



Bishop's Column

I heard the truly shocking news that Pope Francis had passed away as I switched on the TV to listen to the morning news on Easter Monday.

Although the Holy Father has been struggling with his health over the last few months, it appeared that he was making progress.

He had made several appearances over Holy Week and on Easter Sunday he appeared on the balcony of St Peter's Basilica to wish the crowds present, and indeed all the world, a happy Easter and gave us his blessing.

So to hear that Pope Francis had died was a genuine shock. However, I truly believe that from the moment he was elected Pope right up until his last breath he accepted the role of Peter, the papacy, as a gift from God and trusted that he would be given all that was needed to fulfil the role.



He was not afraid to show his own weakness and vulnerability right up to the end, believing that God could work through his frailty and teaching us all the lesson that the same is true of us.

He will surely be known as the Pope of the poor and the marginalised, for he spent so much of his ministry for and behalf of them. He was Francis by name and Francis by nature; he brought a real breath of radical fresh air to the ministry of Peter in the Church of today, like the great St Francis did.

He has certainly left a legacy, but he's also left us a great challenge. Whenever I was in his presence and he spoke, you were drawn in, but then he always challenged you.

His challenge to us is how are we going to carry on caring for the poor, caring for the marginalised and recognising that that's what the Church is about? It's an open door, or as he put in the Synod, it's a tent, and you can always lift up the sides of the tent and make it a little bit bigger to bring more people in. That's the big challenge for us today.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

+ Tony

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World mourns the Pope of the Poor

Catholics and members of other faiths and none were deeply saddened to hear of the death on Easter Monday of Pope Francis, the 265th successor of St Peter.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and Archbishop of Westminster, said: "The death of Pope Francis brings great sadness to so many around the world, both within the Catholic Church and in societies in general.

"A voice proclaiming the innate dignity of every human being, especially those who are poor or marginalised, is now silent. The legacy he leaves is one we must seek to carry forward and strengthen.

"Pope Francis was called to priesthood through his experience of the mercy and compassion of God. This remained the core of his ministry, as priest, bishop and pontiff.

"Only in understanding the love and mercy of God towards each one of us can we fashion societies and communities that bear the mark of the 'kingdom of God'.

"This same focus and emphasis lay at this desire to see membership of the Church as being rooted in 'missionary discipleship', a dynamic and powerful vision for every Christian and every community.

"Now we pray for the repose of his soul, that he may know, in full measure, the merciful and loving embrace of the Father, of the one God

to whom he gave his life in unstinting service. May he now rest in peace and rise in glory."

Bishops celebrated Requiem Masses in their cathedrals, with Bishop Terry celebrating Mass for the repose of the late Pope's soul the day after the Holy Father's death.

Prayer cards are also being distributed to Catholic parishes throughout the country.

Pope Francis was the first non-European pope for nearly 1,300 years, the first pope from the southern hemisphere and the first to be a member of the Jesuit order.

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Pope Francis with Cardinal Vincent Nichols – Photo © Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

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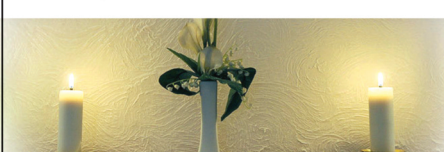
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NEWS

World mourns passing of the Pope of the Poor

Continued from Page 1

A champion of ecclesial reform, an advocate for the poor and refugees, Pope Francis urged the world to develop a relationship with the Earth, which he called “Our Common Home”. He said we face an “environmental-social crisis” marked by “globalised indifference to

the poor”. Care for people, he said, should always trump financial gain. “My people are poor and I am one of them,” was a favoured saying. These were not mere words: Francis chose to live in two plain rooms in the Vatican guesthouse rather than the residence in the Apostolic Palace traditionally used by popes. He would invite the homeless to celebrate his birthday. At Francis’ behest, free showers and

laundrerettes for the destitute were opened in Rome. He also created a Vatican office for the care of refugees and migrants and urged every Catholic parish and monastery in Europe to welcome a migrant family after bringing 12 refugees from Syria from Greece to resettle in Italy. He visualised the Church as a “field hospital”

where sinners (he included himself) encounter God’s healing love and mercy. His message was that God’s love was for everyone, including those who felt alienated from the Church for whatever reason. He stressed the need for every person to see their lives as a step-by-step journey into closer union with God, following the way and teaching of Jesus, the Christ.

Baroness speaks at assisted suicide bill event

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson of Eaglescliffe warned against Kim Leadbeater MP’s assisted suicide bill when she spoke at SPUC’s Lives Worth Living event at St Thomas More’s Church in Middlesbrough.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill proposes to legalise assisted suicide in England and Wales for terminally ill adults given six months to live. The bill’s next stage will be a second debate and vote by MPs at its third reading, which is expected to take place on May 16. Baroness Grey-Thompson said: “We are told the bill is not for disabled people, yet disabled people are very easily able to fit into the six-month diagnosis.

“For example, we already have doctors in this country talking about terminal anorexia. If a patient with anorexia doesn’t take treatment, they could very easily have a six-month diagnosis. Someone with diabetes could fit into this if they stopped taking their insulin. For someone like me, if I had a pressure sore and it didn’t heal, I could fit into this qualification very easily.” One of the greatest Paralympians of all time, Baroness Grey-Thompson brought her political expertise and unique perspective to the pressing issue of assisted suicide, telling more than 80 attendees, including Bishop Terry, that disabled people are threatened by the bill, which many believe will leave them open to coercion.

She noted her own shocking experience of discrimination as a disabled woman, being told she shouldn’t have children and, when she was on the London Underground, that “people like you shouldn’t use the Tube when people are trying to get to work”. In the context of such discrimination, coercion

was of particular concern to Baroness Grey-Thompson. She noted examples of safeguards being eroded in nations where assisted suicide is legal, such as Canada – but also a clear lack of safeguards in the Leadbeater bill, which saw many safeguarding amendments rejected at the committee stage. SPUC’s northern development officer, Terry Graham, who chaired the event, said: “Kim Leadbeater’s assisted suicide bill is one of the most dangerous pieces of proposed legislation to be voted on by MPs in years. If it passes, it will fundamentally change the fabric of our society, with untold implications for the way we treat the sick and dying, and those with disabilities. “As Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson has rightly pointed out, this bill risks condemning some of the most vulnerable people to coercion and abuse and it would have disastrous consequences for the health service, by devaluing palliative and hospice care and profoundly altering the relationship between doctors and their patients. “Ms Leadbeater’s appalling handling of the committee stage of the bill has drawn widespread criticism from across the political spectrum and members of the public are rightly alarmed at the way in which proposed safeguards have been dismissed by the bill’s



Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson of Eaglescliffe spoke out against Kim Leadbeater MP’s assisted suicide bill at SPUC’s Lives Worth Living event

proponents. “Our message is clear: this dangerous bill must be defeated, and we urge as many people as possible to contact their MP urgently to voice their opposition.” SPUC branches represented at the event

included York, Hull, Stockton-on-Tees, Thornaby & Ingleby Barwick and Middlesbrough. Attendees came from up to nine constituencies across Teesside, North Yorkshire and East Yorkshire.

BISHOP TERRY’S MAY ENGAGEMENTS

- 4 Celebrates Confirmation at Ampleforth Abbey 11am
- 5-8 Attends the Spring Plenary Meeting of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales at Buckfast Abbey
- 11 Celebrates Mass for the Golden Jubilee of St Gabriel’s Parish, Ormesby, Middlesbrough 11am
- 12-16 Attends the Diocesan Clergy Retreat at Ampleforth Abbey
- 18 Gives a talk on St Teresa of Ávila at the Hull University Chaplaincy 2pm
- 20 Chairs the Trustee Board Meeting at the Curial Office, Middlesbrough 10.30am
- 27 Attends installation of the new Archbishop of Liverpool, Bishop John Sherrington, at Liverpool’s Metropolitan Cathedral 12pm

Eggs help spread message of hope at Easter

St Mary’s Cathedral altar servers Leo, Louis and Jack are working together to become Pilgrims of Hope. After some deliberation earlier this year, the boys decided they would like to collect 200 Easter eggs for the Justice & Peace group food bags. The group helps around 96 families with approximately 200 children from our local communities with food bags during school holidays. As the boys said, a chocolate treat will mean the world to a child at Easter. Parishioners from the cathedral family, including St Francis and St Clare of Assisi, Middlesbrough, and many other kind donors resulted in more than 250 Easter eggs. The boys even received a cash donation from a member of our virtual parish who watched the cathedral’s mass on livestream. Eggs not used for food bags were donated to the CAUSE Foundation. Teresa Lyth, who coordinates the food bags, said the families receiving the eggs were very grateful.

Christa Kamanga



Cathedral altar servers Leo, Louis and Jack with some of the Easter eggs they collected

Francis moulded Church of the poor, by the poor

Bishop Terry looks back on the papacy of Pope Francis...

From the moment he walked onto the balcony of St Peter's on the night of March 13 2013 he showed he was not going to be tied down by the trappings of a European-style royal or papal court.

Normally, the new pope gives a blessing to the crowds gathered, but he asked them for their prayers and blessing in a moment of silence and bowed his head before them all.

In his letter of encouragement, the Joy of the Gospel, he offers us many new ways of thinking about the Church and about our place in the Church.

- How he wanted a Church of the poor, for the poor
- The Church is a field hospital
- Priests should be proud of their dusty shoes from treading the dusty roads of their parishes
- They should smell of their sheep
- Warning Christians to show the joy of the Gospel rather than looking like sour pussies – “cara de vinagre”.

He told priests to be merciful and compassionate in confession especially. He declared a Year of Mercy. Mercy and compassion were to be the hallmarks of Christians.

His motto was *Miserando et elegendo*, which comes from the Choosing of Matthew as written in a sermon by St Bede, “by having mercy and by choosing”.

He also wrote the Universal Letter to People of Goodwill, *Laudato Si'*, on care for our common world, challenging the huge industrially well-developed countries to realise the damage they were doing to the planet but also to the smaller, poorer countries.

He threw the challenge to all of us, telling us that climate change and ecological damage could only be stopped by personal, individual



Bishop Terry meets Pope Francis during a visit to the Vatican

conversion of heart, mind and life.

He was willing to go the extra mile, literally, travelling to so many countries to bring the joy of the Gospel and encouragement. While visiting many South American countries, he also went to countries where there was only a small Catholic population, including the UAE, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Korea, Albania and Pakistan.

He led by example

- Visiting prisons even up until Holy Thursday
- Washing the feet of prisoners
- Standing up for migrants
- Standing by the poor – even around the Vatican – setting up medical and hygiene facilities in the Colonnade of St Peter's Square

itself so that the homeless could have somewhere to go for help.

He was never afraid of calling on governments to seek the way of peace. He would speak justice to power even in the face of the most powerful nations.

Right up to Easter Sunday he was reaching out to all – just listen to part of his final message that was read during the blessing to the City of Rome and to the World on Easter Sunday.

“Sisters and brothers, especially those of you experiencing pain and sorrow, your silent cry has been heard, and your tears have been counted... The resurrection of Jesus is indeed the basis of our hope. For in the light of this event, hope is no longer an illusion. Thanks to Christ – crucified and risen from the dead – hope does not disappoint! That hope is not an evasion, but a challenge; it does not delude, but empowers us.

“On this festive day let us remember...” (then he goes through a whole list of countries and places that needed the gift of peace, the South Caucasus, the Western Balkans, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan and the people of Myanmar).

“I appeal to all those in positions of political responsibility in our world not to yield to the logic of fear which only leads to isolation from others, but rather to use the resources available to help the needy, to fight hunger and to encourage initiatives that promote development.

“These are the ‘weapons’ of peace: weapons that build the future, instead of sowing seeds of death!

“In the Lord's Paschal Mystery, death and life contended in a stupendous struggle, but the Lord now lives forever (cf. *Easter Sequence*).

“He fills us with the certainty that we too are called to share in the life that knows no end, when the clash of arms and the rumble of death will be heard no more. Let us entrust ourselves to him, for he alone can make all things new! (cf. Rev 21:5)!

“Happy Easter to everyone!”



Members of the public have been signing the book of Remembrance for Pope Francis in St Mary's Cathedral

POPE FRANCIS

Jorge’s journey from the shanty towns to the Vatican

Pope Francis was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17 1936.

His father, Mario, worked as an accountant for the national railways after emigrating from Piedmont, Italy, and his mother Regina’s family were also of Italian origin. Jorge was the eldest of five children.

His grandmother Rosa was a major influence on his faith, teaching the young Jorge to pray the Rosary. His call to priesthood came when celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In 1958 he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus, attracted to the Jesuits’ missionary spirit, community and disciplined approach to prayer.

Aged 21, he developed severe pneumonia and part of his right lung was removed, impairing his breathing permanently.

He was ordained a priest on December 13 1969 and in 1973 was appointed provincial superior of the Jesuits in Argentina. He became Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires in 1992 and in 1998 was appointed Archbishop of Buenos Aires.

Every day, Bergoglio would rise at 4.30am and he could often be found ambling in battered shoes through Buenos Aires’ shanty towns, chatting to local families.

His habits were frugal. Instead of ordering new clothes, he insisted the previous archbishop’s cassocks should be tailored to fit him. He refused to use the chauffeur-driven limousine and would travel only by public transport.

In 2001, Pope John Paul II elevated him to the rank of cardinal but he asked Catholics not to fly to Rome to celebrate, but instead to donate the money they would have spent on the trip to the poor.

Behind the scenes, he helped find jobs and accommodation for trafficked women escaping prostitution.

On March 13 2013, after a two-day conclave, he was proclaimed the new pope and he chose the name Francis after St Francis of Assisi, whose focus on poverty, fraternity and nature would shape his priorities as pope.

His first pastoral visit as Pope was to refugees on the island of Lampedusa. He observed that “no one in the world” felt responsible for the refugee crisis.

Francis declared a Year of Mercy in 2015-16, with reconciliation with God being a central theme. Catholics were encouraged to frequent Confession, which the Pope called “an encounter with the Lord’s mercy.”

His first encyclical *Lumen Fidei* (The Light of Faith) was a reworking of a draft text written by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI about the light of Christ illuminating every aspect of our lives.

2013’s *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Hope of the Gospel) was dubbed Francis’ “magna carta” and outlined the major themes of his pontificate, including the inseparable bond between Christianity and the poor.

Laudato Si’ (Praise be to You), in 2015, focused on the environment. Inviting “all people of good will” to enter a new dialogue about the Earth, “our common home”.

In 2023, the Pope penned a second part to *Laudato Si’* to reflect fresh environmental concerns.

Fratelli Tutti (All Brothers and Sisters) in 2020 was a challenge to the post-Covid world, using the parable of the Good Samaritan to highlight our need to help our neighbour, including refugees and migrants.

In October 2024, Pope Francis published *Dilexit nos* (He Loved Us), an encyclical on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ.

Francis sought to govern the Church in a collegial fashion, via Synods, where believers walk along the path of Christ together, through the Synod on the Family, the Synod on Young People, the Synod for the Pan-



Andrew Gardner, head of Catholic life at Bishop Hogarth Catholic Academy Trust in Darlington, and his wife Christianne, who teaches at St Edward’s Catholic Primary in Middlesbrough, meet Pope Francis as he blesses newly married couples in Rome

Amazonian region and the Synod on Synodality.

In 2016, the Pope announced the Church worldwide would hold an annual day of prayer for survivors of clerical abuse. He wrote to lay Catholics urging them to be close to abuse victims and pray and fast in reparation for the “atrocities” survivors had endured.

Pope Francis wanted the Church to have a less euro-centric image, reflecting the fact that nearly 70 per cent of Catholic Christians live

in the developing world.

He called for a Church fundamentally focused on evangelisation and urged every Catholic to live as a “missionary disciple”, bringing the Gospel to every part of life.

He said: “I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.”

Royal couple visit Pope Francis on their anniversary

Just 12 days before he died, Pope Francis held a private audience with King Charles III and Queen Camilla, expressing his best wishes for their wedding anniversary.

The meeting took place at the Vatican’s Casa Santa Marta, where the Pope had been convalescing after being released from Gemelli Hospital.

A statement from the Holy See Press Office stated: “In the course of the meeting, the Pope expressed his best wishes to their majesties on the occasion of their wedding anniversary and reciprocated his majesty’s wishes for a speedy recovery of his health.”

The Pope’s best wishes were a reference to the King’s condition, after his hospitalisation at the end of March because of the side effects of treatment for cancer, which was diagnosed a year ago.

An official meeting with the Pope had been announced by Buckingham Palace at the beginning of March, during Pope Francis’ hospitalisation with bilateral pneumonia.

The initial announcement explained the royals would spend the first segment of their trip to Italy to celebrate the Jubilee with the Pontiff at the Vatican.

A later note announced that the couple would no longer be seeing the Pope because of his convalescence.

However, the King and Queen could express their best wishes in person during their audience.

King Charles III is Supreme Governor of the

Church of England. In 2019, on the eve of the canonisation of Cardinal John Henry Newman, the first Briton in more than 40 years to be proclaimed a saint, the then-Prince of Wales published an article in L’Osservatore Romano

calling the event “a cause of celebration not merely in the United Kingdom, and not merely for Catholics, but for all who cherish the values by which he was inspired.”

The future king was later present for the canonisation ceremony at the Vatican in October 2019, at the end of which he greeted Pope Francis.



King Charles and Queen Camilla meet Pope Francis – Photo © Vatican Media

New trust partnership shares attendance success

A group of schools that topped the league table for boosting attendance figures are joining forces to help more pupils make the most of their education.

Hilary Robinson, attendance lead at Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT), came up with the idea for a new forum after Trinity Catholic College in Middlesbrough was named in a top ten list of schools with the most improved attendance in the country.

Supported by Hilary and the trust's attendance team, Trinity headteacher Andy Rodgers introduced a "praise and rewards culture" rather than one based on consequences.

Pupils who attend regularly can take part in special trips and activities and win prizes including bikes, wireless headphones and shopping vouchers.

The result was a four per cent increase in attendance that saw Trinity named in a national top ten put together by school-improvement specialist the Excellence Hub.

Hilary is determined to drive further improvement for Trinity and the other 37 schools throughout Teesside and North Yorkshire that make up the trust.

"We're already part of Department for Education attendance hubs, I attend regional network meetings and our own trust network meetings," says Hilary.

"But you can never stand still with attendance. The picture is constantly changing and we're always looking at new ideas, so I contacted the other nine schools in the top ten alongside Trinity."

The group includes schools from the North-East and others as far away as Essex.

Hilary says: "We're finding out what's worked

for them and telling them what's worked for us, as well as discussing barriers we've faced to see how they face similar challenges.

"Why travel on our own when we can put our heads together and see what works? We're planning to keep in touch and continue sharing strategies."

The North-East region tops unwanted national league tables for both overall school absence and persistent absenteeism, where a pupil misses 10 per cent or more of sessions.

Attendance across NPCAT has improved since new policies and staffing changes were introduced in consultation with schools in September 2022.

The biggest improvements are in the trust's secondary schools, where attendance is usually poorer.

"Attendance often gets worse as children get older because pupils can vote with their feet," Hilary explains.

Trinity's attendance is up 6.1% compared with 2022/23 and another NPCAT school, St Patrick's Catholic College, Thornaby, has improved attendance by 5.7% over the same period.

Primary attendance across the trust has also improved and NPCAT schools make up four of the top five primary schools with the highest attendance within Middlesbrough.

One of that top five is St Alphonsus' Catholic Primary School in North Ormesby, where headteacher Angela McCann has made attendance a priority, with spectacular results.

"What Angela has done is just amazing when you look at the demographic makeup of the school," Hilary says. "Attendance has a high profile throughout the school with attendance boards and displays, attendance heroes,



Children from St Alphonsus' Catholic Primary School in North Ormesby, where attendance has been made a priority

holding an attendance week and regular rewards for 100% and improved attendance.

"Rewards to incentivise attendance are a focus across many of our schools. St Peter's Catholic College in South Bank set up the 100% Club this year, with rewards and perks for pupils who maintain 100% attendance. There's also an Attendance Shop where pupils can spend tickets they are awarded for attendance on a wide range of gifts."

One of the biggest changes NPCAT introduced was early intervention.

"Before the trust makes a referral to local authorities for legal proceedings or penalty notices, we introduce a step called Improving Attendance Plans," says Hilary. "Schools work with parents and other agencies to find out

barriers to attendance.

"We've also made more support available in school, particularly at Trinity, which has the St Christopher Centre, where pupils with specific needs returning from long-term absence can go.

"Attendances across the country dropped after the pandemic but we're slowly seeing improvement, reflected across our schools."

That's good news for pupils, as attendance is strongly linked to attainment.

"School attendance is everyone's business and we're changing culture within our schools. We're doing everything from rewards to getting everyone involved – teachers, tutors, headteachers, families and pupils."

School welcomes two-year-olds into growing community

A North Yorkshire school has announced the opening of provision for two-year-olds in response to growing demand from parents.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Cross Lanes, Richmond, says its commitment to providing local children with access to exceptional learning opportunities from an earlier age marks an important milestone.

With a focus on high-quality, play-based learning, children will be offered an enriching curriculum that aligns with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), ensuring they are well-prepared for the transition into the school's existing three-year-old nursery and beyond.

"We are so excited to be welcoming our youngest learners to St Mary's," said headteacher Fran Mackle.

"It's wonderful to see our St Mary's family growing, and we're thrilled we can now offer more children the chance to start their educational journey with us.

"Our two-year-old provision will offer a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn through play, develop key skills and build relationships with their peers, setting them up for future success."

The provision will be open during term-time only (39 weeks per year) and will operate the same hours as the school's existing nursery.

Hugh Hegarty, CEO of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT), which runs the school, said: "The prospect of parents and carers being able to choose a school



St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Richmond has announced provision for two-year-olds

such as St Mary's, which ensures admission to the outstanding St Francis Xavier School at 11, is something we are so delighted to offer our wonderful community in Richmond and the surrounding areas."

Children can access the full 15 and 30 funded hours of early education, with a maximum of 15 places available in the morning and 15 in the afternoon, ensuring the provision remains intimate and tailored to the needs of the children.

The two-year-old provision will ensure a seamless transition into the school's nursery, where children will continue to benefit from a consistent learning environment and

dedicated staff.

Qualified Early Years practitioners will work closely with the children, providing the highest standards of care and education.

The decision to create this new provision follows a formal consultation process with families and stakeholders.

Miss Mackle said: "By giving children a strong start to their educational journey, we are setting them up for success in the years ahead."

For more information on the two-year-old provision or to register your child, visit smr.npcat.org.uk or call 01748 822365.



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NEWS

How you can respond to Pope's debt crisis action call

The world is facing one of the most acute debt crises in history, and Pope Francis has called for it to be addressed during this Jubilee Year.

CAFOD is inviting parishioners to sign a global Church petition calling for action from world leaders, with a special letter from Father Charlie Chilufya, a priest based in Kenya.

In Africa, 34 of the poorest countries spend more on huge debt repayments to wealthy banks, institutions and governments than on health or education, when hospitals and schools are already desperately underfunded.

As debt expert Kiama Kaara, from Kenya, tells us: "It is the struggles and the pain and the tears that people face every waking day. Debt crisis is not a purely economic issue. It's every collapsed building, every collapsed road, every child who dies in the hospital because they could not get their medication."

Often, countries have repaid their original debt several times over, but the debt will never be cleared because the interest on it keeps growing.

The Bible teaches us that money lending is about accompanying vulnerable people, not about profiteering. But in our current global system, powerful banks make huge profits from the vulnerability of poorer nations.

A Jubilee year in the Church is historically a time for cancelling debt and restoring equality. Pope Francis has

often spoken about the need to address the debt crisis this year, saying, "More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice."

Here are some ways you can respond to Pope Francis' call:

Sign our global church petition

All over the world people are signing this global Church petition calling for action. Add your name at cafod.org.uk/debtpetition.

Order resources for your parish

Father Chilufya has written a letter to parishioners in England and Wales, explaining the impact of the crisis and inviting them to sign the petition. See our parish resources at cafod.org.uk/shop.

Come and meet your MP in July

On Wednesday July 9, thousands of people will meet in Westminster to speak to our MPs about the debt and climate crises. Register your interest at cafod.org.uk/masslobby.

And, of course, we can all pray about what it means to be a Pilgrim of Hope in this Jubilee Year. Find our Jubilee prayers at cafod.org.uk/pray.

Rachel Blaylock

CAFOD Community Participation Coordinator

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



Another heartfelt appeal that I would make in light of the coming Jubilee is directed to the more affluent nations. I ask that they acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and determine to forgive the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them. More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice.

POPE FRANCIS



Lent talks focus on Second Vatican Council

Father Peter Taylor gave a series of five talks on the Second Vatican Council at St Paulinus Church in Guisborough during Lent.

The weekly sessions attracted a large audience from Guisborough and the other parishes in our cluster of Blessed Nicholas Postgate and Our Lady of Lourdes, and beyond.

Father Peter gave an introduction to the Second Vatican Council and then talked through each of its four central documents.

The talks were well received and generated many interesting discussions and questions among audience members, leaving them with much to reflect on.

The choice of topic was selected in keeping with the Jubilee Year, as the Vatican has encouraged us to learn about and reflect on these documents and attaches a plenary indulgence for those who study them throughout the year.

The talks have all been recorded and the audio is now available on the St Paulinus parish and school YouTube channel.

We hope they will be a useful resource for both individuals and other groups who also wish to explore the Second Vatican Council further.

Emma Morrison



Father Peter Taylor giving a talk at St Paulinus, Guisborough

A Letter From Madonna House – Praying the Angelus

Do you remember praying the Angelus as a child? My family prayed it after the evening meal, a first catechesis for us kids as it recalls the Annunciation, the Fiat of Mary, the Incarnation and the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.



I remember hearing the church bells ringing the Angelus at noon. Formulated in the early Christian monasteries, it quotes the scriptures, primarily from the Gospels of St Luke and St John.

The first verse, "The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary," recalls the Angel Gabriel's words, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Lk 1:28).

We respond: "And she conceived of the Holy Spirit".

The second verse, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord", gives us Mary's acceptance of God's plan: "Be it done unto me according to your word".

The third verse, "The Word became Flesh" affirms Christ's humanity as we respond: "And dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14).

The fourth verse, "Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God" flows from the exhortation to pray for one another (1Thes 5:11, 25; James 5:16).

Mary's title "Mother of God" comes from the definitive declarations of the Ecumenical

Councils of Nicea (325) and Ephesus (431).

These confirmed the belief that Jesus Christ is God, "consubstantial" with the Father. In other words, Jesus is one person with two natures: fully divine and fully human. Mary, being the Mother of Jesus, who is God, is rightly called "Mother of God".

Between the verses the Hail Mary prayer is recited. We pray the Angel Gabriel's words, "Hail, Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with you".

Then, Elizabeth's exclamation to Mary, "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" (Lk 1:42).

We reverently say the Name, "Jesus", then we ask for help: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners (all of humanity) now and at the hour of our death."

Surely it is opportune to ask for prayers during that crucial time when our souls depart from earthly life, leaving our tired bodies behind!

The Angelus concludes as we pray: "Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace

into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen."

Occasionally, an objection is raised to addressing Mary in prayer, thinking it dishonours the Lord Jesus.

Would we think less of a well-known person who publicly honours or praises his own mother? Rather would we not consider that praiseworthy? Certainly, Jesus is not offended or dishonoured by his mother being esteemed!

Over the centuries, hundreds of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin have been reported, showing Mary to be a concerned mother.

She received her mission of mothering all of humanity at the foot of the cross when her dying son said, "Woman, behold your son" and to the apostle John, "Behold your mother" (Jn 19:26-27).

Carol Ann Gieske

The changing pathway to priesthood

St Mary's Cathedral dean Canon Paul Farrer was welcomed by the Cleveland Newman Circle to talk about modern approaches to the selection and training of priests.

Between 2017 and 2022, Canon Paul was rector of Royal English College of St Alban seminary at Valladolid in Spain, giving him considerable insight into these matters.

In medieval times, before ordination a student might have accompanied another priest, like being his apprentice.

Later, studying philosophy and theology was seen to be essential and the Tridentine model of taking students away from the world and giving them highly structured academic courses over six years was adopted.

But more recently there is consideration of how to get the right kind of priests and now the training takes between six and nine years – or as long as it takes.

Improvements in priestly formation are always possible, especially after the abuse scandals of recent decades, and that there are still priests who leave active ministry just two or three years after ordination indicates that academic study alone is not sufficient.

Overall, the Church will not suffer for want of priests, but it will suffer from unwanted priests.

For young men today who are considering joining the priesthood, the selection process and initial formation have been upgraded.

As well as positive recommendations from their parish priest, they will have a social profile taken (including psychological reviews) and then a formal interview before they can be accepted by the vocations director and their bishop.



Canon Paul Farrer speaking at the latest Cleveland Newman Circle meeting

Then the first step in their formation is the Propaedeutic Stage, as experienced at Valladolid. This is their year of preliminary instruction, which is both necessary and mandatory.

Canon Paul is clear that priestly formation now must be about the whole person, from human and spiritual perspectives.

A student for the priesthood is likely to have had some experience of life; they must take time to work on knowing themselves clearly. They must be honest about themselves, without unresolved anger, addictions or lack of sexual integration.

The Church wants men of strong moral

character and integrity, who are open, good communicators and relate well to others.

The training for priesthood takes so long because while the student must be sure of themselves and their calling, the Church wants to value and support all aspects of their character and potential: it is rather like a love match!

All are welcome at Cleveland Newman Circle talks, which are held in St Mary's Cathedral hall, Middlesbrough.

For further information email p.egerton123@gmail.com or call 01642 645732.

Patricia Egerton

Chrism Mass unites diocese in faith

Priests, deacons, religious and laypeople from across the diocese came together in a powerful expression of unity and renewal at our annual Chrism Mass.

This celebration is one of the most significant liturgies in the Church's calendar and takes place during Holy Week in cathedrals around the world, including St Mary's Cathedral in Middlesbrough.

Presided over by Bishop Terry, the Chrism Mass focused on the blessing and consecration of the holy oils used in the sacraments throughout the year: the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens and the Sacred Chrism.

Each oil has a specific purpose – anointing the sick, preparing catechumens for baptism and consecrating people and objects in sacraments such as baptism, confirmation, ordination and the dedication of altars and churches.

The Sacred Chrism is specially consecrated with a prayer and the bishop's breath, symbolising the Holy Spirit.

In his homily, Bishop Terry spoke of our mission as Christians to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel.

He said: "Listening to our readings, there can be no doubt that all of us are being presented with a big task, a daunting mission. We cannot fail to recognise that what is being asked of Jesus is asked of each one of us also: to bring good news to the poor, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to captives and comfort all who mourn.

"We are weak servants, sinful servants, but we are called to be faithful servants to the best of our ability. And in this way the Lord will keep us in his love and lead us all – shepherds and flock – to eternal life."

A highlight of the Mass was the Renewal of Priestly Promises, when all diocesan priests publicly renewed their commitment to priestly service, echoing the promises made at their ordination. After the liturgy, the oils were distributed to representatives from our parishes for use throughout the year.

• Preparations continue for a very special Mass of thanksgiving for Bishop Terry's golden

ordination jubilee and the diamond ordination anniversary of our Bishop Emeritus, John Crowley. The Mass, at St Mary's Cathedral at noon on Saturday July 26, will be followed by a reception. Bishop Terry said: "This celebration is an opportunity to give thanks to God for his abundant blessings over the years and to pray for the continued flourishing of our diocese."



The blessing of the oils during the Chrism Mass at St Mary's Cathedral

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dementia talk will include information and advice

Dementia Forward, a leading dementia charity for North Yorkshire and York, invites you to a talk at Sacred Heart Catholic Church Hall, Thirsk Road, Northallerton. Speaker Fiona Andrews will talk about the charity's support, advice and information for those affected by dementia. The event is on Sunday May 18, meeting at 1.30pm for a 2pm start. For more information call Father Michael Keogh on 01609 561075.

Walk St Cuthbert's Way for special jubilee pilgrimage

Join the Stella Maris Jubilee Pilgrimage from May 26 to 31 and follow the ancient St Cuthbert's Way, walking 62 miles in the footsteps of saints, monks and medieval pilgrims, all while raising crucial funds for seafarers and fishers. This six-day journey takes you from the historic Melrose Abbey in Scotland to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. Seafarers endure months away from home, facing isolation and challenging conditions. By taking part in this pilgrimage, you will support vital practical, pastoral and spiritual care for those who work tirelessly at sea. Visit stellamaris.org.uk/pilgrimage.

Help to find hope and healing in marriage

Retrouvaille England and Wales helps couples find hope and healing for their marriage. Its next in-person programme is from Friday June 20 to Sunday June 22 in a north London retreat centre. For more details visit retrouvaille.org.uk or call 07887 296983.

Come together in hope for WeBelieve

WeBelieve is a festival of Catholic life to celebrate this Jubilee Year of Hope. The event offers individuals, families and parishes an opportunity to receive some inspiring faith formation together, to bond as a community and celebrate the Jubilee. Taking place at St Mary's College, Oscott, Birmingham, from July 25 to 28, WeBelieve includes talks, conversation and worship. Speakers include Dr Gianna Emanuela Molla (daughter of St Gianna Molla), Father Paul Murray, Monsignor Michael Nazir-Ali, AnMari and Father Toby Lees. For details visit webeliefefestival.com.

Bishop John Sherrington appointed as new Archbishop of Liverpool

His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Bishop John Sherrington as Archbishop of Liverpool. Ordained as a priest for the Diocese of Nottingham in 1987, Bishop Sherrington has been an Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster since September 2011. He will become the tenth Archbishop of Liverpool in succession to Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, who was appointed in 2014. His installation will take place in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King on Tuesday May 27.

SVP NEWS

SVP members celebrate 180 years of ‘making a difference’

To mark 180 years of the St Vincent de Paul Society in England and Wales, around 50 members of York District gathered for a spring festival with the theme “Making a difference”.

The event took place at York’s newest Catholic church, St Margaret Clitherow’s, Haxby, where our hosts welcomed us with delicious homemade refreshments.

Morning presentations included St Aelred’s telling us how the new SVP shop in Melrosegate came to be set up and how it benefits the Tang Hall community and raises vital funds.

St George’s explained their link with the ITReuse project, which recycles phones and computers at York Furniture Store, James Street, while mentoring those needing IT skills and building up confidence for people returning to work after Covid.

St Wilfrid’s explained their involvement with the food bank at St Joseph’s Hall in Clifton, out of which they now provide lunch packs for needy families on the school holidays, as well as Christmas hampers.

In each case the partnership with other agencies and the ability to expand our work from different platforms has been remarkable.

The highlight of the day was midday Mass concelebrated by Canon Jerry Twomey, Father Bill Serplus, Father Nicholas Ikpeme and Father Jose Michael.

Our Central Council president Pat Nobbs then presented certificates to some of our longest-serving members, several of whom are in St George’s, the city’s oldest Catholic church.

Members heard how we are a growing family, with Mini Vinnies in our parishes and a vibrant 18-33 student SVP at York University.

Rightly proud as we are of our older brothers and sisters, it is a joy to welcome new members who are often full of ideas and new inspiration.

We left the event reinvigorated, with much food for thought.

Angela Breffit
York District SVP President



SVP members gathered to hear how the organisation is making a difference throughout the society it serves

A warm welcome and friendship for new volunteers

If you are reading this, you are almost there – join us in our exciting journey to support your community and your parish. Look at all the things we do...

Running food banks

Visiting the isolated, elderly and lonely

Sporting events

Choirs, drama and youth camps

Homeless support

Prison visiting

Cake fundraising

Cultural events

Providing goods for those struggling with finances

Refugees and asylum seeker support

Faith into action and spiritual guidance

Running Mini Vinnies groups in schools

Pilgrimages and festivals

On top of all that we offer free training and DBS checks if necessary.

But the most satisfying aspect is the welcome you will receive and the friendships you will make.

Unlike other charities, there is no pressure – just call and we can chat about what you

would like to offer. Maybe you have more ideas to bring to the table?

We welcome those of all faiths or no faith and offer doors of hope for everyone. Open the door and come on in – we can’t wait to meet you!

To find out more call me on 07554 336984 or email teresao@svp.org.uk.

Teresa O’Hagan
Membership Support Officer (Middlesbrough)



Diocese of Middlesbrough Adult Formation Coordinator

Salary: In the region of £38,000 with pension contribution.
Permanent Contract.
Full Time (35 hours per week) or possible job share.
Based at the Curial Office, Linthorpe Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

The Diocese of Middlesbrough is seeking to recruit an enthusiastic and appropriately qualified Adult Formation Coordinator to implement the Bishop’s Vision for Adult Formation across the diocese:

“To help the faithful of all ages to grow in both human and Christian maturity, enriching the whole of life with the leaven of the Gospel. This will involve helping them embrace all the faith dimensions of adult life, for example: understanding and communicating the faith; skills needed for personal growth; the experience of family life; relationships; public service and concern for the common good.”

This role will involve office-based work as well as travelling across the diocese to deliver catechesis, training and support to large and small groups (lay and ordained) at parish, deanery and diocesan level. Office duties will include the creation of catechetical resources where necessary and planning of courses and one-off events, as well as involvement in diocesan initiatives.

The successful applicant must be a practicing Catholic and must possess significant knowledge of the Catholic faith, including familiarity with Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and other relevant Church documents. They will also have significant experience of working with adults in a learning or faith environment and will be able to evidence participation in the Church’s liturgical and sacramental life.

As this role will involve regular travelling in parishes throughout the diocese, a driving licence and access to a vehicle will be beneficial. The nature of this role will also require a flexible approach, which will occasionally include working at evenings and at weekends.

For more detail about the role or for an informal discussion, please email Canon John Lumley, Episcopal Vicar for Christian Discipleship, at jl@rcdmidd.org.uk

For a job description, person specification and application form, please email Paul Blackburn, HR Manager at HR@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Closing Date for Applications: May 21 2025
Interviews to take place: early June 2025

Faith and fellowship at peaceful priory retreat



The Day of Reflection at Thicket Priory

More than 70 people gathered at the Carmelite monastery at Thicket Priory for a Day of Reflection organised by the St Charles and St Patrick SVP Conference in Hull.

The event was led by Father John Farrell OP, a Dominican friar from Holy Cross Priory in Leicester. He spoke movingly and beautifully about the Passion of Christ as seen through St John’s Gospel and we all came away with a deeper understanding of the events of Holy Week.

Many of the nuns joined us for the day and at the end we had the privilege of joining them in praying the Divine Office.

The sunny weather enhanced the beautiful surroundings of the priory and we could wander around the grounds and enjoy the tranquil setting, which was a perfect location for a day of reflection.

Participants from our diocese were joined by others from Leeds, Nottingham and Durham.

We also welcomed a minibus of students from the Catholic Chaplaincy at Hull University. It was great to see them there and they brought the average age down considerably.

Our thanks go to Father John for leading the day, the Carmelite sisters who made us so welcome and to Patrick Doyle and Penny Dixie for organising the event.

Chris Cuthill

Izzy's eye-opening experience of love in action

Izzy, a member of the SVP conference at St Mary and St Romuald Parish in Yarm, tells us about her experience when she volunteered with Team B at the Upper Room...

Valentine's Day, 2025. My friend Rebekah and I are marking the occasion with a Marks and Spencer love heart cookie-making kit. These biscuits represent the love that's in the air on a day such as today.

To end the festivities, we decide a trip to the corner shop also represents love. On our way back, I looked into the glow pooling out of the street lights and noticed something wondrous.

"It's snowing!" I exclaimed, with a level of excitement more appropriate from a five-year-

old child.

We were delirious with glee at the sight of snow. We sang (or screeched) a rendition of 'Singin' in the Snow' and remarked that it must be a universal experience of childlike wonder and joy to see snow.

But in fact, it is not a universal experience. The next morning, in the spirit of showing love after the Valentine's celebrations, Rebekah and I volunteered for our first SVP-run breakfast kitchen for the homeless community in the area, and it was a glaring reminder of the privilege we had in that excitement.

It was so lovely to help in the kitchen and see the incredible work of the SVP and the amazing people who came by.

Honestly, it felt like a cafe out of a sitcom, with groups of friends and strangers laughing around tables, armed with bacon butties and cups of tea.

The SVP plays such an important role in so many people's lives. With not enough support out there for some of society's most vulnerable, what they do is crucial.

I work as a healthcare assistant at the hospital and hear so many moving and heartbreaking stories every day. But those stories tend to have the backdrop of a home, somewhere warm and dry, at least. The stories I was told that morning did not.

One man told me about his horrific health problems that had left him unable to work, without the means to pay for somewhere to live and new diagnoses he had received that would further ravage his body and life. When I asked him how his night had been, he responded candidly.

"It was pretty rough because I had chosen to sleep under the railway bridge and the trains are so loud. But then it started to snow and I was so upset because it was just freezing and I couldn't sleep."

There it was. Our frenzy of delight suddenly felt insensitive and any assertion of universality wildly inaccurate. What had been a nice little addition to our night had been the difference between sleep and no sleep for someone else. It had meant freezing temperatures, slush leaking all over a sleeping bag.

Getting involved with the SVP or any event like this is not only essential in recognising our privilege, but it's also essential in living the way Jesus taught us to. As believers, we have a divine imperative to help.

And given this was after Valentine's Day, I'd like to point out the importance of love, something we see spoken about in the Bible a lot.



Izzy, left, and her friend Rebekah helping out at the Upper Room

In today's society, we have lost sight of the many faces of love and the many ways Jesus shows it to us. We have to follow his example and show love as often and as openly as we can.

Sometimes showing love can be a chat with a stranger, cooking a meal for someone or just being there. It may well force us to confront things about ourselves and our situations that are uncomfortable to realise. But it is only in doing so we can become closer to who God wants us to be in our lives.

All this to say, we had a wonderful time, and anyone wishing to get involved in anything similar should definitely ask at their parish because there is always something going on. I know everybody leads busy lives but putting down the pink and red cookies to help out is not only loads of fun but can also give us an insight into the varied experiences of life out there and the spiritual duties we all have as Christians.

Care bags brighten Easter for Upper Room guests

Easter care bags were given out to visitors to the weekly drop-in at the Upper Room with Middlesbrough SVP project.

Items were donated by pupils and families at the Junction Multibank and St Benedict's Catholic Primary School in Ampleforth, and Easter cards were made by children at other local primary schools.

Thank you to all who have supported the project over the past year. We have received private donations, offerings from Lenten soup lunches and money from the Tees Foundation's Tees Million funds.

Many guests express their thanks and tell us coming to the Upper Room makes such a difference to them.

One guest, who has successfully started a difficult journey to move on in their lives said: "I don't know how you can be kind to me – thanks so much for what you do."

Guests are deeply grateful for the emergency clothing, sleeping bags and the occasional tent given out.

The Upper Room with Middlesbrough SVP has now been open every Saturday for over a year, offering those who are homeless or destitute breakfast in a warm, welcoming environment and a lunch to take away.

Sessions are lively and getting busier every week, with 65 attending on a recent Saturday. Podiatry services and free haircuts have been added to the services offered.

A donation of £5 will buy socks and gloves, £20 will pay for a sleeping bag and £30 buys a tent.

If you can help by giving cash or emergency items, please email FrancesG@svp.org.uk or teresa_lyth@hotmail.co.uk or call 07885 599810.

How you can help make Vinnie Camp a success

Last summer the SVP in Middlesbrough ran our first Vinnie Camp at Peat Rigg Outdoor Activity Centre in Pickering.

Under the leadership of Margaret Clark, 19 children from Coulby Newham, Hemlington and Redcar spent the last week of August in the care of six volunteer SVP members and the Peat Rigg staff. The experience was free for their families.

The pilot was so successful that this year we would like to offer a similar experience to 20 children aged nine to 11 years old (Years 5 and 6) from the York area.

This year's five-day residential break will run at Peat Rigg from Monday August 25 until Friday August 29, with activities led by the Peat Rigg staff and SVP volunteer helpers will provide pastoral care.

SVP conferences across the Diocese of Middlesbrough will need to raise £9,000 to allow us to offer the week cost-free to the volunteers and children.

Transport to and from Peat Rigg will also be provided as well as help with clothing or footwear.

We also need two more volunteers. You don't need to be an existing SVP group member but you must be over 18 with enhanced DBS clearance.

All volunteers receive training from the national SVP team.

You can help a child build their confidence, discover their independence, make friends and memories to treasure this summer by...

- Giving a donation in an envelope marked "Vinnie Camp" to any SVP member.
- Emailing presidentc13@svp.org.uk requesting bank details to make a donation.
- Emailing Lizf@svp.org.uk to volunteer for the week.

Please remember to gift aid your donation. Thank you in anticipation of your generosity.

Patricia Nobbs
Middlesbrough SVP Central Council President



Children enjoying last year's SVP summer camp

£1.80 provides a child with a meal every weekday for a month



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NEWS

Singers gather for stirring Messiah performance

Handel's famous oratorio Messiah tells the familiar story of Our Lord from prophecy to birth, through Lent, to Good Friday, on to the Resurrection and beyond to eternal life.

It was wonderful to welcome more than 80 singers, travelling from as far afield as Guisborough, Marske, Whitby and York, as well as Middlesbrough, to sing this fine work ahead of Holy Week.

One of the Cathedral Series of concerts, this Come and Sing performance saw the singers rehearsing for only two hours before performing in front of the audience, along with solos from talented local singers.

The chorus was directed by Richard Gooding, who proved to be an inspiring and confident leader, who coaxed a splendid performance out of the singers. The concert was accompanied on the cathedral organ by diocesan director of music Steven Maxson. Singers who were part of the performance not

only produced a wonderful sound but enjoyed doing so.

Comments from members of the choir included "It was wonderful to be part of it" and "A fantastic sound. Really enjoyed it!"

The performance was much appreciated by members of the audience too, with one saying: "The performance was amazing. If you missed it, you missed a treat."

Steven said: "This was our first Come and Sing performance at the cathedral and you never know quite what to expect. From the very first chord in the rehearsal, however, we knew it was going to be a tremendous event.

"My sincere thanks to all who organised it, to the wonderful team of cathedral volunteers and to all who sang, including our talented soloists."

It is hoped to make this an annual event, continuing to fill the cathedral with beautiful music, bringing people together in song



More than 80 singers took part in a performance of Handel's Messiah – Photo by Stephen Terry

Children create ‘wall of sound’ at choral service

The Solemnity of St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, saw the latest Middlesbrough Schools' Singing Programme Mass.

The programme is now in 12 of our diocesan schools in three of our four deaneries and reaches almost 1,500 children every week.

It is part of the National Schools' Singing Programme, now running in dioceses across England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, as well as in six Church of England cathedrals.

More than 300 children came from Marske, Middlesbrough and York to sing Mass for St Joseph.

The children had learnt the music in their regular weekly sessions and sang the Mass Ordinary, the Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation, as well as four hymns and a communion anthem.

Every school attending had a special part to play, whether that was leading some of the singing, providing readers or intercessors or taking up the offertory gifts.

Those children who are also members of the Cathedral Junior Choir robed and sat together.

Principal celebrant Bishop Terry was joined by the vicar general, Monsignor Gerard Robinson, and the cathedral dean, Canon Paul Farrer, along with assistant diocesan MC, Father Steven Leightell.

Brother Paul Murray, who was attending with the children from St Wilfrid's School, York, was our altar server.

Diocesan director of music Steven Maxson



Middlesbrough Schools' Singing Programme Mass reaches almost 1,500 children every week

said: "It is always wonderful to hear the cathedral filled with the sound of children's voices and to hear more than 300 of them confidently leading our singing at Mass was something which will stay in the memory of

those attending for a long time."

In his homily, Bishop Terry praised the children's singing, talking of the "wall of sound" he could hear as soon as the entrance procession left the sacristy.

The service ended with the official hymn of the Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope, reminding all present that their trip to the cathedral was itself a pilgrimage during this Holy Year.

Poetry and Prayer: Communion with Christians across the centuries

St Peter's, Scarborough, parishioner Andrew Carter continues his series of reflections on the close links between poetry and prayer...

St Bede tells us that an illiterate cowherd called Caedmon, at St Hilda's monastery in seventh-century Whitby, was "so skilful in composing devotional songs that, when any passage of scripture was interpreted for him he could turn it into delightful and moving poetry in his own English tongue".

It's fascinating to see evidence of the first vernacular poetry, translating scripture into the music of early English, but though Bede quotes some in Latin, none of the original remains.

The earliest surviving Christian poem is a vision of the Cross: in the ninth-century Dream of the Rood, the Cross appears in the air, brilliant in gold and jewels, and tells the poet its story, how it was first chopped down in a wood, set up on a hill, and how a young hero climbed into its arms to set mankind free.

You can read this devotional masterpiece in the translation by Catholic poet and scholar Michael Alexander in The Earliest English Poems, a Penguin paperback.

The first surviving lyric (a short rhymed poem) in English, from some 400 years later, is a song to the Virgin Mary by the Durham hermit and retired pirate St Godric, calling

for her to "rix in min mod" (reign in my heart) and help him to reach the joys of Heaven. From early on, there were saints among the English poets!

Our Lady at the foot of the Cross is the focus of a miraculous lyric from the early 13th century. Here it is in full:

Now goeth sonne under wod:

Me reweth, Marye, thy fair rode.

Now goeth sonne under tre:

Me reweth, Marye, they sone and thee.

The sun is setting behind a wood and the anonymous poet feels pity ("Me reweth") seeing the grief on Mary's face.

Thanks to the rich meanings of the words, the setting sun is also the dying Son, the tree is the Cross itself. Pronounce "wod" as woad and "rode" (complexion or face) as road.

With their hard "d" sounds, these lines seem to close in the finality of death. But as Christ sinks on the Cross, the open rhyme of "tree" and "thee" is like a gentle release of breath into joy beyond the pain.

Eight hundred years later, we can share this prayerful experience of death and resurrection with the poet (probably a monk in his scriptorium), a communion with a fellow Christian across time.

Striking makeover for roadside planter

A run-down roadside planter has been given a new lease of life with help from a Middlesbrough councillor and a green-fingered friend.

The stone-built structure near St Joseph's Church had fallen into disrepair with loose blocks and dead plants, making for a less than pretty sight.

Councillor Joan McTigue put in a request to the council's Neighbourhood service for the planter to be restored.

Work by Middlesbrough Council to reinstate and repoint the structure and top it up with fresh soil and compost – at an estimated cost

of just over £4,000 – was started before Christmas, and planting has now taken place.

Councillor McTigue, businessman Bay Bashir and former Newlands School FCJ pupil Peter Hall donated £400 towards the restoration between them.

She was also helped by long-time friend and horticulturist Mike Heagney, who chipped in with funds and shrubs to fill it.

Mike, a St Paulinus, Guisborough, parishioner, who has raised thousands of pounds for charity by opening his own garden, Tudor Croft, to visitors, was delighted with the completed project.



Councillor Joan McTigue asked for the planter to be repaired and was helped by friend and horticulturist Mike Heagney, who donated plants and shrubs

Make a date for annual May Procession

The annual May Procession at St Vincent's Church, Queens Road, Hull, will take place at 11.30am on Sunday May 11.

The procession is part of our parish's strong tradition of Marian adoration. It is a beautiful, joyful liturgy to Our Lady and a great witness of our faith to the wider community.

Children who would like to join in the procession are asked to meet in the school before the service.

Catherine Holtby



Last year's May Procession at St Vincent's, Hull

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NEWS

Out & About

2 Friday

Events, articles and photographs for the June edition of the Voice are due by this day.

3 Saturday

11am Catholic women are invited to share an hour of feminine communion, including meditation, via Zoom. Text Barbara on 07796 117704 with your mobile number and email address so she can add you to the WhatsApp group, or email catholicwomenmdl@gmail.com for Zoom link.

6pm Mass in Italian in the Father Kelly Room, Our Lady, Acomb, York, followed by refreshments. All welcome.

7.30pm The Band of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment present a thrilling night of inspiring music at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough. Tickets are free and there will be a collection for the Yorkshire Regiment Benevolent Fund. For tickets call 0333 666 3366.

5 Monday

9.45am-10.25am Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com. This takes place every Monday.

7pm Catholic charismatic prayer group meets on first Monday each month at St Bede's Pastoral Centre, Blossom Street, York. For more information, contact Sharon on cdscsmiddlesbrough@gmail.com or 07932 420809.

6 Tuesday

10am Coffee at the Cathedral. Tea, coffee and treats every Tuesday after 9.30am Mass. A warm welcome and friendly atmosphere. Make new friends and enjoy some fellowship. Those who are alone especially welcome.

10am

Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle at terry-doyle@live.co.uk. This takes place every Tuesday.

7 Wednesday

5.30pm Sung Evening Prayer and Benediction every Wednesday at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough. Join us for a time of prayer and quiet reflection before the Blessed Sacrament.

11 Sunday
3pm Mass for LGBT+ community, family and friends at the Chapel of the Bar Convent. Doors open from 2.30pm.

12 Monday
2pm Music for the Mind, an hour of fun and music at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, for people living with dementia, their friends and carers, with Trish McLean. All welcome.

13 Tuesday
12.45pm Catholic Women's Luncheon Club meets at the Kingston Theatre Hotel, Kingston Square, Hull. Gather at 12.45pm, lunch at 1pm. All ladies in the Hull and East Riding area welcome. Call 01482 446565 or email jayne.wilson24@gmail.com.

7pm Mass for Knights of St Columba Council 29 at St Mary's Cathedral, followed by a meeting.

14 Wednesday

7pm Hull Circle of the Catenian Association meets at Lazaat Hotel in Cottingham, followed by a buffet-style meal. Email Charles Cseh at hullcirclesecretary@gmail.com.


16 Friday
1.30pm Brodsky Quartet perform at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, for pupils in Years 4 to 9. Tickets are just £5 for pupils, with accompanying staff/volunteers free and are available from ticketsource.co.uk/middlesbroughcathedral.

7.30pm Brodsky Quartet perform Bach, Shostakovich and Ravel at St Mary's Cathedral. Tickets from ticketsource.co.uk/middlesbroughcathedral.

17 Saturday
7.30pm Irish dance with Peter Mylett at the Erimus Club, Cumberland Road, Middlesbrough. Contact John Brown on 07871 958412.

18 Sunday
3pm Catholic Fellowship Mass celebrated by Father Tom O'Neill at the Holy Name of Mary Church, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.

31 Saturday
If you have any events that you would like to include in the Out and About section, please email heidi.cummins@rcdmidd.org.uk.



Diocese of Middlesbrough

Head of Finance

Salary: In the region of £60,000 with pension contribution.
Permanent Contract.
Full Time (35 hours per week).
Based at the Curial Office, Linthorpe Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

The Head of Finance is a key member of the senior leadership team, responsible for strategic financial leadership and ensuring the financial sustainability of the diocese. This role encompasses day-to-day financial operations, investment strategy, risk management, IT oversight and long-term financial planning. It also involves leading and developing a resilient and professional finance team. The Head of Finance chairs the Diocesan Investments Committee, which advises the Trustee Board on diocesan investments including the acquisition and disposal of investment properties.

The Head of Finance acts as a trusted advisor to the Bishop, the Vicar General, the Board of Trustees and the COO and is also a key point of contact with external advisers such as auditors, lawyers, bankers, investment managers, the Charity Commission and Companies House. The postholder also works closely with parish priests and parish finance committees in the day-to-day financial administration of our parishes.

The successful applicant must have significant experience in senior level financial, asset and resources management in a comparable setting and should be a qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA) or possess equivalent extensive financial leadership experience. While the successful applicant need not be a practicing Catholic or have any religious faith, an understanding of the mission of the Catholic Church and the Catholic ethos are essential. Experience of working in a senior leadership role for a charity would also be advantageous.

This role will involve occasional travel parishes throughout the diocese and occasional wider UK travel. The nature of this role will also require a flexible approach, with the possibility of some work outside normal office hours.

For more detail about the role or for an informal discussion, please email Peter Warren, Chief Operating Officer, at peterwarren@rcdmidd.org.uk

For a job description, person specification and application form please email Paul Blackburn, HR Manager at HR@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Closing Date for Applications: Wednesday May 21 2025
Interviews to take place: early June 2025.

Copy Deadline

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

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

Deadline Friday May 2 for June 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.

Celebrating the 80th anniversary of a new beginning

As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day on May 8, John Nicholson Hinman recalls his own family experiences of World War II and those of others from near and far.

I sometimes look towards our china cabinet and notice a treasured item.

Bearing a borough coat of arms, it is a peace mug given to my late father, John Nicholson Hinman, in 1919, when he was five.

These fine china mugs were given to all children in Appleby-in-Westmorland as part of the celebrations marking the official end of hostilities.

My father, who came from two well-known Westmorland Methodist families, the Hinmans and Nicholsons, treasured the gift.

Sadly, we know that 1919 marked only a pause in endless conflict inflicted on lives across the world to this day.

This month's VE Day anniversary is worth celebrating, however. May 1945 marked a new beginning in social advancement and improvements.

New international organisations were also formed to foster shared aspirations for peace and cooperation.

I was told my late mother, Mary Hill, heard the aircraft and explosions that caused severe damage to Middlesbrough Railway Station on Monday August 3 1942.

It was a bank holiday and my mother was too engrossed in the film *Reap the Wild Wind* to leave the Odeon cinema.

My grandfather, John Richard Hill, was crossing the Metz Bridge after his shift at Acklam Steelworks and watched the aircraft fly out towards Grangetown.

Back home in Brambles Farm, John told his wife Ellen he could have touched the aircraft with a walking stick. Ellen told John he should

have found cover instead of sightseeing!

Eight people lost their lives that day and 58 were injured.

There is an intriguing footnote to this event. A Middlesbrough woman visited the German town of Kassel in 1950. While she was making a purchase in a leather shop, she began a conversation with the owner, who spoke fluent English and asked her which town she was from.

When she told him she was from Middlesbrough, he said he knew the town well, having been the pilot of the aircraft that attacked the railway station in August 1942.

A few years ago I had the privilege as a volunteer for MIND of holding sessions with 12 former Middlesbrough evacuees who had been identified by friends at St Mary's Cathedral.

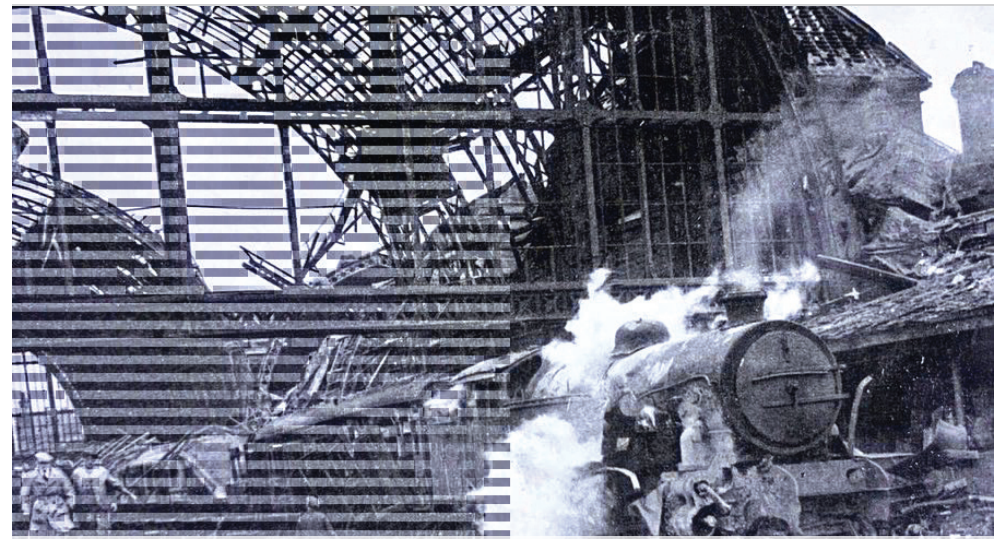
I gave a series of talks to these good folk about all aspects of Middlesbrough at war. The evacuees recounted their experiences of being sent to North Yorkshire and living away from their families. They then wrote up their stories, and these accounts still make poignant reading.

In all conflicts and loss, we are bound to ask, "Where is God in all of this?" We might say the answer lies in the lived experience and moral and humanitarian deeds of those caught up in the horror of war.

The answer also lies in poetry and prayer. An Airman's Prayer is one of my favourites.

Its author, Sergeant Hugh Rowell Brodie, of the Royal Australian Air Force, perished along with his crew above Essen on the night of June 2 1942. Their aircraft was lost without a trace.

Sergeant Brodie was a graduate of Melbourne University and was on the school staff at Melbourne High School when he joined up in September 1940.



Middlesbrough Railway Station after it was bombed by a lone Luftwaffe Dornier Do 217 on August 3 1942, killing eight railway workers and civilians – Photo copyright Teesside Archives

He wrote to his students: "My dear boys, I write to you because I love you... We had from our fathers a world that was good. It was not good enough..."

"The blood of generations shed for your cities and not shed by bound victims, but by free men. Do not waste their sacrifice. The future is yours. Use it well.

"And now I write for myself alone. If I wronged any one of you by word or deed, forgive me. If I taught anything of worth, act upon it. If I taught what should not have been taught, drive from your minds the memory of that teaching, not of that teacher. Do not forget me too quickly, for I shall not forget you, Your friend, Hugh Brodie."

An Airman's Prayer

*Almighty and all-present power,
Short is the prayer I make to thee,
I do not ask in battle hour,
For any shield to cover me.
The vast unalterable way,
From which the stars do not depart,
May not be turned aside to stay
The bullet, flying to my heart.
I ask no help to strike my foe,
I seek no petty victory here,
The enemy I hate, I know
To thee, is also dear
But this I pray – be at my side
When death is drawing through the sky,
Almighty God, who also died,
Teach me the way that I should die.*

Sergeant Hugh Brodie

A sad memory of war

Mike and Bernie Morrissey, of Saltburn, sent in two personal memories of war and peace.

Mike's father, Dr Jim Morrissey, of Bradford, died in June 1940 during the Dunkirk evacuation. He was a member of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

Mike was 10 and on holiday in North Wales

with his mother and younger brother, John.

"None of my friends mentioned it during the next few days, which was sad," he recalled.

Bernie was at boarding school in London when the war ended and a friend got the gift of a pony to mark the occasion.

"Appropriate," said Bernie.



A Vickers Wellington IV like the one Sergeant Hugh Brodie flew in during World War II

Famous Brodsky Quartet prepare for hometown return

Tickets are still available for the visit of the Brodsky Quartet to St Mary's Cathedral on Friday May 16.

The world-famous classical ensemble are making a rare return to the town where they were formed in 1972.

The quartet has performed over 3,500 concerts on the major stages of the world and have released more than 70 recordings.

As well as the evening concert, there will also be an afternoon performance, especially for schools.

Music lovers can also look forward to seeing the Band of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment at the cathedral on Saturday May 3 in a special free performance.

Simon & Garfunkel Through the Years, considered one of the world's greatest tribute shows, concludes the cathedral's summer season with a performance on Friday June 20.

The return of the popular Rocking in the Aisles show, featuring talented performers from all over the diocese, is on Friday September 26.

Tickets for all the above concerts are on sale now from Ticket Source at ticketsource.co.uk/middlesbroughcathedral or call the box office on 0333 666 3366.



The world-famous Brodsky Quartet

NEWS

Our mission to be Christ's presence to all

Shortly before his death, Pope Francis released his message for the 62nd World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which falls this year on Sunday May 11.

Entitled "Pilgrims of Hope: The Gift of Life," the Pope's message recalls that every vocation – be it to ordained ministry, consecrated life or the laity – should offer the world a sign of God's hope for every person.

He noted that young people frequently feel dismay and confusion when they look to the future, given the background of insecurity, identity crises, unjust treatment of others and general indifference.

"Yet the Lord, who knows the human heart, does not abandon us in our uncertainty," said the Pope. "He wants us to know that we are

loved, called and sent as pilgrims of hope."

The Holy Father urged young people to look to the saints to recognise they are the "now of God", since youth is not an in-between time.

Every vocational call, he said, ignites in us a desire to love others and serve them, rather than a means of self-promotion.

At certain points in life, added the Pope, God calls people to choose a path, whether it be to family life, the priesthood or religious life.

"Every vocation is inspired by hope, marked by confident trust in God's providence," he said. "Vocations mature through the daily effort to be faithful to the Gospel, and through prayer, discernment and service."

Pope Francis urged young people to take the

time to listen to God's voice in prayer, even amid the constant bombardment of daily life and external pressures. He said it takes courage to pause to pray and to be open to God's dreams for our lives.

"Prayerful recollection," he said, "helps us to realise that all of us can be pilgrims of hope if we make our lives a gift, above all by placing ourselves at the service of those who live on the world's material and existential peripheries."

Every vocation, added the Pope, is an expression of our overall Christian vocation to be Christ's presence where his light and consolation are most needed.

The Holy Father invited pastoral ministers and vocation directors to patiently accompany

young people on their journey to discover their vocation, listening respectfully and offering wise guidance.

"A vocation is never a treasure stored away in the heart," he said. "Rather, it grows and is strengthened within a community that believes, loves and hopes."

In conclusion, Pope Francis invited all Christians to pray for vocations and trust that the Holy Spirit will inspire young people to welcome their vocation.

"Let us never tire, then, of asking the Lord for new labourers for his harvest, certain that with great love he continues to call them," he said. "Keep walking as pilgrims of hope on the path of the Gospel!"

Parish honours mothers with flowers, music and love

St Vincent's Parish in Hull held a celebratory Mass for Mother's Day, which was a joyous and grace-filled occasion.

The music was uplifting and moving, culminating in a song to all the mothers that involved children from the parish.

Mothers took part by serving on the altar, reading and leading the offertory procession.

Students from St Mary's College Youth SVP crafted flower baskets and Father Richard presented all mothers with bunches of daffodils.

After the Mass there was a celebration in the school hall where mothers served parishioners with delicious food and drinks.



Mothers gathered on the altar at St Vincent's

Come and celebrate Canon Pat's jubilee

Canon Pat Harney will celebrate the 70th anniversary of his priestly ordination at English Martyrs Church, York, at noon on Saturday June 21.

Canon Harney, who was ordained on June 19

1955, served in parishes throughout the diocese and was the first administrator of St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough.

All are welcome to come and join him and the parish to mark this very special occasion.



Canon Pat Harney – Photo by Lars Karlsson

Environment Corner – Celebrating 10 years of *Laudato Si'*

This month sees the 10th anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' powerful and challenging encyclical letter, subtitled *On Care for Our Common Home*.

It seems an ideal time to revisit that letter, which encapsulated Pope Francis' hope that "it can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face". (para 15)

Quoting his guide and inspiration St Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis said: "He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace." (para 10)

"Each organism, as a creature of God, is good and admirable in itself. The same is true of the harmonious ensemble of organisms existing in a defined space and

functioning as a system. We depend on these larger systems for our own existence.

"We need only recall how ecosystems interact in dispersing carbon dioxide, purifying water, controlling illnesses and epidemics, forming soil, breaking down waste, and in many other ways which we overlook or simply do not know about.

"We live and act on the basis of a reality which has previously been given to us. So, when we speak of 'sustainable use', consideration must always be given to each ecosystem's regenerative ability in its different areas and aspects." (para 140)

"The environment is part of a logic of receptivity. It is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next." (para 159)

"What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?

What need does the earth have of us? Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn." (para 160)

"As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning... Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life." (para 207)

Barbara Hungin



Laudato Si' challenges us all to help make the world a better place

Inspiring message of hope lays foundations for pilgrimage

Acclaimed Catholic speaker David Wells moved his audience to laughter and tears during our Lourdes pilgrimage formation day.

His talk focused on the theme of hope – its vital role in pilgrimage and how it sustains us through life's challenges.

David opened by stressing, "Without hope you are not a pilgrim." He invited reflection on why hope is essential, quoting Proverbs 17:22: "A cheerful heart is good medicine but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."

He highlighted Paul's letters that often urged divided communities to encourage each other and live in peace.

He reminded the audience, "Make sure nobody pays back wrong with wrong, but always strive to do good for each other."

This linked to the spiritual practice of cancelling debt - letting go of private resentments. Drawing on Richard Rohr's writings, David encouraged people to "stop wearing our wounds like medals," calling for release from past hurts instead of carrying them as identity.

David described the biblical call to "Rejoice always, pray continually and give thanks to God" as a "triptych" reflecting the Trinity.

"Cheer up, rely on a power greater than yourself, count your blessings, learn to be grateful," he urged.

He said advertisers understand human longing well, but pilgrimage reveals these desires authentically. Referencing Pope Francis' observation that young people often see the future with dread, David insisted: "That can't be right."

Sharing a personal story, David recalled his mother's last wish: "Please, just thank people." This simple request showed the power of gratitude and human connection. He stressed, "heart speaks to heart - you are good people," urging kindness and self-compassion.

David warned against the relentless pursuit of

constant improvement. Quoting Michael Downey, he said, "You can't know what the light is until you have experienced the darkness," reminding us that struggle is part of growth. For hope to exist fully, "there needs to be a necessary unknowing".

Pilgrimage goes beyond physical journeys to shrines such as Lourdes – our whole life is a pilgrimage. Drawing from St Augustine's, he said: "You have made us for yourself O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

The Jubilee Year offers a chance to "press pause" in a culture obsessed with busyness. David referred to a Canadian airport sculpture called "The Flying Traveller," symbolising today's constant hurry.

Hurry is the enemy of pilgrimage because it stops us from being present. Using the Good Samaritan parable, he pointed out both priest and Levite missed helping because they were "in too much of a hurry".

He urged everyone to ask: "What does your heart long for? Why are we doing this?" Comparing Jubilee and Sabbath rest to fallow land, stressing the need for recovery and regeneration that's often ignored today.

Hope is vital to counter utilitarianism, David said, warning against reducing education or life to mere tests or outcomes – tests answer "How?" not "Why?".

The Church's real enemy isn't atheism or secularism but losing joy and becoming small-minded. Pilgrimages renew joy by helping us recover purpose beyond busyness.

Drawing on Pope Francis' *Gaudete et Exsultate*, David advised not to make life about ourselves or become "the biggest player in your own movie." He quoted Richard Rohr: "It's not all about you." Pilgrimage reveals this truth deeply.

David concluded with vivid images of hope's power to transform anxiety into serenity and hesitation into conviction.

He invited everyone to reflect on their personal "Why?" and encouraged ongoing dialogue about sustaining hope in life and pilgrimage.



Bishop Terry and Mark Taylor pictured on either side of inspirational speaker David Wells – Photo by Peter Nestor

Fundraising joke book Faux Pas is no blunder

A vicar, a priest and a rabbit walk into a pub and the rabbit says, "I think I'm a typo."

We all like to groan when we hear a dad joke and we all enjoy a chuckle when we hear a funny story. Back in 1999, while working in Lourdes, Paul Griffiths was sharing funny stories from a bygone era about comical happenings among the brancardiers.

There were lots of laughs as he reminisced with tales of silly mistakes, blunders, bloomers or dropped clangers, and Paul said it would be good to put them in a book.

At the next pilgrimage, for the humble price of 10 francs, the first edition of *Faux Pas* was launched as I stood on a chair outside a busy

cafe known affectionately as "The Brickies".

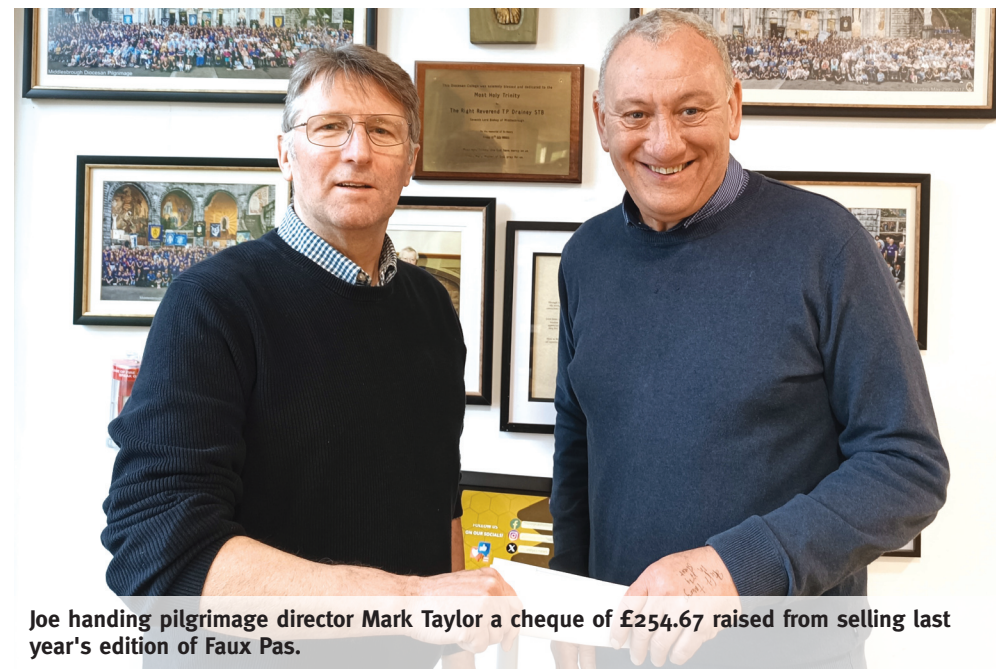
The book sold well, with all the money going to the Lourdes Sick fund.

By the way, Paul was asked to buy six cans of Sprite. When he got home, he realised he had picked 7 Up!

Over the following years, with a generous contribution of paper and printing from Paul at his firm IMH, there have been 13 volumes with each edition selling up to 130 copies of a 24-page booklet of jokes and funny stories produced.

Paul and I would like to thank everybody who has bought a copy over the years.

Joe Harrison



Joe handing pilgrimage director Mark Taylor a cheque of £254.67 raised from selling last year's edition of *Faux Pas*.

Book now for Lourdes pilgrimage

Bookings are being taken for our 2025 pilgrimage (Saturday May 24 to Friday May 30). Visit joewalshtours.co.uk, email info@joewalshtours.co.uk or call 0808 189 0468 for more details.

Application forms for supported pilgrims are available from Lourdes secretary Pat Ling by calling 01642 760105 or emailing lourdessecretary@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Could you be interested in joining our pilgrimage as a helper? Volunteer doctors, nurses, handmaids (women) and brancardiers (men) are always welcome! Executive director Mark Taylor will answer questions you may have. Email pilgrimagedirector@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Last chance for Lourdes training

Attendance at one of our formation sessions is mandatory for those who wish to work in Lourdes.

Helpers who did not attend our Formation Day must attend the Formation Evening at Trinity Catholic College, Middlesbrough, if they are planning to attend this year's pilgrimage.

The event is on Tuesday May 6, with

registration from 5.30pm and a prompt start at 6pm. A finger buffet will be provided and the session will end at around 10pm.

Book using the Eventbrite online registration system – no need to print tickets. Visit eventbrite.co.uk and type "Lourdes" and "Middlesbrough" into the two search boxes.

Dates for your diaries

Lourdes Race Night: Saturday May 10 at St Francis Social Club, Middlesbrough. Doors open at 7pm, first race 7.30pm. Tickets £5, including pie and peas. Race and horse sponsors needed. To book tickets, please email John Brown at john.brown160@ntlworld.com or text 07871 958412. Vegetarians are asked to let us know when they book to enable us to arrange catering.

Hull area Pre-Pilgrimage Mass: Saturday May 10 at 2pm, Sacred Heart Church, Hull.

York area Pre-pilgrimage Mass: Saturday May 17 at 3pm, English Martyrs, York.

Lourdes Pilgrimage: Saturday May 24 to Friday May 30.

NEWS

Prayer for Pope Francis

*Francis O God, faithful rewarder of souls,
grant that your departed servant Pope Francis,
whom you made successor of Peter
and shepherd of your Church,
may happily enjoy for ever in your presence in
heaven*

*the mysteries of your grace and compassion,
which he faithfully ministered on earth.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Eternal rest, grant unto him O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon him.
May he rest in peace. Amen.*

*May his soul and the souls of all the faithful
departed,
through the mercy of God rest in peace.
Amen.*

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