

The Catholic VOICE *of Lancaster*

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster
Issue 274 + November 2015

INSIDE: p05 Building a Culture of Life
p10 New Life for
St Ignatius, Preston



We Will Remember Them

Francis Baron
Thomas A Holden
John L. Thompson
John Cairns
Thomas Taylor
Gerald Tipping
Dennis Delahunt
John McKerney
Michael Tomin
Frank Dwyer
Peter Melling
Wilfrid Westwell
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Norman Moss
Francis Wilson
James Hall
Joseph Swarbrick
Robert Yates
Thomas Holden
Thomas Taylor

After the Second World War the family of Sgt Thomas Holden presented, to St Gregory the Great parish in Preston, a chalice engraved with the above names of servicemen from the parish who had died in the War. Please pray for them and for all who have lost their life in conflicts across the world. *Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace Amen.*

You can read more about Sgt Thomas Holden on page 7.

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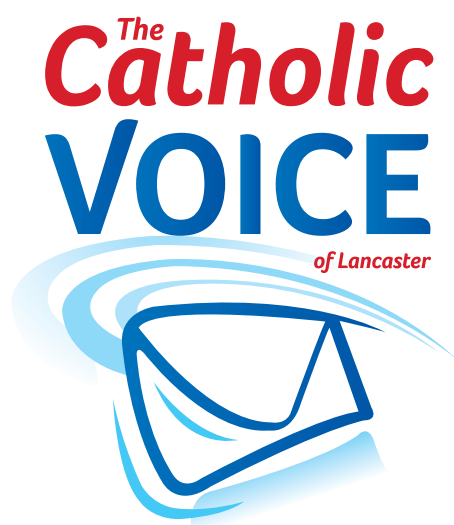
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EDITORIAL

It's a message to all humanity

With the UN climate summit in Paris starting soon, the Catholic Voice warmly welcomes Pope Francis' Encyclical "Praise Be" (Laudato Si'), and particularly that it is addressed to all humanity. The only other encyclical to be addressed to the world was "Pacem in Terris", Pope John XXIII's plea for peace when we faced the very real threat of nuclear war in the 1960s. Pope Francis is sending this very powerful and prophetic message to the whole world:

The environmental crisis is as big a threat to world peace as the nuclear crisis, and humanity must change.

It's about justice

The Pope, a scientist himself, joins the vast majority of other scientists in accepting the evidence that humans, primarily those with most resources at their disposal, have created unprecedented global warming by burning fossil fuels and that it is mainly the poor in the less developed world who will suffer the worst consequences. Because the world is the "common home" of all humanity, we have and are still creating a huge injustice.

It is not just climate change that concerns Pope Francis, but also the devastation brought about by mining, deforestation and pollution, much of which has been carried out in poor countries with little thought for local communities. Until about 30 years ago we might have been forgiven for not recognising the link between our lifestyles and the poor. Now there is absolutely no excuse.

It's about our attitudes

Pope Francis points out that our environmental and our social problems have the same underlying cause: We have come to see ourselves as "the earth's lords and masters entitled to plunder it at will, forgetting that we ourselves are formed from it". Similarly, we

have come to believe that we are lords and masters of ourselves, creating a selfish, consumerist, throwaway society whose culture of instant gratification blinds us to the need to care both for our common home and for the vulnerable in society.

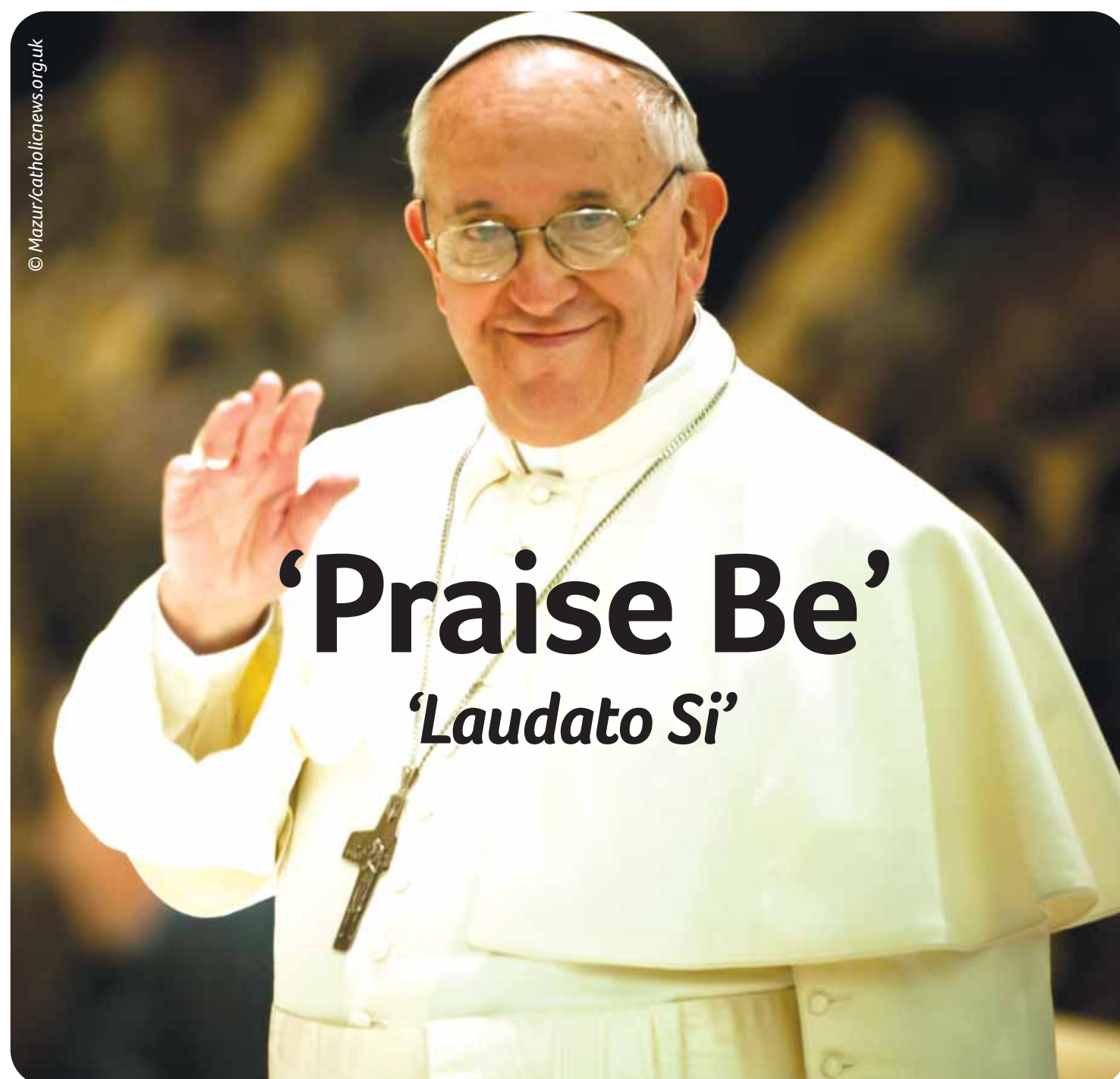
"When we fail to acknowledge the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected.... concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion."

It's about opportunity

The Catholic Voice views the Encyclical as a wake-up call. The world needs prophetic leadership from the Church on the care of both our common home and the poor. The prophets of old had to draw attention to the ills of society before they could proclaim the truth and return the people to the right path. Pope Francis has set the ball rolling.

It's about how we live

St Francis said "Preach the Gospel at all times – use words if you have to." It is now up to us to act out the Pope's message that "less is more" and demonstrate by our lifestyles what the love of God and of his creation looks like in the 21st century. Many people are hungry for an alternative to the norms of our consumerist society. Let us feed them.





Pope Francis Greets Teams of Our Lady

On September 10th Pope Francis welcomed to the Vatican more than 150 couples of Equipes Notre-Dame, or, Teams of Our Lady. This worldwide movement for Christian Married Couples gathered in the Beautiful Clementine Hall to greet and listen to the Holy Father.

Pope Francis acknowledged that Equipes Notre-Dame was clearly a movement of Conjugal Spirituality which promotes the spiritual development of couples by the support they receive from, and give to, couples in their Team. He suggested all couples put into practice and live deeply, with constancy and perseverance, the Spirituality followed by Equipes Notre-Dame. He encouraged their 'Endeavours', particularly that of 'Couple and Family Prayer', which support the hope and faith of Christians, and the 'Sit Down', the monthly time of dialogue between the spouses which he asserted was a precious time of thanksgiving, of forgiveness, of mutual respect and attention to the other. He stressed the mutual fruitfulness of the monthly Teams Meeting lived with the accompanying priest and, thanked Teams couples for being a support and encouragement to the ministry of the priests who find joy and friendship in their contact with Teams couples and their families.

His Holiness also insisted that Equipes Notre-Dame had a missionary role. After receiving so much from Christ and the Church, Christians must witness and transmit what they have received to help others to choose this joyful path. This mission, supported by the Charism of Teams, enables couples to radiate their family life to friends and family which speaks of the love of God for all men and shows the image of the family as God wills it for the good of the spouses and the education of their children.

He invited Teams to help support the faith of young couples before and after their marriages and exhorted Teams also to be close to wounded families and to be instruments of the mercy of Christ and the Church to those whose marriages have failed. They must always remember the suffering of youngsters in these painful situations. He then entrusted Teams couples to the protection of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph and imparted to them his heartfelt Apostolic Blessing.



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Being a YOUNG Catholic Today



Claire Baxter,
Whitehaven,
18

The main thing that I have discovered being a young Catholic today is that I am not alone. There is a whole world out there full of young Catholics just like me! At first I found it difficult to accept God into my life, due to all the negativity and questioning from friends, family and society; they didn't seem to understand. But having the Diocesan youth service to fall upon has allowed me to embrace my faith, as we all have common ground. I have always found it difficult to achieve and it seems things don't always go to plan, but through my faith in God I know that this darkness will turn into light.

Five years ago I became ill; after having major surgery to become healthy again, I turned towards God. During those dark times, He encouraged me to stay strong and comforted me just how I needed. In 2014 I was asked by my parish priest if I wanted to go to Lourdes as part of the youth section. At first I felt anxious but now I am so grateful he put my name forward, it has completely changed my outlook on life and in turn changed me. It was one of the most inspiring experiences I have had, so therefore I decided to go again this year.

Through this I have met some wonderful people that will hopefully turn into long term friends. For that reason I would like to thank the youth service for introducing me to my new friends – they feel like family, and I look forward to all the upcoming events in the next couple of weeks and months.

"For I know the plans I have for you"
Declares the Lord, *"Plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"*

–Jeremiah 29:11

The Pilgrimage of a Lifetime Lourdes



Lourdes is always a highlight of the Youth Service calendar, and this year was no exception. Fifty four young people from every corner of the diocese participated in the diocesan pilgrimage, serving the VIPs with generosity and commitment.

For many of the young people, it was their first time: 'spiritually refreshing', 'eye opening', 'life changing' and 'enlightening' were some of the words that young people used to sum up the week. Besides pushing the VIPs in their wheelchairs and accompanying them throughout the day, the young people had the opportunity to visit Bartres where St Bernadette spent much of her life as a shepherdess, walk barefoot up the high stations, lead the candlelit procession, celebrate the sacraments and engage in some catechesis on vocation, relax at the Lac de Lourdes and visit the Cenacolo community. On our way back home, we stopped off at Orleans where we were privileged to celebrate Mass in the cathedral there, before continuing on the journey back home to England.

It was an amazing pilgrimage, and applications are now open for the 2016 pilgrimage which will run in July 2016. For any further information, or to book your place, call 01768772711 or please visit www.castleriggmanor.co.uk



Building a Culture of Life



Want to find out more? Get in touch with the Alliance of Pro-Life Students:
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info@allianceofprolifestudents.org.uk

Being pro-life at University is tough. The abortion debate seems to crop up everywhere and in the most unlikely of places. From tutorials, to dinner parties, to nights out in the pub...as soon as anyone realises you're Catholic and/or pro-life the questions begin, and they're rarely easy to answer!

When faced with such emotional and contentious issues, it can be easy for any pro-lifer to feel like they are alone and that their opinions are irrelevant, out-dated and even uncaring. Being pro-life is none of these things, and it is so important to break down these stereotypes.

As young people, it is for us to stand up and speak out for the rights of the most vulnerable in society, it is for us to campaign for better support for women experiencing crisis pregnancies, and it for us to promote and build a culture of life. If we stay silent, how is this going to be possible?

Over my time at University, I have been blessed with a close group of faith-loving friends. A couple of years ago, we decided to found a Pro-Life Society aimed at widening debate and discussion and spreading a positive pro-life message on campus. Every fortnight or so we hold events such as talks, socials and

movie nights all with the aim of changing hearts and minds and helping people to say 'yes' to life. Of course it has been difficult, and we have faced some heavy opposition, but with the help of organisations like the Alliance of Pro-Life Students (APS), we have been able to get off the ground and begin some truly constructive dialogue with other university groups.

The years spent at University are an incredible opportunity to learn about the world, to hear new opinions and to form your own. University is also a time to put the desire for change into concrete action. It is a sad truth that thousands of unborn lives are lost and thousands of parents' lives are torn apart by abortion each day. It is also a sad truth that many pro-lifers have become disheartened, believing that nothing will change. Yet, as Saint Theresa of Avila said "Christ has no hands on earth but yours". If any change is going to happen, there need to be people ready to take the lead.

Being part of Students for Life – St Andrews has given me the chance to make small changes in my University community, and nationwide the pro-life movement is regaining momentum. Organisations like APS exist to equip young people with everything they need to make positive change on their campuses. In St Andrews, their support has been invaluable, and the work they do to help students across the country is inspirational.

It just goes to show that with a bit of courage, a bit of patience and lots of joy, the message of life will be spread, and hearts and minds will be opened to welcoming and celebrating every person's life from conception until natural end.

Rebecca Short, Bispham, 23



#BestCampEver

This summer I've been serving as a missionary with Life Teen International, a Catholic organisation with a mission to lead teens closer to Christ. I was based at Camp Hidden Lake in the beautiful surroundings of the North Georgia mountains, in the USA.

Being a summer missionary involved a lot of hard work, but through this service and prayer time we received life changing experiences and so many rewards! Through Eucharistic Adoration and the celebration of Mass every day I was given my 'daily bread' and the ability to face the joys and difficulties missionary life brings. I took inspiration from Blessed Teresa of Calcutta who said 'Draw your strength simply from your joy in Jesus. Be happy and peaceful. Accept whatever he gives. And give whatever he takes, with a big smile.'

Each Monday around 160 teens arrived at the camp. We gave them a huge 'Life Teen welcome' singing and cheering 'Welcome Home!' as the coaches came up the drive. It really was our aim to make Hidden Lake a home for the week, where the campers felt free to be themselves, with each other and most importantly with God. Over the 6 weeks I lived at Camp Hidden Lake I realised that, even though where I would call 'home' was on the other side of the world; my home is where I'm free to be myself, home is where I'm loved unconditionally, and that is in Jesus Christ.

Every week I was assigned to a small group from a parish, and I would journey with them throughout their retreat in their activities and prayer times. Every day there was opportunities to make the most of our surroundings and the outdoors. Of course lake activities were popular: swimming, canoeing and our amazing inflatable blob! We did high and low ropes courses which bonded the groups, in challenges such as a spider's web, tyre wall and trust fall. These were always inspiring, seeing how much faith the teens

had in each other, and in the Lord! A highlight of the week was always messy games. Although it takes a fair amount of courage to jump into a mud pit, it's great fun. Camp wouldn't be the same without getting completely coated in mud and paint!

A lasting memory of camp has to be the Adoration evenings we had with the campers at the end of their week. It's difficult to describe in words seeing so many teens being so open to the Lord as he passed through the room in the Eucharist. I heard so many stories about how deeply moved the campers were, and can also testify to that power in my own life. The message that spoke so clearly throughout our worship was that we are beloved sons and daughters of a loving Father. The Cantic of Zechariah (Luke 1:68-79) contains the line 'free to worship Him without fear.' At times in our praise & worship it seemed at times as though it was just Jesus and I in the room; not worrying about what other people were doing, but me living out this powerful line of scripture, surrendering my will to His.

Being able to look back on the experience as a whole, I see now the way that 'all was gift' from God and the amount of effort that we put in was rewarded in abundance. One of the greatest privileges as a summer missionary is being able to pray with the teens on their faith journey. There were so many beautiful moments praying with teens in all situations – whether that's with the sun setting behind the mountains, sitting next to the lake, right before they encounter Jesus in reconciliation or when they get scared 10 meters up a climbing wall.

Heading down the mountain, and back to university life was strange and a little difficult but I was able to leave behind any fear and anxiety in God's plan for me and I'm taking with me a new found trust in His love, knowing that I am His beloved daughter. Praise God that He can change my stony heart and continue to draw me closer to Him. *Sophie Benson, Lancaster, 22*



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Lest We Forget



Sgt. Thomas Holden, aged 20, was on a training exercise in Drenagh, Limavady, Northern Ireland, when the Wellington bomber he was piloting crashed after take-off, killing all the crew on board. In August 2007 his sister Kathleen Turner was invited by the local Royal Air Force Association to unveil a memorial to the crew of 6, with a plaque bearing their names in the grounds of the estate where the plane crashed.

Unfortunately, little is known about some of the other servicemen whose names are engraved on the chalice at St Gregory the Great. And the parish would dearly love to get hold of any information eg rank, regiment, age, civilian occupation or home address. They would also be grateful for any photographs of the servicemen commemorated on the chalice.

If you can help please contact:

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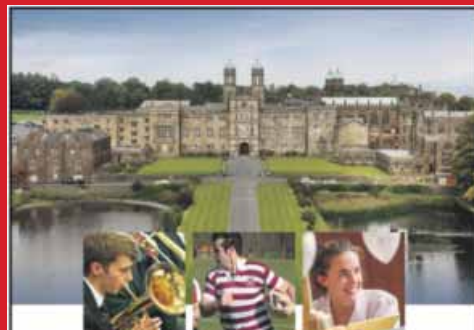
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Diamond Jubilee of Sr Mary Joseph Leapman



At the monastery of Our Lady of Hyning, on Saturday 12th September, we celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of Sr. Mary Joseph. Sr. Mary Joseph joined the Bernardine Cistercians in 1953 at our former house in Slough, Berkshire. She made First Profession at Slough on September 17th 1955. She taught in our former schools at Westcliff and Slough before moving to Hyning in 1994.

We were united in thanksgiving for Sr. Mary Joseph's fidelity to the Order in a

Mass celebrated by Fr. Colin Battell OSB, a monk of Ampleforth Abbey, Mgr. Slattery and Fr. Michael McKenna, our chaplain. Four generations of Sr. Mary Joseph's family were there to celebrate her special day. The community were joined by many of her friends, local parishioners and our Oblates. The celebration was followed by a buffet lunch and ended with Sr. Mary Joseph cutting her Diamond Jubilee cake. When asked whether she would prefer a sponge cake or a fruit cake for her jubilee, Sr. Mary Joseph's reply was "Both, please."

Sr Michaela Toulmin



St Bedes in Action!

The 'Action' Group at St Bede's High School, Lytham have welcomed companions of faith. As Christians we recognised that in our lives we are all on a journey of faith together and that it is not always easy to cope with the challenges that life throws our way on our own. But it is so really heart warming and faith affirming when we make the time to share not only time but also follow the example of Jesus and share food with our faith companions (from the Old French 'compaignon', literally meaning 'one who breaks bread with another', which is based on the Latin: *com*, 'together with' and *panis*, 'bread').

Our students met and shared food with Amelia, the International President of YCW (Young Christian Workers), and with Paul who is from the UK National Congress of YCW. Amelia travelled from Rome to meet our students and was truly overwhelmed by their numbers as members of 'Action' in our school. Amelia said that she has travelled the globe including Rome, India, Paris and beyond and has not met such a wonderful response in terms of the impact of numbers and desire to express Faith in Action.

Amelia's home in Rome is next door to

the home of Pope Francis, so her literal neighbour is Pope Francis, we therefore felt special to be in her company and to be called a neighbour by Amelia (Luke 10:25-37); she said that she will pass on our prayers and messages of 'Faith in Action' from the Diocese of Lancaster.

Amelia, Paul and Terry Mattinson (who works at St Bedes but is also a representative from the Faith and Justice Commission) worked with the students looking at the YCW Philosophy of 'See, Judge, Act' and reflecting upon how this Christian Philosophical Gospel message is applied through living the Gospel in life.

Through their Actions the St Bede's students showed that they are an inspiration to the world. They readily shared their understanding of the Gospel message of Social Justice to such a level of maturity that was a really encouraging sign and reflection of their character as people of faith.

During October the month of Mary, a woman of faith and action, St Bedes 'Action' group reflected upon how to follow Mary's example and respond in faith and action.

John Harding, Head of RE St Bede's Lytham



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Helping Refugees



The children of St Bernard's Primary School, Lea, Preston, have been collecting for 'Calais Action' to help refugees. Many items have been donated including sleeping bags, duvets, clothing, and food items. The donations are being taken to various countries in Europe via the University of Central Lancashire. Well done to all the children their parents and teachers.

Dorothy Leeming



Holy Hour at Lancaster Cathedral – courtesy of the Cathedral Blog.

Are Our Churches Just Museums?

I was forced to ask myself this question a couple of weeks ago. It was a Saturday morning, as usual every Saturday at the Cathedral we have an hours exposition of the Blessed Sacrament before the midday Mass. On this particular Saturday there were only a few parishioners scattered throughout the church, we sang the “*O salutaris*” as the Blessed Sacrament was exposed on the altar, and the church descended into meditative silence.

Within a few minutes of the Blessed Sacrament being exposed the door at the back of the church opened and a couple came in, they then proceeded to walk around the church taking pictures of the stained glass windows, statues of our Blessed Lady and the saints, and they even walked around behind the back of the altar to look at the choir stalls, they then left the church.

This happened at least another eight or nine times during the holy hour, couples, individuals and even small groups wandering around the church taking photos and looking at the marvellous artwork and statues.

It struck me that the church architecture and furnishings and all that interested the Saturday morning sightseers were created to point us towards God, towards Jesus. Yet not one of these people noticed Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament on the altar.

Now in a way it is understandable, when we look at the Blessed Sacrament, what do we see? A little round piece of wafer in a container! It would seem a lot less impressive than the surroundings in which it resides. But as Catholics we know what it is! It is Jesus Christ, body, blood, soul and divinity, right there on the altar! Right there in front of us! It is incomprehensible, it defies the senses but that is what it truly is. Without the Blessed Sacrament, without Jesus nothing else in the church makes any sense whatsoever. The church

without the Blessed Sacrament may as well be a museum.

So what can we do as Catholics to stop our churches being nothing but museums?

I think for a start we should make the effort to spend some time with our Lord during Holy Hours, maybe if more of us spent time kneeling and adoring our Lord during these times it would show that we are here for a specific purpose.

When the church is all but empty, the few parishioners that are in the pews could be mistaken for people in private prayer. If the church had more people in it during exposition then there would be a sense of an event, people coming into the church would ask “*What are all these people doing kneeling and sitting in silence in the church for? Is something happening? What’s going on? What’s that big golden thing on the table surrounded by candles that they seem focused on?*”

St. Alphonsus Liguori wrote: “*Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the Sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us*”. *The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: By not only celebrating the Eucharist, but also by praying before It outside of Mass, we are enabled to make contact with the very wellsprings of Grace ...*”

For me Holy Hour is a great time of peace and prayer. The best way of getting to know someone is to spend time with them, this is what we are doing during exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, spending time with Jesus. It’s like my spiritual batteries are recharged by our Lord.

So let’s spend some time with Jesus, let’s use our churches for the purpose for which they were built, to adore our Lord and God lest they become nothing more than museums.

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New Life



Each week Bishop Michael Campbell OSA publishes a blog on line which can be found by visiting the Diocesan web site at www.lancasterdiocese.org.uk. During October Bishop Campbell devoted his whole blog to the establishment of two personal parishes for our Syro-Malabar Catholics which has saved and breathed new life into the church of St Ignatius, Preston and attracted new Nuns to the area. So important is this news that the 'Catholic Voice' is pleased to reproduce most of the blog here.

The Diocese of Lancaster had the honour of welcoming His Beatitude Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, as he celebrated (on the morning of Saturday 3 October 2015) a special Mass (Holy Qurbana) to inaugurate the two personal parishes erected for his Church in Preston (under the patronage of St Alphonsa) and for the rest of the Diocese (under the patronage of Ss Kuriakose Elias Chavara & Euphrasia). These personal parishes are the first for the Syro-Malabar Church in Europe.

The Mass also marked out the liturgical blessing on the historic – and 'saved' church and presbytery at St. Ignatius', Preston which now serves as the worship, social and catechetical centre for the Syro-Malabar Catholics across the city and area.

Of particular joy is that during the course of the celebrations at St Ignatius', the Major Archbishop also inaugurated the foundation in Preston of the Sisters of the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel (CMC) – only recently arrived from Kerala. This marks the first foundation of a community of Syro-Malabar Religious Sisters in Great Britain.

The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church – headed by the Major Archbishop – has now more than 4 million members worldwide and traces its origin to St Thomas the Apostle, who is said to have reached the shore of Kerala in 52 AD.

The Mass at St Ignatius was extremely well-supported with approximately a thousand people in attendance, 20 clergy from the Syro-Malabar Church and 20 clergy from our own Diocese. The drums, colours and music were all very striking but also a very packed church!

The rest of the Diocese has a smaller but well-established Syro-Malabar presence – connected canonically to the Blackpool St Kentigern's Deanery – and ongoing provision is being made for their needs.

Meanwhile, we are becoming increasingly aware at the present time of the reality of migration and the plight of so many men,

for St Ignatius Preston



women and children seeking a better and more peaceful future. A frequent refrain in the Scriptures is that of *'the stranger in your midst'*, with the injunction to welcome and respect those who differ from us in any way.

There is no doubt that the presence of the Syro-Malabar communities in the Diocese of Lancaster has brought many blessings to us, and we cannot but be impressed by the fervour of their religious practice and devotion to their faith.

The Syro-Malabar liturgical language (*Malayalam*) and form of liturgy are markedly different from our own Roman rite, but are nevertheless ancient and worthy of our respect and admiration. The concern of the Syro-Malabar Church authorities is to ensure that the faith and practice of their overseas communities be safeguarded and strengthened. In some parts of the world, e.g. the USA and Australia, the Syro-Malabar actually have their own dioceses and bishops.

The Syro-Malabar chaplaincy in the Diocese of Lancaster was founded in 2004 by Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue and has, until this point, relied completely on various Roman Catholic parishes in Preston and further afield, to host their liturgies, social gatherings, meetings and prayer services.

I remember clearly an appeal at a Synod of Bishops in Rome, which I attended some years ago, for us here in Europe to warmly welcome immigrants who have their own faith story and long traditions, for they can inspire and bring new life to often seemingly tired faith communities in our part of the world.

Pope Francis often echoes the call to *'welcome the migrant'* as we would welcome God Himself. I have no doubt that almighty God will look kindly on the Diocese of Lancaster for opening its door in welcome to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church communities.

Of course, the word Catholic means universal or 'fullness', and the world-wide Catholic Church may be seen as a 'coat of many colours', having many golden strands and various textures – a *'communion of Churches'* – united in diversity.

We in the Roman or Latin Church represent one distinguished strand of that coat, but an equally important and colourful strand is the ancient and venerable Syro-Malabar Church of Kerala.

We warmly welcomed the Major Archbishop among us in the conviction that our own Church of Lancaster is strengthened and enriched by the presence of his faithful people among us.

Bishop Michael Campbell OSA



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FR PETER RANDALL SJ:

A Jesuit's home is the road

As a Jesuit I am learning more and more how important it is to be adaptable. This is the "road". The institutions where Jesuits once served are changing and the empowerment of lay people to do what previous ranks of Jesuits used to do is necessary. I have moved from parish work in north London to emerging possibilities of university chaplaincy work in Preston. The Jesuit community I am now a part of is very different in its age profile. Each move is a learning opportunity. What we represent as Jesuits is crucial for each one of us along the way, and our purpose is to support the amazing diversity of people on a common pathway to God.

FR MATTHEW POWER SJ:

A Jesuit's ministry: conversation

28 years a Jesuit and I find myself for a first time based in a parish! I've worked in a youth centre, been a school chaplain and teacher in Jesuit schools, a spiritual director in one of our retreat houses (Loyola Hall), and for last nine years I've been the Jesuit Province's vocations director. So a lot of variety, and in the midst of it, to echo something in Peter's words, there's been a lot of walking alongside people. St Ignatius of Loyola speaks of God as the one who labours for us in all things and he invites us to labour alongside him; much of that labouring is achieved by good listening. We all need to be able to tell our stories and to find meaning in the messiness of our lives. As for the disciples on the Road to Emmaus,

so for us, Christ makes his presence felt in our encounters.

FR STEPHEN PATTERSON SJ:

A Jesuit's mission: "at the heart of the world's experience"

The above quotation is taken from a Jesuit document formulated in 1995 titled Servants of Christ's Mission. I was deeply moved by the theme at the time as it resonated with my then embryonic sense of vocation and high ideals of becoming a missionary priest. In 1996, while still discerning my vocation, I had the opportunity to experience the difference between those ideals and the reality of life on a Jesuit mission in Guyana, South America. Challenging though it was, on my return I made a formal application to the Jesuits, was accepted, and entered the Novitiate in September 1997. Since setting out on my journey as a Jesuit I have been fortunate to have lived, studied and worked in various parts of the world. I have experience as a retreat director and in prison chaplaincy. I've studied philosophy and theology in London, Madrid, and California, and after my ordination in 2008 I was able to return to Guyana to fulfil a desire to work as a missionary priest. In 2014, after spending the previous nine years based outside of the UK, I was missioned to St. Wilfrid's situated in the 'heart' of city centre Preston. Since October last year I have been readjusting to life back in the UK while exploring, in some way, how to serve at the heart of St. Wilfrid's experience as a city centre parish.



1) Fr. Peter Randall SJ with parishioners at St. Ignatius, Stamford Hill (left)

2) Fr. Matthew Power SJ at a student mass in North Wales (below right)

3) Fr. Stephen Patterson SJ in Katoonarib, Guyana (main)

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Saturdays: 10.30 am, Low Mass | Sundays: 10.30 am, Sung Mass

Sunday 1st November at 10.30 am

All Saints

High Mass for the visit of Mgr Gilles Wach, Prior General of the ICKSP, St Walburge, Preston

Monday 2nd November

All Souls

Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle at 7.30 am

St Walburge, Preston at 8.30 am, 12 noon and 7.00 pm

Sunday 8th November at 10.30 am

Remembrance Sunday

Sung Requiem, St Walburge, Preston

Sunday 8th November at 6.00 pm

Remembrance Sunday

Pontifical Low Mass celebrated by Bishop Michael Campbell

Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle

Wednesday 11th November at 7.00 pm

Requiem Mass for those buried in the churchyard

Our Lady & St Wilfrid, Warwick Bridge, Carlisle

Sunday 22nd November at 3.00 pm

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A Ray of Hope in Depression



A friend has asked me to jot down something about my experience of breakdown and depression and how I came through it. I do so with fervent prayers for anyone suffering from this nightmare state, in the hope that something in my account may be helpful to them.

How we experience things, including depression, is as unique as each of us is and therefore only Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ can fully understand what each person is going through. I know now that He not only sees through our eyes but in a mysterious way He experiences it with us. However, I found that the worst aspect of my depression was the experience of feeling profoundly and totally cut off from God and goodness. This experience was unremitting and lasted for over four years, the last time I had it. *(I have had increasingly longer bouts of it in the past too).*

Eventually I came to realise that the only possible refuge I had was in Christ's own dereliction on the cross when He cried out 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' He became sin for me and for you.

Although it did not lessen my horror at myself or the terror I experienced, it was enough to make me hold on when suicide presented itself yet again as a viable option. Somehow I still sought the God of mercy who does 'not want the death of a wicked person', for such was my belief of myself, but that she or he turn to Me and live'. I simultaneously sought and despaired.

I sought God by looking for a spiritual director and by relying on the prayers of friends, including priest friends, and by praying with one friend every day, trusting in her closeness to the Lord. In the same way I sought God through His Holy Mother, St Joseph, St Jude and other heavenly friends. I could not seek God by myself because I was afraid of Him, so acutely was I aware of my sinfulness. It was awful not to trust Him because I know that this wounds His Redeeming heart so much. It was not that I thought of Him as some ogre or as someone making notes of all my awful thoughts or actions, or rather inactions. But my relationship with the Lord was in ruins and I felt I didn't belong to Him.



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Humanly speaking my life was at rock bottom. For various reasons, I had lost my job, which was more than a job since I looked on it as my vocation, teaching children with severe learning difficulties. I lost my mum firstly to severe Alzheimer's and then in her death. All my relationships were affected as I withdrew into myself and could barely think of anything else than the nightmare I was going through from second to second. People could not understand me and I tried the patience of really good friends with my constant pleas for prayers.

I hope that's enough to assure that reader that I was indeed in a very wretched state. So now to the means of emerging from the swamp and to staying as clear of it as possible. Before I do this, I must add that all this time I was on medication and I had seen psychiatrists and psychologists who had done their best to help me. I am not saying that these did no good because everything no doubt plays its part but it was only by the following spiritual programme for my life and the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes and other saints because of prayers said for me by very kind friends that God gradually drew me out and freed me.

I went to Lourdes to really hand everything over to Our Lady, from then on there was a ray, a shaft of hope which was to increase gradually as I did my bit as well as I could and learnt to depend on God and leave the rest of it to Him. Of course there had to be the willingness at least to want to leave behind anything I knew God didn't want or to be willing to at least want to do what I felt He wanted me to do. Jesus tells us that the Truth He brings, and our efforts to live accordingly, will set us free. Having a spiritual director was very important. I had confidence that mine (*the late Monsignor Philip Loftus*) was a real friend of God and prayerful and I knew that he really wanted to help me. He gave me a plan of life and I leave it to the reader to see how wise in spiritual, psychological and physical terms it was.

- Every negative thought, each accusation or fear was to be caught (*often lurking at the bottom of a negative feeling*) and to be symbolically transferred into a pebble. The pebble had to be dropped into a container of water, with the prayer '*may we leave the past to God's mercy, the future to His Providence and may we face the present, trusting in God's Grace*'. The water represents the ocean of God's love and mercy. The pebble is so slight in comparison and yet is so destructive to our wellbeing.
- The 'we' referred to the group of people that I was going to particularly pray for that day eg the sick, prisoners. I then had to leave that negative thought thus in God's hands...not fish the pebble out again. This needed repeating however many negative thought there were and there were many in the beginning.

The key factor here is that we must do all we can to leave the negative or pebble there and not follow the inevitable temptation to 'go fishing', get it back and re-examine it! The effort we put into doing this involves self-denial for we are going against a habitual inclination to letting the thought go round in our thoughts and wreak havoc in our feelings and interior peace. It's strange that we tend to cling to doing what wounds us and we need to honestly face the question our Lord asks us '*Do you want to be healed?*' By denying ourselves this indulgence, however compelling the thought, we are taking up our Cross and we can be sure that Jesus will help us to carry it and we will find our Lady with us as she kept him company on the Via Dolorosa. Moreover it is this effort which draws down Grace for our chosen group of souls or intention that day.

Even when going out this '*pebbling*' can be done, transferring a pebble from one pocket to the other or letting go a pebble in our pocket. Eventually this could be all done mentally without the use of actual pebbles, though I still use them in difficult times. Everything that follows aided me in this effort to distract myself from the surrendered '*pebble*' and live in the Present, where God is.

- I had to go on two substantial walks daily, and on each one find four things to thank God for. I had to really look at nature eg even into a flower to see the detail. He said my walking was my prayer, and my '*work*', knowing how I was virtually housebound with the depression.

- I had to read a novel for two periods of half an hour each, concentrating on what I was reading. It hadn't to be a spiritual book since I got caught up with negative worries in these or kept trying to solve it all myself. At first it was really hard to concentrate and remember what I had just read. Now my reading was my prayer and work, as it was in obedience that I did all this.
- I had to eat 3 meals a day and shop for them and set the table as if for a guest. I had given up eating properly or balanced meals.
- I had to memorise a few lines of a hymn, psalm or poem every day and then these could be used in meditation
- Meditation was very hard for me at first and he said to just try and rest in God and repeat the lines learnt. I remember telling Father Loftus that I couldn't do this because I couldn't '*see Jesus*' face. I meant I couldn't visualise Jesus, mentally, emotionally or spiritually. Father replied that a child being carried, held against her father's chest couldn't see his face either. I had to '*be willing*' to believe in the personal and unconditional love of Jesus for me. I had to '*let God love me*'.
- If I awoke in the night and was oppressed with all the negative stuff, I had to get up, '*pebble*' it to God and watch the television for half an hour, having a piece of toast and tea. I must not try and pray more about it as this can be a kind of dwelling on it. I could not deal with it, only God can and we allow Him to do so when we are obedient to such sound spiritual guidance which is based solely on the teaching of Jesus Himself about self-denial and trust in God.

Over some months, the ray of hope or shaft of light grew and I became freer of the swamp, more trusting and, with great relief, more able to focus on others and real life. Healing of all the woundedness that made up my depression in the first place is still on-going and I'm sure there is a long way to go but I find I can live with the '*not yet*' of some aspects, trusting that I am not alone or cut off but that God is working things out in His way and all will be well.

Pam Aherne

Come to Me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

(Mt 11:28)



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Praise Be

(Laudato Si')

Although Pope Francis' latest Encyclical is concerned with the immensity of the current environmental crisis, particularly climate change, it would be wrong to assume that this very readable document is all about doom and gloom. Its title refers us to St Francis' "joy in creation". In the Holy Father's mind joy, evangelization, and caring for creation are all part of the same gospel calling.

The inter-connectedness of the social and ecological issues runs the Encyclical, "We are faced not with separate crises.... but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature... we must hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor".

Plants and animals are part of God's creation just as much as us. We must respect and steward the natural world - our "common home". Pope Francis' joy and wonder at nature is evident, as is



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The post you are applying for is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Act 1975. If successful you will be required to apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a 'disclosure'.



"less is more"

his concern that "thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence."

Like the prophets of old, he is compelled to draw attention to the world's ills before he can offer a fresh vision - rooted in the gospel messages of love, justice and compassion, "The climate is our common good, belonging to all and meant for all."

Repeatedly he makes the point that the selfishness of our consumerist, throwaway society and its culture of instant gratification impoverishes us by blinding us to the need to care both for our common home and for vulnerable members of society. "The same mindset which stands in the way of making radical decisions to reverse the trend of global warming also stands in the way of the goal of eliminating poverty... A politics concerned with immediate results, supported by consumerist sectors of the population, is driven to produce short-term growth.... Governments are reluctant to upset the public with measures which could affect the level of consumption or create risks for foreign investment."

He then asks: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us?...The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet's capacity that our contemporary [unsustainable] lifestyle can only precipitate catastrophes such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world." This imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now.

So what solutions does he offer? Firstly, we must re-define our notion of progress: "A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress".

Secondly, he stresses the importance of environmental education, including in seminary formation.

Thirdly, "it is we human beings above all who need to change". He calls for personal "ecological conversion" whereby the effects of our "encounter with Jesus becomes evident in our relationship with the world around us".

Fourthly, "less is more". Pope Francis says living more simply is liberating - it is living life to the full. A sense of joy is never far away: "Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope."

Do read the Encyclical (it uses simple language). You can download it free at www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk

Each parish priest has been sent materials to support and guide short discussion groups on it. Please make use of them.

Lancaster Diocese Faith & Justice
Commission Environment Group

Quotes from Pope Francis

- *Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us*
- *A change in [our personal] lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power*
- *We are speaking of an attitude of heart.... One expression of this is when we stop to give thanks to God before and after meals. I ask all believers to return to this beautiful and meaningful custom.*
- *Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world*

Prayer for the Care of Creation

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. **Amen.**



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More to Southport Flower Show than Just Flowers!



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I watched from the confines of the Press Marquee at Southport Flower Show, as the rain fell in bucket loads. Ladies in occasion wear teetered cautiously in their high heels on the sodden grass as they made their way seemingly happily to the 'Ladies Day' Lunch, and I gazed on as milieu of colourful waterproofs, wellingtons and umbrellas wielded their way down the Avenue towards the Grand Floral Marquee. Feeling somewhat deflated at the weather, I contemplated the very wet scene before me, as a very cold wind rattled round the Marquee sending cold raindrops down the back of my neck, and I pondered with a shudder on what it is that attracts us to Festivals, come rain or shine?

I decided there and then that absolutely nothing was going to stop me enjoying the Show and all the horticultural aspects I had so looked forward to focusing on and swiftly pulled on my wellingtons and raincoat, grabbed my camera and writing equipment, and very quickly made my way towards the Grand Marquee, paddling through the large puddles.

As I entered the very colourful Grand Marquee, which was edged with the most breathtaking displays of flowers and vegetables, one stall immediately caught my eye because of its tranquil presence. It was the Bonsai stand, which was linked to this year's theme, which was 'China'. Apparently, Bonsai originated over 2,500 years ago in China, making its way to Japan where Buddhist Monks adapted it,

to bring the outdoors into their temples and monasteries. In today's world, Bonsai is enjoyed globally and represents a fusion of ancient beliefs with the Eastern philosophy of harmony between man, soul and nature.

As I and many others stood transfixed admiring the many shapes and varieties, all of which seemed to exude an aura of both peace and strength, a Japanese gentleman approached me and asked if I was interested in 'Bonsai', to which I had to admit to having little knowledge of the subject. The gentleman explained that he had travelled to England from Japan to attend his daughter's graduation as a medical practitioner, and he had come to the Flower Show hoping to purchase a little Bonsai tree as a Graduation present, so that wherever his daughter might be she would always have something that would link her to her roots and her family. The gentleman explained that he had purposely picked a Pine Bonsai Tree as apparently the Pine Tree has a 'loose' symbology of reaching for the stars, eternal life, and also holiday celebrations, and with a wink and a smile, he said it was the latter which he hoped would remind his daughter 'to return home often'. And as we laughed, he turned and took my hand and with a warm smile, he said 'I wish you a very happy and peaceful life' and like a puff of wind, he was gone.....but his blessing would definitely not be forgotten.

Whilst making my way around the large and vibrant displays, I bumped into an old friend of mine, who I had not seen for a



long while, and whose family residence is in Valencia in Spain, but who works as an Engineering Contractor on the Fylde Coast. Carlos explained that our English Festivals, the Music Festivals, the Flower Festivals and the Food Festivals are a highlight of his Summer, as he enjoys meeting a variety of people and it gives him a better understanding of our English Culture. However, the sight of bright shiny Tomatoes at Flower Festivals always make him feel extremely homesick, as in Valencia in August, they hold the Festival of Tomatina which is held in honour of the Town's Patron Saint, Luis Bertran and the Mare de Deu dels Desemparats (*Mother of God of the Defenceless*), a title of the Virgin Mary, and the tomatoes always make Carlos think of this event, which is very special to him, his family and the City of Valencia.

Having much to catch up on, Carlos and I decided to go for a coffee and a sit down. As Carlos went off to go and buy the coffee I tried to find somewhere for us to sit. Finding what looked like, two empty seats, (*but not noticing the Guide Dog happily wagging its fluffy tail underneath*), I asked the lady who was sat next to the seats, if the seats were taken, and if not, would she mind me taking them? The lady replied *'that she couldn't state for sure that the seats were not taken, as she was blind, but she guessed we were probably fine to take them'*. And from there we got chatting....

The lady was called 'Lynne' who explained that attending Festivals was one of her

most favourite activities as Festivals provide a 'structure' to her year. Lynne told me that when she lost her sight in her early thirties, her other senses seemed to heighten as if to compensate for the loss of her sight, so she is able to enjoy in complexity the smells, the sounds and the textures. She said that although she does not have enough sight to see the Flowers at this Festival, her friend describes in great depth the colour of the flowers, the texture and shape, plus with the added benefit of a great sense of smell and good memory, she is able to build up a full picture in her mind's eye, almost like an artist gradually creating a painting. And as we chatted merrily and easily away, having much in common, nothing disturbed our conversation, neither the drops of rain, nor the cold wind rattling across the marquee.

And as I looked around the Marquee wondering where Carlos had got to, I thought about how much I had enjoyed my day, despite the weather. I realised that as much as I had delighted in the beautiful flowers and the horticulture, what had actually left an imprint on me was the people I had met and their stories, a mix of the social, sensory, cultural and spiritual, and each persons motivations for attending the Festival.

And as the sun finally shone and I said 'Goodbye' to Carlos, the scent of cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg from the Herb and Spice stall opposite, filled the late afternoon air and thoughts of a certain other Festival started to fill my mind.....

Susan Wood

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Christ the King Celebrate 50 Years

“The whole community of Preston can be proud of the ambitious programme which has been achieved by the Roman Catholic community. This fourth opening of a Roman Catholic Secondary school sets a seal on the united efforts of both the Church and the Local Education Authority.”



These were the words of Monsignor B K O'Neill when staff and Governors assembled for the first time on 30th August 1965. Many things have changed in the fifty years which have passed; the current educational landscape is very different to the one faced by those staff that came together for the first time. Preston itself has seen many changes, not least the amalgamation of six Catholic secondary schools in the 1980s to form the existing three of Christ the King Catholic Maths & Computing College, Our Lady's Catholic High School and Corpus Christi Catholic High School.

It was the amalgamation of St John Fisher and St John Southworth Catholic High Schools which saw the opening of Christ

the King RC High School in September 1988. Since that time the school has served the Catholic community in the centre and east of Preston, predominately with St Joseph's, St Augustine's, St Teresa's and St Ignatius as its feeder primary schools.

Monsignor O'Neill's vision was very clear that the school would be central to the community which it served and this has always been true of Christ the King. Our strong sense of community and belonging are undoubtedly the strengths of our school. We are recognised in the Diocese and by the Local Authority as a school where students make excellent progress in an environment of outstanding pastoral care. Our Mission Statement inspires us to

'strive to develop a community in Christ which fully supports all in achieving their potential – spiritually, academically and personally.' These words underpin everything that we do as a school as we seek to prepare our students for the challenges of life beyond Christ the King.

Christ the King has continued to thrive over the past 50 years as a result of the dedication and commitment of the many staff and governors who have served our community. We are blessed to have had so many people who have been prepared to 'go the extra mile' to support, nurture and educate our students. Such service is indeed a calling from God and as such, is exemplified by Mrs Joyce Allen who this year celebrates her fiftieth year as a

Governor of the school. Her example helps everyone linked with the school to understand what a unique and special place this is, and what a privilege it is to help to shape the lives of our young people.

I am certain that Monsignor O'Neill would be extremely proud of the achievements of the many thousands of students who have passed through the school in the last fifty years. I think I can say with confidence that the school has lived up to and exceeded his expectations.

Congratulations to everyone connected to the school – you have all played your part. Here's to the next 50 years!

Damien Callagher, Headteacher



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