



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

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## *Assisted Suicide - a short reflection from a physician*



I am writing this as a retired NHS consultant to highlight the critical importance of the upcoming vote on the private member's bill aimed at changing the law in relation to assisted suicide.

Only a couple of years after I qualified, while working as a junior doctor and editing a newspaper called "On Call", I had the privilege of meeting and interviewing Dame Cicely Saunders at St Christopher's Hospice in South London. Dame Cicely was an inspirational figure who not only understood that end of life care was very poorly delivered in the UK (and, to be fair, everywhere else) but had the drive and commitment to fight for change. The national debate she initiated led to the introduction of what we now call "the Hospice movement". All over the country charities raised huge sums of money to buy

the land, build the facilities and employ the staff to provide gold standard palliative care to as many people as possible at the end of their life. The Hospice sector is still doing amazing work, although the ability to do so is being seriously threatened by a failure of NHS funding systems to sustain support in line with inflationary pressures.

Meeting Dame Cicely lit a fire in me that has never gone out and I have seen the impact of the work she espoused up close - particularly as a volunteer at LOROS (the Hospice for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland), where I help facilitate a group for the recently bereaved, and have served as a trustee for over twenty years in two stints - with seven of those as Chair.

The basic principle championed by Cicely Saunders and her successors in Hospices

was, and still is, that the pain and distress that may accompany the last days of life can ALWAYS be controlled if the right care is provided in a timely manner - and my experience has been that this is absolutely the case. Throughout the time I have been involved, I can honestly say that no one has ever suggested that they or their loved ones has found the services offered by our end of life care professionals wanting, regardless of the type of illness that has brought them to that point. Quite the reverse in fact - the many, many testimonials I have seen and heard speak of wonderful experiences of the "good death" that top quality Hospice care provides to patients and their families and friends.

In short, therefore, if health and social care services were adequately provided to all

those at the end of life, there would be no need for anyone to request assisted suicide, and the moral dilemma facing physicians - whether to move to a position of actively ending someone's life - would not arise.

What we now need to do is to use every method at our disposal to explain why this legislation is not necessary and, indeed, poses significant dangers. We must insist that the Government provides the resources required to provide high quality end of life care to everyone who needs it instead of taking the morally bankrupt, but possibly easier, option of opening the door to a disastrous scenario that completely devalues the legal status of God-given life."

**Professor Robin Graham-Brown KGCHS**



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The monthly paper for the  
Diocese of Nottingham

## Catholic News

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# Going the Extra Mile

As you are reading this article we will already be into Advent. Thoughts for many will be turning to celebrations, feasting, exchanging of gifts and spending time with loved ones; decisions to be made about when to go to Mass to best suit planned arrangements; when to take a break from work or other commitments to be able to enjoy the spiritual and human pleasures that the Christmas period affords.



Whilst it is nice to receive gifts and enjoy other's hospitality, Christmas is a time of giving. The act of giving may have truly positive returns although it may not seem apparent at the time.



Matthew (5:38-42) states 'You have learned how it was said 'an eye for an eye', but I say this to you; offer the wicked man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, then offer the left. If a man takes you to law and demands your tunic offer them your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks and if anyone want to borrow do not turn away.'

At the time of Jesus, if you lived in a Roman occupied country, you were subject to Roman laws and customs. For example a slap with the open hand was a compliment but a back-handed slap was an insult. Jesus is teaching to accept the insult by giving the other cheek. With the tunic and cloak Romans were allowed to ask for your tunic but could not ask for more. In the same way Romans were allowed to ask you walk with their bag for one mile but not two. By turning the other cheek, going the extra mile or giving up your cloak you are going beyond what they can ask of you. Jesus is breaking down the rules of the time to help us understand generosity. If someone was to ask a Vincentian, or

anyone for that matter, for a service that is totally reasonable, such as the delivery of a food parcel, we must go the extra mile and reflect that in our service.



It should not just be Christmas that we give – and we should not always focus on the commercial. Giving encompasses our time, talents and our love. We should look for ongoing opportunities to help or be of service, not just during advent.

Opportunities to help or serve will present themselves over time. A conversation after Mass may turn into talking to a beneficiary about how they can be supported with their isolation. A request for a kitchen appliance could turn into the discovery of a need for a holiday and support for carers. The Vincentian willingness to go the extra mile, to help where we can, will naturally bring out more need and hence a greater opportunity for loving service.



## FRANKLY SPEAKING



The season of Advent is always an opportunity for renewal as we commence a new liturgical year.

This year we also look forward to the start on Christmas Eve of the Jubilee Year 2025 which Pope Francis will formally open in Rome.

The symbol for Jubilee 2025 is Pilgrims of Hope. On November 4th I was fortunate enough to watch on television a Mass from the lower Basilica of the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth. A quick look at the map for the Mediterranean sea reveals Nazareth and Jerusalem are between Gaza and Lebanon. Sadly at the time of writing this article the combined death toll in these 2 areas along with the West Bank is expected to exceed 50,000.

Also at the time of preparing this article the outcome of the American election for President and Vice President is uncertain. Peace in the Holy Land is not sadly the only area of the world that Christians need to pray for this Advent.

It is now the best part of 3 years since the Ukraine Russia conflict changed the politics of Eastern Europe and escalated into a tragic war having implications for beyond Kyiv.

So in a few short months we have elected a new Prime Minister and Opposition Leader along with a different American President. Advent is a time for a sacred period and not party politics. The anticipation and expectation needs to be extended to those in greatest need, it is not surprising that now very worthy charities appeal for more

support not least for those in genuine poverty or without a safe home. If you live in one of our large towns or cities you will have witnessed the increase in shop doorways of young people which is an absolute tragedy.

There are many more instances of those in a minority situation who can easily be forgotten this advent. Any collective or individual act of kindness or community spirit just may influence some of our children. They are in need of knowing about difficult choices in life. I just hope we have enough faith and aspiration to tell our young people that peace, hope and happiness are inherently linked with that Christmas.

Frank Goulding,  
Holy Trinity Parish, Newark



# Trip to St Mary's College, Oscott



On the last Sunday of September 2024, the Friends of Nottingham Cathedral, accompanied by a group of parishioners and friends, visited St Mary's College, Oscott, a seminary for Catholic priests in Birmingham.

Oscott College was built in the wake of the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 and the building, designed by Joseph Potter, was completed in 1837. Soon after, Augustus Welby Pugin, the architect of Nottingham Cathedral, took over the design of the entrance lodges, the decoration and fittings of the chapel and the domestic furniture.

Pugin's work is of special interest to the Friends of Nottingham Cathedral as they support the Restoring Pugin Project by arranging tours, lectures, talks and events.

The mid 19th century was a time of great joy and growing confidence amongst Catholics in England who, after centuries of imposed secrecy, were now free to practice and promote their faith in public. Pugin reflected this confident mood in his architecture and design.

Visitors to Oscott from the Cathedral notice immediately the similarity of design in the tiles in the entrance hall which are almost identical to those Pugin tiles that remain in the Cathedral. However it is in the Chapel that Pugin is at his finest: the reredos glitters with the polished brass of candlesticks and the stained glass above it bursts with colour. Set high above ground level is the pulpit: this is the very pulpit in which Cardinal St John Henry Newman stood and delivered his famous sermon, speaking of the Catholic 'Second Spring'.

And now visitors can, as we did, climb the stairs to the pulpit and stand in the footsteps of the Saint.

Also of note is the ceiling of the chapel which has gold stars painted on blue background. This is how the ceiling in Nottingham Cathedral would have looked and we hope one day it will be restored to its former glory.

We spent some time browsing in the library, where contemporary works of theology and philosophy and documents of Vatican Councils rub spines with older volumes. We also visited the museum where original examples of gregorian chant and some antique crosses were displayed. Those of us who strayed on their way from the library to the museum encountered some exquisite nineteenth century cloth-of-gold vestments which we recognised to be very similar in design to those held at the Cathedral.

It was a pleasure to meet the seminarians assigned to be our guides. On our arrival they escorted to the refectory and, over tea, coffee and cake, we had the privilege of talking with them about their lives at Oscott. As our guides, they were happy to answer our questions and share their knowledge with us. This sense of welcome and friendship made our visit a very special experience. We can rest assured that our current seminarians will become the best of priests.

As the afternoon drew to its end, we joined seminarians and clergy for Evening Prayer and Benediction in the chapel, a perfect end to our trip to Oscott.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend of Nottingham Cathedral and would like further information, please contact [friendsofthecathedral@dioceseofnottingham.m.uk](mailto:friendsofthecathedral@dioceseofnottingham.m.uk).

A Verdon

## Received the Sacrament of Confirmation



Our young people at the Holy Family Parish, Nottingham received the Sacrament of Confirmation in Our Lady & St Edward's Church on Friday 18th October. Bishop Patrick presided at a lovely celebration and we had a reception in the Greyfriars afterwards. Thank you to bishop Patrick for presiding and cutting our Confirmation cake! Congratulations to all our young people who received the Sacrament.

Diane Williams

Coordinator – Holy Family Parish, East Nottingham:  
Churches of St Augustine, Our Lady & St Edward, Sacred Heart.



# St Mary's School Derby join Aid to the Church in Need's Rosary Rally



St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy in Derby joined ACN's 'A Million Children Praying the Rosary' rally on Friday 18th October. The prayer intention was for peace and unity in our world.

All the children from Year One to Year Six prayed the Joyful Mysteries, led by

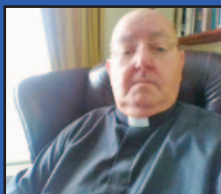
members of the Chaplaincy Team and the ACN Ambassadors.

Pope Francis has been actively encouraging children and young people to use this powerful prayer to make a difference."

**Fran Hazel, Lay Chaplain**



## From: Elston Hermitage.....



Welcome to Advent ! and the beginning of a new liturgical year. By now our new lectionaries will have been opened, blessed and ready for use and we hopefully will be ready for a four week journey into the Advent season. I always think of Advent being a lovely time in our church calendar - it is often a busy, hectic and sometimes a little frantic time when it seems there is so much to be done in such a short time - however above all else it is a season of hope and expectation and a time of preparation not only in our secular world and life but for each one of us spiritually. As we move into the Jubilee Year we remember that we are pilgrims of hope.

Advent is a journey into the mystery of God - made man. Advent invites us into this journey and we have all received a special invitation - the Most High God requests the honor of our presence at the entry of his Son into the world. This event will be followed by a joyous celebration in two locations, both heaven and earth. And so we are encouraged to spend the next four weeks preparing for these festivities.

It is now for us to take up the invitation right away. Let us do everything we are able to be ready to receive Jesus and his gifts. The Gospel on Advent Sunday reminds us not to become 'drowsy' with the 'anxieties' of preparation for Christmas. Advent is not a time to become either drowsy or anxious, but a season of expectation and hope. The Lord is near! He is coming to establish his kingdom!

So Jesus warns us to guard our hearts, so that we are able to experience our 'redemption' more deeply this Advent. He warns us not to let anything burden us so much that it keeps us from turning to him in prayer or talking with him throughout the day. He knows that if we keep him at a distance for whatever reason, we run the risk of becoming spiritually 'drowsy', dull to his Spirit and unable to sense his presence in our lives.

There is so much our heavenly Father wishes to give us this Advent during these grace filled days; inner healing, a deeper sense of peace or joy, a powerful encounter with his mercy and wisdom and guidance for our lives.



If we only are able to spend a few minutes each day contemplating the Mass readings from our new lectionaries, spending a few moments in quiet and in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, then we shall be opening ourselves to the many gifts God has in store for us.

Ask God to open our hearts during this holy season that we may not be drowsy to his love, his grace and mercy. There are three great acts of God, Creation, the Incarnation and the sending of the Holy Spirit. The Incarnation is an act of God - he was made man and dwelt among us.

Jesus is so generous that he wants to help us get ready for him. So slow down this Advent, let us begin to turn our steps and our direction towards Bethlehem - spend time getting ready and awaiting his coming so that we with his Blessed Mother, Saint Joseph and the Angels we may be first to adore the babe of Bethlehem. Don't let Advent slip away. Our redemption is at hand. Stay awake ! Do not be Drowsy so that we are able to receive Jesus at the end of this Advent season.

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



# Mass in Stow Minster

## (Minster Church of St Mary, Stow in Lindsey)

On 22nd October Catholics from Lincoln parishes and Universities gathered in the ancient and beautiful church of Stow Minster for a Mass, celebrated by Fr. Alex Adkins, assisted by Deacons John Wilford and Kevin Pearson. The Catholic congregation was joined by the Dean of Lincoln, the Very Revd. Dr Simon Jones, the priest-in-charge of Stow Minster, the Revd. Jane Fisher-Smith, Canon Peter Mullins, the two church wardens and other Stow parishioners. A large group of students from Lincoln Universities, with their Chaplain Helen Townsend, provided the music and led the singing.

The history of Stow goes back to the time of St Paulinus, who according to Bede, baptised his converts in the nearby Roman ford through the River Trent. It was no doubt via this ford that St. Etheldreda came to Stow (a holy place) from York in the late 7th century. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles describe how Stow church was burnt down by the Vikings in 870. There is a faint line drawing of a Viking longship on one of the pillars, recently verified as the earliest depiction of a Viking longship in this

country. With bishops 'exiled' by the Vikings to faraway Dorchester, the minster was rebuilt and enlarged with added accommodation in nearby Stow Park for their visits to Lincoln and the county. The Norman Bishop Remigius converted this residence into a Benedictine Abbey, and it was here, after the monks had left and it had reverted to a residence for bishops, that St. Hugh intermittently stayed after coming to Lincoln in 1186. His first task was to rebuild Lincoln Cathedral, all-but destroyed in an earthquake with large parts left in ruins. It was at Stow Park on the day of his enthronement that he was adopted by the fierce swan which remained his beloved companion and 'pet' for the next fourteen years.

It is probable that St. Hugh would have celebrated Mass in Stow Minster, from time to time, for larger gatherings of visitors while his Cathedral was being rebuilt. His biographer describes a constant stream of people flocking to Stow to consult him and be sacramentally nourished. The congregation who gathered in October 2024 were the latest pilgrims to celebrate the



Eucharist in Stow Minster through many centuries.

Those who attended agreed it was a very moving experience to celebrate Mass in such an historic setting. The singing was particularly joyous, amplified by the excellent acoustics. We are especially grateful to Pauline Organ, the Church

Warden who initiated the invitation to celebrate a Catholic Eucharist in Stow Minster and for her excellent organisation. We all enjoyed the refreshments and social time afterwards, as well as the opportunity to look round the interior of this unique and holy place.

J. & M. Wilford





# Teach us to pray: Virgo Fidelis

Pope Francis declared 2024 a Year of Prayer, with the theme 'Lord, teach us to pray', in preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year 'Pilgrims of Hope' (which starts this Advent) and the Church, together with Mary, the first disciple, is always waiting and willing to help us in our relationship with her son, Jesus. St Peter & St Paul Church in Lincoln has a lovely Lady chapel that is open most days each week, from early morning to early evening, a refuge of peace to go to light a candle or spend some time in prayer. To offer some inspiration and encouragement, a series of displays were created for the chapel, with a different question posed each month.

## What grieves your heart?

In the Church, September is the month of Our Lady of Sorrows and parishioners (and visitors) were invited to share their sorrows with Mary, who gives them to Jesus and willingly offers her presence and comfort. The option to write a sorrow on a paper teardrop was provided. All the sorrows that were shared with Mary during this time were then presented to the Lord in a Mass (offered the following month for that intention).

## What are you thankful for?

October is the month of the Most Holy Rosary and a display honouring Mary, Rosa Mystica and Mother of the Church was made. Parishioners and visitors were

invited to share their joys, in thanksgiving, on paper petals. The Rosary, as usual for October, was prayed prior to each weekday Mass and people were asked to remember in their prayers the Church and clergy and, in particular, Canon Geoffrey, the Parish Priest of St Peter & St Paul Church.

## Who needs your help?

November is the month of Holy Souls and a number of the Saints have said Our Lady assists the Holy Souls in Purgatory. The teardrops from September, together with the petals from October, were used to represent the refreshment Mary provides the souls undergoing the purifying flames of purgatory. People were asked to remember those souls with no one to pray for them and a prayer for forgotten souls was placed on the altar to assist with this.

Turning to Mary, she not only shares our delight and welcomes our joys to assist others, but she also receives our sorrows, removing shame, offering consolation and using our suffering to then help others in need and we, too, can follow her example and help others when we offer up all our tears (of joy or sorrow) for Holy Souls (or another intention), through the Mass, the Rosary and through acts of charity.

Thank you to: Canon Geoffrey for keeping the Lady chapel open during daylight



hours, Our Lord for giving us Mary for our Mother and the Church, the Church for the Holy Mass and the communion of saints and Our Holy Mother for always being willing to assist us and for the Rosary, which St Therese of Lisieux described as '... a long chain that links heaven and earth.

One end of it is in our hands and the other is in the hands of the Holy Virgin.' May we chain ourselves to Mary and be led, through prayer, to Jesus and the Eucharist and in so doing become pilgrims of hope, bringing comfort and joy, in a world of many sorrows.

# Wear it pink!



For Breast Cancer Awareness day in October, Sacred Heart Community Cafe, Parish of the Holy Family, Nottingham held a fundraising event. We were encouraged to wear pink and posters were displayed to advise people what breast changes to look out for - an amount of £340 was raised. 'Breast Cancer Now' are on a mission to make sure that by 2050, everyone diagnosed with breast cancer lives, and is supported to live well. For more information on this important charity visit: <https://breastcancer-now.org/wear-it-pink/about-wear-it-pink/>

Diane Williams

Coordinator – Holy Family Parish, East Nottingham:  
Churches of St Augustine, Our Lady & St Edward, Sacred Heart.





# Scripture Focus

By Fr Jeremy Corley



## A New Beginning

Sunday 1st December marks a new beginning, because in our liturgy we begin the season of Advent. Moreover, in the scripture readings, we will be hearing a different translation from today onwards. The passages will remain the same, but instead of the familiar sound of the Jerusalem Bible, the readings will henceforth come from the English Standard Version—a revision of the Revised Standard Version.

The season of Advent focuses on the two comings of Christ. We seek to get ready for his glorious second coming, and we also prepare to celebrate his first coming, when he was born of Our Lady in Bethlehem.

The gospel for the First Sunday of Advent reminds us of what we say in the creed: "He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end." Jesus warns us to stay awake and pray for strength to face the future, in order to be ready for the day when he will return.

Hence the gospel calls us to keep vigilant, so that we may be ready to welcome Christ whenever he returns. If we let ourselves be overwhelmed by drunkenness or simply caught up in the daily cares of life, we could be caught off guard.

On the Second Sunday of Advent (8th December), we hear the beautiful Old Testament reading from the Book of Baruch, describing the transformation of God's people from mourning to joy. The city of Jerusalem is told to take off her dress of sorrow and distress, and to put on the fine robe of God's glory.

This expectation is developed in the third chapter of Luke's Gospel, as we hear of John the Baptist proclaiming a baptism of repentance, leading to the forgiveness of sins. The Baptist's call resonates for us as we hear his words today: "Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight." We can look forward in hope, because when the Lord comes, all humanity will see God's salvation.

The gospel for the Third Sunday of Advent (15th December) spells out what is involved

in our preparation for Christ's coming. Anyone with two coats is called to share with the person who has none. We can reflect on our own response to this call. If we have spare possessions, can we find ways to share what we have with the needy?

Around the season of Christmas, many people seek to assist those who are in need, whether near or far, by donating to charity. We ourselves have received so many blessings through God's mercy, and we can seek to let these blessings radiate out to others.

In the gospel reading, John the Baptist does not take credit for himself—he is just a humble messenger. He has baptised people in water, but after him comes someone whose sandals he is unworthy to touch—the one who will grant us the Holy Spirit.

Finally on the Fourth Sunday of Advent (22nd December), we hear of Mary's visitation of her older relative Elizabeth.

She has heard that Elizabeth is six months pregnant and rushes to help her.

The meeting of the two women is an amazing scene of joy, where the unborn John the Baptist leaps in Elizabeth's womb at the arrival of the unborn Christ. Elizabeth cries out: "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"

Then Elizabeth acclaims Mary's faith: "Blessed is she who believed that what the Lord said to her would be fulfilled." Mary responds by directing the praise towards God in the Magnificat: "My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

As we await the birth of Christ at Christmas, we share the joy of Mary and Elizabeth that our salvation has come. We seek to share the faith of Our Lady, and to join with her in praising the God who has saved us.

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## View from the Pew

By Dr Jay Kettle-Williams



# 'Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat ...'

Yuletide under the Tudors in Merry Olde England was responsible for introducing many of the season's attributes which we recognise to this day.

An established custom in such times of yore was to decorate homes but not in those days until Christmas Eve, the day before the start of Christmastide, a term synonymous with Yuletide. Christmas trees, a central European custom, came much later, introduced into this country in the 19th century by Queen Victoria and her consort, Prince Albert.

The Tudors decorated their homes with all manner of evergreens, evergreens being symbols of everlasting life. Mistletoe (pictured), holly, ivy and firs were used extensively in and around the home, notably to be woven into 'kissing boughs', for which mistletoe retains the role to this day, but with one berry being discarded at every kiss.

Henry VIII, renowned inter alia for his repudiation of Catholicism and for having six wives (Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr), was reputedly among the first in England to feast at Christmas time on turkey, as opposed to goose, and for having popularised that great favourite among our nation's young: Brussels sprouts.

The major difference between Yuletide celebrations under the Tudors and the Christmas festivities of our day is that, having fasted strictly during Advent (1-24 December), everybody in Tudor times took the full twelve days (25 December to 5 January) off work, that being unless obligations, such as animal husbandry, dictated otherwise.

The term 'Advent' (abstract noun), deriving from the Latin preposition 'ad' for 'to / towards' and the Latin intransitive verb 'venire' meaning 'to come', is best taken as meaning 'the coming / the approach(ing)' or 'the arriving / arrival'. Well, from the beginning of Advent this year, a new Bible translation for use at Mass will have arrived, the first official translation of the Bible having been in 382 when Pope Damasus, only one of the two Portuguese



Popes to date, asked the convert Jerome to produce a translation of the Bible into Latin.

Translation has long been an interest of mine. 'Traduttore - Traditore' is an interesting cry oft repeated. It reflects the concept that translation is always a betrayal of the meaning of the original, that the only way therefore to produce a true and faithful copy of any original text is to photocopy it.

The meanings of words can change over time and space. Take the word 'virgin' (from Latin) for instance, the meaning of which has been narrowed over time to address and to focus upon the fixation of our day. Admittedly we do still use the term adjectivally - that is in addition to the descriptor 'virginal' - but mainly in limited association nowadays, such as with olive oil, forest, land, snow ... A similar example of lexical semantics would be the term 'maid / maiden' from Germanic as often employed to describe speech, dividend, name, bid, voyage ...

So to keep as faithful as possible to the original in any translation you are on a merry-go-round of translating and re-translating in order to bring and maintain the translation up to date. Alternatively, as in some religions, you refer to nothing but the original. As Christians in the modern world we don't have that luxury. So it's staying on the merry-go-round for us.

Advent, then, is a time for anticipation and expectation when we await the one true gift of Christmas.

I make no excuse at this point for repeating the responses recorded in The Spanish

Ambassador's Suitcase (Matthew Parris and Andrew Bryson, Viking, 2012) as given to a US radio station by several ambassadors in 1946 when asked what they would like for Christmas. The Russian ambassador said he would like 'peace on earth and understanding between nations'. The French ambassador replied saying 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 crystalized fruit would be lovely'.

Well there can always be other perhaps less portentous gifts which we might in all good faith wish to receive or to bestow:

**'Please put a penny in the old man's hat.  
If you haven't got penny,  
a ha-penny will do,  
If you haven't got a ha-penny,  
then God bless you.'**

I wish you a blessed Advent.

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Dr J L Kettle-Williams is an  
experienced business  
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translator).



# Walk in the light



Eight centuries ago St Clare of Assisi, whose name means 'bright light' began a sisterhood of prayer and gospel living focused on adoration of the Lord and intercession for the needs of humankind. There are still two little sisters of the Poor Clare Colettines next to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Bulwell, Nottingham. They are no longer in the former monastery but in the bungalow to the right of the church, praising God and sharing their prayer and poverty with others.

In October, Sister Bakhita, a former London secondary school teacher, shared her celebration of 25 years of religious vows with people from Nottingham, Leicester (where the sisters had been in the interim) and further afield.

At the end of the Jubilee week Sister placed her silver crown, made for her from recycled pieces of aluminium can, on the newly restored statue of St Colette. The sisters have a relic of the mantle of this fifteenth century reformer of their order, who is the patron saint of mothers and babies and share her blessing around the time of her feast in February. They welcome visitors and it is always possible to receive the blessing privately.

The sisters' singing of parts of the psalms of the Liturgy of the Hours, can be found on their YouTube Channel and Facebook page both called Colette's Well as well as a short video of the jubilee celebrations search YouTube Sister Bakhita Silver Jubilee.



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# Stella Maris brings true Christmas joy to seafarers and fishers

Imagine seafarers and fishers, working at sea on Christmas day, thousands of miles from home.

They won't get to church or sing any carols. They might not even have a single gift to open. Christmas can be a lonely and tough time of year for seafarers and fishers.

"Seafarers can find it tough, no matter how long they've been at sea. It's common to hear that a seafarer has not had Christmas at home for four or five years, or even longer," says Charles Stuart, Stella Maris Regional Port Chaplain for Southampton and Southern Ports.

Throughout December, Charles, as well as other Stella Maris chaplains and their teams of volunteers all over the United Kingdom, will be visiting dozens of ships in ports across the country.

They will take with them Christmas presents to give to seafarers and fishers they meet, who will be at sea on Christmas Day. These can be simple gifts like woolly hats, socks, phone cards, and chocolate.

Sometimes, Stella Maris chaplains bring seafarers to Mass when their ship is berthed in port. "Some manage to attend but not many. We will help with lifts where we can," says Charles.

Seafarers often improvise Christmas decorations on board their ship, and Charles has seen Christmas trees made from plastic water bottles.

"The cook will prepare a special meal, and the shipping company may give an extra allowance for this. People of all faiths will come together to celebrate a feast day. Some that have time and can afford it will buy festive food and drink from the supermarket.

"Our gifts add sparkle to the table and offer a link to the world from which seafarers and fishers are so often isolated, and they will remember us for this. One ship master told us we seem to be the only ones who care. I also heard from another master of a tanker who told me his company offered only a chocolate bar for each crew member. He said he had them in his cabin, but he



was too embarrassed to give them out. It's hardly believable," said Charles.

Charles explains that Stella Maris in Southampton and Southern Ports run a Christmas appeal with all the local parishes and some schools, and the response is marvellous. "People organise well in advance and are very generous. Without this support we would struggle to contribute," he says.

Charles says that because ships are often out of sight, many people are unaware of

how important seafarers are to their daily lives.

"People know there is a port, but they cannot see the detail the work seafarers do or appreciate the lives of seafarers. We work to make the public more aware." If readers would like to find out about the work of Stella Maris and opportunities to volunteer or donate to support it, go to [www.stellamaris.org.uk](http://www.stellamaris.org.uk) Let us also pray for seafarers and their families at this special time of the year.

## COP29: Campaigners ask Shell and BP for "Spare change for climate change"

A group of campaigners dressed as mock charity fundraisers have visited Shell and BP's London offices to urge them to donate any "Spare change for climate change".

The group of nearly 30 campaigners from groups including CAFOD and Christian Aid went to the fossil fuel companies' offices wearing yellow tabards and carried buckets and donation jars. Campaigners from Christian Climate Action, Green Christian and Operation Noah also joined the stunt.

The stunt took place ahead of the start of COP29 on Monday 11 November. The UN climate conference is, at the time of writing, taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Governments at COP29 will negotiate an agreement on how to provide greater financial support to communities around the world hardest hit by the climate crisis – funding known as 'international climate finance'.

Campaigners argue that governments must tax major polluters such as fossil fuel companies to raise further money to fund the climate finance pot. This will ensure low-income countries have the resources needed to prepare for climate disasters and rebuild after emergencies.

Liam Finn, Campaigns Manager at Catholic aid agency CAFOD, said: "The



Picture: Amit Rudro CAFOD

climate crisis is hitting people around the world that have done least to cause it. Meanwhile, fossil fuel companies are reaping huge profits from driving the crisis.

"World leaders at COP29 must commit to providing those who are bearing the brunt of the climate emergency with the funding they need to cope – and fossil fuel companies must help to pick up the bill."

Andii Bowsher, Green Christian Trustee, said: "The Bible encourages us to work towards situations where those who do social wrongs pay back fourfold what they have taken from the most poor and vulnerable.

"Asking oil companies for their spare change is the very least. They should, of course, be major donors funding the repair and making better of the climate damages already underway as well as resources to stop the worst scenarios of the future."



STELLA MARIS

## Bring true Christmas joy



Christmas can be a lonely and tough time of year for seafarers. But you can bring true Christmas joy.

Your generosity and kindness will touch the heart of a seafarer or fisher who feels forgotten. Your gift is a gesture of love and gratitude.

Please visit [www.stellamaris.org.uk](http://www.stellamaris.org.uk) for more information about how you can bring true Christmas joy to seafarers and fishers. Please also keep them in prayer. Thank you, in advance, for any support you can kindly give.





LOUGHBOROUGH  
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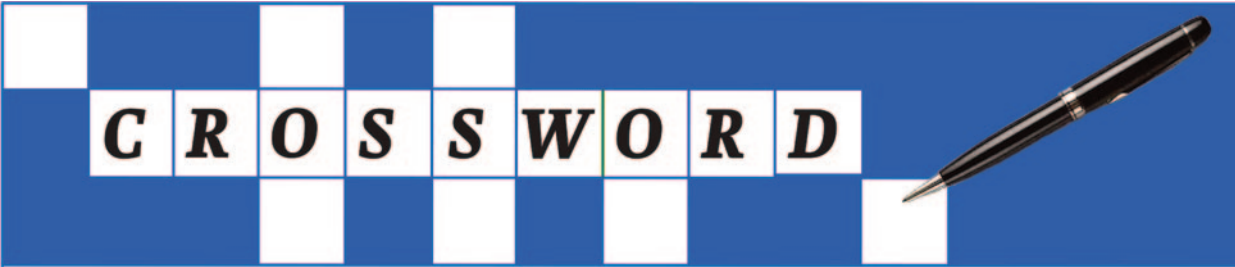


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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

QUICK Across

- 4Isaac's firstborn (4)
- 5Rim; frontier(6)
- 8Roman emperor between 37 and 68 AD (4)
- 9Female domestic servant (8)
- 10Common seabird of Europe; ancestor of many domestic breeds (7,5)
- 12Variety of football played at a particular public school (4,4,4)
- 13Headgear associated with Mexico and SW USA (8)
- 15Father of Menaham(4)
- 17British political party members: Irish RC 17th century outlaws (6)
- 18Poetic name for Ireland (4)

QUICK Down

- 1Pertaining to two dynasties in 17th century Britain, and one in the 21st century (8)
- 2Site of King Saul's last stand (5,6)
- 3Robert ----, Scottish architect and furniture designer (4)
- 4Verge;threshold(3)
- 6Releaseoncemore(7)
- 7Assyrian king, the fifth of his name, who captured Samaria and took the Israelites into exile (11)
- 10Go away and stay away (3,4)
- 11Building, greenhouse, associated with fruit (8)

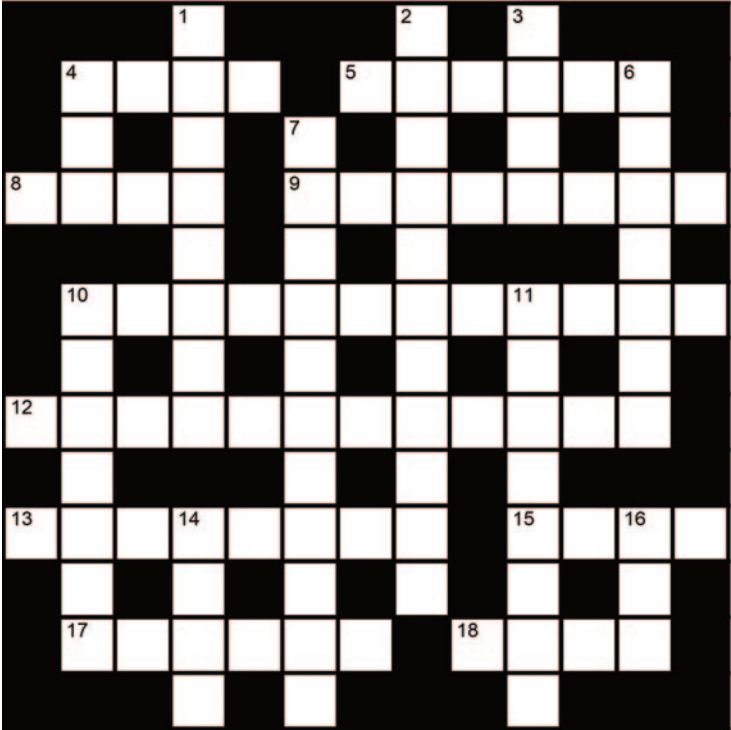
- 14Italian Adriatic port (4)
- 16Son of Jacob and tribal ancestor (3)

CRYPTIC Across

- 4One of the twins seen tucking into Lincolnshire sausages (4)
- 5British sect's on edge (6)
- 8Number, including the Queen, he fiddled, so some say (4)
- 9Subordinate created with care, it's said (8)
- 10Complex soggy eagle, or a great seabird... (7,5)
- 12...low mental age resorting to a noble pastime (4,4,4)
- 13Headgear of Oregon revolutionary angry medic donned earlier (8)
- 15Menaham's dad soldier imprisoned today (4)
- 17Party members after allegations, lose face (6)
- 18Yeats's land in Ulster, knowledge of the Scriptures will bring it all back (4)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1Nothing in vehicle list is of the age of the new king (8)
- 2Philistines prevailed here, but Mongolia is free (5,6)
- 3First family: one on bridge,... (4)



- 4...for the other, it's the brink, mate (3)
- 6Publish again in the matter of offspring (7)
- 7Neal's Harems: massages for old Assyrian kings (11)
- 10Push off and lose one's way (3,4)
- 11Fruit in here has variety enclosed by old railway (8)
- 14One pub promoted Italian port (4)
- 16One of twelve in Israel to get higher than black belt (3)

SOLUTION

Across: 4 Esau, 5 Border, 8 Nero, 9 Handmaid, 10 Graylag Goose, 12 Eton Wall Game, 13 Sombiero, 15 Gad, 17 Torres, 18 Erin. Down: 1 Carolean, 2 Mount Gilboa, 3 Adam, 4 Eve, 6 Reissue, 7 Shalmaneser, 10 Get lost, 11 Orangery, 14 Bari, 16 Dan.



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