

Catholic People

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SIGNS AND SYMBOLS FOR LENT



Archbishop George greets the Catechumens from churches in the Archdiocese, with their godparents, at the Rite of Election, held at St David's Cathedral on St David's Day

By Archbishop George Stack

When you come into a church, you are immediately surrounded by signs and symbols, speaking in a wordless language of truths which go beyond words, things that go deeper than words.

The statues. The candles. The Holy Water. The Oil of Chrism. Even the big eagle lectern in the middle of this Cathedral church, symbolising the soaring theology of the Gospel of St. John. All symbolic speaking much louder than words.

One of the best known symbols is surely the one we'll use – the ashes on Ash Wednesday. Sackcloth and Ashes were introduced in the first three centuries of the Church for those Christians who had apostatised, had gone back to their pagan ways, worshipping false gods and betraying their fellow believers to the Roman authorities. They had thereby ex – communicated themselves, cut themselves off from the community and Holy Communion. Condemned. Damned for eternity.

God's forgiveness

Gradually the Church came to the realisation that God's forgiveness was for everyone, at all times, no matter how grievous the sin.

The sacrifice of the death of Jesus on the cross atoned for every sin. So these apostates could be forgiven too. They could be reconciled. But weren't the penances hard! And finally, for forty days before Easter, they would stand outside the 'church' in a penitential mood, dressed in sackcloth and covered in ashes as an outward sign of their inner sorrow.

Another symbol! Begging for forgiveness before receiving Holy Communion again on Easter Sunday. The converts from paganism

also followed a forty day Lenten regime rejecting paganism, refusing false gods, asking forgiveness before given new life at Easter. Baptism and the Eucharist. The greatest signs, symbols and sacraments of all.

We live in an age where ancient symbols are still practiced, but people have often forgotten their meaning. The outward ritual is practiced with little understanding, or even acceptance, of what they stand for. I think of the recent rugby disaster of the defeat of Wales in the Principality Stadium. Parts of the hymn "Bread of Heaven" were sort of sung. The chorus was followed by what seems to be: "Delilah". The audience sang the words but did not understand the meaning. But in the church, we try hard to keep the meaning of symbols alive. "Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return". The ashes are not just external symbols but speak to us of internal and eternal truths.

Tools for conversion

Prayer, Fasting and works of charity are part and parcel of our Lenten practice. They are part of the inner reality, the tools for conversion, which are symbolised by the ashes.

Death to an old way of life. Embrace of a new way of life. "Repent and believe in the Gospel". The first Lenten building block is prayer – not just saying prayers. It is giving time back to God. Time is my most precious possession. Once it has gone, it never comes back.

Amidst all the saying of prayers, being silent in the presence of God is a great act of faith. We all find it difficult, afraid that it might be a

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ARCHBISHOP
GEORGE'S
ENGAGEMENTS

MARCH 2020



Sunday 1	Civic Service for St. David's Day – St. John the Baptist Church 12.15 Rite of Election Cardiff Cathedral 3.00
Monday 2	St. David's Day Mass Cardiff Cathedral 12.30 Deanery Station Mass St. Joachim Church Dunvant Swansea 7.00
Wednesday 4	Deanery Station Mass St. Joseph's Church Cardiff 7.00
Thursday 5	Christian Fellowship Parliamentary Breakfast Pierhead Cardiff 7.45
Friday 6	Lenten Fasting Lunch and Talk The Cornerstone 1.30
Monday 9	Deanery Station Mass Llandidrod Wells 7.00
Tuesday 10	Department of Christian Life and Worship London 9.00 Meeting of Bishops Conference Standing Committee London 1.00
Wednesday 11	Deanery Station Mass Our Lady and St. Michael Abergavenny 7.00
Friday 13	Lenten Lunch and Talk The Cornerstone 1.30
Monday 16	Meeting with Minister for Education Ty Hywel 12.00 Deanery Station Mass Carmarthen 7.00
Tuesday 17	Deanery Station Mass St. Illtyd Dowlais 7.00
Thursday 19	Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Elect David Oakley Northampton 12.00
Friday 20	Lenten Lunch and Talk The Cornerstone 1.30
Saturday 21	Confers Ministry of Reader Allen Hall 11.30
Monday 23	Deanery Station Mass Pembroke Dock 7.00
Tuesday 24	DCLW Meeting Cardiff 1.00
Wednesday 25	Deanery Station Mass St. Mary's Bridgend 7.00
Friday 27	Lenten Lunch and Talk The Cornerstone 1.30 Farewell Service Dean of Newport St. Woolo's 7.00
Sunday 29	Celebrates Mass – St. David's Usk 9.30
Monday 30	Deanery Station Mass Port Talbot 7.00
Tuesday 31	Deanery Station mass Belmont Abbey 7.00

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS FOR LENT

Continued from Page 1

"waste of time". Nothing happens. When we give a gift to another person, we don't expect or demand how it is be used. We trust that person.

Our gift expresses that trust. So it is with God. Fasting and abstinence. The alcohol. The tobacco. The sweets. The television. The Facebook or the tweeting. What do we do when we "give these things up for Lent" except say "I do not depend on them". An outward restraint is a sign that habits, distraction even temptations can be controlled. Fasting is food for the soul, nourishment for the spirit. And works of charity. No good "giving things up" and pocketing the proceeds for later indulgence. This is to be used for the poor. Give away the money to a charity. A painful sign that I am not defined or controlled by money or material goods. Pope Francis is correct when he says "I distrust charity that is not painful".

Are we prepared?

Signs and symbols are important, whether they be the traffic lights that guide us across the road, or the ashes which guide us on the journey within which takes place during Lent. As we bless the ashes and are signed with them at the beginning of Lent, let us ask ourselves are we prepared to make a proper journey to Easter? What steps will we take, what actions will we perform as outward signs of inner conversion. "Come back to me with all your heart".

Ash Wednesday photographs on page 5

Your Catholic People...

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Email: teresa@teresaodriscoll.co.uk

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'But I trust in Thee, O Lord, I say, "Thou art my God." My times are in Thy hand...'

Psalm 31:14

Perhaps you will agree that when things are going well in your life it is easier, much easier, to say that you trust God. Maybe your faith could be described as vibrant. You may even have got to the point in your spiritual development where a crisis in your life can be viewed – sooner rather than later - as the test it is. But. When you are ill or in pain, or feeling overwhelmed by life, it is human to have a bit of wobble. Even saints have admitted as much. If you are going through a dark valley at the moment I hope that the meditation below will help you circle back to 'Jesus, I trust in You!'.
1. Read Psalm 31:9-16
2. Sit up straight and close your eyes. Breathe in deeply through the nose. Hold a few seconds. Breathe out through the mouth and as you do so feel the whole of your body relax.
3. Now meditate for a few moments on the mysterious nature of God. Then focus on the fact that though, in this life, we will NEVER have all the answers to the most difficult questions, God asks us to trust Him. And though that is especially difficult when we are suffering in some way that is precisely when our trust is most necessary. Otherwise, how can we prove our trust?
4. Now say this prayer – or one of your own – 'Dear Lord Jesus, without You I am nothing. So I beg you to be patient with me if I become impatient with a painful situation in my life. Please remind me of my promise – made in a happier time - to turn everything over to You; to trust all outcomes to Your loving hands. I ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen'

Liturgy Commission

Update on the Year of the Word

- Scripture Study Days are going well on the basis of one a month. We've had two so far and they have been very well received. The next one is on February 15th when Fr. Nick James will explore how the Old Testament informs our understanding of the New Testament
- We are planning a day for Ministers of the Word, Catechists and Children's Liturgists on May 2nd.
- The annual Lenten Talks have been given a Scripture focus.
- An Art Competition focussed on the Scriptures for primary and KS3 pupils will soon be advertised. Adults will be invited to display their work.
- A Musicians' Scripture Day is planned to take place before Advent but is in a very early stage of planning. We wanted to discuss this at the meeting on the 6th but it can wait till the next meeting.
- We have also made resources and events available to parishes and schools:
- The Quote of the Week;
- The links to videos of Cardinal Vincent Nicholls talking about two paintings in the National Gallery with a third to come;
- The Blessing of Bibles;
- The Psalm 22 Garden idea;
- Sent to schools the letter from Bishop Brignall for World Book Day / Word Book Day and teaching resources for KS4/WJEC syllabus and KS3 and advice on how to access them online and
- The CTS booklet on 'The Year of the Word: The God Who Speaks'.

Madeleine Walters
Kate Duffin



5. When you are ready breathe in and out deeply as before. Then open your eyes and have a big stretch.

Prayerfully hoping the above meditation helps you triumph over your toughest tests of trusting God.

God bless
Teresa

For more on the above topic please see Teresa's blog:
<http://teresaodriscoll.blogspot.co.uk/>
Teresa O'Driscoll is the author of 9 Days to Heaven, How to make everlasting meaning of your life

Bishops' Guidance to Catholics on Coronavirus

Despite the low risk to the public from Coronavirus, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has issued guidelines to enable Catholic churches and organisations to find the relevant information in one place.

At the time of writing, the risk to the public from Coronavirus remains low.

We issue these guidelines purely to enable Catholic churches and organisations to find in one place the relevant information to them. Because this is a rapidly changing situation, we may change these guidelines as the situation changes. But in the meantime, it will be crucial to ensure as you read these you check the latest guidance from Government.

Hygiene Measures

At the time of writing our guidance focuses on the hygiene measures needed to disrupt the spread of coronavirus should we get a number of cases in England and Wales. But at present we remain as individuals in England and Wales at low risk.

As Catholics we reiterate the commitment of the Church to health care ministry. Ensuring we disrupt the spread of the virus is core to effective mission.

Version One of this 13-page guide is available to download.

The UK Government has released its information for the public on the outbreak of coronavirus in China, including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and its symptoms.

gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public

Welsh Government Press release

Statement from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales about Coronavirus (2019-nCoV): 7 February 2020



Update from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales, Dr. Frank Atherton on Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

The outbreak of coronavirus with an epicentre in Wuhan, Hubei province, China is evolving and following advice from experts, the UK Chief Medical Officers are now recommending that all travellers who develop flu-like symptoms however mild, (these symptoms could be a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing) within 14 days of returning from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau, should self-isolate at home immediately and call NHS Direct or NHS 111, if available in your area.

It is important to note that travellers from Wuhan and Hubei province should self-isolate for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms, due to the increased risk from that area.

The public can help to lessen the chances of spreading any respiratory virus. The advice is to catch it, bin it, kill it and wash your hands. The Welsh

Government are working with Public Health Wales to support the UK Government's respiratory hygiene awareness raising campaign launched on 1 February.

At this point in time there are no cases in Wales but the Welsh Government and NHS Wales have robust arrangements in place to manage cases and protect the public.

All UK Chief Medical Officers are continuing to co-ordinate action in response to the developing situation. The UK risk level remains at moderate. We are keeping the risk assessment under constant review. I will keep you regularly informed of developments.

Travel advice

China travel advice on GOV.UK. Further information on coronavirus How coronavirus is transmitted and other 2019 coronavirus facts on Public Health Wales. How the response to the coronavirus is being managed across the UK on GOV.UK



Corona virus

Well done for our bishops in giving advice on pandemic planning, as the article on this page shows.

Our bishops were well ahead of the laggardly and insubstantial advice from a government which failed to think ahead and plan properly for such a crisis.

As an article on this page suggests, to hold a crisis meeting on the virus when it has already struck the UK is bad government, bad planning and an insult to the people who may be affected.

The floods in South Wales

As a former resident of Pontypridd I was shocked to see Taff Street flooded and Nantgarw under water.

It is obvious that work needs to be done to prevent such an appalling situation happening again.

Our sympathies go out to all the residents who were flooded out of their homes and face months of repair and reconstruction.

It is worth reading our article on page 4 entitled Paris Caritas and Local Emergencies.

This article outlines a way ahead for work to be done on these local emergencies.

It also outlines how you, in your parishes, can help.

I know of churches who have rushed in to provide cleaning equipment to areas affected by the floods.

God bless them for their Christian charity.

Why the UK government has failed us

**By Dr James Campbell
Editor
Catholic People**

In a previous job I was a consultant for the Thomson Foundation, a charity set up to improve journalistic practice throughout the world.

The Foundation accepted commissions from many organisations, UK based and abroad.

I worked for them on commissions from our Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Department of International Development (DfID) and also for various United Nations organisations including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.

The Thomson Foundation was commissioned by UNICEF to prepare a communications plan to guide governments in terms of the onset of a pandemic, such as we have with the corona virus currently affecting the world and the UK.

The foundation plan was rejected since it only concentrated on training government press offices. I was then tasked to prepare an acceptable plan. From

my army staff training experience in organising major events I saw that in a pandemic situation you had to set up an organisation which involved getting together working groups which included government PR people, medical experts, police, transport, industry and others. You then had to run back exercises with these groups to test out your pandemic communications policy.

I ran this successful programme in Albania, Ukraine, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, running week-long workshops to let the teams work together and prepare for a pandemic situation, putting extreme pressure on them as the pandemic accelerated and vital services such as power, transport and hospitals started to fail.

This was planning head, which the present government has failed to do.

For example, we had the COBRA planning group in the Cabinet Office, the crisis planning unit, only meeting on March 2. I have taken part in COBRA as a civil servant.

They should have met well over a month ago when medical experts could see that this was a pandemic situation.

A dysfunctional and ignorant approach by the Prime Minister, I suggest.

Perhaps he should have taken a leaf of of the book of our Catholic bishops (see the article on this page)?


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Archbishop George and Father Daniel administer the Ashes

HOMILY OF HIS

Basilica of Santa Sabina Ash
Wednesday, 26 February 2020

We begin the Lenten Season by receiving ashes: “You are dust, and to dust you shall return (cf. Gen 3:19). The dust sprinkled on our heads brings us back to earth; it reminds us that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

We are weak, frail and mortal. Centuries and millennia pass and we come and go; before the immensity of galaxies and space, we are nothing. We are dust in the universe. Yet we are dust loved by God. It pleased the Lord to gather that dust in his hands and to breathe into it the breath of life (cf. Gen 2:7). We are thus a dust that is precious, destined for eternal life. We are the dust of the earth, upon which God has poured out his heaven, the dust that contains his dreams. We are God’s hope, his treasure and his glory.

Ashes are thus a reminder of the direction of our existence: a passage from dust to life. We are dust, earth, clay, but if we allow

Parish Caritas and Local Emergencies

Many of our parish communities have been affected by the recent storms. Our thoughts and prayers go out to everyone, but especially to those experiencing flooding, emergency evacuation or other forms of distress.

Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff has draft proposals for the development of Parish Caritas which it is hoped would be undertaken during this year.

In light of the current local emergencies, a number of key actions could be taken by parishes in the frontline of these emergencies as part of their own Parish Caritas development. These need to be under the general coordination of the parish priest.

“...Bishops are responsible for their particular Church, including the diocesan and national Caritas. They also have responsibility for encouraging parishes to be engaged in Caritas ministry” (cf. Intima Ecclesiae Natura). [1]

A systematic approach to ‘reading the signs of the times’

In Mater et Magistra, Pope John XXIII picked up Pius XII’s expression, the ‘signs of the times’, and used the phrase to call the church to renewal in its own life, and in its involvement in the world, by ‘reading the signs of the times’...

In Mater et Magistra he affirms the process of See, Judge, Act as a way of reading and responding to the ‘signs of the time’:

“There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgement on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: observe, judge act.” Pope John XXIII, Mater et Magistra, 1961 (# 236)

Convening a meeting of your parish and charity representatives

The purpose of the meeting will be to develop an organised enquiry process for addressing the current emergency as it affects parishioners. This will be based on the process of See, Judge, Act. The parish priest and organisational members may already have received reports and requests from parishioners and these could be brought to the meeting. The parish priest may make an appeal to parishioners to feed in news and information from others, especially regarding the elderly or infirm members of the parish.

1) Possible organisation of the meeting

Agree a Chairperson (this may or may not be the parish priest); Agree a Secretary/Notetaker; Provide a suitable

introductory prayer; Introductions – Do ‘Rounds’, asking people to state their name, role in the parish, group they belong to, and any occupation/skill relevant to this emergency meeting. Emergency Needs: Ask attendees to share what they have heard from the community.

2) Input of information recorded, with initial analysis and steps for resolutions

Input from those in need could be recorded on the following Parish Caritas Listening and Mapping Issues Record Sheet, which is below. The headings speak for themselves. A larger Record Sheet is provided separately.

Parish Caritas Listening and Mapping Issues Record Sheet

Name of person in need: Name and contact details

Date: Date information received

The Issue: Description of issue. If there are several issues record each and its resolution in a separate line.

What type of issue? Is this about food, shelter, clothing, health, safety, transport, etc.

Support being given – By Parish? By others? A brief note of support given and by whom.

No support? Prioritize the issue: High /medium/low: A brief note of urgency/severity of need

Description of action to be taken and by whom: Include action to be taken by Local Authority, Utilities, Health Services as well as by parish, charities, community organisations, etc.

3) Creating a Directory of Assistance

Input from those within the parish, and the community it serves, that can assist: Section 1) Create a Directory of the Catholic charities and what services and assistance they provide, e.g. SVP, social action groups. Record other groups in the community and what services and assistance they provide, e.g. Cytûn or Churches Together groups and networks, local charities and community organisations, Foodbanks, etc.

Input from external Public Sector agencies that can assist:

Section 2) Create a Directory of the Agencies and Public Sector

organisations that can provide assistance in your parish area, e.g. Local Authority (LA), Police, Fire, Ambulance, Hospitals, GP Surgeries, Public Health, Utilities. LAs have information and advice on a range of emergency scenarios.

For example, EVAC Cardiff is a multi-agency partnership working closely to deliver advice and support to help people and communities to be prepared to deal with any major incidents or emergencies that might occur in Cardiff, such as flooding or severe weather, or transport accidents.

<https://www.evaccardiff.co.uk/>
Gwent Prepared

<https://www.gwentprepared.org.uk/>
includes the following Local Authorities:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council – Emergency Planning

Caerphilly County Borough Council – Emergency Planning

Monmouthshire County Council – Emergency Planning

Newport City Council – Civil Contingencies

Torfaen County Borough Council – Emergency Management

Bridgend County Borough Council - <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/recycling-waste-and-environment/environment/flooding/>


Merthyr Tydfil Council - <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/crime-safety-and-emergencies/emergency-planning/>

Neath Port Talbot Emergency Planning Team - <http://www.jointresilience.co.uk/>

Rhondda Cynon Taf - <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/EmergenciesSafetyandCrime/Floodingassistance.aspx>

Vale of Glamorgan Council <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/iving/Civil-Protection/Civil-Protection-Unit.aspx>

Herefordshire Council https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/homepage/69/flooding_emergency



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ourselves to be shaped by the hands of God, we become something wondrous. More often than not, though, especially at times of difficulty and loneliness, we only see our dust! But the Lord encourages us: in his eyes, our littleness is of infinite value. So let us take heart: we were born to be loved; we were born to be children of God.

Not a time for useless sermons

Dear brothers and sisters, may we keep this in mind as we begin this Lenten season. For Lent is not a time for useless sermons, but for recognizing that our lowly ashes are loved by God. It is a time of grace, a time for letting God gaze upon us with love and in this way change our lives. We were put in this world to go from ashes to life. So let us not turn our hopes and God's dream for us into powder and ashes. Let us not grow resigned. You may ask: "How can I trust? The world is falling to pieces, fear is growing, there is so much malice all around us, society is becoming less and less Christian..." Don't you believe that God can transform our dust into glory?

The ashes we receive on our foreheads should affect the thoughts passing through our minds. They remind us that, as God's children, we cannot spend our lives chasing after dust. From there a question can pass into our hearts: "What am I living for?" If it is for the fleeting realities of this world, I am going back to ashes and dust, rejecting what God has done in my life. If I live only to earn money, to have a good time, to gain a bit of prestige or a promotion in my work, I am living for dust. If I am unhappy with life because I think I do not get enough respect or receive what I think is my due, then I am simply staring at dust.

Make God's dream a reality

That is not why we have been put in this world. We are worth so much more. We live for so much more, for we are meant to make God's dream a reality and to love. Ashes are sprinkled on our heads so that the fire of love can be kindled in our hearts. We are citizens of heaven, and our love for God and neighbour is our passport to heaven. Our earthly possessions will prove



useless, dust that scatters, but the love we share – in our families, at work, in the Church and in the world – will save us, for it will endure forever.

The ashes we receive remind us of a second and opposite passage: from life to dust. All around us, we see the dust of death. Lives reduced to ashes. Rubble, destruction, war. The lives of unwelcomed innocents, the lives of the excluded poor, the lives of the abandoned elderly. We continue to destroy ourselves, to return to ashes and dust. And how much dust there is in our relationships! Look at our homes and families: our quarrels, our inability to resolve conflicts, our unwillingness to apologize, to forgive, to start over, while at the same time insisting on our own freedom and our rights! All this dust that besmirches our love and mars our life. Even in the Church, the house of God, we have let so much dust collect, the dust of worldliness.

Let us look inside, into our hearts: how many times do we extinguish the fire of God with the ashes of hypocrisy! Hypocrisy is the filth that Jesus tells us in today's Gospel that we have to remove. Indeed, the Lord tells us not only to carry out works of charity, to pray and to fast, but also to do these without pretense, duplicity and hypocrisy (cf. Mt 6:2.5.16). Yet how often

do we do things only to be recognized, to look good, to satisfy our ego! How often do we profess to be Christians, yet in our hearts readily yield to passions that enslave us! How often do we preach one thing and practice another! How many times do we make ourselves look good on the outside while nursing grudges within! How much duplicity do we have in our hearts... All this is dust that besmirches, ashes that extinguish the fire of love.

Lent is a time of healing

We need to be cleansed of all the dust that has sullied our hearts. How? The urgent summons of Saint Paul in today's second reading can help us. Paul says: "Be reconciled to God!" He does not simply ask; he begs: "We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20). We would have said: "Reconcile yourselves with God!" But no, Paul uses passive form: Be reconciled! Holiness is not achieved by our efforts, for it is grace! By ourselves, we cannot remove the dust that sullies our hearts. Only Jesus, who knows and loves our heart, can heal it. Lent is a time of healing.

What, then, are we to do? In journeying towards Easter, we can make two passages: first, from dust to life, from our fragile humanity to the humanity of Jesus, who heals us. We can halt in contemplation before the crucified Lord and repeat: "Jesus, you love me, transform me... Jesus, you love me, transform me..." And once we have received his love, once we have wept at the thought of that love, we can make the second passage, by determining never to fall again from life into dust. We can receive God's forgiveness in the sacrament of Penance, because there the fire of God's love consumes the ashes of our sin. The embrace of the Father in confession renews us from inside and purifies our heart. May we allow ourselves to be reconciled, in order to live as beloved children, as forgiven and healed sinners, as wayfarers with him at our side.

Let us allow ourselves to be loved, so that we can give love in return. Let us allow ourselves to stand up and walk towards Easter. Then we will experience the joy of discovering how God raises us up from our ashes.

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Diocesan Caritas development report

Name of Diocese: Cardiff
Date of report: December 2019

This report is to document the work undertaken in the Diocese in relation to development of a Caritas office for the Diocese as agreed between Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) and the Diocese in their Memorandum of Understanding. It should be submitted by email to admin@csan.org.uk. NB CSAN understands that progress may not follow the timeline and that different dioceses will follow different routes towards forming a Caritas. This report is intended to document progress and not to proscribe or constrain the Diocese's work. Diocesan Caritas development activities can include:

1. Building relationships with stakeholders: the SVP, J&P, existing CSAN members in the diocese, CAFOD and others.
2. Scoping the range of Catholic social action within the diocese using the CSAN toolkit
3. Promote the Love in Action resource to interested parishes and deaneries
4. Creating a plan for Caritas in the diocese with the Bishop and diocesan curial officers
5. Planning and delivering a Roadshow
6. Planning and delivering the Caritas launch
7. Supporting the new Caritas for the first 6 months of its existence.

Proposed timeline

Year 1		Year 2	
Activity	Q1 & 2	Q3 & 4	Q5 & 6
A	Engage with stakeholders and build relationships		
B	Scope social action in the diocese		
C	Promote Love in Action to interested parishes and deaneries		
D	Create a plan for the diocesan Caritas		
E	Plan and deliver a Roadshow		
F	Plan and deliver the launch		
G	Support new the Caritas		

Progress to date – The background meetings and events
Please enter a brief summary of activities undertaken over the six months and plans in place.

Quarter numbers (3-4) (1-2)
Activity Progress achieved to date Plans in place
A Engage with stakeholders and build relationships
Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff (CADOC) Steering Group (SG)
• Meeting with CADOC Chairperson: 03.09.19
• There were no meetings with the SG during this period.
• Work continues on developing partnership agreements with each stakeholder, reflecting on the Caritas Internationalis (CI) Partnership Principles and other guidance.
• Drafted and circulated through the SG and parishes Caritas Calling! -‘A Monthly News Bulletin for and from our local charities and Catholic Agencies’, as a way of developing a shared understanding of local, national and international issues and events and providing links to resources.
• Promoted Pope Francis’ 3rd World Day of the Poor message and links to resources through the SG and parishes and through Caritas Calling!, to Cardiff and Menevia parishes
Plans in place
Convening SG meeting:
• to consider and approve the Caritas Diocesan Plan for presentation to Archbishop Stack
• to prepare for Caritas Roadshow

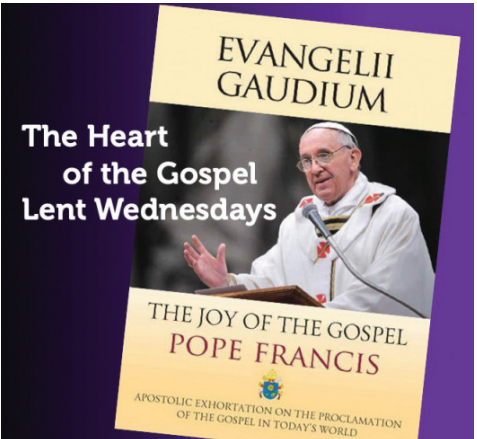
Development of a Caritas Office
The work includes Premises and a Role.
• The Premises: The office arrangements at PRC were changed on 4th July and a temporary desk was made available in the PRC library, with no desktop or landline phone. The hope was for a move to Cathedral House with CAFOD following previous negotiations.
• Notified on 6th August by Christopher Jones, Projects Manager, AoC, that an office would not be viable at Cathedral House due to the large costs required to enclose the stairwell leading to the office to fulfil fire regulations.
The Role: The role of Caritas Coordinator will be based on:
• The sample Job Description and Person Spec provided by CSAN
• the findings from the work with stakeholders, parishes and Commissions, and the Development, Education and Formation requirements at the strategic diocesan level and at the local parish level
• the CI Personnel and Partnership documents

Lent Wednesday Retreats at Belmont Abbey

Lent is the Church’s natural time of retreat, a moment to step back and take stock on where we are as individuals and as a Church. St Benedict recommends that we pick up a book in Lent and read deeply.
What could be better than picking up Pope Francis’s beautiful exhortation Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel), which he gave us right at the beginning of his pontificate, to offer us a way forward. It is a rich and encouraging document: full of enthusiasm, challenge, truth, love and joy. He dreams of a different way of us being Church, living with a ‘missionary impulse’ ‘capable of transforming everything’.
There are Christians, Pope Francis says, “whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.” Is there something

missing from the way we live our faith? St Benedict tells us in his Rule that Lent should be lived rather “all the while looking forward to the Easter festival with joyous spiritual longing.” Lent should be lived with the joy of the Gospel.
Different members of the Belmont community will reflect on the inspiring words of Evangelii Gaudium, so that we might live our Lent in the correct perspective, a Lent lived towards Easter. Then, as Pope Francis says, we might be able to ‘light a fire in the heart of the world’ in a spirit of ‘missionary joy.’
Each retreat runs from 10am to 4pm, including Mass at 12 noon and a soup lunch. The suggested offering is £12. Booking is not necessary, and all are welcome to attend one or all of the retreats.

4 March Out of our comfort zones. [Prologue & Chapter 1]
Pope Francis is causing a certain disturbance in the Church. How does he want to see it transformed? Fr Brendan
11 March Challenges to overcome [Chapter 2]
What prevents us sharing the Gospel with others, as a church community and as individuals? FR Alexander
18 March Missionary disciples [Chapter 3]
If the entire People of God proclaims the Gospel, how are we to become “Missionary Disciples”? Why does Pope Francis place such emphasis on mission? Abbot Paul
25 March Spirit-filled Evangelizers [Chapter 5] and Annunciation Day marking the Rededication of England.



The Church’s evangelization as a kind of Marian style: an interplay of justice and tenderness, of contemplation and concern for others. FR Brendan
1 April The Social Dimension of the Gospel [Chapter 4]
What does a lived faith look like? Fr Andrew

ICAW welcomes you to...

Mediterranean Breakfast



23-03-2019 11am - 2pm Holy Family Church, Cardiff, CF5 3NP

ICAW is delighted to organise a traditional Middle Eastern Breakfast Buffet. The buffet will include a variety of delicious dishes (including vegetarian options) such as: فلفل, تشريب بإقلاء قمر, كرواسون أنواع أجبان رنسلية, وزعتر زيتون, مصمون و خبز عراقي.

There will also be games & activities during the day.
Price is £10 per adult, £5 for children under 12 years and complimentary for the under 5 years old.
All your contributions will be sent to the Christians in need in the Middle East. We would also welcome any donations.

For catering purposes, please book and pay by no later than Sunday 10th March.

Payments can be made by cash or cheque payable to ICAW and sent to: Mr. Laith Khalaf at 1 Roper Close, Danescourt, Cardiff CF5 2RD (Mobile: 07776090075) or to: -Mrs. Nagham Rassam at 69 Cyncoed Road, Cardiff, CF23 5SB (Mobile: 07817 922849)
- Or you can pay online to ICAW (HSBC account number: 31747533, Sort Code 40-16-17).
Please write your name in the reference box



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The Trappist Monastery of Mount St Bernard in new film documentary

Outside The City (PG), a new documentary film about the monks of Mount St Bernard, is to be screened at The Courtyard Centre for the Arts in Hereford on Sunday 29 March at 7.30pm. Situated outside Coalville in Leicestershire, Mount St Bernard was the first permanent monastery to be founded in England since the Reformation and is the only Trappist house in England.
A community of 25 monks, more than half of them over 80 years old, are opening a brewery. For their contemplative sacred existence to survive, the venture must succeed. As the monks reflect on spirituality, ageing and end of life, the number of burials in the Abbey graveyard grow.
This highly acclaimed documentary from filmmaker Nick Hamer explores some of the deeper questions about the role of religious life in the modern world. The Courtyard will be welcoming Nick Hamer to introduce the screening and lead a post-film audience question and answer session. Nick’s work has been screened by major broadcasters, international film festivals and independent cinemas.
To book tickets, or for more information contact the Box Office on 01432 340555 or visit www.courtyard.org.uk.



Trappist monks in England are opening a brewery

Plans in place

- Arranging a meeting with Archbishop Stack and Diocesan staff to resolve location of office and resources required.

ACTA

Gave update on Caritas development at ACTA meeting 24.09.19

Plans in place

- Provide written report 14.01.20 as away at SW Hub meeting

CAFOD

- Joint meetings with CAFOD and JPIC to plan a collaborative event in the Autumn 23.07.19; 31.07.19; 04.09.19 [Event cancelled as it clashed with diocesan launch of The God Who Speaks: A Year of the Word]
- Met with Therese Warwick to explore CAFOD/ Caritas collaborative action, 10.07.19; 20.08.19
- Attended CAFOD Faith in Action Day 16.11.19

Plans in place

- Meet with Therese Warwick to explore CAFOD/ Caritas collaborative action in light of the Joint statement of intent between CSAN and CAFOD ‘United in love, with a common purpose’

Catenian Association

- Met with P Sullivan and P. Sims-Coomber on 26.09.19 to discuss FLC planning for diocesan event in June 2020

Plans in place

- Follow up on possible working relationship with Catenians

Diocesan Deacons’ Forum

- Met Deacon Philip Manghan, 06.08.19
- All Deacons receiving Caritas Calling!

Plans in place

- Arrange for presentation at Deacons’ Forum and exploring working with members collectively and individually

Diocesan Evangelisation Commission (DEC)

- Met with Des Robertson to explore the work of Fr James Mallon in ‘Divine Renovation’ and Alpha training as part of parish Caritas development 09.08.19; 16.08.19; 23.08.19; 06.09.19; 05.11.19
- Met with Mgr. Bob Reardon and Des to discuss work on introducing the Alpha Course into the development of the generic parish Caritas teams in forming ‘intentional, missionary disciples’
- Attended ‘Experience Alpha Welsh Catholic Gathering’ with Des and Madeleine Walters 18.09.19
- Met with Madeleine Walters, Director of Evangelisation, 08.10.19 to explore working relationship between DEC and Caritas
- Attended diocesan module on Catechesis facilitated by David Wells 09.11.19

Plans in place

- Meet with Madeleine Walters, Director of Evangelisation, to continue exploring working relationship between DEC and Caritas as part of the Caritas Plan

Diocesan Family Life Commission (FLC)

- Met Ansti Corellis, Chair FLC. 03.07.19 to explore working relationship between FLC and Caritas
- Attended planning meeting on 19.09.19 for an FLC diocesan event in June 2020
- Met with John Stanton concerning ‘the Beginning Experience ministry to facilitate the grief resolution process for separated, divorced and widowed persons, and children of these losses’ on 01.10.19, and on 02.11.19 with Carolyn Rohde.
- Convened meeting with John, Carolyn and Ansti Corellis to explore working relationship and possible way forward 23.11.19

Plans in place

- Facilitating a meeting to plan presentation to Archbishop Stack in early Spring.

JPIC

- Met with Sheila Collins, member JPIC 14.08.19

Plans in place

- Meeting with JPIC members early in 2020 to draft a working agreement

Knights of St Columba (KSC)

There were no meetings with KSC during this period.

Plans in place

- Develop a working relationship with the KSC

Religious of the Archdiocese

No meeting during this period.

Plans in place

- Meeting with the Vicar for Religious of the diocese

SVP

- Met with Peter Sullivan, Chair, Cardiff Central Council SVP, to explore working relationship between SVP and Caritas 05.08.19;
- Attended a briefing meeting in Cardiff between national SVP members: Helen O’Shea, Chair, Elizabeth Palmer, CEO SVP and other national staff, and Cardiff staff and volunteers

Plans in place

- Explore working relationship and joint events
- Seeking a Partnership agreement

Engaging Agencies and bodies of CBCEW and other local groups

Developing contacts through the CSAN Directors’ Forum and through Cytûn

Plans in place

- Make contact with and establish communications with the Agencies at CBCEW - ongoing

Carmelite Third Order (CTO)

- There were no formal meetings with the CTO during this period.
- Had a brief discussion with the Secretary on potential working relationship, particularly in preparation for and during The God Who Speaks: A Year of the Word, exploring lectio divina, as part of learning how to listen to God and to neighbour

Plans in place

- Arranging Presentation to the Cardiff

PACT (Prison Advice & Care Trust)

There were no meetings with PACT during this period.

Santa Marta Group (SMG) / modern slavery and human trafficking

- There were no meetings with the SMG during this period.
- Attended a Caritas Conference on modern slavery and human trafficking in London. 15.10.19

Plans in place

- Raise awareness on modern slavery and human trafficking when developing generic parish Caritas teams.
- Potential for themed Roadshow on modern slavery and human trafficking in the future.

Together For the Common Good (TfCG)

- Attended the TRAIN THE TRAINER for Here: Now: Us People Common Good Training Workshop

Plans in place

- Planning to introduce training as part of Education and Learning package in CST
- Seeking opportunities to provide it ecumenically

CUK Citizens Cymru Wales Chapter (CCW)

- Met Canon Barry English, Parish Priest and Geraint Williams, a member of Merthyr Tydfil parishes, with Richard Weaver, CUK Community Organiser in CCW, to explore Caritas development and ‘community organising’ training process when developing generic parish Caritas teams. 16.07.19

Plans in place

- Attend CCWLT Annual Meeting, postponed to 05.02.20

Cytûn Churches Together in Wales

- Attended Cytûn: Joint meeting of the Laser Group and Wales & Europe Working Party for a presentation by Lord Lisvane and Sir Paul Silk on the Act of Union Bill 11.10.19
- Attended Cytûn: Wales and Europe Brexit meeting. 04.11.19
- Provided a report on the European Union Settlement Scheme and an information sheet for Steering Group members and Parishes in Cardiff on 10.10.19 and in Menevia on 30.10.19
- Emailed ‘Message from Cytûn - CAB provides multilingual service to EU citizens in Wales who need assistance applying to EU Settlement Scheme’, to Archbishop Stack, clergy, parishes, and organisations in the Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Diocese of Menevia 26.11.19
- Sent same details to Bishop Peter Brignall, Bishop of Wrexham, Cc. Archbishop Stack on 26.11.19

Plans in place

- Attend Cytûn: Wales and Europe meeting 13.01.20

CSAN Caritas Social Action Network

- Attended Caritas SW Hub meeting, Buckfast Abbey, Devon. 09.07.19
- Attended Caritas Diocesan Journey Meeting, Hinsley Hall, Leeds. 09 - 10/09/19

Plans in place

- Attend Caritas SW Hub meeting, Crawley, W. Sussex 14.01.20
- Attend Caritas Journey meeting in London 24.02.20
- Attend Caritas Directors’ Forum in London 25.02.20

Scope social action in the diocese

No specific work undertaken on this issue during the period.

Plans in place

Undertake a ‘mapping exercise’ / ‘social audit’

- within parishes and their local communities
- Within their related schools
- Within the ‘stakeholders’ group
- Within Religious communities

There will be a ‘mapping exercise’ or ‘social audit’ carried out in each Parish when developing generic parish Caritas teams

Promote Love in Action to interested parishes and deaneries

Provided an article on the Love in Action resource in the November edition of Caritas Calling!

Plans in place

- Promote when developing generic parish Caritas teams
- Raise awareness through the Vicar for Religious and the Diocesan Deacons’ Forum

Create a plan for the diocesan Caritas

Continued work on drafting a basic Plan whilst taking account of the new Caritas Internationalis Strategic Framework 2019–2023, the Code of Ethics for Caritas Internationalis: Striving to live our values and Putting our Values into Practice: the Code of Conduct for Staff of Caritas Internationalis Member Organizations.

Researched background documents from Caritas Internationalis:

- Caritas Partnership - A Caritas Internationalis Handbook for Reflection and Action
- The Partnership Toolbox - A Facilitator’s Guide to Partnership Dialogue
- Protection From Abuse And Exploitation Caritas Internationalis - Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

Plans in progress

- Complete draft Plan and share with Archbishop, the Steering Group, Deacons’ Forum and the Council of Priests for feedback and final approval
- Present agreed Plan at the Launch of Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff at a Roadshow event

Plan and deliver a Roadshow

Planning for a diocesan Roadshow to be the official launch of Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff (CADOC).

Plans in place

- Exploring a suitable venue and ‘moment’

Plan and deliver the launch

Plans in place

- Awaiting agreement on the Plan

Support new the Caritas

An indication of the ongoing support from CSAN...

An indication of the ongoing support from the Archdiocese...

Name of person completing the report

Jim Barnaville

Role in the diocese

Caritas Coordinator

A tribute to Dom Alistair

The Abbot of Belmont Abbet the Rt Rev Dom Paul Stonham delivered this eulogy at the Requiem Mass for Dom Alistair Findlay on 29th January 2020

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still and trust in me. I am going to prepare a place for you; I shall return to take you with me, so that where I am you may be too.”

On 15th January, Fr Alistair made his way to his room after Morning Office, taking the lift, as he always did, to the second floor, then walked along the corridor. As he placed the key in the lock, he suffered a massive heart attack and died. To all of us it came as a terrible shock.

We knew that last Summer he had undergone surgery at Worcester Hospital and returned to Hereford Hospital from time to time for a check up and that he took time off to rest when needed. But he continued to work hard, especially at his pastoral duties, and never intimated that he was as unwell as he knew himself to be. Almost as an act of faith, he continued to eat rather unwisely and made no attempt to live a healthier lifestyle. He took literally those words of Jesus we have just heard, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still and trust in me.” He knew that he could die at any moment and that the Lord would return to take him that he might be with Jesus in the Father’s house. He was not afraid to die, for he believed the Lord’s word. Every step was an act of faith. His sudden death was truly symbolic of the Christian life: we have been given the key to the door that leads to eternal life; we can put the key in the lock, but only God can open the door and let us in.

Proud of his roots

Alistair Findlay was born on 19th August 1955 in North Shields, Tynemouth, the only child of William and Joyce (née Archer). He was very proud of being a Geordie and retained a great affection for the place of his birth, as well as for the Northumbrian saints, especially St Cuthbert.

He was baptised at Dunston Hill Methodist church, but confirmed as a teenager in the Church of England. He studied at the Priory Primary School, Tynemouth, and then at Tynemouth Grammar Technical School, where he took his A levels in 1976. This was followed by 3 years at the College of the Venerable Bede, Durham University, where he trained as a teacher, receiving a Certificate in Education. After teaching practice at Gaywood Park, King’s Lynn, he lived with the Taizé Community in France for two years. This was his first experience of monastic life and one that he would cherish for the rest of his life. Here he was also able to perfect his knowledge of the French language. On his return to England, he taught at Coventry Blue Coat School from 1979 to 1988, when he took up a post at St John’s Preparatory School, Enfield, North London. This was followed by two years at

Haileybury Junior School, Windsor. Finally, in 1993, he took up his last teaching post as Assistant Headteacher at Topcliffe School, Birmingham, where he would remain until 2010. He was, of course, an excellent teacher, a true professional, who is remembered for the clarity of his expositions in the classroom and the charitable and fatherly way he treated his pupils. You might be surprised to learn that among the many roles he took on, he also coached rugby.

A first class chef

Ever since his time at Taizé, where, in addition to running youth meetings, he was also in charge of catering – he was a first class chef, but never got the chance to share this talent at Belmont – ever since Taizé, he had been contemplating the possibility of some sort of Christian community life.

At the same time, his faith deepened and matured as he devoured books on every aspect of Philosophy and Theology. He became very learned in the things of God, that spiritual journey to which the Lord invites each one of us. This prayerful reading gradually led him to think seriously about becoming a Catholic.

After the necessary preparation, he was received into Full Communion on 24th March 1994, the Thursday before Palm Sunday, at the church of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Rednal. Following his conversion, he visited a number of monasteries, including Belmont and Mount Saint Bernard. Some of you will know that he was a frequent participant in our retreat programme. In 2010 he took early retirement and so was free to consider the possibility of a monastic vocation. Eventually, he entered Belmont in July 2012 as a postulant and was clothed in the habit on 1st February 2013 together with Br Dunstan.

Although, on entering the monastery, he said, “I wish I had done this sooner,” nevertheless it wasn’t an easy transition from the freedom of the lay state to the restrictions of the monastic novitiate, from bachelorhood to the coenobitic life. He would soon discover that self-discipline and a stiff upper lip were not sufficient to put up with and accept the foibles and idiosyncrasies of the brethren. It’s one thing to be a guest, looking in from the outside, but quite another to be one of brothers living cheek by jowl with the others. The monastic virtues do not come easily; you have to struggle with humility, obedience, silence and charity. Although he cooperated fully with the Holy Spirit on the search for God and the quest for holiness, at times his powerful nature would get the better of him and he would express his anger openly. He once described himself as “intolerant and impatient.” One of his favourite expressions was, “I am incandescent with rage,” and although he meant it, it was said with a twinkle in his eye, as though mocking his inability to control his powerful emotions. He applied himself assiduously to his novitiate studies and to the work assigned to him. He made his First Profession on



Dom Alistair at his ordination, blessing a baby

2nd February 2014 and his Solemn Profession on 4th September 2017.

A mature student in Rome

In the meantime, he had begun theological studies at Sant’Anselmo in Rome, which he took to with enthusiasm. He enjoyed being a mature student. In preparation, he took an Italian course at Padua, staying with the community at Santa Giustina, the monastery of Augustine Baker’s profession.

The three years he spent in Rome were some of the happiest in his life. He contributed much to community life at Sant’Anselmo and loved being at the vibrant heart of the Catholic Church. He worked as a translator at the 2016 Abbots’ Congress and began doing translation work for A.I.M. (Alliance for International Monasticism). He completed the three-year Baccalaureate in Theology, while at the same time working on a License in Liturgical Theology, to which he was putting the finishing touches here at Belmont when he died. He was a deeply committed student, writing copious notes, reading every book he could get his hands on and producing essays so good they could have been published. Alistair took to heart those words from the Prophet Daniel we heard today, “The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue, as bright as stars for all eternity.” He was to continue this hard work in his preparation of homilies, retreat talks and conferences. You will remember that even his short weekday homilies were the fruit of prayer and study, jewels of perfection in content and style, theologically sound and yet always practical, homely and helpful.

Threw himself into his work

On returning from Rome, Fr Alistair was ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop George, present with us this afternoon, on 4th September 2018 and then to the sacred priesthood on 12th January 2019.

It was only the Sunday before he died that he celebrated the first anniversary of his ordination. From the moment he returned to Belmont, he threw himself with vigour into whatever work he was asked to do. A difficult job, which was not to his liking, was that of Procurator. He was also a director of Monksoft, which deals mostly with Hedley Lodge. He was elected to the Abbot’s Council as a community councillor and became a trustee. But he was happiest of all doing pastoral work, celebrating the sacraments, preaching, visiting the sick and assisting the dying and bereaved. He took special care over the celebration of funerals. He began serving as Officiating Catholic Chaplain with the Armed Forces. Then there were talks, conferences and retreats. He tackled all these with that professional spirit he had learned during his 35 year teaching career. You could not but admire his dedication and the genuine love and concern he had for all those with whom he came into contact as a priest.

A great source of consolation And yet, he was a priest for just a year. A parishioner said to me that she found it a great source of consolation that Fr Alistair had been able to celebrate a whole liturgical year as a priest, that he had celebrated all the major feasts and seasons. In fact, he began and ended his earthly ministry with the Baptism of Jesus. St Paul reminded us today that, “When we were baptised in Christ Jesus, we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father’s glory, we too might live a new life.” At 7.20 on the morning of 15th January, no longer symbolically but in very deed, Fr Alistair entered into the tomb with Christ, so that in Christ he could be raised from the dead by the Father’s glory. Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, has prepared a place for him in his Father’s house.

We pray that there he may rest in peace. Amen.

Wanted for the Missions

Large Statues (Even damaged ones), old vestments, pictures, church fittings, rosaries, prayer books, religious books, relics etc.

**Please ring
Mr. B. Ferris KSC,
102 Moor St, Earlsdon,
Coventry CV5 6EY
M: 07764 460041**