



Bishop's Column

Deep down inside the human spirit, there is a flame of hope. Sometimes that hope can be expressed crudely in wanton restlessness or it can be enshrined in persevering heroic trust against the odds.

It is not optimism, though, like Mr Micawber, but genuine hope is based on personal experience of God's continual and providential care for us. God has walked at my side through thick and thin, he has been with me in all the ups and downs, and I trust, I hope, that he will continue to do the same in the future.

As we move through Advent and towards the Christmas season, I ask for each of us, I pray, I genuinely hope for each of us the gifts of happiness, peace of mind, and health in body and spirit. And because I ask the Lord, I know we shall receive. Because I pray, I believe we already possess them, and because I hope, I trust that these gifts will be poured into our lives.

We need to go beyond optimism; rather we need to become a beacon of hope and trust in our world desperate for that warmth, light and purpose that true hope always brings, hope in our all-loving, our ever-generous God and Father.

As we enter Advent and approach Christmas, it is a good thing to count our blessings and to remember others who are not as well blessed as us.

Deliver us, Lord we pray, from every evil, graciously grant us peace in our days, that by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Yours in blessed hope

+ Long

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Advent: A time of waiting and encounter

Adult formation co-ordinator DEACON DAVID CROSS suggests making reading the Bible part of your Advent preparations...

Many years ago, I did some voluntary work for an organisation that gave parents and children from low-income backgrounds a break from each other, just for a couple of hours one evening per week.

Another volunteer and I would plan activities ranging from ice skating to going to the cinema, visiting a museum or art gallery, a panto at Christmas, or even a visit to the local church.

Some evenings we would do art and crafts or discuss something they were interested in.

One evening close to Christmas, we got our young people to create a huge Christmas-themed collage for the youth centre's wall. The collage had lots of "Christmassy" images – Santa, a reindeer, Christmas trees, baubles, holly, gift boxes and so on.

But there was no crib scene – in fact, none of the scenes we would be so familiar with.

So I asked our youngsters, what did Christmas mean to them?

Only one or two mentioned anything to do with the birth of Jesus and these kids were ridiculed by their peers for having any knowledge at all of the Christmas story.

Christmas, I was told, was about getting

presents. It was a time when their parents, if the kids were lucky, would pull out all the stops to make sure their children had a Christmas to remember. Not one of them mentioned family time together or sitting round the table for a Christmas feast.

One or two said Christmas was just another day, no different from any other. Hearing this gave me a lump in my throat. Here was a group of youngsters, eight to 10 years of age, who had little if any knowledge of the true meaning of Christmas. I wondered how this could be so.

If we take a look around us now, it's easy to see how the true message of Christmas can be overlooked. Our attention can be focused on making sure we buy the right gifts or even that we receive the gift we want to receive.

In our consumer-driven world, it's easy for us to forget. This isn't helped by secular agencies or businesses who purposefully attempt to take Christ out of Christmas, calling it "Wintertide" or some other non-specific title that doesn't mean anything to anyone.

I wonder if at times we're quite reserved about our faith, or about telling people what we're celebrating at Christmas and at other times in the Church's calendar.

I'm as guilty as anyone. Many of us don't feel confident enough in the knowledge of our faith. Other faiths and Christian

denominations seem able to quote chapter and verse of their scriptures. As Catholics, many still feel they don't know the Bible well enough.

Let's begin to put that right, so that when we arrive at the beautiful feast of Christmas, we have begun to do what Pope Francis and many of his predecessors have encouraged us to do – to set out on a personal relationship with Jesus so that this Christmas will be the best it can be for us and our families.

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The Parishes of St Mary's Cathedral, St Francis of Assisi, St Clare of Assisi, Middlesbrough and the Lady Chapel, Osmotherley

CHRISTMAS EVE - SATURDAY, 24 DECEMBER

Lady Chapel

First Christmas Mass 3 pm

Cathedral

First Christmas Mass 6 pm

(suitable for children and families)

Midnight Mass 9 pm

With Bishop Terence Patrick Draine by candlelight

St Clare's

First Mass of Christmas 5 pm

(suitable for children and families)

St Francis

First Mass of Christmas 5 pm

(suitable for children and families)

CHRISTMAS DAY

Cathedral

Christmas Day Mass 10 am

St Clare's

Christmas Day Mass 9 am

St Francis

Christmas Day Mass 10 am

26 DECEMBER

Boxing Day Mass

Cathedral 9:30 am

Lady Chapel 11 am

New Year's Eve - SATURDAY, 31 DECEMBER

Cathedral

9:30am

11:15pm

Lady Chapel, Osmotherley 3pm

St Francis 6pm

May the Lord bestow on you and your family the gift of peace this Christmas filling your hearts with deepest joy and blessings that never cease.

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NEWS

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Advent: A time of waiting and encounter

During Advent, the Old Testament readings are all taken from the Prophet Isaiah, beginning at Chapter 2:1-5 with the amazing vision of how God is going to help his people forge peace by “hammering their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles”.

Read the whole text, pray with it, and take the message to heart. It only takes five minutes and what a payback you will receive. God won't be outdone in generosity.

On the Second Sunday of Advent, our reading is taken from chapter 11:1-10 and speaks about how the spirit of God rests upon the one the Lord is sending and that “Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips”.

Again, read the whole passage. Ask our Lord what he wants to reveal to you. Read the passage again, praying and looking for a key word or sentence.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, our reading from Isaiah is taken from chapter 35:1-6,10. There is a beautiful sentence that should find a place in our own hearts and minds: “Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, ‘Courage! Do not be afraid. Look, your God is coming... he is coming to save you’.”

For me, this is what Christmas is all about – God coming to save us in the form of a vulnerable child. Read the whole passage at least three times and let the beautiful imagery of Jesus find a home in you.

“The eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy.” Wow! Hopefully, by now you're not in a hurry to end your prayer and reflection time.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our passage goes back to chapter 7:10-14. We're nearly there! Christmas Day is just around the corner and our reading focuses on the maiden being with child.

BISHOP TERRY'S DECEMBER ENGAGEMENTS

- 6 Attends meeting of Bishop's Council at Middlesbrough 10.30am
- 7 Attends meeting of CSAN Board, Romero House, London 1pm
- 12 Attends meeting of Northern Church Leaders, Zoom 4pm
- 13 Attends Trustee Board Meeting, Middlesbrough 10.30am
- 14 Attends the Ordination of Bishop Peter Collins, Norwich All Day
- 18 Attends the Catholic Fellowship Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough 3pm
- 19-23 Bishop attends Personal Retreat
- 24 Night Mass of Christmas at St Mary's Cathedral 9pm

Catholic agencies unite to back Homes for Ukraine scheme

The number of people fleeing the brutal Russian war in Ukraine and in need of shelter will continue to rise this winter.

Russian attacks on critical energy infrastructure are even taking place in areas considered relatively safer, such as western Ukraine.

Prime minister Rishi Sunak has reaffirmed the UK government's support for Ukrainian defence efforts, as well as assisting those displaced by this unnecessary war.

St John of God Hospitaller Services (SJOG), in partnership with Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), is asking for people to provide much-needed help for Ukrainian guests.

Under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, hosts who commit to providing six months of accommodation are eligible to receive £350 to help with expenses associated with hosting.

SJOG and CSAN have launched a new project offering a matching pathway, training and support for hosts and guests.

The aim is to support 600 people on their

journey towards independence and provide opportunities to build a new life and integrate into the community.

One Ukrainian guest said: “I am so grateful to the UK government for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. I feel safe here, away from the sounds of sirens, curfew, and living in constant fear of shelling.

“The scheme has given me time to find my feet and build a new life. I have been in the UK for about seven months now, and I have found a job and moved out of my host's place. I am incredibly grateful for all her help and support. I will be forever grateful.”

The SJOG/CSAN scheme matches hosts with guests to the requirements of both parties, including area, home and health requirements and dietary and pet preferences.

It also offers...

- Mediating first e-meetings between hosts and guests
- Toolkit for hosts and a welcome book in Ukrainian for guests
- Online training about the hosting process

- Transfer from the Poland-Ukraine border to London
- A welcome box for the Ukrainian family upon arrival
- Support during the first month of placement
- Re-matching service
- Ensuring support from local communities
- A multilingual team that speaks English, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian and is ready to help

Details of the scheme have been sent to every parish in England and Wales and the agencies hope the Catholic community will rally round to support those coming from Ukraine.

People willing to share their space with those in need of a safe place can register their interest at forms.office.com/r/DFYUneZ7nC. For more information, visit sjog-homesforukraine.uk or email homesforukraine@sjog.org.uk. You can also find out more at facebook.com/sjoghomesforukraine.

Mary's Meals Doubles the Love this winter

Donations to school feeding charity Mary's Meals this winter will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5m – meaning the public's kindness will go even further to reach more desperately hungry children with life-changing school meals.

Thanks to the charity's low-cost approach, just £15.90 can normally feed a child with Mary's Meals every school day for a year, but during this time, the Double the Love campaign means a donation of £15.90 will feed two children.

Mary's Meals serves nutritious school meals in 20 of the world's poorest countries and its work has never been more important. Conflict, food insecurity and the cost-of-living crisis is having a devastating impact – in East Africa, a fourth season of failed rains is causing one of the worst droughts in decades, leaving millions of people on the brink of famine.

The promise of a meal at school attracts hungry children into the classroom where, instead of working or looking for food, they can gain an education and hope for a better future. The charity currently feeds 2,279,941 children every school day.

For children like Ulemu in Malawi, a daily meal at school has been life-changing. Ulemu is one of Chigodi Primary School's newest students, but the 15-year-old should be well into his secondary school career.

The teenager missed much of his early education because of hunger. With little food at home and no school feeding programme at his previous school, his attendance and performance suffered. Now he receives Mary's Meals at his new school.

Ulemu says: “If we had porridge at my old school, I could have been in secondary school right now. I would frequently miss classes because there was no food at home. Even if I could go to school, I could not concentrate because I was hungry.

“I concentrate in class and play with my

friends because the porridge keeps me from feeling hungry throughout the day. My academic performance has improved since I joined Chigodi.”

Mary's Meals has been serving children in Malawi nutritious school meals for 20 years. Chigodi is one of 1,044 schools in the African country where the charity delivers its school feeding programme. A daily meal at school is helping children like Ulemu – who dreams of becoming a doctor – gain an education and reach their goals.

Daniel Adams, executive director of Mary's Meals, says: “In a world devastated by conflict, food insecurity and drought, bringing new hope to desperately hungry children with our life-changing school meals has never been more urgent.

“That's why our Double the Love campaign is so important. This winter donations will go twice as far, allowing us to reach even more children in countries including South Sudan, Yemen and Haiti. Just £15.90 will feed two children for a whole school year – fuelling their learning and hopes for the future.

“We are deeply thankful to everyone who is helping us keep our promise to the more than 2.2m children who rely on our meals,



Ulemu is thriving at school in Malawi

while allowing us to reach the next hungry child waiting for Mary's Meals.” The Double the Love campaign runs until January 31 2023. Visit marysmeals.org.uk/doublethelove to find out more.



Children in Malawi receiving Mary's Meals – Photos by Andrew Cawley

Papal Nuncio joins schools' remembrance service

Papal Nuncio to Great Britain Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti took part in a moving service of remembrance during his three-day visit to the diocese.

The service took place at Postgate House, headquarters of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT), which runs 37 schools across Teesside and North Yorkshire.

Archbishop Gugerotti was accompanied by Bishop Terry, who hosted the three-day visit of the Vatican's diplomatic representative in London.

NPCAT CEO Hugh Hegarty welcomed the distinguished guests and representatives of schools throughout the trust.

"Today we gather as a family and look back and think of all those loved ones who passed over the last year," he said.

"In particular, our minds are drawn to the sad demise of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth only a few months ago."

Trust chair Joe Hughes said the war in Ukraine gave this year's remembrance commemorations an added poignancy and reminded us all how peace is fragile.

"In our schools and in many schools across the land, we now have links with the Ukrainian community," he said.

"We have pupils from Ukraine and parents of those pupils. As we stand here this morning, we remember the fallen British servicemen and women who died, particularly in the two great wars.

"But sadly, the war in Ukraine reminds us that wars are still happening around the world, and it's particularly sad that it's happening in our continent of Europe today.

"Maybe we'll think in particular today of the people of

Ukraine and the servicemen and women fighting on the side of Ukraine, and also those fighting on the side of Russia who've lost their lives."

Canon Derek Turnham began the service with a reading before reflections read by armed services veterans and pupils.

Children from St Thérèse Of Lisieux Catholic Primary in Ingleby Barwick and Christ the King and St Patrick's Catholic primary schools in Thornaby led the singing, before the playing of the Last Post signalled the start of the two-minute silence.

NPCAT CEO Hugh Hegarty ended the service with a message to Archbishop Gugerotti.

He said: "Finally, Your Excellency, I want you to do us a wee favour.

"When you return to Rome, take with you our blessings to Pope Francis, and tell him that he's in all our prayers."

Earlier in the day, Archbishop Gugerotti blessed and officially opened two new classrooms at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Middlesbrough, before spending time chatting to children (see page 5).

The next day Archbishop Gugerotti met volunteers at the Feast of Fun partnership at St Mary's Cathedral.

The group provides holiday activities with healthy food for children and their families facing challenges during school holidays.

Bishop Terry and Archbishop Gugerotti then travelled to Hull to celebrate the evening Mass at Our Lady and St Peter's



Archbishop Gugerotti presented the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* (For Church and Pope) medal to our recently retired director of schools Kevin Duffy, in recognition of his service to education in the diocese

Church and meet students from Hull University Catholic Chaplaincy.

On the final day of the visit, Sunday November 13, Archbishop Gugerotti celebrated 10am Mass at the cathedral. After lunch, Bishop Terry and Archbishop Gugerotti set off for a meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.



NPCAT CEO Hugh Hegarty lays a wreath



Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti leads prayers



Pupils at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Middlesbrough chat with Archbishop Gugerotti – see page 5 for more details of his visit



Canon Derek Turnham begins the service



A St Patrick's Catholic Primary School pupil joining in the singing



A pupil from St Thérèse of Lisieux Catholic Primary School

SVP

Turning concern into action during cost-of-living crisis

I asked our conferences to share with me what they had planned for the cost-of-living crisis and encouraged them to use the SVP fund if they needed it.

The responses were astounding, and I thank parishioners and members, without whom this would not be possible.

You can read about some examples in this edition of the Voice, but here are a just few of the other ways the St Vincent De Paul Society is helping...

- Setting up food banks and supporting existing ones with donations or volunteering all around the diocese
- Organising or liaising with other denominations to run warm spaces over the winter
- Liaising with schools to help families by providing uniform, bedding (30 duvets in one school in Hull) and winter clothes
- Helping elderly people with household bills, food and other necessities

- Supporting asylum seekers and refugees with food, clothing, baby goods and language training
- Feeding homeless people.

If you or someone you know needs help or support, contact your parish SVP conference, visit svp.org.uk/request-help or email sharonp@svp.org.uk for a local contact.

Frances Gilchrist
Middlesbrough President, SVP

Fundraising sleepout shows solidarity with homeless

Members of the York University Catholic Student Society decided last year to set up a conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society for 18 to 35-year-olds (SVP1833).

From the start, the students were keen to get involved in practical ways of putting their faith into action and serving the local community.

They began by joining in with an initiative of some of the parishioners of York Oratory, who were taking leftover food from a local Italian restaurant to give to the homeless on the streets of York. They have now taken over this ministry and go out twice a week.

Along with giving out pizzas and other food from the restaurant, the students, funded by St Wilfrid's SVP conference also buy drinks for those they serve and, in the winter, provide warm items of clothing to those who

need it.

To raise money to cover the costs of these drinks and other items, the students organised a sponsored sleepout.

They also wanted to do it in solidarity with the homeless people they have come to know, so they would have some experience of what it's like to sleep rough.

Seven SVP1833 members slept out in the garden of the Catholic Chaplaincy building and raised £730 between them, which will be so helpful over the winter months.

It's great to see the students not only having fun during their time at university but also truly living out their Catholic faith and continuing to grow in their love of God and his people through the SVP1833.

Joanna Allen

Teamwork makes food bank dream work

Members and friends of St Wilfrid's SVP Conference in York, together with York University's SVP1833 group, formed a working party of 22 to clean and decorate St Joseph's Church Hall in preparation for a session of a new food bank.

Hard work by both beginners and experienced painters was rewarded with bacon sandwiches and takeaway pizzas, and the hall was transformed in seven hours.

Father Daniel Seward of York Oratory accompanied by Father Richard Duffield, now the university's Catholic chaplain, blessed an ecumenical team in its new venue and prayed for the success of this food bank,

currently the only one in the York area to be held on Catholic premises.

The first session was a happy occasion as the team came to work together, give hospitality and provide food, courtesy of the Trussell Trust, for 25 hungry mouths, including families with several children.

The power of Christians working ecumenically was palpable. This scheme can only develop and grow in these times that are proving difficult for so many people.

It came about directly as a result of prayer over a long period and heeding the SVP motto, "Turning concern into action".

Angela Breffit, St Wilfrid's SVP



St Wilfrid's SVP Conference in York and York University's SVP1833 group cleaned and decorated St Joseph's Church Hall before a new food bank session

Popular SVP night returns in York

The popular pie and pea quiz night organised by the SVP at St Aelred's, York, is back after a Covid-related absence. Quizmaster was Bob Graves, and there was also a raffle and bingo. Everyone enjoyed the evening and a magnificent sum of £276 was raised for the SVP.

Jesuits hold online prayer school

The Jesuits in Britain spirituality team is holding an online School of Prayer on Tuesday December 13 and again on Thursday January 19. This event is an ideal introduction to various types of prayer suitable for Catholics wishing to deepen their prayer life. For further details and a link to book, visit jesuit.org.uk/events/school-of-prayer



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Special visitor opens St Joseph's new classrooms

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Middlesbrough welcomed a very special visitor to open two new classrooms.

Papal nuncio Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti was accompanied by Bishop Terry, who was hosting the nuncio's first-ever visit to the diocese.

The classrooms, which are designed to cope with growing demand for places at the Marton Road School, were built off-site, with children being invited to visit and see them being constructed before they were brought into the school's grounds.

Executive headteacher Liz King said the investment by Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust was a big boost for the school.

She said: "St Joseph's is an amazing school and is highly respected in the local community. We're oversubscribed and many parents and even grandparents who came here want their children and grandchildren to come.

"We're very welcoming and our mission is to recognise every child is unique and to develop their talents."

Archbishop Gugerotti's visit made the day especially memorable.

Mrs King said: "It was an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime experience, and he was so down to earth.

"When I tried to introduce him to the governors, he said he wanted to talk to the pupils first, and the way he was with the

children was just wonderful."

After cutting the ribbon on the new building, Archbishop Gugerotti took time to make two very special presentations.

Dorothy Alton was about to celebrate her 80th birthday but has no plans to step down from her role as a lunchtime supervisor after 38 years at the school.

Archbishop Gugerotti blessed and presented her with a silver cross during his visit to the school to cut the ribbon on two new classrooms.

Mrs King told Archbishop Gugerotti and guests: "Dorothy has one of the most challenging jobs in the school as a lunchtime supervisor. She's been here since 1984 and is still a very valued member of our staff. And thankfully, she isn't going anywhere yet!"

Archbishop Gugerotti told Dorothy: "You've got the secret of perpetual youth – you look much younger than me!"

Asked what makes the school so special, Dorothy said: "It's the children, really. When the little ones come in for nursery, I give them high fives and a cuddle and they love that."

Archbishop Gugerotti also presented a gift to David Nolan, who is stepping down as a governor after 16 years, the last 10 as chair.

"It's been an interesting and rewarding experience and I've seen lots of changes in the school and in the education environment as well," said David.



Archbishop Gugerotti cutting the ribbon at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's new classroom – Photo by Chris Booth

"St Joseph's has a wonderful team and many of them have been here for a lot of years because it's so good.

"I hope the school continues to grow and that more young people can benefit from what it has to offer."



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Praying for a positive outcome for our planet

As I write this, COP27 is taking place in Egypt.

In a powerful opening address, UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres challenged world leaders, saying that the 8 billionth child was about to be born and what would we say when they ask, “What did you do about climate change when you had the chance?”

“The clock is ticking,” he said. “We are in the fight of our lives and we are losing. Greenhouse gas emissions keep growing, global temperatures keep rising and our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on our way to climate hell, with our foot still on the accelerator.

“Climate change is on a different timeline and a different scale. It is the defining issue of our age. It is the central challenge of our century. It is outrageous, unacceptable and self-defeating to put it on the back burner.

“Human activity is the cause of the climate problem, so human action must be the solution – action to re-establish ambition and action to rebuild trust, especially between north and south.

“The science is clear. Any hope of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees means achieving global net zero emissions by 2050. But that 1.5 degrees is on life support and the machines are rattling. We are getting dangerously close to

the point of no return. And to avoid that dire fate, all G20 countries must accelerate their transition now, in this decade.”

I hope and pray there will be some positive outcomes agreed upon and implemented to address the climate crisis, and that the promised finance is delivered to address the loss and damage experienced by so many countries around the world.

Carol Cross
Community Participation Coordinator

How you can help provide refuge this Advent

This Advent comes in another year of many global crises and with grief in our hearts.

We at CAFOD, and all our church networks, have seen some of those first-hand in our work with Ukrainian refugees, Pakistani families hit by floods and in East Africa, with one of the worst food crises in history. But our faith means we have hope, and never more so than in Advent, as we wait in hope and prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus.

We would like to share this story of hope with you. A story of courage and compassion and of communities taking in strangers when they had nowhere else to turn, even though they themselves had barely enough.

It’s a story from South Sudan, one of the poorest countries in our world. May this story give you hope that God and human kindness are all around us, especially in places where people need help the most.

Nyanguet Ket, a mother of five, told us; “I fled my village due to intercommunal fighting. I witnessed many being attacked. Properties were lost and my village burned

down. I escaped into the swampy area with my children, where we stayed for two days without food. We suffered mosquito bites. The experience was horrible. I lost my friend.”

Nyanguet courageously set out, walking over 80 miles to find refuge for her family. Hope led them and hope met them. Thankfully, a community opened their doors to this determined mother and her children.

The community shared what little food they had.

“We escaped here for refuge,” said Nyanguet. “The host community hosted us well. I have a piece of land that I am cultivating now. I am really pleased I have moved out of trouble. My children and I feel safe here now.”

If you are inspired by Nyanguet’s story, will you share hope with a vulnerable family this Advent?

Your support can put an Emergency Food Package into the hands of a mother determined to feed her family. Donate online at cafod.org.uk/give.



Nyanguet Ket, from South Sudan, with her five children – Photo by Achuoht Deng/Caritas South Sudan

A time of waiting, hope and expectation

As Advent approaches, Catherine, from CAFOD’s Theology team, shares some ways to help you mark this season of waiting, hope and expectation...

I love Advent, with all the preparation and anticipation of this season.

As soon as December starts, the rest of the world seemingly goes Christmas-mad. But I like taking time to remember the hope this season brings, to prepare for the light that is coming into the darkness, and to watch and wait for the main event.

During Advent, we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Christ, but also waiting for Christ who will come again, even though we don’t know when that will be.

Throughout the festive hustle and bustle, I try to hold on to the idea, then, that we are still journeying. We have not yet quite reached our destination. To me, waiting seems to make Christmas all the more exciting when it finally arrives, and we can celebrate the birth of Christ with joy.

Here are two things that help keep me grounded during this season and are ideal ways to hold on to its true meaning...

Advent calendar

We provide daily reflection emails based on the scripture readings of the day throughout Advent. These offer an opportunity to pause, think and pray, as well as to look outwards to the world around us. Each reflection also offers us a way to consider putting our faith into action, inspired by what we have read. You can sign up to receive the daily reflections at cafod.org.uk/advent.

Family prayers

As a parent of a five-year-old and a seven-year-old, I am

always looking for activities to keep them amused, as well as to keep them in touch with their faith. Our family prayer resources offer a mixture of creative activities and ideas to mark the season, as well as to introduce a moment of family prayer into this busy time.

I remember the words of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si’*: “The Lord comes that we might find him in this world of ours.” (#236)

Our Advent prayers can help guide prayer time during this season, as we wait with joy for the Lord, the hope of the world.

Thank you to our volunteers and supporters for all you do to support and promote our work in our parish and school communities. We wish everyone a blessed, hopeful and peace-filled journey through Advent.

Daily Advent messages focus on those in need

This Advent, a new free daily resource will invite us to consider how hospitality is at the heart of the Christmas message – including welcoming refugees and others in need.

Since February, Sanctuary Foundation has been supporting the Homes for Ukraine scheme, resourcing hosts and guests and advising the government, while working closely with refugee charities and other partner organisations to welcome Ukrainians to the UK.

Now, in this free Advent resource, founder Krish Kandiah invites us to join him on a special Advent journey through a series of 25 short video reflections – one for each day of Advent.

He said: “With everything that’s happening – politics and the economic crisis and world events – many of us

will be feeling anxious, hopeless or cynical. This Advent, I want to invite you to join me on a journey of spiritual renewal.

“Each day, we’ll take a fresh look at an aspect of the Christmas story to reboot our souls, to have a ‘spiritual defibrillator’ moment, to wake ourselves up to the goodness and kindness of God, as we get ready to celebrate the coming of Jesus.”

To receive an email each day in Advent with a two-minute devotional reflection based on the Biblical account of Christmas to watch or read, sign up at bit.ly/SF-advent.

To find out more about the Sanctuary Foundation, visit sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk.

Giving to your parish moves into digital age

As a diocese, we rely on the generosity of you, our parishioners, to support us in our mission.

In an increasingly cashless society driven by advances in technology, we must be able to respond to ways in which people can continue with this support.

Traditionally, the weekly cash collection has been the bedrock of financial support for our parishes. In recent times, parishioners have set up standing orders directly into parish accounts.

More recently still, the pandemic has highlighted the significance of contactless and card payments, and it is important that we now look to offer this facility to our congregations and visitors too.

Diocesan gift aid officer Dan Woodgate has teamed up with Dona and is leading the implementation across the diocese.

"It's great to be at the forefront of this digital giving campaign, and to show that the Diocese of Middlesbrough is in touch with the needs of society," he says.

"We use our bank cards an awful lot in everyday life, so why not when we come to church? We very much value the ongoing support from parishioners and, hopefully, this helps to make giving that bit easier."

Since the first installation in Holy Week earlier this year, the "digital collection plates" have seen hundreds of donations received and can now be found in more than



20 churches across the diocese, from Thornaby down to Hull.

In addition to the physical contactless machine, parishes that sign up also benefit from a unique web donations page. This can be accessed directly from the internet or by scanning a QR code like the one shown in this example on a mobile phone or tablet.

If you would like to take advantage of the current Christmas promotion (first three months support fees waived) and receive a device before Christmas, or you have any queries about digital giving, contact Dan directly on 01642 850505 extension 254 or at giftaid@rcdmidd.org.uk.



Dan Woodgate demonstrating a digital collection plate at St Charles Borromeo Church, Hull

Time for carols at Music for the Mind

The Music for the Mind team will hold a carol service for people living with dementia, their friends, carers and families at St Mary's Cathedral on Monday December 12.

The service will be led by Trish McLean and Monsignor Gerard Robinson will welcome guests and introduce the carol service.

Children from St Augustine's, St Gerard's and St Clare's Catholic primary schools will give the readings and lead the singing, while St Clare's pupils are also making Christmas cards for the participants.

Tea, coffee and cake will be served in the hall from 1.30pm, before everyone moves



into the cathedral for the service at 2.30pm.

The service is being live-streamed – go to YouTube and search for "Middlesbrough Diocese Music for the Mind".

The organisers would like to thank the Knights of St Columba for technical support and for advising on the purchase and fitting of a camera for the cathedral hall.



Bishop Terry was the principal celebrant at our annual Mass for deceased bishops and clergy at St Mary's Cathedral on the Feast of All Souls. After Mass, the clergy and congregation moved out to the garden, where our deceased bishops are buried. After a short reading, Bishop Terry blessed the graves. The ceremony finished with the singing of the Salve Regina.

Words and picture by Paul Bowen

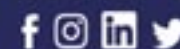


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Christmas Mass

Ampleforth Abbey
St Laurence's Abbey Church
Christmas Eve
10.15pm Christmas Night Mass
Christmas Day
10am Mass of Christmas Day

Cottingham
Holy Cross
Christmas Eve
Christmas Vigil Mass 6.30pm
Midnight Mass
Christmas Day
10am Mass During the Day

Kirkbymoorside & Helmsley
St Chad's & St Mary's
Christmas Eve
7pm Carol Service, St Chad's Kirkbymoorside
8pm Mass, St Chad's Kirkbymoorside
Christmas Day
9am St Mary's Helmsley
10.30am St Chad's Kirkbymoorside

Nunthorpe
St Bernadette's
Christmas Eve
5.00pm Mass with Children's Nativity
8.00pm "Midnight" Mass
Christmas Day
9.30pm Dawn Mass of Christmas

Bedale/Northallerton
St Mary and St Joseph Bedale
Christmas Eve
4.30pm Carols
5.00pm Mass
Christmas Day
11.00am Mass
Sacred Heart Northallerton
Christmas Eve
7.30pm Carols
8.00pm Mass
Christmas Day
9.15am Mass

Hessle
Our Lady of Lourdes
Christmas Eve
6.30pm (Family Mass),
11.30pm Readings & Carols,
12 midnight Christmas Mass
Christmas Day
8.30am & 10.30am Mass
NO Sunday Evening Mass

Lealholm, Egton Bridge, Ugthorpe
Our Lady, Lealholm
Christmas Eve
5.30pm Carols
6.00pm First Mass of Christmas
St Hedda, Egton Bridge
Christmas Eve
8.00pm First Mass of Christmas
St Anne, Ugthorpe
Christmas Day
10.00am Mass

Redcar and Marsk
The Parish of Blessed Nicholas Postgate
Incorporating the Churches of:
Sacred Heart, Lobster Road, Redcar TS10 1SH
St Augustine, Warwick Road, Redcar, TS10 1SH
St Bede, Southfield Road, Marske, TS11 7BP
Christmas Eve Masses
4.00 pm Sacred Heart
5.00 pm St Bede
6.00 pm St Augustine
7.00 pm Sacred Heart
Christmas Day Mass
9.30 am Sacred Heart
All Masses are suitable for families with young children but the 4.00 pm Mass will be especially for children.

Our Lady Star Of The Sea Catholic Parishes Of Bridlington - Eastfield - Filey
Our Lady and St Peter's Church, 32, Victoria Road, Bridlington, YO152AT
St George's Church, Moor Lane, Eastfield, Scarborough YO113LW
St Mary's Church, 23, Brooklands, Filey, YO149BA
Christmas Eve
Eastfield at 6pm
Filey at 6pm
Bridlington at 7pm
Christmas Day
Bridlington at 9am
Eastfield at 11am
Filey at 11am

Hull
Saint Bede's Staveley Road, Hull
Christmas Eve
Carol Service 4.30pm, followed by Vigil Mass and Blessing of the Crib at 5.00pm
Sacred Heart Church, Southcoates Lane Hull
Christmas Eve
Carols 6.30pm followed by Vigil Mass & Blessing of the Crib 7.00pm
Christmas Day Mass 9.30am
Christmas Day
Mass 9.30am

Middlesbrough
St Therese of Lisieux
22nd December
Candlelit Carol Service 6.30pm
Christmas Eve
Children's Mass plus nativity 5.30pm
First Mass of Christmas 8.00pm
Christmas Day
9.30am Mass

Middlesbrough
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH
Christmas Eve Sat 24th December
Corpus Christi Church
4.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas
Saint Gabriel's Church
5.30pm Vigil Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day Sun 25th December
Saint Gabriel's Church
10.00am Christmas Day Mass

Hull
Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel
Christmas Eve
Confessions 6.30pm-7.00pm.
Carols at 7.30p.m
First Mass of Christmas at 8.00pm
Christmas Day
8.30am Mass
10.00am Mass

Thirsk & Osmotherley
All Saints, Thirsk
Christmas Eve
5.00pm - 6.00pm Confessions
7.00pm First Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day
10.30am Morning Mass

Christmas Times

Whitby

St Hilda, English Martyrs 19th December

7.00pm Festive songs sung by
the Tuesday Singers

Christmas Eve

5.00pm Carols - St Hilda, Whitby
5.30pm Mass - St Hilda, Whitby

Christmas Day

9.00am Mass - English Martyrs,
Sleights
10.30am Mass - St Hilda, Whitby

The Parish of Our Lady and St Benedict

Serving the Communities of the Valley and beyond

Saturday 24 December

10.00am Children's Crib Service
11.00am Confessions & Exposition
6.00pm Family Mass of
Christmas Night

8.30pm Mass of Christmas Night
followed by refreshments

Sunday 25 December

10.00am Mass of Christmas Day

York

English Martyrs

Christmas Eve

6.00pm First Mass of Christmas
10.00pm Midnight Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day

10.30am Mass

Dalton Terrace, York YO24 4DA

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Middlesbrough Voice
readers a very Merry
Christmas from all the
Parishes, the Diocese
and everyone at
CathCom

York

St George

Tuesday 20th December

Candlelit Carol Service
at 7pm

Wednesday 21st December

10am Mass

Saturday 24th December

Confessions, 10-11am
and 6.30-7.30pm before Mass
Mass at 8pm

Christmas Day

9.30am Mass

York

St Joseph and St Wilfrid

St Joseph

Christmas Day

9.30am Mass with Carols

26 December, St Stephen's Day (Boxing Day)

No Mass

St Wilfrid

Christmas Eve

5.00pm Sung Mass followed by
blessing of the crib.

11.15pm Carols and Readings
followed by Midnight Sung Latin
High Mass (EF)

Christmas Day

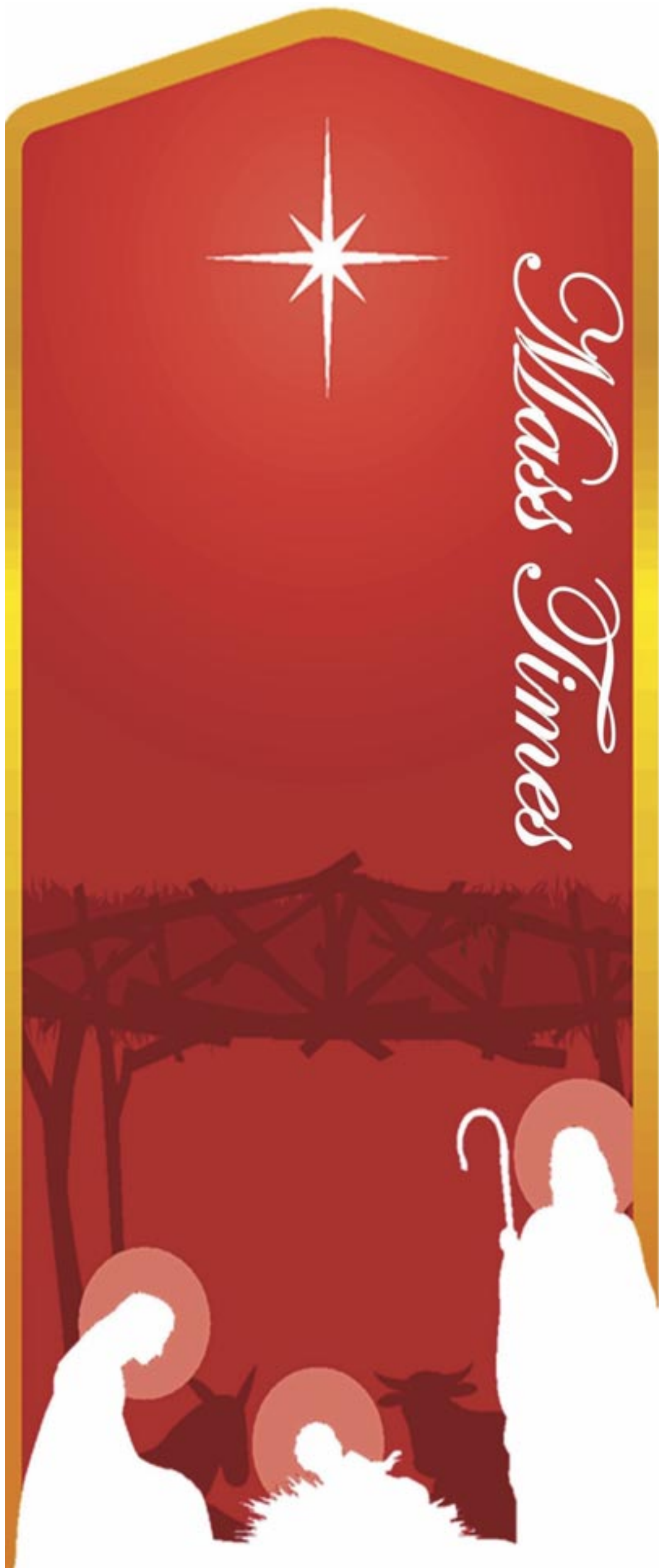
8.30am Mass

10.30am Mass with Carols

4pm Benediction of the Blessed
Sacrament followed by Prayers at
the Crib

26 December, St Stephen's Day (Boxing Day)

Mass at 12.10pm



NEWS

A Congo Christmas carol

Francis Hannaway, from St Gabriel's Parish, Middlesbrough, lives and works in Basankusu Diocese, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It always amazes me how early advertising for Christmas begins, and that's long before Advent has even started.

Advent is when we take stock of how we live, in preparation for the Nativity of Christ. Even so, we're already buying presents and decorating our homes. We might start to watch some classic films, like A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens – and perhaps that helps us in our reflection.

In the story, set in snowbound Victorian England, Ebenezer Scrooge is a character we wouldn't like to be associated with. But we might be left feeling uncomfortable in recognising some aspects of our own selfishness.

The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Bob Cratchit and family trying to enjoy Christmas. Tiny Tim, a very frail child, is with them. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows a different scene. Tiny Tim has passed away. Scrooge is urged to change his ways, to improve his life by loving his neighbour – in this case, the family of his underpaid worker, Bob Cratchit.

As it happens, here in the Congo, at the

malnutrition centre, we accepted a little boy called Tim, Timoth   in French, and yes, he was tiny. All the children are frail, even the ones who are plump because of the swelling. As we're always short of food stock, Judith asked me to make a special push for funds.

"I've heard that during Advent people in Europe like to buy presents," she said. "I'm sure people will support Timoth  's treatment."

She wiped her hands on her apron after stirring a huge pan of beans, sweat from the midday sun glistening on her forehead. The heat in the rainforest is relentless, even in December.

Our "Tiny Tim" was very underweight. He didn't walk with a crutch like in the story, but had difficulty standing. His swollen feet were painful, and his left eye was almost closed because his face was also swollen.

I took some photos of him with his family to post on social media. Two months of treatment on our feeding programme, including medicines, would cost around  250. Not only that, but we also have another 30 "Tiny Tims" at the centre.

Sadly, the spectre of Christmas Yet to Come is only too real here – we've lost five children since September. There have been



Francis Hannaway, who runs a malnutrition centre in the Democratic Republic of Congo

certain times when we've become dangerously close to running out of food to feed the children as well.

Scrooge was left with a choice. His life wouldn't continue to be just about himself, but it would include some social action. What better way to prepare ourselves for the

coming of Christmas?

Wishing you all a peaceful and reflective Advent from us both. In the words of Tiny Tim, "God Bless us, every one!"

•You can follow Francis and his work in the Congo on Facebook and Instagram.

Child abuse inquiry releases final report

A statement from the Catholic Council for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse on the final report of the inquiry...

The Panel of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) has published its final report after seven years of work.

The Catholic Council welcomes this report, thanks the Inquiry for its work and will carefully study its contents and recommendations.

In the work of safeguarding all who are members of, or come into contact with, the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, at no point will the Church stop on its journey of dedicated effort in making the life and work of the Church safe for all.

Before the publication of the case study report into the Roman Catholic Church in November 2020, the Church commissioned an independent review into its safeguarding work and structures, which is in the process of being implemented.

The new national safeguarding body, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA), which began operational work in April 2021, provides a regulatory function to organisations within the Church in England and Wales, ensuring that standards are upheld, and all safeguarding processes adhered to.

These changes were fully aligned with the inquiry's recommendations in the case study report.

Key to this progress is the voice of victims and survivors of abuse, which has been an integral element in the development of this new agency.

The Church remains committed to listening with humility to those who have been hurt by the actions of Church members so that their experiences will inform our work.

It is important for us to again offer an unreserved apology to all those who have been hurt by abuse in the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales and to reaffirm our commitment to the continued refinement and improvement of our safeguarding work to protect all children and the vulnerable.

The Catholic Council for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was created

in 2015, at the commencement of the Inquiry's work. It has assisted IICSA under its chair, Baroness Nuala O'Loan, and has representatives from both the Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious. It has supported the numerous organisations that make up the Catholic Church in England and Wales in their engagement with IICSA and ensured that the evidence required by the Inquiry was collated appropriately.

You can find out more in the safeguarding section of the Bishops' Conference website cbcew.org.uk/safeguarding and the CSSA website catholicsafeguarding.org.uk. The final IICSA report can be found at iicsa.org.uk.

A Letter From Madonna House – The unquiet Season of Advent



Advent is acclaimed as a season of quiet expectation. While I fully acknowledge that this might be the intended tenor of this brief but rich liturgical season, such a serene, reflective period has never been my experience of Advent.

Rather, despite my best efforts, Advent has almost universally been the busiest of seasons for me. And as far as I am aware, this experience seems to be shared by most Christians who actually attempt to observe this shortest of liturgical seasons.

Outside of the liturgy, our days seem to be taken up by 1,001 preparations for Christmas. We have Christmas cards to write, we have Christmas parties to attend, we have presents to purchase and wrap, we have plenty of baking to get on with, some of us have music or school pageants to rehearse or homilies to write, and all the while we ride a wave of growing anticipation for the feast that makes many actually long for the passing of the first few days of Christmas so as to finally be able to

collapse into an armchair in a puddle of exhaustion.

I know this is not the Church's intended experience of Advent, but it nevertheless remains the reality for many. I used to be disappointed by this, feeling that I should somehow be able to do the impossible by accomplishing with a snap of the fingers all the tasks on my pre-Christmas list so as to then enter into the quiet stillness of long Advent nights.

But such an expectation, with its accompanying frustration, is simply not in reality. Rather, I am being invited to live the packed days of this season in a spirit of Advent. The invitation is to be open to the Advent comings of Christ as he might make his presence known in the very midst of the busyness.

The first place that Christ would like to make his presence known to us this season is in the liturgy. Thankfully, the Advent liturgy remains the one place where the weary Christian can take refuge from the

pre-Christmas hustle and bustle.

The liturgical texts of Mass each day are rich; let's not let them pass us by. Let's take a few minutes when we can receive the Word of God that is proclaimed at each day's Mass.

And let's welcome Christ more deeply at each Holy Communion, inviting him to remain with us and even to lead us forth as we launch into our other activities.

Then, let us be open to Christ's surprises through our Advent days. For, our pre-Christmas activities are ultimately centred around him and the love of him in our family and friends. He, Emmanuel, God-with-us, is present within every bit of the busyness.

So, amid each Advent activity, let us remain open to his presence, so that we can arrive at Christmas better prepared to proclaim our "Joy to the world [for] the Lord has come."

Father Michael Weill

Bishop announces New Year clergy moves

Bishop Terry has announced that parish priest of St Joseph's, Stokesley, Father Bill Charlton will retire early in the New Year and move to Northallerton.

Current dean of St Mary's Cathedral Monsignor Canon Robinson will move to St Joseph's and will also have pastoral care of St Margaret Clitherow, Great Ayton, and St Mary, Crathorne.

Canon Paul Farrer is being welcomed back to the diocese after spending six years as rector of the Royal English College of St Alban in Valladolid, Spain.

He will take over as cathedral dean and will also have pastoral care of St Francis of Assisi, St Clare and the Lady Chapel at Osmotherley.

The moves will take place by the Feast of the Epiphany, Friday January 6 2023.

American missionary to give Advent retreat

Well-known US missionary Meg Hunter-Kilmer has agreed to give an Advent retreat at St Paulinus, Guisborough, during her tour of the UK.

Meg felt a call some years ago to give up her "normal life" and follow the Lord by driving around speaking to people about Jesus.

She lives out of her car and survives completely on God's providence.

Visit piercedhands.com/about-me/faq to find out more about Meg and her mission.

The retreat, which is an ideal chance to prepare spiritually for our celebration of Christmas, will take place on Saturday December 3 from 1pm to 4pm.

All are welcome.



American missionary Meg Hunter-Kilmer

Please remember in your prayers the following clergy from our diocese whose anniversaries are this month. They are listed here along with their final resting place.

3	1925	Rev James Butler	Hull
4	1897	Rt Rev Mgr Thomas Witham	Lartington
7	1928	Rev Bernard Kelly	Grangetown
8	1938	Rt Rev Mgr Canon Bernard McCabe	Whitby
8	2000	Very Rev Canon Patrick Moynagh	Loughlinstown
9	1921	Rev Arthur Calvert	Holme-on-Spalding-Moor
9	1997	Rev Patrick Morris	Thurles
14	1931	Rev William McKernan	Staithes
15	1982	Rev Charles Wilde	Whitby
15	1968	Very Rev Canon William Clifford	Market Weighton
15	1980	Rev Gerard Banks	Holme-on-Spalding-Moor
17	1934	Very Rev Canon Cornelius English	Bedale
23	1884	Rev Joseph Fisher	Hedon
24	1917	Rev Charles Van Pouke	York
24	1971	Very Rev Canon William Warmbold	Wycliffe
25	1950	Rev Patrick Fox	Hessle
26	1996	Rev David Cawkwell	Los Angeles
27	2004	Rt Rev Kevin O'Brien (Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus)	Middlesbrough
29	1895	Rev Stephen O'Hare	Holme-on-Spalding-Moor
30	1908	Rev William Donnelly	North Ormesby
30	2013	Rev Dermot Nunan	Redcar

A Prayer to the Blessed Virgin (Never fails)

Sent in by a reader

Oh most beautiful flower of Heaven, assist me in my necessity,

Help me and show me that you are my Mother.

Blessed Mother of God, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to receive my prayer (make request).

There are none that can withstand your power, Sweet Mother.

I place this cause in your hand.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world (repeat three times).

Say prayer six times daily for nine days.

Publication must be made in thanksgiving.

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NEWS

The best Christmas guest ever

A Christmas story written by Whitby parishioner ANTHEA DOVE...

Molly and Joe Robinson were very excited about Christmas.

"Only three more days!" said Joe, looking at their Advent calendar.

"Oh, I'm so glad it will just be the four of us," said Molly.

"Well, I was just going to tell you, Molly and Joe, but it won't be just the four of us this year," said their father.

Both children were surprised.

"But Daddy, why?" said Molly.

"Well, a friend of mine at work," said her dad, "told me about this little girl, the same age as you, Joe, who is completely alone, with nowhere to go at Christmas. So, Mum and I..."

Joe rolled his eyes.

"Oh no, Dad! You didn't say you would invite her here?"

"Course they did!" said Molly.

"But Mum, you didn't ask Joe or me. Why not?"

"We didn't ask you, love," said their mother, "because we knew that once you saw Mary, you would want to share your Christmas with her. Her mother and father were both killed, and she is alone in a strange country, with no friends and no-one to love her."

For a moment, nobody said anything.

Then Joe asked, "Is she a refugee?"

"Yes," said their dad.

"Oh!" said the twins, together. But then they went to their playroom and made plans. Molly said, "We've got to give Mary a happy time."

"I suppose," said Joe.

"Yes, and we will," said Molly.

When Christmas Day came, the twins did their very best. But so did

Mary, bringing just perfect presents for Molly and Joe. Much later, the children's dad explained that some people from Mary's church had given her money so she could give something to her new friends. Mary gave Molly a little doll.

"Oh, wow," said Molly. "Look! Just what I always wanted! Oh, thank you!"

And she gave Mary a huge hug. But Joe was even happier. Mary had given him a brand-new football and his favourite football team's home shirt.

"This is fabulous!" he said. "You are fabulous, Mary!"

After they had enjoyed their Christmas dinner, their dad looked out of the window and saw that the sun was shining.

"Come on everybody," he said. "Let's put on our warmest clothes and go out to the field at the back. A game of football will do us all good."

Molly was not too keen to go, but her mother saw she was hesitating.

"Come on Moll," she said. "You'll enjoy it when we get out!"

"Can I bring Tabitha?" asked Molly, holding her new doll close.

"Course you can!" said everyone. So, Tabitha came too, and with the help of the twins' dad, she even scored a stunning goal!

"You are the best player, Joe!" said Mary.

"And you are the best guest who ever came to us at Christmas!" said Molly.

Then she added, "Will you come again, please, and soon?"

Mary was smiling, but crying a bit too, because she was so happy. She only managed to say "Oh!"

But everyone knew what she meant.

Dove installation symbolises peace on Earth

You're invited to immerse yourself in the historic surroundings of the Bar Convent this Christmas for a unique "Peace on Earth" festive experience.

England's oldest living convent invites visitors to explore this historic house, established in 1686, including the stunning 18th-century chapel, Georgian parlour and exhibition, all dressed for Christmas.

The Bar Convent has continued its tradition of creating a meaningful, community-spirited display. With countries still at war around the world, including Ukraine, the convent has partnered with New Visuality, an award-winning York-based charity that seeks to advance the arts, culture and heritage, to create a beautiful installation of origami peace doves.

The installation is a representation of solidarity and support for those suffering at the hands of war and hopes to encourage prayers for peace.

Sister Ann Stafford, superior at the Bar Convent, said: "God sent the Angel Gabriel to ask a young girl called Mary to be the mother of a baby who would redeem the world. That is what we celebrate at Christmas – the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

"Here the angels came to the shepherds and announced this special news. The message to the shepherds was one of peace on Earth.

"This is why this year's Christmas theme will be the dove, an enduring and universal symbol of peace and love."



New Visuality co-director Ails McGee said: "It has been humbling to watch our participants create 3D works of art. The collaborative and inclusive nature of the exhibition has really struck a chord.

"We have origami from young people from families who have experienced poverty, children from Ukrainian families and young people with learning difficulties, and seeing their work exhibited in a world-class destination like Bar Convent is really exciting for them."

The installation will be on display until Tuesday December 20 as part of the Bar Convent's Christmas celebrations. Guests are welcome to contribute a dove to the display during their visit. Christmas lunches are available, but spaces are limited, so please book in advance. No booking is required to visit the rest of the house.

A two-course Christmas Lunch costs £27 per person and entry to the exhibition is £6 for adults, £4 for concessions and £2 for children or you can buy a family ticket for £12. Chapel and Georgian parlour entry is free.

Copy Deadline

Copy and photographs for inclusion in the *Catholic Voice* should be sent to: The Editor, Middlesbrough Diocesan Catholic Voice, Curial Offices, 50a The Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS5 6QT.

Tel (01642) 850505, email catholicvoice@rcdmidd.org.uk

Deadline Friday December 2 for our January 2023 edition. Out & About will return next month.

Where possible please send articles in Word and photographs as jpegs. Please confirm when you send in your photographs that those who appear in them have given their permission for publication.

Council 29 celebrates hitting 100 not out!

Council 29 of the Knights of St Columba, based in Middlesbrough, marked its 100th birthday in style.

The celebrations began with a black-tie dinner attended by Bishop Terry and clergy from throughout the diocese, as well as Council 29 brothers and their wives and families.

A screen showing photographs of the knights in action over the years provided a backdrop for the banquet hall.

Bishop Terry, Supreme Grand Knight of the order Harry Welsh and Council 29 Grand Knight Andrew Gardner all spoke after dinner.

TV and radio comedy impressionist Kevin Connelly, brother of Council 29 treasurer Roland, also entertained guests with a hilarious appearance to round off the night.

The following day, brothers met again for a celebration Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, where Bishop Terry was the principal celebrant.

Afterwards, they gathered for bacon sandwiches in the church hall.

The Knights of St Columba order was formed in Glasgow in 1919 and exists to support the Church's mission and work for the spiritual, intellectual and material welfare of its members and their families through the virtues of charity, unity and fraternity.

Brothers can often be seen helping to marshal diocesan events such as the Assumption Pilgrimage and the Postgate Rally.



Knights of St Columba with Bishop Terry and clergy after Mass to celebrate the 100th birthday of Council 29

Anyone interested in joining Council 29 can contact them by emailing council29@gmail.com.

Bishop Terry urges Catholics to back poverty campaign

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), the Bishops' Conference agency promoting domestic social action, has launched a campaign calling on the government to make changes to the welfare and tax system for the benefit of society's most vulnerable.

The agency is also calling on Catholics to write to their MPs to share how poverty is affecting their communities.

Bishop Terry, who is chair of CSAN, said: "We urge the Catholic community to support the vision of the bishops' Department for Social Justice in working to alleviate the impacts of poverty in our communities and promoting a vision for the common good, where all can flourish and lead fulfilling lives."

CSAN's campaign is in line with a Department for Social Justice briefing paper the Bishops' Conference published in September, which called on the government to increase welfare benefits, remove the two-child cap on universal credit, consider reform of the tax system and more.

CSAN is the domestic Catholic agency tackling poverty and injustice in England and Wales, with 50 Caritas diocese and independent member charities.



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LOURDES

A year to remember

As we approach the end of the year, I just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone involved in Lourdes, both on the organisational side and, of course, our pilgrims.

We returned to Lourdes in May for the first time in three years and with fewer pilgrims than usual, but we were still 250 in number. We had a fantastic time, and everyone returned home Covid-free.

The pilgrimage was shorter than normal, over five days instead of the normal seven, to reduce any risk of Covid infection and make sure everyone was safe.

We had the most rewarding, spiritual, and friendly pilgrimage and it was enjoyed by all.

My thanks to our youth group from our schools who travelled with us this year – they were fantastic.

Around 3,500 people attended and venerated the relic of St Bernadette when it visited our diocese in October.

This was a fantastic opportunity for this once-in-a-lifetime event, a totally special occasion as we spent 24 hours overnight in Middlesbrough and then travelled to spend

12 hours in Hull. The event will live long in the memory of all, as we brought a little piece of Lourdes to share with our diocesan family.

Many thanks to everyone involved in enabling this visit to happen.

The 70th Diocese of Middlesbrough Pilgrimage to Lourdes will take place from Friday May 26 to Friday June 2 2023.

I just want to let you know that the interest already being shown in this pilgrimage is very exciting.

We expect to have record numbers as we return to our normal pilgrimage plans, with Covid restrictions hopefully behind us.

As we experienced in Lourdes this year, the spiritual and social needs of our pilgrims is utmost in our thoughts and will be at the forefront of our plans.

The committee and I have had a short break, but planning is now well underway for the pilgrimage.

Booking forms are available in all churches throughout the diocese and you can also book online at Tangney-tours.com.

Supported pilgrim application forms for



Mary Hynes and Andrew Woods share a Lourdes moment – Photo by Joe Harrison

anyone needing medical care or support while in Lourdes are available from Pat Ling on 01642 760105.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year for 2023, and I hope to see many of you in Lourdes in May.

Please continue to support our events throughout the year. It's much appreciated and enables us to bring a little bit of Lourdes to our diocese.

Keith Tillotson
Pilgrimage Director



Lourdes handmaids Teresa Cook and Marie Potter are pictured with a wonderful flower arrangement of the Nativity that Marie created for the visit of St Bernadette's relics to St Mary's Cathedral.

Teresa and Marie were also part of the handmaids and brancardiers team who welcomed visitors coming to venerate the relics.

The stable was kindly made by Deacon Bernard Morgan.

Join us to celebrate our 70th!

Our 70th Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes will take place from Friday May 26 to Friday June 2 2023 and will be led by Bishop Terry.

The organising committee have been working hard since our return from Lourdes this year to negotiate the best possible prices and we have taken on board the economic situation, inflation and soaring energy and food costs.

Bearing all that in mind, we have secured full board prices starting at £799, with a flight-only option at £550. Insurance is in addition, as is with any single-room supplement.

We encourage you to book early as demand for the pilgrimage is expected to be extremely high.

To improve the pilgrimage experience, we have put in place the following booking system:

Pilgrims wishing to stay in the Accueil Notre Dame

Please complete the supported pilgrim application available from our pilgrimage secretary, Pat Ling.

Our medical team will review your application and will be in touch to carry out a nursing assessment on each applicant.

Initially, booking will not be through Tangney Tours but directly with the pilgrimage, as detailed on the application forms.

Those who wish to come as hotel supported pilgrims

We will only be able to support those pilgrims with assistance from the designated hotel to the services and return. Due to limited numbers of volunteers, we will not be able to offer any personal care.

You will be required to fill in a "Hotel Supported Pilgrim" application, available from Pat Ling, which will enable our medical team to assess your needs while on pilgrimage.

In addition to the "Hotel Supported Pilgrim" application, you will need to complete a Tangney Tours booking form. This should be completed after your nursing assessment.

Pilgrims not requiring any assistance

All other pilgrims not requiring any assistance are asked to complete either an online booking or paper booking form and send it to Tangney Tours. Application forms are available in all parishes. Email Pat Ling at lourdessecretary@rcdmidd.org.uk or call her on 01642 760105 for more information.



Environment Corner - 'We are a people of hope'

On the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the Social Justice Department of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales launched a new edition of its teaching document on the environment – The Call of Creation.

First published in 2002, this new edition was released at the conclusion of the Church's month-long Season of Creation, calling for a "profound interior conversion" and for Catholics to "repair our relationship with God's creation" and address the current ecological crisis.

As I write this, the COP27 meeting is underway in Egypt – the issues are clear and urgent. Many articulate and powerful voices have been raised to argue for the measures needed and in warning of the consequences of failing to act with urgency.

Writing in the foreword, Bishop John Arnold, lead bishop for

the environment at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and Bishop Richard Moth, chair of the social justice department, say: "We are a people of hope, who believe in redemption. We must study the signs of the times and take the action that is needed to repair our relationship with God's creation.

"As is made clear in The Call of Creation, the exercise of the virtue of solidarity and the promotion of the common good, which are so needed at this time, are the responsibility of each and every individual and institution in society.

"Individual choices can seem insignificant when faced with major global challenges. But Pope Francis has rightly stated that multiplied individual actions can indeed make a real difference. As individual children of God, it is important that we think carefully about how we use consumer goods and

value simplicity in our lives. "We should also care for, and nurture, that part of God's creation for which we are particularly responsible. By doing this, collectively, as brothers and sisters in Christ, we can also help to change our culture. "The full human development of every human person, both now and in future generations, cannot be separated from the fate of the earth." Christmas is, above all, a celebration of hope, and a good time to consider how we can contribute to that nurturing of our beautiful common home.

The bishops hope the document will be read and used widely throughout our communities. Visit cbcew.org.uk/environment to read it in full.

Barbara Hungin

Thousands join March for Life through London

People from across the diocese responded to Bishop Terry's invitation to take part in the UK March for Life, joining a crowd of 7,000 in calling for an end to abortion.

Filing past the Houses of Parliament, the lively procession journeyed along Whitehall, passing Downing Street, and ended up back in Parliament Square to pray together and listen to uplifting pro-life speeches.

In the week leading up to the march, Bishop Terry recorded a video message for the organisers' YouTube Channel, encouraging people to support and, if possible, attend the day in London.

Priests and laypeople from places including Hull, York and Richmond were among the throngs of participants – including significant numbers of young adults and families with children – who prayed and chanted slogans such as “Life from conception: no exception”.

Organisers said the US Supreme Court's overturning of the Roe v Wade judgment earlier this year had resulted in a “ripple effect” across the ocean, giving young people the confidence to stand up for the protection of unborn children.

Madeline Page, CEO of the Alliance of Pro-life Students, said: “We've seen a steady increase in the number of young people

wanting to take part in pro-life events since the news from America.

“Many of these are stepping out for the first time and feel that since this issue is being talked about more, it's now acceptable to disclose their beliefs.”

For the first time, this year's March for Life began with a Mass held at St George's Cathedral, Southwark, presided over by Bishop John Sherrington, an auxiliary of Westminster and lead bishop for life issues at the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Two other bishops joined about 30 concelebrants and several hundred people in the congregation, which was again noted for its youthfulness.

Also, before the March, a pro-life festival was held at the Emmanuel Centre, Westminster, including information stalls and inspiring pro-life speakers representing different Christian denominations.

The theme of this year's March was “Ten million too many”, a reference to the number of abortions in the UK since the 1967 Abortion Act, a figure described by Bishop Terry as “absolutely mind-blowing”.

In his video promoting the event, Bishop Terry agreed that the Roe v Wade decision, “had created an opportunity for the whole matter of abortion to be discussed locally,

nationally and even internationally”.

He continued: “It's an opportunity for us to become involved in a calm, rational narrative to help people see the facts about abortion and the dignity and rights of the child in the womb.

“All the time these days we are being reminded about care for the world, care for nature. How can you promote these good things and at the same time advocate the legal killing of a child in the womb?”

Bishop Terry quoted Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*: “Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion.

“How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to

protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties?”

Bishop Terry reiterated the two-fold message at the heart of the pro-life movement: to campaign for an end to abortion, but also to reach out to women in crisis pregnancy situations and those suffering after an abortion experience.

He said: “As our Holy Father reminds us, we have to put in place support and help for women who find themselves in such difficult circumstances. At the same time as condemning procured abortion, we must do all we can to open the door to God's mercy and love.”

Next year's March for Life takes place in London on Saturday September 2.

Father Richard Marsden



March for Life participants from the Diocese of Middlesbrough

Show tells FCJ story

Christian theatre company RISE is looking for churches to book performances of its latest original production, Faithful Companions, next February and March.

The play tells the inspirational true story of Marie Madeleine d'Houët, foundress of the Faithful Companions of Jesus. The booking fee for a performance is £750, although some parishes in the north of the diocese may be asked for an additional contribution towards travel expenses. For more information, email touring@risetheatre.co.uk, call 0118 324 7775 or visit risetheatre.co.uk/faithfulcompanions.



From the Archives



40 Years Ago

(From the Catholic Voice, December 1982)

Next year marks the Golden Jubilee of St Vincent's Church, Hull. The event will be celebrated during the week 6th to 10th June. Among other things, it is hoped to have an exhibition of photographs going back fifty years or more. Have you got a photograph that we could use? Any kind of photograph connected with St Vincent's Church and Parish – groups, individuals, events etc? You may have left the Parish for many years but may still have precious photographs. Or you may have some incident that you may wish to recall. All photographs will be returned later if clearly identified.

100 Years Ago

(From a letter in Hull Catholic Magazine, December 1922)

St Charles' Notes – On Sunday the Brothers of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic organisation which distributes relief to the poor, attended St. Charles Church, Hull, on the occasion of their annual Mass, and special reference was made to the admirable work done by the Society. The Brothers make no appeal to the public for funds, and very little even to their co-religionists. They not only do the practical work by visiting the poor at their homes, but they contribute regularly to the funds by means of secret subscriptions amongst themselves at their weekly meetings, a practical illustration of charity at its highest sense.

David Smallwood

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NEWS

Using prayer to decode an unusual Nativity scene

At first glance, this picture looks just like any other 15th-century Italian painting of the Nativity.

However, this one is different and repays close inspection, as Father Bede Leach OSB from Ampleforth explained in his talk to the Cleveland Newman Circle, “Scripture through art”.

The painting is by Bicci di Lorenzo (1373-1452), who lived and worked in Florence. Unusually, it shows Joseph seated in the foreground by himself, with Mary standing by – and the baby is in the background. Why would the figures be arranged like this? What new spiritual understanding can we gain by reflecting on the picture?

Father Bede proposed exploring the picture’s meaning using the Lectio Divina method. This is where a piece of scripture is read carefully and repeatedly, then interrogated sentence by sentence and word by word, until a spiritual meaning shines through, which can be different for everyone.

We were invited to look at the picture and read it in its scriptural context, and then to focus on each character individually to see what understanding developed.

We started with Joseph: he looks anxious, maybe worried about whether he can look after Mary and the baby – or even whether he wants to.

Does his small knapsack hint he is deciding whether to leave by himself?



Bicci di Lorenzo’s Nativity was the subject of a talk by Father Bede Leach OSB

In her concern for Joseph, Mary seems to have left the baby. But she is holding back from comforting him – perhaps she is praying for him, but letting him come to his own decision?

There is so much to think about. Is the baby in swaddling bands in a manger, or wrapped in grave cloths in a tomb? And could the three struts of the stable signify three crosses? What are the two (Franciscan!) shepherds looking up into heaven to see?

The colours of the characters’ clothes also tell a story and the more we look, the more we think. Maybe the picture is not just of the Nativity, but also of a Visitation, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. There are no answers to these questions. The result of Lectio is not answers, but prayerful insight.

Father Bede helped us with insights and challenged us to ask: “Who is my Joseph? Who do I know who is suffering, anxious or

worried? Could I be their Mary and support them as they make their decisions?” It’s worth thinking about!

For information about the Cleveland Newman Circle, email p.egerton123@gmail.com or phone 01642 645732. Our next event is our New Year’s Lunch at the Parkmore Hotel, Eaglescliffe, on Sunday January 29, at 12.30 for 1pm.

Patricia Egerton

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