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# The Catholic VOICE *of Lancaster*

The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster  
Issue 257 + March 2014

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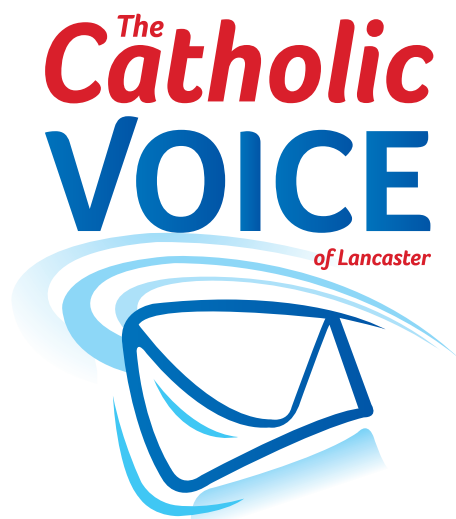
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**The Catholic Voice of Lancaster** is published on the last Sunday of the month previous to publication date.

**The Catholic Voice of Lancaster** is published by its owners. The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lancaster, a registered charity, (No. 234331), and is wholly independent of and separate from any previous newspaper published by or on behalf of the diocese.

### EDITOR:

Edwina Gillett  
01253 736630 / 07969 967268  
edwinagillett@hotmail.co.uk  
www.catholicvoiceoflancaster.co.uk

### ADVERTISING:

Caroline Gonella / CathCom Ltd.  
01223 969506  
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### DESIGN & LAYOUT:

Rob Hotchkiss / Hot Creative  
01253 730343  
rob@hot-creative.co.uk  
www.hot-creative.co.uk

### PUBLISHED BY:

CathCom Ltd. N2 Blois Meadow  
Business Centre, Blois Road, Steeple  
Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7BN  
020 7112 6710 / www.cathcom.org

### Articles to:

voicenews@hotmail.co.uk

### Letters to:

voiceletters@hotmail.co.uk

### VoiceXtra:

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### Postal Address:

FAO Edwina Gillett  
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# True Reform in the Church

## EDITORIAL

**S**t Francis of Assisi has received renewed attention since the arrival of Pope Francis to the See of Peter. Following his conversion St Francis lived the Gospel in a time, in fact, much like our own – involving great political and social unrest, great confusion and yes, sinfulness in the Church. Francis lived the Gospel radically – without gloss, without excuses, without interpretations to make discipleship easier or more comfortable.

Francis was a radical or revolutionary in the truest sense of the words. He wanted a radical commitment to holiness from his brothers. Remember holy doesn't mean good, and it certainly doesn't mean nice – although holy people are always good, and they're also frequently nice. Holy means "other than." Francis was different, as his Lord was different. Francis wanted to live in the presence of God, as his Lord did. He wanted to live and act in ways "other than" the ways of this world.

What distinguished Francis from all the other reformers of his day was one simple thing. He understood that he could never live out his love for God alone, or even with a just a group of friends. He needed that larger family of faith – the one that Jesus founded. He never allowed himself or his brothers to separate the Gospel from the Church, or indeed the Church from Jesus Christ.

Francis was always a son of the Church – just like the current Pope who bears his name has declared for himself. And as a son,

St Francis sometimes scandalized his brothers because he always insisted on fidelity and obedience to the Holy Father and reverence for priests and bishops – even the ones whose sins meant they didn't really deserve it! What Francis heard from Jesus on the Cross of San Damiano was not "replace my Church" or "reinvent my Church," but "rebuild my Church." And he did that in the only way that lasts – one stone at a time, with the 'living stones' of his own life and the lives he changed through his powerful personal witness.

Inspired by St Francis and our current Holy Father who bears his name the **Catholic Voice of Lancaster** believes that if we want to be disciples and make new disciples; if we want to rebuild the Lord's Church in the shadow of our own limitations and sins, Church scandals and setbacks; we need to understand that new approaches, programmes and reforms in the Church will certainly be important. However, without saints, without our own radical conversion nothing we do will work. **Without holy men and women on fire with Jesus Christ, in love with His Church, and zealous in preaching the Catholic faith through their words and actions, nothing of our own hands alone will ever work.**

Finally, we can't give what we don't have. **If Jesus Christ and an authentic Catholic identity don't burn in the interior cathedral of our hearts, we can never possibly rebuild the external life of the Church in the world – never mind transform the world!**





**S**t Joseph's primary school, Wesham, is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs Cate Gili-Ross as headteacher from January this year. Mrs Gili-Ross takes over from Mrs Margaret Wright who retired in December after 28 years at the school.

Born in Lytham in 1970 Mrs Gili-Ross was educated at St Peter's primary school and St Bede's High School Lytham before moving to sixth form education at Newman College in Preston. She attended the Catholic University of Trinity & All Saints Leeds where she graduated with a BA Hons (English) and obtained her Qualified Teacher Status.

Her first teaching post was at St Wilfrid's Preston and following a short spell in Australia where she taught at Pultney Grammar in Adelaide she returned to the UK in 2000 and a two day supply post at St Joseph's and never left! Mrs Gili-Ross was appointed assistant headteacher at the school six years ago and feels it is a privilege to now succeed Mrs Wright as headteacher.

"St Joseph's is a fantastic school. It is small (96 children on the Roll) in comparison to some schools but there is a strong sense of Catholicity throughout that binds the children, families, staff, governors, parish and wider community together" she said. "The school is guided by the instruction of Jesus 'love one another' which is communicated firstly by the example set by the teaching staff and by their articulation of the message which in turn sets the expectation for the children."

Five years ago Mrs Gili-Ross was sponsored by the diocese to attend a Catholic Leadership Course which she said "gave me time to reflect on my own faith, a sort of time out which reignited my passion for the faith and in turn my role as someone who passes on the faith to others." She said "There was a particular charismatic priest leading one of the sessions who said that 'time' was something many people think is in short supply as they grapple with the pressures of everyday life. But if you think that you haven't got time to develop your faith, dedicate 20 minutes a day to build your relationship with God and you will soon find that you have an hour to spare for the purpose."

Mrs Gili-Ross is married to Ian (vice chair Governor's at St Peter's School Lytham) and they have two children Grace and Nathaniel.

## It is Finished

*Lord you said on the cross it is finished, it is finished, Finished, is it? I don't think so. Not until the funny little woman on the Friday bus means more to me than I do to myself, Not until I read aright the message of your pain filled eyes. That I must take the ones you loved and left behind to live with me as my responsibility. Not until I freely place my stock of cherished certainties like sad surrendered weapons at your injured feet. Not until the public and the private faces of my troubled Christianity can meet and know they recognised each other when they met. Not until I know half the names of the people in my street. Finished? No. I don't think so, not yet.*

Adrian Plass



This hand-carved Altar was donated to school by Mrs Wright to mark her retirement in December.

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## Being a Young Catholic Today

Julia, 22, Hyning Hall

### Take from our souls the strain and stress

**I** am Julia from Germany and I'm 22 years old. For the past one and a half years I have been a helper at Hyning Monastery. I grew up in a very Christian family with my parents and two sisters.

In 2005 I was healed from a very difficult and long-lasting illness after prayer. Through this experience my faith became very strong. I knew I could trust God and I never wanted to walk without Him.

At Hyning I decided to become a member of the Catholic Church, having thought a lot about it over the last few years. To live and to work with the gentle and kind Bernardine Sisters at Hyning, with the daily spirituality of the community and many fruitful encounters with the guests and friends of the Monastery, has been very enriching for my life. I'm very grateful about this.

# Olympic Cross

**J**on was a former member of the team at Castlerigg and met his wife through his work at Castlerigg. He is now working at Alton Castle, the youth centre for the Archdiocese of Birmingham. In this article he speaks of how a re-discovered love for art has taken on global proportions which he never expected.

In 2010 I married my wife Sara and within weeks we discovered that we were pregnant and we would now be a family of three. Deep within me a change began: I would soon be a dad and that gave me permission to tell bad jokes, "dad-dance" at parties and, most of all, it opened up opportunities to do DIY!

Some years ago I had worked as an artist with great success. Always wanting to sculpt I had never really found the opportunity and so I stuck to paint and canvass, but all that has changed since becoming a dad. Never one to start off small, I decided to sculpt an 8 ft high cross made of 72 different pieces of timber (cf. Luke 10). It was a true Body of Christ cross, symbolizing Jesus' historical form and humanity on the cross, representing the Church of the disciples called and chosen, and was made complete with the cross becoming a monstrosity, and being able to hold the Eucharist for adoration.

In 2011 I was commissioned by 'More than Gold' an ecumenical group of charities responsible for ministering to the London Olympics 2012. They asked me to create a symbol of faith for the summer of 2012. This creation would become a central focus for prayer and would provide a centre point for those involved with

the Joshua Camp, the Catholic outreach project, ministering at the Olympic Games.

This portable cross ran along similar lines to my earlier piece 'the Body of Christ' cross as it was made of several timbers. I chose to use 12 different timbers from across the world to create the cross so as to represent the 12 disciples who were commanded to 'go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:19). The Olympic Cross has the same purpose: while each individual part may be rich with character, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Each timber was carefully selected for its colour, texture, history and for the part of the world it represents. These are as follows: Ash (North America), London Plane (England), Siberian Larch (Russia), Tree of Heaven (China), Olivewood (Holy Land), Gimlet (Australia), Rosewood (India), Pink Ivory (South Africa), Thuya Burr (North Africa), Lignum Vitae (Argentina), Purpleheart (Brazil), and Blue Mahoe (Jamaica). The timbers chosen to make up the three-step base into which the Cross stands are: Sycamore (faith), Spalted Beech (hope) and Paduk (love), each one chosen deliberately to emulate something of each virtue. Whilst the Cross was designed specifically for the Olympic Games in London, it has taken on a life of its own and is now the property of the Vatican who are promoting it so as to bring a missionary dimension to the Olympic experience. Much to my surprise, I found that the cross was blessed by Pope Francis himself in the Town Hall of Rio de Janeiro last summer, and is now being paraded around Brazil as a focus for prayer in the run-up to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio.

Jon Cornwall, 26



# South Sudan: no peace without reconciliation



**I**n the first month of 2014, up to 10,000 people are estimated to have been killed and 500,000 others displaced from their homes as a result of violent clashes across the newest African state of South Sudan. Throughout this period, observers have recorded reports of extensive human rights violations, including mass killings, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, and sexual violence.

Over 60,000 civilians are currently sheltering in UN compounds, with 30,000 in camps in the capital, Juba, alone. In one particularly tragic incident earlier this month, over 200 women and children drowned as their boat capsized while crossing a river to flee fighting near the town of Malakal. The ongoing events have been referred to by the United Nations as a **"horrific humanitarian and human rights disaster."**

Despite some degree of stability following the nation's secession in 2011, it was an elite power struggle surrounding the President's sacking of his Vice President in July 2013 which prompted the latest outbreak of violence. This event exacerbated tensions that by December saw rival military groups fighting on the streets of Juba. Fear and confusion spread across the country, leading to alleged incidents of targeted killings on the basis of ethnicity, and consequently sparking cycles of retaliatory attacks.

Amid growing global concern, the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) wrote in its Christmas message that this was **"a political problem [which] should not be turned into an ethnic problem."** Ecumenical organisations such as the SSCC have played a key role in vocalising peace messages in recent weeks, and historically have played a central role in promoting national peace processes. Their message during the current humanitarian crisis has been that the diversity of religious and ethnic groups in South Sudan is a source of strength, and should not be exploited for political ends.

I spent several weeks in South Sudan during August and September 2013 while conducting research into peace-building processes as part of my work for the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA), based in Kenya. While undertaking fieldwork in Torit, Eastern Equatoria State, I met and interviewed representatives of the Caritas programme of the Catholic Diocese of Torit. We discussed the role of the Diocese in conflict prevention and peace-building schemes across the region, organising many regional and cross-border peace conferences, and in particular focusing on bringing together young people from previously opposed communities, in order to foster conditions for peace among future generations.

One of the most outstanding aspects of



the peace-building work of the Diocese of Torit is the 'Peace Village' project, which has been celebrated as **"a resounding success story in mediation and reconciliation."** Holy Trinity Peace Village, Kuron, founded in 2005, was the vision of Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban. Inspired by visits to inter-faith communities in Germany, Israel, and the United States, Bishop Taban dreamt of **"a community where people with different ethnicities and different religious backgrounds could live side by side in confidence, harmony and fellowship."**

The Peace Village, located in Kapoeta East County, is an inter-faith and inter-ethnic community founded to encourage harmonious relationships between several pastoralist groups with a history of violent conflict, traditionally concerning the raiding and theft of cattle. The project is based on a culture of inclusion and on the promotion of constructive relations between these groups.

**The Diocese has implemented a number of practical schemes for the community which have supported agriculture and food production, increased access to formal education, built schools and healthcare centres, and developed water, hygiene and sanitation provisions. What started out in 2005 as a group of 80 families has since grown to encompass over 3,000 people, including some who have left neighbouring countries to join the community.**

In such a space, there is the capacity for resolution of present and past disputes through mediation, rather than encouraging the use of violence driven by ideas of ethnic difference. **"We started the peace village because we wanted to break down tribalism"**, writes Bishop Taban. **"The communities no longer refer to each other as enemies but as friends."** Bishop Taban's work has earned him a reputation as an expert advisor on national peace issues, and was recently acknowledged by his receipt of a United Nations Peace Prize.

As I write, a tentative ceasefire agreement appears to have been reached between government and rebel representatives at talks held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While diplomacy is critical in such situations, the example of Holy Trinity Peace Village demonstrates that it is through mediation, dialogue, and ultimately, reconciliation, that lasting peace is achieved. And, while political forces can easily manipulate difference into division, the project further highlights the truth that even after decades marred by conflict, diverse groups in South Sudan are still able to live side-by-side, to overcome past disputes, and to move forward together.

For more information about the Holy Trinity Peace Village, visit: [www.kuronvillage.net](http://www.kuronvillage.net)

*Daniel Cullen, 23, Grimsargh*



## The Generosity of Our Young People - The Teams Conference

**T**he New Year opened with a national conference for young people working in youth ministry.

In our diocese we are blessed to have our youth team at Castlerigg Manor. There are nine other youth centres around the country run by dioceses and by different religious orders. They represent part of the Church's on-going support of youth ministry, but they also represent the great generosity of young people who give up a year of their lives to help to run retreats and mission work.

About 110 of these gap years met together in January with Bishop Kieron Conry; it was a great experience for them all to know that they are part of something much greater, and to realise that there are other young people who are working hard, praying hard, and giving of themselves in this way. One of the team members from Castlerigg said, **"It was an amazing opportunity to meet other young Catholics working in youth ministry, to make new friends and to discover new experiences. At this time of the year when the days are so dark and cold and it is so hard to get out of bed, the time together gave me new hope and purpose"**.



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*This day you will be with me in Paradise, My Father will set us free. Thank you for speaking out for me, My Father has made you see.*

*He has not left me all alone. He has heard every groan. The Spirit has heard your every word. We'll be as free as a bird.*

*You have testified for me, on Earth. I will testify for you, before my Father and his angels in heaven. You will live forever with us. Your story is written in Golgotha, and your future, in Paradise.*

*T. Booth, Kirby Lonsdale*

www.lancasterdiocese.org.uk



## The LIGHT is ON for YOU!

### Reconciliation Wednesday!

In every parish church in the Diocese of Lancaster on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014** 6.00pm - 8.00pm

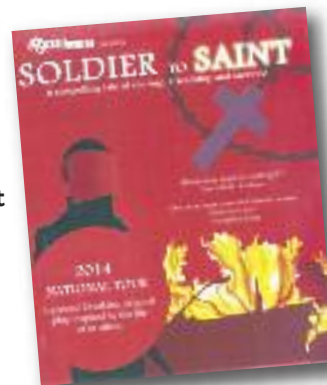
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After a successful London run in 2011, and following their 2013 Summer tour, RISE Theatre is reviving its ground-breaking one-act play "Soldier to Saint", bringing this challenging & thought-provoking drama to the very heart of Blackpool!



students in a series of dynamic drama workshops and presentations, RISE theatre will be taking to the stage in Blackpool once again. This time, for one night only and Holy Family Church will play host to "Soldier to Saint". RISE are excited to be bringing this inspirational play straight to your doorstep, offering

a unique way to explore the journey to faith.

"Soldier to Saint" is coming to Holy Family Church, Blackpool on Tuesday 25th March 2014 at 7:30pm.

Don't miss out, for tickets, visit: [www.risetheatre.ticketsource.co.uk/](http://www.risetheatre.ticketsource.co.uk/) For more details please call St Mary's Catholic College Chaplaincy on 01253 442591 or [sst@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk](mailto:ssst@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk)

Rise Theatre will also be performing 'Soldier to Saint' in Preston on Saturday 12th April 2014 at St Walbuge's Parish Hall, PR2 2QE at 7.30pm (Doors at 7pm). For more information about this venue or to buy tickets please contact the Metanoia Project on 07957 566741, [team@metanoiaproject.co.uk](mailto:team@metanoiaproject.co.uk) or [www.metanoiaproject.co.uk](http://www.metanoiaproject.co.uk) where you can also buy tickets online.

The play is immersed in the gritty world of London 2020, where religious expression has been made illegal and a city is in crisis. As Christians are forced into hiding and rioting hits the streets, a soldier – John Alban, strikes an unlikely friendship with a fugitive priest, a friendship that could cost him his life.

For such a time as this, John Alban must now make a choice between his old way of life or following a new path – a path that will change his life forever.

Performed by RISE Theatre, "Soldier to Saint" brings to life the inspirational true story of Saint Alban, England's first Christian martyr – a compelling tale of courage, friendship and sacrifice.

Following the success of the Mission week last year at St Mary's Catholic College, where the theatre company led over 1200



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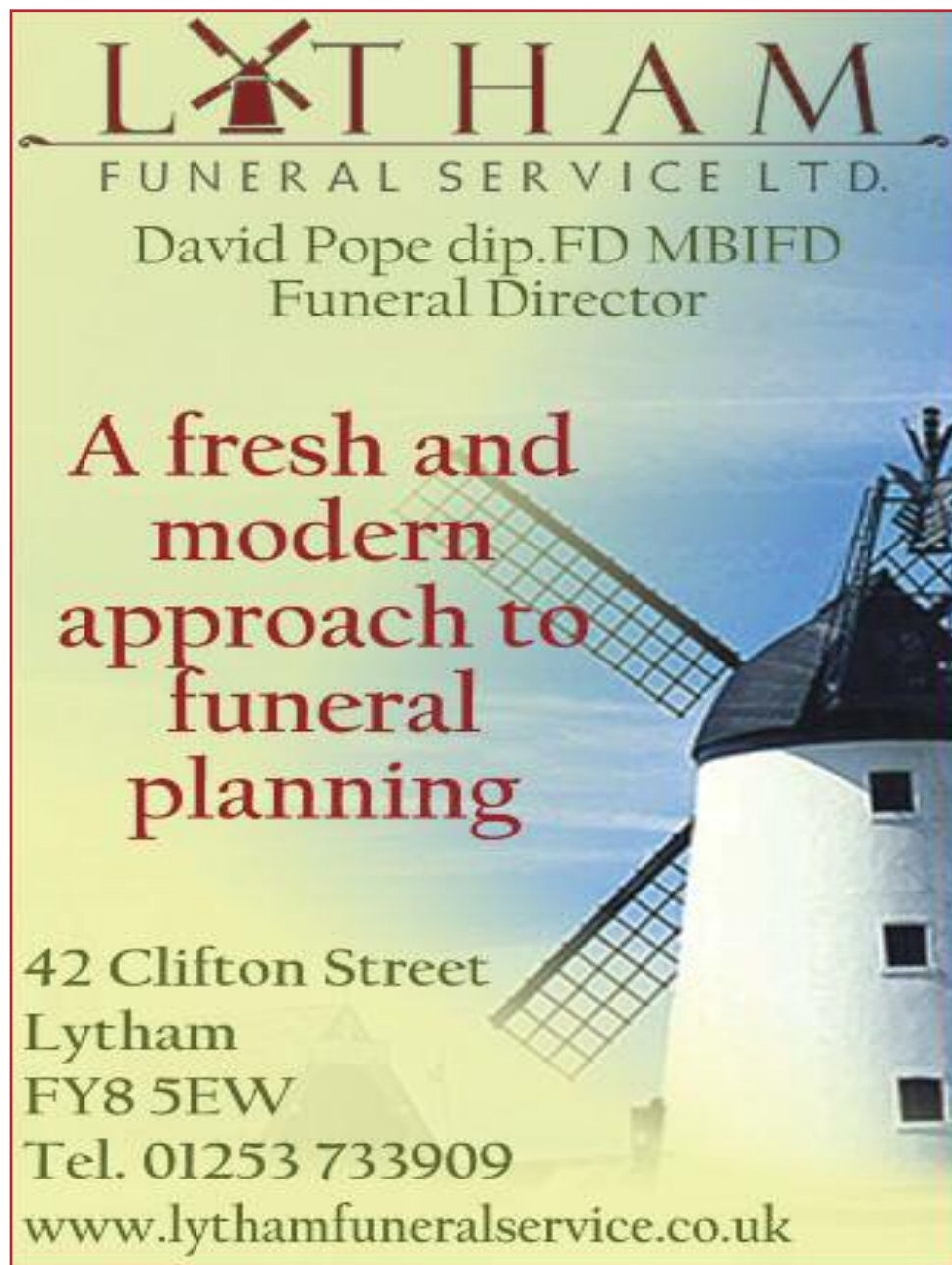
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**B**ill Adams, Preston, has celebrated 63 years as a serving member of the St Vincent de Paul society.

His years of service were recognized at a festival evening held at St Wilfrid's, in January. As a member of the society, Bill has worked extensively in local prisons, hospitals, hospices and the old St Vincent's orphanage, in Preston.

Following Mass a hot pot supper was served in the parish centre and Raymond Daly, the Diocesan SVP central council president, travelled down from Kendal to present Bill with a commemoration plaque and a special long service medal. (The medal was issued from the SVP headquarters in Paris, where the

SVP was founded by Frederic Ozanam).

Bill was the first Deacon to be ordained in the Diocese of Lancaster, over 31 years ago and in addition to serving as Deacon at St Wilfrid's, Bill acts as spiritual advisor to their SVP conference and to the Preston and District council.

The St Vincent DePaul Society recently gained national recognition, when Prime Minister, David Cameron gave the organization the Big Society award, he said:

*"I am delighted to recognise all 10,000 SVP volunteers and staff who support them in their vital work, turning concerns into action."*

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### Three voices reflect a little on Parish life from the Choir, the SVP and Parish Council.

#### A voice from the Choir

Those of us with the responsibility and privilege of being in parish choirs will be familiar with the words attributed to St. Augustine *"he who sings prays twice."* Although, sacramentally, all Masses are the same, I'm sure many of us will agree that music in the liturgy has a very important part to play. It must aid prayerfulness, concentration, participation and reverence and add illumination to the theme of the Readings and the Church's year. Mostly, the choir should lead the congregation and not be seen to be *"performing"* too often (*oops!*)

Here at St. Alban's we are fortunate to have fifteen loyal members who generously give hundreds of hours a year as *"ministers of music."* As most of us are retired, we are able to lead music at all parish funerals and weddings as well as Sunday Mass and Holy days. We all know how deeply supportive it can be to the family and friends at a Requiem Mass or funeral to be supported and carried in this way. We are *"generously rewarded"* with an annual choir *"do"* or party.

Our congregation is very warmly supportive of the choir, and knowing your congregation is important for those of us choosing music for the liturgy. We make use of a very wide range of music from new compositions through to the familiar and nostalgic sounds of Latin hymns like *Pange Lingua* and *Salve Regina* and the *Missa de Angelis* which we sing throughout Advent and Lent.

We have built up a tradition in the parish, (*if a 'little birdie' lets us know*) of marking birthdays, wedding anniversaries, special celebrations, by singing to them at the end of Mass. You might guess that the younger members of the parish really enjoy it. However you might be surprised

to know that parishioners at the other end of the age range secretly love it too, especially if they live alone. One parishioner commented *"I'm sure I've never had so many people sing happy birthday to me ever before!"* After all we are a parish family, the family of God.

We choristers all hope that singing truly is double praying; it certainly is rewarding. Here at St. Alban's we are fortunate to have two *"Godsends"* a parishioner who is always ready to play the organ for all occasions, and a button on the organ to change the key, up or down. Gone are the angelic screeches in *"Hark the Herald!"*. Lowering the key encourages the men to join in, and I don't just mean us tenors and basses! So I say thank you Lord for the music, for giving it to us. Or as Peter Dimuantas puts it:

**So help me God to keep in mind  
The giver of my gift of song,  
That I may never be inclined  
To selfish boasts, when praise belongs,  
My Lord to Thee, and Thee alone.**

#### A voice from the SVP

The St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Alban's is small, with eight members, but we would like to think that it is effective in what it tries to do, since it is helped in its work by a very generous and caring community.

Since 2006 we have raised £12,099 for the baby feeding stations in the Sudan, helping to keep them open when they were faced with closure, thus putting the lives of vulnerable babies and toddlers at risk. This is an ongoing project for the SVP nationally and we continue to keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

We also provide tea and home-made cakes and a nice chat once a month to the local community around us.

Blessed Frederic Ozanam saw a need to help his fellow students in the 1830s by meeting together to discuss their



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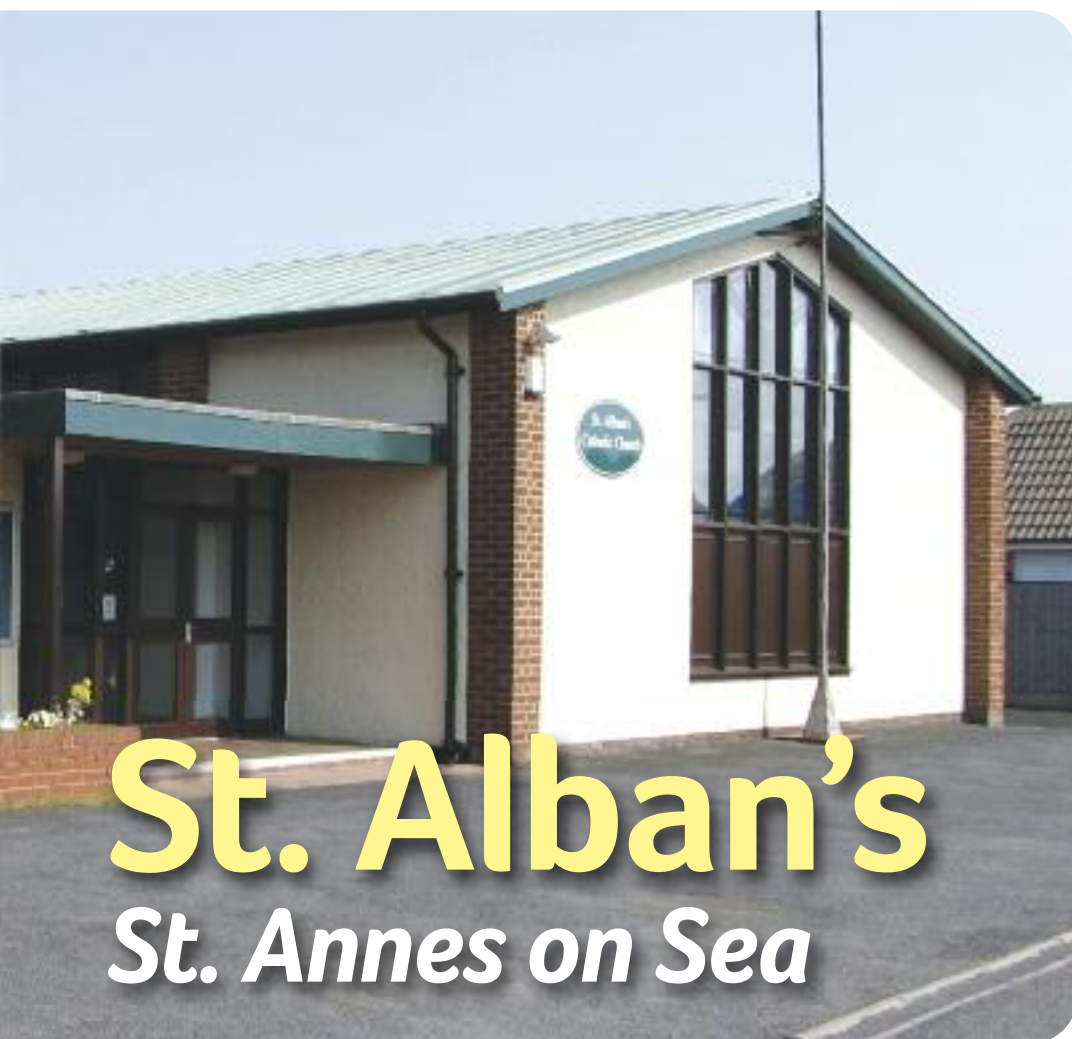
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# St. Alban's

## St. Annes on Sea

problems and the social injustices of the day and to act. We have boxes in the entrance Hall for parishioners and friends to donate food and clothing for the food bank run by the SVP at St. Cuthbert's Blackpool, a very great need which is growing week by week. We have arranged a few socials which have raised funds to help this work and in Lent we will have our 'Hunger' lunches once again, soup and bread, to raise funds for home and abroad.

Other activities include visits to the sick and housebound, the lonely, those in hospital and care homes, some of the duties undertaken by the SVP throughout this country.

Every year we entertain around 70 to 80 parishioners, neighbours and friends from other churches to a Christmas party. We start by celebrating Mass, we sing carols with our famous choir, party food is served in the Hall, then we have a sing-a-long to all the old Christmas favourites. Father Christmas arrives with presents for everyone, it is a jolly good way to celebrate Christmas.

There is a hymn called "The Servant King" which I think sums up the ideals of the SVP:

***This is our God, the Servant King,  
He calls us now to follow Him,  
to live our lives as a daily offering,  
of worship to the Servant King.***

Blessed Frederick Ozanam started the St. Vincent de Paul Society to address the needs of the people around him. Parishes throughout the country, and indeed throughout the whole world, have emulated him in the care of their communities. What better way to serve the Servant King! The hymn goes on poetically:

***Hands that flung stars into space,  
to cruel nails surrendered.  
We are his hands, We are his stars,  
We are called to serve.***

### **A voice from the Parish Council**

Welcome to St. Alban's. As we enter we are greeted by a detail from the 'Return of the Prodigal' by Rembrandt.



Some people tell us that we are a warm, inviting and friendly community – and so we are – but isn't that the way all churches are? We are just people living by what we believe and building on the foundations left by those who have gone before.

We have inherited great facilities left to us by the forward thinking fathers of this parish. So we have all we need – a presbytery, a modern low cost church building, and plenty of car parking. We have a very practical and well placed church hall and we are even blessed with a field for outdoor events and potentially for expansion if ever needed.

In this our 50th Anniversary year of the Parish we have just started to celebrate that inheritance. 50 years ago our Sunday Mass was in the local Inn, and on weekdays when there was "no room at the Inn" it was in the local farm cottage. Of course a parish is not about buildings, no matter how necessary – it's about the people – and it's about our mission. We are just a group of people called to love God and our neighbours – just as we should. In fact, being the only place where people can gather in this part of town, the neighbours often drop in for some tea and chat. Isn't that the heart of our mission, to present the warm, inviting, and friendly face of God to an otherwise cold and unfriendly world?

Our down to earth attitude means we have a high proportion of the congregation who roll up their sleeves and do work for the parish. When you visit us you may notice that the place is well cared for, well loved, and of course you are welcome. So why not join us for our 50th Anniversary Barbecue in July this year, and take a share in the treasure that is St. Alban's.



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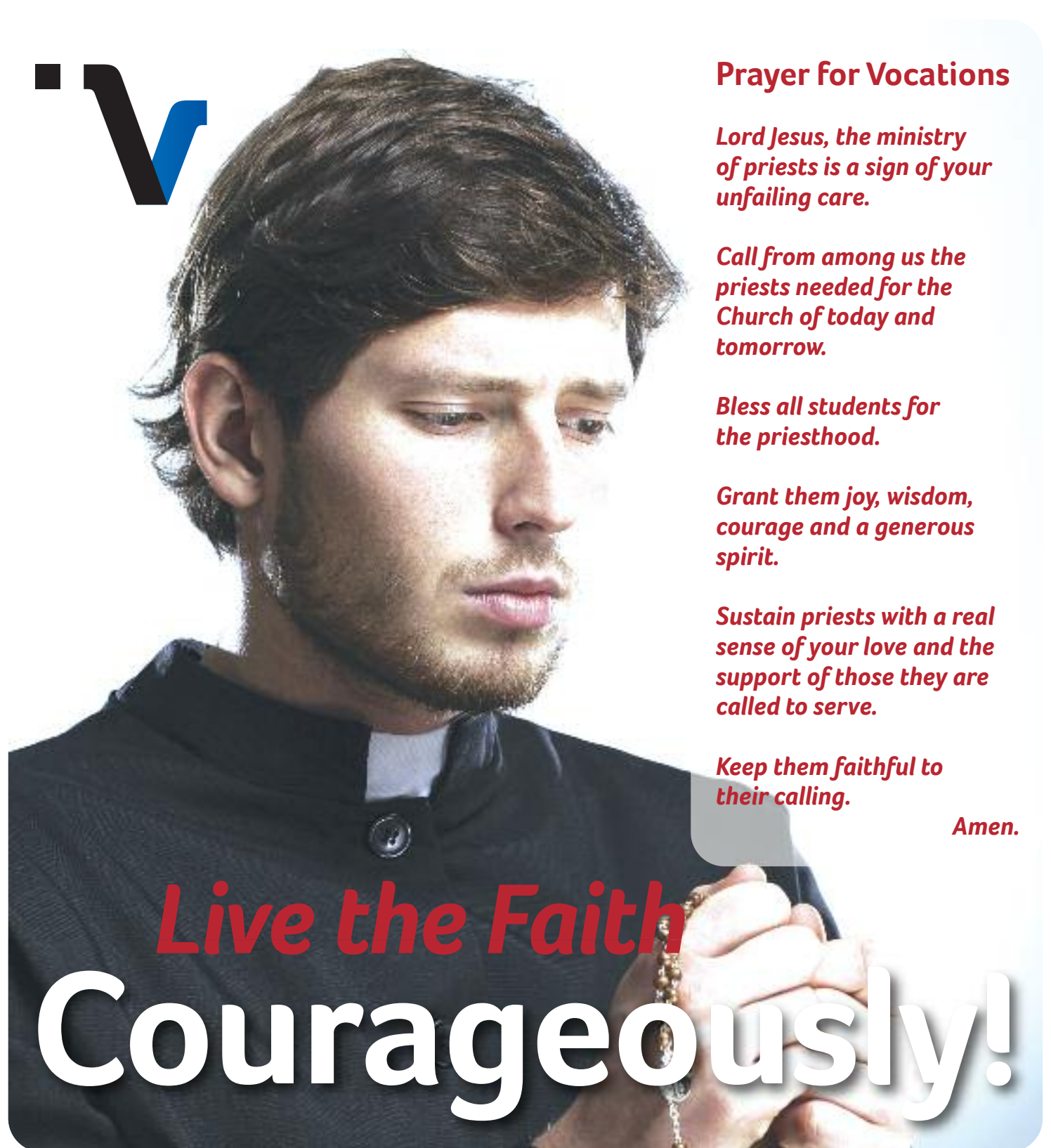
**Sunday March 2nd at 6.00 pm**  
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**Saturday March 15th at 10.00 am**  
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**Live the Faith  
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**Prayer for Vocations**

*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.**

**F**rom time to time people will ask me, "How's recruitment going?" I always try to gently correct their question, because vocations work is never about recruitment. We always start from the basic truth that God has created each of us with a purpose, and it is the work of both the individual and the Church to discern what that purpose is. So the work of a Vocations Director is never to persuade or arm-twist someone into going forward for the priesthood; instead, it is to help them to ask the question: "What is God calling me to?" – and then, of course, to work with them to find the answer, always with a genuine openness to God's will, whatever it may be.

The falling number of priests in our diocese, and across much of the 'developed' world, is a symptom of our times, and of the wider challenges the Church faces. The main reason that vocations have fallen is that Mass attendance has fallen. We all therefore need to work together to encourage people back to Mass, and, amongst the Mass-going community, we need to encourage one another to live our faith more fully and more courageously.

The 'vocations crisis' is really a crisis of faith. The first step to reversing it is to renew our own faith in the Lord. Nothing short of this will help. We need to recommit ourselves to prayer, to trusting in God, to allowing Him to work in us and in our parishes. It takes six or seven years to train a priest, so even if we had a surge in vocations tomorrow, we face several more years of painful decisions about how best our priests can serve the diocese. But this is not a reason to despair. Without doubt, the Lord is teaching us to renew our trust in Him.

Once, when I was expressing my frustration at not being able to do all the things I thought I should be doing, a wise priest said to me, "The Church has only one Saviour – and it's not you". How

quickly we can forget that. If we believe that the Lord is with us, we know that He too shares our problems, He is with us in the midst of our anxieties about the future of the Church, and He knows how much we value the sacraments He has given us. It is God who provides for His Church – He asks only that we are generous in giving of ourselves, and that we pray that He will send labourers to His harvest.

*Fr Andrew Allman, Vocations Director*

The **Catholic Voice** urges every individual, family and parish community to pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

Last Easter Pope Francis said:

**“**  
*Behind and before every vocation to the  
priesthood or to the consecrated life there  
is always the strong and intense prayer of  
someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a  
mother, a father, a community... This is why  
Jesus said: “Pray therefore the Lord of the  
harvest,” that is, God the Father, “to send  
out labourers into his harvest” (Mt 9:38).  
Vocations are born in prayer and from  
prayer; and only through prayer can  
they persevere and bear fruit.*  
**”**





The "farewell" meal, Saturday, 11th January, 2014. Photo courtesy of G O'Donoghue.



Inside the Bolangaro home, 1967. Photo courtesy of M and D Dowling.



Outside the Bolangaros, 1967. Photo courtesy of Mr J Daresbury Hatton.

# St Francis of Assisi Hambleton 1979-2014

**T**he final Mass at St Francis of Assisi Chapel of Ease was celebrated by Father Bryan Irving, Sunday 5th January, 2014, on the eve of his retirement after 43 years' service as a priest both in Lancashire and Cumbria. We wish Father Bryan a long and fulfilling retirement at St Winifrede's, (home for retired priests, Bispham).

Father Bryan and the parishioners met in the chapel the following Saturday for a "farewell" meal accompanied by Father Anthony Keefe and Father Bernard Partington prior to closing the doors for the last time.

The initiative to re-establish Catholic worship in Hambleton, can be dated back to Sunday, July 9th, 1967, when 21 Catholic residents of Hambleton attended a Mass celebrated by Father Gaffney, Pilling, at the home of the Bolangaro family in Market Street – the first celebration of a Catholic Mass in Hambleton in over 400 years.

The need for a larger venue for future Masses led to the use of the Supper Room at the Village Hall, then the Main Hall itself. Weekday Masses were celebrated in the homes of members of the congregation.

Father Gaffney was succeeded by Father Bilsborrow and priests from the seminary at Underley. This arrangement continued till

1973 when Father Mitchell, the Parish Priest of Little Thornton, assumed the duties. The rural Catholics of Hambleton identified themselves with the nature-loving St Francis of Assisi and, in 1975, money was raised, and land was purchased, for the erection of a chapel dedicated to him.

By 1978, following a huge, 3-year, fund-raising effort by the whole Christian community, sufficient money had been raised for the construction of a new chapel. Early the following year the chapel was completed. On Saturday, 31st March, 1979, The Rt Rev Brian Foley, Bishop of Lancaster, celebrated Mass and blessed the new chapel.

In the 35 years of its existence, the chapel of St Francis, has been a Chapel of Ease attached to various parishes, latterly of St Mary's, Great Eccleston, and has seen many Parish Priests come and go:

- Father George Pennington
- Father Anthony Keefe
- Father Jim Burns
- Father Peter Groody
- Father Stephen Ashton
- Father Bryan Irving

The congregation are indebted to the pioneering work of the first 'committee' which, prior to 1979, was instrumental in creating the chapel of St Francis, and to all committee members whose efforts, since then, sustained the chapel over the years.

*Gerald O'Donoghue*

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# The Way Forward - A personal view

**The declining number of priests, to serve the faithful, as well as declining congregations has caused dioceses throughout the western world to undergo restructuring. Reality tells us that there will be no quick fix answer to the issue of an ageing and numerically reduced clerical presence but our generation owes it to the next generation to form and shape them in such a way that our congregations start to grow rather than continue to decline in the years ahead.**

The Diocese of Lancaster, like many other dioceses, has and continues to face the reality of linking and merging parishes, and in some cases the closure of some church buildings. These practical and necessary steps, while a source of sadness and loss for many parishioners at the time of change do however present fresh opportunities for new beginnings.

Several years ago, the Parish Priest at The Willows in Kirkham, found himself in charge of St Anne's parish in nearby Westby. He had the benefit of inheriting a small, though dedicated congregation at Westby, while we, at The Willows, had the joy of getting to know fellow Catholics – not least the late Deacon David Done – who served both parishes and enriched the lives of both communities. Two years later St Anne's Westby has become linked with Holy Family in Freckleton while The Willows in Kirkham has merged with St

Joseph's in Wesham and is now known as the Parish of the Holy Cross (*the church building names remain however*). You would need to reside in Kirkham or Wesham to realise the significance of this monumental merger! Suffice to say that the train station provides the definitive border between the two small towns.

Following the Relief Act of 1791 when the building of Catholic Churches was permitted, a chapel and presbytery dedicated to The Holy Cross was built on the existing land where the Willows Church now stands. It became known as The Willow Chapel after the Willow trees which grew around it and the existing church of St John the Evangelist, is still better known as The Willows. The Parish of the Holy Cross seems a fitting name for the new parish as both communities are inextricably linked in the past and the area is steeped in Catholic history.



*The church of St John the Evangelist, Kirkham and the church of St Joseph, Wesham.*

The merger of the two communities into the Parish of the Holy Cross has seen new friendships forged and many positive

practical outcomes not least a growth in SVP membership.

It is evident that the workload of our priests' is increasing all the time as a result of these changes. The welfare of our parish priests should be a prime concern for us all and we should continually pray for them and strive to help and support them as much as possible. It is so easy to be critical of change but thinking more in terms of what we can do for the Church is far more positive than simply thinking what the Church can do for me.

The future is challenging but there is a lot to be positive about and continued dialogue, prayer, imagination and the ability to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit will make for the beginnings of a worthy legacy to those who come after

us. But we need to also recognise that each one must share the responsibility of handing on the faith – along with our ordained clergy. As Pope Francis recently said ***"Through Baptism, each of us becomes 'missionary disciples', called to bring the Gospel to the world. Each of the baptized, whatever their role in the Church or the educational level of their faith, is an active agent of evangelization. ... The new evangelization should involve ... a new central role for each of the baptized. The People of God is a People of disciples – because we receive the faith – and a missionary People – because we pass on the faith. This is what makes Baptism in us: it gives us Grace and transmits the faith. All of us in the Church are disciples, always and for our entire lives; and we are all missionaries, each in the place that the Lord has assigned us."*** *Jenny Phillips*



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# Our Faith

## Does God guide the world and my life?

Yes, but in a mysterious way; God guides everything along paths that only he knows, leading it to its perfection. At no point in time does something that he has created fall out of his hands.

God influences both the great events of history and also the little events of our personal life, without reducing our freedom or making us mere marionettes in his eternal plans. In God "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

*God is in everything we meet in all the changes in our life, even in the painful events and the seemingly meaningless coincidences. God wants to write straight even with the crooked lines of our life. What he takes away from us and what he gives us, the ways in which he strengthens us and the ways in which he tests us all these are arrangements and signs of his will.*

(YOUCAT question 49)

## If God is all-knowing and all-powerful, why does he not prevent evil?

*"God allows evil only so as to make something better result from it."*

(St. Thomas Aquinas)

Evil in the world is an obscure and painful mystery. Even the Crucified asked his Father, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46). Much about it is incomprehensible. One thing, though, we know for sure: God is 100 percent good.

He can never be the originator of something evil. God created the world to be good, but it is not yet complete. In violent upheavals and painful processes it is being shaped and moved toward its final perfection. That may be a better way to classify what the Church calls physical evil, for example, a birth defect, or a natural catastrophe. Moral evils, in contrast, come about through the misuse of freedom in the world. "Hell on earth"

child soldiers, suicide bombings, concentration camps is usually man-made. The decisive question is therefore not, "How can anyone believe in a good God when there is so much evil?" but rather, "How could a person with a heart and understanding endure life in this world if God did not exist?"

*Christ's death and Resurrection show us that evil did not have the first word, nor does it have the last. God made absolute good result from the worst evil. We believe that in the Last Judgment God will put an end to all injustice. In the life of the world to come, evil no longer has any place and suffering ends.*

(YOUCAT question 51)

## What is heaven?

Heaven is God's milieu, the dwelling place of the angels and saints, and the goal of creation. With the words "heaven and earth" we designate the whole of created reality.

*Heaven is not a place in the universe. It is a condition in the next life. Heaven is where*

*God's will is done without any resistance. Heaven happens when life is present in its greatest intensity and blessedness a kind of life that we do not find on earth. If with God's help we arrive someday in heaven, then waiting for us will be "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9).*

(YOUCAT question 52)

## What is hell?

Our faith calls "hell" the condition of final separation from God. Anyone who sees love clearly in the face of God and, nevertheless, does not want it decides freely to have this condition instead.

*Jesus, who knows what hell is like, speaks about it as the "outer darkness" (Mt 8:12). Expressed in our terms, it is cold rather than hot. It is horrible to contemplate a condition of complete rigidity and hopeless isolation from everything that could bring aid, relief, joy, and consolation into one's life.*

(YOUCAT question 53)

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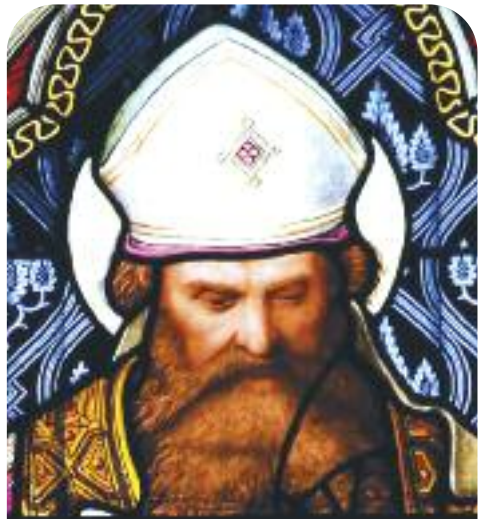
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### Thought for Lent

**What does love look like?**

**It has the hands to help others.**

**It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy.**

**It has eyes to see misery and want.**

**It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men.**

**That is what love looks like.**

*Saint Augustine*

# To busy complaining to see good?

**I**t takes a disciplined spirit to endure the monastery on Montserrat in Spain. One of the fundamental requirements of a particular religious order is that the young men must maintain silence. Opportunities to speak are scheduled once every two years, at which time they are allowed to speak only two words.

One young initiate in this religious order, who had completed his first two years of training, was invited by his superior to make his first two-word presentation. "Food terrible," he said. Two years later the invitation was once again extended. The young man used this forum to exclaim, "Bed lumpy."

Arriving at his superior's office two years later he proclaimed, "I quit." The superior looked at this young monk and said, "You know, it doesn't surprise me a bit. All you've done since you arrived is complain, complain and complain."

**Exaggerated? Maybe!**

What if you were asked to share two words that describe your Life? Would your focus be the lumps, bumps, and unfairness, or are you committed to dwell on those things that are good, right, and lovely? Think about it!



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**Nazareth Retirement Villages**

**Larmenier Village**

ADVERTORIAL



**L**armenier Retirement Village in Blackburn is able to put a little bit of that summer sunshine back into these dreary winter days with the second phase of purpose built retirement apartments and bungalows known as Whitaker Gardens.

Residents choose to retire to the Village for many reasons. One such resident, Mrs Barbara Donavan was born in Jamaica and arrived in Britain in 1950 with her family to complete her education, Barbara attended Secretarial College. A keen lover of languages, she also studied Spanish, spending nine months in Spain. She found work at the BBC as a junior in sound radio, where she met her future husband who was an engineer.

Mr and Mrs Donavan were happily married for 33 years and their Catholic faith was very important to them both. After the death of her husband, Barbara eventually sought an appropriate retirement home. She noticed an article in the Catholic Universe about Larmenier Village and was very impressed with what it had to offer. Apart from it being closer to her daughter and family, it also offered a village with a strong Catholic ethic and the opportunity to attend Mass regularly in the chapel on site. This together with the opportunity to

**Warm Winter**

# Welcome

undertake a trial in a fully furnished apartment and rent until her existing property was sold influenced Barbara heavily and she felt that the village would be perfect for her needs.

Barbara continues to be happy with her choice and said "Larmenier provides me with a very good life. I particularly like the choice and quality of the meals available and the various types of help offered, with access to carers and other support such as cleaning, laundry and handyman services." Another key attraction is that Larmenier is not like a nursing home but combines independence with support in a safe, secure environment. "I am free to come and go" said Barbara "and I have no regrets moving here from Kent."

All our residents enjoy the cosy warmth of energy efficient central heating, double glazing and a high standard of thermal insulation, enabling them to relax without having to worry about high energy costs. There is a 24hour emergency response service a regular doctor's surgery and much, much more including a cinema and a library.

To arrange a village tour or to find out more about their 'trial in style' option call Larmenier on 01254 677926.



# Out into the Field!



**K**een GCSE Geographers from Corpus Christi High School, Preston, headed to the Trough of Bowland for four days to complete their field study for their Controlled Assessment task.

Pupils collected primary data on the formation and development of rivers. Completing a mix of field work and classroom work throughout the visit, the group began their fieldwork at St Michaels on Wyre, where the river is joined by a second major tributary, the River Brock where they were able to see how the river becomes tidal below the weir at St Michael's. Later they headed to the top of the Trough of Bowland to view the source of the river. The pupils analysed six different sites at various different stages of the river before it reached the river reached its widest part at the mouth.

Data was gathered including: the river depth, the channel width, the wetted perimeter and the velocity of the river. And the students used this information to test their own hypothesis about how a river flow can vary.

As well as working towards their GCSE, improving team building skills was also a major aim. As well as working together to collect data they were given the chance to partake in thrilling outdoor activities. Venturing onto the water in canoes, heading up the indoor climbing wall and getting their adrenaline pumping as they travelled down the zip line were all activities that helped to promote the importance of teamwork and communication.

Year 11 pupil, Abby Howarth thoroughly enjoyed the fieldtrip. She said: "The whole group had a fantastic time. It was great being able to work together outside of the classroom, and learn about Geography while out in the field just like professional Geographers would do. The experience was invaluable to my studies and I now feel fully prepared for my upcoming controlled assessment."

*Sarah Johnson*

Care and support. As you need it, when you need it.

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"I'm still in my own home but now have more confidence knowing I have support from my careworker"

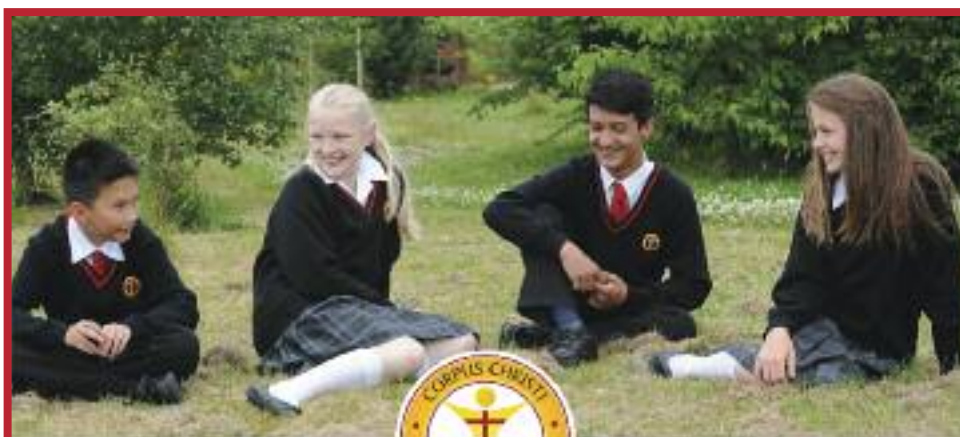


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## CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Together in One Body

**T**he changes that have taken place at Corpus Christi over the last two terms, can only be described as transformational. In July, Ofsted recognised that the new headteacher's leadership was having a very positive impact on staff and students and stated that his 'clarity of vision, high expectations and drive to improve the school are tangible'.

Changes introduced last April, have included an impressive new uniform, a highly effective approach to managing behaviour, a strong focus on improving teaching, new systems for improving attendance, new reports to parents and a new rewards system.

The most recent section 8 report confirms that the conduct of pupils has improved markedly and recognises the impact of the school's work on attendance, which has also improved significantly. The report also confirms that the proportion of teaching judged to be good or

better has more than doubled since the summer term.

**"The Headteacher's leadership is having a very positive impact on staff and students."**

Headteacher David Hubbard is extremely proud of both pupils and staff. He said: "Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive and reflect the huge importance that we attach to respecting the unique dignity and value of every person."

If you would like to arrange a visit to Corpus Christi, please contact school on: 01772 716912. Our Open Evening for September 2015 admissions will be held on Thursday 9th October 2014.

Corpus Christi Catholic High School, St Vincents Road, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 8QY  
 www.ccc.lancs.sch.uk



# Our Lady's Catholic College, Lancaster



**Canon Luiz Ruscillo, Diocesan Head of Education, watches Bill Arnold, Catenian, present two cheques, value £400, to Ruth Lowe Head of the Sixth Form at Our Lady's Catholic College.**

Ruth is the team leader for eight sixth form students and four teachers who in July this year will fly to Bukinda, Uganda where they will spend time with St Paul's RC school and other schools in the Kanungo District. Whilst there, the

team will share their expertise as Science teachers and students with the Ugandan pupils.

The team is raising money, by various functions, to support the students costs and to take additional resources asked for by the Ugandans.

This will be Ruth's second visit to Uganda as she travelled there last year with supplies for the area provided by the Hornby parishioners. *Bill Arnold*

## Lancaster students raise thousands

**S**tudents from Our Lady's Catholic College raised over £2,500 for communities in the Philippines devastated by Typhoon Haiyan – the largest school donation for the Philippines in the Diocese of Lancaster. They were responding to an urgent appeal by CAFOD

The children held a variety of fundraising events, including a hot dog day, cake sales and a non-uniform day. "Our students are always anxious to help other people wherever they can and when they saw the scenes of terrible devastation they were immediately clamouring to be allowed to fund raise" said Brendan Conboy, Headteacher. CAFOD's Patrick Gardner said, "This is an amazing amount of money the College has raised and a real show of solidarity and compassion. CAFOD is overwhelmed at the efforts they made to raise this money and so grateful to all those who have contributed to the appeal, there's been an exceptional response throughout Lancashire. People's livelihoods and communities have been devastated in the Philippines, and the churches there are playing a vital part in providing emergency relief and starting the rebuilding process. It's extremely heart-warming to know local people want to help. Their support is hugely appreciated."

Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines on the 8th November last year and affected over 13 million people by severely damaging power, transport and water systems as well as destroying thousands of families' homes.



## THE SISTERS OF NAZARETH

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for entry to year 7 in 2015

**Tuesday, July 8th & Tuesday 30th September**  
6.00 to 8.30pm

**Taster Day Monday 23rd June**

Please enter via the Elmfield site on Ullet Road

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Section 45 Inspection June 2012

Behaviour in classes and around the school building is first rate.

Section 5 Inspection June 2012

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