



Bishop's Column

Lent is a time for renewal, metanoia, change of heart. We began the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. An action which reminded us of being humble. Life is a journey towards God.

The end of Lent is the celebration of the Easter Vigil. The symbol of Light and Darkness needs to be experienced.

In the light of the fire and the lighting of the Easter Candle we are helped to understand the scriptures proclaimed to us.

Like the disciples walking to Emmaus, we can say: "Did not our hearts burn within us as he opened the scriptures to us?" This needs to begin in darkness as we are led to the light.

The scripture readings of the Sundays of Lent are leading us to meet Christ. They open to us our history of salvation.

First Sunday of Lent: We hear in the first reading how sin entered our world. The start of our journey of redemption.

In the second reading, St Paul reminds us of Christ's saving action. Jesus spends time in the desert fasting and praying. It reminds us of our need to enter the desert.

Second Sunday of Lent: The story of our journey to renewal begins with Abram, "Our Father in faith". He is to leave the familiar to experience the unfamiliar. We need to do so spiritually. St Paul reminds us that what we are given is pure gift. In the Gospel, the disciples catch a glimpse of what is to come. Matthew shows us that Jesus is the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets. This encounter fills us with hope.

Third Sunday of Lent: As the people are on their journey to the promised land, they experience thirst. The Exodus event reveals the joys and challenges of their journey. Once again, St Paul encourages us in our life of faith: "This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." The Gospel gives us the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. It reveals the different stages of her faith in Jesus. This links with our first reading. Jesus is the one we encounter in order to have our thirst quenched.

Fourth Sunday of Lent: In the first reading Samuel anoints David as King. It is of God's choosing. It reminds us that we are the anointed looking to be renewed this Lent. "You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord." St Paul tells us we too move from darkness to light as we journey towards the Easter Vigil. Once again, St John gives us another encounter between Jesus and this time it is with a man born blind. St John gives us the different stages of the man encountering Christ who gives him his sight. He comes closer to Christ; the religious are still spiritually blind.

Fifth Sunday of Lent: Ezekiel gives us this wonderful image of life returning to the bones in the graves. Life and hope are restored. This Good News is reflected in St Paul's reading, reminding us of the power of the Holy Spirit. This is our story too. The theme of new life is given in the Gospel passage. Lazarus is brought back to life. Once again, it is a faith story. Just as Lazarus needed to be set free from the burial clothes, we too need to be set free.

In blessed hope,

+ Liz

What's Inside

**Spotlight on
persecuted Christians**
Page 6



**Celebration time
in Teesville**
Page 9



Charity opens earthquake emergency relief fund

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has opened an emergency fund for people in northern Syria desperate for help after a series of devastating earthquakes.

The charity is appealing for funds to support local Church partners helping those plunged into dire need by the disaster.

ACN is currently speaking to project partners as it plans an aid package that will focus on two key areas.

Firstly, it will support repairs in Aleppo which will allow those currently being sheltered by the Church to return to their homes.

This includes repairs to heating and water systems as well as structural damage resulting from the quakes.

It is estimated that more than 7,500 people slept in Aleppo's churches, convents and other locations after the quake.

The Mekhitarists – an Armenian-Catholic religious order – are sheltering 2,000 people in the school they run in Aleppo, and need more help.

Secondly, ACN will provide blankets, food and other essential aid for those who have been forced out of their homes by the natural disaster.

Franciscans are caring for people in Lattakia affected by the earthquake including children and the elderly.



Devastation caused by the earthquake in Aleppo, Syria – Photo © ACN

Continued on Page 2



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ANNUAL EVENTS AND LADY DAYS MASSES 2023

25 March Solemnity of the Annunciation

Rosary 1pm : Mass 3pm

7 April Good Friday

The Way of the Cross 10am

16 April Divine Mercy Sunday

Exposition & Devotions 1pm: Mass 3pm

31 May Visitation of Our Lady

Rosary 11:30am : Mass 12midday

13 August Diocesan Assumption Pilgrimage

Rosary 2.30pm : Mass 3pm

22 August Queenship of Our Lady

Rosary 11:30am : Mass 12midday

8 September Birthday of Our Lady

Rosary 11:30am : Mass 12midday

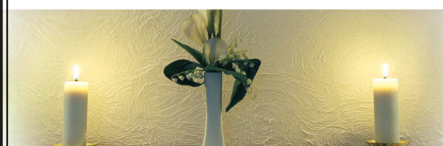
7 October Rosary Pilgrimage

Exposition, Confession and Full Rosary 1pm: Mass 3pm

8 December Solemnity of Immaculate Conception

Rosary 11:30am : Mass 12midday

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NEWS

Charity opens earthquake emergency fund

Continued from Page 1

Carmelite Sister Arlene said her cloistered community has opened its doors to those in need.

She said: “The families are afraid and they do not want to return to their houses, they are looking for a place to spend the night.

“We have had five families come to us, and we are sheltering them. Other families are going to the schools or churches.”

Father Emad Daher was one of two priests buried alive when a Melkite Greek-Catholic building collapsed. Archbishop Emeritus Jean-Clement Jeanbart narrowly escaped death when it fell.

To contribute to the appeal, visit acnuk.org.

•CAFOD is also appealing for urgent funds, having already sent £100,000 to the relief effort. See story below for more details.



People taking shelter in the Mekhitarist School, Aleppo after the earthquake – Photo © ACN

Responding to urgent needs around the world

In the world of international development, our plans are constantly changed by unexpected events – as is the case now.

While we were focusing on preparations for sharing our Lent Family Fast Day (Friday March 3), and recruiting for the Big Lent Walk, the devastating earthquake in Syria and Turkey struck.

We have had to adapt our priorities to meet the urgent needs of those affected. It’s a delicate balancing act, as it all needs to happen at the same time.

Our emergency response teams and partners

on the ground begin by assessing urgent needs in the immediate aftermath of an emergency.

These are the humanitarian needs for food, clean water, shelter, warm clothing and a safe place for people to go.

It is especially hard when time is of the essence because of the risk of further events, such as aftershocks and unfavourable weather, and we have seen the freezing temperatures in media footage.

Funds we receive from our Fast Day appeals go into our general funds and enable us to respond to emergencies immediately, as they occur.

That enabled us to send £100,000 from the donations many of you contributed last year to our partners in the region in the days following the earthquake.

Of course, that means we have to replenish the pot to fund our ongoing plans for programmes in other countries and to be in a position to respond to other emergencies that may arise.

In all the years I have worked for CAFOD, I have been constantly amazed and humbled by the outpouring of generosity and the response of our Catholic communities to our appeals, both for our planned Fast Days and

the increasing number of emergencies that are happening.

I want to thank you for everything you did in 2022, which was a tough year, and share the following information as a way of feeding back to you.

The funds raised in parishes for Family Fast Days and emergency appeals were:

- Lent: £1.04m (83% more than funds raised from the previous Lent collections in parishes) out of a total of £2.52m
- Harvest (World Food Crisis): £733,793 (40% more than funds raised from the previous Harvest collections in parishes) out of a total of £1.42m
- Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, started in Lent 2022: £861,481 (in parishes) out of a total of £3.65m
- Pakistan Floods Appeal, started in September 2022: £252,536 (in parishes) out of a total of £1.07m
- Advent: £22,700 out of a total of £340,000.

In the financial year 2021/22, our volunteers helped enable giving from 1,716 parishes in England and Wales and 16,636 individuals gave to CAFOD for the first time out of a total of 87,000 individuals who made a

donation.

In total, 817 schools and 1,000 organisations donated.

During Lent 2022, people walked 700,000 kilometres against global hunger raising £350,000. We received very generous gifts in wills totalling £11m.

In 21/22 we received a total income of £50.5m, of which £35.6m (70%) came from the Catholic community in England and Wales.

It is this generosity and your partnership that enables the work CAFOD does on behalf of you all in the Catholic community in responding to the ever-increasing needs of people around the world. Thank you for everything you give, do and have done to support this vital work.

I am acutely aware that this is also a time when costs are rising for people here at home and that many of you are also supporting people in need in our diocese too, which makes me incredibly humbled and very proud.

Thank you and God bless you for your generosity and kindness.

Carol Cross, Community Participation Coordinator, CAFOD in Middlesbrough

BISHOP TERRY'S MARCH ENGAGEMENTS

5

Celebrates Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Coulby Newham 10am

9

School Visitation to St Patrick's Catholic College, Thornaby 9.30am

11-12

Parish Visitation to Christ the King and St Patrick's, Thornaby All Day

12

Attends Golden Jubilee celebrations of Monsignor Ricardo Morgan 3pm

13

Attends meeting with directors general at Madonna House All Day

14

School Visitation to Christ the King Catholic Primary, Thornaby 9.30am

15

School Visitation to St Bernadette's Catholic Primary, Nunthorpe 9.30am

16

School Visitation to St Patrick's Catholic Primary, Thornaby 9.30am

18-19

Parish Visitation to St Bernadette's, Nunthorpe All Day

21

Attends meeting of the Bishop's Council, Middlesbrough 10.30am

24

Attends Bishop's Study Day, York All Day

25

Attends the Lourdes Formation Day at Trinity College, Middlesbrough All Day

28

Attends meeting of the Trustee Board at the Curial Office, Middlesbrough 10.30am

29

Attends meeting of CSAN Board of Trustees, London 1pm

30-31

Attends Call to the North Retreat, Whalley Abbey, Clitheroe



Congolese appeal for martyrs' canonisation

Joining in a tradition sometimes seen in St Peter's Square, the Congolese faithful sent a message to Pope Francis about two African martyrs who are awaiting canonisation as saints.

The Stade des Martyrs de la Pentecôte (Martyrs of Pentecost Stadium), in the centre of Kinshasa, was filled for Pope Francis' meeting with young people and catechists from all corners and parishes of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to listen to the Holy Father.

Prime Minister Jean Michel Sama Lukonde was also present, together with delegations from neighbouring countries.

Some of the congregation displayed a banner with the Italian inscription "*Santi subito*" (Saints at once), accompanied by images of Blessed Anuarite and Bakanja. On two sides of the podium from which Pope Francis spoke were images of the two martyrs.

The animation of the crowd before the Pope's arrival testified to the living faith

and remarkable vitality of the Church in the DRC.

Blessed Anuarite was beatified by John Paul II in Kinshasa during his second visit to Congo (then known as Zaire) in 1985. Blessed Bakanja followed in Rome in 1994. Since then, the Catholic faithful in Africa have nourished a great devotion to the two and, in his address, Pope Francis mentioned them as models of faith, courage, perseverance and forgiveness.

Martyred in 1964 in the north-east of the DRC for having preserved her purity until death, Blessed Anuarite was a religious of the Sisters of the Holy Family, Bafwabaka. Blessed Bakanja is the patron of the Congolese laity and the youth. He died on 15 August 1909 from wounds inflicted on him as "punishment" for his faith, which he bore patiently while forgiving his aggressor.

Archbishop makes passionate plea for peace

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby pleaded with leaders in South Sudan to find lasting peace, saying he had hoped for more progress on the commitments they made at the Vatican in 2019.

Archbishop Welby was in the capital Juba with Pope Francis and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland for an unprecedented

joint pilgrimage to South Sudan.

The ecumenical visit by leaders of Roman Catholic, Anglican and Reformed traditions was the first trip of its kind in Christian history.

The Archbishop and the Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields, met the Pope at

Juba International Airport.

The Pope was then welcomed by the president of South Sudan and a guard of honour, as well as representatives from the South Sudan Council of Churches.

The three Christian leaders met the president and later addressed a gathering of

authorities, civil society leaders and diplomats in the garden of the presidential palace.

Archbishop Welby said: "In 2019 Pope Francis knelt to kiss the feet of each politician. Five years later, we come to you in this way again – on our knees, to wash feet, to listen, to serve, to pray with you.

"But we come to listen to the young people, which is 70 per cent of South Sudan. Without listening to their voice, there will be no peace and reconciliation. And we come to honour the women who have known such terrible suffering.

"And we thank you for your presence in this gathering. We pray that this may show that you have not given up hope. Yet forgive me my dear sisters and brothers and leaders of this country, but I must say that places far and near, and so many of the citizens of this wonderful country, are becoming tired that more has not changed."

During their visit, the three churchmen met people displaced by war and heard testimony from children living in displacement camps because of the conflict.

They also attended an open-air Ecumenical Prayer for Peace vigil attended by more than 50,000 people.

Speaking to the press on the papal plane on their way back to Rome after the visit, Archbishop Welby said Christians have grown accustomed to living apart, but it is the norm for the Church to work as one.

"We need constantly to be reminded, and I hope this trip reminds people that the normal is for the Church to work as one."

Source: Vaticannews.va



Enthusiastic crowds lined the route for the ecumenical visit to South Sudan



Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby greets Pope Francis during their Ecumenical Pilgrimage for Peace to South Sudan – Photo courtesy of Vatican Media



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St Bede's Pastoral Centre is looking to appoint a Director who will be responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of all aspects of the management of the Centre.

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NEWS

Saved by the power of the Holy Rosary

A parishioner from St Paulinus in Guisborough sent this moving account of her experiences in Poland during the dark days of World War II...

My country was occupied by the Hitler regime.

We civilian people were made to work as forced labour, and near the civilian people were prisoners of war who were made to work very hard.

The Red Cross had not found out if they were alive or not for six months or longer. They were given very poor food and very little. The weather was cold, and some men were ill. My father said to my mam, "Yes, we must help these men so they will get back to their homeland."

We had very little food, but we were free and not behind barbed wire. We put some food on the roadside into a heap of stones, with a marking. This was fine for a long time, but one day the Gestapo police came to take my father away.

I went forward and said that I walked there and not my father. So they took me to the Gestapo headquarters for interrogation.

They gave me a piece of bread and water, but I did not eat the bread – I made it into Rosary beads and I prayed Our Lady's prayers.

I was taken each day for questioning and the Gestapo men were not nice, but I was not frightened as I had in my hand the greatest weapon, the Rosary.

One day they said to me, "All the people who come here, they tremble and are very frightened and you are not. Why is that so?"

I said: "I have done nothing wrong."

In my hand I squeezed the Rosary beads and prayed and I felt Our Lady, our Mother, was with me and I was with her.

This is a true story.

Dear people, please pray the Holy Rosary, as I know our dear Mother was with me as I was with her, and she saved me.



Help Severine's charity save lives in the Congo

Severine Kipili is a parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes & St Peter Chanel Church, Hull.

She came to live in the UK in 2006 as a refugee with her husband and three children after living in refugee camps in Zambia since

1998 when she fled the war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The family has settled well in the UK but has always felt the need to help her country, whose people are still being affected by

food and water shortages, sexual violence and exploitation of the country's natural resources, such as minerals and diamonds.

The situation is desperate, with about 27m people, including under-fives, facing severe hunger, lack of medical care and violence.

With this in mind, Severine and fellow refugees started a charity to help the country she grew up in called Bora Shabaa Refugee Community Organisation, which is registered as a charity in the UK and also in the Congo. Bora Shabaa means "quality not quantity".

The charity aims to raise funds to help the needy in the Congo. It is currently trying desperately to raise funds for seven-year-old

Eune Edourd, who is blind in one eye and unless he receives urgent treatment will lose sight in the other eye.

Among its greater aims is to operate throughout the Congo, helping all those affected by war and famine.

Bora Shabaa has started a fundraising page at gofund.me/7dfa8a1c. They will gratefully accept any donations to help the people of the Congo, no matter how small or large.

Please help Severine help Eune and others who are in urgent need.

For more information, visit borashabaa.org.uk.

Chris Cuthill

Shaping Futures

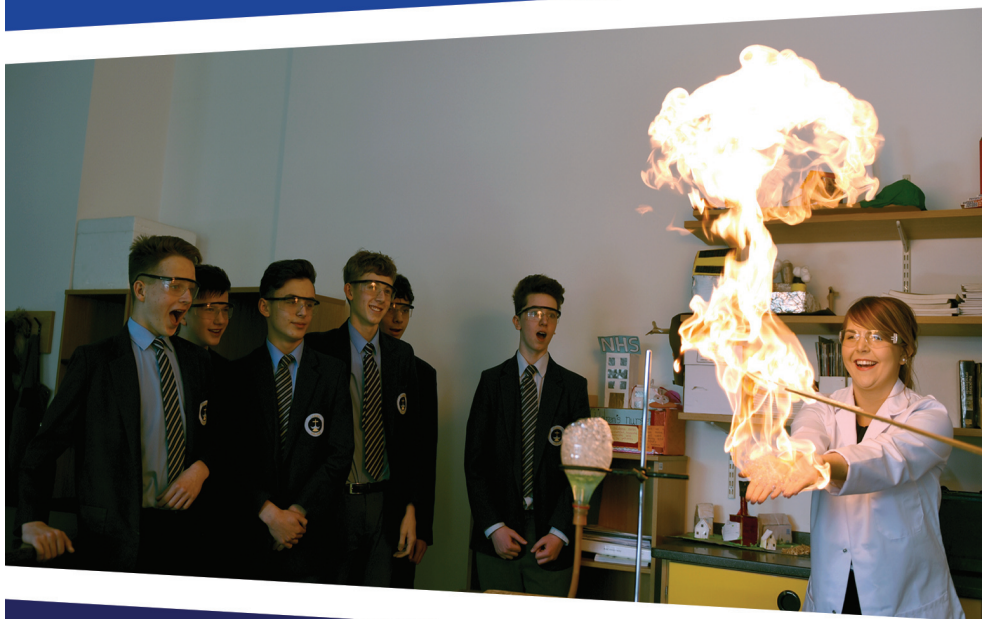


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Canon Paul Farrer, centre, is pictured after being installed as a member of the Cathedral Chapter of Canons. Alongside him are Canon David Grant and Canon John Lumley – Photo by Keith Tilloton

Headteacher's delight at Good Ofsted rating

It's Good to be back!

A York headteacher who returned to work in the school where she was once a pupil is leading celebrations after Ofsted rated the school Good in all areas.

Inspectors said St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School in Monkgate is an inclusive school where pupils feel safe and happy.

"Leaders have an ambitious vision for all pupils to achieve well," the report says.

"Leaders have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

"Leaders give pupils a wide range of experiences to help them develop both academically and personally. Pupils get the opportunity to develop their confidence and resilience through different leadership positions.

"Pupils are taught that being kind, considerate and tolerant is important. This is reflected in the way that pupils treat each other.

"Pupils' personal development is a priority for leaders."

Headteacher Helen Keith, one of three members of staff who attended St Wilfrid's, said the report reflected the school's strong family ethos.

"We are all proud of this positive outcome and of our whole school community," she said.

"Our pupils were excellent ambassadors throughout the inspection and communicated the strengths of our school with great confidence.

"The positive feedback in the report is a testament to the hard work of everyone within the school community.

"The staff team work extremely hard every day and are committed to giving our children an excellent education."

Miss Keith began her teaching career in Harrogate but returned to St Wilfrid's as deputy headteacher in 2012, before being appointed headteacher from September 2022.

The fabric of the school has improved since her days as a pupil, with extensions in the 1990s and again in 2017 being added to the original Victorian building.

"But what hasn't changed is the special feeling when you walk into St Wilfrid's, and the strong relationships within the school community," Miss Keith said.

"St Wilfrid's is a genuine team and I'm so proud and privileged to lead this school."

St Wilfrid's, which serves the north side of York, has 257 pupils from reception up to year six and is diverse in terms of ethnicity and culture.

At the start school year it became part of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, which now runs 37 schools across Teesside and North Yorkshire, including the city of York.

Miss Keith said: "We have quickly developed an excellent partnership with the trust, which has supported us with the strategic direction of the school while allowing us to maintain our individuality.

"With the trust's support and the dedication

and commitment of the staff, we will continue working hard to implement the recommendations within the report and beyond."


NPCAT CEO Hugh Hegarty said: "I am delighted that the work of all the staff has been acknowledged in the report.

"St Wilfrid's has a proud tradition over so many years of delivering a rich and nurturing climate for learning.

"The trust's standards team have worked closely with all the staff in the months since the school joined NPCAT and I am confident this relationship will grow deeper and stronger as St Wilfrid's moves towards being Outstanding."



Children at St Wilfrid's, York, celebrate their school's latest Ofsted report



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AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED

Defending persecuted Christians throughout the world

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is a pontifical foundation directly under the Holy See. ACN supports the faithful wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in need, through information, prayer, and action. Undertaking thousands of projects every year, the charity provides emergency support for people experiencing persecution, transport for clergy and lay Church workers, children's Bibles, media and evangelisation projects, churches, Mass stipends and other support for priests and nuns and training for seminarians. Here we share news from countries around the world where ACN has been active in recent weeks. To find out more and learn how you can help, visit acnuk.org.

Convent reopening is milestone as Iraqi Christians return

ACN has hailed the reopening of a convent in a village devastated by extremists as a sign that Christianity can once more flourish in Iraq's Nineveh Plains. The charity helped rebuild the Dominican Sisters' new convent and kindergarten in Batnaya, which replaces buildings razed by Daesh (ISIS) during the jihadists' occupation of the village from 2014 to 2016. ACN (UK) national director Dr Caroline Hull, who visited parts of the Nineveh Plains seized by Daesh, said the new convent was a sign of new life in a town where militants had smashed altars, decapitated statues and daubed anti-Christian messages on church walls. Around 5,000 – mostly Chaldean Catholics – fled the village in 2014. Some went to IDP camps, while others emigrated. ACN backed projects to help rebuild key buildings in the Christian-majority village, which was on the frontline of fighting between Daesh and coalition forces. Widespread booby-trapping and an extensive underground tunnel system created by Daesh delayed the start of reconstruction work in Batnaya. The Dominican Sisters returned in 2017 and began ministering to the families who had come back to Batnaya.



The consecration ceremony for the Dominican Sisters' new convent in Batnaya – Photo © ACN

Prayer appeal after Spanish church attacks

One man was killed in a suspected Islamist terrorist attack on two churches in the southern Spanish city of Algeciras. The incidents occurred in the churches of San Isidro and Our Lady of Palma on January 25. Spanish media reported the assailant overturned statues and other images while yelling "Allahu akbar" ("God is great"). Father Antonio Rodríguez Lucena was stabbed in the neck while saying Mass at San Isidro and required emergency surgery. The assailant then made his way to the nearby Church of Our Lady of Palma, where he attacked the sacristan, Diego Valencia. Mr Valencia fled outside to the public square where he was killed with a machete. Four others sustained injuries during the attacks.

Call for international response in Congo

A priest has denounced what he describes as international indifference in the face of acts of terror sweeping parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Father Marcelo Oliveira, a Combonian missionary priest, was speaking after an attack on a church in Kasindi, a town in the region. "Terror is widespread," Father Oliveira told ACN. "It's one village here today, another there tomorrow, and all this in silence." "And this is what gets to us, as missionaries, seeing the silence of the international community, the deafening silence, while human lives are massacred." The comments came after attackers armed with improvised explosives struck at a packed Protestant church in Kasindi, near the border with Uganda, on January 15. At least 15 people died and dozens were wounded after a bomb, which had been placed in the middle of the busy Sunday congregation, was detonated. The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) insurgent group claimed responsibility.

Priest burnt to death in presbytery



Father Isaac Achi, of St Peter and St Paul Parish, Kafin Koro, Minna Diocese, Nigeria – © CSN

One priest was burned alive and another suffered gunshot wounds after attackers stormed a priests' house in Nigeria. Father Isaac Achi died at the parish of St Peter and St Paul, Kafin Koro, Minna Diocese, in Niger State, where the attackers struck in the early hours of the morning, burning the presbytery to the ground. According to media reports, Father Achi, who reportedly had survived a bomb attack in 2011, managed to contact relatives, who alerted the police, but they arrived too late. Another priest, Father Omeh, was shot trying to escape but Father Achi died as the fire took hold. The attack took place the same day as Father Michael Olofinlade, of Ibadan Archdiocese, in south Nigeria, was kidnapped. Last year, four priests were murdered in Nigeria, according to ACN data, and 28 were kidnapped. More than 7,600 Christians were killed in the country between January 2021 and June 2022.



Archive image of violence in the country's east – Photo © Aid to the Church in Need

More volunteers needed for SVP charity shop

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We can also put people in touch with local SVP volunteers if they need further support.

Many of our donors pay tax gift aid their items, and this is a major source of our income and helps to pay for the shop's running costs.

We desperately need more volunteers to work even two or three hours once a week. Roles vary, depending on what you feel most comfortable doing.

If you would be happier just chatting to customers or simply sorting donations in the stock room, that would be thankfully received.

Whatever your skills, there is a place for you, and you would be most welcome.

If you have a few hours to spare, please consider joining our friendly team.

The shop is at 430 Marton Road, Belle Vue, Middlesbrough, TS4 2PT.

Please contact Ruth on 01642 821816 or email ruths@svp.org.uk.

Frances Gilchrist



The SVP shop at Belle Vue, Marton Road, Middlesbrough

Newman Circle focuses on fellowship, food and the future

St John Henry Newman was very much in favour of an "educated laity". He also enjoyed many strong friendships with women, as well as men.

So, while the Newman Association was formed "to promote open discussion and greater understanding in today's Church", it also fosters friendships.

From the dioceses on either side of the River Tees, members of the Cleveland Newman Circle recently gathered to celebrate their fellowship and enjoy a meal together, with raffle prizes to follow.

They also confirmed their desire to build up activities again after Covid.

In future months they will focus on the Camino de Santiago (March) and Dorothy Day (April).

For further information, email p.egerton123@gmail.com.

Judith Brown



Members of the Cleveland Newman Circle from both sides of the River Tees gathered for food and fellowship

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SYNOD

Bishop responds to latest stage of synod

The 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, commonly referred to as the synod on synodality, has three stages.

It began with the Diocesan phase and is now in the Continental phase. The Concluding phase will begin when bishops gather at the Vatican in October and then continues until October 2024.

Hundreds of people across the diocese contributed to the Diocesan phase and we were recently asked to respond to the Document for the Continental Stage (DCS).

Bishop Terry has now sent the following response after listening to the feedback received...

Preamble: The initial consultations on the synod, although, involving only a small proportion of the parish congregations and groups, was embraced with a modicum of enthusiasm and hope. This consultation of the DCS has not been so embraced. Only a minimal response has been received. Perhaps some reasons why this is the case are listed below.

Timescale: This was seen to be very tight making meaningful reading, prayer and reflection difficult given the density of the DCS.

Language used in DCS: Made the document quite difficult to understand and could have had an impact on who could be involved in the process.

Tensions: between “Traditionalists” and “Modernisers” making the Pope’s position difficult

Persecuted Church: it seems that in countries where Christians are persecuted, we find an active and vibrant church, whereas here and in Europe there is indifference.

What resonates? What is new or illuminating?

There was joy and excitement in the process of the Synod. We are surprised to see many of the same issues coming up all round the world. We also feel the desire for the Church

to become more open and welcoming to all, and we like the image of widening the tent. We agree that the problem of clerical abuse of children and young people brings anger, shame and a loss of trust and credibility. Almost worse than the abuse itself is the systematic cover-up which often took place by the Church hierarchy. We agree with much of what is said about the place of women in the Church. Women’s voices should be listened to, and women given more roles of responsibility. Like the DCS, we find a divergence of views about whether or not women might be ordained priests.

What tensions emerge? What questions should be addressed?

There is a strong tension between truth and mercy, in particular in areas of marital status and of people who identify as LGBTQ+. These call for prayerful discernment and pastoral accompaniment. There was discussion about how the Church could be more attractive to young people. Many of them perceive the Church as having too many rules and not being relevant to their lives. We appreciate that rules are necessary to avoid anarchy, but they must be applied sensitively and with compassion for the real people involved. Rules can be a “comfort blanket” for some priests, and also for some lay people. We want to find ways to foster people’s relationships with God. We think the obligation to be at Mass on Sunday allows some people to feel that as long as they go to Mass, they have done all that is necessary. It also leads to few people being interested in attending other liturgies or devotions. Some of us regret the prohibition of lay-led Services of Word and Communion on weekdays, as they could provide a focus for people to gather for prayer.

There was discussion about the role of priests in the Church, with a feeling that their training should be modernised, to include more practical skills. This could help counteract clericalism, both within the priesthood and among lay people. We appreciate that many priests need more



support, as theirs can be a lonely job. There is some concern about the type of men going forward to be priests.

What are the priorities, recurring themes and calls to action?

In order to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the various tensions we need formation in listening, discernment and accompaniment. We need to learn to handle a divergence of views and discern what is the right path to take.

Conclusion: From a personal point of view as the bishop of the diocese, I find myself at

this juncture wondering how to discern what is genuinely important for the communal, missionary and participatory future of this local church (diocese). While there are some very important issues highlighted as a result of this synodal process so far, it is also obvious that some of the proposed scenarios diverge radically from the perennial teaching of the Church. Also, the use of terminology like “traditionalist” and “modernisers” doesn’t help in the end. We are all traditionalist in as much we receive what has been passed on to us, passed down to us from the Lord through the apostles right up to our day. And we are “conservatives” in protecting what has been handed down to us. We are “modernisers” in as much as we continue to plumb the depth of the mystery that is the Church, and apply it to our present situations, knowing we will never encompass all that the mystery contains and is.

We talk about “hierarchy” as if it were a pejorative term instead of a gift given to us by the Lord in the person of Peter and the Apostolic College and lived out today through Petrine Office and the Episcopal College. As always, when divine gifts are placed into fallible human hands, there is the possibility of malfeasance. However, we are also aware that where sin abounds grace abounds even more (Romans 5.20).

It is evident that a great deal of expectation has arisen from the discussions and consultations surrounding the synodal process. Many questions have been asked to which answers must be given. Failure to acknowledge the expectations and the questions would result in, I think, a great sense of disappointment and disillusionment which will increase a tendency to view the workings of the Church and the hierarchy with a degree of scepticism and cynicism. Therefore, I feel, at this stage, that a great opportunity for teaching and catechesis has been placed into our hands. Only a spirit of truth and humility will lead us into the Way that the Lord is calling us to follow.

Rt Rev Terence Patrick Draine,
Bishop of Middlesbrough



Bishop Terry greets Pope Francis in Rome – © Servizio Fotografico Vatican Media

Equipping ourselves to be a Synodal Church

Our diocesan Sycamore online programme began last month with an introductory session led by Sycamore mission development worker Susan Longhurst.

Susan took us through the Sycamore Pathways we can use as parish groups or even as individuals. The first session was well attended, and we look forward to welcoming others as we go.

The programme – five monthly online sessions and one possibly face-to-face meet-up in June or July – has been put together in response to some of the points raised during the parish synod consultations that took place early last year.

Although the introductory session has taken place, anyone interested can still sign up for the remainder of the programme. You may consider joining our sessions on March 2 and 30 as part of your Lenten preparations for Easter.

Here are the topics and dates of the remaining sessions:

Thursday March 2, 7-8.30pm: Speaking and listening to one another in the Holy Spirit

Thursday March 30, 7-8.30pm: Reflecting on Scripture for Holy Week and Easter

Thursday April 27, 7-8.30pm: Christian prayer and how to pray

Thursday May 18, 7-8.30pm: The Church's

best kept secret – An introduction to Catholic Social Teaching

Thursday June 29, 7-8.30pm: How are we using Sycamore in our parish or community setting? An opportunity for people to share how they have been or are using Sycamore, what has worked well or not so well, and what else could we do to support people? If face-to-face the event will be moved to a Saturday, either June 24 or July 1 (TBC).

A recommended reading list will be offered at the end of each session.

Those who took part in our introductory session spoke positively about the resources available and were keen to explore them further. We also had some excellent breakout group discussions.

Why not put the dates in your diary, talk to other parishioners or members of your family and encourage them to have a look at our programme? After all, what have you got to lose?

You can sign up at eventbrite.co.uk/e/introducing-sycamore-in-middlesbrough-diocese-2023-tickets-516851475677 or email adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk for the link. If you miss any sessions, you can catch up with them on the diocesan YouTube channel.

David Cross, Adult Formation Co-ordinator



The Sycamore programme is available to individuals and parish groups

Celebration time

St Andrew's Parish in Teesville has celebrated the 60th anniversary of the very first Mass in the church.

The Bishop of Middlesbrough, the Rt Rev George Brunner, celebrated the first Mass on Wednesday January 23 1963.

The following afternoon the *Evening Gazette* reported the event with the headline:

600 CROWD INTO NEW TEES-SIDE R.C. CHURCH

The fine new Roman Catholic Church of St. Andrew's, Teesville came into use last night when nearly 600 people attended its first Mass. Many stood in the aisles. Mass was

celebrated by the Bishop of Middlesbrough in a sanctuary of breathtaking modern beauty. Bishop Brunner told the congregation: "This is a church you can be proud of." The Rev. Patrick Bluett – a former chaplain who won the Military Cross in the last war – would be the first parish priest.

Sixty years later, on Monday January 23 2023, Bishop Terry celebrated a special Mass which was attended by surviving clergy who have served in the parish.

Bishop Terry praised the people who worked hard over the years to build up the parish and also the clergy, saying: "You have been served by some of the best clergy right up to the present day."

He also issued a challenge to follow the example of St Andrew by taking the Gospel out to those who have fallen away and to find new disciples of Jesus.

Current parish priest Father Michael Sellers thanked those who played a part and supported the 60th celebrations.

"Let us all use our talents to build up the church in our own time and for the future," he said.

People gathered in the parish hall for a buffet prepared by parishioners afterwards, and Bishop Terry cut an anniversary cake.

Paul Terry



Bishop Draine and clergy concelebrate the 60th Anniversary Mass, from left: Canon Edmund Gubbins, Father Neil McNicholas, Father Stephen Pimlott (Birmingham Diocese), Canon Michael Loughlin, Canon Alan Sheridan (ordained in the church), Monsignor Ricardo Morgan, Father John Bane, Father Philip Cunnah and Father Michael Sellers



Altar server Megan reads the Prayers of the Faithful



Bishop Terry cuts the anniversary cake in the parish hall – all photos by Paul Terry

NEWS

Dominicans mourn Ushaw teacher Sister Cecily

Sister Mary Cecily Boulding OP, who taught systematic theology at the seminary at Ushaw from 1978 to 1996, passed away on December 27.

Born in 1933, Cecily was the fifth child of six children. One of her brothers, Peter, became a secular priest and her youngest sister joined the Benedictines, becoming the renowned Dame Maria Boulding of Stanbrook Abbey.

Cecily gained an Oxford blue in rowing, having studied for her first degree and Master's at the university.

She joined the English Dominican Congregation of St Catherine of Siena in 1959 and professed in 1964.

Sister Cecily was a member of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) commissions and the Faith & Order

Commission of the World Council of Churches and also worked on theological commissions for the United Reformed Church.

She was a prolific writer and translator and had many friends and colleagues in the northern dioceses because of her teaching career at Ushaw and her work as a theologian.

“Cecily became increasingly well known and probably the most notable Dominican woman of her generation,” wrote Dominican prioress general Sister Mary Teresa OP.

“I don't believe from stories I have heard that she gave her students an easy ride, but she was held in great affection and wherever any of us went in recent years, we were always asked if we belonged to the same congregation as Cecily.”



Sister Cecily meeting Pope John Paul II at the final ARCIC session – Photo from the archives of the Dominican Sisters at Stone



Marske Fishermen's Choir will be singing at St Andrew's in Teesville

Fishermen's choir returns to help raise parish funds

Marske Fishermen's Choir are returning to St Andrew's Parish Hall in Teesville, Middlesbrough, for their first concert in three years because of the pandemic to help raise funds for the parish.

The concert is on Friday March 24 in St Andrew's Hall. Doors open at 7pm and the music starts at 7.30pm.

Tickets, priced £5, are available at the back of church or from Paul Terry or any fundraising group member. Alternatively, you can pay at the door. Bring your own food and drink.

SVP invite you for coffee and a chat

Members of the St Charles SVP conference, Hull, host a coffee morning every Friday from 10.30am until noon in the Kingston Theatre Hotel, Kingston Square, Hull (just round the corner from St Charles Borromeo Church).

There is no charge, just come along and enjoy a drink and a chat in a warm space. Afterwards, if you wish, you can go to the 12 o'clock Mass in St Charles. Everyone is welcome, no matter where you live.

Marriage Encounter unveils new programme

Marriage Encounter is a national Catholic organisation that offers experiences to enrich relationships and strengthen family bonds.

The gatherings are available in two formats, either live experiences held at hotels or online. They all seek to bring God to the heart of your marriage and family.

Its forthcoming programme includes Marriage Enrichment: Marriage Encounter on March 3 and 5 in Swindon and May 13 and 14 online.

There are also Marriage Preparation: Engaged Encounters online on March 11 to 12 and April 22 and 29.

For further information or to book, visit wwme.org.uk or engaged-encounter.org.uk.

A Letter From Madonna House – The Lenten springtime



As the weather grows milder and the first signs of winter's passing to spring appear, the buds on rose bushes and the flowering of daffodils, the Church announces that great call of repentance and sanctification called the season of Lent.

This is a season of more than just a spring cleaning of our winter excesses; it is a time of truly looking at Christ living in us and seeing how he might better be given to all who seek him, consciously or not.

The distractions of a connected and entertaining world make it easy to lose our connection to God and the communion of saints, at least while we aren't in church or formal prayer.

Lent provides a reminder of our need to maintain a conscious contact with God while the day runs its course.

The Church has always recommended as a course of action for Lent, three areas of growth: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Prayer, to reconnect to our Loving Father and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to draw from them the necessary strength of soul to persevere in our faith, hope and love.

Fasting, to help us remember we live by the Word of God and that, “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:10-11 NIV).

Almsgiving, to give the graces and blessings we have received from God to those we encounter who are in need.

Not all alms are monetary, although that too is something we are called to give. Rather, we are also called to give our time, energy

and patience to those who might need a friend to talk to, a shoulder to cry on or even just to listen to the story, joyful or sorrowful, and so to give Christ's presence to them, and who knows, perhaps we might find him in the other.

Fasting, too, is more than just abstaining from certain foods, it is also looking at what distracts us from our connection to God and making efforts to let go of what God is not calling us to have or to do.

So, reconnecting to God in Lent is much like springtime reconnecting the earth to life. The sun warms the soil, and the seeds germinate. The trees and perennial plants receive light and draw up water and nutrition from the soil.

The winter rains water the soil and bring life back. So the Word of God goes into the desert of our hearts and makes it a garden of paradise, if only we are willing to give him everything.

Mathieu Dacquay

York parishioners gather in remembrance

St George's parishioners in York came together for a Service of Remembrance to remember their loved ones who had passed away since November 2019 – the last time the service was held.

A candle was lit on the altar for each name read out and family and friends filled out stars to hang on the Christmas tree showing the names of their loved ones.

Thank you to Canon Jerry Twomey for a sincere and heartfelt homily and to everyone at St George's who helped make the service possible.

Dave Harper



Canon Jerry Twomey leads the Service of Remembrance – Photo by Lars Karlsson

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

1	1908	Very Rev Canon James Wells	York
6	1944	Very Rev Canon Thomas Noone	Pocklington
7	2015	Rev Joseph Brennan	Enfield
8	1927	Rev Patrick Clancy	Hull
8	1927	Rev Charles Donovan	Wycliffe
8	1999	Rev James Gannon	Middlesbrough
9	2007	Very Rev Mgr Patrick Lannen	Dungarvan
10	2015	Rev Michael Murray	Carlisle
12	1934	Very Rev Canon Patrick Cronin	York
12	1951	Rev Michael McEldowney	Grangetown
14	1886	Very Rev Provost Henry Walker	South Bank
15	1932	Very Rev Canon A D'Hooghe	Thornaby
16	1908	Rev Edmund Hickey	Egton Bridge
16	1969	Very Rev Matthew O'Connell	York
17	1968	Rev Richard O'Riordan	Hull
21	1949	Very Rev Canon John Owens	Hull
21	1969	Rt Rev George Brunner	Third Bishop of Middlesbrough
21	1991	Very Rev Canon Patrick Bluett MC TD	Florida
24	1935	Rev Stephen Hines	York
26	1997	Rev Matthias Smyth	Ballyjamesduff
27	1963	Rev Eugene O'Reilly	Hedon
27	2012	Rev Hugh Curristan	Letterkenny
29	1960	Rt Rev Mgr Provost Patrick Lynn	Scarborough
30	1972	Rev Oswin Corboy BA	Scarborough

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NEWS

Out and About

- 1 Wednesday**
5.30pm Vespers and Benediction at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.

3 Friday
Events, articles, and photographs for April Voice are due by today.

4 Saturday
7-9am The Men of St Joseph meet for prayer and fellowship at St Thomas More's Church in Middlesbrough. For further information please contact Terry on 07549 068226 or Ben on 07867 472979.

6 Monday
9.45-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com.

7 Tuesday
10am Christian Meditation group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle, email terry-doyle@live.co.uk.
7pm Knights of St Columba Council 29 meets at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough beginning with Mass at 7pm in the cathedral chapel.

8 Wednesday
5.30pm Vespers and Benediction at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
7pm The Hull Circle of the Catenian Association will meet at Lazaat Hotel in Cottingham. The meeting will be followed by a meal. To join us please contact the Circle Secretary hullcirclesecretary@gmail.com.

9 Thursday
7.45pm Middlesbrough Catenians meet at Middlesbrough Cricket Club, Green Lane, Middlesbrough TS5 7SL. Contact Peter Carey on 01642 317772 or Chris Rhodes on 01642 319161.

10 Friday
7.30pm Irish Night in aid of parish Lourdes fund with Janie St John, St Gabriel's Church Hall, Ormesby, Middlesbrough. Bingo, raffle, tombola. Bring your own refreshments. Tickets £5, call 07407 606172 or 07432 662759.

12 Sunday
3pm Mass for LGBTQ+ Catholics, family and friends at the Chapel of the Bar Convent. Doors open from 2.30pm.

13 Monday
9.45-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com.
2-3.30pm Music for the Mind, for people who enjoy singing and connecting memories, St Mary’s Cathedral Hall, Middlesbrough. No charge and all welcome. Tea, cake and biscuits followed by fun. You can also join in on the Diocese of Middlesbrough YouTube page. For details call 01642 710179.

14 Tuesday
10am Christian Meditation group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle, email terry-doyle@live.co.uk.
12.45pm The Catholic Women's Luncheon Club meets at the Kingston Theatre Hotel, Kingston Square, Hull. Lunch at 1pm. There are several speakers during the year. All ladies in the Hull and East

- Riding area welcome. Call 01482 446565 or email jayne.wilson24@gmail.com.
- 15 Wednesday**
5.30pm Vespers and Benediction at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
7.45pm Cleveland Newman Circle: Camino De Santiago – a healing for the broken. The speaker is Deacon Neil Galloway who leads pilgrimages for those damaged by war experiences. St Mary’s Cathedral Hall, TS8 0TW. Tea/coffee served from 7.30pm. All welcome. For more details call 01642 645732 or email p.egerton123@gmail.com.
- 17 Friday**
The Eddie White Sacred Heart Irish Dances 2023 – Sean Kelly, St Patrick’s Day dance, ticket only. All dances take place at the Erimus Club, Cumberland Road, Middlesbrough TS5 6JB. Contact John Brown on 07871 958412.
7pm St Patrick’s Day Social. St Patrick’s Parish Centre, Thornaby. Live entertainment, bingo, raffles etc. Bring your own food & drink. Doors open 7pm. Tickets £3 available from Dan Woodgate 07843 237070.
- 19 Sunday**
3pm Catholic Fellowship Mass at St Paulinus, Guisborough with Father Phil Cunnah.
- 20 Monday**
9.45-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com.
- 21 Tuesday**
10am Christian Meditation group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle, email terry-doyle@live.co.uk.
- 22 Wednesday**
5.30pm Vespers and Benediction at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
- 25 Saturday**
1pm Rosary for the Solemnity of the Annunciation at the Lady Chapel, Mount Grace – Mass at 3pm.
- 27 Monday**
9.45-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com.
- 28 Tuesday**
10am Christian Meditation group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle, email terry-doyle@live.co.uk.
- 29 Wednesday**
5.30pm Vespers and Benediction at St Mary’s Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
- If you have any events you would like including in the Out & About section, please email Heidi.Cummins@rcdmidd.org.uk**

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 March 3 for our April edition.

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.

Jesuits launch series of vocations videos

The Jesuits in Britain (the Society of Jesus) have launched a new series of videos focusing on vocations.

Personal blogs accompany the videos, which show members of the order living out their calling in pastoral, community and educational settings, with signposting for viewers to find out more information.

They are part of the Jesuits' outreach to both men who are considering exploring a vocation and those interested in the order's work.

The Jesuits launched the series as they prepared to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the British province earlier this year.

Each video focuses on one individual's daily life – both priests and those who are yet to take their final vows.

The first video features Brother Mikhael Ahmad. Other videos capture Jesuits working with young people, and with homeless and vulnerable communities.

Also featured are the recollections and inspirational views of an older Jesuit, Father Michael Barrow SJ.

As well as being available on the Jesuits' website and YouTube channel, they will publish social media clips of the videos on channels, including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

More information about becoming a Jesuit is available at jesuit.org.uk/who-we-are/vocations.



Seafarer gift donation comes of age



From left to right: Dorothy Connor, Eileen Stevens, Angela Cooper, Marie Leach, Jackie Metcalfe Smith, Deacon Peter Barrigan, Caroline Bates, Theresa Davies, Ann Stones, Ellen Akerman, Dave Akerman

The Friday Knitting and Natter Group at St Clare's Church, Brookfield, Middlesbrough, donated 120 gift bags for seafarers arriving in the Tees during the Christmas and New Year period.

They presented the bags to Deacon Peter Barrigan, the Stella Maris port chaplain for the Teesside area.

This was the 21st year the parish has supported this cause, and this year they held a special celebratory lunch.

One of the guests was Tony McAvoy, who was the first chaplain 21 years ago when Stella Maris was known in this country as the Apostleship of the Sea.

In July 2009, the then Bishop of Hexham and

Newcastle, the Rt Rev Seamus Cunningham, presented Tony with the Benemerenti Medal, which is awarded to members of the laity by the Pope for exceptional service to the Catholic Church.

The Friday Knitting and Natter Group works tirelessly throughout the year, organising the Holy Island pilgrimage and supporting many other causes.

We would like to thank St Mary's Cathedral and St Francis Church for their tremendous support with the Christmas bags.

This year's Holy Island Pilgrimage is on June 24. Contact Theresa Davies on 01642 591009 for details.

Ann Stones

Men of St Joseph meet for prayer and fellowship

On the first Saturday of each month, a group of men meet for prayer and fellowship at St Thomas More's Church in Middlesbrough.

The gatherings begin with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 7am, followed by Lectio Divina and a time of discussion and reflection on the Sunday Gospel while enjoying a shared breakfast together,

finishing by 9am.

The group is part of a wider fraternity of men from across the North-East who wish to support and encourage one another in the Christian life under the patronage of St Joseph and in imitation of his virtues.

For further information please contact Terry on 07549 068226 or Ben on 07867 472979.



The Men of St Joseph gather every month at St Thomas More's, Middlesbrough

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The Diocese of Middlesbrough would like to point out that while every care is taken with advertisements placed in the Catholic Voice, publication does not suggest an endorsement of any views expressed.

NEWS

New provider for church-related abuse support

The Catholic Church in England and Wales is one of three organisations that have announced ongoing support for victims and survivors of church-related abuse with a newly appointed independent provider First Light for their Safe Spaces project.

Safe Spaces is a free national support service which offers a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England, the Church in Wales or the Catholic Church in England and Wales, regardless of age, gender or sexual orientation.

First Light is an independent organisation with extensive experience in supporting those who have experienced or are experiencing sexual abuse or domestic violence, including survivors and victims of

church-related abuse.

The board of trustees of Safe Spaces England and Wales (SSEW) appointed First Light after a competitive tender process.

Bishop Paul Mason, safeguarding lead for the Catholic Church, board member of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and a trustee of SSEW said: "The impact of abuse can be complex and lifelong. It is vital that victims have a source of support from an independent body that specialises in this area.

"We have complete confidence that First Light will deliver this service in the long term and will make a difference for those who need it. We would like to thank every survivor who has worked with us to help ensure a continuity of support and

excellence of service."

Lyn Gooding, chief executive of First Light, said: "Our trained staff are ready to be there for any victim or survivor of church-related abuse.

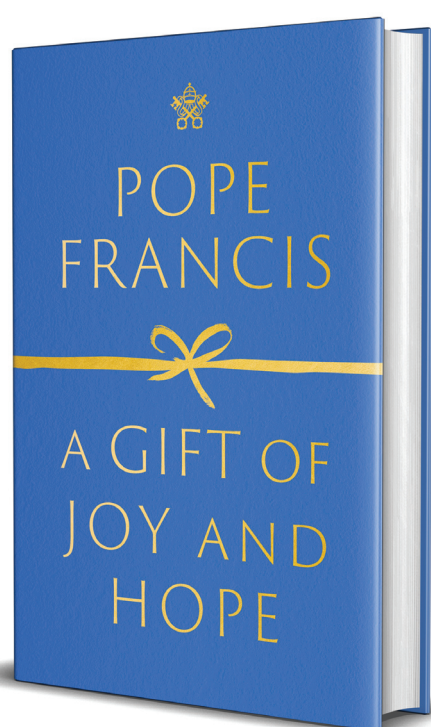
"We know that Safe Spaces is needed, we are committed to the project for the long-term and we could not be prouder to take up this vital work."

Service users can expect a seamless transition from interim providers FearLess (formerly Splitz Support Service), which followed a successful two-year pilot of the Safe Spaces project run by Victim Support.

All current service users will be contacted individually to talk through relevant information, options and to answer any questions. They can expect continuity in accessing support.



You can contact Safe Spaces via safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk or by calling 0300 303 1056.



Pope's latest book published in English

Pope Francis' bestselling book *A Gift of Joy and Hope* is now available in English for the first time.

The book, the third official publication by the Holy Father, was first published in Italy at the end of 2020, at the height of lockdown.

Pope Francis was inspired to write a book to help people find hope and meaning in response to the devastating loss the world faced during the pandemic.

The book is filled with thoughts and reflections on how to cope with the world we're currently in, from the anxieties of the age to the importance of nature.

Published by Hodder Faith, *A Gift of Joy and Hope* encourages readers to look outside themselves and trust that joy and hope are still possible.

Irish night at St Gabriel's

All are welcome to an Irish Night in aid of the parish Lourdes fund at St Gabriel's Church Hall, Ormesby, Middlesbrough, on Friday March 10 from 7.30pm.

Entertainment is from Janie St John, and there will also be bingo, raffle and tombola. Bring your own refreshments. Tickets are £5, call 07407 606172 or 07432 662759.

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Environment Corner - The creativity of dreams

People from parishes in York, Middlesbrough and Ampleforth village were challenged to identify with Pope Francis' book, *Let us Dream*, and imagine the shape and function of future parishes as dynamic hubs for the Care of our Common Home.

The call – can we "shape our parish" to enable it to "shape the world"? – was made at the February meeting of the Justice and Peace Commission.

John Paul de Quay, from the Ecological Conversion Group, introduced the morning through the concept of integral ecology, whereby everything is connected and we live in right relationship with our creator and our planet.

So many live in a conflictual relationship with their homeland, turning creation into a commodity and seeing people as "other".

As a contrast to that, in *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis calls for an ecological conversion whereby the effects of our encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in our relationship with the world around us. Everybody and everything matters.

We were asked to consider how we would build structures of love that make life better for everyone, structures that would educate and enthuse and help us grow together as

communities.

Ideas were generated that encompassed every aspect of parish life – centring on liturgy, prayer, encounter, use of green spaces to plant trees, vegetable gardens and wildflowers.

The importance of closer relationships between parishes and schools was emphasised with recognition of much good work that goes on in our schools concerning care for the environment that needs to be shared more widely.

Our parishes should be open welcoming spaces where everyone feels at home and the local community can feel part of. Joint projects with the local community could focus on issues such as land regeneration and eco shops.

It was fun to dream and to be made aware of the richness of resources within the Journey to 2030 project, of which John Paul is a joint founder.

To quote from *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis's encyclical on fraternity and social friendship – "No one can face life in isolation... We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead.

"How important it is to dream together... By

ourselves we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there.

"Dreams, on the other hand, are built together. Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travellers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all."

Excellent parish packs are available which are suitable for groups to plan a range of activities and to reflect on what is good in what they are already doing.

Visit journeyto2030.org to find reading and video resources and advice on getting started. You can order packs via the website.

Barbara Hungin



Members of the Justice and Peace Commission at their latest meeting

New book retells the life of St Patrick

A North-East author has penned a novel retelling the life of St Patrick, using his own research to piece together the dramatic events that shaped him.

Eric Foster's *Becoming St Patrick – His*



Author Eric Foster has written a novel retelling the life of St Patrick

Slavery explores the saint's fall from affluence and power to slavery and persecution, before finally finding an unshakable faith in God.

Snatched from a life of luxury by raiders, Patricius, an adolescent of the Roman-British ruling class, is bundled into one of many boats along with scores of captives.

He is bound for a slave market in Ireland, where a sheep-farming king buys him. Renamed Patrick by his master, he is chained to the back of a cart loaded with pigs and his journey to the western edge of the world begins.

Patrick harbours a terrible secret from his own days as a slave master. It leads Patrick to find God in the desolate Irish hills.

Repentance and prayer help to heal his broken spirit, but just as Patrick finally accepts that his permanent future is in Ireland, he is stunned by something that compels him to return to Britain. He becomes a runaway slave, attempting the impossible journey.

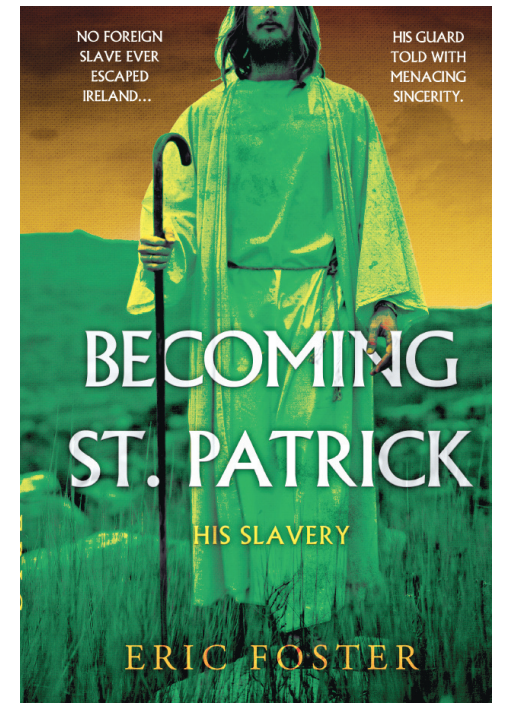
Travelling in the dark hours, Patrick secures passage on a merchant vessel and escapes the shores of Ireland. But the boat is bound for Gaul and Patrick is snared in an ordeal worse than his original captivity.

After learning about St Patrick's amazing history, Eric – who is an active member of Darlington Catenians – realised how few people knew much about him.

"When I read Thomas Cahill's book, *How the Irish Saved Civilisation*, I was inspired by a section on Patrick, which revealed far-reaching activities I had never come across in history books.

"Discovering a whole new avenue about Patrick spurred my desire to tell the saint's story widely."

Becoming St Patrick – His Slavery is published by Troubador and priced £11.99. It can be ordered from Waterstones, Blackwells and other bookstores, or online from troubador.co.uk and as an ebook on Amazon.



Report highlights fall in family engagement

A new report says four out of ten churches have reduced engagement with families since the end of lockdown.

The survey by Liverpool Hope University and the National Institute for Christian Research – in partnership with five Christian organisations – has found a significant disconnect between the way church leaders and families view the Church's support of

faith in families, both during the pandemic and afterwards.

They found there was a significant decrease in engagement between families and their local churches during the pandemic – and many families have not returned to regular attendance.

The report – "What is the place of the families in church post-Covid?" investigates

how churches are now connecting with Christian families and what they need to do differently.

The research – sponsored by Share Jesus International, Hope Together, Evangelical Alliance, Care for the Family and Parenting for Faith – was based on an online survey of 175 church leaders and Christian parents and children. The participants represented 12 denominations and were based throughout the UK.

Many parents felt the pandemic had improved their family's faith lives but reduced their connection and engagement

with their local church. Some said they would value more personal, targeted and relational support from their local church for faith at home.

"This new research enables us to finally put statistics to the experiences that we shared over the pandemic," said Rachel Turner, of Parenting for Faith.

"Some of its conclusions are confirmation of what we already knew, but it also provides some eyebrow-raising surprises. It makes for a thoughtful and provoking read that demands action."

LOURDES

Formation Day dates for your diary

This year's Formation Day, the mandatory training we need to cover so we can work safely in Lourdes, is on Saturday March 25.

There will also be a Formation Evening on Tuesday May 16. Both events are at Trinity Catholic College, Middlesbrough.

Donate to Lourdes by phone

You can now donate to the Diocese of Middlesbrough Lourdes Sick Fund via your mobile phone.

Simply scan this QR code into your phone and select how much you would like to donate.

The money raised pays for dozens of our supported pilgrims to go to Lourdes every year, staying either in the Accueil or one of the many hotels in the town.

Thank you for your generous support for this very worthwhile cause.



From the Archives



40 Years Ago

(From *Catholic Voice*, March 1983)

Cliff Mulligan, Head Teacher of St John Fisher Junior High School, Hull, writes: There has been a growth in recent years in both the idea and pursuit of Christian Unity; a Catholic school should try to be part of this process. To this end, St John Fisher School was involved in 1982 in a joint assembly on the theme of Christian Unity with a neighbouring local authority school, Shaw Park Junior High.

So successful was this joint assembly, that a similar venture took place in January 1983. The service was very much in the hands of the Covenant Players who were visiting Beverley for Unity Week Services. Based in California, there are 12 nationalities involved in a number of touring units. Their basic aim is to convey the Christian message through drama. The pupils were treated to a number of playlets based on the Gospel message and a simple unity theme.

The Assembly concluded with a saying of the Our Father, and the singing of the hymn Bind us Together.

100 Years Ago

(From *Hull Catholic Magazine*)

The Flag Day for the St Vincent's Orphan Boys' Home takes place this year on April 3rd. A meeting of the Ladies has been held, and all arrangements have been made to make it a success. The cause is good, one of the best, and with united effort it should be made a record collection. Don't forget. Remember that the cost of each orphan in the Home now is more than twice as much as before the War. Give generously, and a record is assured.

David Smallwood

NEWS

Final season of hit life of Jesus series released

All three seasons of *The Chosen* – the global phenomenon, drama series based on the life of Jesus – are now available to view for free.

With more than 420m episode views from around the world, *The Chosen* is a fan-supported, seven-season television series that creates an authentic and intimate picture of Jesus' life and ministry, seen through the eyes of the people who knew him.

"The theme of Season 3 is 'Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,'" said series creator Dallas Jenkins. "The honeymoon phase is over, now the characters all have to deal with the costs and occasional confusions of following the Messiah."

The Chosen's first two seasons earned praise from critics and fans alike for its historical and biblical accuracy, playful spirit, stirring drama, genuine humour and disruptive impact.

It has been translated into more than 60 languages and is consistently one of the top-searched shows on streaming platforms.

The Chosen is the largest fan-supported entertainment project of all time. It is completely free to watch on mobile or smart TV apps, with no fee or subscription necessary.

It is described as a stirring and humorous drama that creates an authentic and

intimate picture of Jesus' life and ministry, seen through the eyes of the people who knew him.

Both critics and fans have praised the series for its historical and biblical accuracy, playful spirit and disruptive impact.

"*The Chosen* has moved from an experimental project to a worldwide phenomenon and fans have high expectations for the next chapter," said Jeffrey Harmon, chief content officer of the series' producer, Angel Studios.

You can view all episodes from seasons one to three on the Angel smart TV app or at watch.angelstudios.com. The first eight episodes are also on Netflix.



Episodes of *The Chosen* have been viewed more than 420m times around the world

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