



Laudate Deum – Praise God

These are the opening words of the Apostolic Exhortation (Letter of Encouragement) from Pope Francis. He wrote this letter to all people of goodwill on October 4, the feast of St Francis of Assisi. It is a follow up to his groundbreaking letter *Laudato Si'* which he wrote eight years ago. It was released in advance of Cop28 which is taking place in Dubai from November 30 through to December 12.

In the letter the Pope recognises that our reactions and the steps that we have taken regarding climate change have turned out to be increasingly insufficient. While some still doubt, the vast majority of people understand that climate change is undeniable, and its effects are becoming more and more evident. There is no doubt that human activity is the cause of this problem and all of us have to accept some responsibility for the problem.

The experience of the recent Covid 19 pandemic has taught us that everything is connected and that no one is saved alone. Many turn to technology and economic power for solutions to all our problems. In many ways this route has led us to believe that nature is a resource for us to exploit and our justification has been the mantra "maximum profit at the lowest cost" thus weakening our concern for our common home, the earth.

Global cooperation and multilateral agreements between nations are necessary if we are to ensure the global common good. While it is true that international conferences have been held to address the climate crisis, they have mostly failed due to the lack of effective monitoring and sanctioning mechanism. Cop28, now going on in Dubai, could be an important turning point if it can demonstrate that the efforts since 1992 have been genuine. However, the necessary transition is not progressing fast enough. We need to overcome the tendency to look for isolated technical solutions since we run the risk of remaining locked in the logic of patching-up, while a process of deterioration that we nourish is advancing underneath.

National leaders and policy makers must think of the common good and the future of their children, for what is the point of preserving today a power that will be remembered for its inability to intervene when it was urgent and necessary to do so. The Holy Father reminds all Catholics of their faith in God and their responsibility to care for God's creation which implies respecting the laws of nature and recognising the beauty and richness of divine creation.

Laudate Deum - Praise God because human beings who pretend to take the place of God become the worst danger to themselves.

In blessed hope,

+ Long

What's Inside

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Anil and Father Xavier**
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The Priests booked for exclusive cathedral concert

They've sung for three popes, two queens and a king – and now they're coming to sing for us at St Mary's Cathedral in Middlesbrough.

Award-winning classical singing group The Priests – Northern Ireland brothers Father Eugene and Father Martin O'Hagan and their lifelong friend Father David Delargy – have agreed to perform at an exclusive concert on Friday June 28 2024.

The Priests' self-titled debut album became the fastest-selling debut album for a classical act in the UK when it was released in 2008 and went gold and platinum throughout Europe, as well as topping the classical Billboard chart in the United States.

Their first three albums were all nominated as Classical Album of the Year in the Classical Brit Awards and they have had the honour of performing for Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, as well as for the late Queen Elizabeth II, The Duke of Edinburgh, and Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, (now King Charles and Queen Camilla).

"We can't wait for the summer and what promises to be a spectacular night," said cathedral dean Canon Paul Farrer, who is organising the event.

"I'm delighted we are able to bring The Priests to the cathedral. I met Father Eugene just before the pandemic when he visited a seminarian in Valladolid. We said then how good it would be to arrange a concert. Little

did I know it would be here!

"We are working hard to bring a series of such events to the cathedral and I can't think of a better first announcement."

The vast majority of The Priests' music

income goes into a charitable trust that has helped build schools in Cambodia, Uganda and Thailand, as well as looking after retired priests and homeless people.

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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, Sunday 24th December
Lady Chapel 3pm

St Clare of Assisi 5pm *
St Mary's Cathedral 6pm*
St Francis of Assisi 7pm*

(*All suitable for children and families)
St Mary's Cathedral 9pm Midnight Mass
with Bishop Terence Drainey

Christmas Day, Monday 25th December
St Francis of Assisi 9am
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am

St Stephen, Tuesday 26th December
St Mary's Cathedral 10am
Lady Chapel 11am

St John, Wednesday 27th December
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am

Holy Innocents, Thursday 28th December
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am

Friday 29th December
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am

Saturday 30th December
Mass for 6th Day of the Christmas Octave
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am

Sunday Vigil Mass
Lady Chapel 3pm
St Clare of Assisi 6pm

Holy Family, Sunday 31st December
St Mary's Cathedral, 10am
St Francis of Assisi, 11am
St Mary's Cathedral, 5pm

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the gift of peace this Christmas filling your
hearts with deepest joy and blessings that
never cease.

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NEWS

The Priests booked for exclusive cathedral concert

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The three men, who were all awarded MBEs in the Queen's New Year Honours in 2020, continue to serve as full-time priests in the Diocese of Down and Connor.

The concert is their only planned mainland date and will be extra special because 2024 marks the 50th anniversary of their first performance together as schoolboys at St MacNissi's College, County Antrim.

"I know the cathedral will be packed with people who want to hear them sing in a beautiful setting," said Canon Paul.

"I even think tickets would make a wonderful Christmas present!"

Tickets for the event, which will also feature the Cathedral Choir and Cantabile, are priced from £22.50 to £27.50.

To book your tickets, call the cathedral on 01642 597750 or email cathedralevents@rcdmidd.org.uk.

- We'll have an exclusive interview with Father Martin from The Priests in next month's Voice.
- Tickets are still available for the cathedral's musical Christmas spectacular, featuring Cantabile, on Friday December 8. There will also be refreshments available and Christmas stalls. For tickets, priced £7, call 01642 597750 or visit eventbrite.co.uk/e/christmas-at-the-cathedral-with-cantabile-tickets-732735901807.



BISHOP TERRY'S DECEMBER ENGAGEMENTS	
3	Attends the Advent Carol Service at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough 3.30pm
5	Attends the Bishop's Council meeting via Zoom 10.30am
6	Attends NPCAT Advent Carol Service at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough 11am
7	Attends meeting of CSAN Board, Romero House, London 1pm
10	Attends the Diaconate Ordination of Steven Leightell, Bridington Noon
12	Attends Trustee Board Meeting at the Tree Bridge Hotel, Middlesbrough 10.30am
13	Attends the Oratorian Meeting, Curial Office, Middlesbrough 10.30am
18	Attends the Northern Church Leaders meeting via Zoom 4pm
19-23	Attends personal retreat
20	Attends Christmas Mass at Deerbolt Prison, Barnard Castle 1.15pm
24	Night Mass of Christmas at St Mary's Cathedral 9pm

Emma clears new path towards ancient vocation

In a break from our series focusing on the four men in our diocese who are training to be permanent deacons, we hear from Doctor Emma Morrison who is in formation towards a notable first for our diocese...

I have already had the joy of getting to know some of you from across the diocese through the synod process, travelling as a doctor on the Lourdes pilgrimage and through being roped into being first aider at diocesan events!

What is perhaps less well known is that I am in formation for consecrated virginity within the Diocese of Middlesbrough, a little-known but growing vocation within the Church.

I grew up in Northallerton, attending Sacred Heart Parish, went on to secondary school at St Francis Xavier in Richmond, and am now a parishioner at St Paulinus in Guisborough – so I have always had a strong connection to the diocese, and I feel so fortunate to be discerning and sharing with you all about this form of consecrated life.

Unlike most other forms of consecrated life for women, consecrated virginity is lived within the diocese. Consecrated virgins are committed to a particular diocese rather than a religious order, and are directly under the guidance of the diocesan bishop, as our priests and deacons are, rather than under a religious superior as nuns or sisters are.

Consecrated virginity is both one of the newest and one of the oldest vocations within the Church: it was one of the forms of consecrated life present in the early Church, with well-known saints such as St Agnes, St Cecilia and St Lucy all having followed this way of life.

Over the centuries, consecrated virginity merged with the desert tradition and evolved into religious life as we know it today, with the diocesan form falling out of use. However, at the Second Vatican Council, the decision was made to reintroduce consecrated virginity in its original diocesan context.

One of primary images presented by the vocation of consecrated virginity is the image of the Church as the Bride of Christ – that through our baptism, and our membership of the Church, we are all called to an intimate and personal relationship with Christ, and that as the Church we are called to total devotion and faithfulness to him. (And because of this bridal imagery, it is the only state of life in the Church which is only open to women!)

My personal sense of vocation to this form of consecrated life grew from a coming together of several strands in my life: I had an ongoing sense of wanting to give my total "yes" to God, and live my whole life for and with him, echoing that bridal/spousal image mentioned above.

While at university I started discerning religious life for a while, but eventually realised I was picking religious orders based on who had houses in Yorkshire, rather than the order themselves! It was at this point I started to realise God was maybe doing something else with this desire.

I began noticing a deep call to diocesan and parish life – to the Diocese of Middlesbrough in particular: I have always loved hiking through the Moors and the Dales, and as any of my friends will tell you, I feel a very strong connection to Yorkshire!

But also I had come to a realisation that for the Church to thrive in my generation, we need to be putting our energy and gifts into parish life.

After seeing how God had brought these strands of my spiritual life together, and after a few years further discernment, I eventually approached Bishop Terry about this way of life.

Since then I have been receiving ongoing formation and guidance from both my spiritual director and the nuns at Stanbrook



Emma Morrison is a parishioner at St Paulinus in Guisborough

Abbey. If I am eventually consecrated, I would be the first consecrated virgin in our diocese, which means that often my formation and living out of this vocation seems like "the path is made by walking".

However, it is also exciting to be discerning a vocation that is undergoing such a renewal – the line that always comes to my mind when I share about this vocation is St Augustine's: "Beauty ever ancient, ever new".

One final feature of the lives of consecrated virgins is the emphasis on prayer for our dioceses – so I will continue to pray for all of you over the coming months and years. I would be so grateful if you would hold people discerning and living out all forms of consecrated life in prayer. If reading this has sparked any questions for you, please ask me if you see me around or get in touch via Canon Sheridan.

- If you feel you are being called to the priesthood, permanent diaconate or consecrated life, contact our vocations director Canon Alan Sheridan by emailing parish.priest@stthereseingleby.org.uk or calling 01642 751304.

Will world leaders keep their promises at Cop28?

With the ongoing devastating conflict raging between Israel and Palestine overshadowing everything else that is going on in the world, it would be easy to overlook Cop28 taking place in the United Arab Emirates.

This is the opportunity world leaders have to agree and implement policies and actions that will help to keep global warming below 1.5degrees.

The murmurings coming from the pre-Cop meetings sound promising, with Cop28 president Dr Sultan Al Jaber calling for unity, action and multilateralism in his opening speech.

Addressing the 70 ministers and more than 100 country delegates, Dr Sultan was clear: "The world needs to do more and seize the opportunity to act and keep 1.5 within reach."

Some newspaper headlines claim Cop28 UAE will be a milestone moment when the world will take stock of its progress on the Paris Agreement by conducting a Global Stocktake.

They are making many promises but their track record leaves a lot to be desired. Since signing the Paris Agreement in 2015, few effective measures have been implemented. They agreed to compensate those nations most affected to enable them to mitigate the impact of climate change. This has not happened.

Last year, they agreed to pay Loss and Damage to those same nations and again, no financial payments have been made to date. Time will tell if they keep their promises.

In *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis says: "Eight years have passed since I published the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, when I wanted to share with all of you, my brothers and sisters of our suffering planet, my heartfelt concerns

about the care of our common home. Yet, with the passage of time, I have realised that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing breaking point.

"In addition to this possibility, it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons. We will feel its effects in the areas of healthcare, sources of employment, access to resources, housing, forced migrations etc."

The Holy Father says: "Our care for one another and our care for the earth are intimately bound together. Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community. The effects of climate change are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world.

"If there is sincere interest in making Cop28 a historic event that honours and ennobles us as human beings, then one can only hope for binding forms of energy transition that meet three conditions: that they be efficient, obligatory and readily monitored.

"This, in order to achieve the beginning of a new process marked by three requirements: that it be drastic, intense and count on the commitment of all. That is not what has happened so far, and only a process of this sort can enable international politics to recover its credibility, since only in this concrete manner will it be possible to reduce significantly carbon dioxide levels and prevent even greater evils over time.

"May those taking part in the conference be strategists capable of considering the common good and the future of their children, more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses.



A climate change pilgrimage took place earlier this year to urge the government to stop investing in fossil fuels – Photo by Louise Norton/CAFOD

"In this way, may they demonstrate the nobility of politics and not its shame. To the powerful, I can only repeat this question: 'What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold onto power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?'"

"I cannot fail in this regard to remind the Catholic faithful of the motivations born of their faith. I encourage my brothers and sisters of other religions to do the same, since we know that authentic faith not only gives strength to the human heart, but also transforms life, transfigures our goals and sheds light on our relationship to others and with creation as a whole."

Let us pray and hope the Holy Spirit will permeate the minds and hearts of world leaders to take the necessary actions for the good of the earth and all its peoples.

Cop28 takes place from November 30 to December 12. You can read more at cop28.com.

I send special thanks to all of our diocesan priests, volunteers and parish communities for their ongoing support and generosity towards our work and I wish you all the joys and blessings of the Christmas season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Carol Cross
CAFOD Community Participation Coordinator

Charismatic Spirit of New Dawn comes to Yorkshire

Middlesbrough Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion (CDSC) held a Day of Reconciliation and Healing at St Vincent de Paul Church in Hull.

The service, with the theme "With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption", followed on from its launch event, "Taste and see that the Lord is good", in June.

More than 100 people attended this latest event, which began with the Rosary, beautifully prayed by Kathy Holtby and Mary Wilson.

We were blessed to have Brother John Bosco from the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal to lead us in praise and worship, accompanied by Joe Mishra, the music leader from St Joseph's parish in Pocklington.

Coordinator Sharon Daniel gave an introduction to the CDSC and Father Richard Nwagwu, from St Vincent's, gave a talk about the mercy of God before we had an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We enjoyed a hearty lunch, generously provided by the St Vincent's parishioners and the CDSC team, in the next door, providing for a wonderful time of fellowship where new friends were made and faith stories shared.

The afternoon began with a time of Eucharistic Adoration accompanied by worship music from Brother John. A powerful and beautiful time of prayer ministry for healing followed. The day culminated in Mass led by Canon David Grant, dean for the southern deanery of the diocese, who gave a wonderful homily about the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.

We have received some encouraging feedback



More than 100 people attended Middlesbrough Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion's Day of Reconciliation and Healing at St Vincent de Paul Church, Hull

from those who attended the day and we were deeply encouraged to continue sharing our gifts and working towards renewal in our diocese, for the edification of the whole Church. We hope our next event will take place early in 2024 in either the coastal or northern deanery.

The CDSC team is offering to help run courses in parishes. We trialled this at English Martyrs Parish in York earlier this year.

It was a wonderful experience with much

exploration and sharing of faith, culminating in the group praying for an infilling of the Holy Spirit for each participant.

One lady shared this feedback: "The course was a powerful experience of renewal, a deep realisation that the Spirit is working among us. A call to prayer, to intercession – a call to live life in a deeper way. A call to serve, maybe in a new way."

If you would like to know more about the National Service for Charismatic Renewal

(CHARIS) or the work of Middlesbrough CDSC team, please email or telephone to put your name on our mailing list to be notified of future events, to join a charismatic prayer group in the diocese or to talk about the possibility of a Gift (Life in the Spirit) course in your parish.

You can contact me on 07932 420809 or email cdscmiddlesbrough@gmail.com.

Sharon Daniel
Middlesbrough CDSC Coordinator

SCHOOLS

New mission statement sets out key trust objectives

St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust began the academic year with a new mission statement.

Launched at a service of dedication at Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel Church in Hull, the new mission and vision has been developed with input from the board of directors, staff and members.

The trust's new mission is rooted firmly in Bishop Terry's vision for education in the diocese.

Local clergy and representatives of the board of directors joined staff and pupils representing all 15 schools in the trust in prayer and song.

Father William Massie led the congregation in prayer and contemplation.

Five key objectives bring the new mission to life across our family of schools...

- To give every member of the St Cuthbert's family the experiences to encounter Christ and know that they are loved by him.
- To enable all to meet their full potential and flourish.
- To provide excellent academic opportunities for learning.
- To grow in the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love.
- To grow in service of others.

Interim chief executive officer Karen Siedle said: "I am excited about the journey the trust is on and we are dedicated to preserving and developing Catholic education



St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust's launched its new mission statement at a service of dedication at Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel, Hull

in the area served by St Cuthbert's – Hull, the East Riding and North Yorkshire.

"We look forward to seeing our trust continue to grow and adapt, guided by the Catholic principles upon which our academies and trust are founded."

Schools unite for Mini Vinnies' Foundation Day

Primary schools throughout St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust took part in a Mini Vinnies' Foundation Day.

Our photo shows Mini Vinnies from St Vincent's Voluntary Catholic Academy Primary School together with one of the school chaplains, Micki Coyle, at the altar that was designed for opening prayers.

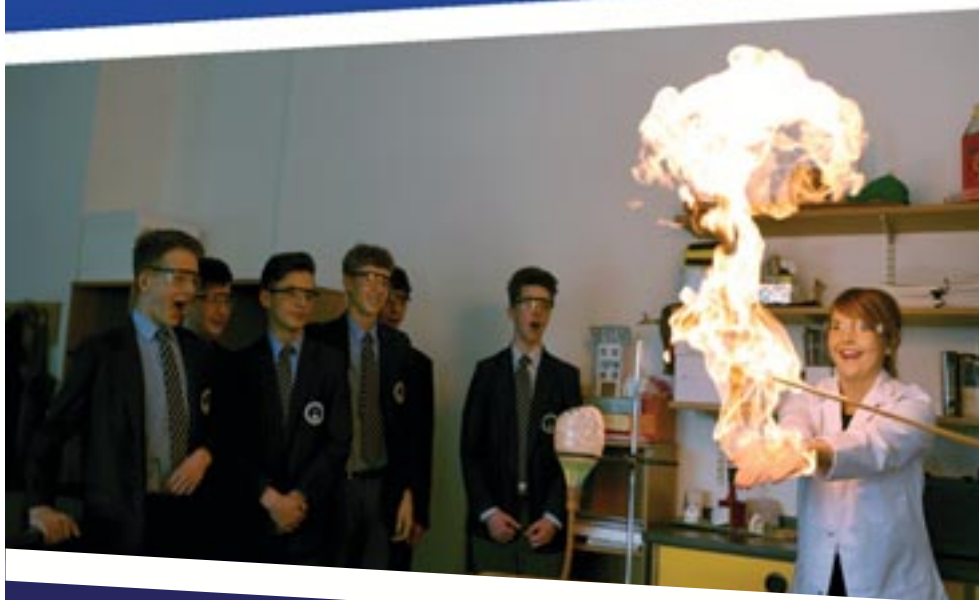
The pupils were enthusiastic about learning what their roles would involve and their lives have been enriched with the knowledge of how they will achieve this.

We hope this will be a fruitful year of working to show kindness to friends, family and the community and, of course, to all the other students in their schools.

Helen Marshall



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Ofsted success for four more NPCAT schools



Trinity Catholic College headteacher Andy Rodgers

Four more Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT) schools are celebrating after successful visits from Ofsted.

Andy Rodgers, the recently appointed headteacher of Trinity Catholic College in Middlesbrough, was delighted to receive an upbeat update praising the “rigorous and intelligent approach to school improvement”

he is taking.

In a letter following a monitoring visit to the 1,300-pupil school, Ofsted said leaders have taken effective action to improve the school towards it being rated “good”.

“Since your appointment, you have taken a rigorous and intelligent approach to school improvement,” the letter said.

Mr Rodgers said: “Trinity has the potential to be a fantastic school. I can see where we should be, and I know how we can get there.”

Ofsted praised efforts from NPCAT to provide the foundations for the Trinity’s continued improvement.

Meanwhile, three North Yorkshire primary schools that joined NPCAT at the start of the 2022 school year have all been judged as good overall and good in all areas in their latest reports.

Gerard Eddy is headteacher of two of those schools, St Joseph’s Catholic Primary in Pickering and St Benedict’s Catholic Primary



Pupils from St Joseph's, Pickering

in Ampleforth.

Inspectors said parents and carers are hugely positive about 87-pupil St Joseph’s and the care of the headteacher and school staff.

“Pupils are friendly, happy and feel safe in this school. Leaders strive to make the school a place where everyone can succeed,” their report said.

St Benedict’s was described as “a small, welcoming school at the heart of its community”.

Ofsted said: “It is also a friendly and happy school. Pupils form strong friendships. They cooperate with each other and show kindness and respect to all.”

Finally, inspectors who visited St Mary’s Catholic Primary School in Richmond found a “caring community” where children have everything they need to flourish.

“Pupils behave well and feel safe. They are

well cared for by the adults, who know them well. Leaders have high expectations for pupils’ achievement. This starts in the early years, where the curriculum has been well thought through to support pupils to learn.”

Headteacher Fran Mackle said she couldn’t be prouder of St Mary’s children, families and governors.

NPCAT was formed in September 2018 and now includes 38 Catholic schools across Teesside and North Yorkshire, including the city of York.

Two of its six secondary schools, St Francis Xavier in Richmond and All Saints Catholic School in York, are rated Outstanding by Ofsted. Three others – St Patrick’s Catholic College in Thornaby, Sacred Heart Catholic Secondary in Redcar and St Peter’s Catholic College, South Bank – have been upgraded to good after their most recent inspections.



Headteacher Fran Mackle with children from St Mary's, Richmond



ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY, STOCKTON

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



ST GEORGE'S PRIMARY, YORK

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



CHRIST THE KING, THORNABY

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY, PICKERING

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



ST BENEDICT'S PRIMARY, AMPLEFORTH

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



TRINITY CATHOLIC COLLEGE, MIDDLESBROUGH

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



ST MARY'S PRIMARY, RICHMOND

Special Measures Requires Improvement Good Outstanding



ST BENEDICT'S PRIMARY, REDCAR

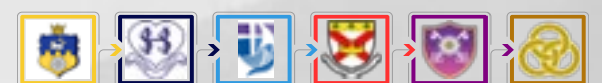
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SCHOOL REPORTS

Join our amazing NPCAT primary and secondary schools with sixth forms across Teesside, York and North Yorkshire.

Our NPCAT schools continuously achieve excellent Ofsted reports, further Ofsted quotes and complete reports can be accessed via our school websites.



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NEWS

Looking back on a year of coming together events

The past year has seen our communities continue to emerge from the pandemic, with more people attending face-to-face events across the diocese.

The synod, launched by Pope Francis in 2021, helped to shape much of our work in Adult Formation by building-in a response to our own Diocesan Synthesis.

As we stand on the brink of a new year, it's worth just recapping on some events that have happened across our diocese.

January

We completed our second Lay Funeral Ministry Formation programme at Our Lady's, York, with five people, from York, Haxby and Whitby, who were put forward for the training by their parish priests.

Father Tony Lester led our RCIA Retreat Day, an annual event for those who are planning to be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, along with their sponsors. Around 20 people attended the day.

February

We launched our Sycamore online programme, a series of six monthly, online, 90-minute sessions covering a different faith-related topic each month. The programme was put together in response to topics highlighted by parish groups during our synod consultations. Session one was an introduction to Sycamore, which uses different methods of explaining the Catholic faith. You can find more information at sycamore.fm.

On the first Sunday of Lent, 24 people from parishes across the diocese and their sponsors and families joined Bishop Terry for



Lay funeral ministers Johan Bergström-Allen, Elizabeth Maynard, Sue Ellis, Gill Almack, Marie Ledgeway and Catherine McGlinchey with Bishop Terry after their commissioning in June 2023 at Our Lady's, York – Photo by Carol Cross

the Rite of Election at the cathedral. This is a beautiful service where those wishing to be received into full communion with the Church at Easter present themselves to the Bishop.

March

Session two of our Sycamore programme built upon the synodal process of speaking and listening effectively to the Holy Spirit and each other. You can view recorded sessions at middlesbrough-diocese.org.uk/online-sessions-explore-catholic-practices-and-beliefs

Session three, Reflecting on Scripture for Holy Week and Easter, followed this and explored "Who is Jesus?"

April

In session four of our Sycamore programme people looked at Christian Prayer: What is prayer? Does prayer make a difference? It looked at how to pray, using online resources.

May

Exploring Catholic Social Teaching – The Church's Best Kept Secret was an introduction to Catholic Social Teaching on the themes of the dignity of the human person and the right to life, Christian teaching about family and society, speaking the truth and following conscience.

June

Bishop Terry commissioned our six trained lay funeral ministers during Mass at Our Lady's, York, on Sunday June 11. Congratulations to Johan Bergström-Allen, Gill Almack, Sue Ellis, Marie Ledgeway, Elizabeth Maynard and Catherine McGlinchey.

Our Sycamore online programme ended this month, with participants sharing how they are using Sycamore resources, exploring what worked well and what else can be done to support them.

July

We established a group to explore how we respond to the climate crisis with the aim of holding a diocesan event at the end of September involving members of the Caritas Middlesbrough network.

September

Around 500 Ministers of the Word and Holy Communion gathered as Sister Moira Meeghan, of the Irenaeus Centre, Liverpool, led our Diocesan Inspiration and Commissioning Day at Scarborough Spa. The theme was Baptised into Christ and the day helped us explore how our baptismal dignity helps to set the scene for us in carrying out our ministries.

Vicar General Monsignor Gerard Robinson celebrated Holy Mass, joined by Canon Eddie Gubbins, Father Pat Keogh, Father Michael Weilt (Madonna House) and cathedral dean Canon Paul Farrer, who was introduced to us as the new Episcopal Vicar for Spirituality and Worship. In his homily, Canon Paul thanked Canon Pat Hartnett for his years of service to the vicariate.

A further diocesan event drew our attention

to what we can do to respond to the climate crisis. The event, Don't Just Pray, Do Something For God's Sake, was held at English Martyrs Parish Hall, York. Speakers included Sister Margaret Atkins, who spoke at length about the challenges of *Laudato Si'*, its links to Catholic Social Teaching and a call for us to act now.

Diocesan building and environmental surveyor Glenn Melvin gave an informative talk on work he is doing with clergy and parish communities to reduce our carbon footprint by helping our buildings become more energy efficient.

Others spoke about action they have taken in their homes such as installing solar panels, heat pumps and insulation and using environmentally friendly household products. Don Lillistone gave a brief presentation on CAFOD's *Laudato Si'* Award and work taking place in our schools.

Teresa Lyth talked about the establishment of an eco-shop in Middlesbrough and Barbara Hugin with Claire and Dave Palmer of York spoke about making the penny drop. Their parish has established a *Laudato Si'* Group to encourage parishioners to put the document's principles into action.

The day ended with a liturgy provided by pupils from St Patrick's Catholic College, Thornaby. Thank you to them and all who helped with the day.

November

More than 50 people attended Becoming a Missionary Parish – Responding to the Synod at the cathedral. Father Chris Hughes, from the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, led the day. Participants explored three questions being raised in October's General Assembly in Rome.

- How can welcoming and accompanying be made more central in the life of the diocese?
- Mission – how can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel?
- Participation, governance and authority – what processes, structures and institutions are needed in a missionary synodal church?

Why not think about these questions in your parish and keep the Synod process going?

Future events

Saturday December 9, 10am to 12.30pm, St Mary's Cathedral: Creation is Screaming At Us, Are We Listening? Responding with *Laudate Deum*.

It's eight years since Pope Francis gave us *Laudato Si'*. The Holy Father tells us not enough is being done to tackle the impending climate catastrophe. Join us at the cathedral for a morning of prayer, insight and reflection on Pope Francis' document *Laudate Deum*.

This free event could be the best Christmas gift you receive this year! Please let us know you are coming at adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Saturday January 20, 10am to 3pm, RCIA Retreat Day, Our Lady's, Acomb, York

Sunday February 18, 3pm, Rite of Election, St Mary's Cathedral: Like the retreat above, this is for those expecting to be received into Full Communion with the Church at Easter, their sponsors and their families and, of course, the wider parish family.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for all your help and support over the past year and to wish you and your loved ones a joy-filled and peaceful Christmas as you prepare to welcome the Christ child? And all the very best for 2024!

Deacon David Cross
Adult Formation Coordinator



Job opportunity Human Resources Manager

Role title: Human Resources Manager
Location: The Curial Office, Middlesbrough
Reports to: Chief Operating Officer
Hours: 21 hours per week (negotiable and flexible)
Salary: IRO £36,000 (pro-rata)
– depending on experience and qualifications.

About the role

This vacancy would suit an experienced HR professional who wants to move to part-time working, while still have a stimulating and rewarding role in with a high level of autonomy. We are happy to discuss flexibility of hours and working pattern, alongside hybrid working. You will be given autonomy to apply your expertise in employment law, developing policies and procedures for employees and line managers within the diocese. The HR Manager will deal with all HR issues in the diocese.

Who are we looking for

A person who has the confidence and experience to establish new HR processes and policies. You will have significant experience of advising on a range of employment areas. You will be able to demonstrate how you are able to work with high degrees of autonomy. You will be confident in your knowledge and interpretation of employment law and best practice. We seek a person who is a good "fit" in terms of values, workplace culture and ethos. While the successful applicant does not need to be Roman Catholic, we expect the person to understand working in a faith environment and have sympathy with the Christian ethos.

For an application pack contact email Dawn Cummings at bishopsecretary@rcdmidd.org.uk. For an informal discussion about the role contact COO Peter Warren at peterwarren@rcdmidd.org.uk.

The closing date for applications is Friday December 15 2023.

Book traces fascinating history of Amazing Grace

Parishioners at St Aelred's York, were treated to a preview of Professor James Walvin's new book on the story of the well-loved hymn, Amazing Grace.

He told how slave-trading ship captain John Newton experienced a change of heart and began understanding the enormity of what he had done in transporting hundreds of men, women and children from west Africa to be sold into slavery on plantations in the Caribbean.

Eventually becoming an Anglican priest, he was a great preacher and hymn writer, and wrote the words to Amazing Grace in 1779. He joined William Wilberforce in campaigning

for an end to the British slave trade, which came in 1807, shortly before Newton died.

James said Irish or Scottish immigrants took the hymn from Olney in Buckinghamshire to America. For the first 60 years it was sung to a variety of tunes, usually folk melodies, until an American matched it to the tune we now know so well.

Its words, promising salvation and a way home to God, found a place in the hearts of slaves, and made their way into the repertoire of the black churches at the time of emancipation. By the end of the 19th century it appeared in many American hymn books.

The hymn grew in popularity in the United States, particularly at the time of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War in the 1960s and '70s. Paul Robeson's recording took it onto the world stage and it was taken up by musicians of every kind, from soul to jazz, from piano to bagpipes. It has been played at the funerals of American presidents and at the inauguration of America's first black

president, Barack Obama, where it was sung by Aretha Franklin.

James' moving account ended with his audience joining in an unaccompanied rendition of the hymn.

We were delighted to have a preview of the book and to have been able to mark 2023's Black History Month in such a fitting way.

Kath Stubbs

90th birthday celebrations for Sheila

Sheila Nolan, a devoted parishioner of St Patrick's Church in Thornaby, marked her 90th birthday in a special way during the annual Harvest Mass.

Pupils from the parish's two schools, St Patrick's Catholic Primary and St Patrick's Catholic College, attended the service of thanksgiving.

Parish priest Father Pat O'Neill added a delightful surprise at the end of Mass by inviting Sheila to the front of the church.

He gave her a beautiful bouquet while the congregation sang Happy Birthday, much to her delight.

The celebrations continued in the parish hall, where a buffet prepared by the parishioners awaited Sheila's friends and family. A montage showcasing Sheila's life journey was displayed, adding a nostalgic touch to the event.

Family members, some of whom had travelled from Australia, were present to share in the joy of the occasion.

A heartfelt speech by her grandson, Chris, highlighted the significance of the Church, and particularly St Patrick's Parish, in Sheila's life.

As a dedicated parishioner, Sheila's 90th



Sheila with her birthday bouquet
– Photo by Dan Woodgate

birthday was a momentous occasion for the entire St Patrick's community. We extend our warmest wishes to her on this special day and for many more to come.

Dan Woodgate

Bishop blesses graves of predecessors

Nineteen priests joined Bishop Terry as he celebrated the annual Mass for deceased bishops, priests and deacons at St Mary's Cathedral on All Souls Day.

The picture shows Bishop Terry blessing the graves of our previous bishops along with Father Peter Taylor, with Deacon Bernard Morgan in the background.

Paul Bowen



Sarah Sheils, Father Bill Serplus, Professor James Walvin and Rose Cartledge, leader of the singers



Light up Christmas for hundreds of seafarers and fishers.

Look around you: 90% of the things you use has been brought here by sea. It's extraordinary to think how much we depend on the shipping industry. But so often, men and women of the sea are forgotten.

This Christmas, the port chaplains and ship visitors of Catholic charity Stella Maris will welcome many seafarers and fishers in ports around the UK, bringing them gifts, and ensuring Mass is organised for them, where possible, at this special time.

And it's all thanks to you. Your gift to Stella Maris helps us to share God's love with seafarers and fishers and make their Christmas special.

Please visit www.stellamaris.org.uk for more information about how you can light up Christmas for seafarers and fishers. Please also keep them in prayer. Thank you, in advance, for any support you can kindly give.



Christmas Mass

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

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

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 5pm
Filey at 6pm
Bridlington at 8pm
Christmas Day
Bridlington at 9am
Filey at 11am

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

Hessle
Our Lady of Lourdes
Christmas Eve
6.30pm (Family Mass),
11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Christmas Mass
Christmas Day
8.30am & 10.30am Mass

Hull
Saint Bede's Staveley Road, Hull
Sunday 24th December
Carol Service 5.30pm
Vigil Mass & Blessing of the Crib 6.00pm
Sacred Heart Church, Southcoates Lane Hull
Christmas Day
Morning Mass & Blessing of the Crib 9.30am

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

Ingleby Barwick
St Thérèse of Lisieux
Wednesday 20th December
7pm Candlelit Christmas Carol Service
Saturday 23rd
Mass 5pm
Sunday 24th
Mass 11am
Christmas Eve
Masses:
Children's Christmas Mass 5pm
First Mass of Christmas 8.30pm
Christmas Day
10.30am

Middlesbrough, Linthorpe Road
Sacred Heart Church
Christmas Eve - 24th December
Family/Children Mass 4.30pm,
Midnight Mass 11.30pm
Christmas Day - 25th December
Masses at 8.30am and 10.00am
Boxing Day - St. Stephen, 26th December
Mass 12.00 noon
New Year's Eve - 31st December
Crossover Night Mass at 11.30pm beginning with Eucharistic adoration at 11.00pm
New Year Day - 1st January 2024
Mass at 12.00 noon

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

North Ormesby
St Alphonsus Church
Christmas Eve - 24th December
Christmas Vigil Mass 6.00pm
Christmas Day - 25th December
Mass 10.00am
New Year Day - 1st January 2024
Mass at 11.00am

Middlesbrough
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
4th Sunday of Advent Sat 23rd December@ Corpus Christi Church
5.30pm Vigil Mass of 4th Sunday in Advent
4th Sunday of Advent Sun 24th December@ Saint Gabriel's Church
11.00am Mass of 4th Sunday in Advent
Christmas Eve Sun 24th December@ Corpus Christi Church
4.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas
Saint Gabriel's Church
5.00pm Nativity Play & Carols
5.30pm Vigil Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day Mon 25th December@ Saint Gabriel's Church
10.00am Christmas Day Mass
Website: ourladymbro.org

Nunthorpe
St Bernadette's
Christmas Eve
5.00pm Mass with Children's Nativity
7.30pm "Midnight" Mass
Christmas Day
9.30am Dawn Mass of Christmas

Stokesley, Great Ayton & Crathorne
St Joseph's Stokesley, St Margaret Clitherow, Great Ayton, St Mary's Crathorne Parishes
Christmas Eve
Mass suitable for Children 5.30pm
St Margaret Clitherow, Great Ayton
Mass 8pm St Joseph's, Stokesley
Christmas Day
Mass 9am St Mary's Church, Crathorne
Mass 10.30am St Joseph's, Stokesley

Christmas Times

Wishing all the Catholic
voice of Middlesbrough
Readers a very Merry
Christmas from all the
Parishes, the Diocese
and everyone at
CathCom

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

Yarm

St Mary & St Romuald

Saturday 23rd December

Mass 6.30pm

Sunday 24th December

Mass 9.30am

Christmas Eve

Mass 7.00pm

Christmas Day

Mass: 9am

York

English Martyrs

Christmas Eve

6.00pm First Mass of Christmas
11.45pm Carols
12.00pm Midnight Mass
of Christmas

Christmas Day

10.30am Mass

Dalton Terrace, York YO24 4DA

York

St George

December 24th

10.30am and 7pm

Confessions after each mass

December 25th

9.30am

Wednesday 27th

10am sacristy

Friday 29th

10am sacristy

Saturday 30th

10am sacristy

Sunday 31st

10.30am and 6.30pm

January 1st

10am only

York

St Joseph and St Wilfrid

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Christmas Carol Service

Wednesday, 20th December
at 7pm

Christmas Eve

5pm Mass with Carols (English)

11.15 pm Readings and Carols

Midnight High Mass (Latin)

Christmas Day

8.30 am Mass (English)

10.30am Sung Mass (English)

4 pm Solemn Benediction

(No 12 Noon Mass on

Christmas Day)

St Joseph's Catholic Church

Kingsway North, Clifton YO30 6JX

Christmas Day

9.30 am Mass (English)



NEWS

SVP members inspired by reports of work in India

St Vincent de Paul members from throughout the diocese spent an inspiring and uplifting time at a Twinning Festival at St John the Evangelist in Easingwold.

The day started with a talk and presentation from Akhila Maria, a Coventry University student who is the daughter of Central Council president in Kerela, India.

She explained how the twinning donations sent from SVP conferences in England and Wales were being used building houses, paying for medication and running a pharmacy back home.

She also told how the Mission Odisha was funded by the SVP and comprised of six adult and eight youth members.

They went on a “journey of compassion” to 12 villages, finding and helping those in need.

The message she brought from India was: “A big thanks for all your generous contributions. All your donations are well spent, and it has definitely put a smile on a lot of faces. You have received a lot of blessings and prayers from different parts of India.”

Next, Father Jose Michael, from Blessed Nicholas Postgate, Redcar, who had only returned from visiting his family in India two days before the event, found the time to come along and talk of how his father and uncle were SVP presidents in India and

about the work they did helping the poor in their region. Father Jose’s talk was moving and heart-warming.

Part of the day was saying a big thank you to Frances Gilchrist, the outgoing Central Council president, and welcoming Pat Nobbs from St Aelred’s, York, as the new president.

We also thanked Stephen Merckx, a member of St Joseph’s Conference in Stokesley, who has handed over the reigns of twinning officer to Helen Heywood, from St Bernadette’s Conference in Nunthorpe.

Father Jose then celebrated Mass, with hymns and prayers in praise of all the work done at home and overseas that is supported by the kind donations from SVP members.

The day ended with a picnic in the hall. As this was the first central council meeting since the pandemic, there was lots of catching up to do.

This was a truly memorable day, filled with love and Vincentian friendship.

If you would like to become a member of the SVP or to support the work we do both here and abroad, please contact me on 07554336984 or email sharonp@svp.org.uk or svp.org.uk.

Sharon Pemberton
Membership Support Officer



Father Jose Michael gave a moving talk about the SVP's work in India

Red-carpet premiere for The Chosen

For the first time, the groundbreaking historical drama The Chosen, which has become one of the world’s most-watched shows, will premiere brand new episodes outside of America.

The Chosen has announced its season four global premiere in London on Monday January 22 2024.

Cast and crew members from the hit show will join the red carpet along with press, supporter organisations and celebrity supporters. The event will take over Leicester Square and promises to give fans a night to remember.

Fans will then have the chance to watch the first episodes of season four in cinemas across the UK from February 1.

After the full-season cinema ends in the US, The Chosen will announce the debut on popular streaming platforms such as Amazon and Netflix and on TheChosen.TV.

The Chosen is a groundbreaking historical drama based on the life of Jesus. What started as a crowd-funded project has now garnered more than 600m episode views and 10m social media followers.

You can watch a trailer for the season by searching for The Chosen on YouTube.

Father Chris: ‘Christian prophets are needed today’

Father Chris Hughes began his talk to the Cleveland Newman Circle by explaining his personal debt to the association – his parents met at a Newman event back in the 1950s!

The subject of his talk was “Do we still have prophets today?” Inevitably, the term brings to mind Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah and Isaiah, who were prepared to speak out. Jeremiah was critical, challenging, speaking truth to power, while Isaiah proclaimed a vision of hope to God’s people.

Father Chris said the Church – and the world – need such roles just as much today and they can be part of every Christian’s life.

In baptism we are baptised into Christ as

“prophet, priest and king”. We accept “the priesthood of all believers”, and “the prophetic role of all believers” is equally important.

Father Chris identified several modern Christian prophets. Archbishop Oscar Romero risked all in speaking truth to power. Dorothy Day spoke out for the need to be faithful to the truth. Madeleine Delbrel highlighted the importance of being present alongside others. Simone Weil proclaimed “the option for the poor” before that phrase became popular.

“Mustard seed prophets” (as described by Father Chris) identify a need and then speak out, challenging the status quo. They sow a small seed that grows to involve and benefit

many people. Among them he includes Chad Varah (Samaritans), Cecily Saunders (hospices), Peter Benenson (Amnesty International) and Carmody Grey (ecology).

Father Chris spoke about “prophetic action” and said whole communities can be involved as they hope for change. He gave examples from his own experience, including a mums’ group that hoped for a safe park where children could play. They cleared litter and lobbied the council and police until swings were erected and trees planted.

Another example was a group of secondary school pupils who felt teenagers should not pay adult bus fares, especially when on school activities. They wrote repeatedly to their council, eventually meeting the mayor.

Now everyone under 22 can use buses for £1! Communal prophetic activity can make things happen!

Father Chris’ challenging talk prompted much discussion. Can you think of more modern prophets? Does your community need prophetic activity?

Cleveland Newman Circle holds six talks a year, usually on Wednesdays, in St Mary’s Cathedral Hall.

For further information about the Cleveland Newman Circle, email p.egerton123@gmail.com or call 01642 645732.

Patricia Egerton

A Letter From Madonna House - Journeying through Advent with Joseph



Write about Advent? What could possibly be interesting that our readers haven’t read many times before? In Madonna House I experience Advent as the liturgically rich but oh so busy time before Christmas!

Then my imagination kicked in – write about St Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem... Perhaps my attitude about Advent could be a bit different... at least in my heart. Let’s look at each of the Advent Sundays for a clue about Joseph.

On the first Sunday we read that Jesus said to his disciples, “Stay awake! You never know when the time will come” (Mark 13:33). But Joseph was asleep, exhausted with the conundrum of Mary’s unexpected pregnancy. Isn’t he like us when we face circumstances of life that mystify and worry us? He prayed, he made a decision as charitably as possible and then trusted in the righteousness of God. We too are called to trust, especially when God’s plan or purpose is hidden from us.

The Second Sunday: “Prepare a way for the

Lord” (Mark 1:2). Joseph became one who fulfils the prophet’s message. He accepted his new vocation to prepare for and protect the long-awaited messiah, whom he now knew to be Mary’s son. He was prompt in responding – he made a home for Mary and her soon to be born son. Sometimes I question: “If I look out for myself even if my action hurts another – is that really wrong?” I can inwardly fret rather than seeking help because I don’t want to appear inadequate or weak. In accepting Mary in her pregnant condition, Joseph also accepted bearing the inevitable slurs on his reputation.

The Third Sunday: “God has called you and he will not fail you” (1 Thessalonians 5:24). That long walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem was a difficult journey! Yet Joseph must have trusted in God’s providence. When faced with a difficult task, what is it that makes the difference between peaceful acceptance, or resistance with anxiety and resentment? We might think Joseph and Mary had “inside” knowledge of how the future would

unfold. The Gospel indicates otherwise: “They did not understand what he (Jesus) said to them” when they found him in the temple (Luke 2:50). Too often I forget to call upon the grace of the sacraments I have received: faith at baptism, the infilling of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation, and assurance of God’s mercy in Confession. The sacramental graces are real, but we need to activate them through prayer.

The Fourth Sunday: The angel gave Joseph the same message given to Mary: “She will have a son and you are to name him Jesus” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus, true God and yet, a helpless baby! Holding the newborn infant must have been a decisive moment for Joseph. Jesus needed Joseph’s love, his fatherly protection and guidance. Joseph was indeed chosen for an essential role in the fulfilment of God’s plan to bring humanity back to our original condition, created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). God wants our love as well.

Carol Ann Gieske

Grant funding promises a warmer winter

Despite winter's arrival, freezing temperatures will no longer be a concern for users of St Alphonsus Parish Hall in North Ormesby, Middlesbrough, thanks to comprehensive refurbishment work on its windows and doors.

The initiative, encompassing the replacement of 21 windows and the installation of four new double French doors, was facilitated by a generous grant of £15,000 from the SUEZ Communities Fund – England.

Parish administrator Rev John Idio expressed his appreciation for the project, saying: "The hall has taken an entirely new look thanks to the grant received, and to Dan at the Curia, who facilitated it.

"This massive support package has brought about the impressive upgrade of the windows

and doors of the hall. We at St Alphonsus Catholic Church are incredibly grateful."

The grant application was prepared and submitted by Dan Woodgate, the diocesan fundraising officer.

Expressing his joy for the parishioners of St Alphonsus, Dan said: "I am thrilled to have been able to secure the funding for this project. I understand from personal experience the significant impact a grant of this magnitude can have on a parish.

"I would also like to extend my gratitude to the funder for their support, and to parishioner Gerard Drinkwater for his assistance."

• For further information about grant funding in parishes, contact Dan at fundraising@rcdmidd.org.uk.



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.

3	1925	Rev James Butler	Hull
4	1897	Rt Rev Mgr Thomas Witham	Lartington
7	1928	Rev Bernard Kelly	Grangetown
7	2014	Rev Norman Jacobson	Hull
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	Staithe
15	1968	Very Rev Canon William Clifford	Market Weighton
15	1980	Rev Gerard Bankes	Holme-on-Spalding-Moor
15	1982	Rev Charles Wilde	Whitby
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
29	1895	Rev Stephen O'Hare	Holme-on-Spalding-Moor
30	1908	Rev William Donnelly	North Ormesby
30	2013	Rev Dermot Nunan	Redcar

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NEWS

Out and About

- 1 Friday**
Events, articles, and photographs for the January edition of the *Voice* are due by today.
- 3 Sunday**
3.30pm Advent Carol Service at St Mary's Cathedral.
- 4 Monday**
9.45-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com. This takes place every Monday.
- 5 Tuesday**
10am Christian Meditation Group meets online. For further information please email terry-doyle@live.co.uk. This takes place every Tuesday.
7pm Knights of St Columba Council 29 meets at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, beginning with Mass at 7pm in the chapel.
- 8 Friday**
11:30am Solemnity of Immaculate Conception at the Lady Chapel. Rosary 11:30am, Mass noon.
6:30pm Christmas at the Cathedral with Festive Song performed by Cantabile.
- 9 Saturday**
10am *Laudate Deum* Study Morning at St Mary's Cathedral.
- 10 Sunday**
3pm Mass for LGBT+ Catholics, family and friends at the Chapel of the Bar Convent. Doors open from 2.30pm.
- 11 Monday**
2pm Music for the Mind Christmas Carol Service at St Mary's Cathedral. There is no charge and everyone is welcome. Tea, cake and

- biscuits followed by fun. For details call 01642 710179. You can also join in on the Diocese of Middlesbrough YouTube page.
- 12 Tuesday**
12.45pm The Catholic Women's Luncheon Club meet at the Kingston Theatre Hotel, Kingston Square, Hull for their Christmas lunch. Gather at 12.45 for lunch at 1pm. All ladies in the Hull and East Riding area welcome. Call 01482 446565 or email jayne.wilson24@ymail.com.
- 13 Wednesday**
5.30pm Vespers and Sung Evening Song at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
7pm Northern Deanery Advent Reconciliation Service at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough.
- 14 Thursday**
12.30pm Hull Circle of the Catenian Association Christmas lunch at Lazaat Hotel, Cottingham. Further details from Charles Cseh at hullcirclesecretary@gmail.com.
- 17 Sunday**
3pm Middlesbrough Fellowship Mass at St Gabriel's, Ormesby, Middlesbrough.
- 23 Saturday**
7pm Knights of St Columba Carols and Candles in St Mary's Cathedral Hall, Middlesbrough.
- 30 Saturday**
Noon LGBT+ social gathering in the café at the Bar Convent, York. All welcome.
- If you have any events you would like to include in the Out & About section, please email heidi.cummins@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Large crowd for Remembrance Sunday service

Guisborough held its annual Remembrance Day parade and service watched by a crowd of over 1,000.

The parade started in Westgate and marched up to the Cenotaph at St Nicholas Church, led by a piper and the drums of the Salvation Army.

At the Cenotaph, the trumpeters of the Guisborough Salvation Army sounded the Last Post, followed by the two-minute silence.

Afterward, the rector of St Nicholas Church, Reverend Alison Phillipson, said the prayers, assisted by Father Jose Michael, of St Paulinus Catholic Church, a Methodist minister and Salvation Army Major Antony Mugford. The service ended with two verses of God Save the King, led by the St Nicholas Church choir.

Wreaths were laid, starting with Deputy Lord Lieutenant Graham Henderson, followed by Simon Clarke MP, civic dignitaries and political organisations, military and civil organisations, military cadets, churches, scouts, guides and local clubs and societies.

Afterwards, the parade reformed and marched back down to the town centre for dismissal.

Brian Gleeson



Father Jose Michael leading prayers at the Cenotaph with Major Antony Mugford of the Salvation Army, Methodist minister, Reverend Alison Phillipson and Sergeant Nathan Cole – Photo by Brian Gleeson

Copy Deadline

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Deadline December 1 for our January 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.

‘Let there be light’ exhibition at the Bar Convent

The Bar Convent in York will be aglow with a twinkling tree, dazzling decorations and an exciting new luminous installation as part of this year’s Christmas experience “Let there be Light!”.

Hope: Shadow and Light, a brand-new light installation, will take centre stage against the backdrop of the stunning 18th century chapel this Christmas.

The project, in partnership with York arts charity New Visuality and installation artist Nick Walters, will see more than 200 drawings from 15 countries on five continents

projected in the Bar Convent’s chapel dome alongside work created in York.

Sister Ann Stafford said: “We are overjoyed to be working with the New Visuality team again this year.

“This year’s theme, Let there be Light!, was inspired by the quotation from Isaiah which is part of the Christmas Liturgy, ‘The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone.’

“The installation, Hope: Shadow and Light,

represents this perfectly and we welcome everyone to come along and see this spectacular collaborative work of art.”

Greg McGee, co-director of New Visuality, said: “York’s heritage works best when it looks forwards and outwards. Digital illumination of artwork from some of the most interesting and vulnerable people in the city is not only a coup for us a charity, but it’s of huge benefit to residents and visitors to York alike.”

New Visuality worked with Our Lady Queen of Martyrs and St George’s RC Primary, learners

from Blueberry Academy, ESOL students from York College and York’s Civic Party, led by the Lord Mayor of York. All art will be distilled into video installation in the exhibition and chapel.

Entry to the exhibition is adults £6, concessions £4, children £2 and family ticket £12. Entry to the chapel and Georgian Parlour is free. Last admission is 4pm.

Two-course Christmas lunches, priced £27, should be booked in advance. No booking is required to visit the rest of the house.

Trust is still supporting our retired clergy 30 years on

The New Horizons Bridging Trust was inaugurated on August 1 1993 after a generous gift from a parishioner and with the guiding hand of Monsignor Seamus Kilbane, then parish priest of St George’s Church in York.

The trust’s aim was to promote the advancement of the Christian faith by the provision of services for the benefit of ordained ministers, particularly those of the Roman Catholic faith, both before and after retirement.

Monsignor Kilbane and the new trustees recognised that retirement from a life of service to God, as with other professions, can bring opportunities but also challenges and

isolation.

What better way to acknowledge this long service to the church and its parishioners than to keep in regular contact with those retired priests?

This took the form of a greetings card plus a small cheque at Christmas time and another card and gift on the anniversary of their ordination – and it still does today.

Initially this was just for retired priests and deacons, but last year it was extended to serving priests who had reached or exceeded 40 years’ service.

The trust currently keeps in touch with 19 retired priests, six retired deacons and 13

active priests. Many still live in the diocese while others have moved to be nearer to family or friends.

Trust members are aware how much they appreciate this regular contact from the many thank you cards and letters it receives.

“Your gift from the New Horizons Bridging Trust is always much appreciated. With grateful thanks and every blessing.”

“What a lovely surprise to open up my card this morning. Obviously out of sight but not out of mind... With thanks and prayers for the committee.”

“A word of thanks for your recent gift on the anniversary of my ordination. You are the

only ones to remember it.”

“You are very thoughtful and kind to remember me on such an important date in my life. Prayerful best wishes.”

“As always, I am touched by your thoughtfulness. I am of course wondering where the last 48 years have gone! I hold the trust and the work you do in my prayers and at Holy Mass.”

Would Monsignor Kilbane and the original trustees have thought it would still be going strong 30 years on and even expanding to continue their vision with small acts of kindness, respect and recognition? What a legacy!



Canon Michael Ryan with a card from the New Horizons Bridging Trust

Mothers taking their place at the heart of the Church

Members of the Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM) met at St Mary’s Church in Filey for the Diocesan AGM, which was hosted jointly by the Scarborough and Filey foundations.

We began at noon with Holy Mass celebrated by Father Albert Schembri. The gospel of the day was Luke 11:27-28, in which a woman exclaimed to Jesus how great was the happiness of the mother who had carried him in her womb and fed him at her breast. Our Lord said: “Still happier those who hear the word of God and keep it.”

The homily included a reflection on the name of the UCM and offered a beautiful interpretation of it.

We are a union in the sense of being united, a network of women with friendship and mutual support at the heart of all we do.

communicate that effectively within our parishes, I hope there will be less need in the future for any woman to ask that question. Membership is for all Catholic women and all Christian women who are in sympathy with our objectives.

During the AGM that followed Mass and lunch, there was a wonderful energy of optimism and a genuine warmth of friendship.

Our diocesan president Barbara Cookson praised the wonderful homily, intending to share more widely the concept of the UCM as “the heart of the mother within the church”.

Where the UCM began and where it is going in the future is all part of that endlessly expansive action of the Holy Spirit.

With qualities of unity and universality expressed through the loving heart of a mother we have so much to offer our parishes, the diocese and the Church.

Petra Micklethwaite

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Cedar tree handed over to King Charles

King Charles III welcomed Archbishop of Westminster Cardinal Vincent Nichols and apostolic nuncio Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía to the grounds of Windsor Castle for the formal handing over of a Cedar of Lebanon tree.

The tree was a gift to Queen Elizabeth II from Pope Francis. In a letter to the late monarch, written in March 2022, the Holy Father wrote: “May this tree, which in the Bible symbolises the flourishing of fortitude, justice and prosperity, be a pledge of abundant divine blessings on your realm.”

The nuncio conveyed the Holy Father’s greetings to the king and Cardinal Nichols offered a prayer of blessing. The tree was sprinkled with holy water. King Charles expressed his appreciation for the gift, and the cardinal assured the king of the prayers of the Catholic community.

NEWS

Gaza Christians' plea: 'Peace – we just want peace'

A sister at Gaza's Catholic parish – now caring for more families following the bombing of the local Orthodox church – has made a heartfelt plea for peace.

Speaking to Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), Sister Nabila, who is caring for Christians sheltering in Gaza's Holy Family parish complex, said she is very worried.

The parish has no electricity or running water and has resorted to drinking water from a well – which they fear could run dry – or bottled mineral water, which costs three times its original price.

Sister Nabila expressed particular concern for around 100 traumatised children they are caring for and who have known nothing but war throughout their lives.

She said: "We just want peace, peace. We have had six wars in Gaza. Children only know war."

Holy Family parish has been providing aid and shelter to wounded and displaced Christians affected by the ongoing violence over the past two weeks – most of whom

have lost their homes.

Along with another six religious sisters and a Catholic priest, Sister Nabila has been working tirelessly to support the almost 700 displaced persons they are caring for – including 50 living with disabilities.

The number of those taking refuge in the Holy Family's complex increased by around 200 after the compound of St Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church was hit by a missile, killing 18 people.

Among those killed when the Greek Orthodox compound was hit was a teacher who taught at Rosary Sisters School, where Sister Nabila is principal, along with her entire family.

Other children who had been attending parish catechesis also died.

Mass is celebrated twice a day, and people have been constantly praying the Rosary – seeking peace through the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

She concluded: "Peace, peace, we want just peace. There is so much evil, so much suffering. It's terrible. Right now, we only



The Rosary Sisters School in Gaza after bombing – Photo © Aid to the Church in Need

Bethlehem trader: 'Without faith, I couldn't continue'

A Christian living in Bethlehem has recounted how war, disease and economic crisis are hitting the faithful in the place where Christ was born.

Speaking to Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Rony Tabash, a member of a Christian family that has lived in Bethlehem for generations, described how the conflict is directly affecting West Bank Christians.

Mr Tabash said: "The situation is terrible. Every day, new challenges arise. I've never experienced anything like this before. It's a war."

Mr Tabash, the owner of a shop that sells religious items in Bethlehem's Manger Square, had hoped to finally pay off his debts after the pandemic but now faces a bleak reality.

The absence of pilgrims has left the local economy in ruins, affecting all sectors that rely on religious tourism, from hotels and restaurants to olive-wood artisans and souvenir sellers.

He stressed the importance of pilgrims to the Christian community in Bethlehem and added that the lack of visitors has left many families "jobless and hopeless".

"I keep opening my shop every day. I go to the square in front of the Basilica of the Nativity and people ask me why I'm going – I'm the only one opening the shop.

"The only thing that sustains me is faith. Without faith, I couldn't continue, not even for a minute. We've lost hope – all that's left is faith.

"Our family has owned this shop since 1927. My father tells me, 'Have faith, Bethlehem is a sacred place. It won't be touched.'

"Yes, I will stay because it's a sacred place; we're living in the place where Jesus was born. We can't leave; if it weren't for that, I would leave instantly.

"But as a Christian Palestinian my mission is to be here, even though every day new challenges come. The war has to end. We are tired – we want peace, only peace for our children and our families.

"Is this place only sacred to me, to my family, to us Palestinians in the West Bank? Isn't it a sacred place for all Christians in the world?

"Many people have the desire to come to the Holy Land, and it's time to help us, to be present in these holy places."

Mr Tabash knows people can't visit Bethlehem, but he urged them to be present in other ways.

He said: "Come with your prayers, come with your actions asking for peace, come by defending the integrity of these places. The

silence scares me. Come, with your support for the Christian families in the Holy Land."

Visit acnuk.org to find out how you can help vulnerable Christians in the Holy Land and other parts of the world.



Shops shuttered and closed in Bethlehem – Photo © Aid to the Church in Need

Environment Corner – Cop28 must seize this vital opportunity for change



Pope Francis is to address the Cop28 meeting in Saudi Arabia

Publication of this month's Voice coincides with the Cop28 meeting in Saudi Arabia.

Last month's edition featured Pope Francis' Exhortation *Laudate Deum*, written to set out his powerful call to world leaders and to encourage us all in our efforts to work together and to apply pressure to those who represent us on the world stage.

Pope Francis will address the delegates at Cop28 in person.

The *Laudato Si'* Movement launched the document with a webinar featuring people from around the world, including Ridhima Pandey, the young activist from India who featured in the film *The Letter*, when, with a group of environmentalists, she met the Pope at the Vatican to talk of her work and concerns. She has been campaigning since the age of nine.

Ridhima finds tremendous inspiration in

Pope Francis, particularly with his use of the word "crisis" to describe the current situation and his message to us all that now is the time for action.

As Pope Francis points out: "Regrettably, the climate is not exactly a matter which interests the great economic powers, whose concern is with the greatest profit possible at minimal cost." (LD13)

However, he is also clear about the strength of a groundswell of action from all parts of the world:

"The demands that rise up from below throughout the world, where activists from very different countries help and support one another, can end up pressuring the sources of power." (LD38)

The message from the webinar – in line with Pope Francis – was one of hope. Other speakers on the webinar described how we

are seeing a seismic shift in how we are talking about these issues.

There was encouragement to think of ourselves as voters, citizens and strong advocates for change.

"We are stronger together," is a phrase we hear often.

A specific action we can take is to call for support for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Writing to MPs and government ministers is a way of raising our voices in this worthy cause.

Support for such a treaty is spreading and particularly from those countries worst affected by climate events.

Cop28 is a most important opportunity – a vital step on the path to positive change.

Barbara Hungin

More children to experience Lourdes with HCPT

HCPT has received two generous grants from the Lady Ryder of Warsaw Memorial Trust. With this funding, more children will experience a pilgrimage to Lourdes in Easter 2024.

The late Lady Sue Ryder was a British volunteer in the Special Operations Executive in the Second World War who afterwards established charitable organisations, notably the Sue Ryder Foundation. She set up the Lady Ryder of Warsaw Memorial Trust shortly

before her death in 2000 so her work caring for disabled and disadvantaged people would continue, including supporting people with disabilities in going to Lourdes.

This coming Easter, the trust is generously funding five children to travel with HCPT, which offers pilgrimages to Lourdes every Easter for disabled and disadvantaged children and young people from across the UK, supported by volunteers.

The funding will also support student nurses from the North-East who will travel with HCPT as part of their student placement. This initiative will not only benefit those aspiring nurses but also all the young people who will be in their care over the week.

George Overton, HCPT's head of fundraising and communications, said: "We're so grateful to the trustees of the Lady Ryder Trust for supporting HCPT's next Easter pilgrimage. Their grants will mean that more disabled

and disadvantaged children benefit from a life-changing week in Lourdes."

HCPT was founded in 1956 in response to Our Lady's invitation to go on pilgrimage to Lourdes. Its aim is to enable those who may need help, especially the young, to experience pilgrimage, and they do that in small caring groups, seeking to share, with joy, the gift of God's love.

Visit hcpt.org.uk to find out more.

Dates for your diary

Saturday December 9: Lourdes Christmas Mass and tea party at Sacred Heart Church Hall, 280 Southcoates Lane, Hull HU9 3AP. Mass begins at 2pm, followed by the tea party. All welcome.

Saturday December 16: Lourdes Christmas Mass and tea party at St Gabriel's Church, Allendale Road, Ormesby, Middlesbrough. Mass begins at 1pm, followed by the party. All welcome.

Saturday January 20 2024: Lourdes Ceilidh Dance, details to follow.

Sunday February 11 2024: Lourdes Mass for Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Details to follow.

Saturday February 24 2024: Lourdes Race Night with pie and peas. Details to follow.

Saturday March 2 2024: Lourdes Formation Day at Trinity College, Middlesbrough. Details to follow.



Monsignor Gerard Robinson with his aunt, Margaret Clark, at the Torchlight Marian Procession – Photo by Brian Gleeson

Memorial to fallen police officer unveiled



A memorial to police officer Sergeant David Winter has been unveiled on the village green in Old Malton, near the spot where he was murdered 41 years ago.

Sergeant Winter, a parishioner of St Leonard & St Mary's in Malton, was shot dead on June 28 1982.

Members of Sergeant Winter's family unveiled the memorial along with Geraldine Winner, the widow of film director Michael Winner, who helped found the Police Memorial Trust in 1984.

Johanna Davis

Parish says farewell to Father Anil and Father Xavier

A large congregation gathered at St Francis Church, Middlesbrough, for a thanksgiving Mass for Father Anil and Father Xavier as they prepared to leave to take over their new posts at Thirsk and Hessele respectively.

After the Mass we enjoyed a reception in the church hall where presentations were made and a celebration cake was cut.

Both priests will be a great loss to the parishes of St Mary's Cathedral, St Francis, St Clare and the Lady Chapel at Osmotherley.



Paul Bowen

Leprosy charity prepares for centenary year

UK-based health charity Lepra is preparing to celebrate 100 years of supporting some of the world's most vulnerable people who are affected by neglected tropical diseases such as leprosy.



Lepa specialises in the detection and treatment of leprosy, an ancient disease that can have a profound physical and psychological effect on people in some of the world's most remote and hard to reach communities.

The organisation has a rich history of research and development, helping to develop vital detection methods, effective treatments and recovery programmes for people affected.

Leprosy is thought to be the oldest disease known to humanity and carries with it myths, misunderstandings and prejudice that create a cycle of fear, which can prevent people from accessing early treatment that can prevent disability.

Lepa provides programmes to help people to recover from the emotional, social and financial impact of a diagnosis.

Lepa began as BELRA in 1924. From their experience in India, founders Sir Leonard Rogers, Reverend Frank Oldrieve and Sir Frank Carter saw a need for an organisation dedicated to studying and eradicating leprosy.

The most recent patronage was held by the late Queen Elizabeth II and Lepa's vice president is the Duke of Gloucester.

In 1945, Lepa's Dr Robert Cochrane began studies with sulfone derivatives, and was the first to use dapsone in the treatment of leprosy, laying the groundwork for treatments still used today.

In 1975, Lepa became one of the first organisations to implement the use of multidrug therapy (MDT).

Since 1981, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has provided free MDT across the world and more than 16m people have now been treated.

As Lepa approaches its centenary, its focus remains on supporting people most in need, in remote communities that are most impacted by health inequalities.

The charity will mark the start of its centenary year with a Mass at Westminster Cathedral on Friday January 26 at 2.30pm. All are welcome.

Music for the Mind holds Christmas concert

Music for the Mind holds its Christmas concert in St Mary's Cathedral Hall, Middlesbrough, on Monday December 11 from 2pm to 3.30pm.

The event is for people who enjoy singing and connecting memories. Come and join in for carols, followed by tea, coffee and light refreshments. You can also find them on the Diocese of Middlesbrough YouTube page.

NEWS

The perfect place

For several years, St Hilda's, Whitby, parishioner Anthea Dove has been sending us a special Christmas story to print in December's *Voice*. This year's story is about the crib... Daniel Brown lives with his parents and brothers and sisters on a farm just outside the village. He loves to help on the farm.

It was nearly Christmas when one afternoon Dan was coming home from school and looking around him, he suddenly had the idea. He ran into the yard where his father was working.

"Dad! Dad!" He shouted. "I just had an idea!"

His father laughed.

"You're always having ideas! What is it this time?"

"Well, you see this corner by the gate?" said Dan. "I think it would be the perfect place for us to build the crib!"

"I never thought of that, not in all the years I've been helping to make the crib. But you're right, Daniel. We could make it half on the farm and half in the village."

"Oh, please, Dad," said Daniel. "Do you think it would work?"

Mr Brown was scratching his head, like he did when he was thinking hard. But he was smiling too.

At last, he said, "Daniel, I think it would work. In this corner we could make a wonderful, big crib. We could bring one or two of the smallest animals in, so the youngest children could come close to the baby Jesus and touch the animals, provided we have lots of help."

They did have lots of help, and almost everyone in the village did their share of making the crib. When it was finished, Mrs Brown invited everybody to come to the farmhouse for a hot drink.

Everyone seemed happy and Daniel overheard one man say, "I wonder whose idea it was to build the crib just here? It's the perfect place."

Daniel grinned and turned a somersault when he thought no-one was looking.



Photo by Ignacio, courtesy of Cathopic

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