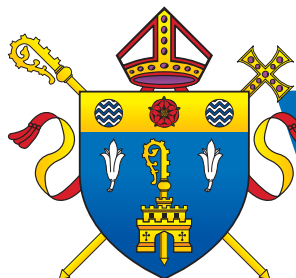


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**The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster**

***The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster***

**Issue 278 + April 2016**

**INSIDE:** **p05** Scattering seeds  
of mercy  
**p14** Called to the Cloister



# SUFFERED

*betrayal, persecution, mocking, abuse and torture*

# DIED

# *nailed to a Cross*

“

***The passion of Jesus is a sea of sorrows, but it is also an ocean of love. Ask the Lord to teach you to fish in this ocean. Dive into its depths. No matter how deep you go, you will never reach the bottom.***

“

## St. Paul of the Cross



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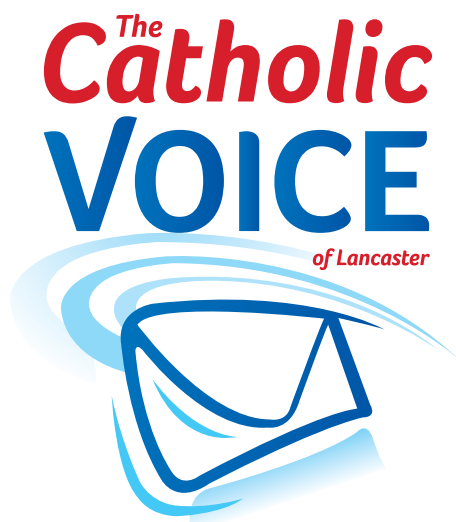
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is published on the last Sunday of the month previous to publication date.

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

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01253 730343  
rob@hot-creative.co.uk  
www.hot-creative.co.uk

### PUBLISHED BY:

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

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## EDITORIAL

**I**n the last few weeks we have journeyed through the pivotal moments of the Church's year. Moving through Holy Week we reflect on the depth of God's love, that he gives Himself for us in the life, passion, death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ. Through the emptiness of Holy Saturday we come to the glory of Easter, the triumph of Love over everything that would separate us from God. And, as our celebration of Easter continues until Pentecost, we begin this month with the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday, the first Sunday after Easter.

St John Paul II established the feast of Divine Mercy in response to the visions of St Faustina, and in his homily for her canonisation quoted her diary:

***"Humanity will not find peace until it turns trustfully to divine mercy"***

Reflecting on how St Faustina received her visions in the years between the First and Second World Wars, St John Paul II observed how far the world has been from peace and how relevant the message is for us today and will continue to be in the future.

It would be easy to despair of finding peace in this world; the news reports are unceasing in telling us of new horrors, violence and grief. But the message of Easter gives us hope: Love will triumph over everything that would separate us from God.

Pope Francis has asked us to observe this year as a Year of Mercy, restating the continued relevance of mercy today, and in calling a jubilee year has invited us all to make a pilgrimage to a Door of Mercy, opened at significant churches around the world,

including at our own Diocesan Cathedral in Lancaster. Pilgrims from our diocese will visit Doors of Mercy around the world this year, notably at the Divine Mercy Shrine in Krakow (*the site of St Faustina's visions and part of the itinerary for World Youth Day*) and in the Shrine of Lourdes.

At the Divine Mercy Shrine we reflect particularly on how we receive God's mercy, His love given unconditionally. And especially in Lourdes we experience mercy in the care shown to the sick, the lonely and those who need our prayers. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said

***"Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them."***  
***(Matthew 5:7)***

The mercy we experience and the mercy we show are related. In facing the suffering of our world, our first step needs to be to reach out with mercy to those who need it: being charitable to those in need, visiting those who are isolated, comforting the sorrowful, forgiving others, being patient with those who treat us unjustly, and guiding those who are lost. And this is difficult; you might well say *'but they don't deserve it!'* But that is precisely the point of mercy: it wouldn't be mercy if we deserved it, it would be justice. Our reluctance to forgive and to reach out to others can be the distance that comes between us and God.

We find hope in the mercy we receive from God. He loves us unconditionally, and forgives us, and even died for us, even though we do not deserve it. The more we can show mercy to others in our world, the greater will be our understanding of God's mercy given to us, the closer we will come to God, and our trust in God's mercy will bring us peace.



# Rachel's Vineyard

**Most women who arrive at the start of a Rachel's Vineyard retreat have already judged themselves as unworthy of love – from either God or themselves.**

Over the weekend that follows, the job of the volunteer team members is to ease their crippling burden of grief and guilt by helping them see that God's mercy is a gift for each and every one of us.

Rachel's Vineyard was started in America in 1995 by Doctor Theresa Burke. As a young Catholic woman training to be a psychologist, she carried out some research involving troubled young women and discovered that many had undergone an abortion in the past.

She gradually identified a devastating set of symptoms that can include depression, anxiety, panic attacks, suicidal thoughts, guilt, flashbacks, substance abuse, unresolved grief, low self-esteem, emotional numbness, disassociation, self-hatred, fear and an inability to maintain healthy intimate relationships.

These have come to be known as post-abortion syndrome (PAS) and can be indicators that someone is suffering after the trauma of abortion.

Inspired by her faith, Theresa developed a programme to help people, based on the living words of Jesus Christ in the scriptures. Twenty years on, Rachel's Vineyard now offers more than 750 retreats each year in more than 25 countries.

Part-time teacher Susan Walsh, a parishioner of Ampleforth and a volunteer team member and developer, has seen for herself the devastating impact abortion can have.

*"Women – and men – can become isolated and locked in a downward spiral, feeling so far from God and themselves that they can't find any forgiveness, peace or reconciliation," she says.*

*"Their true feelings are usually suppressed because it's taboo to talk about, their fear being that they would meet the same condemnation from others that they already experience inwardly.*

*"In this country alone, tens of thousands of pregnancies each year are ended by abortion.*

*"Women are often coerced into abortion or choose it because they are frightened by the reality of the pregnancy and they don't often consider adoption, for instance, as an alternative way forward.*

*"If they come to the point where they realise they need help, they might search on the internet and find Rachel's Vineyard. And if they then find the courage to come on the weekend, that's a huge step forward, because so much of the work is actually getting them there. Once there, God's grace can flow by entering into the shared group process, which will allow them to experience their grief with Christ in a safe emotional space."*

The team is made up of a facilitator, a counsellor, a priest and other volunteers who work very closely, praying for participants before, during and after the weekend.

*"The welfare of each person is treated with the utmost care and confidentiality," says Susan. "The team is also supported in prayer by the extended family of our faith communities."*

Although the programme is about acknowledging the truth, it isn't a talk therapy. A number of carefully chosen "Living Scripture" passages are gently introduced and participants are invited to place themselves in the story. After that, they each share their experience of what the events depicted mean to them. Simple props and music are used in conjunction with the scripture meditations to help reveal the truth about their experience.

Theresa Burke says: *"Jesus will encounter the wounded soul through the process of the retreat, according to his perfect will and timing. Everyone is invited to trust this process, as it is a gift from the Holy Spirit."*

During the weekend, the women have the opportunity to tell their own story – often the first time they have ever done so.

*"Some people have never even said the word 'abortion', it's so painful and raw," says Susan. "We lead them towards discovering that their truth is full of painful emotions, such as anger, and these are part of the grieving process. It is then that they can move into a time of grace."*

The weekend includes time in front of the Blessed Sacrament and there's always a priest available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

*"It's a bit like the Easter story – the first 24 hours is entering the tomb and acknowledging the reality and darkness of where they are, naming the emotions they are feeling and discovering that the other participants are feeling them same as them.*

*"They move through powerful emotions and, after lots of tears, are gradually led into the time of resurrection on Sunday morning.*

*"By then, they're usually able to begin to see there is hope for their future and that it's possible for them to live without that burden dominating their lives.*

*"The job of the team is to be completely non-judgmental, compassionate and nurturing, and to offer ourselves wholeheartedly, day or night, giving unconditional love.*

*"By being alongside them in this way, they began to realise they're not unlovable and that it's not the unforgivable sin because God's mercy is bigger than we can possibly imagine.*

*"We're facilitating a very personal, face-to-face encounter with Jesus, and that usually happens for everyone at some point on the weekend. Occasionally it doesn't – God sometimes works in other ways and at other times.*

*"But we've had so many letters saying, 'I can't believe how much my life has changed'. Others have told us Rachel's Vineyard literally saved their lives, because if they couldn't find God or forgiveness, they were going to end it.*

*"It's about healing and bringing people who feel so unworthy back into a place where they can lead a fuller life, and perhaps have their faith rekindled, or ignited. It's about restoring relationships, with God, and self. That's why we volunteer to do this."*

For more info about Rachel's Vineyard, including details of forthcoming events, or to make a donation, visit: [www.rachelsvineyard.org.uk](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org.uk)



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Tom, 18,  
Castlerigg Manor - Keswick

## Being a YOUNG Catholic Today



**M**y mum once told me that you know a religion is strong when you can have a good laugh at it. I think she told me this while we were discussing the virtues of Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, as the credits rolled down the screen with that immortal message to always look on the bright side of life ringing in our ears.

While most of what we were talking about has been lost to the ages, that simple phrase has always stuck with me.

I've been Catholic all my life. I was baptised Catholic, I was raised Catholic and I was dragged to Mass as a Catholic child should be. I have to confess however, I never really saw the appeal of going to Mass for an hour every Sunday (*actually it was more like an hour and three quarters when you factor in how long my Mum talked afterwards*). I always saw Mass as a chore - just another blockade in my quest to ignore homework and watch trashy TV. Yet as I've grown up and (*dare I say it*) matured slightly I've begun to slowly realise the importance that Mass has in our lives.

Father John Moriarty, our director here at Castlerigg Manor, begins every Mass with the school groups by commenting

on the significance of people coming together for Mass. It's the fact that Mass brings together different people from all walks of life, united in the shared love of Christ. At the end of Mass we are told to go out and spread the Gospel in our lives, to all the people we meet and through way we treat them.

I've met some of my oldest and dearest friends through going to Mass every Sunday. Going to Mass has taught me not to be afraid of people, and to love and respect people no matter what their age or background.

My faith in Christ, and my faith in people has oft times been strengthened purely through the conversations and chance meetings I've had with other people. One such person I met at the back of church. I was late and so I had no choice but to stand at the back. We began talking (*after Mass, of course*) and I got to know him better, we ended up talking about our views on Catholicism and I remember him saying to me:

*"Mass is a Celebration, we're celebrating Jesus' life, we're celebrating our faith, we're celebrating our community. We only have one chance on Earth, let's be happy, let's be thankful, let's enjoy our faith, enjoy each other, let's have a laugh".*



## CYMFed National Leaders' Congress

**C**YMFed, the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation, hosted its 2016 conference on Saturday the 6th of February. People involved in youth ministry in England and Wales gathered in London to focus on the theme of faith and mercy. A couple of representatives from Lancaster Diocese made the journey to London, to spend the day learning a little more about this theme of faith and mercy.

The conference started with what could perhaps be described as Catholic "*have you ever*." The hosts read out a statement and if it applied to you, you had to stand up and shout "*that's me!*" The game began with a very strategic "*I have complained about being tired*," which instantly got everyone on their feet. The statement "*I have had an argument with a coach driver*" seemed to be reserved for the more experienced youth ministers. Fr David from the Briars (*Nottingham diocese youth service*) gave a good demonstration later that day of how such arguments might come about, when

he single-handedly blocked all traffic in London (*or should we blame that London bus driver?*).

Throughout the conference, One Hope Project led us in praise & worship, with some wonderful music, and inspiring words. Rise Theatre performed some touching dramas to show that God's mercy breaks our chains, that God is present in our lives at all times even if we fail to see Him, and that God takes away the baggage we carry. The keynote speaker for the day was Fr Andrew Small, who spoke about mercy as God's ID card, the foundation of the Church's life, and a call to action. Fr Paul Farrer launched the Faith in Action Awards, an award scheme to "*value the immeasurable*." It encourages young people to live out their faith as servants to others by partaking in a project of their choice, while also helping them to reflect on that experience. The conference ended with a moment of prayer and reflection, sending everyone back to work with some new insights and ideas.

Anke, 23





# Scattering seeds of mercy

**A**s a response to Pope Francis' call to celebrate a 'Year of Mercy', the Castlerigg Manor team have been out and about across the Diocese recently – this time visiting some of our primary schools. For the 'Year of Mercy' the Youth Service are offering day workshops to primary schools to encourage children to think about God's mercy in new and exciting ways. So far we have visited Preston, Lytham, Frizington, Barrow-in-Furness, Maryport & Carlisle, with more destinations still to come!

The days in the schools have been insightful and engaging for the team, and hopefully for the young people and staff that we have been ministering to. We have found that often the children have a good initial idea of what mercy is, and why it is important in our day to day lives. A comment from one child was that "mercy is a way in which we can make other people around us feel worthwhile".

We recently spent two days in Blessed Sacrament Primary School in Preston, working with years three and four and their teachers. Using drama and cartoon strips we looked at the story of the Prodigal

Son – stopping at various points to reflect on how we would have felt and would we have behaved differently? The courage shown by the son and the love of the father in welcoming him home led us into thinking about Pope Francis invitation to celebrate the 'Year of Mercy'. We looked at images of how we receive mercy, from friends and family, and from God, especially in the sacraments, and how we show mercy to others, thinking about the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The children all enjoyed the opportunity to take a mini retreat from the usual routine of school life and left with artworks which will remind them of the mercy of God and their own commitment to be merciful to others.

In addition to the work we have been doing in primary schools, we have also been working the 'Year of Mercy' into our retreats here at Castlerigg Manor. A few members of the team have also created a 'Year of Mercy' board, as a visual aid for our visitors to help them understand a little more about this special jubilee year. "God's mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love, to become merciful in turn. – Pope Francis



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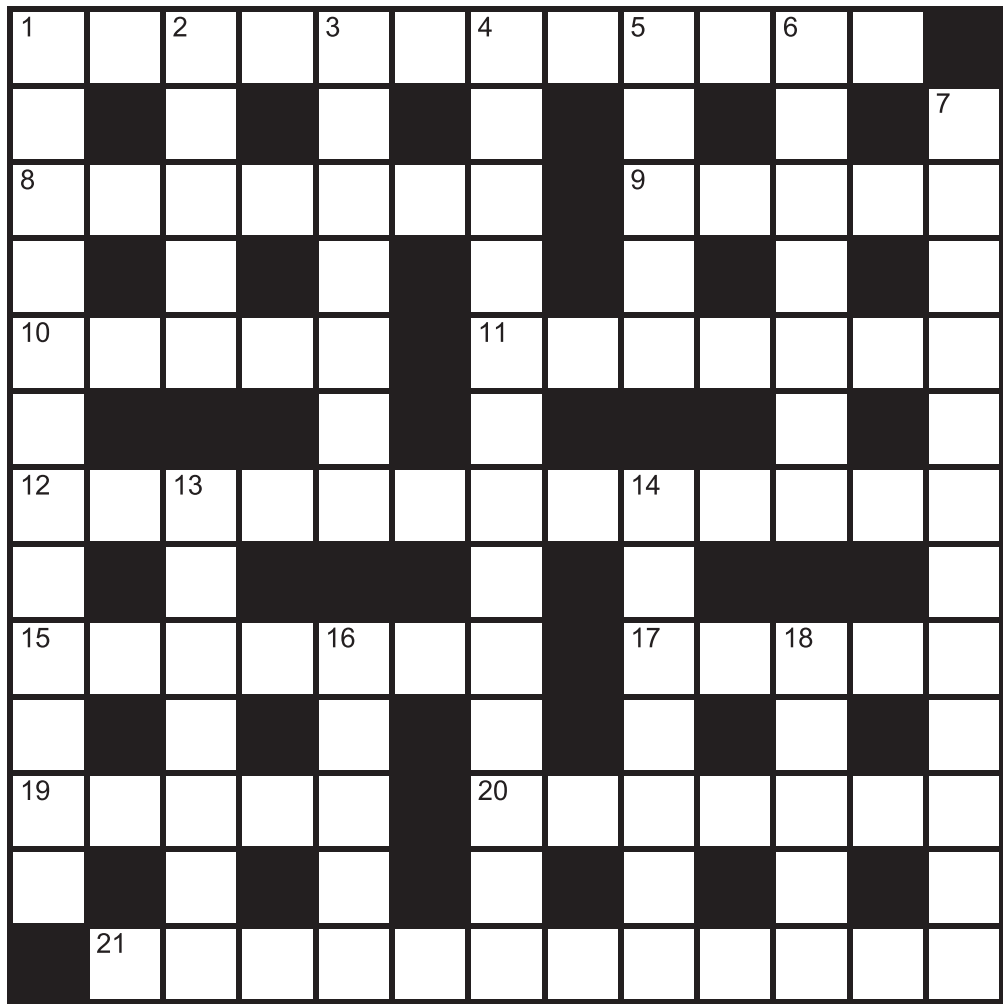
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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same. So, if you want to try the CRYPTIC puzzle, for instance, but are unsure, use the QUICK clues to help you work out the solution. Similarly, if you try the QUICK clues, use the CRYPTIC clues to help you prove the solution.

## EXPLANATIONS (of Cryptic Clues)

**Across:** 1 anag, 8 red+cent interchanged, 9 rif(l)e, 10 s+part [rev], 11 hidden word in 'out-LAY IN TO urist', 12 anag, 15 Shia+t(-orture)s+U, 17 ye(it[rev])s, 19 W+help, 20 inert+A1 [rev], 21 anag.

**Down:** 1 anag, 2 con+GA, 3 hidden word in 'ChassEUR AS I Anticipated', 4 double def , 5 st(R)ay, 6 homophone of 'Fnd' & pun, 7 anag, 13 VA+i(NE)s+t, 14 Key+West, 16 t(op)ic, 18 Tut+it[rev].

## CRYPTIC

- 1 Cases I select at random for book (12)

8 Revolved around Yank having little money to change (7)

9 Widespread looting at first during foray (5)

10 Stratagems made by southern section in revolution (5)

11 Have a go at swordplay in Tortuga shows (3,4)

12 Get some idea of Ken hailing van to go to work (4,2,7)

15 Form of acupuncture and Muslim extreme tortures for all to see (7)

17 OK, it's about feeding monsters (5)

19 Wife gets support after baby (5)

20 Still the road goes west, to where there's no activity (7)

21 Call in cards after writ stockist made (5,2,5)

## CRYPTIC

- 1 What cohesion is there when everyone's choice is different? (4,2,3,3)

2 Dance and press against Georgia (5)

3 Chasseur, as I anticipated's content being continental type (7)

4 Carol's seen in Rome, in sweet, rejoicing... (2,5,6)

5 ...visit; going about Rome, initially getting lost (5)

6 Foundation contracted, listening to important Turk? (7)

7 Aged's consent dubiously obtained stuff to help the breathing (12)

13 Virginia is around Tyneside tense and most unproductive (7)

14 Direction legend goes – north – is really south in Florida (3,4)

16 Subject of work to get a kind of spasm about (5)

18 All play for Egyptian king when little; it changes later (5)

## QUICK

- 1 OT book, 'Qoholet' in Hebrew after whom it is attributed (12)

8 Concentrated (7)

9 Long gun with a grooved barrel (5)

10 Bunkers, as often-called in US golf (5)

11 Assaults (3,4)

12 Get a slight suspicion (4,2,7)

15 Japanese form of acupressure (7)

17 Semi-legendary beasts of the Himalayas (5)

19 Pup (5)

20 Passivity (7)

21 Decision to make in pontoon (5,2,5)

## QUICK

- 1 Everyone's different when it comes to taste (4,2,3,3)

2 Kind of African drum (5)

3 World's longest east-west landmass (7)

4 Popular carol, a hit for Mike Oldfield in 1975 (2,5,6)

5 Abandoned (pet) (5)

6 Turkish form of address (7)

7 Additive to cough medicine to help one breathe (12)

13 Most self-important (7)

14 Most southerly US city, linked to the Florida mainland by the Overseas Highway (3,4)

16 Theme (5)

18 Piece of music for the whole orchestra (5)

**SOLUTION**

**Across:** 1 Ecclesiastes, 8 Centred, 9 Rifle, 10 Traps, 11 Lay into, 12 Have an inkling, 15 Shiatsu, 17 Yetis, 19 Whelp, 20 Inertia, 21 Stick or twist.

**Down:** 1 Each to his own, 2 Conga, 3 Eurasia, 4 In Dulci Jubilo, 5 Stray, 6 Effendi, 7 Decongestant, 13 Vainest, 14 Key West, 16 Topic, 18 Tutti.

# Jesus is our life



by Margaret Wilcock  
St Mary & Michael's,  
Garstang

*Jesus is our life's companion  
With us always day by day  
Through our joy and in our sorrow  
Worries he will chase away*

*Though he is our God and Saviour  
Each of us he knows and cares  
Stays with us though we may falter  
Listens to our daily prayers*

*In our childhood years he guides us  
Parents teaching right from wrong  
Sharing with us God's creation  
Showing us a love so strong*

*Through a time of youthful challenge  
Prayer will help and guide our way  
Leading us along life's pathway  
Saving us from going astray*

*When we find our special partner  
Who our life and home will share  
Vows are made to God in heaven  
Promising to always care*

*Growing older, weary lonely  
Prayer can help and comfort send  
All through life our Lord has been there  
And will be there at the end*

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Pray therefore, the Lord of the harvest said, that he send labourers into his harvest. St. Luke 10:2

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**This month we continue on from last month's experiences from hospital chaplains. We hear from three priests from our diocese who have served in the armed forces:**

**Fr. Bob Halshaw, RAF chaplain, Fr. Tom Butler, Army chaplain and Fr. Jim Allen, Navy Chaplain.**



as a Chaplain but as a fellow human being.

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**"The Happiest days of your life ....."**

**– Fr Bob Halshaw**

There is a popular saying which suggests that your school days were the happiest days of your life. In my case that wasn't true. It's not that my school days weren't enjoyable – they were, but by far the happiest days of my life so far, were those spent serving as a Chaplain in the Royal Air Force.

In the Royal Air Force a chaplain is given what is known as a "relative" rank. Something which, from the outset, demonstrated clearly that your primary role was that of a Minister of Religion. Your title of address was Rev, followed in brackets by the Officer rank you held.

But what was it that made my time there so happy? What can be happy you may well ask about going to places of conflict and unrest, places from which, there is always the chance, you may not return from?

For me it was without doubt the sense of camaraderie. The true feeling that "we are all in this together". That feeling of being alongside other personnel, was both challenging rewarding and at times frightening. The chaplain was there to represent the presence of Christ in "every" situation. The work of being with people in sometimes hostile situations was also very humbling. They appreciated the fact that their "padre" was prepared to be with them, wherever that may be and however dangerous. For me. One of the greatest aspects of being a Military Chaplain was the fact that before you could truly be "one of them" you had to win their respect, not

When serving on a home station, the chaplains role would be very similar to that of a priest in parish. You would administer all the Sacraments, attend events in the local community to help foster good relations both civilly and within the local Christian community. You would deal with personnel and their issues, some of which were moral, pastoral and some of which were "service related" ie a need to facilitate a relocation to be closer to family for reasons such as a family members ill health and suchlike. You would be on hand to minister to families struggling with long periods of separation from their loved ones and especially present for them when they had lost a Father, a Mother or a child who had been killed in the line of duty. When on deployment overseas you were often in a "war zone". Such deployments brought home to me in a very real and sometimes harsh way, the precious and fragile nature of human existence. It wasn't unheard of to have sat at the breakfast table in the mess tent with someone and then hear that they had been killed later that day. Deployments were tough for personnel and for those who ministered to them. Some chaplains came home themselves scarred by what they had experienced.

I would say that my time as a military chaplain was privileged and I was very sad to leave. All ministry is privilege, perhaps Military Chaplaincy is privilege in the extreme. I am sure I will never feel such privilege again, but I am extremely grateful for all that it taught me about life and putting matters in perspective. It was a lesson I will never forget and for which I

never fail to thank God each day. Please do keep Chaplains in the military and those they serve in your prayers. I never met a single person during my time in the Armed Forces who “liked” conflict. They serve, to try and keep peace in a sometimes broken world. Perhaps our ardent prayer for peace may one day make all Armed Forces redundant. We can but hope.



### Fr Tom Butler

One of the many great things about priestly ministry is the sheer variety. So often I have found myself in a situation and thought: “On the day I was ordained I never imagined I would be doing this”.

Part of my ministry has been spent in the army. This involved lots of travelling, spending time “in the field”, in the desert, dealing with all ranks, teaching, listening lots, conducting memorial services and funerals for those who died early, baptising soldiers' children, conducting marriages, setting up “church” in a tent in Jordan, in a semi-derelict building in Iraq, in a hut in Kosovo, in a factory in Bosnia, in the open air in many places.

Serving as a priest in the army has brought home to me in a very concrete way the universality of the Church: concelebrating Mass in Bosnia and Kosovo even though I do not speak Serbo-Croat – but whispering in English and being absolutely at one with priests and congregation. Although they use the Chaldean Rite in Iraq, I was still able to concelebrate with the Archbishop of Basra and with the priest in the church in Al Amara – our local town.

Much of my army service was spent in Germany where I traveled lots of miles going from church to church to celebrate Mass for soldiers, their families and the support agencies in our care.

Serving in Germany also gave me the opportunity to make friends with the church there – especially in the archdiocese of Paderborn where I still have many friends. I often went to Michaels Kloster – a community of Augustinian Sisters – and celebrated Mass and the Divine Office with them. They became proficient at Mass in English and I at joining vespers in German!

Although the setting is different, the priesthood and the ministry are the same no matter what the situation or setting: hearing a soldier's confession “in the field”, celebrating Mass in the church in Maryport, leading an ecumenical Anglo-German Carol Service in Paderborn Cathedral or celebrating Mass in the sweltering heat of

the desert. In all of these situations we have the privilege of being a priest and of serving the people to whom we are sent.

The Lord certainly works in mysterious ways. Thirty four years down the line, after lots of experiences and many ups and downs, I am still grateful to the Lord for calling me to serve Him and His people in ministerial priesthood.



### Fr Jim Allen

**Naval and Royal Marine Chaplain  
1978 – 1990**

It is over twenty five years since I left the Forces, and since then I am assured that things have changed immensely in the Navy and the Royal Marines. Women now go to sea. Even some places where I served will have been closed and changed completely. For example I spent two wonderful years based at HMS Daedalus at Lee on Solent which is now closed. While I was there I was serving HMS Collingwood, HMS Sultan and HMS Centurion. HMS Sultan was the big base for training future mechanical engineers (*stokers*), and HMS Collingwood was a massive base for electrical engineers. HMS Centurion was the main administrative arm of the Navy and it is here that I received my leaving papers and pension.

What drew me to the Navy was the sea and the possibility to travel and see the world. Over the years I did this but it wasn't just this and the gin and tonics! Every appointment was different and challenging and as chaplain I was called upon to use my initiative in many varied ways.

I did two tours at sea and the first time was soon after my initial training at Dartmouth. Joining HMS Lindisfarne I was totally involved caring for a small group of men who were busy patrolling the North Sea in fishery protection. Often we were out in gales while the fishermen took shelter.

Later after spending two years in the new entry establishment, HMS Raleigh and Fishgard (*no longer existing*) I went to sea again with the Second Flotilla based in Plymouth. But at Raleigh I met with Doctor Michael Everett who introduced me to the HCPT (*Handicapped Children's Pilgrim Trust*). In those days the pilgrims travelled by train from Waterloo station through to the ferry and then by train down through France. They required a lot of strong volunteers, to lift and move the children with special needs, from the train to the ferry, and then off on to the French trains. So Easter 1980 I took young naval personal, men and women, with Tug Wison and Andy Mac to

do the lifting and shifting. This was the start of the Royal Navy's, and later the three Forces, long term association with the HCPT.

It is wonderful to see God's Divine Providence. I experienced this in 1982. After serving in HMS Raleigh, I was assigned to the 2nd Flotilla. In October of 1981 I went to sea with HMS Active and HMS Sheffield on the Gulf Patrol, spending Christmas in Muscat; and visiting Mombasa, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Reunion Islands. But on our return to Gibraltar in the spring of 1982, the Argentinians were invading South Georgia. Sheffield and Active were two of the ships sent immediately South to the Falklands. I wanted to go South with them but I was ordered back to the UK so as to take RN personnel to Lourdes.

The rest is history. HMS Sheffield was the first ship to be hit by an exocet missile and twenty men were lost, if my memory serves me right. But what is significant is that the exocet hit amidships, just where my cabin was!! It is possible that I might not have been there in my cabin. But it is wonderful to see how God works and how he is so merciful. Obviously He had further work for me to do! As Saint John Paul II was visiting England, I was in HMS Southampton and Birmingham, brand new ships, busy working up at Portland to get ready to go south to the Falkland's. Once I arrived at the Falklands all hostilities had ceased. I

was employed in visiting all three Services over six months giving pastoral assistance.

In the twelve years of service in the RN, I was a teacher of RE, a counsellor/confidant for men and women in married quarters, parish priest of certain establishments like HMS Faslane, Rosyth and Drake, a fellow sailor or Royal Marine at sea or in the field. Visiting troubled and dangerous places such as Northern Ireland (2 tours), Cyprus with the RM doing UN work, Hong Kong in the New Territories, and the Arctic.



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**I**nspired by Pope Francis’ Encyclical representatives from St Bede’s Action Group, Lytham have recently visited their neighbours at St Peters Primary school to begin a faith journey of collaboration, which focuses on the inspiring words from ‘Laudato Si’.

Together the young people have developed a programme of study with the support of youth worker, Terry Mattinson (representing the Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission).

Patrick Gardner, CAFOD, and Sarah Barber from the CAFOD Youth Team in Romero House London are helping to support them in their learning. The students are going to continue to be working together over the spring and summer terms.

The students are keen to learn together about the teachings, which are conveyed through the document and how these teachings can be put into action. Pope Francis reminds us in the document about St Francis being ‘the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and how St Francis was ‘particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.’ *John Harding, Head of RE, St Bede’s*



## Papal Blessing

**L**ast November, the Blessed Sacrament Primary School, Preston celebrated the many years of work and commitment to their governing body of Mr. Andrew Spencer, with a special Mass of thanksgiving celebrated by Canon Luiz Ruscillo, Fr. Peter Hart, Fr. Norman Johnson and Fr. Pawel Szatlewski.

Mr. Andrew Spencer had been a member of the governing body at the Blessed Sacrament Primary School for 29 years and chaired the governing body for the last 15 of these. His vision for the school and sense of mission inspired the governing body throughout this time, to always seek to provide an excellent education for the children of Ribbleson, set within a caring Catholic ethos and connected to the parish.

It was fitting, therefore, that his retirement from the governing body was celebrated with a special school Mass of thanksgiving, which was also attended by many parishioners and governors. This was a truly wonderful and uplifting occasion, particularly the contributions from all the children who prepared hymns, readings and even a homily supported by the lay chaplain Mrs Kirsty Charnley.

At the end of Mass the head teacher, Mrs Tomlinson, and members of the school council presented Andrew with a Papal Blessing organized by the school to mark his years of work and commitment. We wish him well with all his new ventures.

*Lucille Kennedy*

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# Safeguarding and the Catholic Church in England and Wales

**All allegations of abuse reported to the Church in England and Wales are immediately passed on to the police. The Church works closely and cooperatively with the statutory authorities as these allegations are investigated. Following this investigation, which follows UK law, the Church conducts its own internal investigation, following Canon law.**

The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of the Church's mission. There is no place in the Church, or indeed society, for abuse, a grievous crime which can affect people for their entire lives.

Victims come first. This has not always been the case. The Church deeply regrets all instances of sexual abuse and the abuse of minors and vulnerable adults, and accepts that grave mistakes were made in the past.

## Historical Inquiry

After years of addressing these issues, the Church is looking forward to assisting the historical Inquiry into child abuse, led by Justice Lowell Goddard, in any way possible and learning from its findings and recommendations.

As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI told English and Welsh Bishops during his UK visit in September 2010: *"Your growing awareness of the extent of child abuse in society, its devastating effects, and the need to provide proper victim support should serve as an incentive to share the lessons you have learned with the wider community."*

Today, the safeguarding of children and the vulnerable is a Church priority from the top down, and there will be no place to hide for offenders.

## Pope Francis

In December 2013, Pope Francis, who has declared there should be *"zero tolerance"* of abuse, established a Vatican Commission on the protection of minors. Last year, the Holy Father said that he wants to encourage and promote the Church's commitment to protection and care *"at every level — Episcopal Conferences, Dioceses, Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life — to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the protection of minors and vulnerable adults and to respond to their needs with fairness and mercy"*.

The remarks reflected a considerable journey for the Catholic Church in England and Wales when it comes to safeguarding.

## Current Structures

Last year's annual report of the independent National Catholic Safeguarding Commission [NCSC] approved the setting up of a Survivors Advisory Panel to help inform the work of the NCSC and the safeguarding policies and practices within the Church. It also

found that now over 95% of parishes in England and Wales have at least one safeguarding representative.

The NCSC directs the work of a second unit set up in the wake of Cumberlege, the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service [CSAS], which was established to implement improvement in practice. The CSAS has in recent years completed safeguarding audits of all dioceses in England and Wales.

Today, the Church has a robust selection procedure for candidates to the priesthood and their training includes child and adult protection. Meanwhile, the Church encourages victims of abuse to come forward and supports them to do so.

Christopher Pearson, NCSC Chair, says: *"The harm, damage and impact of abuse on victims and their family is immense. That is why we want victims and survivors to be at the heart of what we do as a Safeguarding Commission...Can we say it can never happen again? No, but we can say the likelihood is less than it was, and that by encouraging people to report abuse, it makes it easier to do so."*

Looking ahead, a working party on pastoral support for survivors is proposing a model of support for victims and survivors to be implemented across all dioceses and Religious Communities. Sr. Lyndsay Spendelow, the Religious Vice Chair of the NCSC, emphasises a 'One Church' approach. *"More people today are probably aware of the NCSC,"* Sr Lindsay says. *"Religious are well represented on NCSC and the Conference of Religious also has its own support and communication structures to assist the Congregational Leaders to keep up to date with safeguarding requirements and developments. In the past year or so, together with CSAS, there has been great emphasis on strengthening and developing a One Church approach to Safeguarding."*

The Director of CSAS, Colette Limbrick, adds: *"The Church's approach to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk has developed considerably since the publication of the Nolan Report in 2001. Safeguarding structures at national and local levels work to ensure that as safe an environment as possible is created for children and adults taking part in the life of the Church...However, there is no room for complacency and we must continue to improve; in particular we must ensure that the needs of the victims and survivors of abuse always come first and that we provide a more sensitive and pastoral response which truly places the needs of victim or survivor at the heart of our work."*

Finally, returning to the theme of the Church using its experiences to help wider society, Bishop Marcus Stock, the Vice Chair of the NCSC, says: *"Given the experiences of the Church and its considerable and important work in this area, we look forward to working with Justice Goddard in her Inquiry."*

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# St Joseph's Care

## Living Our Faith in Word and Deed

**A**s part of their evangelisation programme the parish of St Joseph's, Ansdell has introduced St Joseph's Care, a support system for parishioners and those in the local community. The basis of the system is a helpline which is manned by volunteers from 9am until 7pm everyday.

The idea for introducing something new has been almost 12 months in planning and came to fruition with the official launch on the Feast of Candlemass this year. Before going 'live' it was necessary to compile a comprehensive directory of all the support that is available externally that our telephone operatives can put people in touch with. And we also needed to compile a list of volunteers who would be willing to answer the telephone or offer their skills and time to help people with day to day needs such as shopping, sitting service, transport, walking the dog, odd jobs etc., "We want people who are in need of some support to get in touch with us and we will do our best to help or put them in touch with someone who can" said Anne Waters whose idea it was to introduce St Joseph's Care.

Whilst the parish had traditional outreach structures in place such as SVP, Tea and Chat, Faith and Light, Trinity Hospice, Cafod and their overseas project in Burkina Faso this project has allowed all these groups to maintain their own identity whilst bringing them together to benefit from each other's

experience. And with the call for more volunteers to give whatever time they could whenever they could the efforts of these groups is now supported by a further fifty volunteers recruited over an eight week period. Some are only able to offer an hour every now and then, some more than that and each has been able describe what help they can provide eg gardening, shopping, odd jobs, manicures etc.

Every member of the parish has been given a 'help card' for their purse or wallet and a small flyer explaining more about the service on offer. "The successful launch of the scheme has been due to the meticulous work of the small steering group, the prayers of the parish and the willingness of people putting themselves forward to help" said Parish Priest Fr David Burns. "The Parish are now preparing to take the scheme into the local community, which is not without risk, but if we continue to pray and commend our efforts to the patronage of St Joseph I am sure great works can be done" he continued.

This Lent leaflets with details of St Joseph's Care will be distributed with an Easter Card to over 600 homes around Ansdell village – "It is fantastic to think that from the seed of an idea we are now opening our doors and taking what we have to offer into the wider community, since his election Pope Francis has been urging the Church to become missionary and this scheme helps us to do that" said Anne Waters.

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Shrine Church of St Walbuge, Preston  
Mondays – Fridays: 8.30 am, Low Mass (except First Fridays & Holy Days 7.00 pm)  
Saturdays: 10.30 am, Low Mass  
Sundays: 10.30 am, Sung Mass  
  
Sunday 17th April at 3.00 pm  
Third Sunday after Easter  
St Mary's, Hornby  
  
Mass is also celebrated every Sunday at 8.30 am at St Mary Magdalene, Leyland Road, Penwortham and 11.30 am at St Catherine Labouré, Stanfield Lane, Leyland.  
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# “Blessed are the Poor in Spirit”

**T**his Beatitude teaches us that actual poverty does not earn the Lord's blessing unless it is accompanied by poverty of spirit. The Greek adjective *ptochós* (*poor*), as Pope Francis notes, does not have a purely material meaning. It means “a beggar” (2014). The poor who are blessed are those whose actual poverty is animated by poverty of spirit, a heart free for God: they are the “*poor of the Lord*,” the *anawim*, the lowly ones.

Jesus Christ became poor in order to enrich us through his poverty (cf. 2 Cor 8:9), revealing to us that actual poverty united to poverty of spirit makes the Blessing more secure. Jesus insisted often on the practice of poverty, especially in the case of

those whom he calls to the state of perfection. We recall the story of the rich young man who asks about the surest road to perfection (Matt 19:16-22). We read that Jesus, “looking at him, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’” We then read: “At that saying his countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.”

Jesus did not oblige but rather counselled the young man to practice actual poverty in order to be perfect. The point is, to be perfect one must have at least the spirit of this counsel, the spirit of detachment in the midst even of riches. The having or not

having the possessions is not the focus; rather, in regard to these possessions, we should not attach our hearts to them if we have them, or covet them if we don't have them. Like the *anawim*, we are to trust in God that He will take care of all our needs in His loving providence (cf. Matt 6:25-34).

Just as “poverty” denotes more than lack of goods, so too the “rich man” in scripture denotes more than just the materially rich person. The biblical rich man is the person who sees himself as entirely self-sufficient to the exclusion of others, including God. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus starkly portrays the consequence of one's habitual choice to ignore the poor for love of wealth and

status (Luke 16:19-31). As Pope Francis notes, “the Beatitude of the poor in spirit shapes our relationship with God, with our attitudes to material goods and with the poor. With the example and words of Jesus before us, we realize how much we need to be converted, so that the logic of being more will prevail over that of having more” (2014).

All are most welcome to attend this free series of talks. The schedule for April is: Lancaster – Tuesday, 5th April, 7pm (Education Centre); Carlisle – Tuesday, 12th April, 7pm (Our Lady & St Joseph's Parish Hall) and Preston – Tuesday, 19th April, 7pm (Our Lady & St Edward's Parish Centre).

*Sr. Mary Julian Ekman, RSM*

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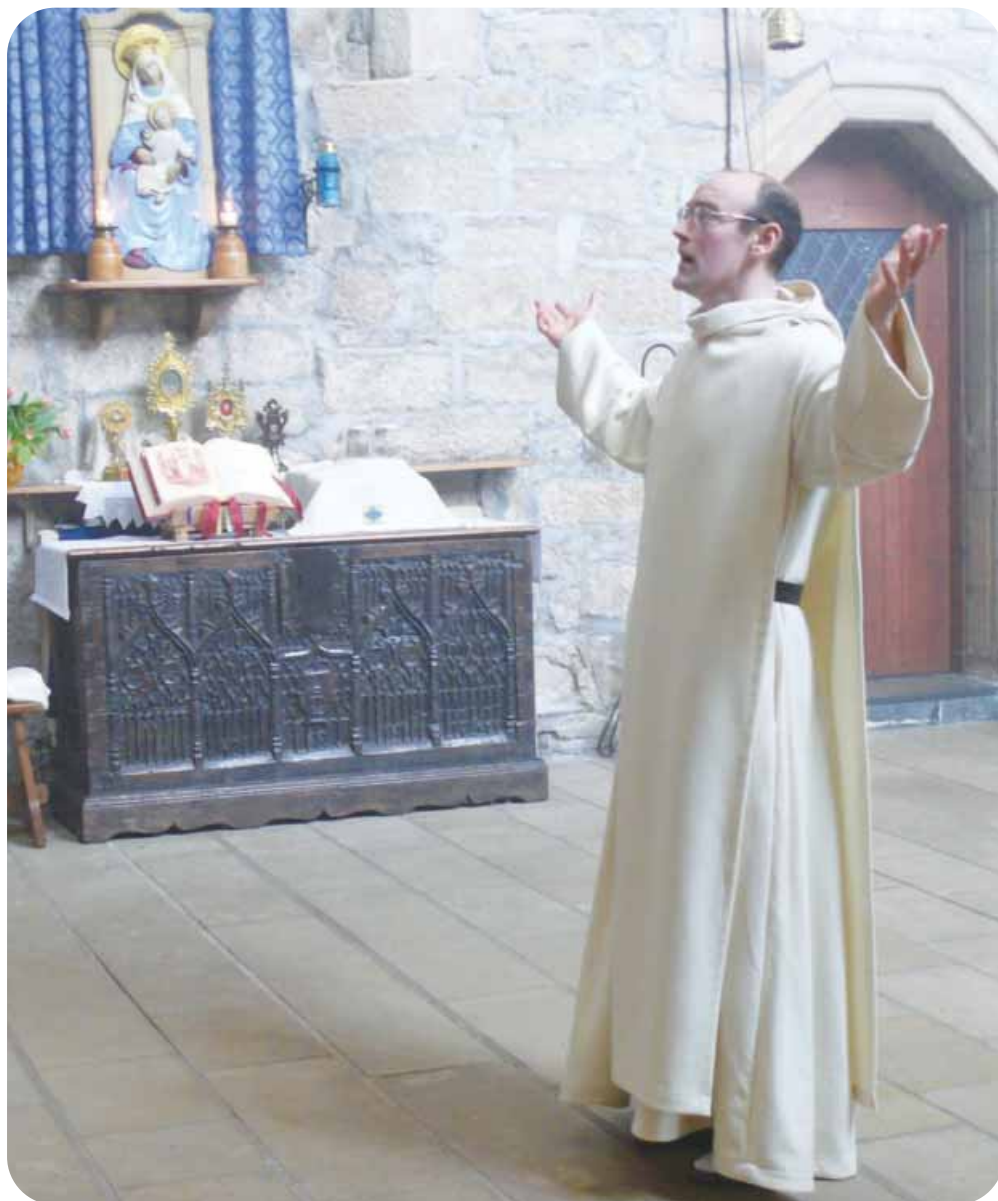
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# Called to the Cloister



**I**n March 2004 on receiving God's mercy in confession after a very long absence, besides the sense of peace and joy, one truth took hold of me – St Paul expressed it thus: *“Our battle is not against human forces but against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness”*.

There is sin and God's mercy – a cosmic spiritual struggle for the souls of all the living until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again in glory. Immersed in God's mercy we become the saints we have been created to be.

It was this message that I desired to proclaim.

A month later I spent some time as a guest at the contemplative Benedictine monastery of Pluscarden Abbey to discern what to do next. Wonderful as it was, I was thinking more of being a diocesan priest. As a student at Lancaster University I had had thoughts of the priesthood, but thought my sinfulness made this an impossibility. After a few meetings over a period of a year with the vocations director, then Fr Manny Gribben, I decided to leave my job and in September 2005 – at nearly 32 – began a year at St Mary's, Cleator. A most happy time! Seminary then followed.

My time at seminary was also happy, yet during my second year I felt I was in the wrong place. A hunger was growing to be alone with God in front of the Blessed Sacrament for hours at a time, along with a inkling that I was not praising God enough. The monastic life began to appeal. But God – as I thought – was asking me to be a priest and so were not my desires for monastic life merely a selfish escapism?

Thoughts of ordination began to cause fear and anxiety, yet when I pondered the life of a monk it was with a sense of peace and joy. I would daily ask the Lord to show me the way. It was pointed out to me that when we are faithful to prayer our desires become closer to God's desire. My desire for monastic life perhaps wasn't selfish – maybe this was what God wanted me to do!

So with some trepidation, I paid another visit to Pluscarden to ask whether they thought I had a vocation, secretly thinking “No” would be the reply. It wasn't. In September 2008 I entered, changed from “James” to “Br Joseph” and on the feast of the Annunciation 2014 I made my solemn profession, vowing obedience, a commitment to continual conversion of heart and stability in the community according to the Rule of St Benedict.

Before March 2004 my sins had cut me off from the life of grace. Sin wounds our souls and Christ's Body the Church. Conversely, the grace of the contemplative life purifies and heals souls, my soul, and draws down great grace upon the Church:

*“The work of contemplation overflows, benefiting the entire Church. The Church needs this work of contemplation that it may protect its life and increase its growth. The Church is in dire need of those who excel in the interior life and are intent only upon this, that they recollect themselves in God and be aflame, to their inmost being, with love for heavenly things. If such persons are lacking... it follows that the strength of the whole Mystical Body of Christ is diminished”.*  
(Bl Paul VI speaking to Cistercians 8.12.68)

St Thérèse of Lisieux famously said that her vocation was to be love in the heart of the Church; she recognized that without the fire of Divine Love burning in the heart of the contemplative, preachers would not preach, martyrs would refuse to die. The contemplative vocation is for the upbuilding of the Church.


It is not plain sailing! The monastery is not a paradise. In his Rule St Benedict is careful to point out the difficulty of the journey. It is a fight – against sinfulness and weakness and St Paul's “principalities and powers”, for the demons recognize the divine power unleashed through the vows of a religious. Every single act sealed by the vows has great value, as St Faustina Kowalska writes in her Diary:

*“When a reluctance and a monotony as regards my duties begins to take possession of me, I remind myself that I am in the house of the Lord, where nothing is small and where the glory of the Church and the progress of many a soul depend on this small deed of mine, accomplished in a divinized way”.*

God has led me to my place in the Church by a definite path because the journey is part of the call. The Diocese where I received so much grace, friendship and love remains very much in my heart and prayers.

God has led me here by Mary. A priest of the Diocese once told me to consecrate myself to her Immaculate Heart and she would do the rest. I did and she has. At her Assumption I think Mary was granted the grace by Jesus to prepare each of our rooms in the Father's house – do not mothers love to prepare the child's room on their return home!? As in heaven, so on earth Mary prepares and leads us to our place in the Church and she will bring us all home together.

*Br Joseph Carron*



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# 'A Birth is Announced'...

by Julia Beacroft

## The Feast of The Annunciation 4th April

**A**s the mother of four adult children, I have had my fair share of announcements from them – both good and bad. Starring roles in plays, sports achievements, exam results and career changes to name but a few. However, as announcements go, none could top the one which I got during my final pregnancy.

During a routine scan, I was quite worried when the sonographer fetched a more senior member of her team to look at the image on the screen. Then certain questions were put to me:

"How many children do you already have?" I was asked.

"Two," I innocently replied.

"And do you have any twins in your families, on either side?"

came the next question.

"No, none," I answered, puzzled.

And finally the announcement:

"Well, that's unusual, because you're definitely expecting twins this time! Congratulations!"

And there was more to come. When I attended my next scan some weeks later, my husband then announced that he was quite disappointed that they didn't discover a third baby – which would have meant triplets!

### Highly Favoured

Needless to say, he was only joking, as our joy and contentment was as complete as our family and has remained so right up until this present day.

We know that Our Blessed Lady received her own incredible announcement from the Angel Gabriel. She was told that she was so highly favoured in the eyes of God, that she was invited to be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary, of course, had expected no such proclamation, but despite her initial amazement responded in the most positive way possible: *"I am the handmaid of the Lord,"* she said. *"Let what you have said be done to me."*

### Precious Child

The revelation which Our Lady received was the greatest of all time and as we know, resulted ultimately in our redemption. Mary was to carry and give birth to Christ the Lord. Unlike myself, her great tidings told of only one baby to be carried and born, rather than two or even three! Yet never before or since, has an expected child been so sublime, precious and perfect. That child which is our one true Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ

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 around Pentecost this year.

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# Easter Mass Times

## St Anne's on the Sea Our Lady Star of the Sea

**Holy Saturday**  
8.00pm Easter Vigil

**Easter Sunday**  
9.30 a.m. (Family Mass)  
11.00 a.m. Mass  
6.30 p.m. Mass

## Ansdell St Joseph's

**Maundy Thursday**  
7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Watching at the Altar of Repose until 10pm

**Good Friday**  
3.00pm Celebration of the Lord's Passion

**Holy Saturday**  
8.00pm Solemn Vigil of Easter

**Easter Sunday**  
10.00am Family Mass for Easter Day  
5:05 pm Mass

**Monday 28 March - Friday 1 April**  
Daily Mass at 10.00am

## Lytham St Peter's

**Holy Thursday**  
7.00pm Mass  
Exposition until 10.00pm

**Good Friday**  
10.30am Stations of the Cross  
(reflections with music)  
3.00pm Liturgy of the Passion

**Holy Saturday**  
8.00pm Easter Vigil

**Easter Sunday**  
10.30am Mass

## Preston St Wilfrid

**Holy Thursday**  
No Masses during the day  
11am-12 noon & 2.30-3.30pm  
Confessions  
7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper -  
Watching at the Altar of Repose  
until midnight.

**Good Friday**  
10.30am Stations of the Cross  
10.30am-12 noon Confessions  
3.00pm Service of the Lord's Passion

**Holy Saturday**  
No Masses during the day  
11.00am-12 noon & 2.30-3.30pm  
Confessions  
Church closes at 4pm  
8.30pm Easter Vigil

**Easter Sunday**  
7.00am, 10.15am Mass  
(No evening Mass)  
Church closes at 12 noon

**2016 Year of Mercy**  
"Merciful like the Father"

## Divine Mercy Sunday

**2pm Sunday 3rd April 2016**  
**Lancaster Cathedral**



Veneration of the Image  
Divine Mercy Homily  
Chaplet  
3 o'clock prayer  
Adoration of the  
Blessed Sacrament  
Individual Confessions  
4.00 pm Parish Rosary  
4.40 pm Parish Vespers  
6.30 Parish Mass  
Light refreshments from 4pm  
onwards in the Cloister Cafe

"On this day the very depths of my  
tender mercy are open!"



**SUNDAY 3rd APRIL 2016**

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

**St John the Evangelist Church**  
**Breck Road, Poulton-Le-Fylde**

2.00pm Confessions during the Holy Hour  
Veneration of the relic of St Faustina  
Divine Mercy Chaplet  
Benediction followed by Mass  
All Welcome. Refreshments after service



## Feast of Divine Mercy

For The Holy Year of Mercy



Open wide the door to your heart  
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Veneration of the relic of St. Faustina  
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