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The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster
Issue 288 + April 2017

INSIDE: p06 LOURDES 2017 –
We need your help!
p16 Going to Mass in SE Asia



THE
TRUTH

Jesus did not just die on the Cross.
He suffered and died for You!

He suffered the
agony in the Garden
when He prayed
to the Father 'Not
My will but yours
be done'.

He suffered the
humiliation of being
stripped, whipped,
scorned and crowned
with thorns.

He suffered the
desolation of
His followers
deserting Him.

He suffered sadness
as the crowds turned
on Him and called for
His crucifixion.

He suffered the
harshness of being
made to carry his
Cross, barely able
to walk, bleeding
and stumbling
several times.

He suffered the
excruciating pain as
the soldiers drove
the nails into His
hands and feet.

He poured out his
blood for You!

He died for You!

And even in death
prayed:

*"Forgive them Father
for they know not
what they do"*

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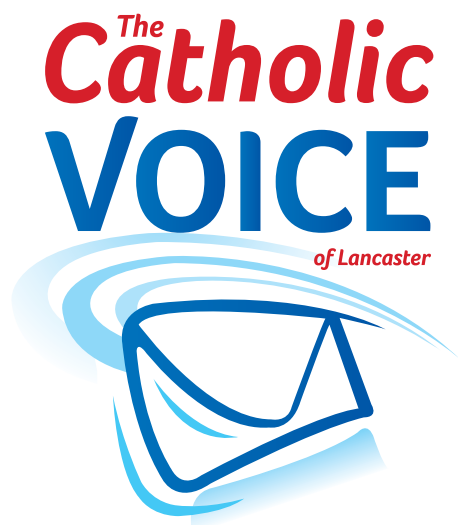
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EDITORIAL

In recent months there has been a lot of press coverage of fake news, untrue stories that are presented as news for any number of reasons, often cynical. Modern communications, especially social media, have made it easier for these stories to proliferate and take on their own momentum but it isn't an entirely new phenomenon. We've become used to stories being adjusted by spin doctors, in history there has always been a role for propaganda, and Mark Twain famously said *"Never let the truth get in the way of a good story" (although we can find no evidence he ever actually said this).*

Of course all reporting has its own perspective. We are used to the idea that you can place people on the political spectrum by their choice of newspaper. It is easier to accept news from a perspective we share. The flourishing of fake news, and the outcry that accompanies it, should call us to reflect on how we consume and share news in our own lives.

In his letter for World Communications Day, Pope Francis addressed the persistent focus in the media on bad news (*violence, scandals, etc.*). There is a danger, he says, that tragedy can turn into entertainment, consciences be dulled, and we slip into pessimism. And this is in stark contrast with the Christian message.

The Gospel, a word which means Good News, is not simply the account of Jesus' life, preaching, and death. Jesus Christ is himself the Gospel. And as such His resurrection is not just the one off triumph of life over death, but His continuing victory.

Pope Francis writes: *"In Christ, even darkness and death become a point of encounter with Light and Life."*

Just as newspapers frame the news according to their politics, we must frame the world according to our faith. Surrounded by bad news we are called to rejoice in our hope; the cross isn't an obstacle, but the route to salvation, and as such suffering is part of a bigger picture. In the pain and hurt of our world we should seek out the love that lifts people out of their suffering and offers them hope.

At the *Catholic Voice* we often report on these instances of love: the experiences of those who are suffering and the encounters which have given them hope; the generosity of those who give their time to help the needy, whether in our parishes or around the world; the joy with which we live out our faith, sometimes in difficult circumstances. We encourage our readers when they read or watch the news, or share it with others, to frame it with the Gospel and seek out signs of love and hope.



“
In Christ, even darkness and death become a point of encounter with Light and Life.
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On Thursday 5th January 2017, Fr John Millar celebrated Mass in the newly renovated Pugin church of Our Lady & St Wilfrid's in Carlisle. This was followed by a coffee morning, hosted by the SVP who provided transport for the elderly and housebound - it was a good opportunity for parishioners to get together and chat to friends.

It wasn't intended for the coffee morning to raise funds but with the array of homemade scones and carrot cake and the attraction of a tombola run by Marguerite Spencer ensured a profit from the event.

Martin McSweeney, SVP Treasurer, thanked Fr John Millar and Fr Anthony Gaskin (*in absentia*) for their encouragement and support in setting up St Wilfrid & St Ninian's' SVP Conference and for fulfilling the role of spiritual directors.

Fr John and Fr Anthony have since moved to the parish of St John XXIII in Preston.



Mission Moldova

A huge amount of old clothing was collected by Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maryport when they moved to a new school uniform last summer. Rather than throw it all away, it was decided to send it to a school in Moldova via Tom O'Donnell who had been coming into school on a regular basis, to share news about life in the country. The whole school community was fully behind this, and brought in bags and bags of old uniforms and other clothing.

Mrs Hampson, head teacher, received news from the school just before Christmas, thanking her for donating the clothes. Olesea, an English teacher from the school wrote,

'Children from the primary level in our school were offered each a piece of clothing. The next day most of the boys were wearing blue sweaters and the girls

white T-shirts or grey skirts. You managed to bring glimpses of joy in some children's hearts that you don't even know, and that's amazing!'

A letter from Niculoan Bocaneala who works through the charity 'Agape' said, 'We would like to let you know that the kids were truly overwhelmed by the gifts, some children were even moved to tears.'

Mrs Hampson shared the letters and photos with pupils during an assembly. 'During the Year of Mercy, we undertook many charitable acts, raising money for organisations such as Cafod, or collecting food for the foodbank. On this occasion, it was great to be able to show our children and families the very real impact they have had upon the lives of others.'

And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

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Returning: Renewed, Refreshed and Real!

I was looking forward to Volunteers' Conference after hearing the leadership team and our second year volunteers talking about how great their experiences had been. Coming back from the Christmas break I was filled with excitement, so much so I'd even packed for the Conference well in advance – something I normally don't do. With a few mishaps along the way, including a cancelled train and starting off going in the wrong direction on the motorway we all made it to the Conference and it was great to all be back together.

The three days at conference were filled with prayer, conversations with friends new and old, laughter, singing, discussions and of course countless cups of tea, hot chocolate, and coffee from the very exciting hot drinks machine which kept us warm and happy. The conference kicked off with, of course, introductions. By now I feel like I could introduce every member of our team in my sleep because every retreat and outreach starts off in the same way, and this soon became very useful as I was nominated to do the introduction for all of us from Castlerigg. We also had our introduction to the theme for the whole conference which was 'Authenticity and Keeping it Real'.

After this we were split into small groups, made up of people from various retreat centres from around the country where we had time to get to know each other and share stories of the work we do in our communities and learn from those with

different ideas and experiences to help us develop as youth ministers. These conversations continued into dinner which flew by as we all quickly made new friends and bonded through everything we had in common.

Our first day ended with Mass in the chapel, a wonderful way to finish our day united in prayer and able to share in our Catholic faith.

The next day was packed full with so many opportunities to learn more, discuss and think about various aspects of our faith and our future. We began with a fascinating and thought provoking talk from Fr. Eamonn Mulcahy, this year's keynote speaker. His talk gave us much to think about and reflect upon in order to grow as people and also as youth ministers so that we can strive to show all the young people we encounter the real, authentic Christ. The talk was filled with so many important messages and each individual will have left with something different, but at its core it was all about accepting God's unconditional, unparalleled, and never failing love for each individual at all stages of life. This was an important lesson for us to enable us to share the message of God's love with young people. We also learned that our faith should be radical, like Jesus, and like him we should try to step out and share this with others in a bold and ground breaking way. After this we were filled with so many ideas and thoughts that our conversations continued way after the talk had finished.

Later we had a variety of workshops, I chose the ones on discernment and mindfulness, both were really useful for me and gave me a lot to take away. Looking at different ways to approach discernment was really refreshing and it is something that I know will help me in the future, especially looking at how vocation is where your greatest passions meet the world's great need and how we can discover what that can be in our own lives. I left filled with ideas and inspired about vocation. Mindfulness was something that I'd heard a lot about, as it seems to have become a trend lately, but I didn't know a lot about it, so it was that curiosity that drove me to attend this workshop despite not knowing what to expect. By the end I was very happy with this choice, as I left feeling very positive and uplifted, wanting to put some of what we had discussed into my own life.

Next up was our Adoration and reconciliation service. A chance for some calm after a very busy day to take that time to just be present with Jesus, to talk to him, to listen and just be there with Him. We were led in this service beautifully by the Birmingham diocesan team, and it really helped us to open our hearts and minds to Jesus before us in the Eucharist. As the opportunity for reconciliation is always amazing as it is such a beautiful sacrament and leaves you feeling renewed and forgiven and strengthened in your journey.

From Adoration to Ceilidh!

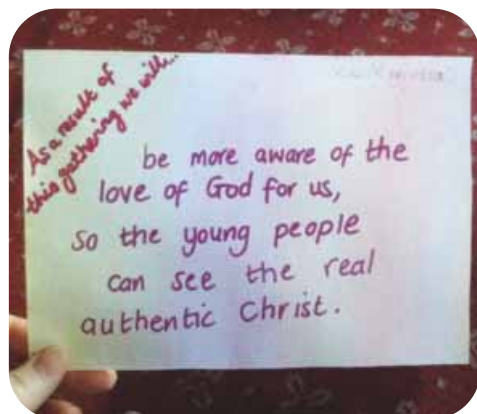
This was the time for us all to gather

together and just have fun and celebrate all that had happened so far in the conference, most of the team ended up dancing at some point encouraged most enthusiastically by Fr John Moriarty, who showed us his outstanding Ceilidh skills. The night was filled with dancing, laughter and of course lots of bumps and trips, but it was such a joyful celebration filled with so much life and love.

Suddenly, Thursday morning had arrived and somehow we had reached the last day despite it only feeling like we'd just started. The final morning was filled with reflection on what we'd experienced during the conference and decide on what next? The Castlerigg Manor team made the pledge to: *'be more aware of the love of God for us, so the young people can see the real authentic Christ.'* This led us into the final liturgy lead by the team from Walsingham House, Brentwood Diocese Youth Centre, with their reflection on Mary, her 'yes' and the joy that it brought to her life, and in the same way how our yes can bring joy to our lives and to the lives of others. That joy comes from being carriers of God's light, and we have a mission to keep this light alive. For the light to stay alive we need to share this with young people, to pass the light to the next generation which we can do through our ministry.

All that is left is for us is to remember the friends and the memories made, all the ideas raised by listening to so many new people, and to remember our pledge and to strive every day to show the real authentic Christ to all that we meet.

Alice – Castlerigg team



Out and about with the Castlerigg Team

Back in January, the Castlerigg Team were busy working with the Chaplains in some of our diocesan schools. On Monday morning the team gathered at 6:15am to drive to our different schools. Andy and Paul were heading to Preston aiming for Corpus Christi and Our Lady's, whilst Alice and Alex were bound for St Mary's Blackpool. Sarah left the evening before, making her journey to Whitehaven to spend time in St Benedict's.

Throughout our week we had the opportunity to take part in the many different jobs that a Chaplain would do on a day to day basis, seeing what makes the role so unique.

However, our first day was reasonably calm as we settled into our new environment, getting to know the chaplains and teachers of the various schools. Obviously, this new environment was very alien to us all, so our chaplains gave us great tours of the schools. We got to know the different corridors to where all the various subjects were taught, leaving us all with throwbacks to high school days.

As the week progressed some of us had the opportunity to sit in some lessons, and have a chance to see what the students were being taught. Watching these lessons as an outsider was very interesting, as we could see how the students discuss the many different subjects that they learn. At St Benedict's Sarah and Mr Teasdale helped to facilitate a year 7 RE lesson on the story of St Bega and why living a life with and for God is important today and to us personally.

Sarah also had the opportunity to participate in a few year 11 classes looking at marriage and the family, acting out the marriage ceremony in the chapel in order to further understand the symbolism within the ceremony. These proved to be rather engaging with Mr Teasdale's references to Shrek, with the added bonus of lots of wedding cake!

Sarah also managed to briefly meet some of the year 7 pupils who had visited the Castlerigg Manor in October and hear their many memories of their retreat and what they had been up to since leaving us.

It proved to be such a joy to watch faces light up as the students spoke about what their time at Castlerigg had taught them about life and faith. Some of the chaplains set us tasks such as planning liturgies for staff and students, usually focussing on the weekly Gospel. Alice and Alex enjoyed Blackpool both in and out of school. They got involved at Christ the King (the local primary school) leading year 2 and 3 in reflection. They managed to see Blackpool tower lit up and visit several big super markets (*very exciting as Keswick has only little stores!*)

This week has been incredible and an amazing experience to work alongside our inspiring chaplains and seeing our young people in a different light. The chaplains and school staff do amazing work and we will continue to pray for them. A big thank you to Our Lady's Preston, Corpus Christi Preston, St. Benedict's Whitehaven, and St Mary's Blackpool for allowing us to come and visit.

Castlerigg Team
— Sarah, Andy, Paul, Alice & Alex



BEING A YOUNG CATHOLIC TODAY

++++

Faith has always been an important part of my life. I was baptised in St Kentigern's Catholic Church, Blackpool and attended St Kentigern's Catholic Primary School right next door. I then went on to attend St Mary's Catholic College and later Liverpool Hope University (next door to the church where poet and priest Gerard Manley Hopkins once lived).

I have always been proud to be a Catholic and I try to live out my faith and support the Church by sharing my time and talents with others. I am an altar server (and have been since I was 7 years old) and I play the organ at Sunday Mass. I have spent time with, and have been inspired by, many people including priests, teachers, friends and family. They have helped me develop my faith, making me the person I am today. For this, I am deeply thankful.

I have been involved in many Diocesan Youth events including the Big Walk (our diocesan pilgrimage walk from Keswick to Cleator - ten in total so far),

volunteering in Lourdes and taking part in two World Youth Days. The most recent was in Krakow, Poland in 2016. The theme of this gathering was "Blessed are the merciful". The atmosphere was indescribable. You just had to be there to understand it!

Knowing that so many like-minded young people had all gathered because of their faith was incredible. Imagine it; over 2 million young people in one place and not a bit of trouble from anyone! Pope Francis urged us to go home and spread the Gospel and not to be "couch potatoes". He told us that "Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, is calling us all to leave our mark on history."

I took these words to heart and I felt I had been spiritually refreshed and strengthened. I came home with a deeper understanding of my faith and the will to share my experiences with others. I pray that with God's love and care, I may continue to be a faithful worker in the vineyard and share the light of Christ with those I meet.

Lizzie, 25, Blackpool



"Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, is calling us all to leave our mark on history."

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For many years George Benson and Philip Bowker have provided overland transportation for the Lourdes Pilgrimage, arriving in time to prepare wheelchairs and equipment, before the pilgrimage arrives.

Not only have they provided this integral service, but for many years fundraised locally in order that the overheads did not fall totally upon the Pilgrimage Trust Fund. As with many charitable acts, fundraising has become more difficult. Over the last few years the cost of hiring the van, diesel, ferry crossing, tolls etc. has been funded through the Trust Fund. I appeal to you, to you! – Do you know anyone with a van or minibus that would be available from 19th – 29th July 2017? Or can you help with covering these costs? Please do get in touch.

We are very grateful to George & Phil for the selfless giving of their time, commitment and hard work. However, they now wish to pass on the baton and give this wonderful opportunity to someone else. So we are looking for 2 people to fulfil this voluntary role. New

volunteers will be given a role description which outlines what the position requires.

Any prospective candidates should be 25yrs+, hold a full UK driving licence and complete satisfactory DBS. If you are interested please contact me by 15th May.

Joining the pilgrimage as a volunteer in any role is a truly rewarding experience. We also need Nurses, Carers, Brancardier and Youth so please consider coming on pilgrimage, in this our 90th celebratory year!

Serving as a driver, helper, carer or nurse is a tremendous privilege for all those involved. So please join our great team and enjoy the blessings that all pilgrims receive on visiting Lourdes.

"The Almighty has done great things for me"! Our Lady of Lourdes – Pray for us

Linda Wisdom

Director of Operations

Diocese of Lancaster Lourdes Pilgrimage,

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"Open my eyes, that I may see wonderful things." - Psalm 119:18



Sohrab is living his life in darkness. A simple 45-minute operation, costing just £95, could restore his sight. Will you help a child see the wonder of God's creation?

Dear Lancaster Voice reader,

There are almost no words to describe the power of witnessing a child seeing for the first time, after eye surgery.

Working with Christian Blind Mission, I am constantly moved by the astonishment and wonder on the faces of children when the bandages come off and they get their first clear look at those who love them.

When five-year-old Blessing's bandages were removed, he didn't say a word. He just smiled, looking in wonder at all the things we take for granted – the doctor's torch, his aunt's colourful bangles, his own reflection in a mirror. In seeing for the first time, Blessing sees the beauty in even the smallest aspects of creation.

Just £95 can restore a child's sight.

Now two-year-old Sohrab urgently needs our help. Born with congenital cataracts, being blind

could devastate Sohrab's chances in life, leaving him with no chance of an education, no route out of poverty.

Just like Blessing, Sohrab is a perfect candidate for our help. His cataracts are a type that our teams treat all the time. But his parents live in poverty, and cannot afford the surgery.

If you could give just £95 today, you could open a child like Sohrab's eyes to the beauty of the world, and give them a future of opportunity and independence.

Blessing is at last free to fulfil his God given potential. **Please help make this happen for Sohrab and children like him.**

God bless you,

Laura

Laura Gore
Programme Manager CBM UK



I'm a big believer in the power of all people, especially those of faith, all pulling together, to make a real and lasting change in the world. Christian Blind Mission is doing exactly that. Inspired by the teachings of Jesus, it reaches out across the world to improve the lives of disabled people in more than 60 of the world's poorest countries.

Diane Louise Jordan



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Refugee Story

The following interview was done by Ella Holliday, a member of Holy Family parish Freckleton and the Young Peace Journalists. It is the latest entry in the Young Peace Journalists project featuring the stories and voices of refugees.

Reproduced courtesy of Pax Christi International in serial form.
<https://paxchristipeacestories.com>

Mohammad is a 22-year-old from Aleppo, Syria who arrived in the UK in 2016 having left Syria in 2014. In the following interview, Mohammad speaks about his experience. The interview was conducted on 12 December 2016.

Ella Holliday: Tell me about your family?

Mohammad: We are a family of four brothers, me, my mum, my dad and my three brothers all used to live in one house

in Syria, in Aleppo. Me and my brother now live here in the UK and I still have my father, my mother and two younger brothers who remain in Aleppo.

What was life like in Syria?
What did you do there?

We used to have an ordinary life, we would go to school then go to the swimming pool. I swam for the national team. It was just a normal life basically, everyday cartoons, watching football matches, everything that usual kids would do.

What was your social life like growing up back home?

What were your interests and hobbies?

We used to play water polo a lot until we got into the team, we were considered the national team I suppose you could say, and we used to train 5 days a week after school and that is it really.

How did this change once the conflict started?

Well, when the revolution started, everything went too fast really, no one thought anything could go this wrong so fast. It was about 3-4 months from our basic usual life until we couldn't leave the house because it was too dangerous. My mum and dad would usually be very stressed if we were just out the house and they called us and we missed the phone call. It was a really small period between our usual lives and when this all started – nobody really expected that. We never really thought about it. Soon enough we weren't allowed to leave the house without permission. We had no electricity, no water, it was a very hard life situation to be in.

How did this make you feel?

Well at the start all of this I was just thinking about myself, well this is not fair,

I want to go out with my friends or I just want to go out to the mall and just shop. I just wanted to do regular stuff but I wasn't able to go. Then it affected my life because a lot of my friends got arrested for taking a role in the revolution so my family became more protective of me and my brother, they didn't want us to go anywhere or be involved in this because if you got arrested, God knows what would happen next, so we were basically protected by my family, my mum and my dad. Anyone who knew me, they would just protect me and keep an eye on me in everything I was doing, from the food I bought to the stuff I wrote on facebook or anything like that, they would always be watching me, telling me what I should do, and what I should not do.

Nobody likes that, because of course, everyone wants some space for themselves.



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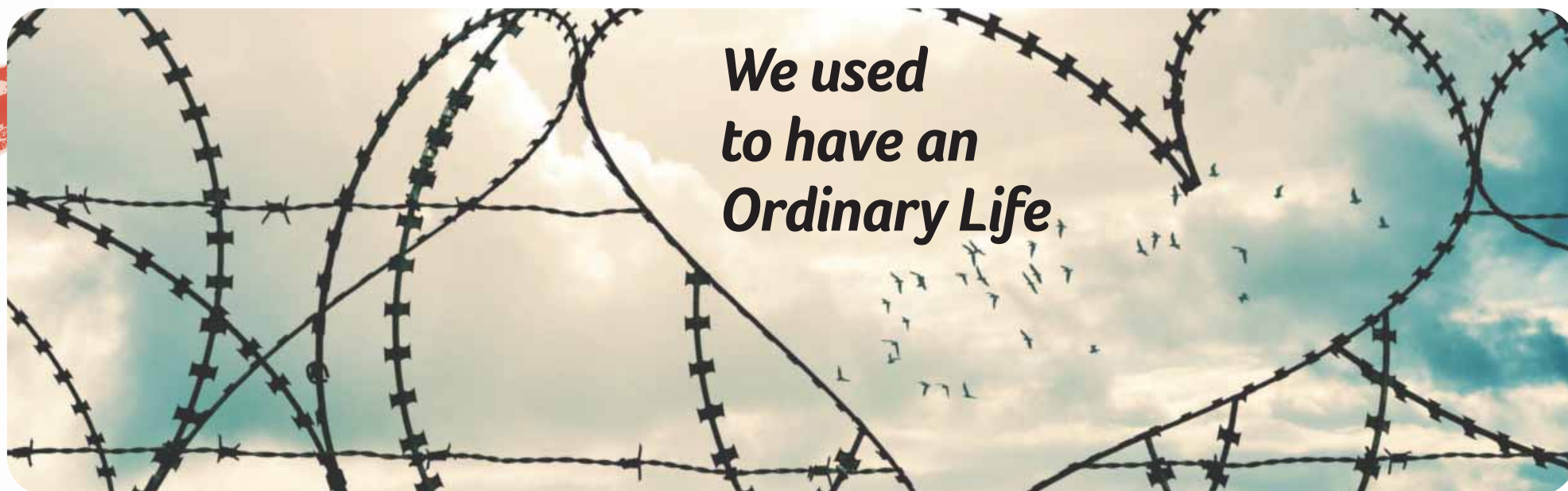
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**Tell me about your journey to the UK?**

So in 2014 we figured out that there is no possibility of living here (*in Syria*) anymore because there is no future, nothing, no light at the end of the tunnel. We can just see things getting worse and worse every day, so me and my brother decided to leave Aleppo and we didn't think how to go or where to go, we just wanted to get out of there. So we said to my dad we need to go, we need to get out of here, this isn't working, we can't stay like this, so we decided to go to Turkey. We put our stuff together and we had a car come to my house the next morning at 6am and we took around a 14-hour trip in the car.

Then we had to go to the border by foot so we walked for about 2 hours to get into Turkey. I got to Turkey and stayed there for 2 years. I was studying but I couldn't stay there legally so I only stayed for 2 years then me and my brother decided we

couldn't stay there anymore as it was not working, there was no future again.

So we decided on the UK because we had a lot of knowledge of the English language – because we used to study at the university in Turkey in English. We took a trip from Istanbul to Greece by foot. It was a long trip, it was 7 or 8 hours to walk to Greece and then I spent 20 to 25 days in Greece before I moved on to the next country because I was in the detention prison in Greece for 15 days before I was able to continue with my trip and then I had a couple of failures trying to leave Greece.

I eventually managed to leave Greece for Belgium on a fake passport and I stayed there in Belgium for a few days before I had to leave again to Spain with another fake passport. From Spain I took an airplane to London airport. It was around a 40 day trip altogether.

So tell me how does this make you feel having to move around different countries illegally?

It was a long and stressful journey, because all the time you had to be really careful, especially when you don't know who to trust or who to tell your real story to, who is here to help you or who is there to put you in the next detention centre.

For me I was looking at the police, not as someone to protect the people but as just another person that I needed to lie to in order to get to my destination or to get to safety. It was a long trip and I faced a lot of bad people, as well as some good people too, but it was very stressful and dangerous I think, looking back at it now, and I don't know how I did it. I don't think I was thinking about how dangerous it was or how dangerous was the stuff I was doing. I was just thinking I want to be done with this and think

about starting my life correctly again in the right way.

What did you know about the UK when you arrived?

Not much really, just what I've seen in the regular news and some information from the movies. I know some things about the life habits. They speak about it in our country. They say "*this is English, so English*". Most of it is not true but it gave me some brief idea about the people.

Thank goodness I was not wrong! From the moment I was taken into the UK the treatment of the policemen was different. They were not treating me as a terrorist they were just saying "*you will be ok, everything will be alright. Just relax, you're here now and there is no reason to panic*". Everything has gone alright since then.

To be continued next month >>

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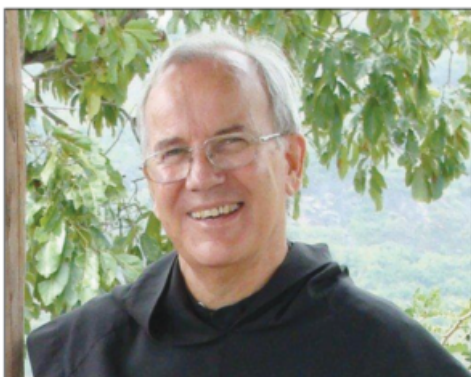
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Live Simply at Our Lady & St Edward's

Our Lady & St Edward's parish in Fulwood, Preston has started working towards the CAFOD Live Simply Award.

Mike O'Callaghan, a parishioner, explained: "The Live Simply Award is about making a clear commitment to care for our common home and all its peoples and creatures. We are inspired by Pope Francis' great Encyclical 'Laudato Si' to live more simply, more sustainably with creation, and in solidarity with people in poverty".

Welcoming Live Simply, Fr Bob Horn said: "I am delighted to see parishioners at the grassroots seeking to put faith into action by changing their lifestyles to live more in accordance with the gospels and in the joyous spirit of Laudato Si - and that the Parish CAFOD

group has made the running".

Stephen Garsed of the CAFOD group added: "Living simply frees us from the stifling consumerism of our modern world. It means 'being more' by living imaginatively, concentrating on the needs of other people and nurturing rich relationships, rather than simply 'having more'".

Although gaining the award is an achievement, it is the process of growth and transformation that is important. Cath Noblet, chair of the parish CAFOD Group, added "One of the beauties of Live Simply is that it enables us to recognise and celebrate what we are already achieving and to build on those strengths".



Some examples are given in the boxes below. In particular, the CAFOD group recognises that practical action must be supported by understanding, so three of our main priorities have been:

- A family quiz evening to discuss, in an entertaining way, simple measures that we can all take to reduce waste
- Carrying the Lampedusa Cross in procession at Sunday Mass whilst reading Pope Francis' words about migrants and refugees
- A series of three study evenings on Laudato Si to which churches of all denominations in Preston are being invited

Cath concludes: "We invite other parishes to be our partners and peers throughout our Live Simply journey".

Welcoming this invitation, Patrick Gardner, CAFOD's Community Participation Co-ordinator for the Lancaster Diocese said:

"I am so pleased that parishioners at Our Lady & St Edward's have taken up Live Simply and are inspiring and inviting others to follow their lead. I would be delighted to speak to anyone wanting to know more about Live Simply".

Patrick can be contacted at the CAFOD Lancaster Volunteer Centre on **01772 733310**.


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Holy Communion

♥ Which one are YOU? Follow the line to find out more...

♥ About to make your First Holy Communion Old Timer! (Already receive communion) Going to take communion ... one day! Not going to make your First Holy Communion



So....You've come the furthest - your line was the longest. But what does this mean?

For those of us whose First Holy Communion seems like a distant memory, do we ever reflect on what being a member of the family of Christ means?

Do we still treasure our invitation to receive the Eucharist each and every time we celebrate mass?

It is all too easy to crowd mass into our week and become distracted about items on our shopping list during mass.

However, we are all continually called to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This is a privilege not a chore, an honour not an inconvenience.

Next time you are at mass, take time to really enjoy the presence of God in your life and the peace He will bring to your busy week.

How are you feeling? Are you ready?

You've probably had lots of classes for your First Holy Communion so you may feel you know all about it - or you may still be a bit unsure.

To be honest it is tricky and some people find it difficult to understand.

You've done lots of reading and lots of listening. Hopefully you've done lots of thinking too.

Now is the time to Stop - take some time to ask questions about things that you are unsure of.

PRAY - Spend time with God. Ask him to help support you in making your First Holy Communion.

Enjoy! This is your special day! You are showing others that you are excited to be a member of God's family.

Not going to make your First Holy Communion

Making your first Holy Communion is what members of the Catholic church do when they are old enough to understand the most important parts in the mass.

Not everyone chooses to make their First Holy Communion when they are a child. Sometimes people choose to make it when they are an adult and others choose not to make it at all.

If you are not making your First Holy Communion, but someone you know is, you could get involved by helping them to prepare for the big day.

You could ask them important questions about the mass.

You can sing and pray with them on the day and of course you can certainly help them celebrate!!

You may be watching your brother, sister or friend making their First Holy Communion and looking at their smart clothes and their big smiles on the day.

Have you thought about whether you might like to make your First Holy Communion and what it might be like?

Think about your special role in God's family and what gifts God has given you that makes you the special person that you are?

When you go to church think about your First Holy Communion, what questions do you have and how can you start to prepare?

Remember...
EVERYONE is welcome in God's family.

Spot the chick on each page!!

Taken from the Spring Edition of Your Reach - www.CathComReach.com

In the parents' section there are articles about First Holy Communion and tips for the day itself!

Triduum

How do you say it?
Trid - you - um
or
Trid - oo - um

How many words do you
know with a double "u" in
them - not a "w" - but a
double "u"??

What is it????
It is the 3 services over Easter - Maundy Thursday, Good
Friday and the Easter Vigil. One flows into the other - so
even though they are on 3 different days its like
3 services in 1!

The service starts like
a normal Mass

The priest
washes the
feet of 12
people - copying
what Jesus did as
an example that we
should be humble
and serve others.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Jewish custom at the
time, saw the feet as the
lowest part of the body. So
the lowest job you could do
was wash someone's feet.

Maundy Thursday
is the day of Jesus'
Last Supper with his
disciples. It is the Last
Supper that we copy every
time we go to Mass - when
Jesus becomes present in the
bread and wine - we call this
the Eucharist.

The word Eucharist is
Greek and it means
"THANKSGIVING"

Maundy Thursday

There isn't a proper end to the Maundy Thursday service - Jesus is led away and for the only night of the year the box where Jesus is always present in the form of bread is left empty

Continuing from the night before, the
Church is still empty and there is no
proper start to this service - the
Church is empty and everything
starts in silence.

This service is not a Mass - we listen to
the readings and we think about
Jesus on the cross.

Veneration of the Cross

An image of the cross is revealed and
everyone is invited to kiss the foot of
the cross as a sign of respect for what
Jesus did for us.

Good Friday

Although this is not a Mass - Jesus,
in the form of bread, is brought
into the Church and
Holy Communion is given.

At the end of the service everyone leaves in silence again without a proper ending. Reminding us how the disciples & Mary must have felt when Jesus had died and they left thinking it was all over.

Once again there is no proper start to
the Easter Vigil service - it begins
in darkness and in silence
with a bonfire.

The fire is blessed, and
gradually candles are lit
throughout the church as a sign
of the light of Christ spreading
throughout the World.

Readings trace the history of the
Jewish people from Creation to
Jesus and the Easter story.

Easter Vigil

At the Gloria - bells ring out
and it is announced that

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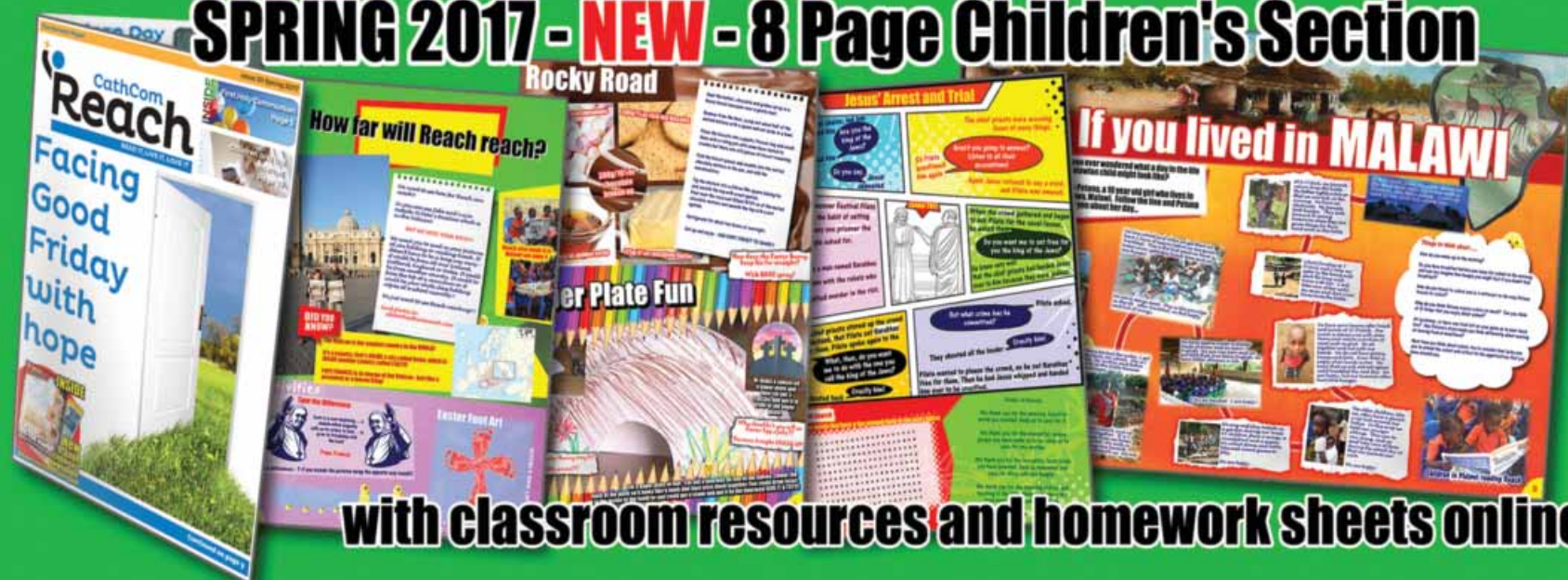
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- Please keep your letters concise (max 300 words),
- Include your full name and address
- Letters should not include any personal criticism or attacks
- The editor reserves the right to:
 - amend or shorten letters or to refuse to publish them (no correspondence to discuss decisions taken will be entered into)
 - publish a response if deemed appropriate

Fracking – the alternative viewpoint

Dear Editor,

In the March edition of the *Catholic Voice*, a reader wrote to implore your readers to oppose all fracking. In his letter he quoted Pope Francis's concern for the environment. However, our Pope has also spoken frequently, and eloquently, about poverty. For example:

"The times talk to us of so much poverty in the world and this is a scandal. Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry."

With current technology no energy policy is environmentally friendly. So-called 'renewables' contribute an unreliable, low fraction, of our needs. Expensive wind and solar farms are ugly, and destructive to our wonderful countryside and wildlife. Furthermore, the subsidies they give to rich landowners add significantly to energy bills. Naturally, the poorest, who spend a higher proportion of their income on power, are hardest hit by these scandalous, job destroying, subsidies. In 2017 over 25% (and growing) of our electricity bills will be a result of 'green' energy policy.

Fracking in the USA is preventing OPEC members raising energy prices for petrocarbons, and thereby, helping GDP growth, and wealth creation, throughout the world. It is not devastating the environment or polluting the water supply as was claimed. It is helping millions of people escape poverty.

Fracking sites should be selected carefully (NOT Roseacre for example) but to support a complete ban is no way to support the poor.


John Ellwood, Carnforth




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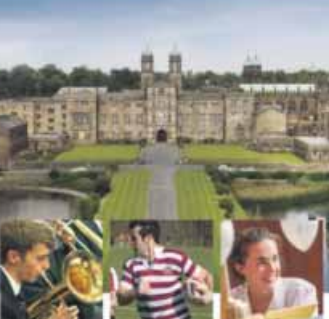



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Going to Mass in South East Asia

I recently travelled to two countries in South East Asia, Singapore and Vietnam and experienced in both a vibrant, joyful and welcoming Catholic community. Knowing that Singapore was until 1942 a British colony and that Vietnam was under French rule until 1954, you may think that it is hardly surprising that there are many Catholics, yet, since independence, both countries have completely transformed themselves and developed their own distinctive culture, leaving their colonial past behind, but clearly not their Catholic heritage.

Knowing a little of Vietnam's turbulent past, I was surprised to learn that Catholicism is the country's second religion. Approximately 9% of the population are Catholics. Around 19% of the population are Buddhists, while the

majority of people are classed as agnostic. This is because they engage in ancestor worship, which is not recognised as an official religion, although it has its roots in Confucianism.

Vietnam was a closed country under Communist rule from 1975 until 1990, following the war. While the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh (*Saigon*) have several fine buildings dating from their French colonial past, many people suffered under French rule and, with the exception of their Christian legacy, it appeared to me that the Vietnamese had successfully shed their French Colonial past, emerging as a religiously diverse and tolerant society.

Ho Chi Minh boasts a beautiful Cathedral, Notre Dame, and even the relatively small town of Hoi An in central Vietnam has a Catholic Cathedral dedicated to Our Lady.

It was here that we attended Sunday Mass during our recent holiday. The church itself was undergoing substantial external renovation, the inside having been recently renovated, an indication in itself that it is a thriving community. There were two Masses, one in Vietnamese and one in English. We attended the English. The town is a popular tourist destination and was full of foreigners during our stay but, apart from an American who was travelling with us, the congregation appeared predominantly local. The church was far from full but it included a significant proportion of young people and it was the young who led the music. They were a very talented and well-rehearsed group who not only played instruments and sang but also led the congregation in both the singing and the responses. Vietnam is growing in prosperity but by Western standards it

is still poor and yet the church had embraced technology in a way that few churches in England have. We did not have Hymn books or Mass Cards, the words of both were projected onto screens mounted on the pillars down the side aisles. It worked well. We came away uplifted by the service and at the same time humbled by the achievement of this dedicated community in a relatively poor country.

And what of Singapore? In comparison to Vietnam is very prosperous, though it is a two tier society. The Filipino and Bangladeshi workers are poor in comparison to most Singaporeans and the Expat community. Like Vietnam it is a religiously diverse and tolerant society. Religious practice is valued and respected. I have visited Singapore on several occasions in recent years and attended



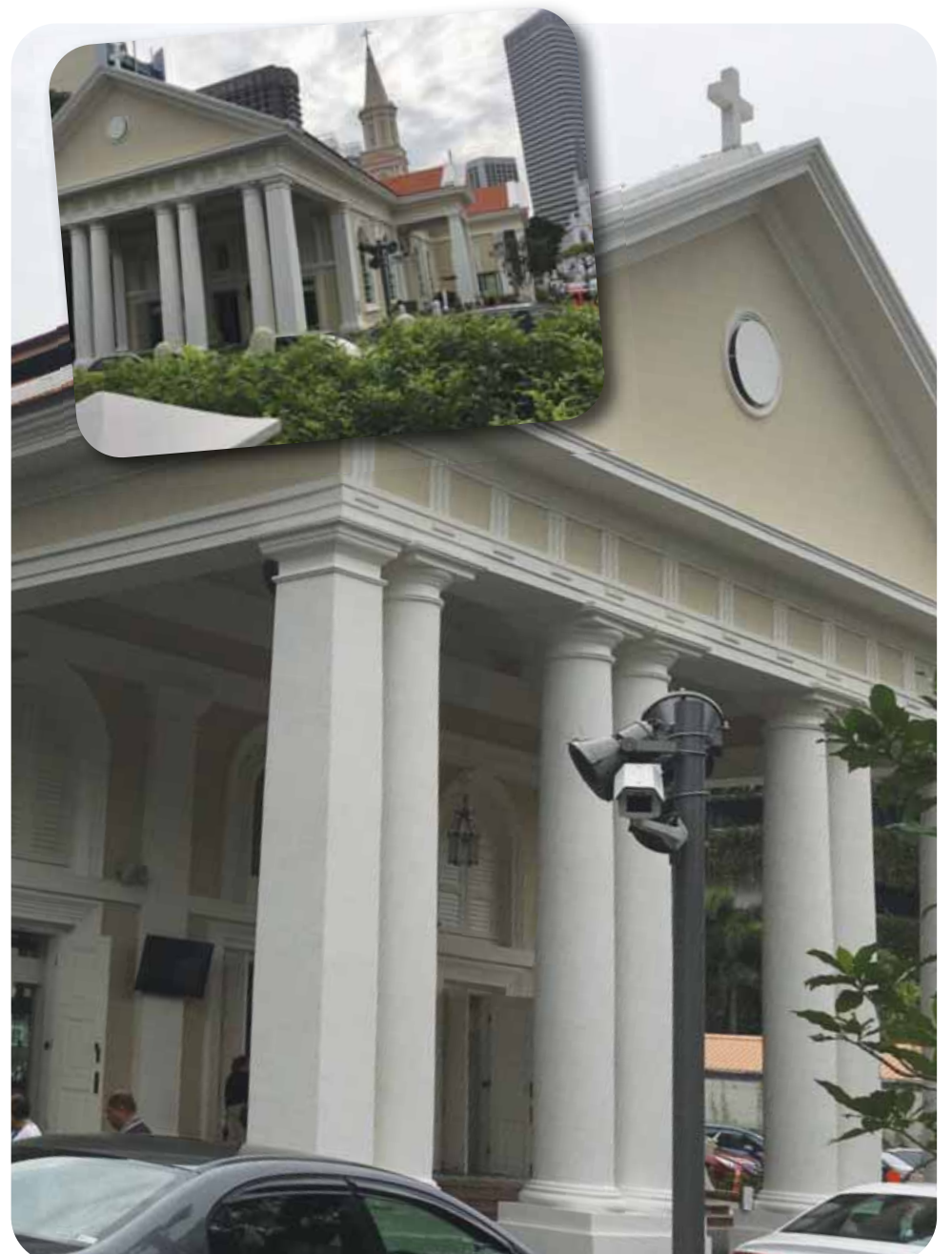
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Sunday 9th April at 3.00 pm
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TITHING

With some parishes struggling to find the funds to pay for fuel, roofing repairs, insurance bills, church supplies or the upkeep of the priests, many clergy and laity are embarking on alternative ways of fundraising. Parishioners are expending much time and effort on activities that involve neither prayer, worship, nor works of mercy.

In 2011, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales explained why Friday abstinence from meat was being re-introduced, that penance is a necessary component of the Christian life and that it takes three forms; prayer, fasting and almsgiving. I draw attention to these forms of penance in order to distinguish between penance and tithing. Tithing is not a penitential work and is actually different to almsgiving. Nonetheless, why might it be important to parish life today?

Tithing as an essential part of the Christian life

The word 'tithe' comes from the word for 10%. Tithing first appears in Genesis 14:19-20. Abram had just rescued his nephew from captivity, his goods, and the women and the people. King Melchizedek of Salem blessed Abram and Abram gave him one-tenth of his goods. Likewise, as we are paid, we can give one-tenth to God. It is a way of saying thank you to God Himself.

At Mass, we read that Christ is a priest of the order of Melchizedek. We also read that Abraham is our father in Faith. We should follow his example. Like our father in faith, we give to the priest who is another Christ.

Tithing is intrinsically connected to the altar. In the book of Tobit, tithing is connected with Jerusalem and the true worship of God, 'But I alone went often to Jerusalem for the festivals, as it is prescribed for all Israel by an everlasting decree. I would hurry off to Jerusalem with the first fruits of the crops and firstlings of the flock, the tithes of the cattle, and the first shearings of the sheep. I would give these to the priests, the sons of Aaron, at the altar; likewise the tenth of the grain, wine, olive oil, pomegranates, figs, and the rest of the fruits to the sons of Levi who ministered at Jerusalem' - (Tobit 1:5-7). Tobias lived under the Old Covenant, and went to the city of Jerusalem. We live under the New Covenant, and we go to the New Jerusalem – the Church, the Bride of Christ.

Tithing - a joyful business

The fifth precept of the Church is 'You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.' We give to God to honour Him, to worship Him, to thank Him and to petition Him.

God has appointed priests to administer the Sacraments. We could never work out what percentage of our income to give back to God in return for receiving His Very Self in Holy Communion - Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. And we are able to enter the Church at any time during the day and

to kneel before Him in the Tabernacle, even when we can't receive Him in Holy Communion. In return we might wish to outdo each other in showing gratitude. It cannot be an accident therefore that God has laid down a rule to preserve us from pride and to curb a competitive desire to outstrip our neighbour. His rule is that we give to Him just 10% of our income. This tenth is devoted to the priests, diocesan and missionary. We then do our best with the rest – paying for the necessities of life, additional purchases and giving alms in line with the corporal works of mercy.

Tithing sustains sacramental life

'And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High' (Genesis 14:18). The priests in the New Covenant are an Alter Christus, and we give to the priests as if they were in fact our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the bread and wine of the New Covenant does not remain bread and wine. They become Christ himself. Bishops and Priests devote themselves to offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and our offerings to God will provide for their material needs. Mysterious as it is, we give to God as Abraham did, and this is linked to the priesthood and the eternal sacrifice.

Tithing as necessary for parish survival

Tithing is an exciting way to live! If 350 people (*men, women and children*) attend Holy Mass on a Sunday and the church is fairly on the large size – you can imagine the financial outlays. Then for example, imagine these people are drawn from at least 50 households earning at least £1000 per month. These 50 households could (*depending on circumstances*) tithe to give £25.00 each week in a four week month. Mathematics tells us this would add up to £60,000 per year. Less time spent on fundraising means more time on prayer and good works.

Here is a sobering thought; the four sins crying to Heaven for vengeance are:

- Murder
- Sodomy
- Oppression of the poor
- Defrauding labourers of their wages. [Genesis 4:10, Genesis 18:20, Exodus 2:23, James 5:4]

And we can keep in mind that Our Lord said:

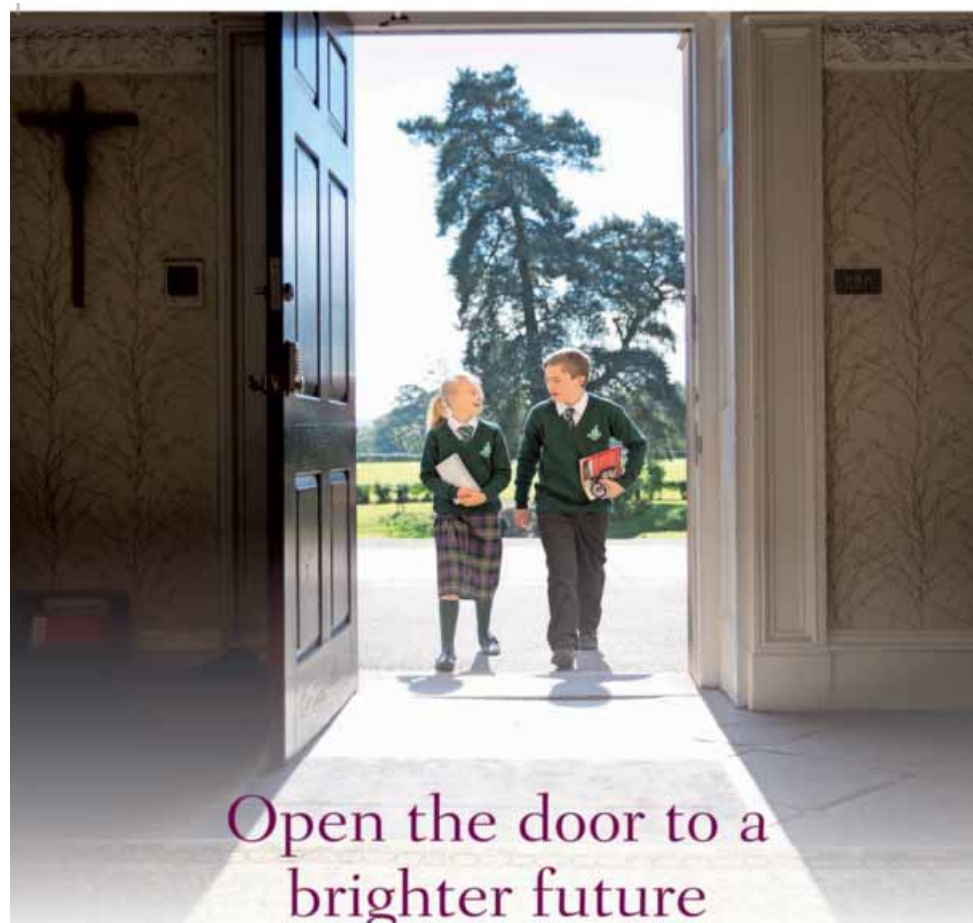
- "pray for labourers to enter the harvest" [Luke 10:2]

As we are the recipients of our shepherds' labour, is there an obligation to contribute to their welfare? If the answer is yes, tithing helps us to fulfil this obligation. And this obligation is really to Christ the High Priest. It is Him we love.

Ruth Smith

Editors note

The *Catholic Voice* wishes to state that the example of 'giving' above is for illustration purposes only. However the *Catholic Voice* would urge readers to constantly review their 'giving' and for taxpayers to consider using Gift Aid to make their contributions.



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Folklore EGG- stravaganza!

by Julia Beacroft

I'm often surprised by the ways in which children interpret what we say to them, often taking things quite literally. To give a quick example: on a rural Welsh farmhouse holiday many years ago, I happened to mention to my four-year-old son that the cows in the fields adjoining the farmhouse would get soaked in the torrential rain we were experiencing, (*sounds familiar?!*) To my great amusement, he appeared five minutes later with a bath towel "to dry the poor cows with," he said.

Pure Fantasy

And we rarely hesitate in passing on some child-friendly folklore to our offspring either. The most obvious of these is, of course, the tradition of Santa Claus. While 'Santa' derived from Saint Nicholas, a fourth century Greek bishop, the notion of bringing gifts to every child in the world – provided they have been 'good' throughout the year – remains pure fantasy. And we don't just stop there. There's also the 'Tooth Fairy' – a mythical creature who replaces lost baby teeth with a small payment. And finally the 'Easter Bunny' – a folklore figure who provides children with Easter eggs, again depending upon how well behaved they have been at the beginning of Eastertide!

In fact, one of my young nephews was so enraptured by his belief in the 'Easter Bunny' that his enthusiasm knew no bounds. Having been promised by his parents that this generous creature would impart gifts of yummy chocolate eggs the next day, he crept downstairs after his parents were tucked up in bed and left a dish of carrots by the front door as a token of his appreciation!

Salvation

Of course, a little fantasy in our often dark world can be enlivening and humorous. However, as we approach Easter this year, we know that there is a far more important person and event to be both recalled and conveyed to our children – and to our brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus died on the Cross to atone for our sins and continues to be with each and every one of us until the end of time. Christ's resurrection from the dead banished death for ever, giving mankind hope for the future in life everlasting. In short, Christ is our salvation.

The Sweetness of Christ

Both 'Santa Claus' and the 'Easter Bunny' offer gifts on the condition that children have been 'good' and both remain fictitious. Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the other hand, loves each one of us unconditionally, awards us our own God-given gifts and welcomes us with open arms even when, as fallible humans, we find it hard to be 'good'. Unlike such fictional characters, documentary evidence provides veracity for the historical Jesus. Yet more importantly, our hearts and souls clearly reveal God's eternal presence to us, as we instinctively yearn to become ever closer to him.

Easter is a wonderful time of the year for adults and children alike. May your children celebrate with chocolate eggs and the sweetness of Christ. One is a 'quick fix' – the other will last forever.

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Julia Beacroft is a catechist and pastoral volunteer who lives in Torquay.
Her first book 'Sanctifying the Spirit' is now available to buy.
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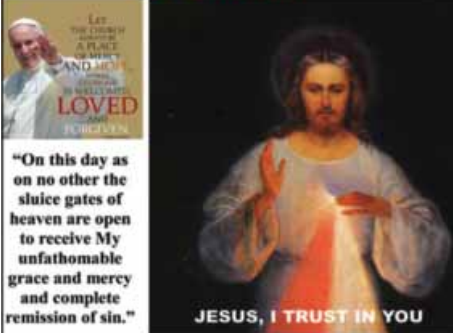
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DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
St Peter's Church, Lytham
Sunday 23rd April 2017
 2.15pm Veneration of the Image
 Divine Mercy Homily
 Litany of Divine Mercy
 Chaplet & 3 o'clock prayer
 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 & Benediction.
 Confession will be available during
 the Service.
 (There is a 10.30am Mass at St Peter's).

Divine Mercy Sunday
2pm Sunday 23rd April 2017
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

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Palm Sunday 9th April
10.30 am: Procession & Sung Mass
Spy Wednesday 12th April
9 pm: Tenebrae (Matins & Lauds
 of the Triduum)
Maundy Thursday 13th April
6 pm: Sung Mass, Procession
 & Stripping the Altar,
 followed by adoration
 at the altar of repose until midnight.
9 pm: Tenebrae
Good Friday 14th April
3 pm: Liturgy of the Passion
6 pm: Stations of the Cross
9 pm: Tenebrae
Holy Saturday 15th April
8 pm: Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday 16th April
Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ
10.30 am: High Mass &
 Blessing of Easter eggs

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St. Bernadette's, Bispham
Maundy Thursday
 7pm Mass of the Lords Supper. 9.50pm Night
 prayer
Friday
 10am Stations of the Cross 3pm Solemn
 Celebration of the Passion of Our Lord and
Holy Saturday
 7pm Vigil and Service of Light
Easter Sunday
 10am Easter Sunday Mass

St Begh's Whitehaven
Holy Thursday
 7.00pm Mass of The Lords Supper followed by
 watching at the Altar of Repose until 10pm
Good Friday
 12 noon Solemn Stations of The Cross
 3.00pm Good Friday Service
Holy Saturday
 8.00 pm Easter Vigil Mass
Easter Sunday
 8.00am Quay Street Mass
 10.00am St Begh's Mass

St Joseph's, Ansdell
Thursday 13 April
 7pm Mass of the Lords Supper
 followed by Watching until 10pm
Friday 14 April
 10am Stations of the Cross
 3pm Solemn Celebration of the Lords Passion
Saturday 15 April
 8.30pm Easter Vigil
Sunday 16 April
 10am Family Mass of Easter
 5.05pm Mass
Monday 17 April – Friday 21 April inc
 10am Daily Mass

**St Thomas Apostle Church,
 Claughton and St Francis
 Church, Hill Chapel**
Psalm Sunday
 Mass in Claughton at 9.00am and Hill Chapel
 is at 10.30am
Thursday of Holy Week
 (Maundy Thursday) 7.00pm at Claughton
Friday of the Passion of the Lord
 3.00pm at Hill Chapel
Easter Vigil
 At 8.00pm in Claughton
Easter Sunday
 Mass in Claughton at 9.00am and Hill Chapel
 is at 10.30am

St. Peter's, Lytham
Holy Thursday
 7.00pm Mass
 Watching until 10.00pm
Good Friday
 10.30am Stations of the Cross
 3.00pm Liturgy of the Passion
Holy Saturday
 9.00pm Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday
 10.30am Mass

St Wilfrid, Preston
Holy Thursday
 No Masses during the day
 11am-12 noon & 2.30pm-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 Lor'd Passion
Holy Saturday
 No Masses during the day
 11am-12 noon & 2.30pm-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

**Holy Trinity and
 St. George, Kendal**
Maundy Thursday
 7.00 pm (Kendal)
Good Friday
 3.00 pm (Kendal)
Easter Vigil 15th April
 9.00 pm (Kendal)
Easter Sunday
 Morning 10.00 (Kendal)
 Easter Sunday 12.00 noon
 (Sedbergh St. Andrews C.of E. Church)

**Our Lady Star of the Sea,
 St Anne's on the Sea**
Holy Saturday
 8.00pm Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday
 9.30am (Family Mass)
 11.00am Mass
 6.30pm Mass



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