



**MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF BRINGING THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER**

Published by Bellcourt Ltd, N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN Telephone: 01440 730399 Editor Nick Layton E-mail [cn@catheom.org](mailto:cn@catheom.org) or [davidl@catheom.org](mailto:davidl@catheom.org)

## *Visit to Holy Souls Scunthorpe of His Eminence Cardinal Virgilio Do Carmo Da Silva, SDB*



His Eminence Cardinal Virgilio Do Carmo Da Silva SDB, came to Holy Souls on Wednesday 8th November, primarily to visit the East Timor Community. Holy Souls has a large East Timor community and as the majority are Catholics they actively participate in our parish life. Prior to the visit there was, of course, great excitement and important planning. Parishioners Alfredo and Ana with their son Rene led this planning with meticulous thought and care given to every detail. The Church was looking resplendent, flowers blooming, choir in place and everything ready!!

The celebration began with the Baptism of five babies. Confessions followed and then Mass began, concelebrated with Canon Matthew. During the Mass a young couple were married by the Cardinal and received his special blessing. It was a beautiful Mass with a sermon by the Cardinal, the choir in full voice, and a meaningful offertory procession involving the youngsters. Before the final blessing, Alfredo gave an address, gifts were presented to the Cardinal and to Canon Matthew, the latter in recognition of his friendship and support of the East

Timor Community. Families queued after Mass for blessings, handshakes and photos with the Cardinal.

The community had prepared a wonderful 'native' feast at St Bernadette's parish hall which followed, and it brought an end to a wonderful, momentous day for Holy Souls for which we all felt very privileged to be a small part of.

The Cardinal and his secretary were accommodated by Canon Matthew and

later Canon was able to tell us what interesting company he had been. The Cardinal is a fluent English speaker and also fluent in five other languages. He related lots of interesting facts about his country and its culture. He is fifty-seven and may well be in the next conclave to elect the Pope and possibly be elected Pope himself!!

We thank him for coming and wish him with our prayers God's blessing in all his good work.





**MORE THAN 24 YEARS OF  
BRINGING THE  
NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE  
TOGETHER**

The monthly paper for the  
Diocese of Nottingham

## Catholic News

**Editor:** Nick Layton

**Editorial Office:** Bellcourt Ltd,  
N2 Blois Meadow Business  
Centre, Steeple Bumpstead,  
Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN

**Telephone:** 01440 730399

email: [cn@cathcom.org](mailto:cn@cathcom.org) or

[davidl@cathcom.org](mailto:davidl@cathcom.org)

**Website:** [www.bellcourtltd.co.uk](http://www.bellcourtltd.co.uk)

**Distribution enquiries:**

Nick Layton

e-mail [nick@cathcom.org](mailto:nick@cathcom.org),  
Bellcourt Limited,

**Publication date:** Fourth Sunday of the  
month for the following month. Opinions  
expressed by contributors are not  
necessarily those of the Editor or the  
Diocese.

**Publishers and Owners:**

Bellcourt Ltd, N2 Blois Meadow  
Business Centre, Steeple Bumpstead,  
Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7BN

Advertising: tel: 01440 730399

Parental permission should be sought  
before submitting photographs of  
minors.

Views expressed in *The Catholic News*  
are not necessarily those of the editor.

## 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  
[cn@cathcom.org](mailto:cn@cathcom.org)  
before 10th of the month



# Celebrating 180 Years of the SVP in England and Wales

AS we enter 2024 the SVP in England and Wales will be celebrating a significant milestone. – 180 years since the first conference was formed.

The SVP was founded in Paris by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and a group of fellow students at the Sorbonne University in Paris in 1833. One of these students was George Wigley.

George Jonas Wigley was a friend of Frédéric Ozanam studying in Paris. He was born near Manchester but brought up in Boulogne after losing his parents. Wanting to start a Conference in England, Frédéric advised him to write articles for magazines. Helped by Fr Ignatius Spencer CP, (Winston Churchill's great uncle and great-great-great uncle to Diana, Princess of Wales) they published articles about the Society in *The Tablet*.

In January 1844, several Catholics met at the Sabloniere Hotel in Leicester Square, London and agreed to form the first Conference in England. An inaugural meeting followed on February 12th. Frederick Lucas, the *Tablet*'s editor, was elected President, but declined. Charles Pagliano, the owner of the Sabloniere, was then elected. By the end of 1844 four Conferences had been formed in London and they quickly spread beyond the capital, with 8 in total started by the end of the year.

Unlike France at this time, England was relatively stable under the reign of the young Queen Victoria. However, Roman

Catholicism was still finding its way post its suppression following the Reformation. While the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 allowed, among other things, Catholics free to be elected to public office, it was not until 1850 that the Catholic hierarchy was restored to England, under Cardinal Wiseman.



At this time, Catholics were in the minority of England's population and so the early English SVP was cautious about introducing SVP works in a country where the established church was the Church of England. Regardless of their small numbers, during the outbreak of cholera (in both France and England) the Society decided to provide funding for nurses, medicines and even coffins. 30,000 people died in London alone during 1832 and 1854; On a trip to the Great Exhibition, Frédéric Ozanam poignantly commented:



Frédéric Ozanam

'What courage the English Brothers need to shake hands with down and outs, in an aristocratic land where contact with the poor is thought to declass and degrade.'

Members of the SVP have been selflessly helping those in need in England and Wales ever since the formation of the first conference in 1844, and its ripple effects are still felt to this day, currently through the SVP's community support of those experiencing hardship because of the cost-of-living crisis. What had been a debating and discussion group named the Conference of History would soon be reinvented to become a Conference of Charity with the aim of helping the impoverished people living around the world.

By the end of 1844 there were 8 conferences in existence. Today there are over 1000 Conferences in England and Wales with around 8,500 members. The SVP in England and Wales is part of a large, international network and has been carefully nurtured over generations by dedicated Vincentians.

This is the SVP's story, and it is a wonderfully Christian one. A small band of passionate individuals coming together in order to organise themselves to take on the world. This is what the SVP tries to do today, this is what the SVP did in this country one hundred and eighty years ago and wishes to continue doing.

If you are interested in joining or would like to learn more about the SVP please contact Joe Gasan, membership Support Office at [joeg@svp.org.uk](mailto:joeg@svp.org.uk)

## FRANKLY SPEAKING



Writing this article on the eve of Advent I have to admit has not been easy. Possibly many have had to be reactive this year rather than pro-active as events have unfolded. At Christmas perhaps we are reactive when we open surprise presents but it should be accompanied by pro-active in this special season and maybe for the year ahead. This surely applies to those who hold public office.

Just before Advent and on the feast of Saint Andrew we learned of the passing of a prominent political figure. Alistair Darling's death brought warm tributes from a number of former Prime Ministers and many other politicians. A prominent Scotsman he was praised for outstanding competence, integrity and a strong sense of social justice. Mr Darling guided our country through the global financial crisis of 2007-10. We need many more of his calibre at Westminster.

I have only visited Scotland briefly but am aware that Saint Andrew is not only the patron saint but his name is fully incorporated into its history. Andrew was

the first apostle to be called, the brother of Saint Peter, a brave Martyr he is also patron saint of Russia and Greece. One of those great pro-active saints who set a good example.

As Advent commenced we in Britain experienced freezing weather with the usual extra concern for what some call "rough sleepers". The organisation of compassion by the charities and volunteers does relate to the need for an end to homelessness. It seems that a target to end this by 2027 is now as far away as ever. This also applies to another 'target' to build 300,000 homes a year. We have now had 16 housing ministers in 13 years, many young people, and sadly an increase in those over 55 are never likely to afford their own home unless we see significant changes.

If decent housing is a problem in our country it is a major grave issue in the war zones which have dominated the international news agenda this year. At the time of writing this article the prospect for peace in the areas near the Holy Land are not encouraging. A

week long truce seemed not enough to prevent further sad tragedy.

Pope Francis has been particularly pro-active this year on climate change. Despite health issues preventing him attending COP28 he has used scientific data, diplomatic arguments and theological reasoning to speak out. The Pope has not hesitated to show his concern for the world's poor and most vulnerable who are paying the highest price for the harm being done to the planet. Whilst we can only observe these issues it is possible for us to help those in greatest need by acts of kindness, by going the extra mile or even offering a kind word. We surely gain most satisfaction by being pro-active this way.

A peaceful Christmas to all readers particularly those who live alone.

Frank Goulding,  
Holy Trinity Parish,  
Newark

**For all your advertising  
requirements  
please contact  
Nick on 01440 730399  
[nick@cathcom.org](mailto:nick@cathcom.org)**



# St John's church Melton Mowbray joins the town's Christmas festivities and celebrates raising £10,000

Melton Mowbray's historic Church of St. John's has excelled itself in participating in the town's festive activities during Melton Christmas Weekend, from Friday 1 December to Sunday 3 December. The Grade 2 listed church, which has a strong connection with the famous architect A.W.N. Pugin, welcomed visitors to its annual Christmas Wreath Festival on Saturday and Sunday, and had a special preview on the evening of Friday 1st December. Visitors were able to come into the church, which was floodlit for the occasion, after the Christmas lights were switched on in the town, and warm up with a glass of mulled wine while taking a look at the results of the competition for the best home-made wreath. The church also ran a Wreath Treasure Hunt through the town centre for the first time. Entitled "The Twelve Crazy Days of Christmas", it involved following a trail of 12 hidden wreaths which led people to the church.

Nearly 80 wreaths were displayed, with prizes in four different categories. The entries used an amazing variety of styles and materials, from crochet to wood carving. There was even one made from a bicycle wheel! In addition to the Festival in the church itself, the parish held a wide variety of activities. The children shared a Lego breakfast at St Francis School, bringing in their favourite toys. The church choir led community carol singing in the church on Saturday, and there was a Taizé service at the Convent on Sunday. The Polish community ran a very well attended family event at their church on the Sunday, and invited the English parish to join in.



At the Wreath Festival, the Charity Friends of St John's church presented Parish Priest Fr. Tom McGovern with a cheque for £10,000, the results of its fundraising over the last 12 months in order to build a church and community hall next to the church. Building is scheduled to start in the spring.

Frances Levett, who helped to organise the festival, said, "There was no charge to view

the wreaths and the Festival was not run to be a money-making event, although we sold tea and mince pies and it did in fact raise over £524. We were delighted to welcome more than 230 people into our church. It looked stunning! Everyone said how warm and welcoming it was. And with the events at the school, the convent and the Polish church too it was a real celebration of our unity. It was a great start to the season and we were so pleased to be joining in the community event. We want everyone in the whole town to know that they are welcome in our church. And when we have built our new hall, we will be able to do even more to join with others and show God's love and care for all people."

Frances Levett





# Christmas Shoebox Outreach

It's about 25 years since the Good Shepherd church began to participate in the Christmas Shoebox appeal, often referred to as 'Love in a Box'. In November, our shoeboxes (105 of them) were collected and taken to a centre in Basford. Here they were checked for 'unsuitable' items such as sharp objects, glass containers or toys relating to war or conflict. Then began their long overland journey to their destinations in Ukraine, Belarus, Romania and Moldova. The shoeboxes will be given to vulnerable children and families, some of whom will be displaced, through schools, nurseries, hospitals and orphanages. This is a long-standing commitment by Teams4u and the children show great wonder and delight in receiving what, to them, seem like boxes of treasure, full of little surprises and treats.

The fact that there has been a consistently generous response over the years shows that it's something that people also enjoy doing. It's surprising how much you can pack away in a good-sized shoebox, and encouraging to imagine what use, fun or joy each item will bring to the child who receives it. A big thank-you to all who have ever donated shoeboxes. If you haven't, and you would like to do something awesome and help with your own unique box of love next year, check out the Teams4u website and on YouTube for details and suggestions for boys and girls in the three age categories. There is also an option to create a 'Family' box containing useful domestic items such as tea towels, Fairy Liquid, clothes pegs, etc. Children and grandchildren love to be involved in creating a shoebox and helping decide whether it's for a girl or a boy, and what



that girl or boy would most enjoy. It helps them to think about and reach out to children who live in very different circumstances from their own."

In addition, inspiration from our parish Friendship Club, an appeal was made to their members to donate items for the shoeboxes. Clubbing the items together, an additional 9 boxes were completed. We are very grateful for their generosity.

Linda Bussey



**Christmas Greetings  
from the  
Hermitage of Our Lady & Saint Benedict  
Elston.**

**A Blessed, Joyful and Peaceful  
Christmas to All !  
With the assurance of our continued  
prayers for this Holy Season.**

**The Benedictine Fathers  
David & Richard H.D.N.**



# Quiz And Supper Delight!



Just a few words about the quiz night which was held on 18th November at the Good Shepherd Church. As usual it was a superb fun filled evening and everyone enjoyed themselves. The quiz master was excellent

as was the tombola and of course the food which was amazing. Three courses of scrumptious loveliness. As I've said over the last few years that I've attended these evenings, if anyone can tell me where I can



get a three course meal together with good company and a fun evening all for £7 then please tell me. While our caterers would prefer not to be mentioned by name I think we would all want to say a heartfelt thank-

you for a job well done and not forgetting of course ladies and gents who served it all up for us. Looking forward to the next one.

**Polly Jarvis**

## Leicester Council of Faiths Inter Faith Food Sharing Festival, Open Meeting and AGM

Over 60 people attended the Leicester Council of Faiths Inter Faith Food Sharing Festival, Open Meeting and AGM recently which was held at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Rushey Mead. The meeting was hosted by Father David Cain, Catherine Danaher, Margret McGrath & Julia Shepherd.

The evening started with the food sharing festival, and we were very honoured that Mr Rupert Matthews (the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland) cut the festival cake.

During the open meeting, attendees heard from 4 speakers, who all gave their personal perspectives on the subject, Women and Faith. The speakers were: Natalie Steel (Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (UK) and

Loughborough University Brahma Kumaris and Sikh Chaplain), Dr Akshaya Rajangam (former Vice President of the national Hindu Students Forum UK), Michele Benn (Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation) and Vibhooti Acharya (ex-President and the first female President of the Shree Sanatan Mandir Leicester). During the AGM, Fayyaz Suleman presented the highlights report for 2023, and talked about all the activities and programmes the Leicester Council of Faiths have been involved with and delivered during the year. The evening closed with elections to the Leicester Council of Faiths board.

For more information about the activities of the Leicester Council of Faiths, contact Emma Buckler on 07512 893613 or [info@leicestercounciloffaiths.org.uk](mailto:info@leicestercounciloffaiths.org.uk)

**Fr David Cain**





# A SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the best time of the year for many, but the worst time of the year from an environmental perspective.

On Christmas Day last year, BBC Radio 4 broadcast a programme, "Christmas Recycled" which looked at how we could make Christmas more sustainable and less wasteful in the UK.

They looked at the presents we might buy, the wrapping paper we might use to enclose the presents, the trees and decorations we might choose and the sort of food we might enjoy.

They also looked at companies whose Christmas products are designed to be more sustainable. Where the programme has found one company offering a particular innovative scheme or produce, there must be others, perhaps near your locality.

And remember that recycling is not the best answer to tackling waste – reducing consumption is far better.

## Clothes

They found that Christmas jumpers, so attractive around Christmas time, usually end up as landfill or are burnt, which is both wasteful and polluting. Some companies, like British Christmas Jumpers, offer Christmas jumpers made from recycled materials.

And there are companies that hire outfits, which is a much more sustainable option. The Independent has listed its top 8 clothes rental companies.

And of course, we're encouraged to donate our unwanted clothes to charity.

## Presents

Presents come with packaging. 114,000 tonnes of plastic packaging will be binned not recycled at Christmas time, according to Wildlife and Countryside Link.

Each year the UK spends £700 million or more on unwanted presents, according to research done by eBay and Wealthify. Find out what people need before you buy. Offer home-baked treats. Arrange a spending limit with family and friends. Check that the items you buy are green and ethical – workers properly paid, not tested on animals, sustainably sourced. Lists of ethical companies can be found by looking online. Best of all, make reciprocal arrangements with family and friends not to buy each other presents. They may be relieved!

Presents for children are an environmental headache, as they are only needed for a while before being discarded and new toys bought, because children grow out of them very quickly. Yet toys can be reused again and again.

There are companies and schemes that rent out toys. You pay a subscription and get a box of toys every month or so. When you send that box back you get another box.

There are also local schemes that take unwanted toys. And national initiatives like Trash Nothing which enable you to give away your unwanted goods – and take other people's offerings.

## Cards

The Greeting Card Association tells us that 1 billion Christmas cards are sold each year, a huge proportion of which can't be recycled because of the glitter and plastic they contain.

Organic waste can be turned into cards, which is what Earthbits in Huddersfield is doing.

Or we can use online greetings in place of actual cards, which more and more people are doing.

Do you really need to buy cards for people you see regularly? If you decide not to, explain that you are trying to reduce consumerism. Home-made cards are a great idea – people like the thought and effort that goes into them. You can use up leftover resources – cards, calendars, things around the house etc... A better idea is to send a Happy Christmas email. If you receive cards, recycle where possible, don't bin them.

## Wrapping Paper

In Britain every Christmas it is generally estimated that we use 227,000 miles of wrapping paper, at the expense of 50,000 trees. Lots of it is single use. There is no need to throw it away. It can be re-used many times. You can buy reusable bags, and you can buy wrapping paper made from recycled paper, or from hemp (organic hemp is one of the most sustainable fibres you can use). Chirpy in Leeds sells cloth wrapping. One company, Wrag Wrap, sells cloth wrapping made from recycled bottles from post-consumer waste.

Or use attractive and re-usable cloth bought from charity shops. Use ribbon instead of tape for sealing, so that the wrapping can more easily be re-used or recycled. The ribbon can be re-used as well, as can any bows used.

## Trees

Millions of Christmas trees both real and artificial are discarded every year in the UK. To cut down on plastic dependence and to offset carbon emissions, buy a living tree, and keep it in the pot in the house or garden when not being used. It can be re-used year after year. Norfolk pines are suitable, as they don't grow large.

Many Local Councils will collect and compost your tree when you've finished with it. Or you can take it to the local recycling centre, or compost it yourself in your garden. But burning or mulching trees will release CO2 back into the atmosphere, so a rooted tree is best.

You don't even have to buy one – some companies rent out rooted trees. One company, Rooted Christmas Trees, rents them, then 'retires' them at the end of their decorative life, by planting them in land where they are needed to prevent flooding.

## Tree decorations

There's no end to sustainable possibilities for tree decorations. Make your own out of unwanted household materials and waste, and/or out of home-baked treats. Use greenery – we could grow our own mistletoe and holly. And use LED lights, as they use up to 95% less energy than traditional bulbs. You can buy craft kits of pre-used, unwanted things like buttons, material scraps etc to make into tree decorations.

## Alcohol

Toast Ale sells beer made from surplus fresh bread from bakeries, which would otherwise go to landfill. This not only prevents waste, but also reduces the carbon and water footprint of beer compared to malt.

Some companies offer a refill scheme for bottles of alcoholic spirits.

## Food

One manufacturer estimates that each Christmas, households bin 270,000 tons of food. The waste figure for producers and supermarkets is much higher – 2 million tons of edible food waste produced each year.

Food waste has the biggest carbon footprint after the USA and China.

FareShare is an organisation that uses food that would otherwise go to landfills, to feed people.

Rotting food creates methane. But it could be used to produce energy and fertiliser instead, if Councils invested in recycling food waste. At least one company in the UK is doing that, Saria Ltd.

There are things you can do at home to reduce waste, such as don't cook more than you will eat, and freeze leftovers for a future meal/s.

You've probably seen headlines like "Tackling the world's most urgent problem: meat" (United Nations Environment Programme). Growing animals for food involves destruction and pollution of the land, forests, waters and atmosphere, and



takes resources from the poorest people. Include some vegan meals over the Xmas\* period. Vegan meal recipes can be found online – at Veganuary.com for instance – and there are plenty of vegan ready meals in the shops.

## Online

When buying online, add the words "eco-friendly" to whatever you're looking to buy. You'll be surprised at the number of sustainable offerings available.

## \*'Xmas'

You may have noticed that I used the abbreviation 'Xmas', and be getting ready to write to the editor in protest.

Some Christians feel strongly that one should not abbreviate the word 'Christmas' to 'Xmas'. The abbreviation is seen as an unwanted secular downgrading of the religious season. But the origin is the Greek word 'Χριστός', meaning Christ, and Greek was the language of the Christian scriptures.

The first 2 letters of the Greek word for Christ are chi (resembling X) and rho (resembling P), which is why the Easter candle, along with a lot of traditional Catholic art and sacramentals, has the Chi-Rho sign (☩). (No argument about that abbreviation.)

So, whether or not one uses the 'Xmas' abbreviation is a matter of personal choice, though some feel that the abbreviation is itself a sacred tradition which should not be lost.

Let's use Christmas time to move closer to God by thinking about how we can care for His creation. Have a healthy, holy, wholesome green Christmas!

## VB, Laudato Si' Animators 2023

This article takes much of its information from the BBC Radio 4 programme "Christmas Recycled" [www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001ghwd](http://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001ghwd)



# Scripture Focus

By Fr Jeremy Corley



## Calling Disciples

As we start the New Year, the Sunday gospels tell of Jesus calling his first followers. On the Second Sunday of the Year (14th January), John's Gospel shows how Peter and Andrew first met Jesus.

Previously they had been disciples of John the Baptist, responding to his invitation to prepare the way of the Lord. Now the Baptist points out Jesus, saying that he is the Lamb of God—the innocent one who will suffer to save the world. As a result, Peter and Andrew transferred their allegiance.

On the Third Sunday of the Year (21st January), we hear them responding immediately when Jesus called them to leave everything and follow him. If we only had Mark's Gospel, we might think that the call was sudden, but John's Gospel shows that John the Baptist had already pointed out Jesus.

The timing of this call is significant. Jesus began his Galilean ministry after John the Baptist had been arrested. The forerunner had now finished his

work, and the Messiah would start his public activity.

Foreshadowing Jesus' destiny, the Baptist was arrested or 'handed over,' being put in prison before facing martyrdom. Later in the gospel, Jesus warns his disciples: "The Son of Man is to be betrayed or 'handed over' into human hands." In the passion story, we will hear that after flogging Jesus, Pontius Pilate 'handed him over' to be crucified.

When Jesus came to Galilee, he proclaimed the good news from God, echoing the preaching of Isaiah of Babylon. In saying that the time was fulfilled, Jesus echoed Isaiah's call for the Israelites to return from exile: "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid" (Isaiah 40:1-2).

Jesus' announcement that God's kingdom was near echoed Isaiah's message: "See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms" (Isaiah 40:10-11).

The call from Jesus was simple and direct: "Turn away from sin, and believe in the good news." Every year on Ash Wednesday we hear this summons, at the start of Lent, but in fact this is a daily call to us.

Jesus was looking for workers to assist in his ministry, so he told Peter and Andrew, with James and John: "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And those first disciples did indeed leave their fishing nets and come after Jesus.

They joined in Jesus' mission and teaching, and later followed him to Jerusalem. But after Jesus had been arrested, they denied him or fled. They were not yet fully ready to be his witnesses.

After the resurrection, however, they led others to follow Jesus. Peter's preaching brought a catch of 3000 people on the day of Pentecost. Following Jesus' command and guided by the Holy Spirit, the various apostles went out in different directions to proclaim the good news of our Saviour.

Whereas Peter became the leader of the apostles, his brother Andrew had a less

prominent role, yet John's Gospel shows him bringing people to Jesus. Just as he brought his brother Peter to Jesus at the beginning, so John chapter 12 depicts him bringing curious gentile Greeks to meet Jesus.

Three of those four first apostles demonstrated their love for Jesus by dying as martyrs. James was the first to die, being beheaded on the orders of King Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1). Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified in Rome during Nero's persecution, while Andrew was also crucified at Patras in Greece. Only John lived to a good old age.

These four first apostles still inspire us by their readiness to follow Jesus, from the time he called them right until their death. They were not perfect, but they pressed on with their faith journey despite their failings. May we be encouraged by their example and prayers to be Jesus' witnesses in the world of today.

**CASPAR**  
Communication & Administration System for Parishes and Religious

**New online tool to help you manage your parish:**

- ✓ Reduce your parish administration
- ✓ Communicate with parishioners
- ✓ More time to be a Parish Priest!

**Newsletters by Email/Text**  
Send to parishioners/add to your website: save money, time & paper

**Parish Pastoral Statistics**  
Keep track of Pastoral Statistics: see live stats, submit stats instantly

**Parish Website**  
Existing website or a new one: make it easier to manage

**Parish Finances**  
Manage parish finances, gift aid records, reduce workload

**Rotas**  
Easily create parish Rotas: enable parishioners to volunteer for jobs

**Pastoral Care**  
Keep track of parishioners who need to be visited and cared for

**100% Carbon Neutral**  
All systems are Carbon Neutral & helps reduce your Carbon Footprint

**Free Trials starting in 2023**  
[www.caspar.church](http://www.caspar.church)  
from CathCom

**You're already using it to produce your Diocesan Almanac**

**To Advertise  
in the  
Catholic News  
contact  
Nick on  
01440  
730399  
nick@  
cathcom.org**

**A.W. LYMN**  
*The Funeral Planning Service®*

**Funeral specialists  
here for you**

- Pre-paid funeral plans available
- In-house masons and florists

**Free home visits**

**Funeral homes throughout  
Nottingham, Derby  
& Mansfield**

**0800 092 0645**

**Funeral Services**

**A.M. BUCKINGHAM**  
INDEPENDENT FAMILY FUNERAL SERVICE

**DIRECT PRICE - £1,200**  
SIMPLICITY FUNERALS  
STANDARD FUNERALS  
TRADITIONAL FUNERALS  
PLEASE CALL FOR DETAILS

**PERSONALISED FUNERALS**  
TAILORING TO YOUR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS  
PLEASE CALL FOR DETAILS

**PERSONAL FUNERAL PLANS**

*We are small independent family funeral service that are here to help at your time of need. We are here to listen, reassure and guide you through all your options. Please do not hesitate to contact us on the details provided below.*

**6 The Precinct, Cotgrave, Nottingham, NG12 3JQ Tel: 0115 989 0060**  
**632 Farborough Road, Clifton, Nottingham, NG11 9GU Tel: 0115 784 4331**  
**64 Carlton Hill, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1ED Tel: 0115 667 0086**

*Offices open from 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday. Phone lines manned 24hrs day 365 days a year*

*We also manage the Holygate Memorial Woodlands - a natural burial site on the edge of Cotgrave.*

**Email: [ambuckinghamfunerals@outlook.com](mailto:ambuckinghamfunerals@outlook.com)**  
**www: [ambuckingham.co.uk](http://ambuckingham.co.uk)**

*We understand how difficult losing a loved one can be, and we promise to help you through every step of arranging a funeral with care, dignity, and respect.*



**Church Pews Uncomfortable?**

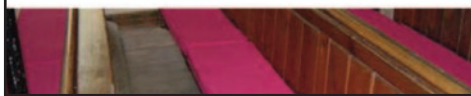
Why not try

**safeoam**

top quality upholstered foam pew cushions?

Safeoam, Green Lane, Riley Green,  
Hoghton, Preston PR5 0SN[www.safeoam.co.uk](http://www.safeoam.co.uk)

Freephone 0800 015 44 33

Free Sample Pack of Foam & Fabrics sent by first class mail.  
When phoning please quote CN101**LPUK**  
LIGHTNING PROTECTION  
UK LTDNATIONWIDE SERVICE IN DESIGN,  
INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE OF LIGHTNING  
PROTECTION AND EARTHING SYSTEMSHAVE YOU BOOKED IN YOUR ANNUAL  
LIGHTNING PROTECTION TEST AND  
INSPECTION?IS YOUR SYSTEM COMPLIANT TO THE  
STANDARD BS EN 62305: 2012?  
CONTACT US NOW TO RECEIVE YOUR FREE NO  
OBLIGATION QUOTATION OR FREE ADVICE AND  
SUPPORT REGARDING YOUR LIGHTNING  
PROTECTION[WWW.LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM](http://WWW.LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM)

0115 8411 211

[INFO@LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM](mailto:INFO@LIGHTNING-PROTECTIONUK.COM)Representing the best in electrical  
engineering and building servicesASSOCIATION OF TECHNICAL  
LIGHTNING & ACCESS SPECIALISTS

SafeContractor

**Our Lady of Fidelity**The church needs religious sisters  
URGENTLY to bring Christ to others by a  
life of prayer and service lived in the  
community of Ignation spirituality.  
Daily Mass is the centre of community life.  
By wearing the religious habit we are  
witnesses of the consecrated way of life.If you are willing to risk a little love and  
would like to find out how,  
contact Sister BernadetteMature vocations considered.  
**CONVENT OF OUR  
LADY OF FIDELITY**1 Our Lady's Close, Upper Norwood,  
London SE19 3FA Telephone 07760 297001**Monthly National  
Catholic Newspaper****National and International News from a  
Catholic Perspective with thoughtful  
articles to deepen Faith****The UK's first  
Carbon Neutral  
National Catholic Paper**[Subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk](mailto:Subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk)

01440 730399

[www.catholicpost.co.uk](http://www.catholicpost.co.uk)

# View from the Pew

By Dr Jay Kettle-Williams



## The Prince and the Shepherd

Night after night at their bedtime, I used to regale our two with true story after true story as to how Mummy and Daddy had first met. They'd peep out from under the bedclothes listening in awe at how Dad, a supremely handsome prince clad in bright shining armour, sitting proudly astride his white charger, defeated merciless dragons, demons and devils – in true Christmas panto style – to free their helpless captive. As they galloped away – rescuer and rescued both astride Dad's faithful steed – to the safety of the castle, the hood covering the ex-captive's head would be blown back in the wind to reveal the smiling face of the world's most beautiful fairy princess. Not that the kids always believed me. At times I wondered who was humouring whom. But they would always engage, with willing suspension of disbelief, clamouring for another true story. I don't think I ever came up with a story about a shepherd.

However, the two themes of prince and shepherd do now come together, but not with armour, not with a castle, not with a trusty charger but simply with a humble donkey stumbling under the burden of a young woman about to give birth.

'There's probably room for you round the back. Try the stable.'

Well, they're hardly the most attractive words of welcome and comfort. But that's all there was by way of a maternity unit some two thousand years ago for one couple in particular, the wife heavily laden with child.

Well, Advent is now over. That time of anticipation, preparation, a peaceful and reflective time heralding the launch of the Christian message is behind us. The infant Jesus enters our world.

Thankfully most of us these days don't have to be born in a cowshed, although a lot of society's problems and ills of yesteryear – human rights, intolerance, military occupation et al. – have simply morphed into the ills of the current day. But a lot has changed for the better since the birth of Jesus, since He went on to prove His point: rising from the dead following His crucifixion.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. It's His birth which we are now celebrating over these twelve days of Christmas, or do I mean Xmas?

I'd always thought, perhaps erroneously, that the term 'Xmas' was a lazy, short-hand, commercialised even disrespectful way of referring to Christmas. That was until it was suggested to me that the shortened format could perhaps refer, albeit obliquely, to the Chi-Rho. Also known as the Monogram of Christ, Labarum or Chrismon, the Chi-Rho is one of the earliest forms of the Christogram. It's formed by superimposing the first two letters chi and rho (i.e. X and P) of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Christos) in such a way that the vertical stroke of the rho intersects the centre of the chi.

Well, Christmas – or Xmas – covers a very special twelve days, a time of joy and happiness, camaraderie and the giving and receiving presents. Who doesn't like getting presents?

In The Spanish Ambassador's Suitcase (Matthew Parris and Andrew Bryson, Viking, 2012) we learn of the US radio station which interviewed several ambassadors in 1946 and asked what they would like for Christmas. The Russian ambassador said he wanted 'peace on



earth and understanding between nations'. The French ambassador said he wished for 'a brighter future for humanity and for the spread of freedom throughout the world'. Then came the British ambassador's response: 'That's very kind of you – a small box of crystallized fruit would be lovely'.

Well, whether your wishes have such macro or such micro implications, it's a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year that I wish you all in the full spirit of this season. Pax vobiscum ... Pax nobiscum.

Acknowledgements and Attribution:  
Texts/References adapted and/or adopted from  
<http://en.wikipedia.org> under the terms of the  
Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License  
4.0: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>;  
Photograph © David Bumgardner (Unsplash): Chi Rho.



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



# An Evening to Remember - The Confirmation Mass at Saint Winefride's, Shepshed

Friday 3rd November 2023 was a profoundly significant and memorable day for our Catholic community here in Shepshed. On this feast day of Saint Winefride, our Patron Saint, we had the great joy to welcome to the Parish the Right Reverend Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham, for his very first visit to the Parish since 2018.

Bishop Patrick was the main celebrant at the 7pm Mass during which he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to eleven young parishioners. This long-awaited evening marked the culmination of a 2-month period of prayerful and spiritual preparation for the candidates, under the guidance of our catechists and Father Patrick Bassey, our Parish Priest. As they took this significant step in their spiritual journey, the candidates were also constantly kept in the daily prayers of our whole Parish community.

Bishop Patrick, Father Patrick and Deacon Keith processed into the Church as the congregation, led by the choir, sung the hymn 'Holy Spirit we welcome you' which was befitting for the occasion. The atmosphere inside the Church was charged with a palpable sense of joy and reverence. The pews were filled with families, friends and fellow parishioners who had gathered to support the candidates on this special day.



The candidates played significant roles during the Confirmation Mass; many of them serving on the altar, others leading us in the Mass readings and the bidding prayers and others bringing the gifts during the offertory procession. During his homily, Bishop Patrick reminded all present of the significance of the Sacrament of Confirmation and of the importance of supporting the eleven candidates with our prayers. Bishop Patrick also shared a prayer he prays daily "Holy Spirit walk with me this day and help me walk more closely with you."

After a renewal of the baptism promises, the Bishop and the priests present implored the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the candidates. Finally each

candidate was presented by their sponsor to Bishop Patrick who anointed them individually with the sacred Oil of Chrism as he said 'Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit'. This was a truly moving moment in the ceremony, the outward sign of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of the candidates.

At the end of the ceremony, Bishop Patrick and Father Patrick expressed their congratulations to the newly confirmed, and their appreciation to all involved who contributed to making this a truly memorable day for our eleven young parishioners. This is truly an occasion which will be remembered for many years.

(Article authored by Adam Gardner and Luis Vaz; Photo by Ellen Troop)

## People with disabilities are among the most fragile among us

**The Pope's Video for December centres on the disabled in our communities. He says:**

People with disabilities are among the most fragile among us.

Some of them suffer rejection, rooted in either ignorance or prejudice, which then marginalizes them.

Civil institutions need to support their projects through access to education, employment, and places where they can express their creativity.

Programs and initiatives are needed that promote their inclusion. Above all else, big hearts are needed who want to accompany.

It means changing our mentality a little and opening ourselves to the abilities and talents of these people who are differently abled, both in society as well as in the life of the Church.

And so, creating a completely accessible parish does not only mean eliminating physical barriers. It also assumes that we stop talking about "them" and start talking about "us."

Let us pray that people with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions offer inclusion programs that enhance their active participation.

Listen to Pope Francis' words for yourself at [thepopevideo.org](http://thepopevideo.org)



### MASSERS

Solicitors to the Diocese of  
Nottingham

Offering you a full range of legal  
services:

- Wills & Power of Attorney
- Probate & Trusts
- Company & Commercial Law
- Commercial Property
- Commercial/Property Litigation
- Residential Conveyancing

Telephone:  
0115 851 1666

At 15 Victoria Street, Nottingham &  
Tudor Square, West Bridgford  
E-mail: [law@massers.co.uk](mailto:law@massers.co.uk)

## Subscribe to The CatholicPost



[subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk](mailto:subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk)  
01440 730399

**For ALL of your Parishioners**  
100 copies: from £12 (12p per copy)  
200 copies: from £23.20 (11.6p per copy)  
300 copies: from £32.80 (10.9p per copy)

**For some of your Parishioners**  
50 copies: from £9.60 (19.2p per copy)  
10 copies: from £7.20 (72p per copy)

**Individual Subscriptions**  
Annual 1 Copy from £3.20 per month



**Online Subscriptions**  
1 Online Copy  
via Email from £2.40 per month

All prices include delivery

[www.catholicpost.co.uk](http://www.catholicpost.co.uk)

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



Donate now at  
[www.reachfoundationuk.org](http://www.reachfoundationuk.org)  
Your money goes a long way!  
Reach Foundation UK - charity no: 1171521





**LOUGHBOROUGH**  
Amherst School

# OPEN DAY 16 MARCH

**Loughborough Amherst School, an independent Catholic day and boarding school for girls and boys aged 4 to 18.**

Offering sector-leading music, performance and sports facilities, Loughborough Amherst School is a close-knit, happy community in which every pupil can thrive.

**Book your tour today**  
[www.lsf.org/amherst](http://www.lsf.org/amherst)



## Book Reviews



### **Another Fifty Catholic Churches to See Before You Die**

**Elena Curti**

**£14.99**

**ISBN 13: 978 0 85244 999 8**

[www.gracewing.co.uk](http://www.gracewing.co.uk)

Some of the finest Catholic churches in England and Wales are winning recognition and a new lease of life. Some of them feature in *Another Fifty Catholic Churches to See Before You Die*, written by Elena Curti. This beautifully illustrated book continues Elena's exploration of historic churches, and her mission to make them better-known and appreciated. It is a follow up to her best-selling volume, *Fifty Catholic Churches to See Before You Die*, published in 2020.



That book proved very popular. But there was a problem. The fifty selected churches did not include any from the Diocese of Leeds!

The new publication puts that right with the inclusion of two of our Grade II\* Listed Churches: The Cathedral Church of St Anne in Leeds, and St Edward's, Clifford.

Elena Curti said: "Once again, exploring the Catholic churches of England and Wales has been a revelation. I have stood where the martyrs themselves celebrated Mass, visited early legal post-Reformation chapels with their understated exteriors, then seen the creations of wealthy patrons in the nineteenth century, who dreamt of the conversion of England.

"The great churches of the 1950s and 60s capture the excitement of liturgical change in the air, and with it a spirit of adventure in church design."

Elena, a journalist at *The Tablet* for many years, has chosen 50 more personal favourites which, taken together, give the backdrop to the story of Catholicism in England and Wales. The churches are listed alphabetically by location, with history, architecture, and artistic highlights.

Each has a compelling story, featuring courageous old Catholic families, visionary priests and religious orders, local patrons, and poor Irish migrants who contributed their pennies, and often their labour, to raise their places of worship.

At the end of each entry Elena lists many more places of worship in the vicinity that are 'worth a detour'. Also included are biographical notes of the principal architects and artists, and a glossary of architectural terms.

### **With Him...in Him**

**Father Jonathan Moore**

**£5.78**

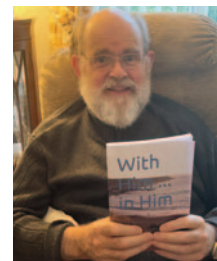
**Kindle £2.99**

**ISBN-13: 979-8860547001**

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

**A spiritual preparation for Christmas**

Monsignor Moore, or Father Jonathan as he is known to the parishioners of St. Mary's church, Marple Bridge and the Annunciation



Church New Mills, (both within the Diocese of Nottingham) has written a book. The book is called, 'With Him...in Him' and is a reflection on the Gospel and starts with the 1st Sunday of Advent.

Monsignor Moore a Catholic Priest retired due to ill health but he makes himself available to celebrate Sunday Mass within the parish when he is needed. Also, during the Pandemic he was a lifeline to parishioners who could join him in his 'virtual online parish' to celebrate Holy Mass. Father Jonathan is a thoughtful and spiritual guide. He sends his reflections on each Sunday's gospel and his weekly homily to many people throughout the world, as far away as Australia, America and Uganda.

It has had very good reviews.



**PLEASE SUPPORT  
OUR ADVERTISERS**



# Fatima Event at The Good Shepherd Church, Nottingham

Did you know that there was an angel who appeared to the children in Fatima in 1916 to prepare the little shepherds for Our Lady's appearances in 1917?

In fact, the Fatima message spans a period of 13 years from the Angel of Peace (The Angel of The Eucharist) in 1916 until 1929 when the Most Holy Trinity and Our Lady appeared to Lucia in the chapel at Tui in Spain.

In the spring of 1916 when Francisco, Jacinta and their cousin Lucia were tending their sheep, a luminous figure of a youth of around fourteen or fifteen years old appeared in the sky, coming from the east. In her memoirs, Lucia described the "supernatural atmosphere" which engulfed them as the angel said "Do not be afraid! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me." So, the Fatima message begins with an invitation not to be afraid! In today's world this is no mean feat! We are faced with pandemics, natural disasters, economic instability and war; and then there are the personal as well as family challenges which so many people face. However, the angel and Our Lady gave us the solution and that solution is prayer and the Holy Eucharist.

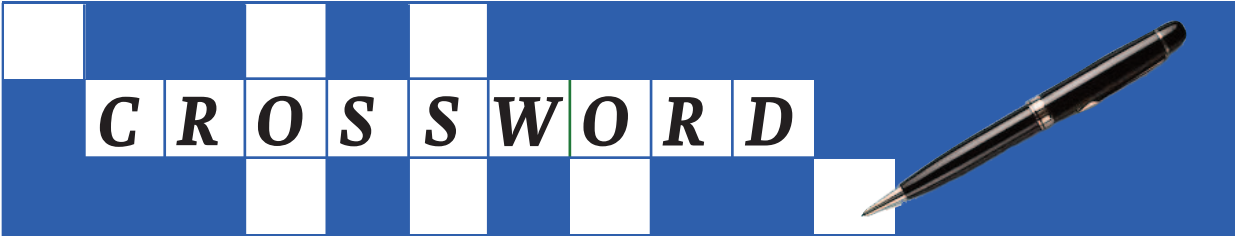
Later the Angel told the children "The hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of mercy upon you". In 1929, the last words of

Fatima were "grace and mercy". So contrary to what most people think, Fatima is not primarily about chastisement, persecution and hell, it is a message of hope and love from a God who loves us unto the point of mercy and who is truly present in person in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

It is no accident that it was three young children who witnessed the apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima. It was their testimony that spread across the region and enabled more than 70,000 people to witness the Miracle of the Sun on 13th October 1917. This is hugely significant and encouraging for our young people today who are called to live holy lives and to proclaim the truths of the Gospel in the years to come.

Pope Benedict XVI said: "The Lady who came from heaven, the Teacher who introduced the little seers to a deep knowledge of the love of the Blessed Trinity and led them to savour God himself as the most beautiful reality of human existence. This experience of grace made them fall in love with God in Jesus."

This is what Our Lady, the Immaculate Heart of Fatima, wants for each one of us – to fall in love with God in Jesus and to experience him as the most beautiful reality of our human existence!



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

CRYPTIC Across

- 5 Sports two letters from Paul (11)
- 7 Log all chocolate that's eaten around Christmas? (4)
- 8 Naive can, strangely to medieval Schoolmen, be an influence (8)
- 9 Building that appeals for Indian ruler to 'go back in time' in retrospective (7)
- 11 This kind of hell hole's diabolical (5)
- 13 Levi's sister's anger initially follows row with husband (5)
- 14 Golden premier of chap being inducted into a mysterious religion (7)
- 16 Note a retrogressive toilet's showy façade: a parable that highlights greed (4,4)
- 17 'No union, no strike' letters initially given to women with habits (4)
- 18 Bernstein, or alternative name for the Premonstratensians (11)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 He composed a tune ultimately the navy embraced (4)
- 2 Key number among Poles eroded benefice's income (7)
- 3 Some in macho Irish group getting vocal when together (5)
- 4 Horse old Persian tracks to a town fortified by Rehoboam (8)
- 5 Means of executing Rugby's capacity to bind individual's attachment to one across? (11)
- 6 Solomon's greatest hit? Perhaps not... (4,2,5)
- 10 ...Eucharistic Prayer heard in Athens maybe a rap Noah composed (8)

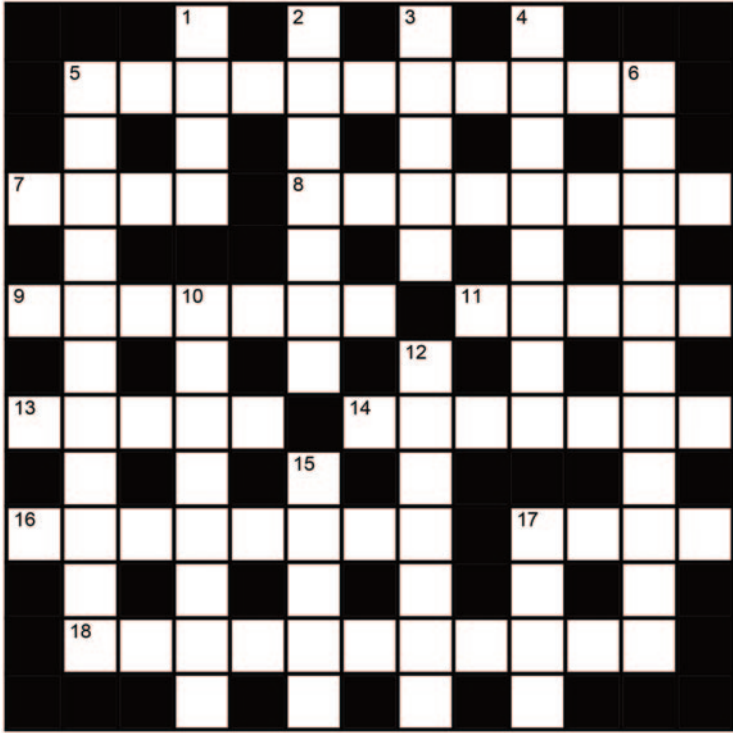
- 12 Abbot's story is written up following Rector's recording outside (7)
- 15 She was unfaithful to OT chap; married an all-round raver (5)
- 17 All over English meet with French negativity, which produces zilch (4)

QUICK Across

- 5 Either of two books of the NT (11)
- 7 Archaic term for Christmas from a 12-day heathen festival (4)
- 8 Muslim philosopher who influenced the medieval Schoolmen... (8)
- 9 ...and a pillar of Islam? (7)
- 11 Word appearing in the OT meaning the underworld or place for departed souls (5)
- 13 Daughter of Jacob and Leah (5)
- 14 Ancient Greek set of religious beliefs associated with Hades (7) 16 A ---- -: parable appearing in Luke (4,4)
- 17 Females who have taken their final vows (4)
- 18 Alternative name for members of the Premonstratensian Order (11)

QUICK Down

- 1 Composer of two oratorios, but more famously Rule Britannia (4)
- 2 First year's revenue of an ecclesiastical benefice, passed to the Crown in 1535 and abolished in 1926 (7)
- 3 Part of a church containing the seats of the clergy (5)
- 4 Town fortified by Rehoboam for which Micah prophesied disaster (8)



- 5 Means of Christ's death as recorded by all four evangelists (11)
- 6 OT anthology of love poems, alternatively called 'Canticles' in some Bibles (4,2,5)
- 10 Word in the Eastern Church which equates to the Eucharistic Prayer (8)
- 12 High-ranking ecclesiastic (7) 15 Hosea's unfaithful wife (5)
- 17 The last of the 'Little Hours' of the Divine Office (4)

SOLUTION

12 Prelate, 15 Gomer, 17 None.  
4 Maresah, 5 Crucifixion, 6 Song of Songs, 10 Anaphora,  
18 Norbertines. Down: 1 Arne, 2 Annates, 3 Choir,  
11 Sheol, 13 Dinah, 14 Orphism, 16 Rich fool, 17 Nuns,  
Across: 5 Corinthians, 7 Yule, 8 Avicenna, 9 Minaret,



**CAFOD** Catholic Agency for  
Overseas Development

**SIGN UP  
& GET YOUR  
FREE PACK**

# THE BIG LENT WALK

*WALK WITH FRIENDS,  
FAMILY, BY YOURSELF  
OR YOUR SCHOOL!  
AND HELP FIGHT  
GLOBAL POVERTY*

**SCAN**  
to sign up



Join hundreds of people, schools and parishes as we take on the Big Lent Walk!  
Raise money to help people as they overcome poverty.

**Take on a challenge like no other this Lent!**

**walk.cafod.org.uk**