

Catholic **Pic**



Issue 186
March 2020

ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

FREE



SYNOD 2020
Archdiocese of Liverpool

A visit to Central America

EN ESTE ALTAR
MONS OSCAR A. ROMERO
OFRENDO SU VIDA A DIOS
POR SU PUEBLO.



**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE**

**Celebrating
the Good
Shepherd
Appeal**



**'Our Lenten
Pilgrimage
begins'**

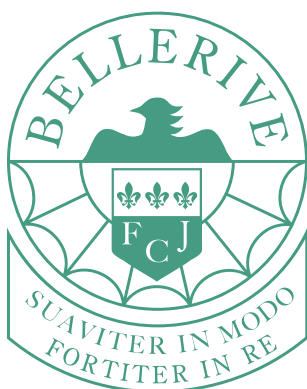


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Welcome

We began our Lenten Journey a few days ago on Ash Wednesday and this afternoon on the First Sunday of Lent the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion is celebrated at 3.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral. We remember and pray for those who will be received into the Church at Easter.

On 24 March we commemorate the fortieth anniversary of St Oscar Romero's martyrdom in the Chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence in San Salvador. Our archdiocese has been given a relic of the Saint which Archbishop Malcolm will receive in the Cathedral on the evening of Monday 23 March. Canon Chris Fallon and Father Stephen Pritchard recently visited Nicaragua and El Salvador with Cafod and they share with us their experiences as a daily diary.

We look forward to Sunday 29 March when throughout the country our Bishops will celebrate Mass for the rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary. Archbishop Malcolm will celebrate the 11.00 am Solemn Mass in the Cathedral on that day.

Lent also means the Good Shepherd Collection for Nugent, an initiative of Bishop Thomas Whiteside who was Bishop (and later Archbishop) of Liverpool from 1894 to 1921. Nugent share the story of one of the country's oldest charity appeals.

A busy Lent lies ahead.



From the Archbishop's Desk

One of my friends died recently and I was filled with great sadness but was grateful that I could pray for his eternal rest and that his family would be strong in their loss. That is one of the good things about being a catholic – we are not helpless or hopeless in the face of death as there is something real and effective that we can do through prayer and sacrament. I didn't see Clive and his wife Sara very often. We would meet up every now and then for a special occasion and engage in long conversations as we did when we were young, and we always seemed to pick up the thread where we had left off.

Nowadays, people stay connected through Skype and FaceTime on our mobile phones, or through social media. I send a lot of Christmas cards to keep in touch with old and new friends but that will probably diminish for me as time goes by. Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, are the major way of staying connected for me especially the Eucharist. In helping us understand this, St Thomas Aquinas says that we are all grains of wheat that make the one bread that becomes the Body of Christ the Church. St Paul uses the phrase 'in Christ' to describe our life as Christians. These two images describe connectivity in a way that doesn't require a mobile phone or a computer. All the sacraments point to our unity in Christ and at different points in our lives they give us hope that we will all be one in Him. And when my time comes, I will be able to continue my conversation with Clive in heaven.



Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP
Archbishop of Liverpool

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Chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence in San Salvador where St Oscar Romero was martyred.

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Marking St Oscar Romero's anniversary

Diary of a Cafod visit to Nicaragua and El Salvador

By Canon Chris Fallon and Father Stephen Pritchard

With Archbishop McMahon unable to make the trip with Cafod to Central America, Father Stephen Pritchard and Canon Chris Fallon represented him and the diocese on a 15-day visit to view some of the charity's work, get a better sense of the Church context in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and integrate some of this experience into the life of Liverpool Archdiocese.

For the 40th anniversary of St Oscar Romero's martyrdom, his relic will be received into the Metropolitan Cathedral in an ecumenical service on Monday 23 March at 6.00 pm and venerated at two Masses on Sunday 29 March – the first at 11.00 am at St Gregory's, Weld Bank, Chorley and the second at 6.00 pm at Liverpool Hope Chapel at which the Archbishop will preside and at 7.15 pm Clare Dixon, Head of Cafod's Latin America Department, will give a talk. All are welcome to all events.

This brief diary highlights some of the experiences we had during our visit.

NICARAGUA

• Tuesday 14 January

Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference

offices: Meeting with Cardinal Brennes and Bishop Herrera, President of Caritas Nicaragua. We were immersed into Nicaragua's volatile situation: since April 2018 when the Nicaraguan government suppressed peaceful protests, 325 people have been killed, over 500 arrested and tens of thousands have fled the country. We heard how Silvio Baez, the auxiliary bishop of Managua who fiercely criticised President Daniel Ortega's brutal crackdown on opposition

protesters, has been recalled by the Vatican following death threats. In July 2018 when he and Cardinal Brennes tried to enter a church they were attacked and Bishop Baez was wounded, hit in the stomach and robbed of his episcopal insignia. This picture of social unrest coloured all our subsequent encounters and affects each level of society. Bishop Herrera commented: 'There are grateful hearts in this country for your visit. We thank you for your solidarity, we are currently suffering.'

Meeting with Cafod Central America team:

We heard of some of the grassroots partnerships Cafod has developed across Central America which include aiding farmers to care for the environment and improve crop yield, supporting women's rights in an unequal society and aiding those defending human rights.

• Wednesday 15 January

John XXIII Institute: Here we saw theory put into practice. We learned that 300,000 people benefit from a pharmacy warehouse we visited. The government does not have the will or means to distribute essential medicines in the rural area. Through the unique network of Catholic churches, many of them having dispensaries, medicines reach the most remote communities.

University of Central America,

Managua: We heard a bleak assessment of the present state of the country: 'Welcome to the nightmare' was the opening remark as we listened to a leading academic. We also heard that the Church has had a leading role in 'protecting people, hiding people, feeding people, healing people; the only place

'There are grateful hearts in this country for your visit. We thank you for your solidarity, we are currently suffering'

people can truly express themselves.'

• Thursday 16 January

Apostolic Nunciature, Managua:

Meeting with Papal Nuncio to Nicaragua, Archbishop Stanislaw Sommertag, who shared how the country is 'a fragile place' and how through his intervention 90 prisoners were recently released by the government.

Cantera: This inspiring project works with young people over four days of workshops to explore relationships of power and where violence comes from. Seven thousand young people have made a pledge by wearing a ring to show their commitment to fight against gender inequality.

• Friday 17 January

Association of Mary Barreda,

Leon: After a two-hour road journey we visited the homes of girls being supported by Cafod to gain training and education. The girls and their mothers speak about how they now see themselves as having more rights and choices and how new horizons are opening up for them as they become more independent.

• Saturday 18 January

Meeting with Vice-Chancellor of the University of Central America,

Managua: Father Chepe Idiaquez SJ spoke to us of the situation of the university since April 2018 and the importance of human rights in Nicaragua. The Jesuits have been at the forefront of peace negotiations and mediation between the government and opposition groups.



Housing In El Salvador

EL SALVADOR

• Sunday 19 January

Mass at the tomb of St Oscar Romero, San Salvador Cathedral:

It was also a day of remembrance for Father Octavio Ortiz, the first priest Romero ordained as Archbishop, who was assassinated with four young people in 1979 because the government falsely claimed he was leading a retreat for guerrillas. His head was repeatedly run over by a military vehicle so there could not be an open coffin at the funeral.

• Monday 20 January

Hospital of Divine Providence: We celebrated Mass at the altar where Archbishop Romero was shot and saw the room in the sacristy where he lived for six months and the small house later built for him in the grounds of this hospice, where we listened to the recording of his last words and the gunshot that ended his homily and his life. We visited some of the patients currently being cared for. San Antonio parish, El Despertar: This was where Father Octavio Ortiz and his

catechists were killed in 1979. We met the current parish priest and some of the young people who were preparing the parish celebration of this anniversary which we'd marked in the Cathedral on Sunday.

• Tuesday 21 January

Solidarity project, Guaymango: In this remote village, Cafod's partner Solidarity is training women to save together so they can fund each other's projects, starting small businesses to supplement their family's income. We visited three sisters-in-law whose shanty houses are adjacent to each other along a dirt track: one is fattening chickens, the second keeping pigs and the third running a small shop stocking everything people need in this rural location. Their husbands all have their own small businesses but support their wives in these new enterprises which have brought hope and confidence to their lives.

• Wednesday 22 January

Ann Manganaro Clinic, Guarjila: This village, completely destroyed by

government bombing in the civil war, was rebuilt by returning refugees with the help of Father Jon Cortina SJ and included a small clinic staffed by American paediatrician Sr Ann Manganaro and an East German surgeon named Victoria. Many years later, the clinic was recognised by the government and now receives some funding but Cafod's support is still needed. We met some of the staff recruited and trained while still in their teens by Sr Ann and Victoria.

• Thursday 23 January

Meeting with British Ambassador to El Salvador:

Ambassador David Lelliot explained that the UK government's priorities for El Salvador are the environment, prosperity (including transparency) and human rights. He was pleased to learn about Cafod's current involvement and keen to visit some of the projects.

University of Central America, San Salvador:

The Vice-Chancellor and senior staff briefed us about the University's determination to form 'agents of social



Meeting with British Ambassador to El Salvador, David Lelliot

change' and their analysis of what they call 'the national reality'. Every student is required to attend 300 hours of teaching about the history and present-day situation of the country and to spend another 300 hours working on community projects. After 20 years of right-wing government and 10 years of left-wing government, neither of which addressed the corruption and violence which have beset the country, the current president rejects traditional politics and appears to govern by social media and – since our return – sends troops in to occupy his parliament. The university still finds itself threatened because of its insistence on social analysis and justice.

• **Friday 24 January**

University of Central America, San Salvador:

We moved from the Loyola Retreat Centre into a guest house on the campus, less than 100 yards from the garden where six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter were shot by government forces in 1989 and the chapel where the priests are buried. We had some time to reflect on these events and to visit the Romero Centre, which includes a memorial room dedicated to the many

martyrs of this troubled country.

Meetings with human rights workers:


We had lunch and dinner with some of the legal aid professionals and other workers funded by Cafod and other charities who were attending a human rights conference at the university.

• **Saturday 25 January**

School visit, La Chacra: Cafod helps to fund a school started by Franciscan sisters in an area of the city controlled by gangs, to provide alternative futures for the young people who grow up here. After lively demonstrations of music and dance, the school's first lay headteacher led us on a walking tour of the area it serves, where we saw the poverty which is the backdrop to these children's lives.

Mass in the university chapel: We concelebrated with Father Jose Maria Tojeira SJ, who was the provincial here in 1990 when the six Jesuits were murdered. This friendly, relaxed and humorous man was typical of so many people we met who had experienced terrible injustice and faced apparently insoluble problems with great faith, joy, hope and gratitude.

'Cafod helps to fund a school started by Franciscan sisters in an area of the city controlled by gangs'



Can you imagine not having a bed of your own?

Sadly, that's the reality for some children living in our communities, who simply don't have the basics that we just take for granted.

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News diary

Jubilee celebrations for Father Denis

If you've got any news from your parish that you'd like featured e-mail us with the details at: catholicpictorial@rcaol.co.uk



Father Denis Parry, who works in Lima, Peru, with LAMP (Liverpool Archdiocesan Missionary Project) celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his priesthood last December.

LAMP is part of the Missionary Society of St James the Apostle and Father Denis was able to celebrate at their January AGM.



He is pictured (left) with Father David Costello (St James' Society Director) also celebrating 25 years of priesthood, in Lima at Mass with Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh who was the speaker at the meeting. He was also visited by Father Joe Bibby from St Wilfrid's Parish, Widnes.

Sacrament of Confirmation: an update by Father Simon Gore

As 2020 started the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation has also begun in earnest. As a diocese we are inviting year 8s to be confirmed, and although some year 8s will have

already been confirmed when they were in year 4 there are still some young people in the diocese able to receive the Sacrament this year.

Animate, as the youth ministry team, have

been going into the Catholic High Schools to speak about the Sacrament to the year 8 cohort. This introduction has been followed by specially designed classes in the year 8 RE curriculum on the meaning and importance of the Sacrament.

From there young people have been asked to register for local preparation sessions in their Pastoral Area. Confirmations should then take place after Easter in Pastoral Areas at Mass or Evening Prayer.

More information on the stages of preparation for the Sacrament can be found on the dedicated website: liverpoolcalled.co.uk. If you know a year 8 pupil who has not received the Sacrament of Confirmation please ask them to visit the website and register for their local preparation sessions (go to the top right of the website and fill in the form for 'Register for Confirmation'). Please keep all those young people preparing for the Sacrament this year in your prayers.



National Lottery Heritage Fund comes to aid St James' Church



Thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the support of the Archdiocese and parishioners, the end of 2019 saw the completion of a major scheme of structural and masonry repairs to the tower of St James' Church in Bootle.

For years the striking 120ft tower had been plagued by structural defects to its bell chamber floor and bell frame structure, as well as substantial erosion to its external sandstone walling. In 2012 bell ringing had to be stopped due to safety concerns and things really came to a head in 2017, when structural investigations determined that the bell chamber floor would eventually collapse if remedial works were not undertaken.

A large scale repair and restoration project was subsequently devised and, after a two-stage application to its Grants for Places of Worship programme, the National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded the parish an overall grant of circa £190,000.

Works began in March 2019 and involved the complete replacement of the existing reinforced concrete bell chamber floor, the refurbishment of the bell frame and bells, extensive repair

works to external masonry and the renewal of the tower roof covering.

In addition to putting right the serious defects, the restoration works also gave the parish the opportunity to reach out into the local community to raise awareness of not only the project but also of St James' Church itself as an important Grade II listed building and local landmark.

Neil Fewtrell, the Archdiocesan Surveyor responsible for overseeing the project, said, 'The support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and parishioners has helped relieve the parish of an overwhelming burden. No longer does it have to face the daunting prospect of a complex and unaffordable repair scheme. The church has served as a place of worship and community asset for the past 135 years and it's great to know that we are a step closer to preserving it for many more generations to come.'

Father James McGarry SDB, assistant Parish Priest at St James' added: 'On Sunday mornings, parishioners are now called to Mass by ringing the peal of bells. What a joy it is to hear the bells once again'.

Obituary of Deacon Peter Fehrenbach

Peter Joseph Fehrenbach was born on 27 July 1931 and baptised in Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Sheffield. He attended schools in Clitheroe and Sheffield before studying at Lancashire College of Agriculture and Harper Adams Agricultural College in Shropshire and pursuing a career in marketing agricultural products.

He married his beloved wife Margaret at St Kentigern's parish in Blackpool in 1958 and they settled in Southport with their three children, Paul, Anne and Martin.

Peter was very much involved in the parish of St Marie on the Sands as a Reader and Eucharistic Minister, an authorised person for registration of marriages and chair of the parish and deanery pastoral councils. Father Chris Crowley, then parish priest of St Marie's, approached Peter to suggest that he may have a vocation to the permanent diaconate and after some time for thought and discussion with Margaret, Peter applied and was accepted for formation in 1988. He was ordained deacon in the Metropolitan Cathedral on 30 June 1991 and appointed to serve the parish of St Marie on the Sands, which he did faithfully for fifteen years until his retirement in July 2006 on reaching his 75th birthday.

Peter was well known and respected by many people in the parish, a constant and reliable presence. He and Margaret helped found the Bereavement Group in the parish and they were active in support of family life in the wider area and in the Archdiocese. Peter was for some years the Archdiocesan Co-ordinator of Formation for Eucharistic Ministers and was a faithful and active member of the diaconal family. After his retirement he and Margaret continued their involvement at St Marie's, attending daily Mass there until just a few weeks before his death on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, 2 February 2020.

Archbishop Emeritus Patrick Kelly celebrated the Funeral Mass for Peter in St Marie's Church on Wednesday 19 February prior to committal in a family grave near Blackpool.

A fitting celebration

By Veronica Murphy

A fitting celebration of two year's hard work completing ten on-line modules in Pastoral Ministry took place at Liverpool Hope University recently.

Representatives from every diocese in the Northern Province and from Wrexham, gathered in the Hope Chapel in thanksgiving for the 48 students who were presented with their certificates from the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago following a Mass of Thanksgiving. It was a joy to see all the different roles and ministries celebrating a course which provided opportunities for lay people, 14 of whom are preparing for the Permanent Diaconate. Dr Mariana Miller represented Loyola and gave a stirring address before Mass. She praised the commitment and quality of the students' engagement during this Pilot course and spoke of the importance of e-learning for Adult Formation: providing opportunities for a much broader group of people to access excellent resources and tuition in this developing theology.

All six dioceses of the Northern Province are now supporting the course, along with Wrexham Diocese and there are 44 students currently preparing for their second year. The bishops of Hallam,



Lancaster, Wrexham and Liverpool attended together with Salford Diocese's Vicar General. It's just three years since Dr Brian Schmisek, the then Dean of the Institute of Pastoral Studies, invited adult formation leaders from the Northern province to a meeting in Leeds to consider the Institutes offer to provide a two year online course at a competitive price. The offer included the opportunity to make significant input to the content

and style of delivery and the possibility of involving some tutors from the UK. Recruitment is underway for a third cohort and if you know anyone who would be interested in beginning the course this year please ask them to make contact with either Sr. Catherine Darby catherine.m.darby@gmail.com or Veronica Murphy, v.murphy@rcaol.org.uk, the UK coordinators for the course, as soon as possible.

Tribute to Sister Agnes

by Sister Benedicte
It was with sadness but with joy that we celebrated the life and death of Sister Agnes Vernon on 17 December 2019 at St Sebastian's Parish in Liverpool.

At her funeral, Father Mark Beattie paid a great tribute to her calm, peaceful and generous nature, which her family, friends from the parish, the families she worked with and of course her two other Sisters in Community at Holly road, had first-hand knowledge. Sr Agnes was born in 1929 and grew up in a large close-knit family in Littleborough in Lancashire. She spent time studying mental health in London before entering the Convent in Belgium with the Sisters of the Little Ones (Soeur des Petites). Then after Noviciate, she arrived back in

England to work at Nugent's Clumber Lodge Children's Home, where so many of the Sisters of the Little Ones worked with the children. She enjoyed a great rapport and working relationship with Monsignor Bennet, who lived in Formby (he was the then Administrator of the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protection Society, which would now be known as the CEO of Nugent) both firmly believing in Divine Providence. The young children at Clumber loved her quiet caring manner, knowing that they could get away with things easily. Her knowledge and organisational skills quickly led her to become the Manager of the Home, bringing lots of new ideas. Her success was noted, and she was asked by Nugent to open the house in Holly Road for

young people with additional learning needs as there was little provision in Liverpool at that time, 1970's, to help these families.

The Project initially started with respite care for the families, who were assessed on the family's individual need by the Archdiocesan social worker working in Liverpool and then referred to the Project. Sr Agnes worked closely with the families and it soon became apparent that families needed extra support. Hence, she organised the Saturday Club to run alongside the respite care, where parents could drop them off to be entertained whilst they did their shopping or other chores. Sr Agnes support to these families was something very special, she will be forever remembered by them. Holly Road, with Sr Agnes'



leadership, moved upwards and onwards becoming a successful Residential Home for people with severe complex needs. She worked tirelessly until around 68 years of age, managing these wonderful services for Nugent. She retired from paid employment, but she never fully retired as she continued to work hard, fund raising for Nugent and the parish by making candles, cards and cakes; which were in much demand. Many people's lives have been enriched for knowing Sr Agnes and her presence will be greatly missed.

Join the Lourdes Music Group

This July pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Liverpool will journey to Lourdes for the 90th time. The Lourdes Pilgrimage is an integral part of the Archdioceses' identity and it is a week of prayer, worship, fellowship and unbridled joy.

There are a great many constituent parts of the Pilgrimage without who the week would not be possible, from the Hospitalité to the clergy, St Bernadette team to the medical staff and of course our wonderful and enthusiastic Youth Pilgrims. All make the sacrifice, of their time and their money, gladly, for the good of our Pilgrims, assisted or otherwise. In this we are truly blessed. Another section of volunteers whose work is vital is the Lourdes Music Group.

The Lourdes Music Group, or LMG as they are known to many, began life in 1978. Their role is: 'to provide the music for all major services of the pilgrimage and other key events throughout the year. This essential ministry creates the context of our worship and lies at the heart of the life and energy of the pilgrimage. It is in our liturgies that we are renewed, and our minds and hearts are raised to God in prayer and petition. We hold to the words of St Augustine, "singing is praying twice" Throughout the years LMG has counted all manner of musicians and singers among its ranks, all committed to the

enhancement of the Liturgy and the experience of pilgrims. Pianists, guitarists, flautists, percussionists, oboe, saxophone and trombone players and more; if it can be played and fits in the hold of an aeroplane, the chances are it's been played in Lourdes at some point in the last 41 years.

Whilst LMG's music ministry is its foundation, over the last four decades the group has grown into a community of praise and fellowship in itself. Through the Music Group, its members past and present have become family, growing with and nurturing one another on our faith

journey, collectively and individually. LMG can now boast married couples who first met through the group as well as two priests and one present seminarian among their number.

As close as the group is, we always desire to expand our number and welcome new members into our extended family. If you or someone you know would like to hear more about what it means to be part of the group, minister to people through music and experience, potentially, the most joyous and blessed week of your year in Lourdes in 2020, get in touch email: LMG@rcaol.co.uk



Cathedral to host rededication celebration

Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral will join in a nationwide celebration on Sunday 29 March with a Mass in honour of the rededication of England as Mary's Dowry.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon will mark the rededication in the 11am Mass at the Cathedral and all are welcome to take part in a pledge which will take two forms: a personal promise – all Christians in England are encouraged to make a personal dedication to Our Lady – as well as a communal entrustment.

The first documented dedication was made by King Richard II in Westminster Abbey in 1381 as he sought the protection of Our Lady in face of political turmoil. England became known as 'Mary's Dowry' – a gift for Our Lady under her guidance and protection – though this title is believed to have an earlier origin.

The Marian shrine at Walsingham, founded in 1061, ranked with Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela as

one of the most visited sites in Christendom prior to its destruction in the Reformation. Medieval pilgrim routes to Walsingham exist from Ely, Norwich and Kings Lynn, where pilgrims from Europe would disembark before travelling the 30 miles to Walsingham on foot.

Pope Francis made his own contribution to the rededication during his weekly audience on Wednesday 12 February when, at the request of Cardinal Vincent Nichols, he blessed a painting of Our Lady of Walsingham. The painting, by Amanda de Pulford, was subsequently taken back to the Norfolk shrine and following the rededication, it will begin a journey to every Catholic parish in England.

The Rector of the Catholic National Shrine in Walsingham, Mgr John Armitage, attended the blessing of the painting alongside Cardinal Nichols. He explained that it would 'be commissioned in Walsingham on the day of the

rededication by Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald on the site of the ancient Holy House'.

Organisers have invited churches, schools and institutions across the country to host a rededication for their communities, setting up a website – www.behold2020.com – for people to register and receive digital packs.

The website provides a map showing all the host venues across the country and it explains that the rededication entails first 'praying The Angelus Promise, a prayer in which we say "yes" in union with Our Lady through the words of the Annunciation'. The second promise, the communal entrustment, involves renewing 'the vows of dedication made to Mary by King Richard II, praying together the Act of Entrustment'. Organisers say that 'these prayers may be celebrated communally in church or at home or in hospital or prison, so that all may take part.'

Scouts Celebrate 50th Anniversary



8th Penwortham St Teresa's Scouts, started by parents and parishioners of St Teresa's Church, are celebrating their 50th Anniversary in 2020. A Church Parade at Mass, followed by a group photo, began the year long celebrations.

The most ambitious event planned by the group is the 'Start a Heart Charity Challenge Walk for Life' which aims to raise £5000. The challenge will involve all sections of the group and aims to complete a virtual walk of the England and Wales Coastal Paths, the England/Scotland Border and a group ride of the

famous Preston Guild Wheel. Each week at Beaver, Cub and Scout activity nights and camps, all miles walked or cycled by the attending members will be logged and added to a progress tracker in the form of a map of England and Wales. Along the way the Scouts will connect with other Scouts around the route and ask them to send something representing their group.

The group have already clocked up 450 miles and raised over £750 towards their target.

The money raised will be used to provide and maintain a defibrillator for Church,

the Parish Centre and the Community of Penwortham. Any remaining money from the £5000 target, will be shared with St Catherine's Hospice and Heartbeat Cardiac Care North West.

The Scouts chose this challenge as it promotes a healthy and active lifestyle, serves the community and promotes teamwork. Everyone at 8th Penwortham Scouts are immensely proud of the fun, friendship, excitement and ultimately the 'Skills for Life' that Scouting brings to the young people of the parish and look forward with enthusiasm to the next 50 years.

A very special occasion

By Marian and Peter Alcock Sunday 9 February will be long remembered for Storm Ciara which rocked Merseyside and the rest of the UK. Strong winds and torrential rain made for a miserable start to the day, and despite the warning not to travel unless it was essential, my family travelled from St Helens to Liverpool and gathered together at the Metropolitan Cathedral for Mass to celebrate Marriage and Family Life, organised by the Pastoral Formation Team.

This is an annual event to help us focus on, and celebrate, the Sacrament of Marriage and the importance of family life in the Church and wider society. Each year, couples who celebrate a significant anniversary, are invited to attend the Mass and receive a family bible

which they retain for 12 months. A bible is also presented to a family in recognition of the importance of family life.

We celebrate our "Golden Wedding Anniversary" in May and had been invited to receive a family bible from Sanaria Al Katy and Saeed Al Taraji, who were last year's recipients. Archbishop Malcolm McMahon celebrated the Mass and spoke movingly about the importance of marriage and the family. Married couples were also invited to renew their marriage vows, and those celebrating a significant anniversary this year, received a special blessing. The bidding prayers reminded us that marriage is a serious commitment and that all couples need the support and prayers of their family throughout their married life. Not all marriages survive



Marian and Peter Alcock with Archbishop Malcolm

without facing difficulties and sadly sometimes result in divorce or separation, we were reminded of our responsibility to offer prayer, support and friendship to those suffering family breakdowns. Families were also remembered, particularly those struggling with issues of our time such as unemployment, poverty and addictive behaviours. The voices of the Cathedral Choir rang out adding their joyful praise to the beauty and tranquil

atmosphere, I am sure that everyone present was very moved by the occasion. We all joined the rest of the congregation in the Gibberd Room for refreshments and conversation following the Mass.

The celebration, joy and peaceful calm within the Cathedral, contrasted greatly to the stormy scene that greeted us as we left to celebrate, as a family, with a special Sunday lunch. It was very special occasion which will live long in our memory.

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On a liturgical note

Canon Philip Gillespie

The month of March opened for us with the first Sunday of the Lenten Season – and so the whole month which lies before us is marked by the purple of recollection, penitence and confession.

There are certain notable exceptions to the purple, when white intervenes: the feasts of Saint Patrick (17th), St Joseph (19th) and the Annunciation of the Lord (25th, nine months before the Feast of the Nativity).

Purple is a royal colour, a colour of penitence but also a colour of matters of significance. We have a saying that 'it was a purple time' – that is, it was a significant time, a time or event of importance. Lent is indeed such a time of significance for us all because it invites us to concentrate on our Baptism as we walk with the catechumens and those preparing to celebrate the sacraments for the first time at Easter. With no flowers on the sanctuary, the Gloria and Alleluia 'rested' for the season, the austere ashes and the theme of 'have mercy on me God, in your kindness', the Liturgy seeks to pare things down to their basics – not only to allow us better to appreciate the basics but also then to

rejoice all the more at Eastertide as the white vestments and banners return, the joyous music and flowers are seen and heard, and the abundance of the water of Baptism helps us to express the Gaudium Paschale, or Joy of Easter. In some of our churches you may have been fortunate enough to hear an addition to the Epiphany Mass; a proclamation made after the Gospel of the 'high days and holy days' of the year which was about to unfold. This serves to remind the Church that the very heart of all that we do is the celebration of the Easter Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Vigil and First Mass of Easter. Perhaps now would be a good time to mark in our diaries the days of the Triduum and to set aside the time needed to celebrate the Liturgies of those days in communion with our parishes and communities. Each Easter—as on each Sunday—the Holy Church makes present the great and saving deed by which Christ has forever conquered sin and death. From Easter are reckoned all the days we keep holy.



Sunday thoughts

Mgr John Devine OBE

A school boy wrote in his RE exam that 'Jesus was tempted in the desert'. That suggests a 'naughty but nice' understanding of temptation; all about chocolates or sex. But the most corrosive evils are often 'respectable'; society condones and even rewards them.

On the first Sunday of Lent we see Jesus, alone in the desert, confronted by the demons in his head. His first temptation is to turn stones into bread. It's the temptation we all face; that of performance. I am what I do. I prove that I am somebody by doing something. I keep busy to demonstrate my worth. To whom? To the inner parent? To God? Jesus does not have to prove anything. He is the Son of God. And so are we. In the second temptation Jesus sees the whole world and all the wonderful things it contains. 'You can have it all.' It's the temptation of possessions. I am what I have. Yet however much I

own it is never enough. I want this, I want that: a new sofa, car or kitchen. Do they satisfy? The third episode sees Jesus tempted to play to the crowd; to go for the spectacular. It's the temptation of popularity: I am what others think of me. It's addictive and never satisfies. I can't please the audience or the opinion polls for ever. How many friends, likes or followers do I have on Facebook and Instagram? All three temptations are attempts to deaden the most fundamental yearning of all: to be loved. Satan's promises are lies. They are hollow but also unnecessary. That's sound psychology and good spiritual sense. I am already loved by God. St Augustine was right: 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in You.'



Light in the darkness



When I was five years old, I was placed in Mrs Newman's class. I felt nothing but safe with her. I had a secret that none of the other children knew about, nor any of the teachers. Dad was alcoholic and I was often told, 'Don't tell anyone what happened last night.'

Mum was terrified that I might blurt out about Dad's drunkenness. So, I was anxious and shy as a result of the tension at home. I thought it was all my fault and that I was bad. That was why Dad drank and at times was so angry. It was all because of me. Mrs Newman sensed my anxiety and pain and told me often that God loved me and had always wanted me from the very beginning of creation. My nana would regularly do the same. My mum would tell me how wonderful I was, despite her own difficulties. However, I still thought it was my fault and it was only by grace that I learned in time how extraordinary each human being is and how precious we are and that this was true for me as well.

The beginning of Matthew's Gospel quotes Isaiah's prophesy about the light for those who walk in darkness. It is in the ordinariness of life and through the likes of Mrs Newman, Nana and Mum that the light shines. Through our baptism we are to share the light in our ministry of healing to those around us. If you and I, who are the body of Christ, don't respond to those who need the light of Christ, then who will? If you and I don't stretch out our hands with compassion and understanding, then who will? If we're not prepared to give people reasons for living and hoping, then who will?

Pope Francis is constantly calling us to be that light in the darkness. He says, 'It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. but if the Church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded Church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn Church, I would definitely choose the first one.' You and I are called to be the healing, loving, transforming presence of Christ in the world. We are invited to get our hands dirty, to be in those places and with those people that Jesus would have been with, to let the light shine through us into the lives of others. This is demanding and it is challenging but it is our call and to not do it is to sell short our Baptismal calling so let's pray for the courage to be fearless proclaimers of the Gospel.

Fr Chris Thomas

Weekly Reflections are on the Archdiocesan website at www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/reflection

Good Shepherd tradition brings best out of our children

Nugent's annual Good Shepherd appeal is special not only because it is one of the country's oldest charity appeals but also because it sees children and young people helping one another.

'God searches for the lost. He searches until the end, like the shepherd who goes out into the darkness, searching, until he finds the sheep ... Finding the lost sheep is a joy to God, because he has a "loving weakness" for those who are lost.' – Pope Francis

Sadly, there are children and young people living in our communities who are in some ways lost. They live without the basics that many take for granted: there may be no food in the house, no clean clothes, no toys. Whether it's a family living hand to mouth, struggling to pay the rent, a homeless mother and child fleeing domestic abuse, or a young person struggling with life, until they find a sanctuary and safe place with us.

Across the last 139 years Nugent has been at the forefront of campaigning for and supporting children and young people living in poverty, in crisis or just struggling with life, helping to restore their sense of dignity and purpose. It is one of the major charities in the north west, offering a diverse range of support through schools, care homes, community and adoption services, and working with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

One of Nugent's longest-established, and finest, traditions is its Good Shepherd appeal, traditionally focused on schools. With its origins in Victorian Britain it is one of the oldest charity appeals in the country, dating back more than 110 years. It is built on the idea of children helping children, and has helped so many families struggling to support themselves in difficult times. The Good Shepherd appeal was an initiative of the then Bishop Thomas Whiteside who was Bishop of Liverpool from 1894 to 1911 and then the first Archbishop of Liverpool until his death in 1921. He wanted to 'enlist for the homeless little ones of his diocese the sympathies not alone of the grown-up people but even of the little children, both those of the well-to-do and those of the poor, but self-supporting, working people.'

It seems fitting to recall that the founder of this appeal should have been originally buried in Ford Cemetery, close to where Nugent's founder, Monsignor James Nugent lies; after all they are two great pioneers of the work that the charity continues today.

Down the decades, school children from

this Archdiocese have continued to support Nugent through the Good Shepherd appeal, raising millions of pounds and helping thousands of youngsters by taking part. Today over £50,000 is raised each year on average.

Pupils at participating schools are encouraged to use their imagination – just as Lottie and Hope from Christ the King Primary School, Wavertree did with their Easter bonnet parade last year to support the appeal.

Recently the Nugent team began researching the Archdiocesan archives for old Catholic Pictorial articles highlighting different ways in which schools across Merseyside have supported the appeal in the past – from jumble sales to fancy dress to simply bringing in pocket money.

One photo (see below) which caught their attention in particular was from 1976 and it featured a group of young people with Archbishop Derek Worlock outside the Metropolitan Cathedral following a Good Shepherd Mass. As it turned out, one of those young people is Marie Reynolds – the charity's Caritas Manager – and she is circled with her friend Anne Casey. Marie has been working at Nugent for over 30 years, and originally headed the fundraising team and therefore led the Good Shepherd appeal. She remains a close friend of Anne, a parishioner of St Oswald and St Sebastian in Old Swan, who is a lifelong supporter of Nugent and runs a Faith in Action youth group which raised funds for the charity last year.

Marie said: 'We were both at Notre Dame Everton Valley and were representing our school at the Mass. I have lots of happy

memories of fundraising for the Good Shepherd appeal and it's great to be still part of it. Seeing the impact the appeal has on local people and the difference the donations continue to make is remarkable.' If any Pic readers were at that 1976 Good Shepherd Mass and appear in the photo, or if you simply raised funds for the appeal at your school, Nugent would love to hear from you. Contact them via email (fundraising@wearenugent.org) or through social media (search for 'wearenugent' on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter). The hashtag for Good Shepherd appeal activities is #NugentGS and donations can be made online, via PayPal or by calling 0151 261 2000. Funds raised will help provide families with essentials such as a bed, a cooker, basic kitchen items and bedding, along with clothes and pyjamas for the children.

Good Shepherd Masses

This year's Good Shepherd Masses at which the children will be invited to present their fundraising donations will be celebrated by Bishop Tom Williams and will take place on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 24 June at St Mary's Church, Leyland at 10.45am**
- **Tuesday 30 June at the Metropolitan Cathedral at 1pm**



Sunday 1 March First Sunday of Lent

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King

Masses at 8.30 am (Blessed Sacrament Chapel), 10.00 am (Family Mass – Crypt), 11.00 am (Solemn Mass – Cathedral), 7.00 pm (Crypt).

Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

3.00 pm at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Deaf Mass

4.30 pm at Christ the King, 78 Queens Drive, Childwall, L15 6YO. Deaf Mass is celebrated in British Sign Language and spoken English, both deaf and hearing people are welcome. Details: Denise Armstrong-Hart: Mobile (text only) 07917 460791 email: DArmstrong-Hart@wearenugent.org

Tuesday 3 March Metropolitan Cathedral Chapter Mass and Installation of Canons

12.15 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Wednesday 4 March 'Songs we Remember.'

Singing and enjoyment for anyone who likes to sing but particularly geared towards those living with dementia and their carers. 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm at St Thomas of Canterbury Parish Hall, Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details: Irenaeus Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

Samuel Group

An opportunity for young people to listen to God's Word and explore the purpose of their life. A series of evenings through Lent which will include praying with Scripture and reflecting with other young people, to talk about what's important in your life. 5.30 pm-7.30 pm at FCJ Centre St Hugh's, 53A Cranborne Rd, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 2HY. If you would like to join the Samuel Group this Lent, contact Sr Lynne fcj lynnefcj@gmail.com or Brother James fcp. brojameshayes@gmail.com

Thursday 5 March 'God reveals deep and hidden things.'

Discovering the prophet Daniel. Scripture Morning at



Irenaeus, 32 Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk Website: www.irenaeus.co.uk

Friday 6 March Women's World Day of Prayer Lent Fast Day

Saturday 7 March

Mass followed by a talk on Our Lady given by Maria Hickman (Northern Catholic Conference)

12.00 noon at Sandymount, 16 Burbo Bank Road, Blundellsands, L23 6TH. Details: Tel: 0151 924 4850 Email sandymountcrosby@montfort.org.uk

Sunday 8 March Second Sunday of Lent

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King

Masses at 8.30 am (Blessed Sacrament Chapel), 10.00 am (Family Mass – Crypt), 11.00 am (Solemn Mass – Cathedral), 7.00 pm (Crypt).

'Crucifixus pro nobis'

By Kenneth Leighton's sung by the Cathedral girl choristers and lay clerks. 3.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Tuesday 10 March Time Out on Tuesdays

10.00 am to 4.00 pm at the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Liverpool L15 6TW. An opportunity for quiet time, away from the daily rush of life. Offering £10 per person (bring your own lunch). For further details contact: Sister Winifred. Tel: 0151 722 2271, Email: winniecenacle@mail.com

Healing Service

7.00 pm at Sandymount, 16 Burbo Bank Road, Blundellsands, L23 6TH. Details: Tel: 0151 924 4850 Email sandymountcrosby@montfort.org.uk

Wednesday 11 March Samuel Group

5.30 pm-7.30 pm at FCJ Centre St Hugh's, 53A Cranborne Rd, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 2HY. If you would like to join the Samuel Group this Lent, contact Sr Lynne fcj lynnefcj@gmail.com or Brother James fcp. brojameshayes@gmail.com

UCM bi-monthly Mass

7.30 pm at St Aidan's, Holmes House Avenue, Winstanley, Wigan, WN3 6EE.

Thursday 12 March

'God reveals deep and hidden things.' Discovering the prophet Daniel. Scripture Morning at Irenaeus,

32 Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk Website: www.irenaeus.co.uk

Sunday 15 March Third Sunday of Lent

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King

Masses at 8.30 am (Blessed Sacrament Chapel), 10.00 am (Family Mass – Crypt), 11.00 am (Solemn Mass – Cathedral), 7.00 pm (Crypt).

'The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross'

By César Franck sung by the Cathedral boy choristers and lay clerks. 3.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Newman Circle afternoon visit to Liverpool Parish Church of Our Lady and St Nicholas, hosted by the Rector, Rev Canon Dr Crispin Pailing

Time to be confirmed. Details: John Potts. Tel: 07889 841096

Wednesday 18 March 'Songs we Remember.'

Singing and enjoyment for anyone who likes to sing but particularly geared towards those living with dementia and their carers. 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm at St Thomas of Canterbury Parish Hall, Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details: Irenaeus Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

Samuel Group

5.30 pm-7.30 pm at FCJ Centre St Hugh's, 53A Cranborne Rd, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 2HY. If you would like to join the Samuel Group this Lent, contact Sr Lynne fcj lynnefcj@gmail.com or Brother James fcp. brojameshayes@gmail.com

Thursday 19 March 'God reveals deep and hidden things.'

Discovering the prophet Daniel. Scripture Morning at Irenaeus, 32 Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk Website: www.irenaeus.co.uk

'The Wounded Shepherd.'

Author Austen Ivereigh will speak on his new book 'Wounded Shepherd: Pope Francis and his struggle to convert the Catholic Church'. 7.30 pm at St Anne's Parish Rooms, Overbury Street, L7 34HJ.

Newman Circle Talk: 'The Pastoral associates Role.'

Speaker: Father Matthew Nunes 7.30 pm at St Helen's Parish Centre, Alexandra Road, Crosby, L23 7TQ. Details: John Potts Tel: 07889 841096

Saturday 21 March

Christian Aid Liverpool Conference on Climate Change

10.00 am-4.00 pm at Liverpool Quaker Meeting House, 22 School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BT. Details and registration: www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved-locally/north-west Email: warrington@christian-aid.org

Mass followed by a talk given by Olive Dawson

12.00 noon at Sandymount, 16 Burbo Bank Road, Blundellsands, L23 6TH. Details: Tel: 0151 924 4850 Email: sandymountcrosby@montfort.org.uk

St John Passion by Johann Sebastian Bach

7.00 pm at the Church of Our Lady and St Nicholas (Liverpool Parish Church), Old Churchyard, Liverpool, L2 8TZ. The singers and players of the Liverpool Bach Collective directed by Philip Duffy. Admission by ticket only (for which there is no charge). Tickets available at: www.eventbrite.co.uk (search for St John Passion or by date). Any unallocated tickets will be available on the door.

Sunday 22 March

Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday)

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King

Masses at 8.30 am (Blessed Sacrament Chapel), 10.00 am (Family Mass – Crypt), 11.00 am (Solemn Mass – Cathedral), 7.00 pm (Crypt).

‘Stabat Mater Dolorosa’ by Pergolesi

Sung by the Cathedral girl choristers. 3.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Monday 23 March

Choral Evening Prayer and reception of the relic of St Oscar Romero

With Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP. 6.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Thursday 26 March

‘God reveals deep and hidden things.’

Discovering the prophet Daniel. Scripture Morning at Irenaeus, 32 Great Georges Road, Waterloo, L22 1RD. Details Tel: 0151 949 1199. Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk Website: www.irenaeus.co.uk

Samuel Group

5.30 pm-7.30 pm at FCJ Centre St Hugh's, 53A Cranborne Rd, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 2HY. If you would like to join the Samuel Group this Lent, contact Sr Lynne fcjlynnefcj@gmail.com or

Brother James ficp.
brojameshayes@gmail.com

Saturday 27 March to Sunday 29 March ‘Be not afraid.’

A weekend of silence and reflection led by Sr Moira Meeghan at Irenaeus, 32 Great Georges Road, L222 1RD. Suggested donations: Residential £85; non-residential with meals £60; non residential self catering £20. Bookings: Tel: 0151 949 1199 Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

Saturday 28 March

Quiet Day

10.30 am to 4.00 pm at the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Liverpool L15 6TW. Time to be quiet, reflect and pray. Offering £10 per person (bring your own lunch). No booking required. For further details contact: Sister Winifred. Tel: 0151 722 2271, Email: winniecenacle@mail.com

The English Reformation and the European Renaissance

An afternoon conference with Professors Peter Davidson (Oxford) and Gerard Kilroy (UCL), exploring the relationship between Reformation England and Renaissance Europe. 3.30 pm to 6.30 pm at the Christian Heritage Centre, Stonyhurst, College, Clitheroe, BB7 9PT. Tickets £29, student discount available, refreshments included and overnight stay at reduced cost available. Details: www.christianheritagecentre.com/events

Bookings:
events@christianheritagecentre.com Tel: 01254 827329.

Sunday 29 March Fifth Sunday of Lent

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King Masses at 8.30 am

(Blessed Sacrament Chapel), 10.00 am (Family Mass – Crypt), 11.00 am (Solemn Mass – Cathedral), 7.00 pm (Crypt).

11.00 am Solemn Mass for the re-dedication of England to Mary's Dowry.

Celebrant: Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP.

‘The Lamentations of Jeremiah’

By Thomas Tallis. sung by the Cathedral lay clerks. 3.00 pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Mass and Veneration of the Relic of St Oscar Romero

11.00 am at St Gregory's, Weldbank Lane, Chorley, PR7 3NW.

Mass and Veneration of the Relic of St Oscar Romero

Celebrant: Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP. 7.00 pm at Liverpool Hope Chapel, Hope Park, Liverpool, L16 9JD; followed at 7.15 pm by a talk given by Clare Dixon, Head of Cafod's Latin America Department.

Synod 2020 Talks

Monday 9 March

‘The Church as a Fragmented Mirror.’

What sort of unity are we called to in a Global Church facing tensions within and without? David McLoughlin. David McLoughlin has helped to train priests, deacons, ministers, and teachers for 30 years. He is a founder member of the Movement of Christian Workers. He has been President of the Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain and Vice President of the European Association of Catholic Theology. He is now the Emeritus Fellow of Christian Theology at Newman University. He provides theological support for a number of charities and religious orders and movements.

Monday 20 April

‘Participating in Christ's Ministry in the 2020s.’

The Ministry of Jesus in focus; sharing in Jesus' ministry: the vision of Vatican II, and responding to the needs of the Church and the world today. Kate Wilkinson and Rev Dr Peter McGrail.

Kate Wilkinson is a Theology Graduate from Heythrop College, London, who has worked in Youth Ministry for the last 10 years. She is currently school chaplain at All Hallows Catholic High School in Penwortham, Preston. She runs a blog and leads workshops and talks on the role of women in the Catholic Church today, inspired by St John Paul II's Letter to Women. Kate was the National President of the Young Christian Workers from 2017-2019 and is currently a member of the Synod 2020 working party. Peter McGrail is a priest of Liverpool Archdiocese, and is head of the Department of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies at Liverpool Hope University.

Talks are at 7.30 pm at the LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, L17 1AA. Tea and coffee available from 7.00 pm and optional Night prayer follows at 9.00 pm.



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A missionary with a paintbrush in his hand

By Simon Hart

'We used to live in a dreamy seaside town where the kids used to go to the beach and sail and windsurf all year long. Here the Mersey doesn't allow that.' Maybe not but that was never going to stop Joao D Filipe from leaving Cascais, a popular resort close to Lisbon, to settle with his family in Liverpool, where they are parishioners at St Charles, Aigburth.

As a member of the Neocatechumenal Way missionary initiative, the 60-year-old sees it as their calling: 'We came to Liverpool as a lay missionary family in 2018 – us parents with our three youngest kids. We expect, by the grace of God, to live here indefinitely.'

He and his wife Ana, who is Brazilian, began their life as Neocatechumenal Way missionaries in the United States in 1991, their efforts focused on helping revitalise parish life and participation. 'First we went to the US,' says Joao. 'We were sent personally by John Paul II.' He offers a lyrical description of their efforts 'both for the baptised and for people who once belonged to the Church and are far away. If the Church is a hospital for those who need to be healed and cared by Jesus Christ, the Neocatechumenal Way could be an "emergency room" in the heart of the Church.'

'We live here as a normal Christian

family,' he adds, 'helping where it's needed and working, with the kids in school. We have no plans, no programme, no regular financial support from anyone. We trust God will guide us.'

He and Ana have nine children and their youngest three – Martin (19), Catarina (16), and Vicente (13) – are here with them in Liverpool, studying at King's Leadership Academy, where Ana is a governor, and the City of Liverpool College. 'We are regularly in the parish, helping with what's needed, such as Baptismal preparation. The children are altar servers and help with the music at Mass on Saturdays. Also they help the Sisters of Charity in the city centre.'

Life has been an adventure for this one-time Law student at the University of Lisbon, who is now a professional artist. 'In America we lived in Newark, New Jersey and in Houston, Texas. I had small jobs in construction, moving furniture, even in a fruit market, until I established myself just as an artist.'

A specialist in religious icons, he explains: 'I've painted more than 700 icons in my life. They're in churches and private homes in several countries, mainly America and Portugal.' Born close to the shrine of Fatima, Joao cites this as one reason for his fascination with icons: 'The message of Fatima is very associated to Russia in the sense of

praying for its conversion and consecration.'

Another is a love of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa in Poland, prompted by St Pope John Paul II. 'The statues and representational paintings we see normally in our churches appeal more to our immediate senses, whereas icons appeal more to our reason. We have to stop, look carefully and contemplate.'

His latest commission is for St Charles parish – an altarpiece for the Our Lady of Walsingham chapel depicting the Annunciation and the Wedding Feast of Cana. 'In Lisbon I had an amazing studio in a 18th century building,' he continues. 'Right now I just have a very small corner in my own home. I can't afford to rent somewhere. I've been looking for two years for a space to paint and display my art in exchange of me providing paintings as "rent" but have had no success yet. Hopefully God will provide me a studio someday.'

'We are regularly in the parish, helping with what's needed, such as Baptismal preparation'

A Chinese Celebration

Every year children at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in Southport celebrate Chinese New Year.

This year is the year of the rat and started on Saturday 25th January 2020. All of the pupils had a creative week, learning all about customs and celebrations associated with the Chinese New Year. Last year they heard the legend of the willow pattern and had an art competition to draw a willow pattern plate.

This year the art competition was to design and draw a Chinese temple with a focus on drawing straight lines free hand and creating Chinese style patterns in order to decorate them. Whilst in Geography the children located China on a map and found out lots of facts about the country and the Chinese culture.

All year groups took part in a Chinese Dragon dance with great instruction from Miss Ross and enjoyed wearing colourful dragon and lion costumes. They also used Chinese parasols that were designed and decorated by year 6 pupils. In addition to yummy Chinese food they learned to say 'Ni hao' (hello) and enjoyed singing 'Gung Hey Fat Choy' or 'Happy New Year'.



Rising football stars selected for national squads

Grace Clinton and Phoebe Hampson, two Lower Sixth students from Carmel College in St Helens have been selected to play for their respective national women's football teams. Both girls currently play for Everton under-20s and are delighted to have the opportunity to play football at a national level.

Phoebe, who studies A-level PE, business studies and geography at Carmel, plays in midfield for Wales Women's Under-19s. This year the under-19 UEFA qualifiers will be hosted in Wales, but Phoebe has previously travelled to Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Denmark and Serbia to play.

Phoebe said: "I am delighted to play for the national team and represent my country. Every team member plays with so much pride and gives everything to each game. Everyone works really hard and there's a great sense of community in the team."

"The staffs in the sport department at Carmel have been great. They have given me lots of advice about future careers in sport. They also arranged a trip to Everton's training ground, Finch Farm so we could speak to analysts, sports physiologists, and nutritionists."

"All my teachers have been really supportive of my football commitments. They understand the additional demands that this places on me".

Grace, who studies A-level business

studies, A-level PE and BTEC science, plays for the Under-17s England squad. Her next competition will take place later this month in Florida against USA.

Grace said: "I've been playing football since I was six years old."

"I now train four days a week at Everton

with a match every Sunday. I'm also part of the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme at Carmel, which has been really beneficial for me."

"I would say to any young girls hoping to get into football, it's not how good you are, but how good you want to be".



Pictured Pheobe Hampson (left) and Grace Clinton

Calling all environmentally friendly schools!

The Educate Awards is looking to commend local schools, academies and colleges who are making a considerable effort to be environmentally friendly this year.

As part of the award's new categories this year, the Outstanding Commitment to the Environment Award will recognise those who are really doing their bit for the environment.

Judges are seeking standout examples of schools who are encouraging pupils, students, staff and the wider community to think about their actions, for example, recycling, cutting out single-use plastics, travelling responsibly or eating sustainably. As society works towards becoming more sustainable, a school's role in instilling the values from an early age has become increasingly important and the awards is looking to shine a spotlight and recognise those who are successfully achieving this. Also new for this year are the 'Most Inspirational Alternative Provision by a School' and 'School Governor of the Year' awards.

The Most Inspirational Alternative Provision by a School category will recognise alternative providers and mainstream schools that are providing the highest quality of provision for students who are unable to access a mainstream curriculum for various reasons, for example, illness or behaviour issues. This award will now strengthen the group of 'Most Inspirational' 16-18 education provider, primary school and secondary school categories. The School Governor of the Year Award will look for the most dedicated governor of a primary, secondary or specialist school who has a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience, and goes above and beyond their voluntary role as a governor.

In addition, the STEM Project of the Year Award will be renamed to 'Outstanding Commitment to STEM'. The award will honour schools, academies and colleges which have a range of ongoing projects that promote the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects, rather than just one project. Finally, the Spirit of Enterprise and the Career Aspiration Award will merge and become the 'Careers and Enterprise Award'. This category will recognise schools, academies and colleges which are teaching students about the range of career pathways and opportunities available to them, whilst also developing a spirit for enterprise amongst students and encouraging entrepreneurship. Now in its ninth year, the awards is open

to schools, academies and colleges across the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire, Manchester and Lancashire.

Kim O'Brien, founder of the Educate Awards, said: "Every year we evaluate each of the 21 categories to ensure they continue to be relevant to schools, academies and colleges in the North West.

"For 2020, we are keen to acknowledge the work that many schools, academies

and colleges are doing as they strive become more environmentally conscious." Kim added: "By introducing new awards or changing the criteria of current ones, it helps to keep the awards up-to-date and in line with what is important in education."

A full list of categories can be found, here: educateawards.co.uk/educate-awards-categories

St Clare's Light Shines...

Staff and pupils from St Clare's Catholic Primary School in Liverpool are celebrating after the school was judged to be a 'Good' school in their latest Ofsted inspection report.

Since the appointment of headteacher, Kate Peaston, the school has moved from a special measures judgement to a good outcome over a period of four years. Headteacher, Kate Peaston said that the ethos of the school came across very strongly during the inspection. "In 2018, we reviewed our mission statement and, as a result, all members of the school community very much hold in our heart, our motto, 'Let our light shine...' This motto is central to everything that we do."

A high number of pupils in the school speak English as an additional language, and many are new to the UK. The recent inspection report asserted that, "Pupils are happy. They find that the school is a calm, restful and protected place in which they can learn, make friends and succeed."

Assistant head, Gwen Pilkington, said: "Inspectors gave particular praise to the teaching of reading at St Clare's, commenting "Leaders put reading at the heart of the school curriculum." and "This good grounding in reading sets pupils up for success in other areas of the curriculum".

"Inspectors recognised that the teaching of computing is a strength of the school, preparing pupils for their future lives. The report also praised the after school activities that were on offer, including music, cooking and sport.

During the past two years, the school has achieved several Quality Marks on its journey to achieving a good outcome, the Liverpool Counts Quality Mark, the Basic Skills Award, the Healthy Schools Award, the School of Sanctuary Award, the EYFS Quality Mark, the Reading Quality Mark and the Laudato Si Award.

Kate Peaston, headteacher said: "We would like to thank all of our children who are an absolute credit to the school, our staff and governors who work so hard and of course our parents and carers. We are all so proud of this achievement."



Hear us roar!

Since completing the ROAR training, learning mentors and colleagues at Blessed Sacrament Primary School in Aintree have been adopting the Reflective, Objective, Assessment, Reassurance (ROAR) approach in many aspects of day-to-day school life.

The ROAR approach uses a range of tools that enable staff to talk to children, while also helping children themselves to identify how they're feeling, expressing and communicating their needs. One of these tools is the ROAR rainbow.

To achieve a whole school approach to ROAR a twilight training session was attended by over 100 members of staff at all levels: the safeguarding team; assistant headteacher; learning mentors; admin staff and lunchtime supervisors. This was followed by a workshop for parents and carers.

Speaking about the staff benefits of the training, Jane Griffin, mental health lead, said: "We have seen increased knowledge and vocabulary used with the children. Staff also have an awareness of children's needs and the bigger picture outside of school life, monitoring vulnerable groups with regards to attendance, appearance and emotional wellbeing.

"ROAR has helped to build better relationships between staff and children; staff are now equipped to identify when children are struggling and provide the correct support."

Jane said: "There is now one system in place that we all adhere to. At any point in the day, children can share where they are on the rainbow, knowing staff are there to listen, offer support and identify next steps if needed.

"This has helped the children to build resilience, developing a skill set that they can use as they move through life."

The rainbow has become an intrinsic part of school life; staff and children can have a conversation about where they are at any time of the day, even staff lanyards now feature the ROAR rainbow.

The programme has helped children in all year groups but in particular those with Special educational needs and disability (SEND) and English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Using the rainbow approach, one EAL boy who previously



struggled to communicate his needs is now able to share why he is low and appropriate support can be given.

Recognising the importance and value of working with families, the school delivered ROAR through workshops to parents and carers. Information was shared on the website and through the school behaviour policy.

The model is promoted throughout the school on posters, and an information leaflet was issued to every child explaining the strategy and programme during the initial set up.

Jane said: "We would recommend ROAR to other schools, it really has transformed behaviour throughout the school for both staff and children, providing a common language. Children recognise it's alright to not always be a '10' on the rainbow and use strategies to empower themselves in moving forward."

ROAR doesn't stop there for Blessed Sacrament. The school has been selected as a pilot setting to train and develop The ROCKET programme.

Complementing ROAR principles, ROCKET is a one-day, interactive course for primary aged children teaching them to become resilience champions within their schools. The role of the group is to look at what the school already does to promote resilience, but also where the areas for improvement are, and how the champions can make a positive difference.

The God who roars!

In celebration of The Year of the Word: the God who Speaks, our diocese in partnership with Salford Diocese are organising a Scripture Festival at Hope university on Saturday 6 June.

Keynote talks will be provided by Timothy Radcliffe OP and Jessie Rogers a biblical scholar from Maynooth.

School choirs and a Gospel Choir will provide music during the day and a range of workshops will be available.

As the patron saint of Biblical Studies is Jerome a mascot for the year is available depicting the lion that legend tells us had a thorn removed from his paw by St Jerome.

Here, pupils from St Jeromes Primary School in Formby, together with headteacher Kathy Monaghan, introduce the lions to their own Jerome Lion.

Lions are available from Pastoral Formation at £3.50 each and all profits will support the Scripture Festival.



Bishop Tom Williams visits ASFA

The Academy of St Francis of Assisi (ASFA) welcomed Bishop Tom Williams to the school recently.

Bishop Tom was invited by the school to meet students and staff, and to find out more about its vibrant community.

As the special guest arrived he was greeted by the academy's choir who sang a wonderful rendition of 'Christ Be Our Light'.

Students from years seven and nine supported Chaplain Phil Johnson during the collective worship, which was titled 'It's Good to Talk', and explored the value of face to face conversations, listening and prayer.

Bishop Tom spoke to his captive audience about the impact of a smile and how kind words can help in difficult times.

He then met with ASFA's student language ambassadors who have been supporting their peers through transition to English, speaking to student teachers and supporting parents evenings.

After a tour of the creative arts and



religious studies lessons, Bishop Tom met with the student leadership team and the award-winning Debate Mate team. The topic of careers was discussed and students shared their aspirations and ambitions for the future.

Finally the visit concluded in ASFA's chapel with the chaplaincy team, who

chatted about the community activities that they enjoy supporting and how they feel that music and drama helps to express themselves as young people. Chaplain Phil said: "We are very grateful to Bishop Tom William's for his time and input with our students and we hope to see him again in the near future."

St Mary's is Sefton's top-performing GCSE school for the third year running

St Mary's College in Crosby has been named as the top-performing GCSE school in Sefton for the third year running according to new Government figures highlighting the importance of a broad-based curriculum.

The college achieved a score of 56.8 in the Department of Education's (DfE) recently published Attainment 8 performance table, higher than all other independent and state schools in the borough.

Attainment 8, launched in 2016, measure students' average grades across a range of eight GCSE-level qualifications. These are English and maths, three English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) qualifications (including sciences, languages, history, geography and ICT) and three additional qualifications approved by the DfE.

The aim of the key Government measure is to encourage schools to offer their pupils a broad and well-balanced

curriculum.

St Mary's College principal, Mike Kennedy, said: "Our school's policy has traditionally been to offer students as much scope as possible at GCSE level, in terms of both the number and variety of the subjects that they take.

"We are delighted to have achieved the top Attainment 8 score in Sefton for the past three consecutive years.

"This official top ranking reflects the breadth and quality of our curriculum and, of course, the hard work, commitment and excellent academic performances of our pupils.

"I would like to congratulate all our students and staff on this outstanding achievement".

In last summer's exams almost two thirds of St Mary's students (62 per cent) recorded ten or more GCSE passes, with many achieving 12 GCSEs, reflecting the school's broad and balanced curriculum. Atsayan Sachchin from Waterloo was top of the class achieving A*-A/9-7 passes in all 12 of his GCSE subjects.

Among the girls Laura Kearns from Maghull was the top performer with 13 GCSE passes, including five at the top 9 grade and four at 8.



Teaching conflict resolution in the classroom



The Trinity Catholic Primary School, located in the heart of North Liverpool, one of the city's most deprived areas, recently marked its completion of an effective programme for teaching conflict resolution in the classroom.

Similar to many other schools across the country that find themselves in a similar position, headteacher, Rebecca Flynn, recognised that effective partnerships was essential to building a thriving school and vibrant society.

The key to achieve this was forging positive relationships between pupils, parents and the community. She reached out to The Peace Foundation in 2019 with a priority of developing an effective initiative for teaching conflict resolution and emotional intelligence within the whole school community.

The Trinity Primary School and The Peace Foundation forged a strong relationship to educate staff, parents/carers and most importantly the young people in conflict resolution via the pioneering 'Peace Initiatives'. This unique project creates a culture for optimised learning by embedding a whole school approach to improving behaviour in the classroom, across the whole school and in the community by using a blend of storytelling, activity and reflection.

'Peace Initiatives' combines a mix of different programmes aimed at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and also encompasses learning for teachers and parents/carers. 'Tiny Steps for Peace' take KS1 pupils on an interactive adventure and is designed to encourage students to be active, engaging and learn through investigation, play and focused discussions. 'Small Steps for Peace' is a renowned

Colin and Wendy Parry hold a Q & A session



OFSTED approved Key Stage 2 programme that teaches young people the importance of resolving conflict in a peaceful manner through communication and dialogue, whilst enhancing emotional intelligence.

Parents/carers play a vital role in shaping a young person's life. This programme recognises their influence, impact and involves them in the project by offering a conflict resolution course that mirrors the work being undertaken in schools, resulting in the message being part of every aspect of the pupil's life.

Rebecca Flynn, headteacher of The Trinity Catholic Primary School: 'This has been a great project, which fits with the long term strategic vision that we have for school. We are impressed with the way the project has engaged our pupils and got our parents on board- so much so, that 45 parents have asked to attend the graduation.

'As a result, we have financed a bus to support our families with this, which is an illustration of the commitment and value we place on the whole project, as is the

three year funding of the project.

Our Peace Ambassadors will support their peers gain a better understanding of more effective ways to deal with conflict in their own lives in school and in their future lives.'

The team behind 'Peace Initiatives' has seen a number of schools base their founding principles around the project to underpin their policies, which has consequently seen a rise in attainment, attendance and engagement and a reduction in behavioural challenges. OFSTED has also recognised the programme as an integral part to engaging and re-engaging learners whilst supporting the improvement of attainment and learning.

To learn more about teaching conflict resolution in the classroom and the 'Peace Initiatives', 'Small Steps for Peace' or any of the Peace Foundation's other programmes please visit: www.peace-foundation.org.uk/





**by Dr Christopher
McElroy**
Director of Music,
Liverpool
Metropolitan
Cathedral

The season of Lent

For the season of Lent this year we are offering musical reflections on various aspects of the passion narrative on Sunday afternoons in place of Choral Evening Prayer.

On the Second Sunday of Lent (8 March) our girl choristers and Lay Clerks will sing Kenneth Leighton's *Crucifixus pro nobis*. This cantata was written in 1961 and explores three important aspects of Jesus' life: 'Christ in the Cradle', 'Christ in the Garden' and 'Christ in His Passion.' The first movement, reflecting on Jesus' childhood is sung by a solo voice, contrasting sharply with the choir alone in 'Christ in the Garden.' It is not until the passion movement that both the soloist and choir combine. The music here captures the theological essence of Jesus' purpose in a way in which it is very difficult for us humans to put into words.

On the Third Sunday of Lent (15 March) our boy choristers and Lay Clerks will sing *The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross* by César Franck. The composer César Franck is best known in Catholic parishes today for his *Panis Angelicus*. *The Seven last words* is a devotional work written in 1859, but never performed until the work was discovered in 1977. Franck was not the only composer to set the seven last words of Jesus (actually, sentences not words) but Franck was unusual in that he sought to expand on the brief text by supplementing other biblical and liturgical texts reflecting the fact that Franck was a parish church organist steeped in the Catholic liturgical tradition. Of interest to Franck was not so much the suffering of Christ on the Cross, but what lay beneath and what the crucifixion symbolised.

On the Fourth Sunday of Lent (22 March) the focus shifts to Mary, appropriately so as we celebrate Mothering Sunday. As is traditional at the Cathedral, our girl choristers will sing Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*. The text of the *Stabat Mater* is a 13th century hymn reflecting on Mary's suffering during the crucifixion of her son. The powerful words have inspired many composers to set the text to music, including the 18th century Italian



composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi. Pergolesi's musical setting alternates movements sung by the full choir, and sections sung by soloists. The singing will be accompanied by two violins and chamber organ.

On the Fifth Sunday of Lent (29 March) our Lay Clerks will sing a setting of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* by Thomas Tallis. The biblical text (drawn from the first five verses of the book of *Lamentations*) was originally set for the holy week office of *Tenebrae*. Tallis' composition is extraordinarily impassioned music for a 15th century composer, capturing the longing of the text alongside the hope inspired by its concluding statement: 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord your God.'

Our Lenten series finishes on Palm Sunday (5 April) with the sung office of *Tenebrae* at 5.00 pm with the responsories sung to a musical setting by Francis Poulenc, and Psalm 50, *Miserere Mei*, being sung to the famous setting by Gregorio Allegri. More about this service in next month's column!

All of these Lenten offerings take place at 3.00 pm on Sunday afternoons (with the exception of Palm Sunday) in Lent and are free to attend.



Cathedral Record

Canon Anthony O'Brien –
Cathedral Dean

Lent is already underway, and we begin the month with Masses for the First Sunday of the Penitential Season and the Rite of Election of candidates for reception into full communion with the Church.

Archbishop Malcolm has appointed three new members of the Chapter of Canons, Father Sean Kirwin, Father Michael Fitzsimons and Honorary Canon Aidan Prescott all of whom will be installed at the Chapter Mass on Tuesday 3 March at 12.15 in the Cathedral. Parishioners and friends of the new canons are very welcome to join us and witness them being invested in their Canons regalia – not that they will get much chance to wear them again.

Also, that week on Friday 6 March we will be welcoming a visit from Martin Lutyens, grandson of Sir Edwin Lutyens who is chair of the Lutyens Trust and who will give a talk on the work of his grandfather including the Crypt of our Cathedral. The time of this talk is still to be confirmed – please see our website.

Because our Diocese has maintained a strong devotion to and remembrance of the life of St Oscar Romero since his martyrdom, we have been offered a small relic, a tiny fraction of his bone that was amputated to try and save his life following the shooting in the Convent chapel in San Salvador.

Archbishop Malcolm will preside at a special Choral Evening Prayer to receive the relic on Monday 23 March at 6.00 pm. The Archbishop will also preside at 11.00 am Mass on Sunday 29 March on the day which the Bishops of England and Wales have designated for the re-dedication of England to Mary's Dowry. I am not too sure what that involves but I'm sure that we will receive liturgical instructions in good time.

Mums the Word



How can Lent have stolen up on me so quickly? I am still finding odd bits of Christmas decorations that have not found their way up to the loft. Clearly, I must do better!

How to do better for Lent, though? Father David Potter, the UCM's spiritual director for Liverpool Archdiocese, told us a beautiful story in his homily at our last Bi-monthly Mass.

He told us about a church in a small village in Germany, which was almost destroyed during the Second World War. The local people really loved their church and especially a very old crucifix which it contained. Imagine their distress, therefore, when they found the crucifix among the ruins of the church, but minus its arms, which had been blasted off in the attack.

After the restoration of the church, some villagers wanted a replica to be made; others called for the crucifix to be kept, but with new arms. It was finally decided to put the crucifix back with no arms and a notice saying 'You are My arms'. What better thing could we do for Lent than to become the arms of Our Lord? Not with a massive wonderful gesture but through many small acts of devotion, kindness or helpfulness. A warm thank you to Fr Potter for an inspiring story.

Ladies, please remember that on Friday 6 March we celebrate Women's World Day of Prayer. There will be many services around the diocese so I hope that you can find one to attend. Also in March we celebrate two national saints' days, so I wish all our members with Welsh names or connections a happy St David's Day, and likewise our Irish members on St Patrick's Day.

The March bi-monthly Mass is at St Aidan's, Winstanley (WN 6EE) on Wednesday 11 March at 7.30pm. Many congratulations, finally, to St Aidan's UCM who are celebrating the 40th anniversary of their foundation.

Madelaine McDonald,
media officer

A century of service News from the Liverpool Province of the Knights of St Columba

Indian boys' home to benefit from new action plan



Every two years the Knights of St Columba, at our annual supreme meeting, consider proposals for a national action plan to provide financial support for a deserving charity. At October's meeting it was decided to raise funds over the next two years for the John Foster Charitable Trust which fully finances the John Foster Memorial Home located in Kamanur village in the state of Kerala in southern India. The home provides food, clothing and education to 28 destitute boys, offering them hope of an escape from poverty by giving them an education, which will enable them to make a way for themselves in the outside world.

The trust is registered both in the UK and India and therefore enjoys all the legal advantages of both countries pertaining to trusts, and all funds raised go directly to the charity. The trustees have a close association with the KSC and include the former supreme knight of the order, Ken Hargreaves, together with his wife Sheila and Sue Ferro (pictured during a visit to the home).

The main building of the home needs to be rebuilt, having suffered extensive damage in a fire caused by an electrical fault, at an estimated cost of £45,000. There is also a need for classroom teaching aids and equipment costing £5,000. Given the rural setting, private transport is another requirement and the home's jeep, which is over 10 years old, needs replacing at a cost of £12,000.

The order has asked all of its councils across England, Scotland and Wales to raise funds by whatever means they choose and send the proceeds to our head office on a regular basis for onward transmission to the trust. Further details can be found on the trust's website: www.jfct.org.uk. Donations can also be sent to Knights of St Columba, 75 Hillington Road South, Glasgow, G52 2AE. Cheques should be made payable to 'Knights of St Columba' and on the reverse write 'NAP - JFCT'.

Websites: www.ksc.org.uk and
www.kscprov02.weebly.com
Email: dpokeane@aol.com

Why life with Animate is a learning curve

By Ellie, Animate Youth Ministries team member

animate
youth

Looking back on the past six months at Animate, I can see how many things I have accomplished which I never thought I would: from being so shy I wouldn't even speak to my own parents to now being able to get up on stage and speak to over 150 young people. There are even small things like trying many new types of food I'd never had before – including calamari, which I do not recommend!

These months have been quite challenging but also extremely enjoyable. Moving out of my small family home was always going to be tough as I didn't have many life skills but moving into Lowe House has enabled me to learn new skills, such as how to cook! Amid the various abilities I've been able to develop at Animate, being here has also allowed me to develop my faith. Although I was brought up in a Catholic household, I didn't really understand the impact that faith has

on people's lives, nor had I much understanding of faith in general. When I was in high school, we didn't focus much on Christian values; we only looked at faith-based views on topical subjects.

Luckily, when I was in Year 10, I received the opportunity to go on pilgrimages to Taize and Lourdes, which gave me some understanding of what it's like to live out faith. Going on these pilgrimages gave me the courage to live out my own faith. This then brought me to Animate as I wanted to work with young people and help them develop their faith just as Animate, when visiting my school, had helped me to develop mine.

Spending time with youngsters in schools has opened my eyes to faith in different ways as it has allowed

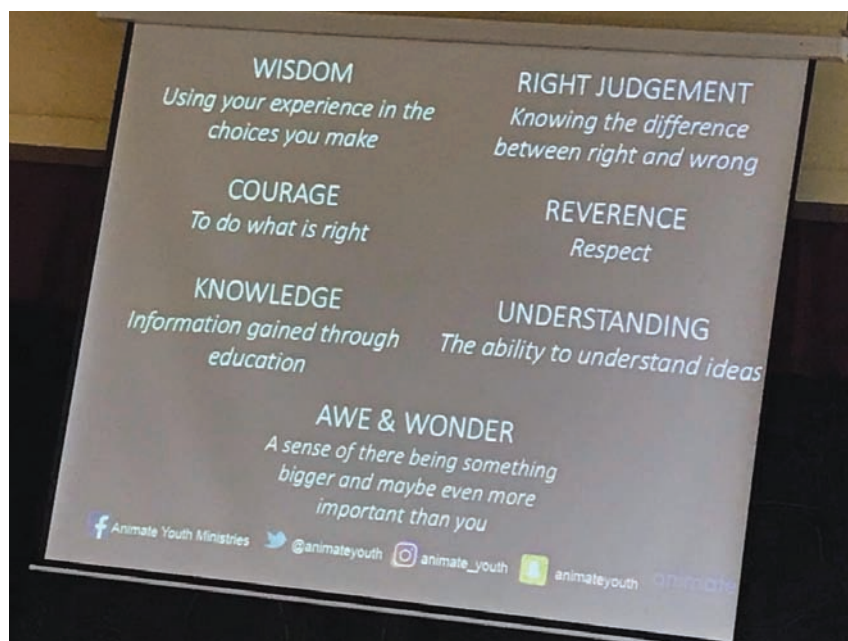


me to explore themes such as 'let your light shine' and 'reconciliation'. These are the two themes that have stood out to me most.

While working with pupils at St Mary's College in Crosby I led two workshops – one on how we can be reconciled with people all over the world, the other a discussion on whether we choose to look after ourselves or the greater good. Working with Haydock English Martyrs primary school had an impact on me too, as the children considered the theme of 'letting their light shine'.

One way we explored this theme was by competing in our very own 'mini Olympics' in which pupils had to decide who out of their group would be the best at completing the various challenges. This task was to show the importance of recognising other people's gifts and talents and what they can bring to the community. It was great to see that our work made a mark and that the young people had taken something from the day.

Throughout Lent I am looking forward to challenging myself to try something new every day that will get me out of my comfort zone. Things that will enable me to continue to grow more, both in my faith and as a person, so that I am better able to help the youngsters that we work with.



PIC Life

The God of second chances

By Moira Billinge

Have you ever experienced that horrible sinking feeling when a radar trap or speed camera might have caught you going above the speed limit? It is very easy to have a momentary lapse in concentration and to exceed the speed limit, especially in an area which rejoices in a 20mph restriction, but the rules are there to prevent injury or loss of life, and of course, even two miles too fast can kill.

When the weeks have passed by without any sign of a penalty notice and you know you are in the clear, the relief is enormous, but that anxious wait usually serves the purpose of deepening our resolve to stay within the speed limit in the future and never to transgress by even one mile. The lesson has been learned and with the proverbial slate

wiped clean, it feels as if we are experiencing a new beginning.

Lent is a new beginning, albeit one that is sometimes rather laborious. While most people look towards Christmas and Easter with varying degrees of excitement, few are particularly overjoyed at the prospect of Lent. Yet the season gives us so many opportunities to deepen our commitment to our faith and to start afresh if we have lapsed. It is a wonderful time of grace.

Not looking forward to Lent, however, is understandable: the human heart doesn't naturally relish the prospect of a Lent-related, self-imposed penance. We are far more inclined to opt for an easy life rather than gravitate towards self-deprivation, discipline, soul-searching and the taking on of additional, albeit voluntary, commitments in order to properly observe the spirit of this sacred season.

Perhaps our new year, so recently celebrated, has led to a triumph of will and determination from those who have so far been able to stick to their resolutions. Conversely, there is a certain sense of defeat if we have already ditched our good intentions along with the Christmas wrapping paper, in these first weeks of 2020. In preparing for Lent, some find it helpful to begin by reflecting on how much God has forgiven us in life; how many new beginnings he has offered; and how much help he has unstintingly provided at every moment – if we are prepared to look for it.

Remembering the times of forgiveness doesn't mean being held hostage to past mistakes. Instead they recall God's mercy and willingness to pick us up and love us into getting back on track. God does not want us to fail and isn't lying in wait to exact punishment, or make us loathe ourselves: 'A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smouldering wick he shall not quench' (Isaiah 42:3). In other words, our infinitely merciful God is a God of second chances.

Worrying about the past merely stifles and ruins our present peace of mind, yet being mindful of the lessons learned from mistakes helps us to avoid repeating them. Lent is a time to stop looking for excuses to remain in a comfortable rut and, instead, to realise how much some parts of our lives need changing. We can make it an extraordinary time to think about what God wants to give to us, explore our relationship with Him and work 'through Him, with Him and in Him'.

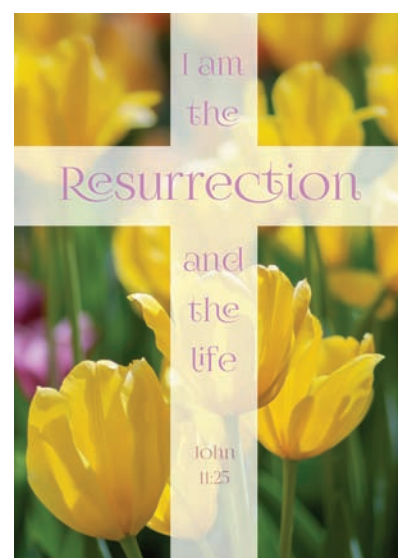
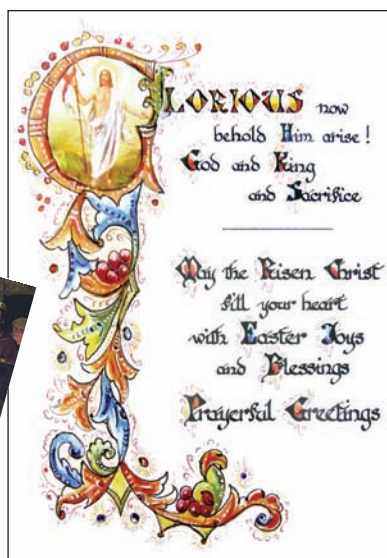
It's nearing Easter Sunday - It's time to select lovely cards for your family and friends. Look into this shop at Maryton Carmel Allerton and you will find delightful Easter cards as well as cards for all occasions on sale.

There are beautiful greeting cards for all occasions, prayer cards and medals on sale in the shop, excellent quality and inexpensive.

Contact the Sisters at Maryton Grange, Allerton Road, L18 3NU. Telephone the card office on 0151 724 7102 or Email the Sisters at marytoncards@outlook.com



Easter Cards from Carmel



Catholic PIC retreats and away days 2020

Catholic Pic Away Days 2020



During 2020 we are planning to visit:

- Stonyhurst College Chapel and Museum
- Arley Hall
- Chorley Shopping Village
- Chatsworth House
- Llandudno
- Grasmere

We are not yet able to confirm dates for the Catholic Pic retreat and away days, we will publish them as soon as possible and apologise for the delay. Meanwhile if you would like any information regarding our retreats and away days please call 0151 733 5492.



Worth a visit - Lacock and Castle Combe

For those interested in film and photography, it is time to plan a spring trip to Wiltshire to explore Lacock and Castle Combe, writes **Lucy Oliver**. A short drive from Chippenham, the 13th century Lacock Abbey was founded by Ela, Countess of Salisbury. This gothic-revival abbey was seized during the Reformation before becoming the private Tudor residence of Sir William Sharington, with its cloister incorporated into the design.

In the 1800s it was home to William Henry Fox Talbot, known for producing the first photographic negative. The nearby Fox Talbot Museum tells the story of the invention of photography and displays the famous mousetrap camera. A short drive away is Castle Combe where you'll find the medieval village used as the setting for the films *War Horse* and the original *Doctor Doolittle*. While the 12th century fortress which gave the village its name is no longer in existence, the Manor House hotel in its place provides some consolation in the form of afternoon tea and scones. Furthermore, the

picturesque village offers its own photo opportunities with its 14th century market cross (dating from when the village was permitted a weekly sheep market), and St Andrew's Church, with the oldest working clock in the country.





Letter from Oscott

by Peter Ross

It's all change here at the moment. A few weeks ago the news broke that Canon David Oakley, our present rector, had been appointed the 13th bishop of Northampton by Pope Francis. Canon David, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, has served as Rector of Oscott for the last six years. Prior to this, he ministered in various parishes along with taking a leading role within CaFE (Catholic Faith Exploration), an organisation that creates catechetical resources.

Many of us here are experiencing mixed emotions as a consequence. On the one hand we are deeply pleased for the Diocese of Northampton, which will be gaining a wonderful new bishop, while on the other we are all saddened to be losing such a kind and pastoral man. Canon David is being consecrated bishop on 19 March, the feast of St Joseph, and the whole college is due to attend. Perhaps on this day you could spare a special prayer for him as he takes up this new and massive responsibility. I would ask for your prayers for our community here too, as we await the appointment of a new rector. On top of Canon David's departure, one of the seminarians in my year group recently discerned that God was calling him to something else. People discerning to leave is an inevitability in seminary. Here we all live, eat, pray, work and socialise together. When someone leaves, you really notice it and it does get you down a bit. When this happens, it always reminds me that a calling to priesthood is not about success. Discernment is not about 'getting through' or winning or losing. Instead, it is about responding to God's call and being open to whatever He has in store for each of us. My friend who decided to leave has not failed; he has simply continued to respond to the God who calls us all, each in our own way, to follow Him.

Another change is the recent introduction of a counselling skills course for seminarians. This comes in response to feedback from priests who feel they would have benefitted from such a course, which is delivered by a certified practitioner who is deeply passionate about supporting seminarians in their preparations for ministry. Priests encounter people from all sorts of backgrounds and situations all the time. Therefore, I feel that my taking part in this course will provide me with the necessary skills and theory to be fully present to the people I hope to minister to one day.



justice & peace

Marking St Oscar Romero's anniversary

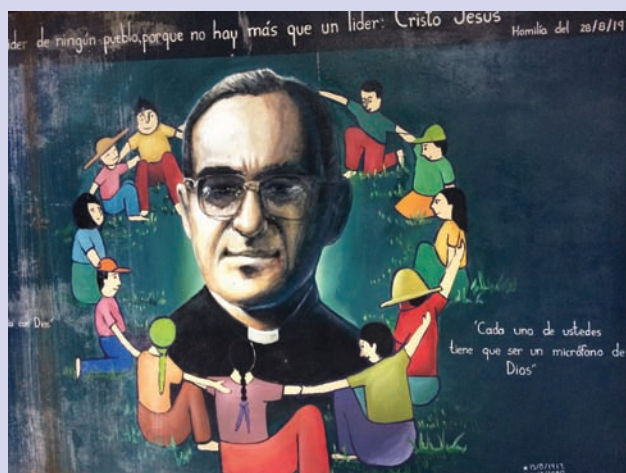
By Steve Atherton, Justice & Peace fieldworker

There are three special events to look forward to in this month of March as we mark the 40th anniversary of the martyrdom of St Oscar Romero. Our diocese has a wonderful association with him: we have the proud tradition of having honoured the memory of his death for each of the 40 years since 1980 with an annual Mass in his honour; his statue is displayed prominently in our cathedral; and this month we are amazed to be receiving a relic of the saint. This will make us the only other place in the world apart from the site of his martyrdom to have an actual relic that was part of the saint rather than part of his clothing.

Two of our priests, Fathers Chris Fallon and Stephen Pritchard, recently visited Nicaragua and El Salvador with CAFOD and we can read some of their stories and reflections elsewhere in this edition of the Pictorial. Here are two quotations from St Oscar Romero to give a flavour of the man. Challenging us to take our baptism seriously, he said: 'Each one of you has to be God's microphone. Each one of you has to be a messenger, a prophet. The Church will always exist as long as there is someone who has been baptised ... Where is your baptism? You are baptised in your professions, in the fields of workers, in the market. Wherever there is someone who has been baptised, that is where the Church is. There is a prophet there. Let us not hide the talent that God gave us on the day of our baptism and let us truly live the beauty and responsibility of being a prophetic

people.'

His insistence that Church must be involved in the world by defending the rights and dignity of the poorest members of society is an inspiration to us as we work towards our Synod in October. His is not a Church that only exists inside church buildings: 'A Church that doesn't provoke any crises, a gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin, a word of God that doesn't touch the real sin



of the society in which it is being proclaimed – what gospel is that?'

Dates for the diary:

Monday 23 March: The relic is received into the Metropolitan Cathedral during evening prayer at 6pm. It will be handed to Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP by Julian Filochowski from the Romero Trust.

Sunday 29 March: 40th Annual Romero Mass at 11am at St Gregory's, Weld Bank, Chorley PR7 3NW. The celebrant will be Fr Graeme Dunne, with Clare Dixon, head of CAFOD's Latin America Department, giving the homily. Mass will include a chance to venerate the relic of St Oscar Romero.

Sunday 29 March: 6pm Mass celebrated by Archbishop Malcolm McMahon in the chapel at Hope University, L16 9JD, including a chance to venerate the relic. Mass will be followed by refreshments then a talk and Q+A with Clare Dixon (from 7.15pm).

All are welcome at both events.



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