

May Christ support us all the day long, till the shadows lengthen, the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging and holy rest and peace at the last.



UCM News

The Newspaper of the Union of Catholic Mothers

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Spring 2022



Pope Francis to beatify 'smiling pope' John Paul I
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Relics of St Bernadette to visit Britain
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Cardinal Nichols: The virtues of faith, hope and charity in 2022

As a new year dawns, we look for hope. Surely this next year can't be as bad as the one to which we've said 'goodbye'?

There are two versions of hope worth pondering.

One is that hope comes when we can look forward to an uncertain future from the basis of a secure present. The unknown prospects of what is to come do not cause us too much anxiety because we are well equipped to face them – individually and as a society. This is the pragmatic version of the virtue of hope.

The second version is a reverse image of the first. Hope is the capacity to face an uncertain present on the basis of an utterly secure future. No matter what happens today or tomorrow, the long-term future is secure because it is promised by something beyond the ebbs and flows of 'outrageous fortune'. This is the Christian virtue of hope, founded on the promises of God made visible in Jesus, the Christ, whose coming we are celebrating.

These two versions stand on either edge of the stage of life, summoning us to decide where to put our trust. They clarify the fundamental options. The choice we make establishes the direction in which we look, the foundation on which we shape our lives.

But there is a great deal of 'middle ground', in which our daily activity takes place.

Prudence demands that we make provision now for future eventualities: insurance and saving schemes, health provision, all we do in preparation for 'the rainy day'.

Charity demands that we act without counting the cost, putting the present needs of others way ahead of our own

current security, acting in a self-sacrificing manner, even going as far as making a gift of our very life itself. This is the story of every true love, told and illustrated again and again, constantly transforming the drama of human living.

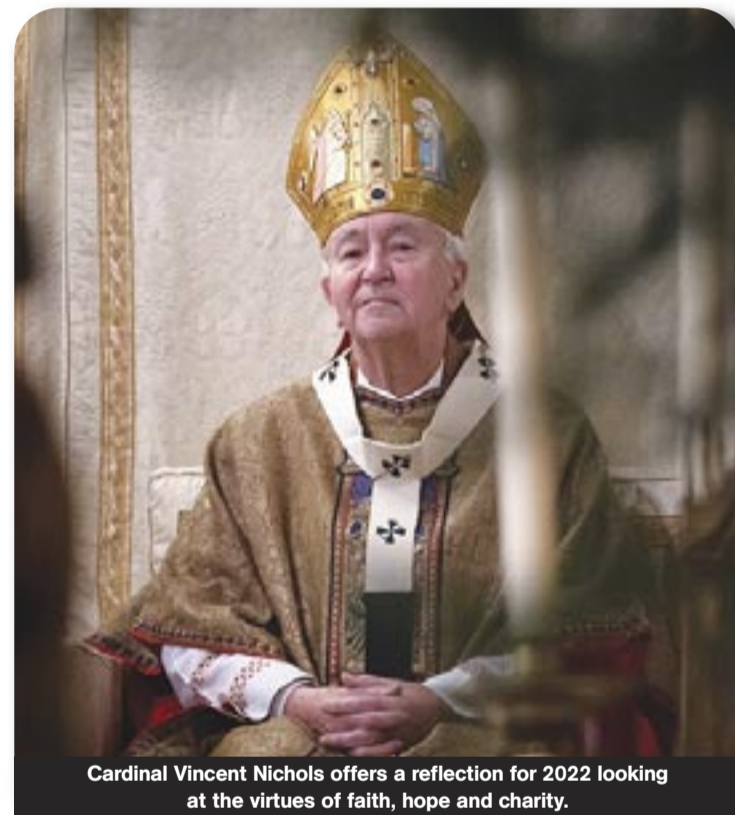
Such charity points to its deepest roots, in the promise of a secure and totally fulfilling future in the presence of God for ever. This is the hope given by the Christian faith and enacted in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. This hope puts a radically new perspective on today and the days to come, no matter what they bring. This future is secured. Now I can act, in any set of circumstance, with a freedom and generosity which flows forcefully from that promise. This is what saints do.

But we must remember that we constantly see the astonishing goodness, devotion, perseverance and practical wisdom of so many people, made even more evident during the hardships of this last year.

As we start a new year, we may well ponder why it is that so many people act in such generous ways. I firmly believe that it is the promptings of the Holy Spirit, that flow of love pouring out of God, which lies as the deepest source of this service. It goes beyond self-interest. It is seeking a future beyond the securities of the present, for they have been shaken. It is the privilege of faith to identify and highlight the well-spring of this goodness: the radical hope given in the promises of God.

It is also the source of our joy and the best reason for wishing each other a happy New Year.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols
President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales



Cardinal Vincent Nichols offers a reflection for 2022 looking at the virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Catholic Charity gave 'near-record' levels of aid in 2021

More than 330 projects across 76 countries were paid out in 2021 by the UK office of a leading Catholic charity - one of the best years on record and achieved in spite of the Covid pandemic. Projects supported by Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) included urgent medical support for Syrian Christian refugee families in Lebanon, subsistence aid for priests, Sisters and catechists ministering in Sudan's Nuba Mountains, and a Church-backed campaign providing emergency Covid-19 help for the poor in Delhi's slums.

Neville Kyrke-Smith, national director ACN (UK), said: "Given the immense challenges our brothers and sisters faced in so many countries last year, I am once again humbled by our benefactors' love in response to their suffering.

"That we were able to help with a near-record amount of aid in 2021 is a testimony to our benefactors' compassion for the Church in need." According to Mr Kyrke-Smith, the more than £9,000,000 in project support provided by the UK office of ACN - its third highest annual amount of aid - helped Christians face a number of tough challenges around the world. He said: "The struggles that the Church is facing as it continues to help the most vulnerable during the Covid-19 pandemic are nothing short of heroic - and we were delighted that part of our aid went to support priests, Sisters and lay people who were helping those affected by the coronavirus crisis, including £25,000 for emergency aid in Pakistan's Islamabad-Rawalpindi Diocese. "Other Covid-19 help featured a project in Delhi's slums which included daily food distribution, free hygiene kits, and the maintenance of two homes for the destitute - as well as medical help for both the

poor and priests and Sisters. Medical care for Church personnel is essential for a subcontinent where hundreds of thousands have fallen ill - and more than 400 priests and Sisters have died of coronavirus.

Mr Kyrke-Smith stressed that ACN (UK) had not forgotten long-term priorities, and was still helping Christians in the Middle East suffering from regional conflicts and targeted attacks from extremist groups. Syrian refugees who fled to Zahle, east Lebanon, received ongoing support including food packages, hygiene kits, rent assistance, fuel, and medical needs.

The UN does not provide these Christian families with any assistance - all international aid is channelled via the Muslim-majority unofficial camps where Christians are afraid to live. More than £85,000 went to provide help for 166 Church workers in Sudan - including priests, Sisters and lay Catechists - in seven parishes and a prayer centre in the Nuba Mountains. Indiscriminate bombing and attacks on civilians occurred in the Nuba Mountains region during the civil war.

Other support provided by the UK office during 2021 included support for seminarians - particularly in Africa, Eastern Europe and the subcontinent, reconstruction of churches across the globe, such as St Joseph's, Kragujevac, Serbia, and rent support for struggling families including in the Syrian capital Damascus, as well as Mass stipends to support poor priests.

John Newton

Source: ACN / Independent Catholic News 15th January 2022

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New National Media Officer Jean Lopez Lopez

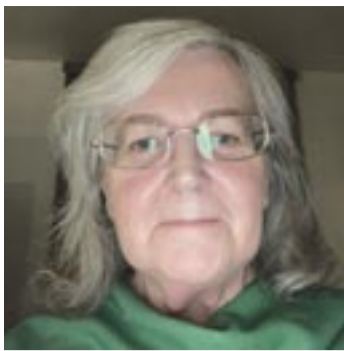
Introducing myself as your new National Media Officer Jean Lopez Lopez (no it's not a typo) from St Mary's Foundation Loughborough in the Nottingham Diocese. I have lived in Loughborough all my life, educated in St Mary's Primary and Our Lady's Convent.

From being a civil servant to playgroup supervisor and childminder I finished my working life as PA to Vice Principal in a local Comprehensive. For a few years I served St Mary's as a First Communion Catechist and now I am the church archivist and member of the parish history group.

My hobbies are sewing, embroidery, reading and history. Really looking forward to receiving all your posts and hearing what you are all up to. New email for submissions ucmnews@yahoo.com. Please bear in mind one or two rules; put

your Diocese on the post or send through the Diocesan Media Officer; photos should be very clear not too crowded with people and please name the people in the photo, any photo of children must be accompanied with written permission from parent/guardian.

Please, please produce your submission in word and attach to email or type directly into the email, NO PDF's. Also when you have finished reading the paper, please leave it somewhere, someone else might see and pick it up to read, it might bring you a new member.



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Hallam Diocese

61st ANNIVERSARY OF UCM IN HOLLINGTON

Arundel & Brighton Diocese

GOLDEN WEDDING

Marie and John WEST, Rossington Doncaster, Hallam Diocese

Veronica and Geoff ANDREWS, Holy Rood Foundation Hallam Diocese

100 YEAR BIRTHDAY

Jo ALLAN, Holy Name of Mary, Middlesbrough Diocese

90 YEAR BIRTHDAY

Bridget POWER, Kidderminster Foundation

Mabel DONNELLY, St Benedicts Foundation, Garforth, Leeds

80 YEAR BIRTHDAY

Nuala THOMPSON, Kidderminster Foundation

Vatican approves rite for institution of catechists

Jo Siedlecka Dec 14th, 2021
Source: Vatican News

On Monday, the Vatican issued a rite and guidelines for the institution of lay catechists.

In May this year, Pope Francis created the lay ministry of catechist with the release of the motu proprio Antiquum ministerium which emphasized the importance of the role of catechists in transmitting the Catholic faith in church communities.

In a letter to Bishops Conferences, Archbishop Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, explains that a catechist has a lay ministry distinct from the ordained priesthood, but that catechists, "by virtue of their Baptism, are called to be co-responsible in the local Church for the proclamation and transmission of the faith, carrying out this role in collaboration with the ordained ministers and under their guidance."

"The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity," Roche said, quoting from St Pope John Paul II's 1979 apostolic exhortation Catechesi tradendae.

Archbishop Roche said the way this role will be carried out may be different in each diocese, depending on the particular needs of the community. He said the tasks of a catechist in a mission territory will differ from those in an area where the Catholic faith has long been established.

Baptised adult Catholics who have received the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion and would like to be instituted in the ministry of catechist can present a written request to

their diocesan bishop, who decides who may be admitted as a candidate. The new ministry can be conferred by the bishop or by a priest delegated by him. The ceremony should take place during a Mass or celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.

Archbishop Roche stresses the "vocational aspect" of the ministry, and says diocesan bishops must carefully discern who should be admitted to this lay ministry.

The Liturgy Office also offered guidelines for who, should not be instituted as catechists. This list includes men who are preparing to receive Holy Orders as priests or deacons, men and women religious, catechists for ecclesial movements, and Catholic religion school teachers.

In Antiquum ministerium, Pope Francis said: "catechists are called first to be expert in the pastoral service of transmitting the faith as it develops through its different stages from the initial proclamation of the kerygma (Gospel proclamation) to the instruction that presents our new life in Christ and prepares for the sacraments of Christian initiation, and then to the ongoing formation that can allow each person to give an accounting of the hope within them."

"It is fitting that those called to the instituted ministry of Catechist be men and women of deep faith and human maturity, active participants in the life of the Christian community, capable of welcoming others, being generous and living a life of fraternal communion."

Catechists "should also receive suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth of the faith he said. "It is essential that they be faithful co-workers with priests and deacons, prepared to exercise their ministry wherever it may prove necessary, and motivated by true apostolic



enthusiasm."

LINKS

Read Archbishop Roche's full letter to Bishops Conferences here: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2021/12/13/0845/01773.html#en>

Rite of Institution of Catechists:

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2021/12/13/0845/01772.html>

Pope Francis' prayer video this month focuses on the ministry, mission and vocation of catechists, thanking them for their enthusiasm for transmitting the faith, and encouraging them to proclaim the Gospel with new languages and in new ways. See: www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJpxgGQywX8

SPUC a short history by Michael Murphy

SPUC is a group formed way back in 1967 after the passing of the first Abortion Act in parliament under the driving of David Steel MP.

However, the act still stands and has been amended since to become even more draconian, allowing, in effect, abortion up to birth. SPUC lobbies politicians, carries out an ongoing publicity campaign and offers practical help and options to those who may find themselves under pressure to have an abortion for whatever reason. SPUC is a voice for the unborn. We promote awareness of the humanity of the unborn child, and the reality of the unborn child as a sentient human being, someone who exists as a person and not just a bunch of cells as those who promote abortion would try to tell us. As Catholics, we too recognise the humanity and life of the unborn, particularly through the first two glorious mysteries of the Rosary, The Annunciation, and The Visitation.

SPUC relies on charitable donations to fund their work and a major part of their income is raised by asking for a White Flower appeal to be held in every Catholic Church on a yearly basis, usually in January. Of course, churches and parishioners have many other demands on their generosity and time, so often the appeal is held on another date. Please support this appeal generously if it is made at your particular church.

There are many sad reasons given to try to legitimise abortion, probably the most common that the child would be born to a life of want or deprivation etc. etc. But when we look at the life and death of Jesus, this looks like a very tenuous argument. Jesus lived a life of poverty, he was derided by many, he suffered a shameful and painful death, but he brought the most important message ever to the world. Perhaps people should think about the great things that these unborn children might bring to our world instead of casting them aside as mere encumbrances. However, it's not just Catholics or Christians who should be concerned with this problem. It's a moral problem, a problem for all mankind because the scale of abortion is truly staggering. There are now many organisations springing up in defence of unborn children who are specifically non-religious and they campaign vigorously for this cause.

The number of abortions taking place is absolutely staggering and puts in proportion the scale of the problem. I am keeping here to

round figures, and all the numbers are on the conservative side. There is no exaggeration. These statistics are for England and Wales.

There are around 580 abortions every single day

That means about 4 000 per week

About 210 000 per year.

And about 10 million since the abortion act first became law in 1967.

In fact, today one in four pregnancies ends in abortion.

Many people are frustrated or angry because they cannot get the medical treatment they urgently need because of the Covid pandemic. But the tide of abortions continues unabated and is a major but hidden drain on the NHS

We have to ask ourselves how we have arrived at this state of affairs where killing our own children has become the acceptable norm for many people. We at SPUC believe it's because it is the hidden problem, the embarrassing problem, the problem that it's just not right to talk about. And yet it sits there becoming the biggest moral problem in society today and the most hidden and secret one, a problem for everyone whether a Catholic or not. And so, SPUC keeps up its struggle to do something about this. But we can't do it alone.

So, what can you do to help? There are three things you can do.

1 Have faith. Pray that God will open people's eyes to this horror and give them the strength to speak out about it. We shouldn't be embarrassed to speak out about what we think is wrong, even if some of our friends or acquaintances don't like what we are saying or are uncomfortable with it.

2. Get involved in some practical way. You could become a member of SPUC and they will send you lots of information about what is going on and what you can do about it. Put 'SPUC' into your search engine and you will immediately be given the opportunity to join. They will then keep you up to date with all the news, and with actions you can take to help.

3. Lobby your MP. Email or write a letter. Or even better go and see your MP and make your views known. Most politics is decided these days by which lobby group can put the most pressure on the MPs. Make sure your voice is heard and that the laws are not made by some small but well organised group who shout the loudest.

Michael Murphy is a parishioner of St Mary of the Annunciation Loughborough Nottingham Diocese.



Submitting copy for next issue
The deadline for articles and photos
for the next edition of the UCM News is
15th May 2022

Please send copy to ucmnews@yahoo.com

Thank you

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FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Hello everyone,

This is a year bringing new beginnings. In May a new President will begin her term of office as you know Mrs Joan Hodge was elected at the October meeting.

In Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral at 2pm on 2nd April we are holding the Triennial Mass which occurs normally at the end of the President's 3 year term of office. I hope some of you will be able to attend. Your diocesan Chaplains are also invited.

Has any diocese used their study day package which was provided by the Vice Presidents?

Walsingham pilgrimage will be celebrated as our 75th anniversary. Remember to wear your yellow roses. The lead Diocese is Salford.

Foundations are up and running with plans being made for the rest of the year. Several new officers have been appointed in

Dioceses and foundations, a warm welcome to you.

This edition will be coming out during Lent so I would like to share this Easter prayer with you.

Lord, you have given us new life and renewed hope.

Help us to live as new people in pursuit of the Christian ideal.

Grant us wisdom to know what we must do,

The will to want to do it,

The courage to undertake it,

The perseverance to continue to do it and the strength to complete it.

Easter blessings to all members and your families.

God bless.

**Margaret McDonald,
National President**

What are the laity supposed to be?

Catholics make up around twenty-five percent of U.S.A. population (approx.9% in the UK). Imagine what would happen if, overnight, every Catholic commenced to live in radical detachment from the goods of the world.

Back in the 1950s, Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, began to articulate a vision that was largely ratified at the Second Vatican Council. She said that the prevailing notion of "commandments spirituality" for the laity and a "counsel's spirituality" for the clergy was dysfunctional. She was referencing the standard view of the period that the laity were called to a kind of least common denominator life of obeying the ten commandments—that is to say, avoiding the most fundamental violations of love and justice—whereas priests and religious were called to a heroic life of following the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Lay people were ordinary players, and the clergy were spiritual athletes.

To all of this, Dorothy Day said a rather emphatic no. Every baptized person, she insisted, was summoned to heroic sanctity—which is to say, the practice of both the commandments and the counsels.

As I say, Vatican II, in its doctrine on the universal call to holiness, endorsed this notion. Though the Council Fathers taught that there is a substantial difference between the manner in which clergy and laity incorporate poverty, chastity, and obedience, they clearly instructed all followers of Christ to seek real sanctity by incorporating those ideals.

So, what would this look like? Let us take poverty first. Though the laity are not, at least typically, summoned to the sort of radical poverty adopted by, say, a Trappist monk, they are indeed supposed to practice a real detachment from the goods of the world, precisely for the sake of their mission on behalf of the world. Unless a lay person has interior freedom from an addiction to wealth, power, pleasure, rank, honour, etc., she cannot follow the will of God as she ought. Only when the woman at the well put down her water jug, only when she stopped seeking to quench her thirst from the water of the world's pleasures, was she able to evangelize (John 4).

Similarly, only when a baptized person today liberates himself from an addiction to money, authority, or good feelings is he ready to become the saint God wants him to be. So, poverty, in the

sense of detachment, is essential to the holiness of the laity.

Chastity, the second of the evangelical counsels, is also crucial to lay spirituality. To be sure, though the way that the clergy and religious practice chastity—namely, as celibates—is unique to them, the virtue itself is just as applicable to the laity. For chastity simply means sexual uprightness or a rightly ordered sexuality. And this implies bringing one's sexual life under the aegis of love. As Thomas Aquinas taught, love is not a feeling, but rather an act of the will, more precisely, willing the good of the other. It is the ecstatic act by which we break free from the ego, whose gravitational pull wants to draw everything to itself. Like the drive to eat and to drink, sex is a passion related to life itself, which is why it is so powerful and thus so spiritually dangerous, so liable to draw everything and everybody under its control.

Notice how the Church's teaching that sex belongs within the context of marriage is meant to hold off this negative tendency. In saying that our sexuality should be subordinated to unity (the radical devotion to one's spouse) and procreation (the equally radical devotion to one's children), the Church is endeavouring to bring our sex lives completely under the umbrella of love. A disordered sexuality is a deeply destabilizing force within a person, which, in time, brings him off-kilter to love.

Finally, the laity are meant to practice obedience, again not in the manner of religious, but in a manner distinctive to the lay state. This is a willingness to follow, not the voice of one's own ego, but the higher voice of God, to listen (obedire in Latin) to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. I have spoken often before of Hans Urs von Balthasar's distinction between the ego-drama (written, produced, directed by, and starring oneself) and the theo-drama (written, produced, and directed by God). We might say that the entire point of the spiritual life is to break free of the former so as to embrace the latter. Most of us sinners, most of the time, are preoccupied with our own wealth, success, career plans, and personal pleasure. To obey God is to break out of those soul-killing preoccupations and hear the voice of the Shepherd.

Catholics make up around twenty-five percent of our country. Imagine what would happen if, overnight, every Catholic commenced to live in radical detachment from the goods of the world.


How dramatically politics, economics, and the culture would change for the better. Imagine what our country would be like if, today, every Catholic resolved to live chastely. We would make an enormous dent in the pornography business; human trafficking would be dramatically reduced; families would be significantly strengthened; abortions would appreciably decrease.

And picture what our country would be like if, right now, every Catholic decided to live in obedience to the voice of God. How much of the suffering caused by self-preoccupation would be diminished!

What I am describing in this article is, once again, part of the great Vatican II teaching on the universal call to holiness. Priests and bishops are meant, the Council Fathers taught, to teach and to sanctify the laity who, in turn, are to sanctify the secular order, bringing Christ into politics, finance, entertainment, business, teaching, journalism, etc. And they do so precisely by embracing the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

December 21, 2021 Bishop Robert Barron
The Dispatch 23
Catholic World Report

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A Daring Adventure: Annie's Story

This is the forward by Ellen Teague to a new book about a remarkable woman who died last year. Annie O'Connor left a rich life story and faith journey with unique insights.

I wish I had known Annie. Annie O'Connor was only 41 when she died suddenly of natural causes on 12 June 2020. That day her family found a small notebook on her desk with just one entry which said, 'Don't just live the length of life: live the breadth of it as well.'

'A Daring Adventure' tells Annie's story and is written by her mother Anne. It records a "life well lived", but more than that it provides inspiration for anyone trying to live a life of faith, guided by the teachings of Jesus. Annie was "genuinely religious" said a friend, and "her faith shone out like a beautiful light for everyone to see". Another reflected that, "she made life a bit better for everyone she met". Note "everyone". On top of her goodness, she had "a wicked sense of humour". Her personality had an appealing mix.

From teenage years in Manchester, Annie was involved with Charismatic Renewal and led a young people's prayer group in her parish. Attending the annual New Dawn Conference and involvement in the Sheffield University Chaplaincy when she moved to university were part of her commitment to evangelisation and building community. She was a Sheffield Samaritan for 15 years, with a colleague saying, "if I ever needed to call Samaritans, I would want Annie to be the person who picked up the phone". Her final job was with the Church Army, nurturing people in their faith and with a special

mission for the marginalised and vulnerable. She did so much more. In 2012 and 2013 Annie spent her summer holidays as a volunteer in Kenya and developed a huge commitment to the children at the orphanage where she worked. She founded a charity to support the children's home. "Of course," she said, "I received far more than I gave - in faith, love, energy, vision and personal growth."

Annie was always setting out on a new adventure. She loved long walks, whether Sheffield to Walsingham or the Camino to Santiago. For her, it was about journeying and being on pilgrimage, about slowing down and being in closer contact with the rhythms of nature. "Here's what I like about walking long distances" she reflected "it gives me time to think and it gives God space to reveal things to me that I might not notice otherwise." She felt the "stillness and stopping and resting with God" was "so important in our busy life." She once said, "my journeys brought me more to the idea that God's in here, in me, in us, in the world, rather than being something out there that we have to pray to."

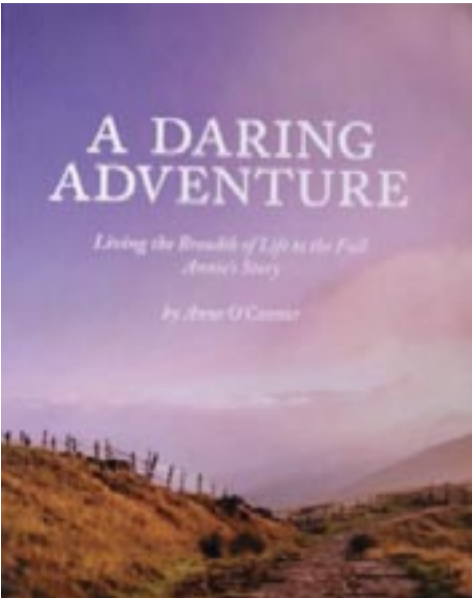
We learn from Annie, in her writings, the importance of prayer and acknowledging that our identity is in Christ, the mission to notice the needs of others, to be kind and gentle, and the value of friendship. She was an inspirational teacher, building relationships of respect. This book has done a great service to humanity in recording such a life.

After she died so many found a big "Annie-shaped hole" in their lives. She was described as a "great soul" and the photos in the book - where

Annie is always smiling - range from Annie on retreat, Annie in the middle of laughing children in Kenya, Annie giving out sunflower seeds at a stall in Sheffield and Annie playing with beloved nieces, nephews and godchildren. How they must miss her.

But this book will console all who are bereaved. Anne O'Connor is herself a great evangeliser and social justice worker with a special charisma to produce youth resources, and the whole family is a beacon of love and compassion. But even deep faith could hardly prepare them for that June day when the terrible news changed their lives forever. The story of how the family channelled their loss into an opportunity to journey forward with hope is truly inspiring. Her father Calvin, for example, took her place as a trustee for the Kenya project. We hear words of love from her family at her outdoor restricted 2020 funeral, but hundreds joined in simultaneously using the funeral booklet - among them Annie's friends and work colleagues and Anne's colleagues in the National Justice and Peace Network. "Our hearts ache with you" said one.

What has Annie's death taught us? To accept the impermanent nature of our earthly life and the infinite nature of God's love; to put the needs of others before our own; to cheerfully give the gift of our time; to listen without judgement; to offer praise and encouragement; to have a smile for everyone we encounter; to retain a sense of fun; to be thankful; to take nothing for granted; to put our trust in God; to live life to the full. At the end of one of her pilgrimage blogs she quoted Helen Keller: 'Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing at all.'



This book offers a life-affirming read. This book was produced with the support of Annie's friends at Church Army, a community with a special mission for the marginalised and vulnerable. There is no charge for the book but donations can be made to Church Army to support their work. Church Army at: www.churcharmy.org/donate If you would like a copy please send your full postal address to: adaringadventure@hotmail.com
Ellen Teague / Independent Catholic News
4th January 2022

A pithy guide to being critical and diligent in reading the news

December 29, 2021 John Tuttle The Dispatch 3Print

In November 2021, Pope Francis honoured reporters Phillip Puellella and Valentina Alazraki, further addressing the importance of journalism and its potential pitfalls. “The risk, as you well know,” said the Pontiff, “is to be overwhelmed by the news instead of being able to make sense of it.”

Those words speak of a stark reality staring the general public in the face and which is so common that we often hardly think of it. We stand aghast and agog at countless scandals, disputes, and power grabs. It's the result of an overabundance of noise in our society, to which the mass media contribute significantly. The biased presentation of events and the very subject matter that tends to get coverage in the news make for an unsettling sensory landscape.

In his new book, titled Reading the News without Losing Your Faith, Christopher R. Altieri (also a contributing editor to Catholic World Report), details some of these problems and suggests possible remedies to cultivate open dialogue, objective journalism, and a better reader-reporter relationship.

While compact and relatively short, Reading the News tackles a broad area of questions relating to today's news media. Altieri pre-emptively discusses the topic by noting that many of the things covered nowadays include bad things. Modernity is faced with minute-by-minute reportage of evils occurring in the world at large. That, truth be told, is a reality that can't be avoided though one which, as the author later explains, may merit abstinence from – for sanity's sake.

Stepping back from the inundation of digital media coverage can be helpful on a number of spiritual and psychological levels. Either via the bias through which the news is fed to us or because of the newsworthy events themselves, the wild fruits of underhanded journalism have the capacity to insight anger, fear, distrust, and confusion. Inevitably, these lead us away from the truth.

Certainly, in the U.S. for instance, the journalistic influence can be traced to an increasingly polarized atmosphere. And this stringent divide is not only noticeable in politics but in Catholicism as well. “The polarisation of discourse in the Church,” writes Altieri, “has grown sharper and more intense.”

Even amid such troubling times, Altieri reminds his readers that hope is not stamped out. Living “in the world while not being of it requires that we be able to see clearly how bad things are, without losing sight of the good.” This is a message propounded by numerous saints: It's simply unhealthy to focus on all the bad things and neglect the good.

With a splendid dash of common sense to top off his confrontation with this issue, Altieri presents a simple “dietology” for media consumption. Fasting, he suggests, would be optimal if doable. Better yet is cultivating a diet unique to one's realistic needs. Otherwise, if no curbs are put in place, unchecked media exposure can lead to anxiety or further mental health crises down the line. We can quickly “be overwhelmed”, just as the Pope said.

This isn't to say, however, that one's media diet should consist of one-sided media. That would be like constricting one's nutritional diet to only red meat or just grains and nothing more. Variety, in this sense, Altieri takes to be virtuous. Whereas bias blinders are dangerous, its best, that none of us be quick to blame the people on the other side of the issue – whatever it is – or be too willing to give ‘our’ guys – whoever they are – a pass. The temptation to do both is always there, and it will always prove fatal to reform efforts.

This call-to-action suggests that everyone, whether reporter or casual news reader, ought to approach a story critically either in the telling of it or in the reading/watching of it. As Altieri explains, being open to the ideas of others, and having a willingness to subject one's own preconceptions to ridicule, is the only real way of coming to the truth, of seeing beyond the haze of voices and noises all vying for attention.

As far as a journalist is concerned, this rule manifests itself in a professional impartiality, meaning he should deliberately avoid a biased twist in relating the words and actions of others to the public. This aspect of the journalistic function is in some sense similar to Marian intercession.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is, like her Son, a servant with a message to share. At the same time, her extraordinary humility tempers how she presents that message. At the wedding feast at Cana, Mary doesn't per se force faith upon those she intercedes for. She simply directs their attention



(Image: Egor Vikhrev/Unsplash.com)

to Jesus, certainly a newsworthy figure!

Mary represents someone. She has the Word of Another entrusted to her; she shares with us the Word of God made flesh. Yes, in this instance, Mary literally tells those who are in need, “Do whatever he [Jesus] tells you” (John 2:5). But at the end of the day, those who listen to her, and to the Word of God, decide whether to abandon Christ or submit to an act of faith. It is this relationship between Jesus and others that leads us to Hail Mary as our “Mediatrix.”

Likewise, the journalistic role is one of mediation, one in which the truth should be highlighted and delivered to the public. Journalists then are servants also. To strive for as little bias as possible requires the virtue of humility and dedication to the truth. And, like Mary, we present the words of others while simultaneously permitting our audience to decide for themselves what is right or wrong in the actions we report on.

In other words, the reader should get to decide which party within the story merits applause or which merits discredit. If a story is peddling a narrative or is intertwined with an editorial slant, then the story is not being honest with the public; it's discolouring what happened to fit it within various ideological parameters.

So journalists, like anyone, might do well to look to the Blessed Virgin Mary as intercessor and exemplar. St. John the Evangelist did so, and he was one of the most prolific writers of the New Testament. Journalists would greatly profit by taking the words of Isaiah to heart: “Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees and the writers who keep writing oppression...” (Isa 10:1). Words, after all, do carry weight.

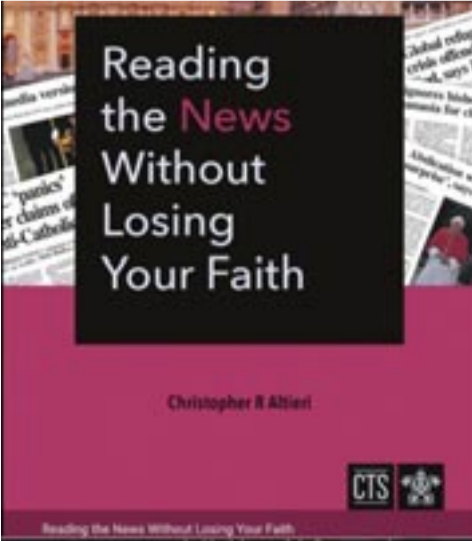
Altieri's booklet outlines many other crucial topics relating to the modern media field such as the relationship between the Church and the media and how that relationship has evolved, citing

instances such as the sexual abuse crisis and the frequent mistranslation or out-of-context usage of Pope Francis' words. He also provides a rough outline of the true journalistic standards of storytelling as well as a few pointers for discerning stories that the average layperson comes across, particularly ones relevant to Catholics that appear in secular outlets.

Reading the News without Losing Your Faith is a superb reader's primer and a journalist's reminder on how to be critical and diligent in approaching the news.

(Note: All Scripture quotes are taken from the English Standard Version, Catholic Edition of the Bible.)

Reading the News without Losing Your Faith by Christopher R. Altieri
Catholic Truth Society, 2021
Paperback, 88 pages.



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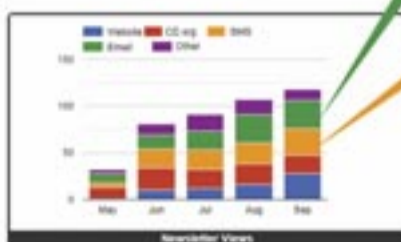
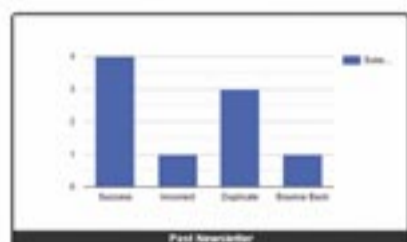
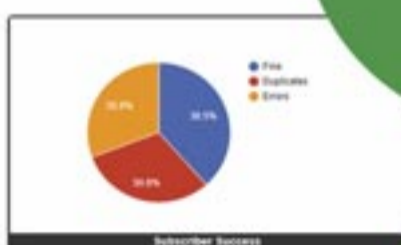
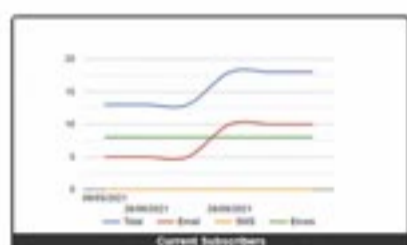
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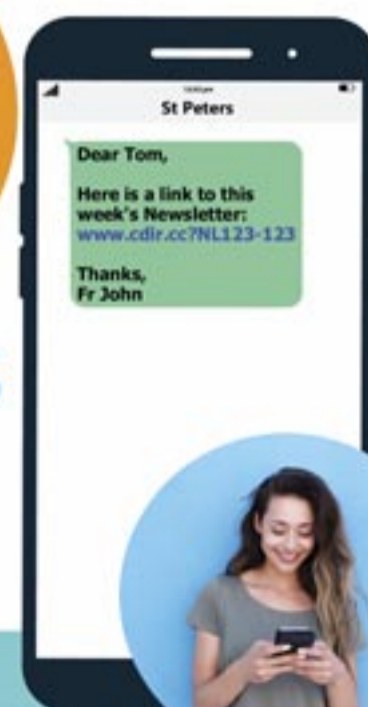
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Paris archdiocese to present plans for Notre-Dame’s interior amid outcry

By CNA Staff

November 29, 2021 Catholic News Agency The Dispatch 13Print

The Catholic Archdiocese of Paris will present its plans for the restoration of Notre-Dame Cathedral’s interior next week after it dismissed criticism that its proposals would turn the site into “a kind of theme park.”

Officials will submit their proposals to France’s National Heritage and Architecture Commission on Dec. 9 amid a new outcry over the restoration of the cathedral badly damaged by fire in 2019, reported AFP.

The news agency said that the archdiocese denied foreign media reports that the celebrated French Gothic cathedral, built between 1163 and 1345, risked being transformed into a theme park or filled with jarring contemporary art.

The Daily Telegraph, a British newspaper, reported on Nov. 26 that critics feared the changes would turn the building into a “politically correct

Disneyland.” It said that “confessional boxes, altars, and classical sculptures will be replaced with modern art murals, and new sound and light effects to create ‘emotional spaces.’”

“There will be themed chapels on a ‘discovery trail,’ with an emphasis on Africa and Asia, while quotes from the Bible will be projected onto chapel walls in various languages, including Mandarin,” it added.

Maurice Culot, an architect who has seen the plans, told the newspaper: “It’s as if Disney were entering Notre-Dame.”

“What they are proposing to do to Notre-Dame would never be done to Westminster Abbey or St. Peter’s in Rome. It’s a kind of theme park and very childish and trivial given the grandeur of the place,” he commented.

In an interview with AFP, Father Gilles Drouin, the priest overseeing the interior restoration, appeared to confirm the proposals but argued that they did not amount to a radical change.

He explained that the restoration sought to

preserve the cathedral as a place of worship, but also to welcome and educate visitors “who are not always from a Christian culture.”

He said that side chapels would feature “portraits from the 16th and 18th century that will be in dialogue with modern art objects.”

“The cathedral has always been open to art from the contemporary period, right up to the large golden cross by sculptor Marc Couturier installed by [the then archbishop of Paris] Cardinal Lustiger in 1994,” he said.

The French government is overseeing the cathedral’s structural restoration and conservation, but the cathedral authorities are responsible for its interior renewal.

The plans must ultimately be approved by France’s Ministry of Culture. Culture Minister Roselyne Bachelot has previously suggested that the restored cathedral should look “identical” to before the fire.

This is not the first time that restoration plans have generated controversy. Critics denounced a proposal leaked in December 2020 to replace



Repair scaffolding on Notre-Dame de Paris, November 2019. (Image: Vicente Sargues/Shutterstock)

architect Viollet-le-Duc’s historic stained-glass windows with colourful contemporary designs in the chapels around the nave.

A spokeswoman for the archdiocese told the National Catholic Register at the time that “it goes without saying that the archbishop has never had any intention to turn the cathedral into an airport or a parking lot.”

The cathedral will reportedly reopen for worship with a Te Deum on April 16, 2024, five years after the blaze. Later that year, Paris will host the Summer Olympics.

Relics of St Bernadette to visit Britain



The relics of St Bernadette are to tour the dioceses of England, Scotland and Wales in autumn 2022, the Bishops Conference announced at a press conference on Friday, following their Plenary Assembly in Leeds.

Canon Christopher Thomas, general secretary of the conference, said the visit “is not only something that will remind us of the importance of pilgrimage in our lives and the importance of the place of Lourdes in the life of many Catholics and dioceses in this country, but will remind us of the centrality of the lives of the saints because this always points us to that greater degree of virtue that we are called to in our living of the Catholic faith.”

The tour of the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux here in 2009 attracted nearly half a million visitors. Bernadette was a visionary and later a nun. Born in 1844, Bernadette was the eldest of six children born to Francois Soubirous, a miller, and his wife Louise. The family lived in great poverty. When they couldn’t

afford to pay the rent, after 1857 the family were forced to live in one room of an old prison.

Throughout her childhood Bernadette suffered many illnesses, including cholera. She had asthma all her life. In 1858, when she was just 14, she began to experience a series of visions of Our Lady in a cave near a rubbish dump near the town at a place called Massabielle.

The Virgin described herself as ‘The Immaculate Conception’ - a term which meant nothing to Bernadette. The Lady ordered the building of a church and told Bernadette to dig in the ground for water. Bernadette did as she was told and found the spring from which 27,000 gallons of water a week pours to this day. The message of the visions was mainly concerned with the need for penance and prayer. Initially the Church was very sceptical about Bernadette’s story. But after many interrogations the bishops began to believe her.

For several years Bernadette stayed in Lourdes

and suffered as crowds followed her wherever she went. In 1866 she joined the Sisters of Charity in Nevers. From that point she was completely cut off from Lourdes and did not see the consecration of the basilica built over the place where she had seen Our Lady. The shrine grew to become the centre of the largest pilgrimage movement in Europe.

During her 13 years with the Sisters, Bernadette worked in the infirmary, as an assistant nurse, then nurse in charge and sacristan. She was very often ill there herself, suffering with tuberculosis. St Bernadette died in 1879. She was canonised in 1933, not because of her visions, but because of her total commitment, simplicity, integrity and trust.

Watch the 1943 classic film The Song of Bernadette, here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLKFAKlfn-w Author: - Jo Siedlecka Source: - Independent Catholic News 22nd November 2021

Sally Axworthy MBE Ambassador to the Holy See 2016-2021

An enlightening and interesting evening held in November in the Bedingfield room at the Bar Convent, York, the evening having been arranged by the UCM, NBCW, Newman Association and hosted by the Bar Convent. The introduction of Sally Axworthy M.B.E. by Sarah Sheils, Study Day Officer of the UCM.

Sally Axworthy, former ambassador to the Holy See shared her experiences of her five years in Rome Sally served in the role from 2016-2021_ was responsible for the relationship between the UK and the Vatican and hosted British Ministers and dignitaries when they visited Rome, sometimes taking them to meet the Pope

Sally Axworthy was only the third women ambassador to the Holy See, the British Legation only having acquired full Embassy status in 1982. She had met and had made many friends among the women working in Rome, appreciating how

much work the women were involved in many parts of the world, it is the women of the Church who work to campaign against slavery, sexual exploitation and trafficking of women and girls.

She became very interested in the Congregation of Jesus (CJs) having met them at their Mother House in Rome. Each year she arranged a garden party on behalf of the Queen. The Community of Jesus had lent her their gardens as a venue. This had given her a great interest in Mary Ward, founder of the Order, who was a pioneering woman who had made her way to Rome in the seventeenth century, travelling on foot, to try to get recognition for her order of nuns from the Pope.

In 2019 the Canonisation of St. John Henry Newman was a highlight of her tenure with guests including the Prince of Wales. He had made a memorable speech about Newman’s role in reconciling Anglicans and Catholics in Britain.

World religious leaders were invited to Rome to discuss climate change and their involvement prior to Cop26.

Sally explained that she wore diplomatic uniform, a form of court dress.

She showed many fascinating slides of her time in Rome and described her pilgrimage walking part of the way of St. Francis in northern Italy with her two dogs and one of her daughters on their way home. Prior to her return to the UK Sally decided to visit all the Station or earliest churches in Rome each day during Lent, as the Pope does, followed by visits to Assisi, and the Franciscan Monasteries.

This was followed by a Question-and-Answer Session, which proved very interesting. Vote of thanks given by Judith Smeaton of the Newman Association.

Having become very interested in the work of the CJs’ in Rome, Sally was delighted to spend some time with the community here at the Bar Convent in York spending the previous evening in their B&B accommodation and the day enjoying their hospitality and visiting the Chapel and Museum with the community prior to the evening meeting.

Kath Stubbs and Sarah Sheils



Sr.Frances Orchard, Judith Smeaton, Sally Axworthy MBE Margaret Clark, Sarah Sheils, Sr. Anne Stafford

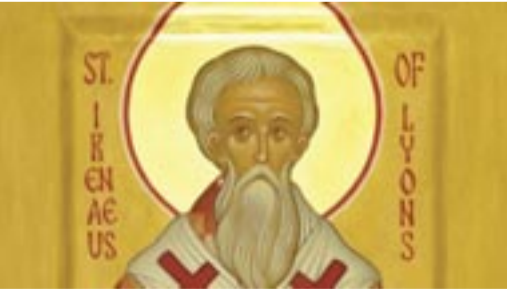
Saint Irenaeus to become Doctor of the Church

Source Vatican News

Pope Francis on Thursday, 20 January, received in audience Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and authorized him, in accordance with the opinion of the Plenary Session of the Cardinals and Bishops who are members of the same Dicastery, to confer the title of Doctor of the Universal Church on Saint Irenaeus.

The Pope had already announced this intention during an audience with members of the St. Irenaeus Orthodox-Catholic Joint Working Group in the Vatican last October.

On that occasion, he described Saint Irenaeus, (who, though born in Smyrna, in what is now Turkey, between years 130 – 140 AD, later moved to France where he served as Bishop of Lyons) as “a great spiritual and theological bridge between Eastern and Western Christians.”



Pope Francis to beatify ‘smiling pope’ John Paul I in September 2022

Vatican City, Dec 23, 2021 / 09:53 am (CNA).

Vatican News, the website overseen by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communication, said on Dec. 23 that the pope who reigned for only 33 days would be beatified in St. Peter’s Basilica.

It added that the Congregation for the Causes of Saints shared the ceremony’s date with Cardinal Beniamino Stella, postulator of the cause of canonization, and Bishop Renato Marangoni of Belluno-Feltre, the Italian diocese where the cause opened on Nov. 23, 2003, and closed on Nov. 9, 2017, with the proclamation of John Paul I’s heroic virtues.

Pope Francis recognized a miracle obtained through the intercession of his papal predecessor in October. John Paul I was elected pope on Aug. 26, 1978, following the death of Paul VI. A priority of his short pontificate was carrying forward the work of the Second Vatican Council. He died

unexpectedly on Sept. 28, 1978, at the age of 65, and was succeeded by Pope John Paul II. Even before he was elected pope, Albino Luciani was known for his humility, his emphasis on spiritual poverty, and his dedication to teaching the faith in an understandable manner.

The miracle attributed to John Paul I’s intercession is the 2011 healing of a girl in the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires, Argentina, from a severe form of encephalopathy, a disease affecting the brain.

Last year, Pope Francis instituted a Vatican foundation to promote the thought and teachings of John Paul I.

In an April 2020 article in L’Osservatore Romano, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin wrote that “Pope John Paul I was and remains a reference point in the history of the universal Church, the importance of which — as St. John Paul II pointed out — is inversely proportional to the

duration of his very short pontificate.”

In 2008, on the 30th anniversary of John Paul I’s death, Benedict XVI reflected on St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, in which the apostle writes: “Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.”

Benedict said that the biblical text brought to mind John Paul I, who chose the same episcopal motto as St. Charles Borromeo: Humilitas. John Paul I’s simplicity, according to Benedict, “was a means of solid and fruitful instruction, which, thanks to the gift of an excellent memory and vast culture, was enriched by numerous citations of Church and secular authors.”

Writing in Avvenire, the official newspaper of the Italian bishops’ conference, on Dec. 23, vice postulator Stefania Falasca noted that the causes of six of the nine 20th-century popes have opened. Four of them have concluded in canonization: those



of Pius X, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II. The cause of Pope Pius XII was opened on Nov. 18, 1965, by Paul VI during the last session of the Second Vatican Council. Benedict XVI declared the wartime pope Venerable on Dec. 19, 2009. Source: - Catholic World Report 24th December 2021

Pope’s prayer intentions for 2022

The Vatican published the monthly prayer intentions of the Holy Father for the year 2022.

By Vatican News staff writer

The prayer intentions are entrusted to the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network, which Pope Francis officially established as a pontifical work on 17 November 2020.

The Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network is a pontifical work with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action, in the face of the challenges confronting humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are addressed in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. Its mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus: a mission of compassion for the world.

Formerly known as the Apostleship of Prayer, the network was born as a Jesuit initiative in 1844 in a house of formation for young Jesuits in Vals, in the south of France. Fr. Francis Xavier Gautrelet sj, the spiritual director of the young men, suggested to them a way of being apostles and missionaries in their daily lives by offering to God everything they were doing and striving to be available to Jesus in order to carry out their everyday duties well.

The fervour of the spiritual initiative spread far and wide in the Catholic Church and in 1890, Pope Leo XIII entrusted his monthly prayer intentions to the Apostleship of Prayer, assigning the job of running the network to the Jesuits. In 1915, its youth section, the Eucharistic Crusade, was born, today known as the Eucharistic Youth Movement.

In 2016, Pope Francis renamed the Apostleship of Prayer as the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network. He raised it to the status of a pontifical work in 2018 and made it a Vatican Foundation with a canonical and juridical status in 2020. The Network, with its headquarters in Vatican City Jesuits, continues to be led by the Jesuits.

In recent years, the Network has been popularizing the Pope’s monthly prayer intentions through its Video of the Pope, across its presence in 98 countries with more than 35 million Catholic members.

Please find the prayer intentions of the Holy Father for 2022:

JANUARY
For true human fraternity

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

FEBRUARY
For religious sisters and consecrated women

We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women; thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.

MARCH
For a Christian response to bioethical challenges

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

APRIL
For health care workers

We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

MAY
For faith-filled young people

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary’s life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.

JUNE
For families

We pray for Christian families around the world; may they embody and experience unconditional love and advance in holiness in their daily lives.

JULY
For the elderly

We pray for the elderly, who represent the roots and memory of a people; may their experience and wisdom help young people to look towards the future with hope and responsibility.

AUGUST
For small businesses

We pray for small and medium sized businesses; in the midst of economic and social crisis, may they find ways to continue operating, and serving their communities.

SEPTEMBER
For the abolition of the death penalty

We pray that the death penalty, which attacks the dignity of the human person, may be legally abolished in every country.

OCTOBER
For a Church open to everyone

We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality.

NOVEMBER
For children who suffer

We pray for children who are suffering, especially

those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.

DECEMBER
For volunteer not-for-profit organisations

We pray that volunteer non-profit organisations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

‘Sharing the Wisdom of Time’

Pope Francis’ book ‘Sharing the Wisdom of Time’ has been used as a base for a Netflix limited series

‘Stories of a Generation with Pope Francis’
Made by young people (under 30) who interview and film the older generation (over 70).



MIDDLESBROUGH

50th Anniversary membership

Diane MacDermott (Vice President of St. Mary's UCM Filey) has served the communities of Scarborough and Filey for 50years. She is dedicated to serving families/children and members of the community who are in need and leads the circle of prayer. She is as an enthusiastic a member of the UCM as ever and her commitment never wavers. We are proud that she is a member of St. Mary's UCM

Margaret Crompton



Jo Allan's 100th Birthday

It was a very special day of celebration for Jo Allan of the Holy Name of Mary UCM as she became 100 in November 2021. Unfortunately, Jo's planned party with her 101 offspring was cancelled due to Covid concerns, but a gazebo was erected in her garden and the celebrations began. Jo was delighted to receive her telegram from the Queen, but was surprised by a visit from the Mayor of Middlesbrough, Andy Preston to present her with a certificate and brooch officially recognising her as an Aycliffe Angel and recognising her war work at the munitions factory at Aycliffe. He said "I'm sure the incredible work Jo and others did saved many lives."



Shoe Box Appeal



Once again through the kindness and generosity of the parishioners of St. Aelred's York the shoe boxes have been building up. The boxes are part of the Rotary Shoebox National Scheme which St. Aelred's have been supporting for several years. The boxes are filled with gifts for Babies, Children, Teenagers and Household's for the disadvantaged people in Eastern Europe. Earlier in the year it had been decided that one of the UCM meetings should be an evening of filling boxes with individual gifts donated by some parishioners over the previous weeks. Our coordinator Kath Duckworth UCM member reported today that 173 boxes have been returned already, exceeding last year's number, these are ready to be collected and hopefully by the time they are collected there may be a few more. Last year these boxes went to House for the Poor and Aged people and the Krasnosika orphanage for girls in Odessa, Oblast Ukraine.

Presentation of 60 years Membership of the UCM

In November the retiring President of the Middlesbrough Diocese, Jean Rigg, visited a Nursing Home in Redcar to visit a member Norma Beckett. Norma has continued as an independent member for many years since the foundation in Redcar closed and has always looked forward to receiving her UCM News. Many years ago, Norma was diocesan secretary of the UCM. Jean had the pleasure of presenting Norma with her 60 years membership of the UCM.



Norma Beckett and Jean Rigg

Middlesbrough Diocesan AGM 2021

The Middlesbrough Diocese Union of Catholic Mothers held their long-delayed AGM on Saturday 25th September at St. Aelred's York. Members having travelled from around the Diocese for Mass celebrated by Fr. Bill Serplus Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, followed by Lunch and Meeting. The retiring President, Jean Rigg, Middlesbrough who having remained extra time in office because of Covid was thanked by all who were present. During the meeting St Aelred's Foundation celebrated their 60th Anniversary which should have been earlier in the year. After two members Kath Duckworth and Kath Stubbs had been presented with their 50yrs Membership Certificates they joined the retiring President Jean Rigg to cut the special celebration cake. The reports were given by the various other officers, Finance, Barbara Cookson, Retiring Secretary Sarah Sheils, Welfare, Study Days and Media officers prior to the election of the new officers.

New President. Barbara Cookson. St. Aelred's,
New Secretary. Rose Cartledge St. Aelred's
New Treasurer. Sheila Taylor. Filey.
New Study Day Officer Sarah Sheils St. Aelred's.
The other Officers were to remain in place.
Alongside the meeting a Craft stall had been arranged to raise funds for the Cafod project which the UCM and NBCW are supporting to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Family Fast Day. The project by supporting the women in South of Lebanon. Allows the vulnerable and refugee women to access informal skills, training opportunities, vocational courses and informal and awareness sessions hopefully allowing them to start businesses. Their important role being in the provision of health care and social work.



Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow

Not being possible since prior the COVID restrictions St. Aelred's Foundation York found it wonderful to be able to visit the Shrine of St. Margaret Clitherow for an evening Mass which previously had been a regular occasion in their programme. Today was our first opportunity and we had Mass Celebrated by our Parish Priest, Fr. Bill Serplus. This being followed by a short walk from the Shambles for a Fish & Chip supper at Drakes restaurant.



ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

Hollington Foundation no 77
61st anniversary

On 12th October 21 Hollington Foundation no 77 celebrated their 61st anniversary with a Mass where they presented an engraved Chalice to the Parish.
Following Mass they had a party in the hall where they also celebrated one of their members Eileen's 90th Birthday.
Arundel & Brighton Diocesan media officer



St Peter's RC Church, Hove



The enrolments took place on Friday 26th November 2021 and Tuesday 7th December 2021. At the mass other UCM members attended showing their support and pleasure for the new recruits. Afterwards, coffee and cake was served and a lovely time was had by all.
New members' names: Trish Colley, Melitsa Bowen and Anna Lin.
Priests: Fr. Alexander Lucie-Smith and Fr. Stipica Lesic

BIRMINGHAM

Two of our
Ladies
celebrate
Big Birthdays

My name is Miriam Cunliffe and I am President of Kidderminster Foundation. At our most recent meeting on Monday 17th January two of our ladies celebrated big birthdays.
Bridget Power turned 90 actually on the day, she is an active member of the parish, involved in groups and goes to keep fit, bakes and is still driving. She's an inspiration to us all. Nuala Thompson also celebrated a big birthday, she turned 80 on boxing day. She is also an active member of the parish. This was our first meeting back since Christmas.
So we had a double celebration.



Bridget Power and Nuala Thompson

LEEDS

Helping residents through the dark
days of the pandemic

A community Rally with the purpose of helping residents through the dark days of the pandemic was held in Garforth Welfare Hall. Susan Oldroyd and Janet Daniels from St Benedict's Foundation took the opportunity to promote UCM with a stall at the event.

SOUTHWARK

New Media Officer for Sheppey Foundation



My name is Joanne Pavitt and I am the President of the Sheppey Foundation and have recently been appointed Media Officer for the Diocese of Southwark.
I have attached some photographs of our UCM Sheppey Foundation Christmas meal held on December 7th 2021 which I hope you will include in the next issue of the UCM News. Our guest of honour was our lovely parish priest Father Frank Moran pictured with myself and our Diocesan President Sharon Bishop in the red jacket.



HALLAM

81st Anniversary of the Union of Catholic Mothers in Holyrood

In the Holyrood Parish of Barnsley on 8th December 2021, the Mothers celebrated the 81st Anniversary of the Union of Catholic Mothers in Holyrood.
An iced cake and tea were enjoyed in the parish hall, after such a long break. Centre stage was their eldest member Mrs. May Bird 97 years.
Dorothy Anderson
(Media Officer for the Diocese of Hallam)





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Archbishops warn of 'concerted effort' to drive Christians from Holy Land

Source: Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury writes on his Facebook page today: This Christmas, let's not romanticise the Holy Land. Instead let's hear the cry of Palestinian Christians who are facing a historic tragedy unfolding in real time. Christians have been a continuous presence in the Holy Land for 2,000 years. Today, they face attempts by fringe, radical groups to drive them away. The Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem and I make this urgent appeal in today's Sunday Times:

Christmas is a time when we think about the land of the Bible. We hear readings and sing carols that name Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem. These are places that are familiar to billions of Christians, whether they have visited them or not. But we should not romanticise them - and especially not this Christmas.

Last week, leaders of churches in Jerusalem raised an unprecedented and urgent alarm call. In a joint statement, they said Christians throughout the Holy Land have become the target of frequent and sustained attacks by fringe radical groups.

In a joint statement they described "countless incidents" of physical and verbal assaults against priests and other clergy, and attacks on Christian churches. They spoke of holy sites regularly vandalized and desecrated, and ongoing intimidation of local Christians as they go about their worship and daily lives.

The Romanian Orthodox monastery in Jerusalem was vandalized during Lent in March this year, the fourth attack on that holy place in a single month. During Advent last December, someone lit a fire in the Church of All Nations in the Garden of Gethsamene, the place where Jesus prayed the night before he was crucified. Usually a place of pilgrimage for Christians from around the world, it's thought the vandal took advantage of the lack of visitors due to the pandemic.

These tactics are being used by such radical groups "in a systematic attempt to drive the Christian community out of Jerusalem and other parts of the Holy Land", the Jerusalem church leaders said in their statement.

It is for this reason that when you speak with Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem today you will often hear this cry: "In fifteen years' time, there'll be none of us left!"

This crisis takes place against a century-long decline in the Christian population in the Holy Land. In 1922, at the end of the Ottoman Era, Christians in the Holy Land were estimated to number 73,000; about

10% of the population. In 2019, Christians constituted less than 2% of the population of the Holy Land: a massive drop in just 100 years.

In Israel, there is some increase in the overall numbers of Christians. The imminent reopening of St Peter's Anglican Church in Jaffa, which has been closed for over 70 years, is encouraging.

But in East Jerusalem, the central place for pilgrimage and the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre - where Christ is believed to have been crucified - there is steady decline. Church leaders believe that there are now fewer than 2,000 Christians left in the Old City of Jerusalem.

This is the land that 2.5 billion Christians worldwide recognise as the birthplace of the church. Yet Christians, who have been a continuous presence there for over 2,000 years, are too often obscured and even forgotten beneath the competing perceptions of the geopolitics of the Middle East. The Christian presence punches above the weight of its numbers.

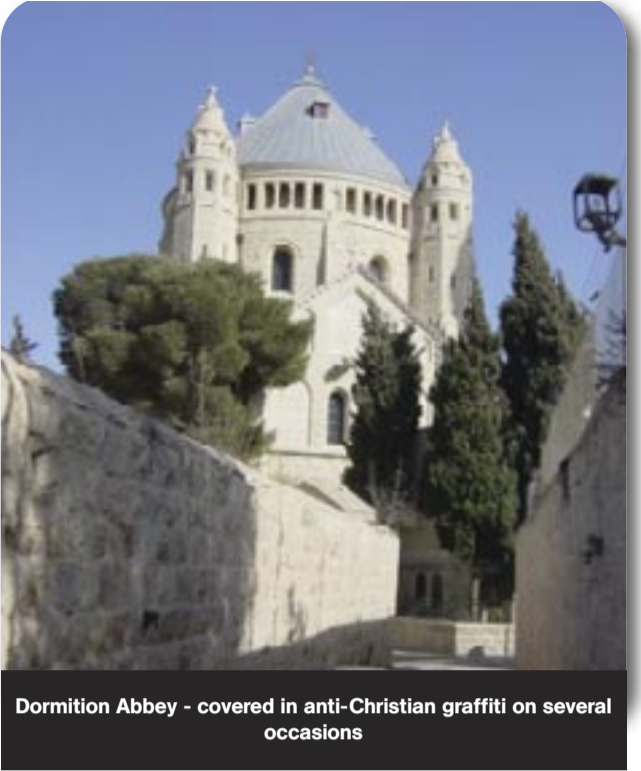
A recent study by the University of Birmingham estimates that the tourism industry generated by the Christian heritage of the Holy Land brings over \$3 billion into the region's economy. The Palestinian Christian population is a highly educated population that contributes beyond its numbers to high-tech industries, hospitals and church-based schools. Christians are good news for the region!

Christians in Israel enjoy democratic and religious freedoms that are a beacon in the region. But the escalation of physical and verbal abuse of Christian clergy, and vandalism of holy sites by fringe, radical groups, are a concerted attempt to intimidate and drive them away.

Meanwhile the growth of settler communities, and travel restrictions brought about by the Separation Wall, have deepened the isolation of Christian villages and curtailed economic and social possibilities. All of these factors have contributed to a steady stream of Palestinian Christians leaving the Holy Land to seek lives and livelihoods elsewhere - a historic tragedy unfolding in real time.

It does not have to be this way. This trend can be reversed - but action must be taken fast. We encourage governments and authorities in the region to listen to church leaders in their midst: To engage in the practical conversations that will lead to vital Christian culture and heritage being guarded and sustained. The time for action is now!

Over the Advent period, it's tempting to be seduced by cosy visions of the Christmas story - twinkling stars, exotic visitors, a painless birth of a baby who doesn't cry. The reality would have been much different: this is a story of God's embrace of humanity in all its messiness.



Dormition Abbey - covered in anti-Christian graffiti on several occasions

The first Christmas tells us of God coming into our world among ordinary lives of human struggle. It foregrounds a refugee family, against the backdrop of a genocide of infants. There's not much about lullabies and cuddly farm animals.

So let's get real this Christmas. When we sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem", or "Once in Royal David's City", let's hear the voice of the church of the Holy Land - and thank them for their gift to all of us. Let's pray for their flourishing and their future: a future intertwined with the future prosperity and common good of all communities.

Woven through the first Christian story is a message of hope and of good news for all people - a small light that can never be put out. Whatever your religion or belief, may you know the peace and joy of the Christ-child this Christmas.

The Most Revd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
The Most Revd Hosam Naoum,
Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

Lets Celebrate Easter- from the Catholic Link

Most people can tell you that Lent is 40 days, but how long is Easter? One day? Yes, Easter Sunday is one day, but do you know how long the season of Easter really is? Seven weeks.

Think about that. Do you celebrate Easter one day, one weekend, all season, or with your entire life? Does the way you celebrate Easter show your family the importance of the Lord's Resurrection in your life? Or is it all about the chocolate bunnies (or bilbies in Australia) and eggs with money inside? Do you know how to celebrate for the whole season and really inspire those around you to embrace their faith in Jesus as Saviour?

"We are the Easter people and Alleluia is our song," Saint Pope John Paul II reminds us. It's time for us to look at the cross with joy, and see love in suffering. All Lent we strived to fast and prepare ourselves for this! Now is the time to renew the rejoicing.

Celebrate so authentically and joyfully that those around you notice. Friedrich Nietzsche once said, "If you want me to believe in your redeemer, you are going to have to look a lot more redeemed." Make that effort to have Easter be more than merely a day. Make it your season to renew your Easter spirit in your entire life—even if life is challenging, even if you didn't properly prepare yourself during Lent, even if you aren't sure how. Like the women who found the empty tomb, shout for joy and tell the world!

Here are seven ways to keep celebrating Easter, even after Holy Week. Try one every week of Easter, or choose one as a new family tradition!

1. **Pilgrimages, Processions, and Pretty Statues!**
"Pretty" is an understatement in most circumstances. The Baroque statues carried around Spain's enormous procession are positively stunning! So are the colours and art found in processions in Guatemala, Indonesia, and the Philippines.
Re-enacting the Passion of Christ is a very popular practice around the world for Christians, and

you can incorporate His Passion, death, and especially Resurrection in your traditions. Perhaps go on a special annual pilgrimage to celebrate with fellow Christians at a Holy Site, such as St. Peter's Square? Or you could organize a procession, relic display, or important talk series at your home parish for those who can't go on pilgrimage.

Traditionally, statues in the church are covered during Lent with purple cloths, which you may have also done at your house. Now that Easter is here, shout "Alleluia!" and let your statues shine. Place flowers around them, especially the crucifixes. Maybe you could make a tradition of adding an icon, contemplative statue, or other beautiful Christian work of art to your home every Easter. These could even be brought back from your pilgrimages to holy sites.

2. **Spring Cleaning?**
Yes, cleaning! It's a time of newness. While Germans clean their homes and Greeks smash breakable pots and pans out their windows to symbolize spring, you might consider joining the fun. Maybe you don't want to smash your kitchenware, but you could always get that dust out of your house and open the windows for fresh air while you spring clean.
Clean with a smile on your face and sing joyful Easter songs, remembering the Lord's Resurrection. While you're at it, what can you clean out of your house to donate to others? How can you simplify your life by simplifying your home, enabling you to focus more directly on Christ?

3. **Eggs, of course!**
Baby bunnies, butterflies, and blue skies—hello, spring! People often decorate eggs to celebrate Easter because it's a symbol of spring and new life—like Jesus rising from the tomb.
Not everyone just dyes eggs, though. Some eggs are works of art! China is full of colourful chicks, dyed inside their eggs. In many countries, like China and America, it's tradition to hold Easter egg hunts.

Germans have egg dances, where they dance around eggs trying not to break them, and decorates trees with them, which is called Osterbaum. It's tradition for American presidents to host an egg roll on the lawn of the White House grounds. People from Australia to Armenia have an egg tapping game. In Greece, the egg tapping game is called Tsougrisma, and they use red eggs to represent the Blood of Christ.

4. **Feasting!**
After fasting in Lent comes feasting in Easter! Each tradition has a special, delicious menu. For instance, in Bermuda they eat codfish cakes and in Argentina it's meat empanadas. From Africa to Australia, many indulge in chocolate.
Try the traditional hot cross buns.
Or, Paraguayan chipa (Easter breakfast bread)
Or, Britain's Simnal cake
Or, Polish white borscht (Easter soup)
Or, Eastertide Tart from Genoese, with traditionally 33 layers (one for each year of Christ's life)
Or, Pizza Chiena breakfast
Don't just feast yourself! Per Russian tradition, give to poor families, those who are hospitalized, or in prison, and to beggars.
Feasting around the world also includes singing, dancing, and drums to announce and rejoice in the Risen Christ! Easter markets thrive in Germany, carnivals start in Indonesia, people in Nigeria wear white clothes, Ethiopians wear palm-leaf headbands, and many take vacation from work to be with family for the festivities!

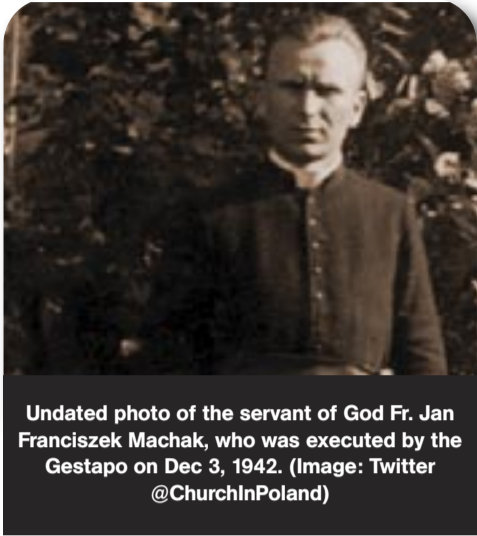
5. **Flames of the Holy Spirit**
The liturgical season of Easter ends on the day we celebrate Pentecost. That day we celebrate the Holy Spirit's descent upon the Apostles, and as with the whole season of Easter, we can celebrate by lighting candles. We light candles to represent many things such as God's light ending our darkness through the Resurrection.
For Easter, we have a special Paschal candle.

This candle usually has the current year on it to remind us that God is present with us always. Does your family have a special Paschal candle? Do you light candles in prayer at home?

6. **Water!**
If you visit Hungary during Easter, watch out for the "sprinkling" tradition! People splash each other with buckets of water to mark the Lord's Resurrection. Water is a symbol of new life, blessing, and growth. Perhaps you can start a new family tradition of Hungarian sprinkling, water balloon games, or setting out the sprinklers in your yard for fun.
During this Easter season, prayerfully water your gardens so that all the colours of spring may bloom joyfully for the Risen Lord! You probably keep holy water in your home. Why not have special places where your family and friends can bless themselves and each other with the holy water?
7. **Welcome in Spring by Celebrating the Resurrection**
In Africa's churches, people decorate for Easter with handmade, colourfully patterned fabrics. People in Bermuda fly homemade kites to remember Jesus' Ascension into Heaven. You could adopt one of these traditions or find other ways to rejoice in the season in your home.
You could decorate your house with the colours of Easter—white and yellow/gold. You could even welcome a new family pet. You could not only grow flowers in your yard but also bring them into your house, especially Easter Lilies! (Lilies are poisonous, so keep them where no animals will attempt to eat them.) Most importantly, consider asking your priest or deacon for a house blessing (and dinner). While nature around you blooms with new life, it's a perfect time to celebrate our life in the Risen Lord!

How does your household memorably celebrate the Easter season?

“He’s either a saint or an idiot”: The remarkable witness of Fr. Jan Franciszek Macha



The Polish priest, who was executed by the Gestapo for his charitable work at the age of just twenty-eight, will be beatified today in Katowice’s huge neo-classical Archcathedral of Christ the King. November 20, 2021 Filip Mazurczak The Dispatch 4 Print

Father Jan Franciszek Macha, a Polish priest who was executed by the Gestapo for his charitable work during the dark night of World War II at the age of just twenty-eight, will be beatified in Katowice’s huge neo-classical Archcathedral of Christ the King. Father Macha is one of many Polish martyrs – who include priests, bishops, nuns, and laypeople – who bore witness to Christian martyrs amidst the horrors of German-occupied Poland.

An early vocation in Upper Silesia

Jan Franciszek Macha was born in Chorzów Stary in Upper Silesia on January 18, 1914, the first child of ironworker Paweł and his wife Anna; in total, they would have six children, two of whom would not survive until adulthood. As a young man, Macha had numerous passions. He was active in the scouting movement and Poland’s Catholic Youth Association, played violin and piano, and acted in amateur theatre productions. Above all, however, Macha was an accomplished handball player: his team, Azoty Chorzów, participated in Poland’s National Championship twice, winning a silver medal once and bronze another time. Upon completing high school, Jan revealed to his family that he above all dreamed of becoming a priest. He applied to the Silesian Major Seminary, then in Krakow (presently, it is located in Katowice; following his beatification, Blessed Jan will be its patron), but was rejected because there were more applicants than the seminary could house. Thus, he studied law at Krakow’s time-honoured Jagiellonian University. One year later, Macha was admitted to study for the priesthood. Jan Macha was ordained a priest on June 25, 1939. The Second World War would break out just a couple months later with the German invasion of Poland; however, the spectre of war was already causing widespread anxiety as Hitler, who had annexed Czechoslovakia and Austria the previous year, was becoming increasingly aggressive in his demands towards Poland. During the ordination Mass upon which Macha received the sacrament of holy orders, Bishop Stanisław Adamski expressed this growing sense of doom: “Dark clouds are gathering in the sky of our lives. Priests must be ready to give their lives for their sheep, just like their Master. A stole bearing the likeness of the cross should remind you that you have decided to be ready to completely sacrifice yourselves in the service of God and neighbour.”

Upper Silesia: A particular target of Hitler’s terror

Industrial Upper Silesia is a historical borderland between Poland and Germany. Its inhabitants, many of whom are of mixed Polish and German ancestry, speak a unique dialect with many German loanwords. Attesting to the confluence of these two cultures, Jan Macha was known to his family and

friends as Hanik, a Polonized diminutive form of his German name (Johann). When Macha was four years old, Polish independence was restored after the conclusion of the Great War. The status of Upper Silesia was a major point of contention. Pursuant to the Treaty of Versailles, a plebiscite on whether the region should belong to Poland or Germany was held in 1919. A majority voted for Germany, largely due to the fact that 200,000 Germans from outside the region travelled to participate in the plebiscite. Yet Silesia’s Poles remained undeterred, and in 1921 the Third Silesian Uprising, led by Wojciech Korfanty, one of Poland’s greatest national heroes of the twentieth century, broke out. Ultimately, the League of Nations decided to split Silesia among ethnic lines; Katowice, Chorzów, and Ruda Śląska, the parish where the young Father Macha would later work, were given to Poland. Hitler’s disdain for the League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles is well-known. As a German nationalist, he was furious at the weakening of Germany, which came in large part at the expense of a resurrected Polish state. Thus, one of the pretexts for the 1939 German invasion of Poland was the alleged mistreatment of the German minority in such border regions as Upper Silesia and Pomerania. After the invasion, Upper Silesia was directly annexed by the Third Reich; consequently, its Polish and Jewish populations were persecuted. Among the annexed territories was the town of Oświęcim, which would soon become better known by its German name: Auschwitz.

Illegal charity work

Around the time of the outbreak of the war, the recent ordinand Jan Macha was assigned to St. Joseph’s parish in Ruda Śląska. There is an old Polish tradition that has persisted until the present of priests visiting their parishioners’ homes around Christmastime. For the young priest, visits to his flock during the 1939-1940 winter season were a transformative experience. He saw that the breadwinner was absent in many families (many Silesian men were deported to concentration camps, imprisoned, or compelled to perform slave labour), which made them destitute. Already as a law student, Macha was active in charitable organizations. After the first Christmas of the war, Macha organized a network of volunteers to bring material assistance above all to widows and orphans in his parish. He recruited Catholic Action activists, older altar boys, and scouts. The Polish underground was impressed by Macha’s vibrant charitable activity; in a report, Zygmunt Walter Janke, the commandant of the Homy Army, the main branch of Poland’s armed resistance, estimated his network as consisting of four thousand volunteers. Because many German men in Silesia were conscripted into the army, their families likewise suffered. Father Macha did not think twice about helping them. As Agnieszka Huf, the author of a Polish language biography of the martyr, writes: “Could he have declined helping someone only because somewhere far away, in Berlin, other Germans decided to start a war that would permanently alter the fate of the world? Polish and German stomachs need the same portion of food; Polish and German children are equally cold when their mothers lack a few groszy to buy coal; a Pole and a German are equally devastated by the death of a loved one. Hanik always saw a fellow human being; his or her country of origin, religion, or views did not matter.”

“A Saint or an Idiot”

Apart from some initiatives carefully overseen by the Germans, charitable work was strictly forbidden in occupied Poland. Furthermore, Father Macha cooperated with the Polish boy scouts, who had been incorporated into the illegal armed resistance. Thus, beginning in early 1941, the Gestapo kept an eye on the young priest. Father Macha was arrested on September 5, 1941. First, he was sent to the police prison in Mysłowice, a place so infamous for its cruelty that it was dubbed “Auschwitz’s hell-like antechamber” (przedpiekło Oświęcimia), where he was the victim of brutal beatings. After one such beating, Macha wrote a prayer in which he asked

God that he may stand by the gates of heaven along with his persecutor. “He’s either a saint or an idiot,” an SS-man who intercepted the prayer allegedly remarked. After more than a year of interrogations and sadistic beatings, Father Jan Macha was guillotined in a prison in Katowice on December 3, 1942. In his last letter to his family, he wrote: “My life was brief, but I am convinced that I have achieved my aim.”

A wartime Church of martyrs

Father Jan Macha is not the first wartime Polish martyr to be raised to the altars, and he is almost certainly not the last, either. The Third Reich intended to reduce the Poles to a nation of slaves that would serve that “Aryan master race.” Thus, the nation’s intellectual and spiritual elites were slated for elimination. About half of Polish Catholic priests were imprisoned in concentration camps during the war; about one-fifth of Poland’s pre-war clergy was killed between 1939 and 1945. According to Guillaume Zeller’s fine study of clergymen imprisoned at Dachau, 84 percent of priests who perished in the camp were Poles. Many lay Catholics likewise bore heroic witness to the faith during this nightmarish time. For example, the cause for the beatification of Józef and Wiktoria Ulma and their six children, executed for sheltering eight Jews during the Holocaust, is advanced. In Warsaw in 1999, Pope St. John Paul II beatified 108 Polish martyrs of World War II. This number is just a tiny tip of a massive iceberg. As more and more Polish wartime martyrs like Father Macha are beatified, we as Catholics can gain inspiration from these great men



Filip Mazurczak is a journalist, translator, and historian. His writing has appeared in the National Catholic Register, First Things, Tygodnik Powszechny, and other publications.

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Winter reflection on Christian-Muslim relations

Fr Victor Edwin SJ, writes:

I spent Christmas at a small Jesuit parish in Behror, on the way to the pink Jaipur (India). A day before Christmas, I read the 19th chapter of the Quran and the first chapter of Mathew's Gospel. Something beautiful struck me: how God cares for Mary. In the Quran, we read that Mary gave birth to the child as announced by the angel Gabriel. She is unmarried. She was worried about how she would present the child to the people. It happened exactly like that.

Carrying her child, she brought him to her people. They said, 'O Mary, you have indeed done something terrible! (Q. 19, 27)

Her relatives were furious and accused her of immorality. She gestures towards the child, and the child speaks, defending his mother. A vulnerable child is defending his mother-something very beautiful.

In the Gospel of Mathew, we find Mary pregnant. Joseph, the man whom she was engaged to, was a man of justice and obedient to God. He was very worried about how the woman he was engaged to was pregnant before marriage.

...an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20)

A silent man, Joseph does not speak a word. A silent, obedient person protects the dignity of Mary. From both these narratives one can draw insightful conclusions as we as Muslims and Christians engage in the Quran and the Bible. What does the Word of God tell us in today's context? What does it say to us with regard to protecting the dignity of the poor and vulnerable people?

I wished more Muslims read the Holy Bible and Christians read the Holy Qur'an. Some time ago, while reading medieval commentarial tradition in Islam, I found a heartening reference to Muslim reading the Bible. Al-Biqai (d. 1489 CE) in his great commentary on the Quran, nazm al-durar fi tanasub al-ayat wa l-suwar (String of pearls concerning the harmony of verses and suras) included biblical material. He was criticized for this by his fellow scholars. Al-Biqai argues that reading the Bible is in line with Islamic tradition (ref Walid A Saleh, In Defence of the Bible: A Critical edition and an introduction to al-Baqai's Bible treatise (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 57-191. Al-Biqai uses a long passage from the Book of Jeremiah and comments upon the passage in the following words: "a speech that is sublime in style, exquisite in its tenderness, such that it crushes the livers, renders the hearts, and makes the eyes swell with tears" (ref Walid A Saleh, "sublime in style, exquisite in its tenderness: The Hebrew Bible Quotations in al-Biqai's Quran commentary," in Adaptations and Innovations: Studies on the interaction between Jewish and Islamic thought and literature from the early Middle Ages to the late twentieth century, Dedicated to Professor Joel L Kramer, eds. Y Tzvi Langermann

and Josef Stern (Paris: Peeters, 2007), 331.

Just before Christmas break, a group of third year students of theology presented a seminar on Blessed Charles de Foucauld (who will be canonized soon). This seminar gave me an occasion to re-read one of my favourite books on the Blessed titled: A Christian Hermit in an Islamic World: A Muslim's View of Charles De Foucauld by Ali Merad.

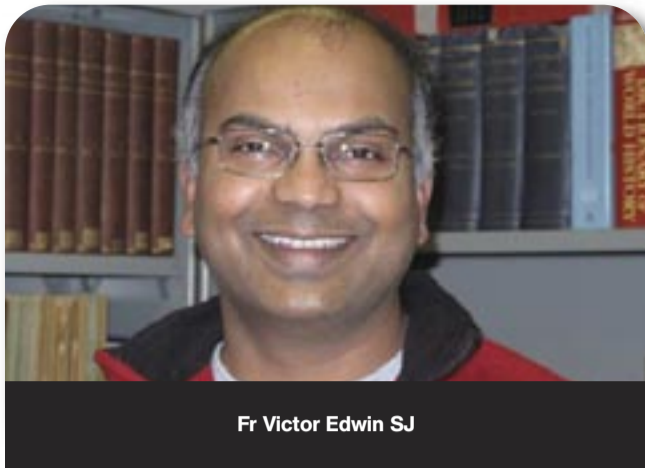
Charles De Foucauld was a pioneering figure in the field of Christian-Muslim relations. As an adolescent, De Foucauld lost his Catholic faith. While taking a risky exploration of Morocco, he witnessed Muslims' devotion to prayer. His heart cried out: "My God, if you exist, let me come to know you." At the age of 28, under the guidance of his spiritual director he rediscovered God. He declared his faith in the following words: "As soon as I believed in God, I understood that I could not do otherwise than to live for him alone."

As an ordained priest he moved to live in Beni Abbès and later at Tamanrasset among Muslims in the Sahara deserts. He wanted to be among those who were, "the furthest removed, the most abandoned." He wanted all who drew close to him to find in him a brother, "a universal brother." In a great respect for the culture and faith of those among whom he lived, his desire was to "shout the Gospel with his life."

The writer Ali Merad observes that for Charles de Foucauld the best Christian witness among Muslims is to seek to imitate Christ. De Foucauld sought to imitate Christ with extraordinary generosity and deep devotion among Muslims in Morocco. Merad notes that for a Muslim, to imitate one's prophet is the most perfect form of living one's faith. As a student of Christian-Muslim Relations, I readily agree with what he says.

Drawing from the Muslim devotion to Muhammad, it should be said that the best way to share the Gospel of Christ with Muslims is to be a living witness to Jesus among them. It is a great challenge to each disciple of Christ, especially those who are called to a lifelong ministry among Muslims. The challenges may be monumental, but I feel deep consolation. There are great models of the past, like Charles de Foucauld, Louis Massignon, and Jacques Jomier to emulate, but also some wonderful contemporary models whom I have met and whose guidance and support I have received-people like Paul Jackson, Chris Hewer and Christian Troll. With much gratitude and love I cannot but surrender myself to the Lord who I believe has called me to live this mission of being a witness among our Muslims brothers and sisters.

In the New Year, a friend of Islamic Studies Association, Prof Alan Brill came visiting me. He is the Cooperman/Ross Endowed Chair for Jewish-Christian Studies and Director of Graduate Studies at Seton Hall University (USA). I invited a Muslim scholar, Khurshid Khan, over for the conversation, and we had a dialogue-a Jew, a Christian and a Muslim-in which we shared about our work and had a meal together.



Fr Victor Edwin SJ

It is one thing to say that we Christians, Muslims and Jews should come together and work for peace. It is good to hear that. However, I think that it needs deeper reflection than this. I think that dialogue between Muslims, Jews and Christians must be made an occasion to celebrate the most cherished faith convictions and practices. Such conversations provide the context for learning through mutual witness. I think that is the most important thing. And our conversation would be engaging and fruitful if it also brings in situations of conflict into our conversation-issues of land and statehood related to Israel and Palestine and the coexistence of the three sets of believers in Jerusalem. I think it is not enough only to be friends and build a bond of love between one another or only to repent for the past hurts or the past violence against one another and in the present, necessary though these are. It is also not just about listening and learning from one another. The most important thing is that we should find ways to collaborate with God's work of healing, reconciliation and bringing peace. We must collaborate as brothers, sisters and friends. We have an important task in the world today. We must work with all peoples for co-existence, reconciliation, peace and harmony. We really need to work harder together.

I wish you a fruitful and healthy new year 2022.

Joseph Victor Edwin SJ India.

Fr Victor Edwin is a Jesuit priest who teaches Christian-Muslim Relations at Vidyajyoti, a Catholic centre for higher theological learning in Delhi. He is deeply engaged in seeking to promote understanding and goodwill between Christians and Muslims. He has a PhD in Islamic Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, and has written widely on issues related to interfaith relations.

A Life Less Ordinary: Sister Pamela Hussey

All my children and many others loved Sister Pamela Hussey. Pamela would have been 100 on 7 January 2022. She died peacefully on 13 December in Cornelia House, in the Harrogate care home of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. She made up for missing the traditional letter from the Queen by receiving one from each of two Popes, Benedict XVI and Francis, congratulating her on her Diamond Jubilee as a nun. An Anglo-Argentinian, Pamela grew up in Buenos Aires which makes the occasion being noticed for a second time, and by Pope Francis, seem more fitting.

Pamela wanted to join the war effort and sailed in 1942 from Argentina on one of the perilous Atlantic crossings to the Bay of Biscay and, hugging the French coast, northwards to wartime Britain. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Services (WRNS). For three years she worked in Scarborough as a wireless telegraphist in an offshoot of GCHQ Bletchley - where she is on the Roll of honour - and returned in 1944 to open a new centre through the good offices of Prince Charles. In 2018 she was awarded the Légion d'Honneur for her service during the Second World War presented in person

at her care home by a representative of the French Government. As a special operator she learnt Morse Code spending hours on end waiting for German U-boats to break cover and surface to communicate with their base revealing their location. It was hardly the most effective use of a woman who was a fluent Spanish speaker, who would take a degree in modern languages at St Anne's Oxford and, having joined the SHCJs in 1950, teach languages for ten years.

The first time I met Pamela was in 1981 when she became a volunteer administrative assistant in the Latin America department of the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR) where I had also just started working. It was a critical and intense period in the Cold War. Dictatorships and oligarchies, backed by the CIA, ruled many of the Latin American States with appalling human rights violations as a consequence. Pamela gravitated to the El Salvador desk at CIIR, making several field trips, sharing the department's admiration for the Archbishop of San Salvador, St Oscar Romero, his courage, work for justice and his theology and after his assassination publicising his life. Pamela had the advantage of looking frail and conservative

when she wasn't. She was the scourge of US Foreign Service personnel who were entirely unprepared for the passion and anger of this diminutive and well-spoken woman when they tried to defend the indefensible. To her great pleasure her work was first recognised in 2000. She was awarded an MBE for her tireless defence of human rights.

The last time we met I asked Pamela what training as a Woman Religious was like in the strict self-effacing convent discipline of the 1950s for someone like her. "Well", she said, "I complained to the novice mistress that my personality was being crushed. She replied: 'Pamela, your personality is oozing out of every pore'". And anyone who knew Pamela would agree. In a quiet sort of a way Pamela had style. Decidedly not the dressy kind but more her old fashioned politeness which set her at ease with a huge spectrum of people whom would address as 'dearest'. One of my happiest memories of Pamela was her 70th birthday party in 1992. We had a lovely meal in the upper room of the now defunct Gay Hussar. Jon Snow and George Foulkes MP, later Baron Foulkes of Cumnock, were there. She was in her element. So was everyone else though sadly the number of empty bottles arrayed on the table in front of the group meant a photographic record of the event for the CIIR Annual Review had to be censored. Even at Apley Grange she would take a daily walk to the local hotel for morning coffee with her copy of Le Monde or La Croix to keep up with international and Church affairs. The last time I saw her she confided that she had Alzheimer's then promptly recited a long poem word perfect from memory.

Pamela was a feminist. Books she wrote, Freedom From Fear: Women in El Salvador's Church and, with Marigold Best, Life Out of Death, the Feminine Spirit in El Salvador and Women Making a Difference bear witness to that. She felt



Sister Pamela Hussey
(7 January 1922 - 13 December 2021)

deeply the betrayal of women who had fought against the Latin American dictatorships and who were expected after victory to return to traditional roles. Her life offered yet another example of the extraordinary range of Women Religious' gifts to the Church. Her death brings down the curtain on a period when the witness of many Women Religious was within the struggle for liberation against tyranny, justice against repression, life against death. There will never be another Pamela.

She leaves a younger brother, now aged 96. May She Rest in Peace.

Ian Linden Dec 17th, 2021
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Lord Bird MBE delivers annual Craigmyle Lecture

The 2021 Catholic Union Craigmyle Lecture was delivered on Tuesday at Farm Street Church, Mayfair, by Big Issue founder and crossbench peer, Lord Bird, on the theme of reinventing giving.

The talk was held in-person with many more watching via livestream. Lord Bird began his talk by reflecting on his last visit to Farm Street Church in 1963, following the assassination of John F Kennedy, when he deeply felt the loss of the man he saw as "the most powerful Catholic in the world." Lord Bird described how he was brought up in a large Irish family in the "slums" of west London. He spoke movingly of how his experience of being made homeless at the age of five had shaped his understanding of the causes that led people falling into need. It was the local Catholic church that stepped in to help the Bird family, providing care for him at a convent in Mill Hill.

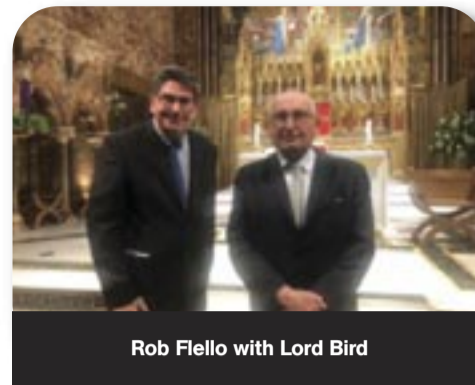
His childhood home gives its name to the title he took on entering the House of Lords in 2015 as the Baron Bird of Notting Hill. "I got into the House of Lords by lying, cheating, and stealing", he said - in reference to the fact that it was his time in a young offenders' institute where he learned to read. He spoke of the importance of families, and the need to "hold the hand of people" who did not

have the benefit of a strong family network. He remarked that where he was brought up in London had the largest number of single-parent households in the country at that time.

Lord Bird's experience of being given money by Gordon and Anita Roddick to launch the Big Issue in 1991 has clearly shaped his view on giving. People need a "hand up, not a handout", and he stressed that giving should always be helpful to the person on the receiving end. "When we give, we should not rob people of their dignity", he said. He noted that every party in power found itself moulded by the machinery of Government. He hoped that his presence in the House of Lords would force people to think differently.

He describes himself as being a devout Catholic in his teenage years before becoming a "devout Marxist" and returning to his faith again in later life. He spoke of his passion in promoting a "muscular Catholicism... committed to the wellbeing of the poorest."

Catholic Union Chairman, Rob Fello, said: "We're extremely grateful to Lord Bird for a very powerful and personal talk. Few people have the life experiences that he is able to offer. His journey from working in the kitchens of the House of Lords to sitting on the red benches is truly remarkable.



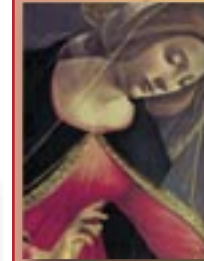
Rob Fello with Lord Bird

His talk was a stark reminder of the crushing nature of poverty, and the importance of giving in transforming lives.

"This was the first Craigmyle Lecture we have been able to host in person since 2019 on account of Covid restrictions. It was excellent to see many familiar faces and some new ones too. I am grateful to Father Dominic and everyone at Farm Street Church for making it possible to gather and hear such an inspiring talk."

Source: Catholic Union/Independent Catholic News 3rd December 2021

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Monthly message of the WUCWO President, February 2022

Dear friends,

This morning, on Vatican News I read an article that made me shudder: "Every minute, 15 people die in the world due to lack of access to healthcare, the impacts of the climate crisis, hunger and gender-based violence" (source: Oxfam report, The Pandemic of Inequality). In the face of this alarming information, God forbid that we become entangled in the "globalisation of indifference" that Pope Francis repeatedly denounces!

Again, from the Vatican News article: "In the first two years of the pandemic, the world's ten richest men more than doubled their assets, from \$700 billion to \$1.5 trillion, at a rate of \$15,000 a second, \$1.3 billion a day". At the other extreme are those who are paying the highest price in this crisis: the poorest and most fragile, particularly women, the "invisible ones", in the eyes of many.

As women of WUCWO, I invite you to ask yourselves: What would Pilar Bellosillo, the woman who led our organisation and showed us the way to holiness, say to us today? How would she react and what would she propose to us in the face of this reality? Some facts from her life can illuminate our answers. In 1966, she launched a survey on women in the family, society and the Church, sent to 36 million Catholic women in WUCWO member organisations. In this way, women's "voices" were "heard" and the "cries" of those most discriminated against were perceived. This survey inspired the Liga Mundial contra el Hambre (World League Against Hunger), that today is Manos Unidas.

From this survey, a plan of action was developed to change and improve inhumane situations. A network of collaborators was established on all

continents. In 1969, Pilar left for Africa and visited organisations in various countries to promote renewed education. In 1974, the General Assembly was held in Tanzania under the motto: "WUCWO, an agent of change for a more just society", as Pilar said that women are the first victims of injustice.

For these and other reasons, dear friends, I call on you to "get down to work" on the WORLD WOMEN OBSERVATORY (WWO), the new WUCWO project that is providentially beginning now, when, as a magnifying glass, these two years of emergency have shown and aggravated the wounds already suffered by women in the most deprived areas of our countries and continents, highlighting at the same time their strengths and resilience.

We have placed the Observatory under the patronage of Pilar Bellosillo, trying to follow in her footsteps. We are sure that she has interceded for us to offer the first fruits of the WWO to the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took our report as working material for its Continental Ecclesial Assembly. We are preparing the WWO in Africa, in order to listen to and bring out the most suffering women, to find together, to inspire and promote solutions to their sufferings in the Church, governments and society.

That is why WUCWO has decided to start a fundraising; together with the sending of the prayer for the WUCWO Day, 13 May 2022, we have sent you, and it is also on our website, the launching of the Prayer and Fundraising Campaign for the Observatory in Africa, which will be developed in different steps. The first step, as always, is to dedicate ourselves to prayer. Specifically, I ask you to say to Pilar, as to a close friend, "Pray for our Observatory in Africa" every day. And, if possible,

pray the prayer for the cause of Pilar's canonisation (down below) every day, entrusting this and all your intentions to her.

I am convinced that the women of WUCWO have an enormous capacity to react to the global crisis, if we decide and commit ourselves to "weave" solutions together, with the "resilience" of each one of us. The FABRIC OF OUR RESILIENCE is precisely that spiritual, moral and concrete network that, by the grace of God, no one will be able to break, and that will allow us to reach out to the women who suffer most and alleviate their wounds, to support them as in a network, to strengthen their characteristics and to become part of that same resistant fabric to welcome other sons and daughters of God as brothers and sisters, gradually transforming this planet into a Common Home.

Please receive my warmest regards,

Maria Lia Zervino, Servidora

PRAYER

Lord God and our Father, we thank you for the fruitful life of Pilar Bellosillo, for her testimony of dedication to the cause of the Gospel, for her love for the Church, and for her dedicated and important work for the path of renewal in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. We thank you for the impetus she gave to the Church's laity and for her constant commitment to the promotion of women.

Trusting in her intercession, we put in your hands the grace we ask you to grant us. Make us, too, courageous and committed witnesses of the faith. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Archbishop Desmond Tutu on the Holy Land

Source: Jewish Voice for Peace/ICN

Jewish Voice For Peace writes: A Nobel Peace Prize laureate and religious leader in the South African anti-apartheid movement, Tutu fought tirelessly for the liberation of his people and others oppressed by colonialism and apartheid, including Palestinians. He attributed the fall of apartheid in South Africa in large part to boycott and foreign economic pressure tactics that non-violently isolated and exacted a cost on the government.

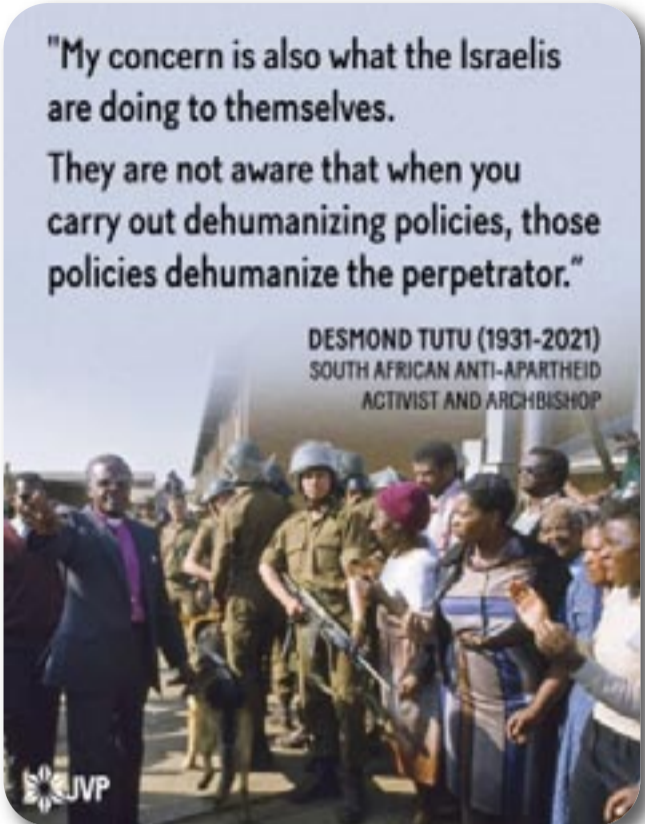
After visiting Palestine and drawing parallels between the apartheid conditions there and in his homeland, he became a staunch advocate for the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement.

While he criticized Israeli apartheid, Tutu expressed consistent love, respect, and compassion for Jews, both in the diaspora and in Israel. He sympathized with the injustices in Jewish history, raised his voice against anti-Semitism, and observed the disproportionately large number of Jews involved in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. He was concerned about the physical and moral wellbeing of Israelis; though he believed Israeli apartheid harmed Palestinians first and foremost, he thought that it dehumanized Israelis too, and that apartheid would never keep Israelis truly safe.

Many establishment Jewish organizations over the years have condemned Tutu or, like the Anti-Defamation League, even gone as far as to surveil him - even as they have paid lip service to supporting his activism against South African apartheid. But we celebrated every aspect of his legacy and worked with him while he was alive, and his memory will be for a blessing to us as we continue to work for Palestinian liberation after his passing.

Some of Archbishop Tutu's statements on Israel and Palestine follow:
"I have been to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and I have witnessed the racially segregated roads and housing that reminded

me so much of the conditions we experienced in South Africa under the racist system of apartheid."
"Israel will never get true security and safely through oppressing another people. A true peace can ultimately only be built on justice."
"My concern is also what the Israelis are doing to themselves. They are not aware that when you carry out dehumanising policies, those policies dehumanize the perpetrator."
"My voice has always been raised against the anti-Semitism that all sensible people fear and detest. But this cannot be an excuse for doing nothing and for standing aside as successive Israeli governments colonise the West Bank and advance racist laws."
"In our struggle against apartheid, the great supporters were Jewish people. They almost instinctively had to be on the side of the disenfranchised, of the voiceless ones, fighting injustice oppression and evil. I have continued to feel strongly with the Jews."
"Nelson Mandela famously said that South Africans would not feel free until Palestinians were free. He might have added that the liberation of Palestine will liberate Israel too."
"Why are our memories so short? Have our Jewish sisters and brothers forgotten the collective punishment, the home demolitions, in their own history so soon? Have they turned their backs on their profound and noble religious traditions? Have they forgotten that God cares deeply about the downtrodden?"
"Those who continue to do business with Israel, who contribute to a sense of 'normalcy' in Israeli society, are doing the people of Israel and Palestine a disservice. They are contributing to the perpetuation of a profoundly unjust status quo."
"What is not justified is what Israel did to another people to guarantee its existence. I've been deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa."





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Eileen SYMONS, St Michaels Foundation, Knottingley
Linda POSKITT, St Michaels Foundation, Knottingley
Mary MCATEER, St Michaels Foundation, Knottingley
Julia TAYLOR, Foundation Treasurer, St Ignatius Ossett

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Ros MULLHOLLAND GULLICK (nee Rogan), Spalding & Holbeach Foundation.
Formerly of Shrewsbury Diocese
Patricia HARBRIDGE, Spalding & Holbeach Foundation

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Nora COMISKEY, Hitchin Foundation
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Hilda VAZ, Hounslow Foundation
Martina BERNARD, White City Foundation

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord

Your memories linger, Your smile that cared , Your listening ear Your goodness shared. In God's deepest love. In God's gentlest care This is my prayer.

Walsingham Whispers Spring 2022

The planning for the 75th UCM Pilgrimage is progressing at pace, with meetings being held with Salford Diocese who will be leading this year. The team at Walsingham including the new Rector (Monsignor Philip Moger) are poised to welcome us back after the cancellations over the past 2 years due to Covid 19. Even though the coronavirus is still with us we are very

positive that 2022 will see the UCM celebrate a return to Walsingham.

The Pilgrim Bureau is open and awaiting our bookings, which have to be made through Angela Higginson, the booking forms will be sent out to each diocese at the beginning of March 2022. We advise that each diocese organises a co-ordinator and for them to make the bookings. The form for

the badges is printed in the UCM News and again please, only one person from each diocese to complete the form. Badge prices remain at £8 each and the Abbey Link Mobility Bus tickets are £2.50. All cheques to be sent to Angela, made payable to the UCM National Committee.

After two years of lockdown and worry, lets meet with Our Lady and give thanks and prayers for the

UCM. Please commit now to meeting with like minded people and encourage others to join us on the fourth and fifth of July.

Looking forward to welcoming you back to Walsingham.

Mary on behalf of the Walsingham Sub-committee

Britain forty years after St John Paul II’s historic visit

Reflecting on the 1982 papal visit forty years later, I see much change – some good, but a great deal that is very bad – in Britain since that time.

January 15, 2022 Joanna Bogle - Catholic World Report - The Dispatch 1Print

This year will see the 40th anniversary of the first ever visit of a pope to England, Scotland, and Wales. Given the complicated history of the Catholic Church in Britain, it is truly remarkable that the anniversary somehow doesn’t seem remarkable at all. The May 28-June 2, 1982 joyful visit of Pope – now Saint – John Paul II was followed by another papal visit, this time at the express invitation of HM the Queen, and Pope Benedict XVI arrived in September 2010 to be greeted by the Sovereign at her palace in Scotland and address a great gathering at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster.

History rolls on, and in this anniversary year we can note how the papal visits have been embedded into our national story and how ordinary it all seems. Stone slabs at Westminster Cathedral – one at the foot of the sanctuary, another at the main door – commemorate the two visits. The vision of religious freedom affirmed by Pope Benedict in his magnificent address at Westminster is recognized as one that brilliantly articulates the authentic teaching of the Church and affirms the truth recognized by all who seek genuine goodwill.

St John Paul’s visit could have been so easily derailed. Britain was at war. The Falklands crisis had erupted and the Royal Navy made its way to the South Atlantic to confront Argentinian claims. Some magnificent diplomacy on all sides achieved something that might have seemed impossible: the Pope made a last-minute visit to Argentina before traveling to London, so that Catholics in both countries could hear a genuine message of peace from the successor of St Peter. The visit to Britain thus had a pastoral quality, with nothing triumphalistic about it: it was not a time for scoring points.

When I look back at my younger self, cheering among the crowd at Gatwick Airport as the papal plane landed and watching on television as the Pope went to Buckingham Palace for tea, I am amazed at how little I realized about the significance of it all. Some of us at that time simply saw the pope as someone who should say things we wanted to hear – about the wrongfulness of abortion, for example – within a sort of zone of this-is-what-popes-should-do. We didn’t see things with the eye of history; perhaps that’s simply something that is acquired with age.

We liked being indignant about things, and so were on the lookout for anything we thought was too trendy or “wishy-washy” – though when I was urged to share indignation about Pope John Paul II being open and friendly with the Anglicans at Canterbury I found that on the contrary it all looked rather valuable. Now, four decades on and with the creation of the Ordinariate by Benedict XVI it all looks prophetic:

Anglicans can now come into full communion with the Catholic Church, bringing their liturgical and other traditions with them. Upon arriving at Gatwick Airport, John Paul II sounded a central theme of his visit: reconciliation:

At this moment of history, we stand in urgent need of reconciliation: reconciliation between nations and between peoples of different races and cultures; reconciliation of man within himself and with nature; reconciliation among people of different social conditions and beliefs, reconciliation among Christians. In a world scarred by hatred and injustice and divided by violence and oppression, the Church desires to be a spokesman for the vital task of fostering harmony and unity and forging new bonds of understanding and brotherhood.

St John Paul had been Pope for just four years at the time of that history-making visit. He had already survived two assassination attempts, one in St Peter’s Square on May 13, 1981, and another a year later on May 12, 1982, at Fatima where he went to give thanks and was attacked by a schismatic priest. He was already becoming the world’s voice of conscience, and over the next years his magnificent encyclicals and other writings (and many addresses) would ring out the truth about the glory of God and the dignity of man.

And those years were often thrilling. John Paul II had yet to achieve the quite extraordinary invention of World Youth Day. In 1982 great gatherings of that sort were still seen as reserved for political rallies or popular music festivals, but he would bring about the astonishing sight of vast crowds of young people from across the world kneeling in silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament or lining up before relays of confessors to receive absolution. He would bring about dramatic change in Eastern Europe. In 1982 that was already on the way, as his 1979 pilgrimage to his native Poland had set in train the events that



would lead to the formation of Solidarity, and eventual freedom from the Communism that had been imposed since 1945.

Reflecting on the 1982 papal visit forty years later, I see the many changes in Britain since that time. There is a great deal that is very bad: continued destruction of babies in their mothers’ wombs, plus massive publicly-funded promotion of bizarre notions of confused sexual identity, and a general withering of standards of excellence in academia. And there is a new surge of constant sniping at cherished values and symbols of historical achievement, and of course an increase of misery as marriages and families collapse under all sorts of pressures.

Is there anything good to note? Not much: the Ordinariate, as mentioned, some new evangelistic initiatives (back in 1982 no one could have imagined a great National Eucharistic Congress on the scale that we had in 2018), and the fact that Christianity here isn’t dead, as I remember being repeatedly told, when younger, would be the case by the 21st century.

“The most annoying thing about you, Joanna,” someone expostulated recently, “is that, especially about the Church, you are always wanting to see the good things.” I think, looking back, it is because, while I was still comparatively young, I encountered the message of St John Paul II.



Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the UCM News is 15th May 2022

Please send copy to ucmnews@yahoo.com

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Donate your old smartphone and make a difference

Jan 11th, 2022 (Updated Jan 12th, 2022)
Independent Catholic News

Do you have an old phone or tablet lying in a drawer that you don't use? It could be a lifeline for a refugee here, helping them keep in touch with family, friends, legal, medical and social services. Jesuit Refugee Services UK are collecting smartphones and tablets to give to people experiencing the asylum and immigration system.

Phones and tablets should be in good working condition (able to make and receive calls and texts, a working screen and keyboard etc.) with no significant marks or scratches.

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Send your devices to: Jesuit Refugee Service UK, The Hurtado Jesuit Centre, 2 Chandler Street, London, E1W 2QT.

You could also top-up a refugee's mobile phone. The Jesuit Refugees Service gives on average 321 refugees a top-up of £10 every month. Over the course of a year this amounts to £38,520.00. Could you help them by donating something? Go to: www.jrsuk.net/adventappeal21 or send a cheque to

Jesuit Refugee Service, 2 Chandler St, London E1W 2QT.
Send your devices to: Jesuit Refugee Service UK, The Hurtado Jesuit Centre, 2 Chandler Street, London, E1W 2QT.



photo by Jonas Leupe on Unsplash

Lebanon Sisterly Support Project

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of CAFOD, the Catholic women of the United Kingdom through the National Board of Catholic women have decided to support a project in the southern part of Lebanon. The idea is to empower women living in this area to extend their vision beyond the home to provide better support for their families and seek out training in new skills and a wider community perspective.

Lebanon is a small (half the size of Wales) but beautiful country of no more than 4 or 5 million people including a million Syrian refugees and others from Palestine. Already up to 18 million of those who claim to be Lebanese are living abroad. The country is riven by discord and is suffering financial collapse. While we wonder how to pay our electricity bills, in Lebanon there simply is no electricity to switch on at times and in their energy crisis the only hope of support comes from Iran at a political price. Armed conflict on the streets and the aftermath of the massive explosion at Beirut support in August 2020 mean that its citizens suffer from hyperinflation and the lack of stable government - elections are set to March in 2022. The country has 18 official religious sects including Maronite and Orthodox Catholics, Sunni and Shia Muslims and ours is a multi-faith project and the activities are chosen by the women themselves.

Although more than 60 years ago when the family fast Day was initiated by women, women in the home had time and energy to commit to



fundraising, this is no longer the case now that we have claimed an equal burden in supporting ourselves and our family and are committed to developing ambitious and equal careers. Nevertheless, in the spirit of journeying together with their Lebanese sisters, women in York have been using their own entrepreneurial skills to start their fundraising efforts with a cake stall, and selling crafts and plants from our gardens, and recycling other goods to convert into donations. We hope that other parishes in the diocese will be equally motivated to champion this cause - not just because the project is an excellent one – there are many of these, but also to show solidarity and demonstrate that, despite the pressures of modern life, women still desire to support and enhance their lives of their sisters across the world.

Donations and profits can be submitted at the JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/NBCWandUCMforLebanoniocesan>

Barbara Cookson
Diocesan President
Middlesbrough

The Union of Catholic Mothers 75th Annual WALSINGHAM Pilgrimage

Monday & Tuesday 4th& 5thJULY 2022 Led by the Diocese of Salford

Booking Form for badges: All Cheques should be made payable to: " U.C.M. National Committee "

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Tel. No. of Coach Company [Inc. Area code]				Address:	
No. of Pilgrims proposing to take part in the Monday Evening Service		Do you require map with directions to the Shrine	YES/NO	Post Code:	
No. of Deacons who wish to participate		No. of Priests who wish to concelebrate		Tel No:	
				Signed	Date:
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followed by the
TORCHLIGHT
PROCESSION

Tuesday 5th July
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For further information please contact your Diocesan President or Local Organiser