reconciliation, conversion, peace and healing.

The all-inclusive cost is £475.00-£550.00 (dependent on accommodation type). Coach collection/drop-off will take place in Workington, Carlisle, Penrith, Lancaster and Preston. Fr Billing is the Rector and is a wonderful host for us, coming as we do from his home Diocese. He is keen to open the treasure of Walsingham to pilgrims who have never been before as well as those of us who are regular pilgrims. It is also an opportunity to support him in his national role.

For more information and booking details contact the pilgrimage organiser Deacon Charlie Conner on 07895 742 732 or email [charlie.conner@lrdc.org.uk](mailto:charlie.conner@lrdc.org.uk) The places will be limited, so please book in good time.

+Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick Bishop of Lancaster



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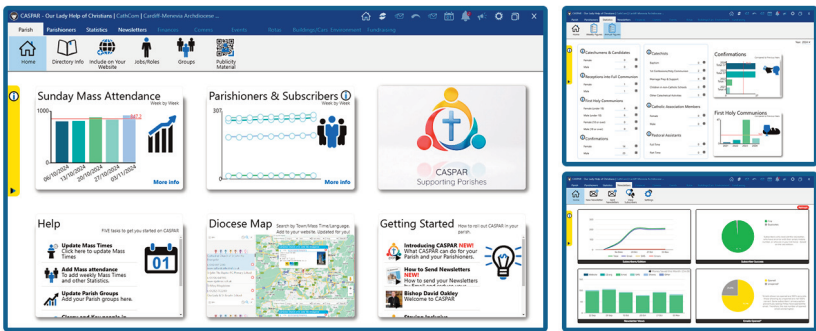
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# A life changing experience

**M**att Vincent is a parishioner at St Wulstan's RC Church, Fleetwood and a teacher at Cardinal Allen High School Fleetwood. Here he shares his joyful experience as an Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister:

As I've recently begun my journey as an Extra-Ordinary Eucharistic Minister, I wanted to share my experience with you.

I hoped from the outset that this role would bring me closer to God, and it has, in truly profound ways. That was, after all, my reason for stepping forward. But what I hadn't fully anticipated was how much it would also deepen my connection with others—sometimes in the most unexpected and beautiful ways.

During my first time as a Eucharistic Minister, I found myself quite affected as I offered the Precious Blood to my brother, Rob, and my mum, Kath. It was a deeply moving experience for me, and I later discovered it had been equally special for them.

Shortly after, I gave the Eucharist to my wife, Kelly, during Cardinal Allen's end-of-term Mass. As she approached, I was so overcome with emotion that I nearly couldn't say the words, "The Body of Christ." That moment was incredibly special for us both, and we later reflected that it reminded us of the blessing we received during our wedding from Fr. Alf.

In those moments, God's presence felt unmistakable, strengthening not only our faith but also our bond to each other. During the same Mass, I also had the privilege of offering the Eucharist to many of my students. Each time, it felt deeply significant, and I couldn't help but reflect on the shared faith that connects us all.

I wanted to share this experience to encourage anyone who might be considering taking up a role within our parish. If you're on the fence, I can only say this: do it. You may be surprised by how many aspects of your life it touches.

Matt Vincent



Matt Vincent  
Extraordinary  
Eucharistic Minister  
at St Wulstan's RC  
Church, Fleetwood.

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## OBITUARY

## Canon Bob Horn - Rest In Peace

**S**teadfast in his faith and steadfast in his love for others - a true Christian. A Loving Reflection of Canon Bob Horn's life by his brother, Bernard Horn.

When it was suggested, I say a few words about Robert – the family always called him Robert to differentiate from Dad who was Bob – I thought gosh, that is a privilege but also quite daunting. How do you sum up such a full life, and one that has been dedicated throughout first and foremost to God, and most certainly to his fellow human beings, particularly those who for whatever reason found themselves in a difficult situation.

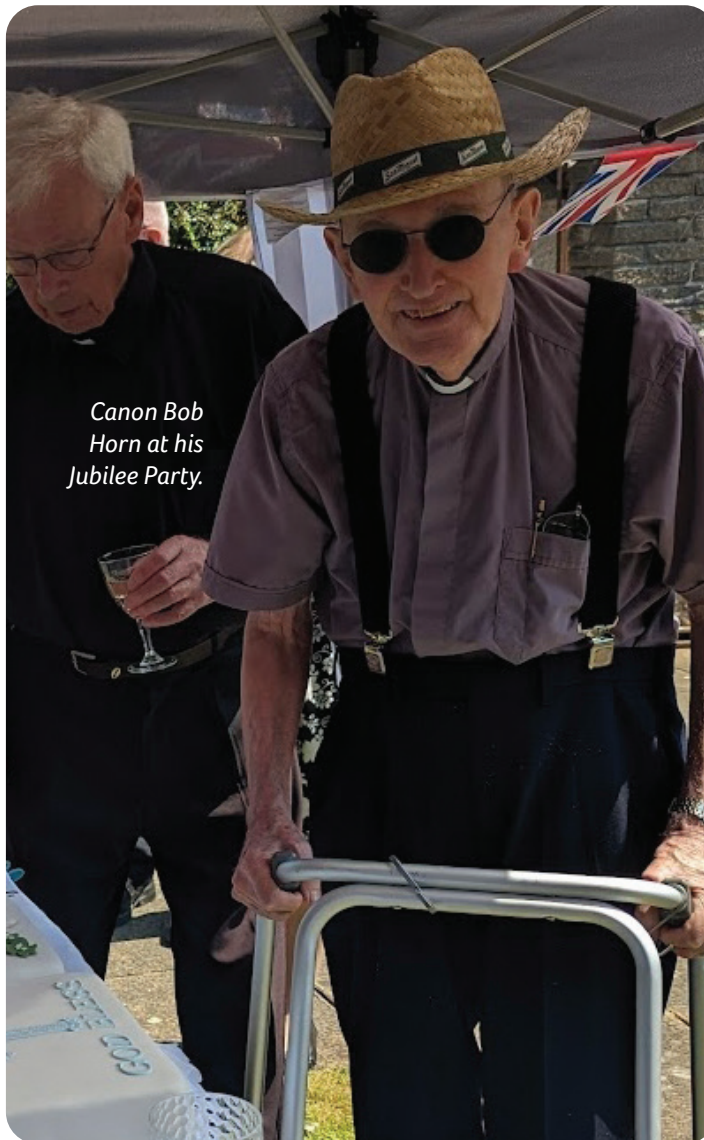
Robert was born, the first of six children, on August 3rd 1939. Like us all he enjoyed a wonderful family home, attended the local catholic primary school, and again like all the boys, went to the Catholic College, Preston to receive his Jesuitical slant on life. Following the College, he attended the junior seminary in Upholland and from there went to Valladolid, Spain to attend the English College seminary. He was ordained in Garstang on 9th June 1963.

Along the way he unfortunately caught TB while in Spain, and was for a time in the isolation hospital in Preston. When Robert was recuperating at home I remember vividly my Mother being in some state of anticipation, as Bishop Flynn decided he would come to our house to visit Robert – this was an honour indeed, so my mother told me!

Robert's journey through life as a priest started in this very church and it is fitting that we are here to bid him farewell, honour his memory and pray for him. To me as the junior sprog I was always rather in awe of him, and it was only in the latter stages of his life that I have been able to see him as a human being like the rest of us and to have the occasional joke – which did make him smile and chuckle. Indeed I said to him towards the end that surely he of all people could get in the fast track line for a speedy journey to see his boss. He smiled.

An excellent cricketer, a thespian, a teacher of philosophy (he returned to Valladolid to teach philosophy in the seminary for 7 years from 1965). He returned to Preston to Blessed Sacrament parish, St Peter's, Lytham, St Joseph's Wesham, and then St Peter and Paul, back in Preston.

Then a real gear shift. Being fluent in Spanish, and via the Society of St James, he moved to Peru where he stayed for



Canon Bob Horn at his Jubilee Party.

almost 10 years. He loved his time in the Andes (sometimes avoiding the attention of the Shining Path by moving around with the help of the locals), and his ministry was very fulfilling for him. There were many stories.

On his return to the UK he went to St Cuthbert's in Wigton, followed by Christ the King in Blackpool, then full circle back here at Our Lady & St Edward's, this time as Parish Priest.

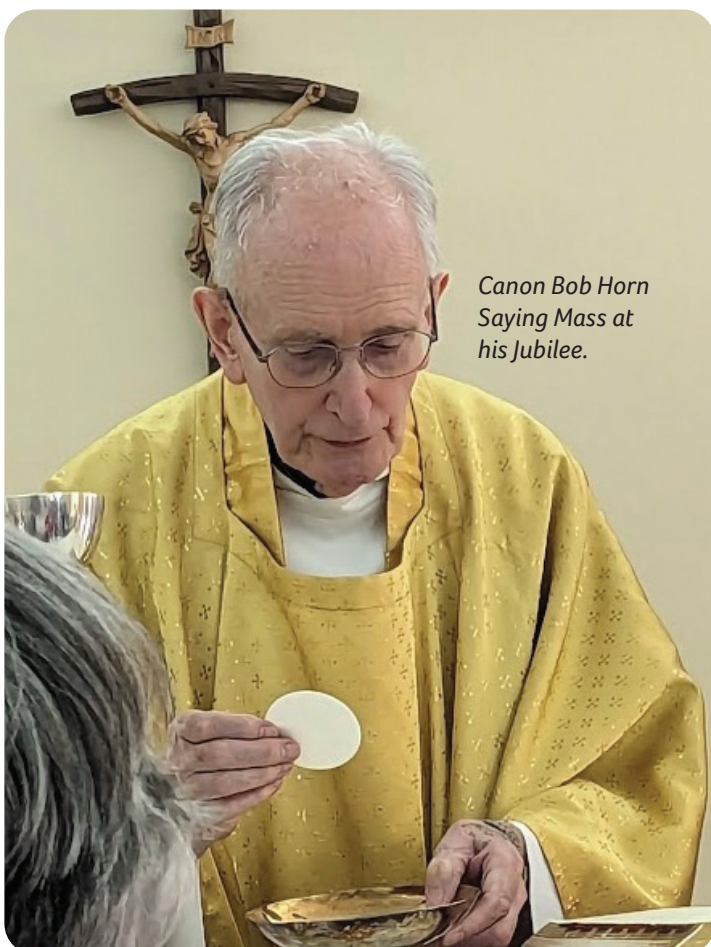
Retirement to Robert was a bit of an anathema, but he was persuaded to do less, and from 2021 he lived in semi-retirement at St Mary's Newhouse, where his body will be laid to rest after Mass. In July 2022 he moved to St Winefride's Bispham, where he spent his last couple of years. Elizabeth and I will always be grateful to Eva who runs St Winefride's for the way she and her colleagues cared for and showered genuine love on Robert right to the end. And finally to Stella Matutina care home, where they worked equally hard to provide Robert with comfort as the end of his life here on earth approached.

And before I finish I want to say just a brief word about my sister Elizabeth and indeed my late much loved and missed brother Roger. Elizabeth has always been there for Robert. She herself lost the love of her life almost two years ago, but has been tremendous in her love and dedication to Robert. Ever since our mother died, way back in 1975, Elizabeth has been his refuge, his decompression chamber, his go-to person always there for him. And Roger, who died before his time last year, despite his own failing health was there for Robert when Robert was going through a very difficult time with the onset of Parkinson's. To sum up, Robert was a very special brother, who seemed from a very early age destined for the life he led – a special human being in a very unsung way.

Witty, intelligent, self-deprecating and, most importantly, giving of himself to others. He existed for others and - he would be very cross at me saying it – he was up there on a pedestal certainly in my eyes, all the way from when I was his baby brother to the end of his life. I was trying to think of a word that would describe him and I came up with steadfast:

*Steadfast in his faith and steadfast in his love for others - a true Christian. We will miss him, as we do John, Edward and Roger. May he - and they - rest in peace.*

*Bernard Horn*



Canon Bob Horn Saying Mass at his Jubilee.

# The Catholic VOICE

## would like to hear from you!

If your parish or school has any news or if you would personally like to submit an article for publication, please send us what you have. Contact details can be found on page 2.

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# CALLING ALL ALTAR SERVERS!

## Lancaster Cathedral to host the National Mass of Altar Servers in May

**O**n Saturday 17th May our Cathedral in Lancaster will host the NATIONAL Mass for Altar Servers, led by Bishop Swarbrick.

The Mass, organised by the Archconfraternity of St Stephen, the Church's official organisation for Altar Servers, travels to a different diocese each year. The aim is to reach and bring together as many Altar Servers as possible, young and old, their families and clergy, to grow in faith, service and friendship.

Pope Francis encourages us, in this Holy Year, to become 'Pilgrims of Hope', and we look especially to our local saints of Cumbria and the Lancaster Martyrs, who journeyed throughout our corner of England. We hope that our diocesan servers from our parishes and schools will make the pilgrimage journey to Lancaster for this special Mass. As this is a national event, we also look forward to welcoming servers from our neighbouring dioceses and further afield.

We are grateful to Bishop Swarbrick and the Cathedral staff for their support and those involved in organising this Mass. We look forward to seeing everyone on the day, it's sure to be a grand occasion and an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the valuable work of our servers, who help to ensure that we celebrate our liturgies 'worthily and well'.

For more information, contact Ian Mulholland, Director of the Lancaster Diocese branch of the Guild of St Stephen – {contact email here}.

*Paul Woodhouse*

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