



MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF BRINGING THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER

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UK's greenest primary school opens



Pupils and staff have moved into the UK's greenest primary school three years after their original building was devastated by fire.

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy is the country's first biophilic school and has been built as part of a pilot project by the Department for Education.

Biophilic design focuses on connecting those inside with nature, with the goal of promoting physical and mental health.

The school's original building burnt down in October 2020 and pupils and staff were based at St James' House, in Mansfield Road, Derby, from April 2021.

Amanda Greaves, Executive Headteacher at St Mary's, said: "I can't quite believe this day is finally here. I am so delighted for the children, staff, parents and wider community as we begin the next chapter in the new St Mary's, the greenest school in the UK. It has been an absolute privilege to be part of this incredible pathway project."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has played a part in supporting us during the most challenging 3 years; our dedicated staff, our loyal parents/carers, the St Ralph Sherwin Trust, Diocese of Nottingham and the people of Derby. We have appreciated your love, guidance and support throughout this time. I am looking forward to seeing the environment flourish over the coming months and using the tech to measure the impact of the stunning surroundings on pupils' educational journey, as well as their physical and mental wellbeing."

Bella Atkin, Year 3 class teacher, said: "It feels a bit surreal to be here but it's really special. It felt quite nostalgic pulling into the site but once you are in it's totally different. It's absolutely beautiful, we are so lucky."

"I think the best thing about the new building is being able to see all of the outside areas from all of the buildings and everything is integrated. We have over 100 trees, the trim trail and lots of benches and everything feels calm and relaxed. Everyone is just excited to be here."

Kevin Gritton, Chief Executive of the St Ralph Sherwin Trust, said: "This move means so much to the St Mary's community and we are delighted for them after such a long and challenging journey."

"We would like to thank all of the staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils who have pulled together and worked so hard during this difficult time. This fantastic new eco-friendly building will serve generations of children for years to come."

Peter Giorgio, Director of Education for the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service, said: "This is a momentous day for everyone connected with St Mary's and we are thrilled that they have moved into this incredible new building, where the staff will continue to provide children with the very best Catholic education and care."

Simon Butler, Managing Director – Building Central at main contractor Tilbury Douglas, said: "Tilbury Douglas are proud to be handing over this fantastic school to the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust. The building will not only be an inspiration to the pupils and staff at St. Mary's for future generations, but is likely to positively influence innovation and quality in school design and building methods moving forwards, as a Department for Education pilot school. We would like to thank our design team and subcontractor partners in the successful delivery of this project."



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The monthly paper for the
Diocese of Nottingham

Catholic News 

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Wanted Parish Correspondents

The Catholic News is
looking for a Parish Correspondent in
your parish to send in local news for
publication in this newspaper.

All items to be emailed to
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Resolution and Resolve

As we move into February, many new year resolutions will have faltered as 'normal service' is resumed. For those who are sticking to a new regime or have made changes for the better to their lifestyle – you are to be commended. February 14th sees the beginning of Lent where, once again, there can be a resolve to make lifestyle improvements, albeit for a specific time, by giving up something as a form of sacrifice to represent the sacrifices Jesus made when he went into the desert.

Any form of sacrifice or commitment to change behaviour is a personal choice and takes discipline and determination; success or failure is very much an intrinsic judgement. Whatever the outcome, the important thing is actually setting out on the journey, regardless of its ending.

February 12th marks the 180th anniversary of the first SVP conference starting in England and Wales, at the Sabloniere Hotel in Leicester Square. Vincentians in each diocese will be planning how to celebrate this milestone during 2024, driven by a resolve to be better and stronger in 2024. The need for support from the SVP continues to grow as we once again endure economic and social hardships with more and more people experiencing some form of need in the community. The SVP Beneficiary Support Team at National Office has recorded an exponential growth in request for help from the public during 2023 and this trend is growing.



180 YEARS

Conferences in the diocese will be putting into action resolutions to 'rise to the challenge' with a resolve to 'actively seek out those in need' and help in whatever way

they can. Unlike a new year resolution or a commitment to make a sacrifice at Lent where it is usually an individual effort, SVP members will be working as a team to ensure they support each other to reach out and offer support to those in need. Heartwarming stories of SVP support abound with many 'Warm Spaces' being supported by conferences, warm clothing and food supplies provided to those in need and many isolated individuals receiving visits and friendship. One story of note involves a team effort where a family near Derby have experienced the calamity of losing their house in a fire, leaving them homeless. Conferences in and around Derby have worked together to contribute support in a range of ways, including financial support and the provision of furniture.

If this article resonates with you and you have a resolve to make a difference to other people's lives, perhaps you would like to join a conference or start a conference in your own parish. If so, please contact Joe Gasan, Nottingham Central Council Membership Support Officer at joeg@svp.org.uk

FRANKLY SPEAKING



When this article is read we will have reached a date in the calendar as the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity will have just drawn to a close on the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul (25 January). We often hear of the life and martyrdom of this great saint in our scripture readings and he undoubtedly influenced the progress of Christianity. Many churches in the various cities he visited were founded after his promotion of the Christian gospel.

When Pope Saint John Paul II led a pilgrimage to Malta in 1990 he told the vast open-air congregation at the final Mass that he was now going back to Rome just as Saint Paul had travelled from Malta. The Mediterranean island was one of many destinations that John Paul visited as similar to Saint Paul he had great vision. When the Pope visited Britain in 1982 one of his places of worship was a Papal visit to Canterbury,

an Anglican friend sent me a postcard which was dominated by revealing the Archbishop Robert Runcie in deeper prayer with the Pope.

To say that this year started with a flurry of political activity would be an understatement. No sooner that the first days of January the count-down to our General Election commenced. What was surprising was the reaction to what is now known as the Post Office scandal highlighted by a powerful proclamation from a television drama. On the first day of activity this huge injustice issue dominated the parliamentary agenda. Compare this when other matters relating to injustice rarely get the attention they deserve.

Over the recent Christmas period we heard of hospital patients, visitors and nursing staff paying annual car parking fees of £146 million, (up 50%), some sections losing staff resulting in fewer people getting the care they need and

of alleged "profiteering" from some children who sadly have been taken into care. It took the television drama to settle the Post Office issue, will it take the same long time before other concerns get the same attention?

Saint Paul and Pope Saint John Paul did not have easy lives but their inspiration and leadership like many other great saints was a clear example of using personal talents. Those who are seeking re-election or have political ambition need to follow their example. In the first few hours of this year I heard 3 Christians speak of "Hope" for the months ahead. These were educated and articulate commentators, perhaps they should have added Justice as well.

Frank Goulding,
Holy Trinity Parish,
Newark

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St Anthony's celebrates 30 years

On the 14th December 2023 St Anthony's in the village of Calverton celebrated the 30th anniversary of the opening of its beautiful church. The community of St Anthony's were delighted to have this celebratory Mass led by Bishop Patrick with priests of St Anthony's past and present and to welcome the Mayor of Gedling Borough, Councillor Mrs Julie Najuck.

Following the Mass there were refreshments giving everyone the opportunity to marvel (and taste!) an amazing handmade decorated cake depicting the church made by parishioner Liz Ellis in honour of this special occasion.

The cake was cut by Father Keith Frisby who, was the parish priest of St Anthony's and Our Lady of Victories in Southwell from 1990 to 2007. Prior to 1993, Mass at St Anthony's was held in a wooden structure. It was very fitting for Father Keith to make the first cut of the cake as he was an instrumental driving force in the creation of the current church building upon the site of the original church; also 2023 was the fortieth anniversary of his ordination.

Christine Thomas



St Nicholas Came to Party



Getting behind our fundraising campaign for St Barnabas Cathedral Restoration Fund, Julie Whiley with her team mates arranged a visit from Santa Claus to entertain our children and their families for an afternoon party in the Cathedral Hall. The food was prepared, with Deacon David lending a hand, tables draped and food was served as the children boogied to the catching Christmas tunes. Each child had a chance to talk to Santa Claus and received a gift bag highlighting the Christmas season. Just a lot of good fun was had by all.

Submitted on behalf of Nottingham Cathedral of St Barnabas.

60th Diamond Jubilee Christmas Tree Festival

The Good Shepherd Church in Arnold, Nottingham has launched its 60th celebration year starting with a Christmas Tree Festival. After discussions, it was decided to call upon the parish ministries to showcase their ministries in a unique and creative way. There emerged some delightful surprises with a lot of thought

and inspiration behind some of the designs. A tree made out of a discarded pallet, a variety of twig trees, and the very likeable traditional green trees. Some were dressed with evangelical themes, some showcased what they represented and others were used for outreach. The Scrubbers (the cleaning team) made up of a lot of retired nursing staff, a retired pharmacist and a current radiographer were inspired by the Intercare Medical Aid To Africa Christmas

match funded program. This was incorporated in such a manner that it led to Claudia (from Intercare) paying us a visit with Bishop Patrick attending the festival to lend his support and goodwill to this initiative of which he is their patron. During the morning visit £272 was raised with additional medical supplies (crutches, bandages etc) which will be finding their way to the African continent in the new year. Please visit intercare.org.uk for further

information if this has any appeal to you and you would like to assist. The Christmas Tree Festival was open to the public to view on dedicated days with light refreshments available in the parish centre. Parish stewards were available to take people on tour round the church, answering questions that arose. We hope to be back next year stronger and more inspired than ever as we take this concept to the next level. Thank you all.



From: Elston Hermitage.....



A couple of days ago I had my routine dental appointment and as I sat in the waiting room I observed the other patients - each one on their arrival sat down, took out their mobile and began to text or whatever. This made me realize that for many of us the input we encounter daily can be great - television, radio, email, text messaging and social media sites like Facebook or Twitter. We have become so engaged with these things that to apply ourselves with any depth to any particular thing we have to try and walk away deliberately from all these other inputs.

This month we shall begin the season of Lent- along with its call to prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Lent gives us the opportunity to simplify our lives. Lent is almost like a retreat, but one we are able to make in the middle of our everyday and ordinary routines. Lent gives us the opportunity to walk away from many of the inputs so that we can focus on the most important input of all the Cross and

the Resurrection of Christ. The thing about opportunities however, is that they don't amount to much if we don't take hold of them. And for that to happen we need a plan. We need something to commit to that will help us to make the most of this time of retreat - the Lenten season.

Our diocese of Nottingham has focused us this year to a year of Encounter, an encounter with the Lord and a year focused on Prayer - there is no better opportunity for us to be focused on our prayer than in Lent!

Therefore using the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving let's make a plan as to how we can reduce all the distracting input in our lives and make ourselves more available to encounter Jesus in prayer.

I am sure that within our diocese and parishes in this season of Lent there will be made many opportunities to attend Mass, join a prayer group, say the Rosary, be



present at Eucharist Adoration or simply as we are thinking about a renewed commitment to prayer recall Jesus' words "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites" (Matthew 6:5) "In praying do not babble like the pagans" (6.7) "when you pray go to your inner room.... and pray to your Father. Note that Jesus did not say if you want to pray or should you choose to pray, NO he said "When you pray" He is assuming that we are going to pray and if Jesus is making that assumption, then it is clear he expects us to pray!

So this Lent let's move away from the disrupting input and influences in our lives (even in the dentist waiting room) and within our diocese let us grow together in a encounter of prayer - and after the year of 2024 we shall know our Lord and Saviour in a closer and renewed commitment through our prayer life.

Have a good and close encounter with the Lord this Lent!

Fr David + h.d.n. Priest and Hermit

Happy New Year from the Saint Barnabas Gift Store: A Year of Blessings and New Beginnings

As we joyfully welcome 2024, the Saint Barnabas Gift Store extends warm wishes and gratitude to our beloved community. Reflecting on the past year, 2023 was truly extraordinary, marked by the establishment of our new store nestled within the sacred confines of the Ellis room. Under the dedicated leadership of Cheryl, our gift store has flourished into a haven of unique treasures, bringing countless smiles to our cherished community.

Cheryl's unwavering commitment to making the Saint Barnabas Gift Store a one-of-a-kind experience has been the driving force behind its success. Her passion for curating a diverse and meaningful collection of items has truly enriched the spiritual journey of our community members.

As we embark on this new year, the Saint Barnabas Gift Store is delighted to announce an expansion of its new stock, featuring a wide range of devotional arrivals. From intricately crafted crucifixes to statues that resonate with deep spiritual significance, our store offers a wide selection of special gifts tailored for those sacred sacrament events. But our offerings extend beyond the devotional, encompassing a variety of treasures such as baby knitwear and blankets, catering to the needs of our newest arrivals, as well as T-shirts for adults and a range of personalised gifts.

With communion and baptisms on the horizon, our store is well-prepared with a diverse array of gifts perfect for those special moments. We are thrilled to introduce a new range of communion memory bears and Easter bears crafted by the talented Justin Alves. These handmade bears serve as a unique and heartfelt way to cherish memories, and Justin is available for bespoke orders. However, due to the high demand for his memorable service, we kindly request interested individuals to book an appointment in advance.

Cheryl and Justin extend their heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your unwavering support throughout the past year. They eagerly anticipate the opportunity to meet and serve you in the upcoming year, 2024, with the same dedication and passion that has become emblematic of the Saint Barnabas Gift Store.

For all enquiries, please feel free to get in touch with Cheryl at: Email: cbroodryk62@gmail.com

Opening times:

Friday (10am - 2pm)

Sunday (9am - 2pm)

May this new year bring abundant blessings and joy to you and your loved ones.

The Saint Barnabas Gift Store Team



New campaign launched to encourage people to Give Prayer A Go

The Archdiocese of Southwark has launched a new campaign to encourage people to Give Prayer A Go and welcome Christ into their hearts.

People often speak of barriers to prayer, which can range from feeling their lives are too busy to take a moment or that they are unsure where to start.

Give Prayer A Go aims to help people overcome these perceived barriers, by providing them with practical and engaging tips and resources to help them build a stronger relationship with the Lord Jesus through prayer.

The campaign coincides with the Year of Prayer, designated by Pope Francis, as the Catholic Church prepares for the Year of Jubilee in 2025.

Speaking about the power of prayer, The Most Reverend John Wilson, the Archbishop of Southwark said:

"Prayer is strength for the weak. It'll never make things worse and only make them better.

"The biggest challenge to praying is just beginning, but you can only learn to ride a bicycle by trying it out. It's the same with prayer – you just need to give it a go.

"Even just by praying the Our Father – the prayer the Lord Jesus taught us – when we wake up and as we go to sleep will make a difference.

"If we ask, we will be heard. If we seek, we will be found. If we knock, the Lord Jesus will open the door. So, pray. Pray to welcome Christ into your hearts. Go on, give prayer a go."

Archbishop John launched the campaign with a video asking people to Give Prayer A Go. The Give Prayer A Go campaign will share a range of content, from social media graphics, to explainers about prayer. The activities will include:

1. sharing testimonies of prayer, from how prayer has people overcome difficult situations to how prayer has enriched lives.
2. helping people overcome perceived barriers to prayer, by showing the various ways you can welcome Christ into your hearts.

3. giving people ideas, resources and tips to pray. From quotes from Saints to simple steps to follow to turn your mind and heart to the Lord Jesus.

4. advertising prayer events across the Archdiocese, such as highlighting prayer groups, adoration and the rosary; as well as explaining the different types of prayers, so as many people as possible can feel included.

The beauty of the Give Prayer A Go campaign is that anyone can get involved and its simple, you just need to pray and let Christ into your hearts.

An online wall has been established by the Archdiocese, to give people a chance to write their own prayers and share their experiences of prayer and the difference it has made to their lives. To write your own prayer, you can do so by heading to the Archdiocese of Southwark's website: rcsouthwark.org.uk/faith/GivePrayerAGo

The campaign will run throughout 2024 and will look to build momentum as the Catholic Church prepares for the Jubilee 2025.



HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY LINCOLN 2024

Along with other ecumenical and interfaith groups throughout the country, the Lincoln Branch of the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ), is holding the Memorial Day Service 2024 on Sunday 28 January at 3.00 pm in Bailgate Methodist Church LN1 3AR. This is supported by Lincoln civic authorities, Churches Together in Lincoln and District, Lincoln InterFaith and our own Caritas and Catholic Outreach groups. Catholic commitment with ecumenical and interfaith partners has always been paramount. The aim is to remember all who died during The Holocaust and other pogroms and genocides in the last century and bring these to the awareness of present and future generations.

The term Holocaust refers principally to the systematic murder of six million Jews at the hands of the Nazis during the Second World War. The chosen date for the Memorial Day is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, not only to mark this tragedy, but to remember and honour the many more who perished in further genocides in countries like Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

The Memorial Service will include reflections, lighting memorial candles, readings, prayers, laying memorial stones, and blessings drawn from Christian and Jewish sources. This year it will feature a major musical contribution by Simcha,

Lincoln's Klezmer Band, in a documentary concert 'Kindertransport'.

The national 2024 theme is 'The Fragility of Freedom' reminding us that the freedoms we take for granted are not taken away by accident, but by calculated human intervention, encouraging blame, intolerance, restrictions, imprisonment, and worse. Sadly, it was seemingly ordinary people, like us, who allowed Nazis to promote hatred and aggression, while others, just like us, seemingly accepted the situation, taking no action to intervene or prevent the evil being perpetrated.

One of the Catholic organisers, Deacon John Wilford, says: "Together with our Ecumenical and Interfaith friends and partners, we are acutely aware of the need, as urgent now as ever, for everyone to be reminded of the lessons of the Holocaust, how it began and developed, and what it became. The need for vigilance to counteract similar tendencies or incidents of prejudice and hostility towards neighbours is constant and ongoing. Ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural stereotyping, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and all such forms of bigotry against a 'different' minority grouping is contrary to the express teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church. Awareness of all this and an active Catholic outreach, is all part of the 2024 Holocaust Memorial Service.



Lincoln Council for Christians and Jews
extends an open invitation to all across
Lincolnshire, of whatever faith or none, to our
annual remembrance event:

Sunday 28th January 2024 at 3.00pm
Bailgate Methodist Church, Lincoln LN1 3AR

The Memorial Service will include poetry, blessings and prayers drawn from Christian and Jewish sources plus lighting memorial candles and laying stones in remembrance of all victims of genocide. This year we also feature a major musical contribution by Simcha, Lincoln's Klezmer Band, with their concert documentary:



Kindertransport



We are grateful to the The Reverend Juliet Wriglesworth and her team for kindly hosting our gathering, and to co-hosts and guests representing City and County Council authorities, members of ChurchesTogether in Lincoln and District, Lincoln InterFaith and local Jewish communities. Retiring voluntary collection for Safe Passage International.



St Mary's CV Academy celebrates Mass led by Bishop Patrick



Three years ago, St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy Derby was destroyed by fire. For the past 2 years the School has been operating from a converted office block. On December 4th they returned to their old site with a brand new, biophilic building. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Bishop Patrick, along with all of the priests from the parish, Fr Greg Tobin, Fr Taz Lasola and Fr Tim O'Sullivan, celebrated a joyful Mass of thanksgiving. Representatives from the Governors, Trust, Catholic Education Service, Department for the Environment and most importantly, the Sisters of Mercy, who originally gave the land for the previous School, were in attendance. The School are looking forward to many happy years in their new home."

Fran Hazel, Lay Chaplain



Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Take my mind and all that's in it
Take my future
Take my past and take me now
All that I do, All that I say
All that I have yet to come.
And all that you have given- to me Lord

I give it all to you,
as you gave it all to me
I give it all to you,
as you gave it all to me

Scripture Focus

By Fr Jeremy Corley



From Drought to Flooding

Climate change has changed our weather in recent years. Summers have often become dry and hot, and a peak temperature of 40 degrees Celsius was recorded at Heathrow airport in July 2022. Yet our country has also become more liable to severe flooding at various times.

On the First Sunday of Lent (18th February), we begin our Lenten journey by reflecting on Jesus' time of testing or temptation in the desert. There he spent forty days in the dry and desolate atmosphere of the wilderness, without the beauty of green plants or the softening influence of running water. The landscape was barren and the sparse vegetation was spiky with sharp thorns.

Mark's Gospel tells us that the Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness after he had been baptized in the Jordan by John the Baptist. Through the dry wilderness runs the River Jordan, bringing welcome water to the region.

When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended on him like a dove. We can

think of the Spirit being poured out on Jesus like water, bringing an abundance of life that he would later share with his disciples.

However, the dryness of the desert would match the spiritual dryness felt by Jesus in his humanity during his time of testing and temptation. Having drawn spiritual life for himself from the water of the Holy Spirit during those forty days, he would be ready to share this life with others during his ministry.

The dryness of the gospel setting contrasts with wetness of the Genesis reading, describing the abundance of water in Noah's flood. Within a dry climate, water is welcomed because it gives life, but torrential downpours can bring death rather than life.

This ancient Genesis story explains the great deluge as divine action to wash the world clean of sin. According to the story, God brought death to the old world of sin in order to begin a new world of righteousness. God wished to start again with a new humanity, based on Noah and his family.

After the great flood, God promises never to send a worldwide flood again to destroy the earth. And he declares that on rainy days, humans would see the marvel of the rainbow, signifying God's covenantal promise made for all humanity through Noah.

During Lent, unbaptized candidates prepare for Christian baptism at Easter, and those of us already baptized seek to be renewed in the grace of our baptism. In the second reading, St Peter uses Noah's flood as a symbol for baptism, where life emerges out of death.

By undergoing baptism, we first unite ourselves with Jesus who was buried in the tomb to save us, before rising out of the baptismal water with his gift of new life: "In the body he was put to death, and in the spirit he was raised to life."

During his forty days of testing in the desert, Jesus was preparing for the greatest test of all, when he was crucified to redeem us. In the Garden of Gethsemane

his human nature struggled with the call to drink the cup of suffering, but he finally yielded to his heavenly Father: "Your will be done."

On the cross he felt parched with physical thirst, but he also experienced the dryness of spiritual thirst when he felt abandoned by God the Father. Yet through the resurrection he moved from drought to flooding, and hence he poured out his Holy Spirit on the disciples at Pentecost.

On our Lenten journey, we seek to become more ready to join Jesus in his saving death and resurrection. Our penitential works of prayer, self-denial, and almsgiving can help us focus our lives more and more on Christ and become more open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. May God give us the grace of a good Lent, that we may move from spiritual drought to find refreshment in the water of the Holy Spirit.



Funeral Notice


Fr Peter Peterken
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View from the Pew

By Dr Jay Kettle-Williams



To be a Pilgrim ...

My wife and I went on a pilgrimage recently. Nothing dramatic. We drove across country to Canterbury for a weekend at an Airbnb in the middle of town. We'd never visited the Cathedral and fancied visiting what had been the rallying point for so many pilgrims in times past as they prepared for what used to be a trek of 80 days or more, firstly by boat across the Channel and then overland step by step to Santiago de Compostela in Spain's north-western province of Galicia. Santiago marks the culmination of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route at the alleged burial site of the Biblical apostle St. James.

It took us some time to go round and fully appreciate the treasure that is Canterbury Cathedral, compensation in grand part for the £34 we'd had to spend to get in. It always strikes me as arch, a bit 'in for a dig', that today's Catholics pay to enter monumental architecture which earlier Catholics had built and to then have seen taken from them by a certain multi-married monarch. My comment to that effect was indulged by the young girl at the ticket office. The way she smiled convinced me that my comment hadn't been the first she'd heard to that effect.

It was Saturday and we knew we'd be looking for evening Mass. 'Is there a Catholic Church nearby?' asked my wife.



'St Thomas of Canterbury,' the young girl replied. 'Just 50 yards or so down this road. It has a relic of St Thomas Becket. A finger.'

I was halfway through asking if it was free entrance but my wife was already tugging me away: 'Come on. Leave it there. Don't be such a bore!' But a young female voice chanted cheerily behind me: 'Yes, it's free to get in'. Thankfully wit and humour don't dwell solely in the past.

From the Cathedral we wandered the short distance to St Martin's Church, half a mile or so beyond the city walls.

St Martin - Martin of Tours, also known as Martin the Merciful - had been born in what is present-day Hungary. A Christian convert, he served in the Roman cavalry in Gaul (present-day France) because of which he is presumably often depicted on horseback. He left military service some ten years before being consecrated the third bishop of Tours in 371. He is credited for having used his sword to cut his cloak in two (see inset) to give half to a beggar clad only in rags in deep mid-winter, the beggar being subsequently revealed as Christ Himself. The shrine of St Martin in Tours became an established focal point for pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

St Martin's Church in Canterbury dates back to the Roman occupation of Britain and to this day remains the oldest church in continuous use in the English-speaking world; part Roman, part Saxon. It is uncertain whether the construction was first built as a church, a mausoleum or something else. Be that as it may, St Martin's has remained in constant use for Christian worship, prayer and mission ever since Augustine arrived with his companions to re-establish Christianity in the 6th century.

Augustine, a Benedictine monk, had been based in Rome. He arrived in Britain in AD597 with 40 companions, Roman monks and Frankish interpreters being among his entourage, to preach the good news of Jesus Christ. St Martin's was Augustine's




initial base for his mission: 'Here they first began to assemble, to sing the psalms, to pray, to celebrate mass, to preach and to baptize, until the king was converted to the faith and gave them greater freedom to preach and to build and restore churches everywhere'. (Bede's Ecclesiastical History, AD731).

From St Martin's my wife and I made our way back into town, to inside the city walls, to St Thomas of Canterbury, in time for the Vigil Mass. The church, nestling just down the road from the cathedral and undergoing some repairs and renovation, hosted a small, sincere congregation which included on that occasion a leading Catholic parliamentarian and his family.

Our weekend pilgrimage was almost over.

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 **Dr J L Kettle-Williams is an experienced business communications consultant and wordsmith (tutor, writer, translator).**

Eight children from the parish of Gaza receive First Holy Communion



Eight children from the parish of Gaza receive First Holy Communion

On Sunday, January 7th, 2024, on the Feast Day of the Baptism of the Lord, also known as Theophany, Fr. Yousef, Vicar priest of the Latin parish of Gaza, administered the sacrament of First Holy Communion to eight children of the parish after completing their preparation program and education, despite the war. During the past three months, the Sacraments of the Church continued to be given in the Holy Family Church of Gaza, noting that the Sacrament of Baptism was also recently given to a child.

The war has not prevented divine graces from happening. We have previously witnessed their ability to open a private production room to produce the special bread (the host), which is used during Mass. Cardinal Pierbattista, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, has formerly expressed the strength and steadfast faith demonstrated by the parishioners of Gaza, which he has witnessed during his check-up calls to those taking refuge in the monastery.

We note, from the images shared on the parish Facebook page, that the parish of Gaza continued to celebrate daily Mass. Many of those who are sick have been taking refuge in the walls of the church, which also enables them to receive the Church's Sacraments daily.

We continue to pray for our people in Gaza so that God would give them strength and patience during these tough times. And we continue to plead for a cease-fire and hope for a comprehensive plan of peace and justice to take place.

Hadfield churches continues in response to the Bishop's request to help tackle the cost of living crisis at a local level

Good working relationships and friendships have developed over the past few months, and half of the proceeds of a festive afternoon tea and gift stalls at St Charles went to Carmel church for their Bellies Not Bins project. Some of our parishioners spent hours knitting and crocheting various items, and our baking ladies produces tasty treats for the afternoon tea.

Despite atrocious weather on the day, and much competition from other Christmas fairs in the area, £674 was raised in total. It was lovely to see representatives from Hadfield Methodist and Carmel church join us. They work so hard, week in, week out to help people of all faiths and no faith. and the money raised helped them provide food and gifts for local families. St Charles is a donation point collecting non perishable food and toiletries which is then taken to Carmel church.



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Book Reviews



The Divine Mercy & Sister Faustina

Fr Andrew Witko

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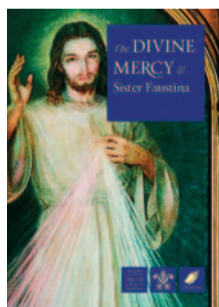
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Beloved by Pope St John Paul II, devotion to the Divine Mercy has grown in popularity since its humble beginnings in Poland. Yet few know the details of its origins or of the devotion itself. That fascinating story is told here.



Beginning in 1931, Jesus appeared to a Polish nun called Sr Faustina Kowalska. He requested an image of himself to be painted, inscribed with the words "Jesus, I trust in You", promising that "the soul that will venerate this image will not perish."

Pope John Paul II has described the Divine Mercy as an antibiotic for the illnesses of

the contemporary world. But while devotion to the Divine Mercy has grown in popularity, few know the details of its origins or of the devotion itself. This booklet offers this information, beginning with the life of St Faustina, it relates her journey to join the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, her visions of Jesus and his request for the creation of the Divine Mercy image. The devotion itself is also explained, with detail about the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Divine Mercy devotions and prayers are also included.

A Simple Rosary Book

Catholic Truth Society

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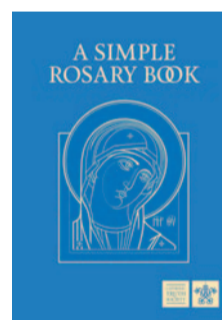
ISBN: 9781860829253

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Designed for those familiar with the prayer as well as for newcomers, this text clearly explains how to pray the Rosary. Prayers and Scripture passages associated with the Rosary are also included.

Enriched by the history, customs and scripture that surround the Holy Rosary,

many today are rediscovering this prayer which lies at the heart of Catholic spirituality. Through 'this school of prayer' (St John Paul II) disciples grow in love for Christ through Mary, mother of the Lord. Designed for those familiar with the prayer as well as for newcomers, this text clearly explains how to pray the Rosary. Prayers and Scripture passages associated with the Rosary are also included.



St Joseph: Prayers and Devotions

Catholic Truth Society

£3.95

CTS Product Code: D772

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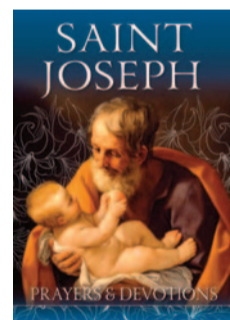
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ISBN: 9781860829109

www.ctsbooks.org

This booklet combines a treasury of prayers to St Joseph with the powerful history of devotion to the saint, while also unpacking his role in the infancy narratives. A must for any devotee of St Joseph.

Although St Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, many saints have testified over the years to the power of his prayers and to their own fervent devotion to him. In this booklet, deepen your own devotion to the beloved foster father of Our Lord with a vast array of prayers, consecration prayers, novenas, hymns and readings.



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Holy Family Parish, Nottingham: Place of Welcome

The Holy Family Parish has recently joined an initiative called Transforming Notts Together which has collated a register of all Places of Welcome that satisfy their criteria: The 5 Ps of Welcoming.

Each Place of Welcome is open to anyone and each one follows the following values (5 P's):

Place: An accessible and hospitable building, open at the same time every week.

People: Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation and staffed by volunteers.

Presence: A place where people actively listen to one another.

Provision: Offering free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) and basic local information.

Participation: Recognises that every person coming to a Place of Welcome will bring talents, experiences and skills that they might be willing to share locally.

Transforming Notts Together offer support to projects who would like to explore joining the network, or places wishing to set one up. They also coordinate a map of over 100 churches across the county who are opening their doors to the local community. <https://transformingnottstogether.org.uk/> To enable us to be part of the register, Julia Terry from Transforming Notts, visited Sacred Heart Community Cafe to take a look and see what we're about. After her visit she said 'It was a real joy to spend time with you and the leaders of the Community Cafe and some of the guests! What a great resource, being used so generously....just wonderful and nice to meet your priest too! You definitely are a Place of Welcome...'

Sacred Heart Community Cafe has been running since our new Community Centre opened in 2021 and was set up by a group of volunteers who wanted a place for their elderly relatives to meet and to enjoy activities and company, especially after the isolation of lockdown. It then extended its opening times to be a Warm Space and is now open to the wider community at the same time each week. We offer free refreshments, soup and a roll and the occasional hot meal. We have free internet and display resources from the councils and the guests also enjoy a game of bingo! We have occasional visitors, such as local police advising on personal and home safety and the volunteers also organise occasional day trips.

Julia also visited Our Lady & St Edward's café which originally opened up in 2022 as a Warm Space. We have continued to stay open as a Community Café and offer free refreshments with soup and roll. The parish SVP and café volunteers also run a food bank from the premises. Julia says: 'How nice to step out of the cold into the wonderful warm welcome at Our Lady and St Edwards. It was so lovely to see how the team made everyone feel part of the family, with one guest bringing Albanian pancakes to share! The smiles, the tasty soup the offer of a food parcel if needed showed love in action in such a gentle edifying way. A real pleasure to attend and great example of a Place of Welcome!'

Our next project is to open St Augustine's Church Hall as a Place of Welcome once the facilities have been renovated. Watch this space!!

Mind to be Merciful café: Place of Welcome

OBITUARY

In the final week of Advent, Fr Kai Fa Lee celebrated the Funeral Mass, of a very special member of her Parish Community. Eileen Udall died on the Fourth of December after a long illness. Eileen was a very active parishioner of St Theresa's Wirksworth. She and her husband Laurence lived in the parish for most of their married life.

Their long and happy marriage was an example and witness to all of the love they shared and shared with others. They were both caring and kind to all they met. There was total commitment to their Catholic faith. It was coupled with a joy of life, a lightness of touch and a sound sense of humour.

In the Nottingham Diocese they were early pioneers and very actively involved in Marriage Encounter Movement. This work aims to give couples who are married or in a long term relationship the opportunity to enrich and refresh their relationship.

In their professional life, they were both teachers and between them contributed nearly seventy years to Catholic education; Eileen as a gentle, caring teacher in the Primary Sector and Laurence as an English. He was Deputy Headteacher at St Thomas More in Derby. He became Acting Headteacher of the school when they merged with St Ralph Sherwin to become St Benedict's. They were each convinced that their teaching vocation was the means by which they supported people to enable them to become the people God created them to be. They lived out this commitment in their daily life

We offer Veronica and Caroline and all their family our condolences.

After a number of years of widowhood Eileen is now reunited with Laurence.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Marian Bolton.



Some of the volunteers and guests at Our Lady & St Edward's Café along with Julia Terry and Community coordinator, Diane Williams.

Another parish in the Nottingham Deanery, who has also applied to be on the register as a Place of Welcome is the Mind to be Merciful Café at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Parish in Bulwell. This was set up by Deacon Martyn Swaby and training was originally given by the charity; Harmless.

Deacon Martyn Writes: The Mind to be merciful café was first opened in September 2017 and was inspired by the Pope's 'Year of Mercy' as well as my work in Mental health. The aim is to be a safe and welcoming place for all who feel isolated, whether physically alone or struggling with issues that make them feel lonely and isolated. All are welcomed with no questions asked. Opportunity is given for 1-1 chats as well as being welcomed into the café community. Since we first opened, we have been here every single Thursday apart from forced closure due to the Pandemic. Although we do not ask or discuss people's religious beliefs, four people who came to the café for support have gone on to become Catholic and join our parish community. This is due to feeling safe and loved and wanting to find out more.

We here at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour R C Church Parish, are proud to support Harmless. A local organisation, that supports people with mental health issues, particularly self-harm and those struggling with life itself. Harmless is a user led organisation that provides a range of services about self-harm including support, information, training and consultancy to people who self-harm, their friends and families and professionals. Harmless was set up by people who understand self-harm and at the heart of our service is a real sense of hope. We know that with the right support and help life can get better. Harmless manages The Tomorrow Project, an outreach suicide prevention programme commissioned by the Nottingham City CCG to raise awareness, encourage help-seeking by people at risk and to reduce the stigma attached to mental health issues. For more information go to info@harmless.org.uk or ask at the Drop-in-Café.

Diane Williams, community coordinator, Holy Family Parish, East Nottingham



Volunteers, with Diane Williams, at Sacred Heart Community café with Rachael, Fila and Karen

Putting the Gospel into action

Across the Diocese of Nottingham are people working to put the Gospel into action. In Caritas we'd like to showcase such initiatives and share the inspiration that they offer. Please get in touch if you are involved in faith-based social action, so that we can help a wider audience learn from it and perhaps offer support.

One such project is REACH, a small charity based in Marple, in the north-west corner of Nottingham Diocese. REACH helps to educate children and support families who live in poverty in East Africa through friendship and collaboration in a variety of practical projects.

From charity to friendship: women in Nottingham Diocese and Uganda supporting each other

An evening with Denise and Lydia from Marple-based charity REACH

Thursday 1 February 2024
at 7.00 p.m. on Zoom

REACH brings women in Uganda together with women in the UK, enabling both to share life stories, build friendships and learn directly from each other about their different cultures, lifestyles, problems and experience. In Marple they work with the local Women's Institute on projects ranging

from food security and the impact of climate change to the challenges facing women.

Denise Ead MBE, a parishioner at St Mary's Marple Bridge, and Lydia Demetriou, chair of REACH, invite you to join them on Thursday 1 February at 7.00 p.m. on Zoom to share a little of their work. Technology permitting they also hope to be joined by women from Lira, Uganda including Sr Evangelista who works with them.

REACH also helps families access food and education, and is supporting a doctor to train as a gynaecologist to repair birth injuries to women who have no access to surgery. Denise and Lydia will share how some of their own journey into their work, and the part their faith has played.

In another project, REACH trains and equips women of the Kosovo slum in Kampala to make soap. In a neighbourhood which lacks adequate sanitation and infrastructure, the soap-making project promotes health and dignity and helps the women develop skills, independence and self-esteem. REACH would like to give the opportunity to the women in the Diocese of Nottingham to join with the women of the Kosovo slum to form friendships, perhaps helping to extend the soap-making skills project.



The most effective outreach is not just charity but friendship. That's what Pope Francis means by 'the gospel of encounter'. Join two inspiring women from a project which has close links with a parish in our diocese, and explore what the gospel of encounter can look like in action.

Book your place for 1 February at bit.ly/uganda-nottingham

Read more about REACH at reach-children-uganda.org.uk

For any queries email caritas@dioceseofnottingham.uk



Reaching East Africa's Children



You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

CRYPTIC Across

- 5 God invites in accountant, about to have tea with the taxman (9)
- 8 Cliff in Edom drinks, backsliding (4)
- 9 With Capone's acceptance into church official, it's almost Babylonian (8)
- 10 Old Archbishop of Canterbury could be Brown's double (7)
- 12 Golden cloud, virtually, is seen to the west of Canaanite city (5)
- 14 He wrote masses; marginally down after book fair (5)
- 15 Song uncle's preferred to old capital (7)
- 17 Jude Hunt is an alias for David's Levite (8)
- 18 Other half of Jezebel is primarily as hard and brazen (4)
- 19 16 mostly responsible for this festival? (9)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Get a mug over here for the wine miracle (4)
- 2 Scots chap supporting two accounts leads to a schism (7)
- 3 British king's framed in the style of an OT monarch (5)
- 4 Sikhs meet here to condemn a drug war (8)
- 6 James' rule to rewrite the Bible? (9)
- 7 Hours in church after weird icon appears during passage (9)
- 11 Cleric's in front, ahead of the leading Essene Jew (8)
- 13 Canaanite city's discovered thanks to an article on a church (7)
- 16 Caucasian Carmelite cleric's gone missing (5)

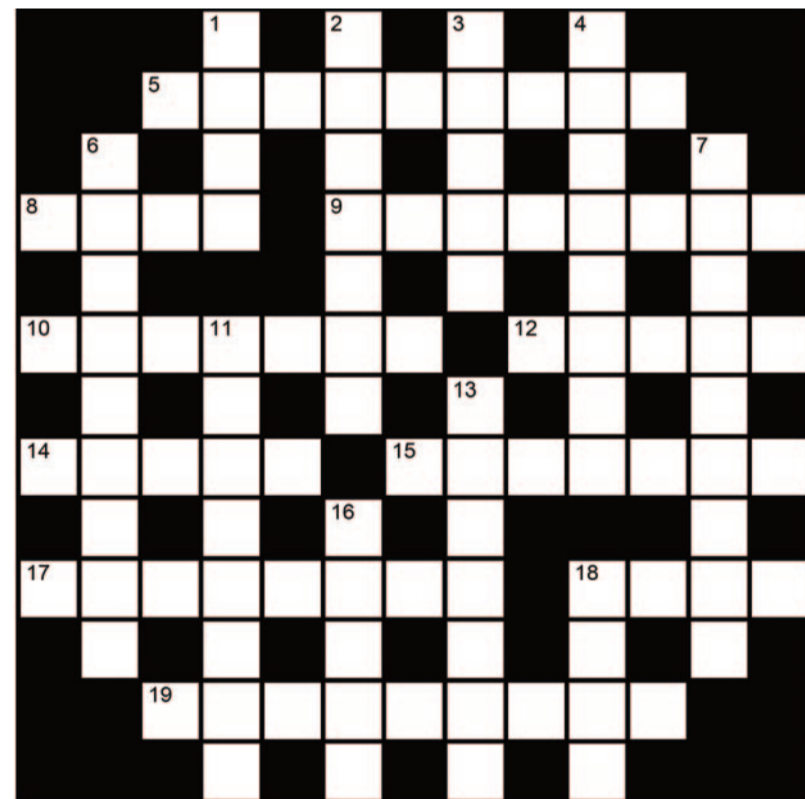
- 18 Blunder losing front part of the church (4)

QUICK Across

- 5 Jericho 'sinner' who, having Jesus to his house, subsequently gave half his property to the poor (9)
- 8 Rocky plateau at the foot of which the Nabataeans carved the city of Petra (4)
- 9 Of people from an ancient part of Babylonia, home to Abraham (8)
- 10 Abbot of Glastonbury, and Archbishop of Canterbury from 959 (7)
- 12 Canaanite city rebuilt by Solomon, along with Megiddo and Gezer (5)
- 14 Composer brothers (Franz) Josef and Michael (5)
- 15 Capital of the biblical Northern Kingdom of Israel (7)
- 17 Levite David appointed as a leader of the Temple music (8)
- 18 Pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (4) 19 Seventh Sunday after Easter (9)

QUICK Down

- 1 Town in the Bible, the scene of the water-into-wine miracle (4)
- 2 Schism between Rome and the East, 482-519, named after the Patriarch of Constantinople (7)
- 3 Moabite king who hired Balaam to curse Israel (5)
- 4 Place of assembly and worship for Sikhs (8)
- 6 Holy city for Jews, Christians and Muslims (9)
- 7 Conforming to the recognized rules of cathedral clergy (9)



- 11 Member of an ancient Jewish sect denying the resurrection and the existence of angels (8)
- 13 Canaanite city; later one of the cities of the Levites (7)
- 16 Link between Carmelites, Magdalenes, Cistercian Monks, Premonstratensians – and Christmas! (5)
- 18 Angular or round section often found in the western part of a church (4)

SOLUTION

Across: 5 Zachaeus, 8 Sela, 9 Chaldean, 10 Dunstan, 12 Hazor, 14 Haydn, 15 Samaria, 17 Jeduthun, 18 Ahub, 19 Pentecost. Down: 1 Cana, 2 Acazian, 3 Balak, 4 Gurdwara, 6 Jerusalem, 7 Canonical, 11 Sadducee, 13 Taanach, 16 White, 18 Ape.