

The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster
Issue 244 + November 2012

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A New Priest for the Diocese – Deo Gratias!



Photo courtesy of Bishop's Blog shows Fr John on the steps of the Cathedral with his parents

Fr John Millar was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Campbell in the Cathedral of St Peter Lancaster on 22 September. Fr John has been appointed as assistant priest at Our Lady and St Joseph Carlisle. He studied for the priesthood at Allen Hall in London.

What is a Priest?

Priests bring Christ to the world in a unique way. Called by Him, they try to be living signs of His presence; they teach people about God; they continue Jesus' work in the sacraments of the Church. Every priest is called to be the human face of God's love and mercy in the world today.

Jesus appointed apostles to continue His ministry after He had returned to heaven. Through the laying on of hands and the prayer of consecration, this ministry – and the authority to act in Jesus' name – has been handed on through each generation. In this way, priests today do the same sort of work that Jesus Himself did, the work we read about in the Gospel.

No priest is perfect – we are all human! – but the grace of God works through the priest in a unique way, so that Jesus may be truly present in His Church, just as He promised: "I am with you always, to the end of time" (Matthew 28:20).

What does a Priest do?

The ministry of every priest is different, and there is a great variety to priestly life. Some work in parishes, schools, hospitals, prisons or in the armed forces. Whatever his surroundings, a priest celebrates Mass and the other sacraments, he leads people in prayer, he teaches them about God, he offers support and guidance in daily life.

Most priests lead very happy and fulfilled lives. They meet great numbers of people and are often welcomed as a member of the family, they find happiness as they offer a unique source of help to those in need, and they live the life for which God created them. To find your true vocation is to find happiness. If God has created you to be a priest, you will never be truly happy doing anything else!

The priesthood is not a job. It is a way of life, a vocation from God which demands real commitment to follow His call, just as the first disciples had to leave everything and follow Jesus. If you think you may have a priestly vocation please talk to your parish priest or visit the vocations website at <http://www.lancastervocations.org>

Fr Andrew Allman, Lancaster Vocations Blog

Lancaster Vocations

Read, on page 14, how Fr John discerned his vocation and learn about his studies and experience working in parishes leading up to his priestly ordination.

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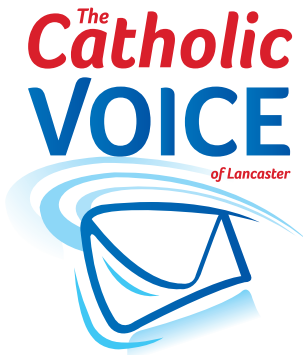
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EDITORIAL

Every month, except for August and January, the Editorial team of The Catholic Voice of Lancaster put together the newspaper for the diocese. No easy task given that each and every month the Editor has a post bag and email inbox full of contributions and news from parishioners up and down the diocese.

The Catholic Voice of Lancaster is recognised by others in the field of Catholic publishing as a high-quality and attractive paper that covers important stories that have been picked up by national Catholic newspapers and local radio news stations. And other Catholic newspapers have taken up regular features, such as Bruno Super Dog, the Children's page, the Saints and the Rosary to re-publish in their pages.

One of the things that you may not realise about The Catholic Voice of Lancaster is that printing and distribution to deanery centres does not cost the diocese a penny, the costs being covered by advertising revenue. The real investment is voluntary time and commitment behind the scenes in compiling such a quality read. Indeed some dioceses employ an editor for their diocesan newspapers – but we are not in a position in our diocese to countenance that.

The Editorial Team would like to sincerely thank our loyal clergy and lay readership, around the diocese, including those who contribute news, articles, and letters. We'd also like to especially thank the KSC and those parishioners who take the time and trouble to pick up their parish's papers and to ensure distribution.

Despite the many strengths of the paper we are receiving reports from around the diocese that some parishes are not picking up their copies from deanery centres, and if the papers do get to the parish they are often just being dumped at the back without any effort to hand it out to the people. Besides, we get numerous reports, too, of large numbers of copies finding their way into the recycling bin each month and as a result parishes are increasingly asking for their supplies to be reduced.

To continue as a free newspaper, the advertising has to be worthwhile for the advertisers. If papers are not distributed, or even picked up causing parishes, as a result, to ask for fewer copies the harder it becomes to get advertisers to advertise with us.

So why is there this lack of interest and support from some areas of the diocese? It's hard to say but based on anecdotal feedback we can suggest a few reasons:

Some view the Paper as too orthodox and consider "there is nothing worth reading in it". We understand this to mean that the Paper

doesn't express a liberal interpretation of Church doctrine.

For others it might be that they are simply not interested in anything outside their parish, whether it be diocesan matters or issues affecting the wider Catholic world.

And finally there are some who, for whatever reason, have simply 'lost faith' and are protesting against the institutional Church and its leadership because of the diocesan financial crisis of several years ago now, the recent sexual scandals among the clergy and more locally because of the linking and merging of parishes etc.

By listing these reasons we are not intending to judge people, we are simply stating the facts of where we stand at the moment. And it is doubtful that anything the Paper does will change these views even in this Year of Faith, when the publication should be at the forefront of the 'New Evangelisation'.

We realise that the way people get their news and information is undergoing a massive revolution through the rapid and instant world of the web with its blogs and the growth of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. If national newspapers are having to adapt and develop in response to these changes, so do diocesan newspapers with their much smaller readerships.

Therefore, in response to the apparent general lethargy to distribute the Catholic Voice at parish level and the social changes transforming the media we are seriously considering stopping producing The Catholic Voice of Lancaster as a hard-copy newspaper that parishioners can get at the back of church. Instead we would have to look towards producing it as an on-line diocesan newspaper.

But before we make any final decisions on the matter, however, we want to know what our readership thinks about such a radical change.

Please write in to the Editor (see contact details in the left hand column) and express your views about our dilemma.

If a considerable number of people express the view that they want The Catholic Voice of Lancaster to continue as a printed newspaper and can come up with practical suggestions as to how we can as a diocese make its operation work at every level we would respect your wishes.

On the other hand, if there is support for an on-line paper or a lack of response to this proposal, the Editorial team will make the change to an online version of The Catholic Voice of Lancaster from Advent 2013

Over to you!

The Editorial Team



Knowing his Bible!



The Schools Bible Project is a Religious Education Project for secondary school pupils. It has been running for over 20 years and in that time has inspired students into thinking about the importance of the scriptures.

The 2012 Bible Project invited every secondary school pupil across Britain to produce an essay based on the life of Jesus Christ and offered a cash prize for the best one. James, aged 13, from St Joseph's Catholic High School was among one of the joint winners.

James wrote an outstanding essay based on the scripture Mark 5:21-43, the story of Jesus healing Jarius' daughter. James will receive £500 for the School and will have the opportunity to attend the annual prize giving ceremony. In recent years the annual prize giving has been held at the House of Lords, with the Trustee Baroness Cox distributing the prizes at a ceremony attended by the winners, their parents, teachers, and friends.

In addition to James, eight students from year 8 and 9 at St Joseph's received runner up prizes of leather bound personalised Bibles. The school's Religious Education Teacher Mr Gabuguga would encourage all schools to take part. He said: 'the Bible Project is a great opportunity for pupils to be creative and develop their independent learning skills.'

A prayer for you

I said a prayer for you today, and I know God must have heard. I felt the answer in my heart, Although He spoke no word!

I didn't ask for wealth or fame (I knew you wouldn't mind). I asked Him to send treasures of a far more lasting kind!

I asked that He be near you. At the start of each new day. To grant you health and blessings and friends to share your way!

I asked for happiness for you in all things great and small

But it was for His loving care I prayed the most of all.

Author unknown

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HOLY BIBLE



Into the Wild The Big Walk

This year 29 young people completed the Big Walk, setting out from Castlerigg Manor, over the Honister Pass and Haystacks, and striding up the Ennerdale Valley.

There was a great sense of joy and friendship as we sat around a bonfire under the most beautiful star-lit skies in Ennerdale, the embers of the fire reaching out to the stars in the heavens, and as many of the young people braved the temperatures and swam in rivers and lakes along the way. We were also feted by the good ladies of Cleator who fed us royally, and many of the parishioners of Cleator who ferried our bags from hostel to hostel and who welcomed us so generously at our journey's end.

Here, Rachel, from Kirkham, shares the

experience: "Doing the Big Walk for the first time was truly an interesting however very enjoyable experience, being with youth from all parts of the diocese for the weekend constantly reminded us all that the Lancaster Diocese is our second family and that we are never lonely. The walking was broken down with us all saying (cheeky decades) of the rosary, this helped us strengthen our faith through the ominous presence of God in the heart of the mountains. We also spent our time swimming in a lake, trying to touch the clouds, and singing round a camp fire - not something you do every weekend!

We stayed at a youth hostel on the Saturday night but what a relief it was to arrive at Cleator on late Sunday afternoon and see the other pilgrims as we all celebrated a beautiful Mass together".



Being a Young Catholic Today

Mary, 19, Preston



**Not just
a cradle
Catholic**

The term 'Cradle Catholic' always seems to have such negative connotations. For those who have never heard of it its basic meaning is a Catholic who was born, baptised and brought up a Catholic. I am, technically, a 'Cradle Catholic', but I would never allow that term to describe fully my faith.

Within the modern world, the idea of being brought up 'religious' can often bring many controversies. People often assume that your faith must be something you have never fully considered, or have merely been forcibly brainwashed into. But how many teenagers do you know that follow exactly what their parents wish

them to? As a typical teenager I constantly questioned my faith, and others, at school, questioned it for me! Luckily, I had amazing support and answers through the chaplain at my school. He persuaded me to go to my first weekend retreat at Brettargh Holt, and later to my first of three trips to Lourdes. It was here that I actually truly discovered my faith. I realised that the Catholic faith did not just exist on a Sunday inside church! Going on retreats taught me how to talk to God, and gave to me an appreciation of the Sacraments and allowed me to develop my own personal relationship with God.

It was at Lourdes that I finally understood that God actually loves me, no matter what. My faith has gone through a full transformation from my childhood to now. Having now gone to study at university, my faith has grown further without influence from my family. I've come to understand the value of prayer and how taking time out within a busy schedule to remember that God loves me and is there for me can help me through any situation. My own journey through faith allows me to happily say that I no longer need to class myself as a 'Cradle Catholic' but as someone who has re-discovered and furthered their faith.

Oasis of Peace



Unusually for the majority of people my age I chose to spend part of my summer camping in a monastery in the middle of France called Taizé.

The way that Taizé works is that you join the community of brothers that live there in prayer, eating and work. You get the chance to meet so many different young people from all over the world and to experience your faith in a completely new, fresh way. It was also sunny every day which was nice.

Every morning, everyone camping was awoken with the sound of the bells. At that early time in the morning, I didn't like it but now I really miss it! Everyone would

join together in the church for prayer and the Eucharist. I found this the most beautiful bit of the day. I think it was so powerful that every day was started with the strength of the Eucharist. The prayers are so simple but beautiful. You chant along with the brothers and the presence of God is so real, I was able to meet the Lord both in the prayer times but also in all of the different people that I met in my visit.

I feel that it was such a blessing to be able to go to this beautiful place and it has really allowed me to grow closer to God in a new way. It was lovely to find a great amount of peace in such a busy and loud world.

Rachel Turley, 20



No longer Poles Apart

Over the summer, two young people, Amy and Ryan, both 17, gave up a week of their summer to welcome and look after a young group of Polish orphans who came to Castlerigg for a holiday.

Amy takes up the story: 'When I and Ryan asked Father Phil if there was any time over summer that we could help at Castlerigg we didn't expect to be blessed with a week as rewarding, hilarious and interesting as the one we experienced.'

Meeting the Caritas Orphanage of Poland for the first time we were able to experience the huge language barrier. However by the end of the week this barrier had been overcome and

the events that we planned led to friendships being formed, leading to myself and Ryan no longer seeing the trip as a compulsory Duke of Edinburgh Residential and instead seeing it as a fantastic way to spend our summer.

We felt the disco organised by Castlerigg's brilliant Kevin was the highlight as there is nothing more rewarding than teaching a group of teenagers the YMCA! Ryan added, 'As a helper on the trip, my initial feelings as I first met the Polish group were ones of worry and fear. It was quickly established that communication would be limited with the Polish group knowing limited English, and vice versa. I was unsure how the week would unfold with this difficulty. Yet these feelings soon subsided at Castlerigg Manor as Dorota, the group's leader, and her

welcoming nature soon calmed the nerves. Woyciek, the English teacher, was a significant blessing enabling translation between the differing nationalities. I am sure the Polish children were apprehensive too, but as the week began the initial unwillingness to practice their English soon faded.

The Castlerigg team was excellent in providing activities that transcended the language barrier and therefore helped to accelerate this process. The week's activities were a brilliant success both at the Manor and outside. It was a busy week, yet great enthusiasm and energy was shown from all despite arriving back from day trips nearing midnight on more than one occasion. Activities involved local walks around

Keswick, meeting the Impact group from Preston at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, a day trip to Liverpool (where there was a particular highlight for me in witnessing the pile of Primark bags the children had from the shopping centre), glass painting, BBQs of Polish cuisine, Pictionary/charades and many other activities. A very busy week indeed!

It was a wonderful experience full of memories that I shall never forget. It was truly fulfilling to see that I helped to bring about the happiness that the children clearly expressed and they showed great gratitude to all involved. They were a wonderful set of individuals, all showing different characteristics that they all brought to the family-like group and I am hoping to remain in contact'.



For many people, five days of camping in the middle of nowhere, far from civilization and even a phone signal may seem a daunting prospect, but this summer, I could not wait to return to the national shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham in Norfolk for my third Youth 2000 retreat. Not your average summer festival, Youth 2000 is centred on adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, with exposition 24/7.

To see dozens of other young people, for example, sacrificing sleep for a 3am 'power hour' with the Lord was so inspirational. For me, this was the highlight, as well as the tangible sense of faith and joy which permeated the tent where a thousand people gathered to celebrate Mass.

In his introduction, Bishop Mark of Shrewsbury wrote that the festival's title, "Searchlight: The Lost Are Found" 'may evoke images of a mountain or sea rescue' – This was certainly my first impression! As the weekend progressed, the title's true meaning became clear. The dynamic talks and workshops helped me understand what it means to allow Christ to be a guiding light in my life. God has a unique plan for each of us, yet the future often seems daunting and unclear. It can be so hard to truly put our lives into God's hands.

During one holy hour, I finally felt able to take all my worries and fears and say, 'Jesus, I trust in You'. This powerful prayer is one I had always underestimated, yet that night I felt an overwhelming peace in the knowledge that my future is with God – who knows me better than I know myself. It was wonderful to be able to spend a weekend away with some of my closest friends in a beautiful, tranquil setting. By Monday we were all completely exhausted and ready for a good night's sleep, yet still filled with joy. It was a weekend filled with grace, conversion and beauty which left each of us feeling uplifted and strengthened, with a deeper understanding of God's love and a new sense of life!

Becky Short, 19, Bispham



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Gravestone inscription of Private T A Cook Machine Gun Company killed in action 12/4/1917

'Their Glory Shall not be Blotted Out'

Last November we connected the commemoration and remembrance of the month of All Saints and All Souls with chaplains to the forces who died in action in the Second World War. This year we present seven Catholic chaplains with Lancashire connections who were victims in the First World War concentrating on three who were killed in action on the Western Front.

The present Diocese of Lancaster was not yet born and we still had yet to endure political boundary change of the 1970s, nevertheless, the following three chaplains have strong Lancashire identity either by birth or direct affiliation and reflect the Irish/Lancashire Catholic evolution. All three were killed in action on the Western Front.

The Rev Thomas Baines DD CF was born in Preston in 1886 and belonged to the Liverpool diocese. Ordained by Bishop Whiteside at English Martyrs Preston in 1915 having trained for the priesthood at Ushaw, his first role was as Professor at the seminary until 1916 when he became curate of St Francis of Assisi in Garston, Liverpool. In August 1917 he volunteered to join the British Army and was commissioned as Captain 4th class on joining the Chaplains Department, as all new chaplains were. Fr Baines served with the Royal Field Artillery 152 Brigade, attached to the Northumberland Fusiliers 34th Division, and died of wounds on 31st May 1918 as testified by his Senior Chaplain in the field. He was the victim of a German air raid at Steenbecque when resting alongside the wall of his billet, the

bomb seriously wounding his legs and removing his hand, it was impossible to operate and he died of shock some hours later. Father Patrick O'Mara SJ gave the last rites. The Principal Catholic Chaplain Fr Bernard Stephen Rawlinson O.S.B attended the funeral. He is buried at Aisne Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais R.I.P.

...his influence for good has been felt by all irrespective of creed.

Father James Leeson CF was another priest from the Liverpool Diocese. Born in Litherland in 1877 and educated at St Edwards and Upholland he was ordained by Bishop Whiteside in 1903. He celebrated priesthood in a variety of parishes including St Mary's Douglas, St Mary's Barrow, St Marie's Widnes and St Philip Neri in Liverpool before being commissioned in 1915. He served with the 8th East Lancashire Regiment but it was with the Royal Fusiliers that he was mentioned in dispatches *'...during operations on the Somme and the Ancre he has shown a persistent disregard for danger...and has won the esteem of all ranks by his bravery and practical common sense...on the Somme he was constantly in the front line and on the Ancre 'he went over' with the men... his influence for good has been felt by all irrespective of creed.'* Major General H B Wilson CO 37th Divi-

sion 1/3/1917. Father Leeson was killed in action soon after on 23 April 1917 and is buried at Pont de Jour Military Cemetery Athies France. R.I.P

Father Patrick Looby CF represents the numerous Irish priests working in Lancashire, many of whom volunteered for Army chaplaincy to minister to the high percentage of Lancashire Catholics serving in Lancashire regiments. Not all, however, were favoured as sacramental and pastoral care was needed by all Catholics across all regiments. Born in 1889 in Cahir, County Tipperary, he trained for the priesthood at the Irish College Paris and at Waterford where he was ordained in 1914. Sponsored by his father and Archbishop Whiteside, he joined the Liverpool Diocese moving directly to St Oswald's Liverpool, a popular curate. By the end of 1915 he had been injured whilst with the 71st Field Ambulance when his bicycle skidded after returning from giving a Service causing his right patella to be punctured. He re-joined in a Divisional role with the Norfolk Regiment which meant active service at the front. Anxious to be transferred to a regiment with 'good Catholic boys', rather than his present predominantly Protestant unit, he pleaded for a move. It was granted and he became chaplain to the Northumberland Fusiliers having access to the Tyneside Irish. He was killed, the first man in this attack, by a shell at Passchendaele on 26th October 1917. Rawlinson writes 'He was hit by a shell and I never heard of any parts of his body being found'. Father Looby is 'buried'

in Poelcapelle Military Cemetery near Ypres Belgium, (notice on the grave top inscription 'BELIEVED TO BE'). R.I.P

In addition, Father Guthrie O.S.B from Downside Abbey was attached directly to the 8th East Lancashire Battalion and died of wounds in November 1916. Father Stephen Clarke volunteered directly from the Diocese of Kilmore in Ireland and was killed when attempting to rescue a wounded soldier from the 7th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers in no-man's land in October 1917. Father H McGinty, a Liverpool born Jesuit was killed on the Italian front, whilst Father Grobel a Middlesex man working in the Salford Diocese died from bronchial illness whilst running St Patrick's Catholic Club at Boulogne.

Many Lancashire Catholic priests became chaplains and their lives are almost forgotten or simply unknown. We would welcome, particularly from the present Lancaster Diocesan and administrative boundaries, any letters, diaries, photographs or memories from those fine men, not only their war experiences but pre and post war. A Lytham priest, one of twins, Fr Fred Gillett's diary has recently been unearthed and tells us much about down to earth priests and down to earth Lancastrians! If you can help my studies of Lancashire chaplains in the Great War at the University of Liverpool please contact me at Stevebellis4@gmail.com or via St Mary's Great Eccleston or through the excellent support and facilities offered by Deacon Michael Dolan and helpers at the Talbot Library Preston, 01772 760186 or talbotlibrary@btconnect.com

Dear Editor

Our Lady of Lourdes Needs You!

It is 4:00am on Monday morning and the alarm is going off. It's time to wash, shave and dress ready for the day ahead. We say morning prayers then leave the hostel accommodation for the railway station to meet Italian pilgrims arriving at 6:45am. We all have our instructions; English, French, Italian and German Hospitaliers (*this is a group of volunteers who travel to Lourdes each year to assist pilgrims, particularly those who are sick*).

We get back to the hostel for a quick breakfast before returning to railway station for the next train of pilgrims due in at 10:20am. On the way back to the station we spot Lancaster Diocesan pilgrims leaving St Joseph's chapel following their morning Mass and there is just time for a quick 'hello' before we head off to greet 180 sick and disabled pilgrims travelling by train from Germany.

A short break before we are back at the railway station again to meet 116 sick pilgrims from Italy at 4:00pm. At 7:00pm we are meeting a further 180 sick pilgrims from Italy before helping with the boarding of 93 sick pilgrims at 8:00pm who are on their way home.

It is now 9:30pm, all our equipment is safely stowed away, time for a quick meal and a beer before falling into bed. Tomorrow is another day though looking forward to a lie in as our alarm clocks are set for a 6:30am start!

John Baldwin, Wesham

Editors note: The Hospitality Notre Dame de Lourdes is urging people (*particularly young pilgrims 18 and over*) to volunteer their time to assist those who are making great efforts, whether because of sickness or disability, to travel to Lourdes. If you think that you could volunteer some time in 2013 John would be pleased to hear from you, tel: 01772 682553.

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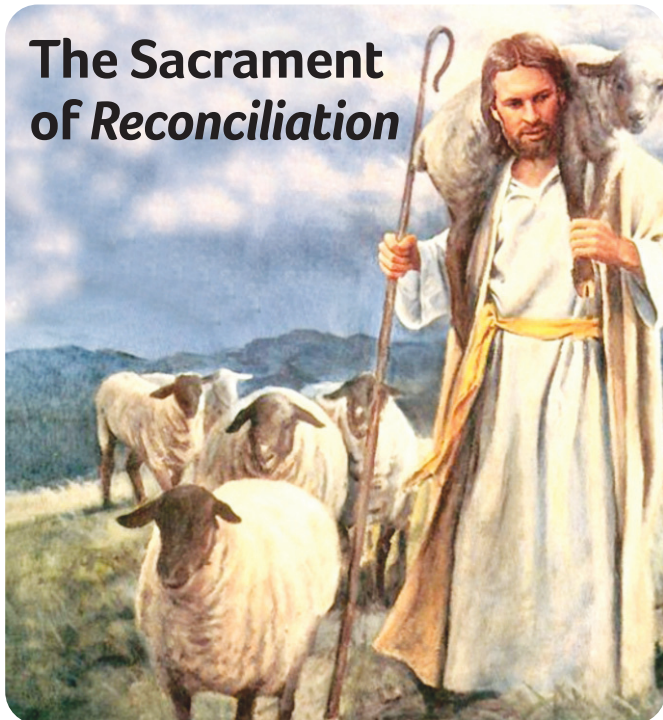
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The Light is ON for You



The Sacrament of Reconciliation



As a young boy I remember the queues of penitents outside Fr. Lynch's confessional and in contrast the one or two brave souls outside Fr. Rafferty's confessional door. He was renowned for his severity and would sometimes require you to say a whole Rosary for your penance! Fr. Lynch however was gentle and easy going and more often than not would let you off with three Hail Marys.

We appear to have moved a long way from those days of my childhood. Undoubtedly much of our confessional practice was based upon fear and discipline rather than a genuine sense of repentance and trust in God who is "The Father of Mercies." Today it would seem that the pendulum has swung too far. Not infrequently I emerge from the confessional not having received a single penitent. Either I am blessed to have lived and worked in parishes where there is not a single sinner or something is amiss?

It is often said that our age has lost a sense of sin and yet I believe that the loss is of a much more serious nature. We have lost our sense of the utter goodness and holiness of God. It is only in the context of God's holiness that we discover our unworthiness and the need for his mercy and forgiveness. William Barclay tells the story of journeying in a train through the countryside and noticing a beautiful little whitewashed cottage, bright and pretty in the morning light. Overnight there was a heavy fall of snow and as he returned past the same cottage set amongst the fresh white snow glistening in the morning sun he thought how, in comparison the same little cottage now looked grey and grubby. It is only in the light of God's love and beauty that we can see our sin and our need of His mercy.

The loss of the sense of sin is in essence a loss of the sense of God's goodness. The sacrament of penance enables us to draw close to the Lord and in so doing we discover our sinfulness and the greatness of His mercy and Love. St John Vianney who spent many hours each day hearing confessions tells us that our sin is but a tiny grain of sand alongside the great mountain of God's mercy. So why do we not seek to experience this mountain of God's mercy?

Fear or embarrassment can often prevent us from approaching the confessional. "I am not letting the priest know my sins!" We should never allow fear to keep us away from encountering Christ in this

sacrament. The priest is only interested in being an instrument of God's mercy and he does not dwell upon our sins. There is something remarkable in this sacrament in that it truly does blot out all our sins. They are gone and in my experience gone from the consciousness of the priest also.

Not infrequently I hear it said by people that they can tell God that they are sorry directly and don't need to go to confession. Why do we think that in this sacrament we can set aside the need for the Church and the Priest. We would never dream of doing this with the other sacraments such as anointing of the sick or the Eucharist. Yes the Lord is merciful but the Sacrament of Penance is about reconciliation and therefore involves at least two parties. Alone I can forgive someone who hurts me but I can only be reconciled if I communicate with the other party. The problem or the hurt needs to be named and the gestures of reconciliation made.

Sin is an offence against God and his people and so we need to be reconciled with Him and with His Church. It is truly wonderful to hear the words "I absolve you from all your sins, go in peace." These tangible words and signs bring a joy and lightness to our hearts. I know this from my experience as a penitent. We priests must go to confession regularly too. In fact I could not survive and function as a priest without this sacrament. Both spiritually and psychologically it is invaluable.

The Council of Trent tells us that the Resurrection appearance of Jesus to the Apostles in the upper room towards the end of John's Gospel is the foundation of this sacrament. The Crucified and Risen Lord breathes upon the Apostles and tells them that those whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the first gift of the Resurrection. A gift won for us through the blood and suffering of Christ. This is a precious gift, one to be received with a generous and open heart. We should never allow fear or a lack of faith to keep us away from so great a gift. The sacrament bestows upon us grace to help us to resist temptation in the future and it renews the grace of our baptism. Often it is said that the Church in the West is tired and weary. If we returned in great numbers to the sacrament of penance I am certain that this would be a vital key in our efforts to reinvigorate of our Church. *Rev. Emmanuel Gribben*



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The Light is ON for You



Every Wednesday evening, (7pm-8pm), this Advent every church in the diocese will be inviting people back to the Sacrament of Reconciliation through The Light is on for You initiative that was so successful in Lent earlier this year. But you don't need to wait for Advent why not find out today from your parish priest when you can receive the peace of God's healing grace.

Oh 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 try not to sin again. Amen.

New Evangelisation Synod

Pope Benedict XVI has convoked the Synod of Bishops, currently in session in Rome, to debate and discuss the urgent question of how to represent the Catholic Faith in a manner which is both engaging and meaningful to the people of our time. The term synod comes from the Greek and literally means 'walking the road together', that represents a time-honoured ecclesial instrument of Church government and organisation, whether diocesan, regional, national or even international. As the theme of the synod affirms, the Church today needs to discover a 'new evangelisation' to transmit afresh the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the answer to the deeper longings and aspirations of the human heart in a rapidly complex and often confusing world. The challenge facing this particular synod is both pastoral and doctrinal: how to reaffirm and deepen the faith of our Catholic people so as to re-awaken their confidence as evangelisers while remaining firmly in continuity with the 'deposit of faith' which has come down to us from the Apostles.

The synod provides a forum for an exchange of views and experiences from bishops and others from every part of the world on what they find are the most effective ways of proclaiming the truth of the Gospel in our time. I would hope that such sharing will be accompanied by careful listening in order to discern what the Holy Spirit might be saying to the entire Church. Different and contrasting opinions, priorities and outlooks will surface in the course of the synod sessions - as they did at the sessions of the Second Vatican Council. What will be required of me as a bishop is the ability to read 'the signs of the times' as discernible through the material and data presented to us. The prospect of contrary and even clashing views during these days in Rome does not disturb me. There is ample precedent for heated debate and opposing convictions within the Church when we read the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. There we see how the young Church had gradually to feel its way, not without difficulty and considerable internal dissension, before it had the confidence to proclaim Jesus as Lord.

During these weeks in Rome I cherish the hope that those present would affirm in their faith those countless Catholics whose daily lives, often humble, unspectacular and hidden, are marked by fidelity, goodness and devotion to the Lord and his Church. As a diocesan bishop, I am constantly amazed and deeply impressed by the practical care and selfless service that I witness in parishes, schools, workplaces and especially in ordinary people's homes in my own Diocese of Lancaster. The word of God has

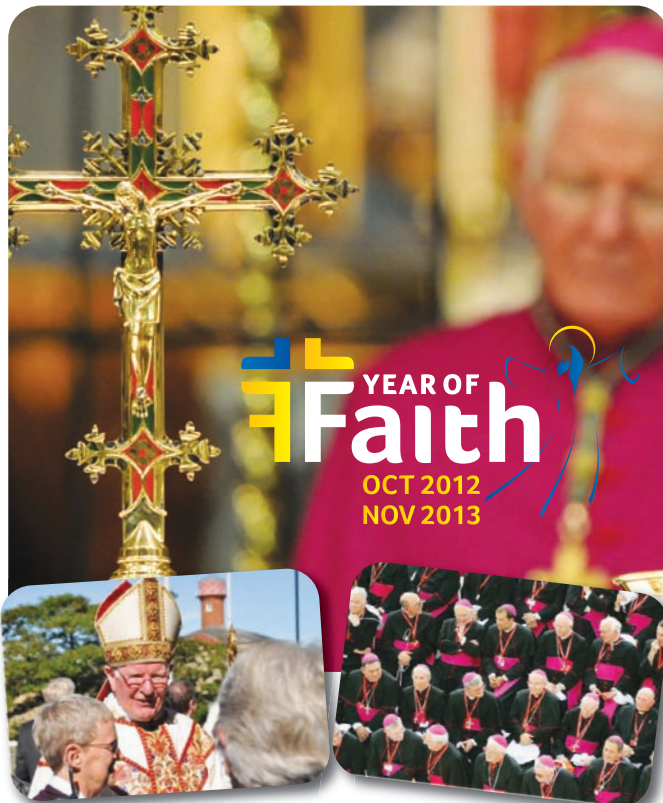
truly taken root and is enfleshed in the hearts and imagination of so many of our good and devoted people. Their lives are Christian witness writ large. In a quiet and unassuming manner they bring to the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice lives of devotion and Christian service that are already sacrificial. Such an appreciative affirmation from the synod would acknowledge the real presence of God's grace and the truly incarnational nature of their apparently ordinary lives.

A major challenge facing the synod is how to recognise all that is presently good and praiseworthy in a world characterised by quite remarkable technological innovation and progress, while reaffirming at the same time the sheer wonder of divine revelation and the eternal God's unique and astounding disclosure of himself in the person of Jesus Christ. The dichotomy perceived between faith and reason, those so-called wings of the human spirit, is only apparent. Faith requires understanding and, conversely, understanding stands in need of faith. The two are not incompatible. Can the synod find the insight and discover the language - and the modes and methods of communication - to give our faith a firm platform to re-connect with the imagination of the men, women and children of the 21st century?

No synod or even Church Council has ever spoken the last word on a particular subject. The nature of the divine revelation in Christ is such that its riches are unfathomable. Each generation enters ever new into what the Apostle Paul calls 'the mystery of Christ' and applies what they discover there to the needs of their time. We are no different, although we face challenges posed by a programmatic and aggressively secularised and rapidly technological civilisation which those who have gone before us could hardly have imagined. As the synod reflects on and grapples with the materialist complexities of the modern, or even postmodern, age, it should draw encouragement from St Paul's remarkable statement to the Corinthians of how 'he takes every thought captive to obey Christ' (2 Cor 10:5). The same great Apostle faced the enormous task of taking the faith of Christ from the thoroughly Jewish milieu of first-century Palestine and implanting it far and wide in the Greek-speaking cities and towns of the Roman Empire.

Synod participants will undoubtedly draw heart from the faith that the same Christ has promised to walk alongside his Church at all times, and that his Spirit will guide her towards the fullness of truth and the power of renewed conviction - so that all of us as disciples of the Lord are made ready for the 'new evangelisation'.

+Michael G Campbell OSA
Bishop of Lancaster



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The Catholic Voice asks for your prayers for the shepherds of our Church as they try to discern a way of communicating the Faith that is both inspiring and encouraging and brings people closer to the knowledge that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life and that He has the message of eternal life. Bishop Campbell has promised to write his reflections from the Synod in Rome which we publish in due course.

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Thursday November 1st at 6.00 pm
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Sunday November 4th at 6.00 pm
Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost
Christ the King, Harrogate, Carlisle

Sunday November 11th at 12.00 pm
5th Sunday remaining after Epiphany
St. Paul X. Omsigill, Barrow-in-Furness

Sunday November 11th at 9.00 pm
5th Sunday remaining after Epiphany
St. Mary's, Harrogate

Sunday November 18th at 3.00 pm
6th Sunday remaining after Epiphany
St. Andrew & Blessed George Haydock, Cottam

Sunday November 25th at 12.15 pm
24th & Last Sunday after Pentecost
Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Lancaster

Sunday November 25th at 12.30 pm
24th & Last Sunday after Pentecost
St. Mary of Furness, Barrow-in-Furness

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What's your Tattoo - Jesus? Preaching most energetically the homily at this year's Diocesan Education Mass at the Cathedral in September Canon Luiz Ruscillo spoke of the infinite love that Jesus has for each one of us, so much so that He, the Son of God died on the Cross for us.

As almost 500 people gathered for the Mass in Lancaster Cathedral which also served as the Diocesan launch for the Year of Faith, Canon Ruscillo asked the congregation to consider how they might, individually, describe their faith in Jesus Christ and challenged us to reflect on how courageous we are in sharing that faith with those around us. In a sense he posed; how do we show ourselves as disciples of the Lord continually seeking to develop a close relationship with their Master? He wanted us to reflect upon how the experience and encounter of our faith leaves tangible and physical signs upon our own lives and upon the lives of those we touch? In such a way the stripes laid upon our Blessed Lord are laid upon us today, providing a witness that actively speaks of the experience of continual conversion as a Christian. Canon Ruscillo reminded us that faith is always personal - but never private.

Speaking of a recent experience he had in Rome whilst travelling on a bus he humorously explained that he observed that a fellow passenger bore a tattoo which depicted the story of Footprints in the Sand. This story is: One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the LORD. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to him, and the other to the LORD. When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered him and he questioned the LORD about it: "LORD, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me." The LORD replied: "My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Canon Ruscillo was not advocating that everyone should rush out and get a tattoo - but he did pose the question of what indelible tattoo do we have imprinted on our own hearts? Does it spell our 'Jesus' or 'Our God is great'? Canon posed a question we can ask ourselves from time to time during this Year of Faith; How deep is our knowledge and love of God and how willing and able are we to pass on the gift of our Faith on to others?

Surely, the Year of Faith is a grace-filled and unique opportunity for each one of us as Catholics to get know our God and our Faith better. The challenge presented in the Year is to again renew and revisit our encounter with Christ which the Holy Father called a "summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the One Saviour of the World" (Porta Fidei: 6). In doing so we are saying we will go out again into the world not hiding and apologising for the stripes we received gloriously at our baptism. Our deep conversion therefore, is the demand of active witness to Jesus - infallibly alive and active in His Church. In fact, only fidelity to Jesus the Lord and His Church will allow us to have the inner confidence to engage effectively and joyfully in the 'New Evangelisation'.

Daniel Etienne

Praise to the Holiest in the Height!

More than nine hundred Preston Catholics raised their voices in praise at a Mass to celebrate Preston Guild 2012. The Service was held in the Grade 1 listed church of St Walburga's, Preston, (which boasts the third highest spire in the country).

Bishop Michael Campbell, was the chief celebrant, and the Archbishop of Westminster, the Most Reverend Vincent Nichols, gave the homily. Eight Catholic Bishops, 27 priests, 35 altar servers, a choir and musicians of over 100, and a congregation of over 800, were joined by three Anglican Bishops, other Christian church leaders, representatives of the Faith Forum and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Preston.

Archbishop Nichols spoke of his Lancashire roots, and linked the 893-year-old Guild with the Pope's call for a Year of Faith. He spoke of the town's coat of arms, which shows a lamb, a flag and the initials PP that are often (mistakenly) thought to stand for Proud Preston, but in fact stand for Princeps Pacis - The Prince of Peace. He quoted the theme of the 2012 Guild - "Looking back to look forward a festival which celebrates history and tradition whilst looking to the future".

He urged Christians to look back to the honest endeavour which brought Preston its Guild market status in 1179 - "Honesty in business: profit combined with wider purpose for the common good." Recalling the welcome Preston gave to its early immigrants, the wool merchants from Flanders in the 14th century, he said, "Even today we face challenges of welcoming the stranger and learning together how to fashion a future for the benefit of all".

He stressed people needed to be more confidently Catholic in all that they do and that they should search for holiness.

"Finally, we come to the third quality of confident Catholic life: that of showing forth the joy and freedom which comes in that relationship in faith with the Lord".

"So, again we look back to look forward: we deepen the roots of our faith so that we may be bearers of its fruit. What better opportunity than this Year of Faith which begins on 11th October".

"I urge Catholics to make the most of this special opportunity and respond enthusiastically to the initiatives of the Diocese, parish by parish".

The full text of the Archbishop's homily can be found at <http://www.rcdow.org.uk/fileupload/upload/PrestonGuildMass39201234132.pdf>

Ann Miller



Fr. Tad Pacholczyk
Fr. Tad Pacholczyk
Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Fr. Tad Pacholczyk - MAKING SENSE OUT OF BIOETHICS

Deciding About Dialysis

Patients and families sometimes struggle with the question of whether dialysis is "worth it." A young woman wrote recently on a website addressing dialysis patients' concerns, "My father has been on dialysis for three years, and he's 62 years old. A few days ago he said he wanted to stop going because he was 'sick of it'. We talked to him and told him that it would hurt us if he did that, but now I'm thinking that maybe I shouldn't have talked him out of it -- this isn't about me and my feelings. This is about what he has to deal with."

When would discontinuing dialysis be a reasonable and morally acceptable choice? Could discontinuing dialysis ever be tantamount to suicide?

While every person is obligated to use ordinary (or proportionate) means to preserve his or her life, no person is required to submit to a health care procedure that he or she has judged, with a free and informed conscience, to provide little hope of benefit or to impose significant risks and burdens.

Weighing benefits and burdens is at the heart of the question of starting, continuing or stopping dialysis. As the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has noted: "We have a duty to preserve our life and to use it for the glory of God, but the duty to preserve life is not absolute, for we may reject life-prolonging procedures that are insufficiently beneficial or excessively burdensome. Suicide and euthanasia are never morally acceptable options."

The benefits of the commonly-used procedure known as hemodialysis (filtration of the blood) are well known: as kidney function declines, dialysis performs part of the work that healthy kidneys normally do, filtering toxins from the body. Dialysis can serve as a bridge to a kidney transplant, which can offer the patient a new lease on life. Discontinuing dialysis during complete kidney failure usually means that the patient will die in a matter of days or weeks.

The burdens of dialysis vary from patient to patient. The procedure can be time-consuming, requiring visits to a dialysis center three times a week for three to four hours at a stretch, with additional time for transportation. One can also feel washed out the next day.

Other burdens may include sharp drops in blood pressure during or after the procedure. Fainting, vomiting, nausea, muscle cramps, temporary loss of vision, irritability, and fatigue can occur. Some patients manifest abnormal heart rhythms from electrolyte imbalances, while others may experience allergic reactions or bleeding problems from the chemicals or blood-thinning medicines used during the dialysis.

Long term dialysis can cause bone and joint pain from a deposit of various proteins known as amyloid in the hands, wrists, shoulders, and neck. Cost may represent yet another burden, depending on the patient's personal finances and insurance situation.

Still other burdens may include problems with the access point made for the dialysis — called a fistula — which usually occurs in the arm. This is a surgical connection made under the skin between an artery and a vein, allowing needles to access bloodflow for dialysis. As many as 25 percent of hospital admissions among dialysis patients are due to problems with fistula malfunction, thrombosis, infection, and access. Multiple surgeries may be required to assure that a fistula continues to function during the time it is used.

In sum, then, dialysis can prolong and save a patient's life, but can also impose significant burdens. Depending on the various side effects and problems associated with the procedure, and depending on how minimal the benefits may be in light of other medical conditions the patient may be struggling with, it can become reasonable, in some cases, to discontinue dialysis. The burdens of hemodialysis can sometimes be lessened by using a different kind of dialysis known as peritoneal dialysis, where fluid is instilled in the abdomen via a permanently positioned catheter and later drained. Peritoneal dialysis can be performed by the patient at home each night.



It's not possible with the limited information we have to draw any moral conclusions about the case of the father who is "sick of it" and wants to stop dialysis. We need further details, such as: What is the reason for his request? Is he experiencing serious complications and significant burdens from dialysis? Does he have other medical problems besides kidney failure? Is he suffering from depression, for which he could be treated?

We should never choose to bring about our own or another's death by euthanasia, suicide or other means, but we may properly recognize, on a case by case, detail-dependent basis, that at a certain point in our struggle to stay alive, procedures like dialysis may become unduly burdensome treatments that are no longer obligatory. In these cases, it's always wise to consult clergy or other moral advisors trained in these often-difficult bioethical issues.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center. See www.ncbcenter.org



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In his forward to the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church Pope Benedict writes:

'You need to know what you believe. You need to know your faith with that same precision with which an IT specialist knows the inner workings of the computer. You need to understand it like a good musician knows the piece he is playing. Yes, you need to be more deeply rooted in the faith than the generations of your parents so that you can engage the challenges and temptations of this time with strength and determination. You need God's help if your faith is not going to dry up like a dewdrop in the sun, if you want to resist the blandishments of consumerism, if your love is not to drown in pornography, if you are not to betray the weak and leave the vulnerable helpless.'

The *Catholic Voice* believes that this message is as relevant to both young and old alike. The Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church or YOUCAT for short has been developed with the help of young Catholics and written for secondary – school age students and young adults as an accessible, contemporary expression of the Catholic Faith.

And in inaugurating a Year of Faith, Pope Benedict is inviting Catholics to participate in rediscovering the joy of believing and the enthusiasm for sharing the riches of our faith with others. He is challenging each one of us to think about what new step we might take to respectfully make our faith visible and heard in our daily lives.

During the Year of Faith every baptised person is invited to re-read the Catechism to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the most important gift that they've been given – their faith. The Catechism helps everyone to learn about the content of the faith as received and safeguarded by the Church during the past 2000 years.

During these months of grace we are also invited to reflect seriously on our journey with God, to examine in what ways we are being invited to grow and change. The Christian calling is a life-long pilgrimage of faith. We can never say that we've arrived, but that we are constantly journeying in search of God's Light. At every moment we are invited to convert, to follow the Lord's way, allowing ourselves to be shaped in and through His love. The sacraments of the Church are a great assistance to us in this regard. The Eucharist is essential to the Christian Life.

You may also choose to receive more regularly the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Year of Faith. In this Sacrament we encounter the loving and merciful heart of God the Father. During Reconciliation we hand over to the Lord everything that burdens us and weighs us down. The Sacrament restores and heals us, giving us the strength to begin again.

The Light is ON for You



The *Catholic Voice* will, starting in December, produce pull-out sections in the newspaper on Year of Faith themes that build into a home study pack on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. And we remind everyone of The Light is on for You (*Sacrament of Reconciliation*) initiative which will be prominent again every Wednesday evening, (7pm-8pm), in every church of the diocese during Advent.

YEAR OF Faith
OCT 2012
NOV 2013



"You need to know what you believe!"

The Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Hail

Holy Queen, Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! Our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley, of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb Jesus; O clement, O loving, O sweet virgin Mary. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Continuing with our series of reflection on the Rosary this month we look at the Glorious Mysteries.

The Glorious Mysteries are the crown of Jesus' triumph. Having a clearer picture of the scene and significance of the mysteries can greatly enhance our meditation and books, such as *Aid to the Church in Need Rosary* booklet, provide a short reading from scripture along with a meditation and prayer to assist us on our journey in pilgrimage, with Mary, along the Way of Jesus to the House of the Father.

1st Glorious Mystery - the Resurrection of Jesus

Mary Magdalen stood weeping outside the tomb. She turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him,

"Rabboni!" Jesus said to her, "Go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." (Jn. 20:11-18)

2nd Glorious Mystery - The Ascension

After his passion, Jesus showed himself alive to the apostles by many proofs. For forty days he appeared to them and spoke to them of the Kingdom of God. While they were together he told them, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And behold, two men stood by them in white robes and said, "This Jesus will come again in the same way as you saw him go." (Acts 1:3-11)

3rd Glorious Mystery - The Descent of the Holy Spirit

With one accord the apostles devoted themselves to prayer, together with the

women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 1:13; 2:1-4)

4th Glorious Mystery - The Assumption

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed." (Luke 1:46-47)

"The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, that she might be

the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords, and conqueror of sin and death." (Second Vatican Council, Lumen Gentium 59)

5th Glorious Mystery - The Coronation of Our Lady and the Glory of all the Saints

A great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth.

And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. And the dragon stood before the woman, to devour her child when she brought it forth. And she brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come." (cf. Rev. 12:1-5; 9-10)

Jenny Phillips

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Fr John Millar

Ordained:
22nd September 2012

Currently:
Assistant Priest - Our Lady & St Joseph's, Carlisle



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Lord Jesus, the ministry of priests is a sign of your unfailing care. Call from among us the priests needed for the Church of today and tomorrow. Bless all students for the priesthood. Grant them joy, wisdom, courage and a generous spirit. Sustain priests with a real sense of your love and the support of those they are called to serve. Keep them faithful to their calling. Amen.

(Above) Fr John with his family and Bishop Campbell after his ordination.

(Right) The anointing of hands by Bishop Campbell

(Below left) Waiting to be called forward for ordination

(Below right) Fr John administering his blessing following ordination



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The Bishop prayed these words when he anointed my hands with the oil of Chrism during my ordination to the priesthood on 22nd September. These words encapsulate the mission of the priesthood. The priest acts by the power of Jesus to make holy the Christian people. This mission underlies and informs all the activity of the priest, whether saying Mass, anointing the sick, hearing confessions, teaching, preaching, praying or even clearing the gutters.

My path to the priesthood began many years ago in the parish of Kendal where I grew up. On leaving school I spent a year at the House of Formation in Cleator preparing me to enter seminary the following year. I then spent five happy years in London at Allen Hall Seminary before returning to the Diocese in July 2011 to spend a year working in the parish of St Joseph's, Lancaster. I was ordained a deacon in February.

My ordination to the priesthood was a very joyful day, the sun shone and the

Cathedral was full. It came as the culmination of many years of preparation but is only really the beginning of a new life.

Following my priestly ordination at the Cathedral I had the privilege to be able to return to my home parish in Kendal the following day to celebrate my first Mass. My first few weeks as a priest have been busy ones in and around Lancaster and as I write this I look forward to beginning my new appointment in Our Lady and St Joseph's, Carlisle.

We need many more priests to continue this great work in the Church helping the People of God to grow in holiness. Please pray for our seminarians currently in formation and that many other young men may follow the call of the Lord to serve Him and His people in the Priesthood.

Lancaster Vocations



The Glorious Mysteries

Let's pray the Rosary

Have you remembered what do? Taking your rosary beads the first prayer we say as we make the sign of the cross is 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen'

Next we say one Our Father, then ten Hail Marys as we work our fingers around the beads of our rosary followed by one 'Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and evermore Amen'. We do this five times as we think about the different mysteries of the life of Jesus.

The Glorious Mysteries

- The first glorious mystery – Jesus rises from the dead. We remember how Jesus died for us on the Cross but rose again on Easter Sunday
- The second glorious mystery – the ascension of Jesus into heaven. We think about Jesus returning to heaven to be

with his Father and the promise he made to us that one day we will go to heaven as long as we stay close to Jesus

- The third glorious mystery – the Holy Spirit comes down on the apostles. Jesus promised to send his followers help and the Holy Spirit will help us to make the right choices if we pray to Him
- The fourth glorious mystery – the ascension of Mary into heaven. Mary the mother of Jesus was free from sin and always very close to God. Like Jesus, her Son, Mary was assumed into heaven to be near Him
- The fifth glorious mystery – Mary is crowned Queen of heaven. Mary, the mother of Jesus is very close to God and has a very special place in heaven. If we pray to Mary, especially using the rosary, she will always be at our side and she will ask God to help us in our lives



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Centenary Celebrations in Poulton

St John the Evangelist in Poulton-le-Fylde has celebrated 100 years since the present church was opened. A number of events have been held throughout the year and the culmination of these events was a Centenary Mass concelebrated by Bishop Campbell.

Present at the service were the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Wyre, Councillor Ian Perkin and Mrs Eva Perkin, the Vice Chairman of Lancashire County Council, Councillor Michael Devaney, a number of priests from Parishes in the local Deanery and representatives from the Churches Together Christian denominations in Poulton.

The Parish dates back to the early 1800s but the present church was opened by the Archbishop of Liverpool, the Rt. Revd. Thomas Whiteside, when the original church, now used as the church hall and is a Grade 2 listed building, had become inadequate to accommodate the worshippers at that time.

Designed by Pugin the son of the famous architect who at that time ran the family firm of architects, the building was described as "an attractive Gothic building of Runcorn red stone with three beautifully decorated altars of Devonshire Seeton stone." It cost about £4,000 to build.

The theme chosen by the Parish for its celebrations during the year has been "the old and the new". It was fitting, therefore, that an ancient vestment owned by the Parish was re-dedicated by the Bishop during the service.

The vestment, known as a chasuble, has recently been assessed by experts at the Lancashire County Museums Conservation Studios as pre reformation

and dates from around 1485. Although used at Mass until only a few years ago and still in remarkably good condition, the advice from the Museum's Textile Conservation Officer, Eleanor Palmer, was that work should be carried out to conserve it and that this could be done by skilled volunteers from the Parish with her advice and supervision.

Volunteers have carried out the work over the last two years and it is now completed and will go on permanent display in the church at St John's. A booklet on its' known history and details of the conservation work has been produced, and is available.

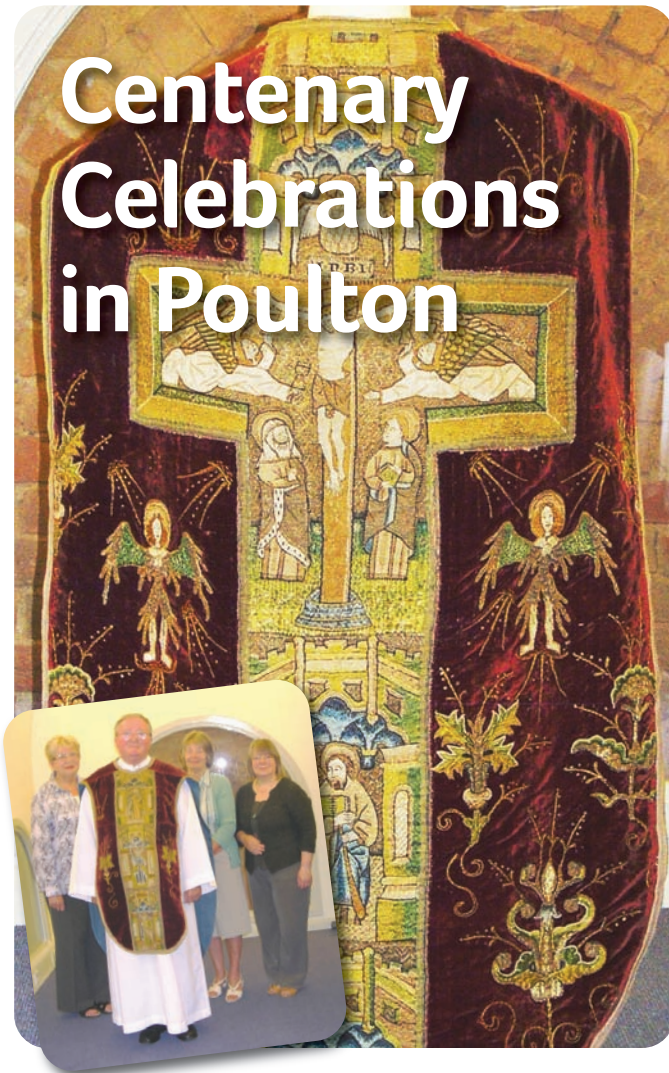
Also a full detailed report on the history and conservation will be held in both the County and Diocesan Archives which researchers and students will be able to access in the future.

In his address the Bishop said "the chasuble was a survivor through many turbulent times in a similar way to the determination of Christians to maintain their religious beliefs often in the face of great hardship, danger and difficulties".

Most of the costs of the conservation work and the specialised cabinet in which it will be displayed have been met from a generous grant of £10,300 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Parish Priest at St John's, Fr John Walsh, said "we very much appreciate this grant which has ensured that there was no delay in carrying out the work to conserve it for future generations and to bring it back as far as possible to its original condition.

I hope that we shall be able to welcome many visitors from Lancashire and beyond visiting our church to see this wonderful vestment on display."



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