

FREE

# The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

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The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 301 + July 2018

**INSIDE:** p03 Making a Difference  
p04 Castlerigg Family Weekend  
p11 Happy Birthday CTS  
COMPETITION!



**“How much our nation needs the intercession of Our Blessed Lady, for all our needs. And how much our society and world needs the gifts of nurturing faith, the defence of life and the promotion of peace – all for which we prayed for on Sunday 29 April at 3.00pm. The Diocese of Lancaster is famous for its Northwest English coast and so the People of God were certainly at prayer in good numbers from Lytham up to West Cumbria for the Rosary on the Coast initiative.”**

*Bishop Paul Swarbrick*



Photos of the different events along our Diocesan coastline can be found on Pages 8 and 9.



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# The Catholic VOICE

of Lancaster



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## EDITORIAL

**W**e are now just 2 months away from the National Eucharistic Congress, 'Adoremus' to be held in Liverpool. This initiative is aimed at promoting the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, but more specifically the place of Eucharistic adoration in our life of faith. The last Eucharistic congress to be held was in 1908 when a public Eucharistic procession was not allowed. It is worth noting that although society has in many respects lost religious tolerance and affiliation, the freedom we as Catholics have now for this to occur is quite wonderful. In our own Diocese of Lancaster there are already annual Corpus Christi processions, and 'Adoremus' will, hopefully encourage more.

The congress will be a real opportunity for all of us to gain a greater appreciation of the Eucharist, in particular through Eucharistic adoration. Sadly, this great devotion has fallen out of practice in so many of our churches, yet it is through Eucharistic adoration that the Lord offers so many graces and from which vocations come. J. R. R. Tolkien says of the Eucharist "I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: The Blessed Sacrament. There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth." Who could not be attracted by that, all that we need, that which gives us strength is contained in a tiny white Host. It is in the Eucharist that we come intimately close to Jesus, in our reception and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament we see the one who so loved us that He gave His life for us.

Eucharistic adoration is our opportunity to enter into contemplation of the great mystery of faith, to contemplate on the Real Presence of Our Lord and King, truly and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Fr Francis Selman says "As we enter into contemplation of the Blessed Sacrament we can lose ourselves in wonder at the many facets of this great mystery. Adore te devote, literally 'I adore you devoutly', translated by the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins as 'all lost in wonder.' We should all be lost in wonder at the very fact that it is the true Body and Blood of Christ Jesus really present for us in the sacrament.

We are also at this time preparing for the World Meeting of Families in Dublin, this is particularly poignant with the catastrophic result of the recent referendum in Ireland. The result and the tragic loss of innocent human life that will ensue is something that is not separate from Eucharistic Adoration.

Let us use our devotion and time in front of the Blessed Sacrament to pray for the intentions of the unborn who will never have chance to live outside the womb, for expectant mothers and those who contemplate an abortion that they may feel the tender mercy of God. But let us also pray and make reparation for offences against the unborn and innocent human life and indeed for offences against the Most Blessed Sacrament.



Courtesy of St John Vianney and St Monica Blackpool.





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# Making a Difference

**Pope Francis on God's call to holiness – defend all human life!**



**R**ejoice and be glad, Jesus is calling you to be holy! Ah, but you might say holiness is for saintly people like the pope. But the pope says holiness is for you and me, and that everyone is called by God *"to be holy and blameless before him in love"* (Eph. 1:4).

In his new apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (*"Rejoice and Be Glad"*), Pope Francis reminds us that the Lord has set the bar extremely high for you and me: *"He wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence"* (see: <https://bit.ly/2qm6f4C>).

The Holy Father writes, *"The important thing is that each believer discerns his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts."*

But common to all forms of holiness must be a deep special love for the vulnerable and poor – near and far.

Pope Francis writes that the various miseries experienced by countless human beings should cause Christians to feel *"a constant and healthy unease"* which should inspire us to deeply pray and tirelessly work to help all those who suffer. This love must be passionate, consistent and unconditional. It cannot exclude anyone, not even our enemies.

But many Catholics and other Christians think that their one life issue – to the detriment of all other life issues – is the most important one of all. The Holy Father calls this mentality a *"harmful ideological error."* Rather than ranking the life issues, Francis links them. He instructs us to see them as essential parts of an integral whole.

He powerfully insists that *"Our defence of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and*

*the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection."*

Pope Francis is clearly insisting upon what the late courageous Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago coined *"the consistent ethic of life"* which calls for the total equal protection of the life and dignity of every human being from conception to natural death, and everyone in between – no exceptions (see: <https://bit.ly/2rfEplT>).

Unfortunately, multitudes of Catholics are not committed to this centrally important teaching. I have encountered many Catholics who are deeply committed to ending abortion, but often have no hesitancy about going to war – which always involves killing countless innocent people. And on the other hand, I have encountered many deeply committed Catholic peace activists who are indifferent to the war of abortion waged against innocent unborn babies.

But Pope Francis is in neither camp. Rather he is crystal clear that we are not to subjectively rank the life issues, but rather to objectively link them all together.

The resurrecting of this ancient teaching of the early Catholic Church – insisting on absolutely no blood-spilling – is both the most moral and the most logical position to hold. It proclaims to governments, corporations, society and the whole world that no one is expendable! And that each person made in God's image and likeness is to be cherished and protected.

*Tony Magliano*

Tony Magliano based in the USA is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings.

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**F**or the bank holiday weekend at the end of May several families gathered at Castlerigg for the annual Family Retreat. All ages were represented, from baby to grandparents; some on their first visit to Castlerigg, others having been many times before.

The theme for the weekend, "I am with you always", was taken from the Sunday Gospel and formed the basis for reflecting on how we respond to God's presence in our lives. Having taken

time to get to know each other, on the Saturday morning we reflected on the lives of the saints. Their stories often tell of heroic virtue in the face of adversity, but we were delighted to discover, on his feast day, that St Philip Neri is the patron saint of joy. He didn't choose an easy life, but his humour and easy manner enabled him to speak to so many and bring them to faith.

St Philip Neri knew the importance of spending time together as a community

and in prayer and these were important elements of our weekend.

The time in chapel is always special, and it was particularly good, as we look ahead to the Eucharistic Congress this autumn, to spend a holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament, all gathered in prayer.

Equally, new friendships were formed as we spent the days together, sharing meals and break times as well as in workshops.

There was a treasure hunt, time for walk, a barbeque, creative workshops, a bonfire, and time spent getting everything ready for Mass on Sunday.

We left having enjoyed the weekend together and regretting that it wasn't longer. It had given us the opportunity to reflect on our faith and spend time together as families.

And we'll be telling all of our friends to come with us next year!





# Sponsored Walk

**O**n the 28th May an intrepid group set out from Castlerigg Manor for the sponsored walk. Fr John had planned a challenging route, taking in some of the amazing Lake District landscapes, and the day lived up to expectations.

Each year Castlerigg Manor welcomes thousands of young people and fundraising helps us to keep the costs down to enable everyone to participate. The ten participants on the walk had a target of raising a thousand pounds each and, although money is still coming in, it looks like we are on target.

We left Castlerigg Manor by minibus, ready to set off from Grasmere. It was a beautiful sunny day and, although showers were threatened in the forecast, we barely saw a cloud all day. The route started out by climbing rapidly from Grasmere to Stone Arthur, a challenge in the heat, where the views over the valley opened out below us. From there it was up again to Great Rigg, and then on to Fairfield, where we could see ahead of us along the Helvellyn range. In the way was a sharp descent to Grisedale Tarn, passing a few people brave enough to try swimming, before climbing again to Dollwaggon Pike.

From Dollywaggon Pike the path continued to rise and fall, taking in Nethermost Pike on our way to Helvellyn, the highest point of the day. Continuing north, we left the tourists behind and found

ourselves on the quieter peaks of White Side, Raise, Stybarrow Dodd, Watsons Dodd, Great Dodd, and eventually Clough Head. The heat of the day proved a challenge, and as we came to these latter summits water was in short supply (*and not to be found on the ridges!*). The final descent to St John's in the Vale was steep and rocky, passing old mine workings before reaching the road and a car loaded with bottled water – a very welcome sight.

We were delighted to be joined on the walk by Bishop Paul, as well as staff from several of our schools. Everyone enjoyed the day and finished with a great sense of achievement. We'd walked 17.15 miles, climbed a total of 6,102 feet and reached the summit of twelve Lakeland fells. Along the way we had the chance to get to know each other, and spent a whole day in awe of the beautiful countryside around us.

It is not too late to donate – to find out more go to: [www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/donate](http://www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/donate)

Group Photo: From left to right – Nigel (Our Lady's, Preston); Peter (St Bernard's, Barrow); Simon (St Mary's, Blackpool); Bishop Paul; Helen (Cardinal Allen Fleetwood); Sr Shienrose (Castlerigg); Fr John (Castlerigg); Helen (St Mary and St Michael's parish, Garstang); Sue and Sue (Our Lady's, Lancaster).



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Photos courtesy of  
Ruth Wallbank



# Bishop Paul returns to his roots!



In May our new Bishop came home to Garstang to celebrate Mass with us. We had eagerly been anticipating the chance. We had tentatively booked two coaches for his episcopal ordination until we learned of the restrictions on how many people could attend. We could easily have filled the cathedral with people from Garstang and left no room for anybody else – more than one of my parishioners could have made a very good case for why that would be the right course of action! However, since we could not all go to the ordination it was great that Bishop Paul came home.

Preparations were almost as enjoyable as the Mass. It was a bit like getting ready for Christmas! The choir practised to perfection, extra chairs put out in church, children prepared – it was the week after twenty-four young people had made their first Holy Communion and was the day when we traditionally crown the statue of Our Lady. The papal flag was

flown, parishioners made enough food for a shared meal that could have fed all of the inhabitants of Garstang and still have had twelve baskets full at the end. The parish photographer was all prepared and the excitement was tangible.

Mass was lovely. More than one tear was shed: “Well, how delightful was that! It was good to see such smiles on so many faces”. “A lovely Mass and a great reception for him. A truly lovely family day: he couldn’t help but feel all the love and support for him from St Mary and Michael’s. I think the Holy Spirit has certainly answered all our prayers” were among the many comments made.

Home is where you can kick your shoes off and put your feet up. We hope Bishop Paul will come home often and kick his shoes off and put his feet up with those whom he has known all his life.

**Ad Multos Annos – may you have many happy years in our midst. Fr. Tom Butler**

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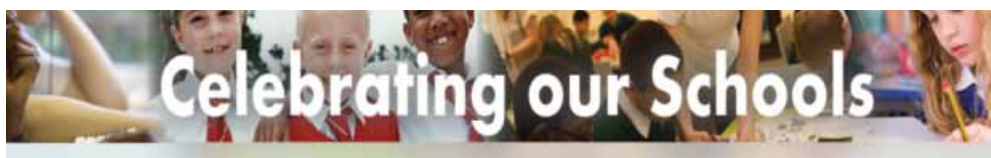
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**M**arc Besford the National Training and Development Worker and Assistant to the National President of Young Christian Workers (YCW) has recently written to express his pleasure at meeting the Impact groups at St Bede's Lytham and Our Lady's, Preston and to commend the work being undertaken by our young people.

He was pleased to see and hear from the Impact groups first-hand and he particularly liked the wellbeing questionnaire produced by St Bede's in conjunction with Our Lady's. Noteworthy too was the work being undertaken to support, amongst other charities, CAFOD and the expansion of the respect ambassadors programme focusing on bullying as well as the mental effects of bullying. Also of particular mention was the digital film initiative undertaken by Our Lady's and the links with the University to raise awareness of environmental issues. Marc congratulated the YCW group on achieving their certificate in leadership. And felt that the young people were inspired, dedicated and committed to voice the concerns of young people and he saw real leadership development through their activities. Marc thanked Terry Mattinson (youth worker) on guiding the young people to take authentic Christian action and empowering them to look at the world around them and encourage change.



**HEADTEACHERS – If you would like to support the Catholic Voice and promote your school to Catholic families in the area please contact Caroline on 07931 836926 or email [carolineg@cathcom.org](mailto:carolineg@cathcom.org) to book your school advert**

  
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**O**n Sunday 29th April, the Catholics of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland formed a Human Rosary chain around the entire coast!

Over 400 locations were officially registered and an estimated 45,000 Catholics took their Rosaries in their hands to the coast to pray for Faith, Life and Peace!

The event brought together our Church in the UK, with Bishops, Priests, Religious, Laity and youth all praying as one at 3pm for Faith, Life and Peace.

I went home to Fleetwood where I worked with Canon Alf Hayes to get a team together to organise our rosary for the area. Someone opened their Chalet on the beach and provided hot drinks, someone else brought their Statue of Our Lady and others brought so much joy to the cold showery afternoon that it was. I love my home town and I spend most of my time on the beach when I'm home just reflecting on life and appreciating the views looking across to Morecombe, Barrow and the Lake District hills.

On this occasion it was a beautiful experience, firstly receiving a special Apostolic blessing from Pope Francis and secondly knowing that St Wulstan's and St Edmund's Parish were joined together with St Mary's and even a couple from the Willows in Kirkham to pray our rosary led by some of the Parishioners including our young people, gazing across to the other parts of the Diocese but, also on a bigger scale joining in prayer around the country.

*Patricia, from Fleetwood, Castlerigg Manor*

**St George, Pray for us,  
St David, Pray for us,  
St Andrew, Pray for us,  
St Patrick, Pray for us.**

**Hundreds of people across the Diocese joined in this Human Rosary chain with excellent numbers reported in Blackpool and Lytham on what was a bitterly cold day. But whether part of a large group or a small one do not underestimate the power of your prayers. "For where two or three gather together in My name, there am I with them" – Matthew 18:20**



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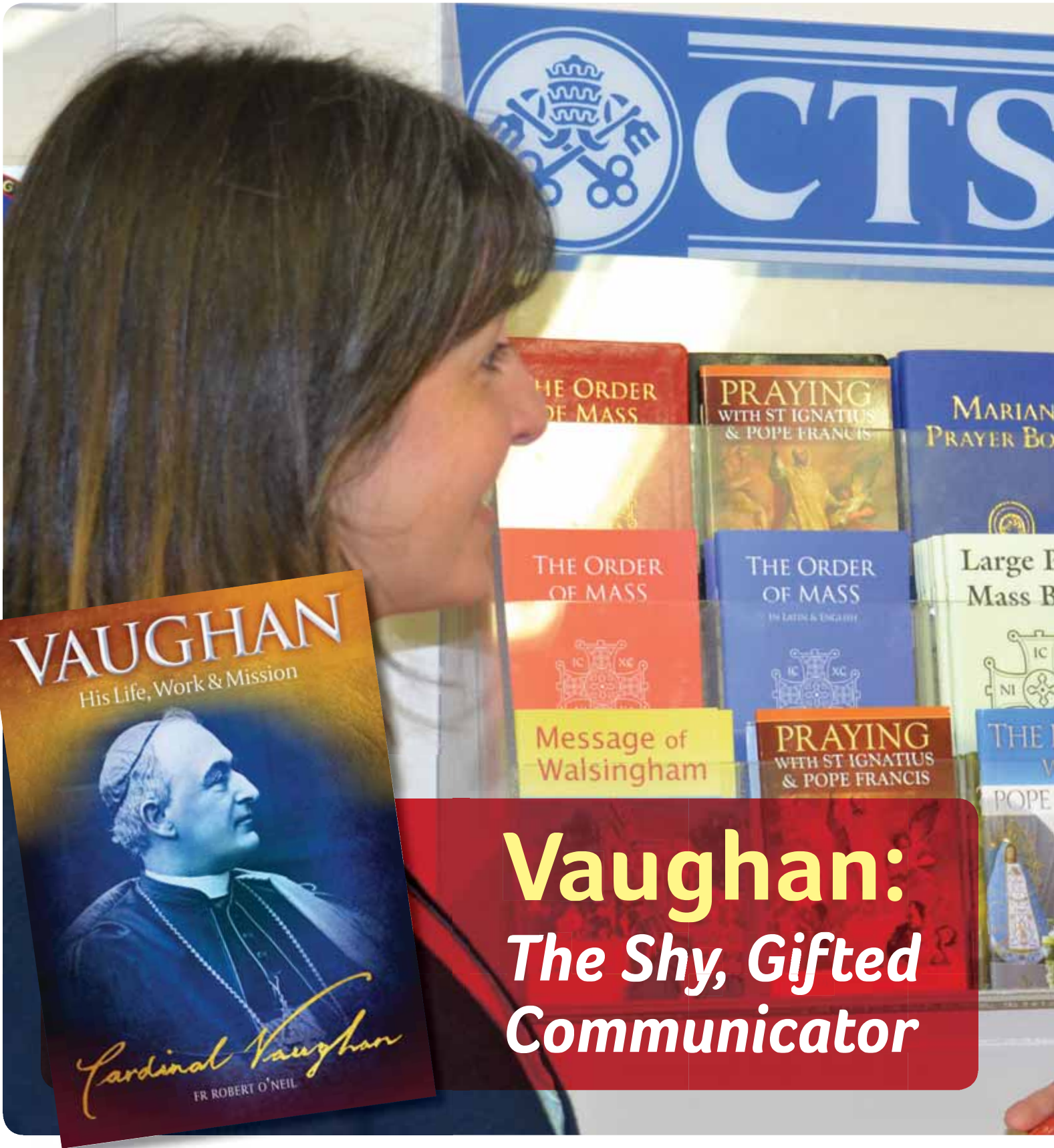
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# Vaughan: The Shy, Gifted Communicator

**A**braham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale, William Gladstone and many others – those fading sepia-tone Victorians have always fascinated me. It must be in their eyes. What is it that moved them? What made them tick? Because, as I was fast learning from my A-level history teacher, Fr Christopher, what moves people is what moves history, for good or bad.

45 years later I'm still staring, this time at eyes that have become more familiar: a rather stiff-looking Victorian clergyman, tall and handsome. He has timid, intelligent, even tired eyes. I think I can see what I'd call determination. Perhaps the eyes of a man who never expected to live to seventy. Yet these are the eyes of someone who longed to be a missionary all his life, and to his probable regret ended his long and furiously energetic life as Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, 1892- 1903. These are the eyes of the person who founded the organisation I work for – the CTS 150 years later!

True to form, Herbert Vaughan had renounced a considerable inheritance, life of ease, and a warm, loving family to pursue his vocation to be a priest. He grew up on the Welsh borders and had long dreamt of being a missionary to Wales. From a wealthy, established Catholic family that had survived penal times, he was the eldest of thirteen siblings most of whom became religious or clergy. Yet his entire life was marked by unstable health due to a weak heart. What is fascinating is that he survived at all, and greater still that he did so much.

He was widely known to reconcile with enemies and to ask forgiveness of those he had offended. People came to know that he spoke his mind, and that he did so with no malice but with

the utmost sincerity. He was simply put, a Christian man. He had learnt his faith and the truth of it from his mother. Missionary life fascinated him from an early age – he was overcome with the impulse to bring the good news of the gospel to those who were entitled to hear it.

All his life he had great devotion to St Joseph and to the Sacred Heart. He had been schooled by the Jesuits and Benedictines, at home and overseas, and enjoyed a long association with the Carmelites.

Vaughan it seems was never a parish priest or even a curate, but after training for the priesthood in Rome became vice rector at the new seminary at Ware, where he was popular. During that time he investigated missionary and priestly training in many different contexts. Juxtaposed between periods of poor health and recuperation there would be intense and prolonged bursts of energy – the fitful energy perhaps of a man racing against the clock.

He co-founded a dream of Cardinal Wiseman – a missionary society of diocesan priests (*the Oblates of St Charles*) – a very revolutionary idea at the time. At only thirty four years old he founded a new missionary order: the Mill Hill Missionaries. He absorbed himself in his first love: evangelisation and the order grew and prospered under his care. He had found his great mission for life.

But he was a marked man. At only forty he was made Bishop of Salford, where he remained for twenty years, visiting all his parishes, and founding the Children's Rescue Society, St Bede's





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The Editor, Edwina Gillett, 99 Commonsides, Ansdell, Lytham St Annes FY8 4DJ or alternatively email voicenews@hotmail.co.uk Entries must be received no later than 10 July. The winner will be the first correct answer chosen at random. The Editor's decision is final and the winner will be contacted by the CTS.

Commercial College for catholic children and countless similar initiatives. In my view, his eyes confirm the story that he felt guilty over the plight of the neglected and poverty stricken Catholic children of Manchester, with little future ahead of them. He had been too busy to help them. This sense of remorse drove him on to further projects despite the intolerable level of his responsibilities. Some say he took on too much – no doubt he would agree.

Just a few years before, he had founded the Catholic Truth Society – to become known over time as 'the CTS' - and it continues to this day as an active publishing charity.

At the tender age of 60 a request from the Pope that he become Archbishop of Westminster came. He begged to be excused his appointment but when he could see there was no way out he threw himself into Our Lord's hands and gave it all his energy, despite recurring and increasing illness. As a great fundraiser he raised funds to build Westminster Cathedral, surprising everyone by the sheer size of the project, its style and grandeur. He wanted to put Catholicism back on the map, not just for the world to see, but to inspire and encourage his flock after centuries of being forced into the shadows – as Christ had been. The first liturgy in the almost finished cathedral was his Requiem Mass. He died at Mill Hill among his Missionary Order confreres on 19 June 1903, the feast of the Sacred Heart, after a long illness, aged seventy-one.

*Fergal Martin, CTS General Secretary*

For more information on the 150th anniversary of the Catholic Truth Society please go to: [www.onefifties.org](http://www.onefifties.org)



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Diocesan altar servers  
Pilgrimage to Ladywell,  
courtesy of Bishop's Blog



**S**pring, according to Chaucer, puts a spring into the step of the would-be pilgrim. In the Middle Ages pilgrimage was a popular work of piety. The Protestants rejected the idea - you don't get to heaven by collecting brownie points awarded for 'good works'. True, but the faith that transforms your life naturally manifests itself in what you choose to do. Pilgrimage is now gaining popularity. In February the BBC put seven 'celebrities' on the Camino - to walk for a fortnight along the old pilgrim route to Compostella, the shrine of St James, the apostle, in Spain. They were to spend their time reflecting on the spiritual side of life, sharing their views between themselves and us.

Here at home our national pilgrimage centre is Walsingham, stretching back to Anglo-Saxon England, revived in the 19th cent. And, decade by decade becoming a more powerful magnet. Years ago, as a young priest, I was walking down the village street and was accosted by a BBC radio reporter who wanted to record my answer to her question of why I had come to Walsingham. I took fright and excused myself. I think now I would say that I had come to water my roots.

I came from a part of England with an unbroken Catholic presence and Walsingham was a historic link in the tradition to which I belonged, honouring Mary as Mother of God.

Within our diocese there are thousands each year who visit Fernyhalgh. Did any of our martyrs ever visit? Possibly St John Plessington who lived in Garstang, and maybe Bl. Thomas Whittaker whose missionary centre was up the road at Goosnargh, or Bl. Richard Hayhurst who lived in nearby Broughton, but we may be sure as we walk up the lane to the shrine that we are accompanied by the ghosts of thousands of confessors of the faith.

When it was hard to be a Catholic Fernyhalgh was a rallying point. The first Catholic king after the Reformation was James II. Even before he became king in 1685 the Protestant establishment had prevented him from taking public office by introducing a conditional oath that no Catholic could take. This Test Act made the 18th century a torrid time for Catholics. They were barred from the armed forces, the civil service and all the professions. They paid extra taxes and transactions concerning property were made difficult for them. The great majority had never seen a Bishop. Under James II John Leyburn was consecrated.

On his tour of the North, Fernyhalgh was chosen as a meeting place and over 1100 were confirmed there - some having walked over the sands from Ulverston. Their memory lingers along the tracks that lead to Ladywell which becomes for pilgrims the symbol of a faith which was treasured above the natural desire to get on in the world. If we tune in to what is in the air at Fernyhalgh we may hope to leave strengthened in our own faith.

Canon Thomas Dakin



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## Catenians on Pilgrimage

**34** pilgrims from across Carlisle and West Cumbria travelled to the Carfin Lourdes Grotto, Scotland's National Marian Shrine near Motherwell, on a visit organised and led by the Catenian Carlisle and Penrith Circle.

The Grotto was created in the 1920s, and built by local parishioners. It has since expanded beyond a single field to many acres, and the pilgrims were moved as they visited life-size depictions of Christ, Our Blessed Lady and many saints. Mass was celebrated in the adjoining Holy Ghost Fathers' Chapel by Fr. Terry Donnelly, whose mother came from Carlisle.

*Jack Johnstone*

**O**ur Lady and St. Edward in Preston celebrated the First Holy Communion of their young parishioners in May.

It was a brilliant weekend in many respects; the weather was glorious and the children were so smart and respectful as they received Our Lord for the first time in Holy Communion. In this the year of the Adoremus Eucharistic Congress it was a fitting celebration of God's greatest gift - the Blessed Sacrament. Many congratulations to all the children.

*Fr. Simon Hawkesworth*

**Editors note:** It would be impossible to feature every similar parish celebration but our good wishes and prayers go to all our children across the Diocese who have received Holy Communion for the first time this year.



**D**iocesan seminarian Philip Wrigley is now a Minister of Lector. This ministry was conferred by Bishop Tom Burns in the Chapel at Oscott College recently.

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**DIOCESE OF LANCASTER ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO LADYEWELL**  
(The Shrine of Our Lady and the Martyrs)

Led by  
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Bishop of Lancaster Diocese  
Date: Saturday 14th July 2018

**Programme of Events**  
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Groups of 10+ are kindly requested to contact the Shrine in advance to give notice of their attendance/numbers



*'I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.'*

*John 6:51*

# The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress



*Our Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission Environment Group will be there and invites you along.*

**The Eucharist has a central place in Catholic prayer, contemplation and adoration so you might be asking: Why have a whole congress about it?**

presentations. Sunday is devoted to Mass and a street Eucharistic Procession open to all. There will also be plenty of opportunities for prayer and adoration throughout the programme.

The Echo Arena has 10,000 spaces. However, there is only enough room for about 4 laity from each parish, so whether or not you are one of those the Faith and Justice Commission invites you to come along anyway and experience some of the parallel events taking place near the Arena. We are fortunate from the North-West that Liverpool is so accessible.

The Lancaster F&J Commission will join with the National Justice and Peace Network in the church of St Philip Neri (L8 7NL) hosting an event entitled *'Environment: On the Altar of the World'* – more on this in the next issue. Other parallel events include *'Reconciliation'* by Pax Christie, practical responses to physical hunger in *'Food for the Hungry'*, *'Welcoming the Stranger'* about immigration through the ages, and inter-denominational sharing on how we understand Eucharist. There are also exhibitions on archived history of church in this country during penal and more recent times, and another on eucharistic miracles; a chance to hear Jimmy McGovern explain how he came to write the series *'Broken'* and what he based the script on, and a *'Nightfever'* drop-in for young adults. All of these and much more will run on Saturday, some on Friday too, and provide opportunities for all ages to be involved.

The main programme in the Echo Arena is ticket only (*available through each parish*), but don't be put off if you don't have a ticket. The parallel events in the surrounding churches and venues are open to all on Friday and Saturday. We would love to see you there.

The Bishops of England and Wales are hosting the huge National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in Liverpool this September. So what is it, and should I go?

Running from Friday Sept 7th to Sunday 9th the Congress is a gathering of clergy, religious and laity which promotes an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Church. Our eye is drawn to the word Mission. It is outward and active; in the world and amongst the people created by God. The Bishops want the pilgrimage to bring people together from across the dioceses and further the service of the poor and marginalised in our midst.

We begin on the Friday by looking at theology and scriptural contexts, including a talk by Sr Margaret Atkins, an Augustinian sister and former lecturer of Theology at Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds. She explains you cannot teach the Eucharist unless it is from a lived context that gives it sense. There follow workshops on diverse practicalities such as preparing children, liturgies and music, extraordinary ministers, Christian unity, and teaching the Eucharist. Amongst these is a talk by the chair of the Catholic Social Action Network about Eucharist and Social Justice – how the Eucharist changes the way we can see the world and the demands it makes on how we should live.

The main Congress on Saturday has a great stage programme of keynote speeches, drama, testimony and

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Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

"Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

# Mad dogs and Englishmen!

by Julia Beacroft

And so in our reflections on the months of the year, we come to the wonderful month of July – a time when the sun is supposed to shine and when the hot sultry weather of summer usually begins.

Sadly, we are often disappointed as the temperamental British weather all too often lets us down, but when the sun does indeed shine and the sky is blue, there is no better place to be than this small island called Great Britain, which we, in turn, call home.

## Obsession

We know that we are often laughed at by our European brothers and sisters for our obsession with the great British climate and also the fact that it so often rains during our summer months. Only a couple of years ago, a young Spanish girl told me that I lived in a 'raining country', in answer to her question about where I was from. On the other hand, we are equally teased because we sometimes have no idea how to manage hot spells of weather either! We are not participants in the siesta and all too often we get sunburnt and exhausted as we neglect to take the correct precautions against the sun. It has to be said that the phrase 'Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid-day sun' can seem particularly apt!

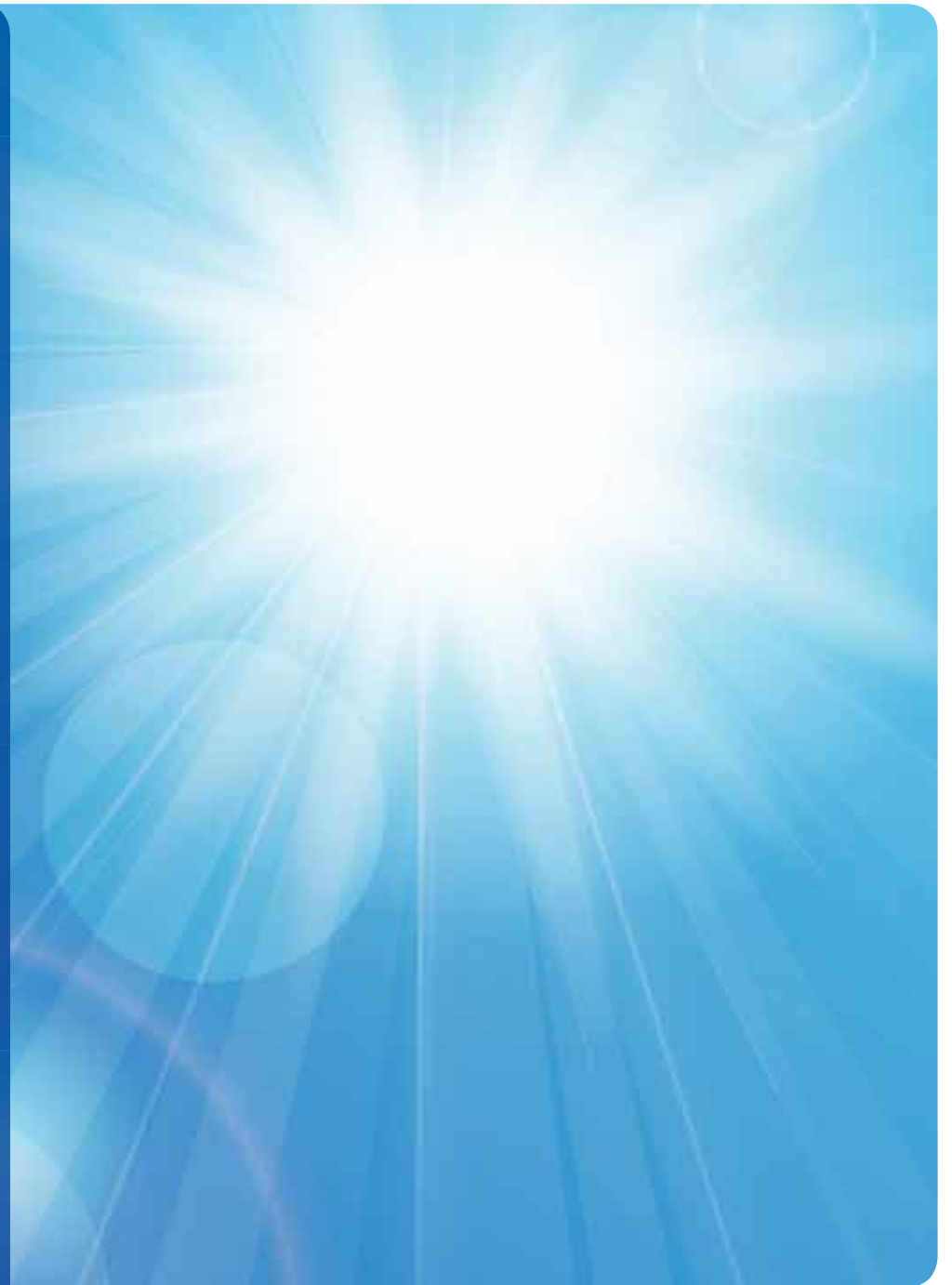
Yet this particular expression has always – perhaps bizarrely – reminded me of the passage from St Matthew's Gospel (given above), where the Canaanite woman pleaded with the Lord to help her. Her daughter was suffering and she knew that Jesus could alleviate this. Yet surprisingly Jesus refuses, stating that he has come for the Jews alone, but the woman gives such a convincing counter-argument that Jesus immediately heals her daughter.

## We too can receive

This story is as relevant for us today as it was then, as it refers to race and culture as well as faith. But you are probably wondering why this wonderful account reminds me of the words 'Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid-day sun'? The explanation is quite simple really... The woman refers to 'dogs', which were doubtless mad to receive the scraps from the table. Both Jesus and the woman were probably out and about in the heat of the sun and finally the story refers to race – Canaanites and Jews – and English are merely another race.

And so it is that as a nation who are often obsessed with climate, we can also be a nation of great faith. We may be like mad dogs as we risk the heat of the mid-day sun, but like the dogs in the Gospel we too can receive the crumbs that fall from the masters table. We too can receive Jesus.

Julia Beacroft is an author, editor, workshop leader and presenter in Catholic faith formation. Her book 'Sanctifying the Spirit' is available to buy from AMAZON, [www.waterstones.com](http://www.waterstones.com) or Book Depository. Please visit [www.sanciobooks.com](http://www.sanciobooks.com) for more information. Follow Julia on Facebook & Twitter. Copyright © Julia Beacroft 2018. All rights reserved.



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# Caught in the Nets of Injustice



**A**lthough Britain is an island, much of the fish we eat is not caught off our coast, but hundreds or thousands of miles away. If you have ever eaten a McDonald's Filet-o-fish there is a good chance that it came from the Alaska Ocean.

Yet the fishing industry has its murky side, because in some cases the fishers who go out to sea are victims of a form of modern day slavery.

Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) is trying to combat this. **8 July is Sea Sunday**, when the Church asks us to pray for seafarers and support the work of AoS, whose chaplains and ship visitors provide practical and pastoral help in ports around the coast of Britain and in many countries throughout the world.

The seafarers who work on fishing vessels often come from poorer parts of the world, such as India, the Philippines, or Thailand. They work long hours in harsh

conditions and for low pay. Fr Romeo u-Chang, AoS port chaplain in Singapore, explained that because of the lack of legal protection fishers are open to abuse. "They are often unfairly paid and cheaply treated. Some are also left stranded in Singapore, after they choose to leave vessels when they dock at the Jurong Fishery Port."

Many of the fishers he meets are from impoverished villages in countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines, lured by promises of high salaries.

On tuna vessels – usually Taiwanese-owned – men are usually made to work for 18 to 20 hours. Many find themselves unaccustomed to this kind of regime. "They are not exactly trained fishers," said Fr Romeo. "They are farmers and construction workers. They learn the trade on board vessels. The reality is not as good as what was offered. The captain normally abuses the fishers. It's very traumatic for

them. There is no documentation of suicides, but I've heard accounts from fishers I encountered."

Mick Duthie is a former detective chief superintendent in the Metropolitan Police who is now deputy director of the Santa Marta Group, set up by the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales to help combat human trafficking.

Last October, he attended the AoS World Congress in Taiwan last October. He said it gave him a real insight into the global fishing industry and just how difficult and dangerous a job it is to go to sea to catch the fish we eat.

"I was fortunate to visit ports in Taiwan and meet Indonesian and Filipino fishers. All were young men who had left their homes and families behind to earn a better living. Some of their contracts were for two years meaning they would not go home in that time."

"I asked what would happen if a child was born, a wife or family were in crisis or if there was death and they just shrugged their shoulders and said they would just have to continue working. Most had some form of debt and needed to pay this off."

"I saw some of the tuna vessels that are used and having heard the term 'floating coffins' I now totally understand this concept. The vessels were small and cramped with poor toilets and kitchen facilities. The fishermen slept on the floor with people having to climb over each other to get out. Their clothes were limited and were washed with sea water and the food they ate was very basic."

Mick said the Congress raised questions about what we do here in England and Wales and the fish we eat. "How sure can we be that the fish is ethically caught? How do we really know companies don't put profit before fishermen's welfare? I will certainly think hard and long about the fish I buy."

Greg Watts

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