

The Catholic VOICE *of Lancaster*

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 269 + May 2015

INSIDE: p05 Igniting the Flame
p10 Renewed Baptistry
in Carlisle!



Psst!

Pass the Word – God Loves You

There are moments when mission becomes urgent and our response needs to be revived” said Pope Francis. He continued by challenging the faithful “How many people are tired and exhausted? How can we share with them the love of God?”

Jesus provides the example, where was he to be found, amongst the poor, amongst sinners, teaching of the power of love – not condemning but bringing forgiveness and healing.

Pope Francis concluded by saying “.... patience and perseverance. We don’t have a magic wand but we do have the Lord who accompanies us and never abandons us, bearing witness is the beginning of evangelisation and is what touches the heart and transforms it.”

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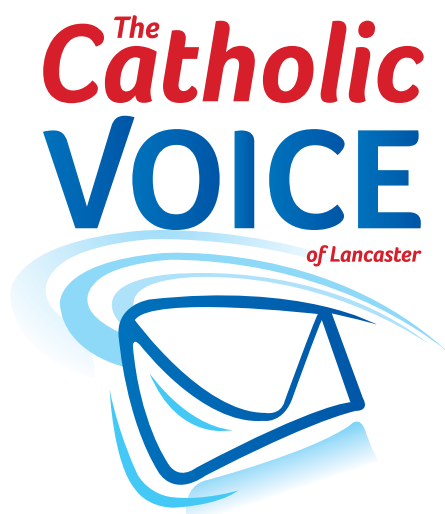


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EDITORIAL

Initing Mary to show us the transforming power of prayer; **at the start of this month of May what about this invitation? That you invite Mary to teach you the power of prayer, the power that we can receive if we follow her lead and open our lives for God to fill us with His presence, His power, and His love. Mary's whole place in God's providence is to be the one who places herself at God's disposal. To the angel's message her reply is "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word". Really, those words of prayer sum up her whole attitude of life, and they lead us to think of what our own prayer is about.**

So often our prayer can get stuck within our own vision of things. It isn't that we are only asking things for ourselves, though sometimes this is true, but even when we are praying for others and for good of the whole world it is still contained within our own narrow vision. Our limited vision of things shouldn't stop us praying, **Our Lord urges us to persevere, to knock and the door shall be opened, but maybe it will be opened in a way we could never guess.** Is there something important for me to learn from Mary's "let it be done to me according to your word"? Because I must admit that most of the time my prayer can be "let it be done according to my word."

Mary's prayer takes her beyond her own grasp of things, beyond her own understanding. Those words "Be it done according to your word" turn priorities around from the start. It makes her prayer the opening up of her life to God's possibilities, God's priorities, God's will. Those words open up her life to the mystery of God in whom we live and move and exist, they open her life to the presence and the mystery of God, and she says it clearly, I am the handmaid, the servant of the Lord. **Yes it is God who is the guide and ruler and inspirer and enabler of my life. And so the priority of prayer is changed from the expression of my will, which I'm hoping God will bless and approve, into something very different - the opening up of my life to God's will.**

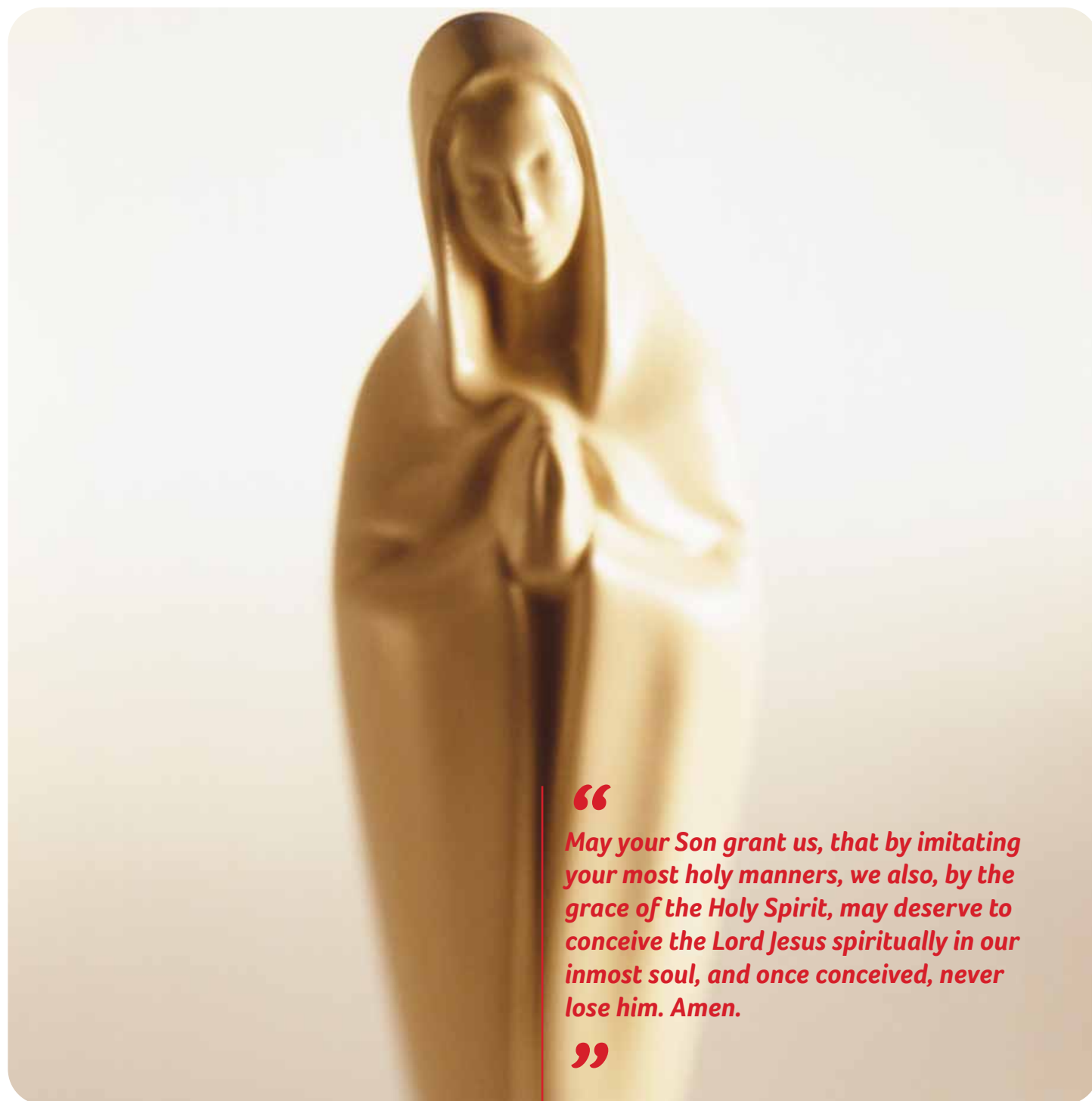
Sometimes people imagine that this obedient prayer of Mary, opening to the will of God, is too passive, a sort of sleepy going with the flow. Quite the contrary, to understand it correctly we see that it is the most generous and courageous way to live and to pray, because we move out of our comfort zone of our own limits and give our lives to God in all his mystery, we open our lives to what we do not yet know.

Mary's own choice, her acceptance of God's will brought her much pain and difficulty. Simeon expressed it well when he said to her "and a sword will pierce your own soul too, that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare." Mary's apparent quiet acceptance of God's purpose for her life is a work of courage. It is not the bravado of "doing my thing", but the generous courage of doing God's will.

All Mary's dignity comes from her motherhood, her willingness to carry and bring to birth the Son of God. And that motherhood, that loving co-operation with God is not only a physical event, but also an action of faith and prayer. By her openness in prayer and faith to God's will she conceived the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is that powerful openness to God in prayer which we may learn to copy from Mary's example.

Part of an old English prayer to Mary puts it so strikingly and shows how following her way of prayer is life changing for us: "May your Son grant us, that by imitating your most holy manners, we also, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, may deserve to conceive the Lord Jesus spiritually in our inmost soul, and once conceived, never lose him. Amen."

Here is surely the greatest sign of the power of prayer, not when we assert our will, but when we humbly open our lives to God and our lives are transformed by the loving presence of God and we become bearers of Christ to our world.



“

May your Son grant us, that by imitating your most holy manners, we also, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, may deserve to conceive the Lord Jesus spiritually in our inmost soul, and once conceived, never lose him. Amen.

”

Church Leaders in Cumbria Sign Pledge

In March Church Leaders in Cumbria, including Bishop Campbell, jointly signed a pledge of support for social action and social justice. The signing took place at Manna House, Kendal, which is a Christian-based social action project doing cutting-edge work with homeless and vulnerable people.

Chief Officer of Manna House, Jonathan Brook, said: "We welcomed the county leaders of Cumbria's main denominations to Manna House to share our experiences of providing help and hope to people in need across South Lakeland. Our hope is that this will lead to encouragement and inspiration for the development of similar initiatives across the county and beyond."

Along with Bishop Campbell other church leaders who signed the pledge were Bill Bewley, representative of the Religious Society of Friends (*Quakers*); Rev Andrew Dodd, Network Minister for Cumbria of the North Western Baptist Association; Bishop Robert Freeman, the Anglican Suffragan Bishop of Penrith; Major Drew McCombe, Divisional Leader of the North Western Division of the Salvation Army; Rev Jennet McLeod, Deputy Chair of the Cumbria District of the Methodist Church; and Rev Sarah Moore, Area President for Cumbria of the North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church.

The pledge reads: *'As we celebrate the inspiring work of Manna House with some of the most marginalised members of our community, we the leaders of the Churches in Cumbria together pledge our continuing support for faith-based social action and community initiatives around the county, both rural and urban.'*

We will seek to listen to and prioritise the voices of poor and marginalised people in our communities.

We call on policymakers to tackle the problems of poverty, hunger and isolation. We particularly highlight the need to: pay a living wage, review zero hours contracts, ensure that the welfare state once again provides a robust defence against destitution, and protect the viability of rural and isolated communities through the retention of services.'

Also in attendance were the Chair of the Social Responsibility Forum of Churches Together in Cumbria; the Chair of Churches Together in Kendal; the Manager of King's Food Bank; the chair of Lancaster Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission, Fr Hugh Pollock and the Community Worker from the Cornerstone project at Sandylands Methodist Church.

Helen Boothroyd, of Churches Together in Cumbria, said today: "It is particularly relevant that the Cumbria Church Leaders signed this pledge in the run up to the General Election when people of faith are challenged to ask questions of social justice to the candidates in their constituency and to consider the candidates' responses on these issues in deciding how to cast their own vote."

Helen Boothroyd



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Being a Young Catholic Today

Tom, 19, Thornton



Searching for God

One of the things that I have discovered is that there is a lot of hope in the Church. Recently I have been on a Lourdes preparation weekend and I have found many like-minded young people. Sometimes I wonder where all the young people are in the Church, but in getting involved with the Youth Service I've realised that there are many young people that are still searching for God.

In my own life it may seem that things aren't always going according to plan, but staying positive and believing in God has helped me to get through those times and realise that a lot of good things have happened in my life.

I have discovered that such a simple thing like reading the Bible in difficult times can completely change your perspective, sometimes instantly, and put you in a new frame of mind. I was given a Gideon Bible when I first started at school and at the front of the Bible there is an index which suggests different Scripture readings for different situations and challenges in life. I have found this invaluable, giving me light in dark places.



Out of Africa

It's difficult to write an article at the end of my African adventure; I'm not sure the words will do justice to the experience, but I'll give it a go. At the start of the trip I was curious – Zimbabwe was the last place I expected to end up, the thought had never before crossed my mind. However I can safely say I have truly undergone a remarkable experience.

During my time in the beautiful land-locked country of Zimbabwe, we met many inspiring communities, as we learnt about their culture and how they go about their day-to-day lives. We visited many projects along the long dirt roads of Binga, in the capital Harare and in Chinhoyi where many crossing cows, goats and baboons kindly caused us moments of panic... Oh, and driving through a river – that was certainly a highlight!

There is however a harsh and cruel reality

that swooped over me. There is a saying that you have to witness certain things just to begin to understand what some people go through, a statement that has stayed with me especially within the past few weeks.

The projects I have seen have opened my eyes to a world I thought I understood – HIV and AIDS is a hugely challenging issue here in Zimbabwe and a word that is still said in hushed voices. The level of stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV and AIDS is part of the root cause. Denial and fear of what others may think prevents people from coming forward for testing or from receiving the correct medication to keep them well.

Despite the challenges there is hope, and hope is a word which is strong within the people of Zimbabwe. And what makes me able to walk away with hope, is the fact that the people and those who help them will never give up, and even if others

do, they will still be here fighting for a community free of HIV and AIDS, a community that can strive and a community which will succeed.

This trip has truly moved me in a way I only hope I can pass on to others on my return home. I am eagerly awaiting to share the stories of the communities and CAFOD partners I have met and all I have experienced. The joy on the faces of the people, and the many smiles is enough to get anyone motivated. Inspired by their determination, and the light in the world I have witnessed, I am more determined than ever to support the amazing work of CAFOD partners and all those involved.

Although I have only seen a small fraction of the work that CAFOD does, it's enough for me to know that you should tell your friends, your family, even your best mate's grandma about it!

Kieron Ainsworth, Blackpool, CAFOD Step into the Gap volunteer

Half a Million March for Life

Each year hundreds of thousands of people from across the USA travel to Washington DC, on or around the anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's decision legalizing abortion in the case *Roe v. Wade*.

On Wednesday 21 January, my wife Kayla and I stepped aboard a coach taking us to the March for Life in Washington DC. The journey from Illinois to Washington would take us 16 hours.

Whilst traveling we heard testimonies from people who had been on the March before. We were also informed of the most current legal battles fighting for the Right and Dignity of Life from Conception until Natural Death. We drove through the night sleeping on the coach, arriving into Washington at 6:30am. Our first stop was the Armoury Stadium, where we celebrated Mass with 10,000 people; it was a wonderful celebration, all the more

remarkable as we were the 'overflow' from the Verizon Stadium because it was full at 20,000! We headed out at midday and caught the metro to the rally at National Mall where we heard from different speakers. We then began the March – all 500,000 of us! Half a Million! We walked down Constitution Avenue ending at the steps of the Supreme Court of the United States. It was an incredible sight to behold: the number of people was almost impossible to count and all of them were peacefully there to show their sadness that this government does not hold Life with dignity or respect. After the March Kayla and I went to visit both the House of Congress and House of State Representatives.

It was a joy to be a part of the 2015 March for Life, and to meet so many people and we even met up with six people that we knew from other parts of the USA, remarkable when you imagine the size of the crowd.

James Cowell, formerly of Goosnargh



History was made on Saturday, 7th March, when more than 8,000 young people gathered at Wembley Arena for Flame 2, one of the largest ever Catholic youth events to be held in this country.

Organised by the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation (CYMFed), two BBC presenters introduced an inspiring line-up of speakers and performers: Cardinal Luis Tagle from the Philippines who spoke to the crowd of the extravagant mercy of God, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Fr Timothy Radcliffe, Baroness Hollins who spoke on mental health and young people, with

music throughout from the double Grammy winner, Matt Redman.

A joy-filled day concluded with the quiet joy of adoration. Fr Radcliffe explained, 'Adoration is a bit like sunbathing but more than that. The monstrosity looks like the sun. You feel the warmth of God's love. We say "Let your face shine on us". God knows all the worst things that you have done and He still delights in us. You are His. And He is yours'.

Amongst the crowd was the Lancaster contingent who made a weekend of the event, staying in London to enjoy some

sightseeing, as well as participating in the event. Howard, from Lancaster, described the experience as nothing less than a 're-vitalisation of faith'. He added, 'I believe that young people face many tests of their faith, and there are even social pressures surrounding faith, so something like Flame is a gift to young people; a place where they can go to be told "you are not alone". I felt so alive at Flame. I had a genuine feeling that God was with me. I felt safe, and in any next steps I take in my life, I know God will be with me'.

Rutendo, also from Lancaster, wrote,

'My trip to Flame 2 was an unforgettable experience. Not only were the London sites beautiful but I was able to enjoy the trip with my new-found friends from the event. My highlight of the trip was singing to the Matt Redman's songs in the Wembley Arena; they were really uplifting and brought joy to the crowds. From this religious experience, I learnt that it's never too late to contribute to the Church, and so I have now decided to help those in need around me and around the world. I also discovered that many young people are part of the Christian community, and so I would not hesitate to go to such an event again. It was a truly enlightening experience'.

Peace for our Families



This year is a special time of prayer for the family as the Church reflects upon the family in modern day life. Through the years the family weekends at Castlerigg have provided relief from that pressure and an opportunity to rediscover the gift of family life.

Damian Horton, from St Annes -on -Sea writes, "In this hectic world we now live in, let's be thankful that there is a place where you can escape, at least for 48 hours, and contemplate the real things in life. There are not many places where as a family you can meet new friends with a similar outlook, in an environment that is both safe and inspirational not only for the adults, but also for the younger members of the family. From the moment we arrived at Castlerigg Manor, serenity and tranquillity seemed to descend. The children were introduced to the other children in the group by the youth team. The children were treated to activities that included cooking, den building and exploring. Not only were the children having great fun, but they were being taught the underlying message of new life. From morning prayers, through the activities of the day, to the composing atmosphere of the chapel at bedtime, the children learnt so much. For the first time in a long time I had time to listen, contemplate and possibly re-order the priorities in my life. It was not only a time that allowed me to recharge my batteries but also recharge my faith."

David Pope, Lytham, added, "The Family Weekend is a gift from God! My family have been joining other families from around the diocese for some time now and we get so much from the weekends. As adults, being given the opportunity to share our faith with other adults and the time to be quiet in prayer is a chance we don't get very often, so it is very much appreciated. I would encourage all families around the diocese to come and share a family weekend, meet new friends and experience this fantastic gift."

Margaret Johnstone from Scotland, loved not 'having to cook and loved the beautiful context of Castlerigg. Since returning home, we marvelled at how there was not one cross word, not one tantrum among the children. It was all very calm and relaxing and so well organised! The level of care was amazing and the spiritual care was wonderful, inspiring, varied, warm, and gentle'.

Please come to our next Family Weekend at Castlerigg, 22-24 May. Grandparents, parents, children, families of all shapes and sizes welcome. www.castleriggmanor.co.uk



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Over the 'Church' Garden Wall

As I tiptoe downstairs hoping not to wake the rest of the family, I head to the kitchen to make a coffee and then go outside and sit on the wooden bench. This morning I have decided to get up early and greet the dawn. Many gardeners rise early in May to listen to the 'Dawn Chorus', but, for me, hearing the 'Dawn Chorus' is not possible, but I still get up early to enjoy the stillness and fresh sweet scent that accompanies early mornings in May. It also gives me chance to get a few essential gardening tasks completed before the rest of the house awakes.

As I look around the garden at the lush foliage, frothing flowers, delicate pastel blossoms, and the bumblebees buzzing around, my mind turns to the month of May – a time for Flower Shows and Festivals and for celebrating the Virgin Mary – for May is Mary's month.

Looking around the Garden I see flowers that are named after the Virgin Mary such as Alchemilla Mollis known as 'Lady's Mantle', Cow Parsley known as 'Lady's Lace' and Monkshood known as 'Mary's Slipper'. But many other plants, in visual arts, are also associated with the Virgin Mary, such as the Almond, the Carnation, Cowslip, Iris, Jasmine, Lily, Snowdrop and Violet. The most moving for me personally are the Snowdrop and the Lily. The Snowdrop is known as 'Our Lady's Bells'

and whose flowers were used during Candlemas, a celebration of the feast of the presentation of Christ. And the Lily, which is a symbol of purity, one of the attributes of the Virgin Mary.

As I make my way to the cold-frames with a tinge of excitement to collect the flowers I have grown from seed the Sweetpeas, Cosmos, Larkspur and Delphinium, Ammi Majus and flower arrangers Dill, are now ready to be planted up, I look to the bottom of the garden and I have to stop a moment and take in the lovely vista that is before me.

The scene is just like a painter's palette with varying hues of gold, green, blue and white. Beneath the canopy of the tree are golden Daffodils in their final flush making way for English Bluebells whose heads are bowed, almost as though in prayer, with wild Garlic dotted in between. The pure blue of the Bluebells prompts me to think of Marian Blue, which is symbolic in the Catholic faith of heaven and heavenly love, and which is the traditional colour associated with the Virgin Mary and the events in her life. Although the Virgin Mary has many titles, my favourite is that of Mother Mary, which I feel a linkage with in my own role as a Mother. But as I look at the Garden and see the blue star shaped Chionodoxa flower, I am reminded of the ancient title for Mary, that of Stella Maris, Star of the Sea, which

is particularly relevant for all those who travel or seek livelihood on our shores and which is still popular throughout the Catholic world.

But then a gentle breeze blows across garden which brings me to the present and my own earthly duties as a mother, such as making breakfast for the little sleepyhead that is peering at me through the kitchen window.....

Susan Wood

– May is Mary's month

*'Bring flowers of the rarest
.....bring Blossoms the
fairest.....from Gardens
and Woodland and Hillside
and Vale'*





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Dear Editor

Thank you for the March edition of the *Catholic Voice*.

I always enjoy reading the testimonies of the young people. What a joy to hear of their faith and such a relief for the future of the Church.

Then we had the Sisters of the House of the Mother, St Walburgas, Bishop Challoner, the reflection on the Annunciation and the piece from Fr Philip Conner. All, so informative and uplifting.

May Jesus bless you and all the contributors.

Mrs Sue McDonald, Kendal



Isabella's birthday gift to the homeless

Dear Editor

A true act of kindness was completed by seven year old Isabella on her birthday. St Teresa's, Cleveleys, pupil Isabella was left speechless after seeing a homeless man begging for money whilst on holiday in Edinburgh. She has decided to now ask for donations to the Blackpool homeless charity Streetlife instead of receiving birthday gifts.

Isabella was out for breakfast in the Scottish capital with her mum, when she saw the homeless man. She said: *'I saw lots of poor people and they just had sleeping bags to sleep in. It made me feel sad. Everyone was walking past him and he looked so cold.'* Unable to eat her food, she insisted on giving her £5 holiday spending money, to the man so he could buy a breakfast of his own.

Proud mum Wendy said: *'Your first reaction is that you don't take your six year old to talk to a stranger, but she had a good level of understanding and she does like to think about other people. She had a lovely conversation with him and gave him £5. I was so proud of her, she had such empathy with a man most people were avoiding.'*

Isabella added: *'I think it will have made him happy. Mummy said I had done a good thing, and hopefully the man will now believe there are good people in the world.'*

Since returning from the holiday, Isabella has planned her birthday party and instead of asking for gifts of nail varnish, dolls or DVDs, she has asked for charity donations instead.

The youngster has been praised by Jane Hugo, the chief executive of Streetlife, which offers support and shelter to young people, aged 16-25, who find themselves homeless. She said: *'It is really heart-warming to hear how touched Isabella was by her experience in Edinburgh, and that she has not forgotten about it when she came home. It's really good that she wants to help people in the same situation.'*

Teacher, Sarah Oxley added *'Isabella is a role-model to others after putting into action what the class had learned during Lent. It's one thing for children to learn about Catholic values but to put them into action at such a young age is inspirational. She is a credit to our school and her family.'*

Jennifer Hilton

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- Sunday May 3rd at 6.00 pm**
 Fourth Sunday after Easter, Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Sunday May 10th at 6.00 pm**
 Fifth Sunday after Easter, Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Thursday May 14th at 7.00 pm**
 Ascension of Our Lord, Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Thursday May 14th at 7.00 pm**
 Ascension of Our Lord, St Walburga, Preston
- Sunday May 17th at 3.00 pm**
 Sunday after Ascension, St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster
- Sunday May 17th at 6.00 pm**
 Sunday after Ascension, Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Sunday May 24th at 6.00 pm**
 Whit Sunday (Pentecost), Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Sunday May 31st at 6.00 pm**
 Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle
- Shrine Church of St Walburga, Preston**
 Mondays – Fridays: 12 noon, Low Mass (except First Friday 7.00 pm)
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Faith and Justice was the topic of Corpus Christi High School's Year 8 Extended Learning Day held recently. The day consisted of a wide range of 'faith' and 'justice' workshops that were delivered by external contributors. The format, which was so successful last year gave pupils the opportunity to explore the deep rooted Catholic tradition that Faith and Justice has an essential relationship between what we believe and how we live, and that faith and justice are intimately bound together.

The day was a great success with pupils gaining unique and rich learning experiences and responding very well to the opportunities made available to them.

A full timetable was led by Fr Darren Carden, Diocesan Vocations Director, and assisted by several external contributors from Cardinal Newman, CAFOD, Fairtrade and Steve Watkin, who together presented the day to over 110 pupils of four mixed groups which was active and educational in its approach to faith and justice.

Steve Watkin, chaplain at Christ the King High School in Preston came to lead pupils in prayer, guided meditation and relaxation which proved very popular with pupils. Emphasising not to give up on prayer he encouraged pupils to always take time to calm down and don't let the stresses and strains of life take over. *'Prayer can relax you, especially a deep conversation with someone else,'* Steve explained. Pupil Michael Ryan found the session very relaxing, saying that *"it gave him time to think positively about himself and reflect on many other thought provoking issues happening around the world today"*.

Cath Greenlees represented Fairtrade by providing information and a stall consisting of a variety of Fairtrade products displayed for all pupils to acknowledge and purchase. CAFOD had

two excellent sessions with Ellie Turner giving an insight into the charities 'One Climate, One World' campaign. The session explained to pupils that one way to stand up in solidarity with poor communities around the world is to campaign in the UK to change the policies and practices that keep people poor. They were encouraged to put their 'faith' into action and created posters displaying what they would do to help stop climate change and also compiled prayer messages to people in the world suffering from the impacts of climate change.

Kieron Ainsworth presented a very informative workshop about CAFOD's work and the principal that by working together, a better world can and must be achieved so that all can enjoy the fullness of life. He showed a video relating to the issues and conflict surrounding Israel and Palestine which resulted in discussions about reconciliation and different religions.

Anne Russell together with previous Corpus Christi pupils Fiona Paradzai and Shajia Patel from Cardinal Newman explained about the inequalities of countries throughout the world with a graphical footprint 'Simulation Game'.

Making a creative display with cutout footprints representing the inequality in life that exists between countries such as the USA, in comparison to sub African countries such as Nigeria.

The 'Faith and Justice' day gave pupils a rich learning experience to examine their own spiritual lives and to look closely at social, economic and political justice for all people. It also helped to reaffirm their faith, to be proud to stand up against injustice, promote hope, dignity and sustainability and to personally reach out and promote the principle that everyone should be able to live their lives to the full without discrimination and injustice.

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Going Bananas for CAFOD!

Alistair Thornton (l) and Wilf Whittle.

Two Lytham St Annes parishes held an open evening to show a wider audience how local people can support people living in poverty overseas. Parishioner and personal trainer Alistair Thornton, from CoreCoach, energized the start of the event with an hour's free fitness class. Free FairTrade bananas helped participants cool down afterwards!

The evening was hosted by the parishes of St. Joseph's Ansdell and Our Lady Star of the Sea, St Annes, when they introduced the work of Catholic aid agency CAFOD and how local people can get involved with the charity's work. The group heard from Bernadette Goddard, 25, a chaplain at St. Mary's Catholic Academy in Blackpool, who is undertaking a gap year with CAFOD and has recently returned from a visit to Nicaragua to see the agency's programmes.

Paul Kelly said: "What I find so special is the way CAFOD works with and through local partnerships in every country it serves. It provides emergency relief, but the main work is enabling people to grow and develop their own futures with dignity. The partners best know the local needs and draw on CAFOD's support and expertise for long-term sustainable development. Hearing about this first hand has been truly inspiring."

CAFOD's annual Lent fundraising appeal was this year focused on supporting people affected by floods, droughts, and storms. The charity has been supporting people to recover and rebuild their lives and then to put measures in place to lessen the impact the next time an emergency hits – such as a typhoon in the Philippines or a cyclone in Myanmar.

CAFOD believes that climate change, which scientists state with 95 per cent certainty is being driven by human activity, is the biggest threat to tackling poverty worldwide.

This year, the UK government will match every pound donated to the Lent Fast Day appeal up to the value of £5 million, from Wednesday 18 February to Friday 17 May.

This means that donations from individuals, schools, and parishes will have double the impact, helping even more people living in extreme poverty overseas. So far during Lent the two parishes have raised £4016! *Paul Kelly*

If you would like to support CAFOD activities in any of the Lytham St Annes parishes, either regularly or occasionally, please contact Paul Kelly on 01253 735746, Josie Varney on 01253 731696, or the CAFOD north-west office 01772 733310.



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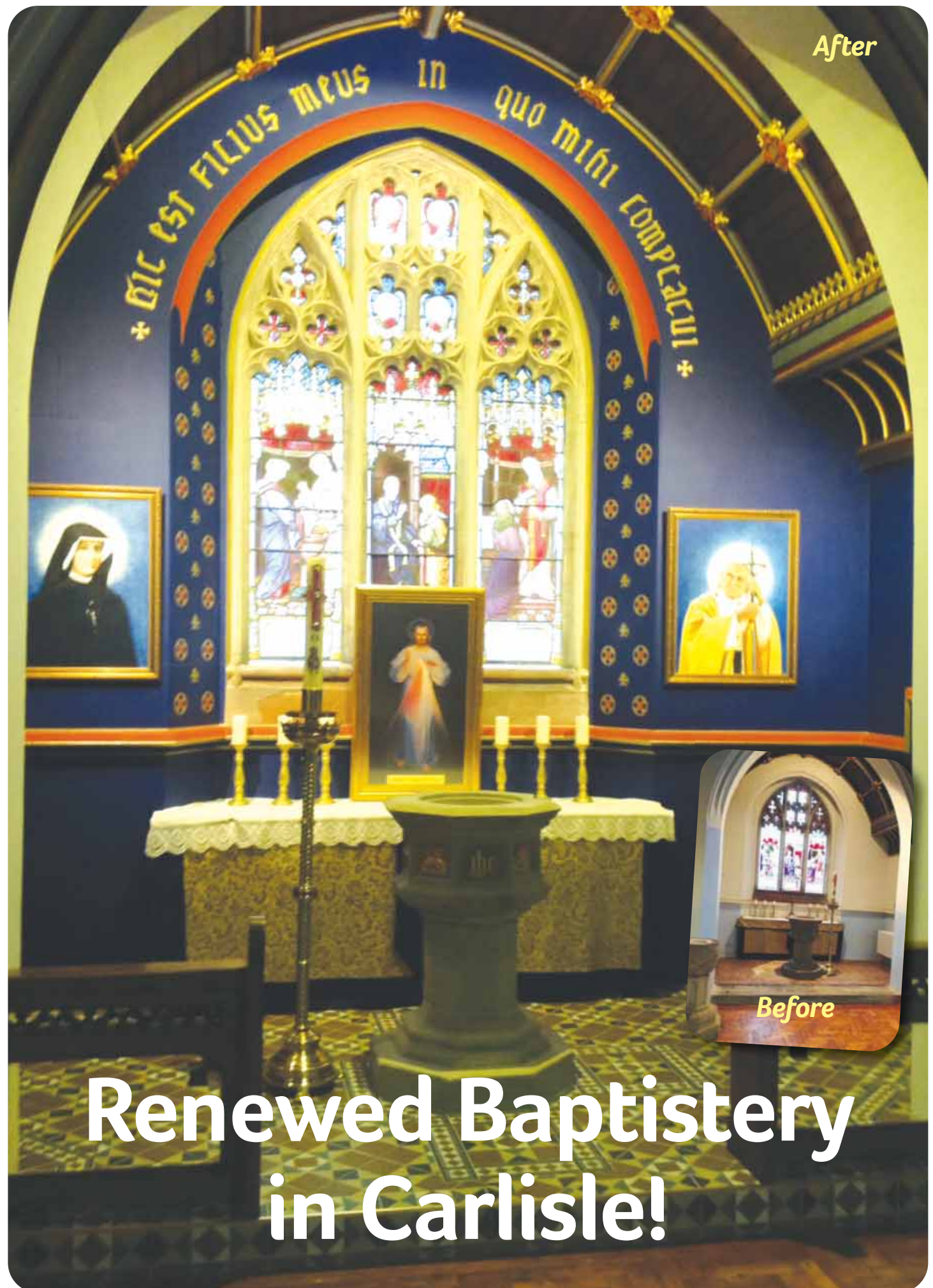
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During March Bishop Campbell graciously came to bless the new Baptistry of Our Lady and St Joseph's Church in Carlisle.

Previously the Sacrament of Baptism had to be administered in a portable wooden font with no particular home in the church building. The original baptistry had been turned into a shop and the original font in which generations of parishioners had been baptised had become a bird bath in the garden.

Last October some of our Polish parishioners took the brave step of restoring the original font and carrying out the necessary cleaning and restoration on it after years of neglect in the garden. They removed the shop from the baptistry and ripped up the worn and dirty brown carpet from the floor. Sadly the original Victorian tiled floor had been badly damaged at some stage and been replaced in part by concrete. They then re-installed the font in the Baptistry.

It was obvious, that though we now had a good quality font, and

a suitable space for Baptism, it was not in a fit state for use. Therefore, using the church at Warwick Bridge as inspiration we had the Baptistry redecorated and a new tile floor installed. Near the entrance of the church, the position of the Baptistry clearly explains that it is through this Sacrament we enter the Church of Christ. Above the window are stencilled the words *"Hic est filius meus in quo mihi complacui"*, *"this is my Son in whom I am well pleased"*. These words of God the Father at the Baptism of Jesus remind us that in our baptism we become children of God by adoption.

The font is set in a Cross on the floor because St Paul tells us we are baptised into the death of Christ so that we might rise with him to new life. St Faustina and St John Paul decorate the walls of the Baptistry because it is in Baptism that we receive the call to sanctity.

At long last our church has a worthy place to celebrate this foundational Christian sacrament for generations to come.

Fr John Millar

As a way of celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life, we are inviting young people between 18 - 35 to walk across Morecambe Bay with religious and priests on Saturday May 30th at 3:30pm.

It is a way of responding to the challenge of Pope Francis in his Apostolic letter to all consecrated people to “wake up the world” and to “engage in an exchange of experiences on the life of prayer, on ways of deepening communion” with the Church. Crossing Morecambe Bay with its tides, quick sands, and unpredictable channels, is a novel way of doing just that! The idea of “crossing the Bay” arose because of the location of two religious orders in the diocese, the Bernardine Cistercians of the Monastery of Our Lady of Lady in Warton, Lancashire and the Augustinian Canonesses of Boarbank Hall in Grange, Cumbria. Religious walking the Bay is nothing new as the monks of Furness Abbey in Barrow, used to guide wayfarers across the treacherous Bay. Over 120 square miles of sand are revealed when the tide goes out, making it a truly amazing walk.

“The Crossing” is part of a weekend event and people are invited to participate in all or just some of the weekend. Representatives

of the various Consecrated forms of life in the diocese, walking with young people from across the North, will start from Arnside and the walk across the Bay is about 6 miles, taking 3 hours approximately. A longer walk is also being offered, directly from Hyning Monastery to Boarbank Hall.

Part of the weekend involves learning about Morecambe Bay, and there will be a talk in the history of the Walk and aspects of Morecambe Bay on the Friday evening at Hyning. There will also be opportunities to pray and learn more about the various forms of the Consecrated life and the idea of vocation, over the course of the weekend. The weekend involves staying at Hyning on the Friday evening, “crossing” the Bay on the Saturday, with the possibility of staying at Boarbank on the Saturday evening.

There will be a time of prayer and sharing on the Saturday evening. The weekend ends with a celebration of Mass at Boarbank on the Sunday morning.

Cost is by donation and registration is essential! Please contact the Bookings Secretary at Hyning for more details and for a full programme: hyningbookings@yahoo.co.uk or 01524 73268.

The Crossing



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Praying for Vocations

For further information with regard to vocations to the priesthood contact one of the team:

Vocations Director

Fr. Darren Carden
Email: priest@lancastervocations.org
Tel: 01772719604
Mobile: 07552795060

Assistant Vocations Director

Fr. John Millar
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Since the beginning of the pre-year for vocations back in September 2014 there has been a build-up of activity which will continue through to the Bishop's planned Year of Priestly Vocations, which will begin in September 2015 in the year of the 200th Anniversary of Saint John Vianney's Ordination to the priesthood.

Every vocation is grounded and discovered through prayer and therefore this is the starting point for the promoting of vocations in our Diocese. The entire people of God are responsible for promoting vocations and do so chiefly by persistent and humble prayer. Therefore there will be a number of initiatives across the Diocese in Parishes, High Schools, Colleges and Universities dedicated to priestly vocations.

The Diocese has commissioned a number of Icons of St John Vianney one for each Deanery and also one Icon that the vocations team will carry with them as they travel around the Diocese. The Icons have been written by Sr. Mary Stella and her team at Hyning Monastery. The vocations team are grateful for the donations towards the cost of these Icons that have been received from the Catenians association, the Knights of St.

Columba and a private donor. The Icons which were blessed by the Bishop before the Chrism Mass back in April have been entrusted to the Dean of each of the Deaneries. These Icons will remain visible in each Deanery Church across the Diocese, until the beginning of the Novena for Vocations leading up to Pentecost 2015.

The Icons will be passed from church to church each day where the Novena for vocations is being hosted.

On Pentecost Sunday the Icons will return to the Deanery Church for a Holy Hour, hosted for the entire Deanery to pray together for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for the intercession of St. John Vianney during the Bishop's planned Year of Priestly Vocations 2015-2016. These Icons will remain visible in the Deanery Church until the launch of the Year of Priestly Vocations in September 2015.

Please support this prayer intuitive by attending one of the Holy Hours in your Deanery and especially by attending the Holy Hour on Pentecost Sunday. Details of the Novena for each Deanery can be found on the vocations blog: www.lancastervocations.org or on Lancaster Vocations Facebook.

Fr Darren Carden



Women's World Day of Prayer

An Interdenominational Service St John's RC church, Poulton le Fylde

It was the turn of St John the Evangelist in Poulton le Fylde to host this annual Interdenominational Service on behalf of all the Churches in the Poulton & District area.

The aim of the service was to pray to support women who live in underdeveloped areas of the world. The focus of the 2015 event was Women of the Bahamas. Similar services were being held throughout the Diocese and beyond.

The service of readings and a variety of hymns was prepared and written by women of from the Bahamas. The service

was held in the main church of St John's – where the Interdenominational team of ladies tried to create a Bahamian atmosphere. Cuban music was played and the congregation were encouraged to wear brightly coloured clothes and pashmina shawls in pink, yellow, turquoise & green. A slide show of the Bahamas at the side of the altar set the scene. The altar had a beautiful central flower display of flowers from the region.

The service followed a set programme. Women from each church in Poulton participated in a variety of dramatised readings including 'washing of the feet by

Jesus'. Cardboard cut outs of footsteps were provided for each member of the congregation to record how we might go forward from the service to help our sisters in need, both locally and internationally. These were then displayed on a notice board for all to see.

After the service refreshments were provided in the Church Hall. Ladies of St John's parish provided excellent cup cakes decorated in Bahamian brightly coloured icing. Carrot cake and fruit cake following Bahamian recipes were delicious. Chocolate cake and fruit bread delights were all soon eaten.

Overall a very enjoyable occasion well supported by the ladies from the Interdenominational group of churches in Poulton.

The event raised £256 which was forwarded to the national organisation for Women's World Day of Prayer. The funds will be distributed to causes specifically related to women in need. *Kathy Scanlon*

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ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, WHITEHAVEN

Learning faith by living the faith

A school in Whitehaven, Cumbria was recently told by Ofsted in 2014 that the *"provision for students' spiritual wellbeing is outstanding"* and that ethos continues to ring true. Through the work of the school's lay chaplain and the RE department, students at St Benedict's Catholic High School are given the tools and guidance to engage with their faith on a daily basis.

Richard Teasdale, lay chaplain and a former student of the school says *"Here at school, we strive to make the student's interaction with their faith more active. It is important that they learn their faith by living their faith"*. In keeping with Richard's belief, the school has been using the spring term to guide the students down a more practical route. The season of Lent within the school had a heavy focus on prayer and scripture. Each year 7 student was given a copy of St. Mark's gospel which they had studied earlier. In addition each Year 7 RE had a *"Class Mass Rota"*. The rota saw three lessons broken down into three sections:

- **Lesson 1**– What is the Mass?
Exploring the significance of each part of

Mass and why each part is relevant.

- **Lesson 2**– Preparation. Students selected the Mass readings, wrote the bidding prayers, produced artwork and wrote invitations to family members.
- **Lesson 3** – Mass was celebrated in the school chapel with the students their parents and members of the senior teaching team.

Students also had the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, they received guidance on preparation to make a good confession and were provided with opportunities to go to confession. Reconciliation was a huge part of the school's preparation for Easter and the school is very grateful to the committed priests in the area who were willing to take time out to serve the school. A huge thank you must go to them. For others students a pledge wall was created in the chapel, an area where individuals could write things they were going to do in Lent. They made promises of fasting, prayer and giving and later had the opportunity to reflect on how each of those actions helped to make Lent a joyful and blessed time to fully embrace the wonder of Easter.

Sam French



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OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, LANCASTER

Local Girl Rises to Top of the Class

In September 1979, 11 year old St Bernadette's pupil Helen Dalgleish began her high school life in Miss Hunt's 1st Year form at Our Lady's in Lancaster. Thirty six years later this September, the same person, now Mrs Helen Seddon, will take on the role of Headteacher at the same school. Not only does this crown over three decades spent at the school, as both student and teacher, but means that Mrs Seddon will become the first ever female Head of Our Lady's.

After completing her A-levels in 1986, Helen spent the next 3 years at Newcastle University, graduating in Biology. She then obtained her teaching qualification at St Martin's College and was appointed to her first teaching post at Our Lady's in the Autumn of 1991.

She progressed on to be Head of Year, Head of Biology, Head of Science and Assistant Headteacher before obtaining her present role of Deputy Headteacher in 2011. Mrs Seddon will be taking over the reins of the school from the outgoing Head, Mr Brendan Conboy, who is retiring after eight very successful years. During his tenure, the school has gone from

strength to strength and is currently one of the leading schools in the whole country for student progress based on last year's Key Stage 4 exam results.

Teaching must be in the family genes, as Mrs Seddon's mother was a long-standing member of staff at St Bernadette's primary school in Bowerham. Helen's daughter, Kate, is also a secondary school teacher and the current Head of Biology at St Mary's Academy in Blackpool.

Mrs Seddon is relishing the challenges to come;

"Brendan always called it 'The Best Job in Lancashire, but when I first qualified, I never even considered becoming a Headteacher. As I gained experience, progressed through the roles and discovered I could make a real difference to the lives of young people, being Headteacher gradually became my ultimate goal. My passion for Our Lady's, the pleasure I get from watching our pupils grow into successful and happy young adults and the confidence I have in the quality and dedication of my colleagues means I might just echo Brendan's words from time to time!"

Sharon Cossutti

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Entering into the Spirit of Things



As PENTECOST approaches, my thoughts turn to the Holy Spirit, as you might expect. It's a time for renewing our baptismal and confirmation promises and a time when we can reflect on the power of the Holy Spirit working in our everyday lives.

But the Holy Spirit with a sense of humour is an entirely different matter. In common with many parishes, we, at Abbey Road church in Torquay, have started preparing our young people for the Sacrament of Confirmation which they will celebrate with Bishop Mark O'Toole in May.

After a couple of sessions, the candidates were ready to commit to the programme with the Rite of Enrolment, which was recently part of our Sunday morning Mass.

As the catechist who was presenting them to our parish priest, Father Kieran Kirby and to the parish community, I was all set and raring to go...

After the homily I gave my prepared speech and carefully read out the twelve young people's names, as some of these were quite tricky to pronounce. Heaving a sigh of relief at a job well done, I was then startled to hear Father Kieran repeating his question to the youngsters: asking them if they wished to be enrolled in the confirmation programme.

To my horror, I realised that the shattering silence on their part was due to an

oversight on ours: we had forgotten to give the young people a copy of the rite, so that they would know how and when to respond. At this point I had no choice but to dash to the front pew on one side of the church to face the young people.

However, in so doing I nearly made the couple seated there jump out of their skins. Especially as I then frantically began pointing at the words "I DO" on my sheet like a demented conductor, while at the same time silently mouthing the words. After a stupefied silence the young people responded and then started to grin as I went through the same pantomime a second time, when Father addressed his next question to their parents. By then there were smiles, nods and grins all round. Those in the nearby pews couldn't hide their amusement and the warmth and cordiality towards our twelve confirmation candidates was wonderful to behold.

We are, of course, preparing them to receive and be sealed with the Holy Spirit in a special way in May, but it seems to me that the Spirit was already very much in evidence and enjoying the fun on that Sunday morning. As for me... well, I think I'll stick to catechising and not conducting in future.

Julia Beacroft is a catechist and pastoral volunteer who lives in Torquay. Her first book 'Sanctifying the Spirit' will be published and available to buy next year.

Julia Beacroft

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