



Trinity Sunday
June 11th

Catholic News

MORE THAN 19 YEARS OF BRINGING THE
NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER

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Sister makes First Profession of Vows

On Mercy Sunday, 23rd April 2017, Sister Berta Maria Demeterova, Franciscan Minor Sister from St Clare's Convent, Clay Cross, made her First Profession of Vows in the Parish Church of St Patrick and St Bridget, Clay Cross.

Having completed her three year initial formation period as a Postulant and as a Novice, Sister Berta Maria took the next step on her vocation journey. There will be a further formation period of at least three years in formation in preparation for Per-

petual Profession.

Fr Michael Copps, OFM was the chief celebrant, assisted by Fr Jim O'Hanlon, Parish Priest, and Fr Alan Burbidge and Fr Peter Peterken from Sister Berta Maria's home Parish, St George's, Derby. Deacon Michael Browne also assisted. Family, friends, twenty two sisters, parishioners from our own parish and also from other Churches in Clay Cross attended the ceremony. It was a wonderful celebration of the gift of a Religious Vocation. If any young women feel



drawn to explore the possibility of God's Call to Religious Life, do visit our website and join our Come and See Vocation Discernment monthly afternoons. www.franciscansm.org or contact us at

vocations@franciscansm.org

*Please go to page 5 to read
Sister Berta Maria Demeterova's
vocation story*

ALTAR SERVER CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday 26th March 2017 at the Holy Spirit Church, West Bridgford, Nottingham, we celebrated Jim Harrington's 60 years as an altar server. Jim was presented with a special gold medal by Canon Michael Brown to thank him for all his years of service to our parish and other parishes in London. This was a total surprise to Jim as well.



JOE WALSH TOURS

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MORE THAN 19 YEARS OF BRINGING THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER

The monthly paper for the Diocese of Nottingham

The **Catholic News**

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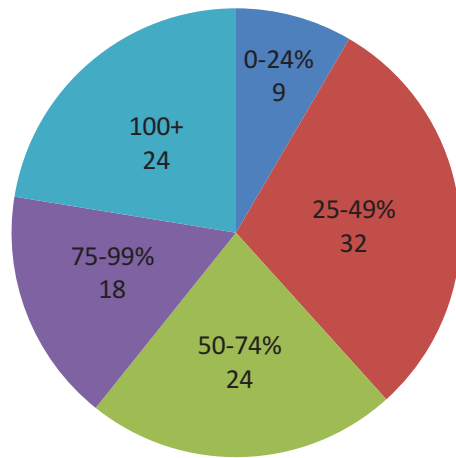
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Views expressed in The Catholic News are not necessarily those of the editor

RETIRED PRIESTS APPEAL

By the time you read this we will be well on the way to closing the *active* phase of our appeal on June 11th and will then concentrate to help parishes still raising funds.

We don't list the total raised on this page because by the time *Catholic News* gets distributed the total will have increased (good news there). Thanks to so many we have passed the two thirds mark of the £5,000,000 we were asked to raise: how you have achieved this other than by effort and generosity is beyond us. The total is updated each month on our website (www.retiredpriestsappeal.com).



Before moving to closure events 24 parishes have completed their task; the pie chart shows how many parishes there are in each of five bands of percentages of what was sought of them.

There will be two events to round off the *active* phase of the appeal. On Trinity Sunday June 11, the diocesan wide annual collection for Sick and Retired Priests will be restored, and on a one off basis its proceeds will go to the appeal- allocated to the individual parishes' total raised. We will send gift envelopes to parishes and remind tax payers if they can to tick the gift aid box.

Secondly parishes should by now have had details of the church to church sponsored walk between 23rd May and 10th June led Canon Edward Jarosz and John and Gillian Fernandez to support the Appeal.

John and Gillian Fernandez will have departed from Glossop on Tuesday 23rd May and eventually end at the Cathedral on Pentecost Sunday, 4 June.

Canon Jarosz will leave from Burton on Trent, meet with the Fernandezes at the Cathedral on Pentecost Sunday, and then continue to reaching Scunthorpe on Saturday 10 June.

Bishop Patrick hopes to walk a stage with both limbs of the walk, and the principal walkers would be happy to share any individual stages of their walks with other parishioners who wish to join them for a day.

We have sent packs to be distributed through our parish representatives' network including details of how to sponsor our walkers and to take part yourselves.

Finally a recent walk by Sileby and Syston parishes with Fr Clement and friends braved the rain on April 1st and raised over £6,000 (see May's *Catholic News*). The pictures (www.saintgregorysileby.org) are well worth a look- but two are our favourites.

Right: The Parish Priest has to run to keep up.



Yellow or red card for the clergy?



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 johnclwson@icloud.com before 10th of the month

Diary Dates

If there is an event in your parish that you want publicised please email john@bellcourtltd.co.uk

25 May - 4 Jun Nottingham –

'Thy Kingdom Come' (May 25th – June 4th 2017) Two central ecumenical prayer

gatherings. As part of the global wave of prayer between all major Christian denominations:

Friday 2nd June 2017 at 7 pm -

Trent Vineyard church, Nottingham – Nottingham City Prayer Network

Saturday 3rd June 2017 at 7 p.m.

Southwell Minster, Southwell, Nottinghamshire

For further details please contact the Anglican Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham's chaplain Lucy Cleland at:

chaplain@southwell.anglican.org

15 - 20 Oct

St. Philip Neri parish Mansfield – Pilgrimage to Florence and Rome:

15th – 22nd October 2017 –

For more details or to book a place please contact Fr. Paul Chipchase: SPNMansfield@hotmail.co.uk

23 Oct - 2 Nov

Yad Vashem Seminar 2017 for Clergy and Church Leaders

Monday 23rd October – Thursday 2nd November 2017.

Please note events may be cancelled for one reason or another. It is therefore prudent to ensure there are no changes to the information listed above before travelling.

Parish Movie and Bingo Night



On 29 April 2017, the Good Shepherd Parish, Woodthorpe, joined together for an evening of entertainment and fun. Tickets, which were priced at £5 per family, were sold out the week before the event and a fabulous night was had by all.

Visitors young and old enjoyed the movie throughout the evening. During the interval, hot dogs and jacket potatoes were served, with hot drinks and cakes available. All ages enjoyed a great game of family bingo! Over 120 people attended and £400 was raised for the Church of the Good Shepherd building fund.

Rachael Steele

Celebrations at Fatima

Unique to have Centenary, Canonisation and the Pope at the same time

Pope Francis canonised Jacinta and Francisco Marto the two Portuguese shepherd children during a Mass in Fatima in May, a century after the children and their cousin first saw the Virgin Mary here. The children, Jacinta and Francisco Marto, along with an older cousin, Lúcia de Jesus dos Santos, told sceptical elders that they had witnessed six apparitions of the Virgin between May 13, 1917, and Oct. 13, 1917, when Jacinta was 7, Francisco was 9 and Lúcia was 10. After the Church validated the children's visions, it turned Fatima into Portugal's main pilgrimage site. The site is nowadays visited by more than five million people a year, many crawling on their knees the last few yards to a shrine of the Madonna. Organizers had expected as many as one million people to attend the Mass. In the end, 500,000 came, according to the Vatican, a drop that some attributed to the overcrowding concerns that the pontiff's visit had generated.

To keep a prime spot for Saturday's Mass, some chained their foldable chairs to the side railings.

Traditionally, pilgrims walk at least part of the stretch to Fatima. Some then cross the esplanade on their knees, sometimes crawling, to reach the Chapel of the Apparitions. Lara Saavedra, 28, a nun and theology student, said she had walked about 13 miles to Fatima early on Friday and then spent the night on the esplanade, getting ready for Saturday's morning Mass.

In recent weeks, many local hotels had raised room prices to stratospheric levels. All along the access roads to Fatima, pilgrims set up makeshift camp sites.

"Fatima doesn't, in any case, have the logistical capacity for everybody, but the young are flexible and can adapt," Ms. Saavedra said.

'It's really unique to have a centenary, canonization and the pope all at the same time, so I think some people got scared about coming and not even being able to enter Fatima,' said José Ferreira, a priest visiting from Lisbon.

Still, the crowd was a sight to behold, with pilgrims overflowing in all directions from an esplanade designed to hold 400,000 people. After a candlelit vigil on Friday, many spent the night on the main square. Among them was Gabriel Barbosa, 22, a student from Brazil, who said, "You do special things for a special event."



A 1917 photo of cousins, from left, Jacinta Marto, Lúcia de Jesus dos Santos and Francisco Marto.

The Virgin Mary was said to have appeared to the children that year and given them three "secrets."

The sanctuary is home to two basilicas, but its most important feature is the much smaller Chapel of the Apparitions, which

stands where the Virgin is said to have appeared to the children in 1917, on the side of the esplanade.



CARETAKER'S 51ST ANNIVERSARY PARTY AT THE HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH

On Saturday 25th March the Holy Spirit Church in West Bridgford, Nottingham, we held a surprise 51st Anniversary party for Bill Turner. Bill has been working as a Caretaker at the Holy Spirit for 51 years and is not retiring!

The Holy Spirit Social club and parish organized a special party to thank Bill for everything he has done for the past 51 years and still does for the parish. Members from the parish groups attended the party. Bill was very surprised to say the least. Here are a few photos from his party.



W A F England and Wales Welcomes

Fatima Centenary Celebration

St Barnabas Cathedral
2-4 June 2017

Enjoy a dose of good reading

As the leading Catholic weekly, *The Tablet* offers a lively look at the Church and the wider world

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It all adds up to an enjoyable blend of news, ideas and intellectual nourishment, giving you a deeper understanding of what's really shaping the Church and the world. As a subscriber, you can also browse the whole *Tablet* website. Its 176-year old archive gives you a fascinating window onto history – such as the awed response to the photos of the Turin Shroud in 1898.

So if you enjoy great writing and original thinking, it could be time to take *The Tablet*. You can save up to 49% off the cover price at www.thetablet.co.uk or call 01795 414855.

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Last October, several parishioners at St Peter & St Paul's, Lincoln were invited to attend a CaFE course in Nottingham as part of a roll out programme. The hope was that, on returning to their parishes, they would lead the course for others. I was one of them. Unfortunately, family circumstances prevented me from attending the two Saturday sessions, however I indicated that I would be happy to assist in offering the course at a future date back at Lincoln.

The course name?

The Gift – A Life in the Spirit course

When those who did manage to attend returned, I was lent a copy of the DVD that accompanies the course, which I started to watch at home. However life, as usual, got in the way and I only managed to watch the first two sessions in the series.

Nothing more happened until Christmas, when Brian and Patricia Davis gently reminded me that we needed to set a date for the course. After a small (!) panic when I realised that I was not just being asked to provide tech support for the playing of the DVD but instead to be in a position of leading a group, my general rule of thumb prevailed - 'Well, I've said I'll do it so I can't let anyone down now!'

With the encouragement of Father Tom, we decided that Lent would be the perfect time to run the six-week course and set to preparing ourselves in earnest. Each week we would meet and watch part of the DVD together, praying that we would be given the strength to play our part in God's work which we were going to undertake. In what I saw as blind optimism, Brian and Patricia were hoping for between 30 and 60 attendees, in contrast, my pessimism had me thinking 'Yeah, we'll probably outnumber those who want to come along'. We put out flyers and Fr Tom supported Patricia in her ap-



peal from the pulpit. Next week when we met, the list of names stood at 35. To say I was amazed would be an understatement! Our prayers turned towards bringing us more people to act as group lead-

ers... By the next meeting we had an additional two participants, allowing us to allocate groups with a good ratio of leaders to attendees (approx 2:8). All of this took place with a certain amount of trepidation on my part as I have never been involved in praying 'with' people before, other than as part of the congregation at Mass. For anyone who may not understand my caution, I feel the need to explain - please bear with me and read on with kindness....

...I am a very practical person and, if something needs doing, I just get on with it (not necessarily putting a whole lot of thought into why, pigeonholing myself as a bit of a 'Martha'). Born into a Catholic family, I lapsed for many years, returning in earnest only when I had my daughter. I often feel ignorant of the teachings of my faith, but too caught up with work, family and other distractions to actually do anything about it. I go to Mass every Sunday, sing in the Choir, arrange flowers, sit on committees and help with Confirmation classes etc, but still feel on the periphery of it all. I look at the wonderful people in my parish at Mass and the coffee mornings afterwards and wish that I could be more like them, more 'holy', more involved - but by that I mean more involved with God, not just with 'doing' stuff. I guess I thought "This course may not seem your cup of tea but, in for a penny..." (just to sling in a few clichés - my apologies). Anyway, to get on....

Having arranged ourselves, we now turned to the venue - once again my pessimism came to the fore...I thought the room was too small and that we needed to split the main group. Other more positive, and calm, people (you know who you are) remained steadfast in their belief that God would provide - yep, you guessed it, I was wrong again! But happy to be so!

On the first evening people arrived early for a meet and greet, before being allocated into groups and making their way to the main room for the introduction. At this point a fuse blew, plunging the house into darkness. There we were with a mobile phone as a light,

hunting for the (remarkably well hidden) fuse-box. Some 10 minutes later both equilibrium and light were restored. There had been no moans or even queries, everyone was so understanding and calm - which in itself was an experience for me - had this happened at work, things would have been very different!

After watching the DVD, we split into our separate groups for discussion, returning to the main room for a plenary and a couple of carefully chosen hymns. I have to say, a few members of the choir were there and we are still trying to persuade the rest of the participants to join us on a Sunday! Without exception, all raised their voices in praise and it sounded wonderful, a truly uplifting end to the evening.

Six weeks went by and, whilst not everyone managed to make every session, we found people starting to ask us what was going to happen after the course ended. As a result we put out questionnaires to find out what people thought of the course itself and what their requirements were for the future. The response was wonderful. As group leaders we went through the sheets, slightly anxious to begin with, but the beautiful comments were wonderful to read. Although not all elements of the course were for everyone, the overwhelming picture was one of tremendous positive benefit. The joy and renewed enthusiasm that some had found leapt from the pages and to read of the personal changes that had been wrought for some was deeply touching.



I won't go into details of the course content too much, but there are some truly inspirational speakers on the DVD, and the group discussions have been described by participants as 'extremely useful', 'enlightening', 'supportive' and 'faith affirming' amongst other positives.

My own personal experience has been incredible; this course has enriched my life in ways that I could never have imagined. I am still a practical person, that's how God made me, but I also know that I am a work in progress and that, whatever comes my way and however I go about things, I now have the most powerful company along for the ride on my journey through life. All I needed to do was say 'yes'.

Not sure about going on or running the course in your own parish? Just do it - what have you possibly got to lose?

Alison Guz,
St Peter & St Paul's, Lincoln

The Response group

The Response Group is one of the longest running groups in St Peter and St Paul's parish, Lincoln. Formed in 1982 as a Response to the visit to England of Pope John Paul II, it is still active today. What makes the group so successful is its informality. We have no rigid rules or leaders but merely a framework to guide us through each meeting with everyone being involved.

What happens at a typical meeting? A different member of the group hosts the meeting in their own home each month. We meet and greet and have a drink before the meeting begins. Someone reads the Gospel for the coming Sunday and we all have the opportunity to say what we feel the reading means and how it can be relevant today in our own lives. When we hear the reading again on the following Sunday and listen to the Priest referring to it in his homily we can appreciate much more its meaning. After our discussions we have time for



prayer when we have the opportunity to put our own intentions and those of the parish before God. Then it's time for light refreshments, cup of tea or coffee and maybe a piece of cake and a good chat! In addition to our regular monthly meetings, we hold coffee mornings and other events to raise money for our chosen charities.

We are a very friendly group within the parish and everyone is welcome to join us at one of our meetings. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7.45pm. Please contact St Peter and St Paul's parish office (01522 682278) for details.

Tony Rowlett

FRANKLY SPEAKING

We waste much of this aid to meet "targets"

I did wonder why the Prime Minister appeared on the television news no fewer than three times over the Easter Weekend. The great Christian celebration is normally free from news about our political leaders as the media concentrates rather more than usual on the Easter messages of Christian leaders.

The nation and the world soon found out that the country was to face a General Election and most of the media and more importantly the electorate were taken by surprise. On May 2nd Parliament was dissolved at midnight but by then we had all become familiar with the June 8th poll which took prominence over the important local elections which took place just after the early May Bank Holiday.

The defining issue of this election is likely to be Europe. The referendum of 2016 is still less than a year ago and what we now call Brexit is clearly a major hill to climb not least with our European neighbours with whom we have to negotiate.

Writing this article in early May the omens do not look good as there is so much opinion accompanied by strong language. It is somewhat surprising that we are not scheduled a national television debate between party leaders as the repercussions of all this will have serious implications for

all the areas of the United Kingdom.

The issue of Brexit may well dominate the General Election but the serious problems we faced at the 2015 poll have simply not gone away. The pressing problems of the NHS are too numerous to be resolved, cuts in social services, education and council provision have hit local communities hard. Our prisons still accommodate over 85,000 despite being told that crime is falling. It is perhaps the allocation of aid to the deprived and suffering of our world that has caused some of the greatest hostility. Much of this is the claim that we waste much of this aid to meet "targets". Surely the appalling famine in East Africa and the plight of refugees in the Mediterranean deserves a better response than this.

Perhaps when you read this article you will have decided which way to vote or you may have just switched off from the campaign. I really do hope some readers will ask all the candidates to visit their local food banks which have witnessed a significant growth in recent times. If they understand why these are necessary in their constituencies some good may yet come from this election.

Frank Goulding
Holy Trinity Parish
Newark

My Vocation Story

I am Sister Berta Maria Demeterova, a Franciscan Sister Minoress living in St Clare's Convent, Clay Cross. Originally I am from Slovakia but I lived in Derby for about nine years with my family before I entered the Convent. I would like to share with you

a little about my call to be a Sister.

My first memory of wanting to be a Sister was after watching 'Sister Act'. I was about knee high at the time! God can use many different ways to help us to hear His call -

even a funny film like 'Sister Act'. But as the years passed and I became a teenager, God wasn't the centre of my life and I did what I wanted, making my own decisions and rules in my life.

But God is a very loving and patient God and in July 2012, I had what I can only describe as a personal conversion experience. Somehow I realised that God, the Almighty, is Good and He wants me to be happy and live life to the full. I realised He wants me to live in joy and happiness. I also realised that His Plan for my life is the best plan. Therefore, I asked God what He wanted me to do with my life. I even prayed a Novena to St Clare to help me to know God's will.

Memories of my childhood desire to be a sister came back into my mind and heart. I remember asking the Lord, face to face 'Do You really want me? Do you really want me to be totally yours? And at that very moment I seemed to see the Lord in front of my eyes, looking at me, saying, "Yes, I want you" and I knew how in Love Jesus is with me. St Catherine of Siena said that God is intoxicated with love for us. In everyday language, God is drunk with love for us. I was so in awe and surprised that the Lord wanted me that "I said 'Yes Lord, let's do it ". But that was only the beginning. I needed help and guidance and this is where other people have a part to play in helping young people to take the next step.

One of the parishioners in my parish at St George's, Derby, a married woman, named Karen, one day came to me and said: "I see you are faithful to your daily Mass. Have you ever thought about being a Religious Sister? I shared a little bit with her and she told me about the Poor



Clare's in Nottingham and St. Clare's Convent in Clay Cross. Because my English was not so good at that time, Karen even phoned the two Convents for me. So we got cracking together and I am a Sister today by His Grace and the kindness and encouragement of a good parishioner. I was very happy that Karen was able to be at my First Profession of Vows on Mercy Sunday.

So, there is a message here for every parent and parishioner. Have the courage to talk to young people about becoming a Priest or a Sister. You may be the channel God wants to use to help some young man or woman to follow the extra-ordinary Call of God to be a Priest or Sister.

REVIEW OF ST ANNE'S PARISH COUNCIL

If there is anyone who doubts the efficacy of having a Parish Council, they need only look at this account of the past 18 months of St Anne's Parish, Buxton.



In December 2015 Fr Dennis Higgins, our Parish Priest, was suddenly taken into hospital. The Parish council convened an emergency meeting and took action. The immediate priority was to notify High Peak Deanery and arrange for a priest to cover the weekend Masses. Fr Kevin Gradwell recently ordained, filled the breach. He managed to say Mass at three churches every Saturday and Sunday and the Christmas Masses until Fr Dennis was well enough to take over again. It was decided to reduce the services having one Mass midweek and opening the church for one hour of private prayer on Mondays.

Margaret S. Chairperson of the council and Sue H. a retired GP member, visited Father in hospital; despite being so ill, Fr Dennis was mentally alert and took a keen interest in the arrangements. Sue H. liaised with the doctors and found Father would not be discharged home until January 2016.

In order to facilitate the smooth running of the Parish during Father's absence, a working knowledge of procedure and the day-to-day business of the Parish were necessary. It became obvious that what was needed was a comprehensive plan with named personnel responsible for each part, which could be brought into use in the absence of a Parish Priest. After a great deal of discussion, Margaret S. formulated a plan, a copy of which would be kept in the Sacristy, so that anyone in difficulty would have a name and phone number to contact for help.

THE PLAN

The plan had 12 main headings: Communication; Property; Liturgy; Evangelisation; Education; Safeguarding; Formation; Social; Outreach; Churches Together; Catechetics; Contingency.

Each category was sub-divided into different sections for example Property was sub-divided into Church, House, Grounds, Parish Centre.

For example, CHURCH - covered the building itself, furnishings, liturgical vessels, vestments, altar cloths etc., where each item was located and the person responsible for its upkeep. Five key holders were also named to ensure the church was open for services and securely locked afterwards.

Communication was important so at every Mass, Margaret S. addressed the congregation to report on Father's progress, inform about the past week's affairs and outlined what was needed to be done in the week ahead. A weekly bulletin was composed by Angela D. and printed on the Mass sheet. The two Youth contacts on the Council kept the schools informed and Robert A. updated the Parish website. Margaret S. and Sue H. also liaised every week with Canon Bowdren, High Peak Deanery.

Father Dennis was not discharged home until January 2016, he resumed all duties but at a reduced rate. During this period

the Parish held a First Communion service for 20 children and Bishop Patrick confirmed 12 candidates, both ceremonies were a great success.

However in May, Father Dennis was sent to hospital but discharged to care at home. Locum priests covered the services. Father needed more support but was determined to carry on. The Parish Council meetings were moved into his house so that he could take part, albeit in a wheelchair latterly. A gardening team led by Mary R. was organised to keep the grounds in good order and a buildings team, overseen by Peter S., dealt with repairs, mainly in the Community Centre.

In October, Father Dennis was taken to hospital again, now seriously ill; however he found life on a noisy hospital ward too stressful. The hospital medical team agreed that he could be treated at home. Sue H. arranged for a Community Care Agency, Buxton Rehabilitation Team and the District Nurses to be involved and organised a rota of 14 parishioners, mainly retired nurses and carers, to sit with Father so he would never be left alone. Various parishioners provided meals for him.

The Parish was very grateful to Mgr. Dazley for coming out of retirement to cover the weekend Masses over this period. Bishop Patrick visited and insisted Father retired as Parish Priest but could still continue to live in the house.

In the lead up to Christmas, a meeting of Readers and Eucharistic Ministers was arranged to plan the Christmas services. On Christmas Eve the congregation was delighted to see Father Dennis on the altar in a wheelchair to take part in the Christmas Masses with his friend Father Gerry Murphy.

During all this period, Margaret S. co-ordinated all the Council's tasks, liaised with visiting priests, dealt with all the bookings for the Community Centre and answered numerous enquiries requesting help and advice. Margaret's husband Ken set the alarms and checked the house and church buildings and made all secure every night. On the 14th January the Parish Council organised a Birthday celebration for Fr Dennis, he appreciated it but could not eat much by this time and was now confined to bed. Unfortunately his condition continued to deteriorate and Father died on 20th January 2017.

Anybody who has had a bereavement in the family will appreciate just how difficult, time consuming and exhausting the necessary arrangements can be. As Fr Dennis only had one close relative, an elderly brother, it meant the Parish Council was involved from the start.

Continued on page 9

School of the Annunciation

Centre for the New Evangelisation

Four-day residential schools in 2017 at Buckfast Abbey, Devon

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27th-30th July

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27th-30th July

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Fr Jim gives the 'Thumbs Up' for the Gift Course

The Parish of Christ the King Alfreton and St Patrick and St Bridget Clay Cross presented The Gift course during the six weeks of Lent. Co-ordinated by Sr Patricia, FSM and a team of twenty two, the course was an amazing experience of faith renewed and faith shared.

It all started when eleven parishioners attended the Training days in Nottingham in November and December. After Christmas, in January, Sr Patricia called the first meeting to prepare for the Course. Having watched the preparatory DVD the team took to heart the threefold emphasis on Prayer, Publicity and Preparation.

Prayer: The team agreed to pray the Novena Prayer to the Holy Spirit every day for the Gift Course. Sr Patricia distributed the prayer Cards and also suggested a little fasting - especially on Wednesdays - when we intended to run the Course. This agreed we moved on to our second 'P'

Publicity: Several members of the team agreed to distribute posters in Churches, workplaces, schools and even in Tesco's. Sr Patricia spoke at the end of all the Masses in our Parish and Sr Shirley spoke at other Christian Churches during their Sunday services. This bore abundant fruit as we had over 20 participants attend the Course from other Christian Churches. They were very enthusiastic, appreciative and grateful for the experience. The one-to-one personal invitation both within the parish and outside it was very effective. A number of our Parish team were available at the end of Mass to invite people and take names for the Course.

Preparation: the team worked with great enthusiasm and generosity to ensure that every aspect of the Course needs were met: room preparation, heating, lighting, table cloths, flowers, candles, technology, refreshments, car parking, hospitality, name labels and list of those who attended, printing of reflections for each week, questions and reminders for Table Leaders, hymn sheets, music (both live and on CD), resources from Café (on sale and return basis), photographers - all these details were superbly and unobtrusively dealt with by the team.

In February we had another preparatory team meeting to ensure that all details were in place and also to have some idea of numbers attending as this would affect the number of tables and printing requirements. We also felt it was necessary to meet again as a team during the Course to prepare for Week 5 which is a little different from the other sessions. This was a very worthwhile and blessed evening for the Team as each member was prayed with in a way that the Table Leaders would repeat during Session 5 for those in their group.



Two other events also prepared our hearts for engaging in the Gift Course. We have a Prayer group that meets on the second Thursday of every month at St Clare's Convent. Our focus leading up to the Gift Course was Charles Whitehead's book: The Gift which is recommended for use with the DVD Gift Course. We prayed and shared our reflections on each Chapter and this helped greatly in deepening our understanding of what was being offered. We also organised a 52 seater coach to the National Day in Birmingham celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This too was a channel of grace and inspiration in preparing the way for leading and participating in the Gift Course.

Entrusting our efforts to the Holy Spirit we felt ready to launch the Course on Ash Wednesday. We had a wonderful response, not only on Ash Wednesday but throughout the six weeks. We had hoped to replicate the number in the Upper Room on the first Pentecost - about 120 we are told. We almost reached that number as we had a total of 111 participants. The photos, which capture the mood of the Course and our experience as a parish, were capably taken by two of our parishioners, Paul Fuller and Bruce Johnson.

At our final session 6, one member of the team, Isabel Hopkins, produced delicious and attractively decorated cakes for our refreshments to celebrate our time together. Sr Patricia was also presented with a beautiful bouquet for flowers for her part in co-ordinating the

Course. Using the language of the 'Oscars' Sister Patricia said she received the bouquet on behalf of all who had worked so hard to make this course possible. We hope and

pray every other parish will be blessed by this amazing opportunity, which Bishop Patrick has encouraged throughout the Diocese.

Celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary

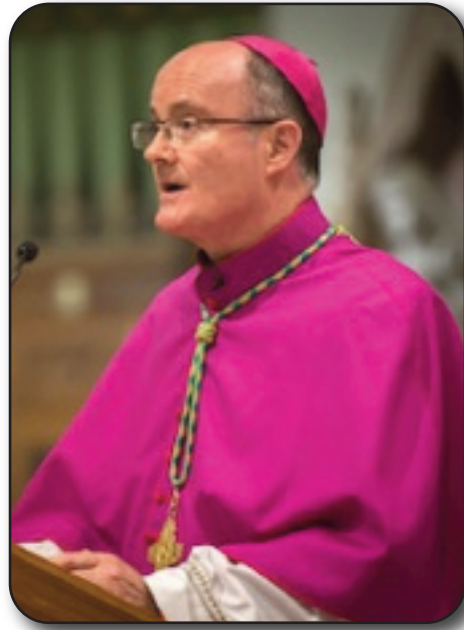
*The Holy Spirit Church,
West Bridgford, Nottingham*

We celebrated John and Dympna Kitchin's 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday 26th March 2017 at 10.30am Mass. Fr. Michael surprised John and Dympna by presenting them a papal blessing.



Congratulations to John and Dympna!

Bishop Patrick on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery



Thank you to all of you who have attended one of the five sessions we have held so far on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. There is one final event remaining, of which you will find details below. Thank you for giving your time to these events and joining me in the prayer that one day soon, together, we will play our part in bringing an end to modern slavery in the UK and helping to eradicate human trafficking.

Although our programme of awareness raising events is coming to an end, our work on this issue is just beginning.

During the course of the programme we have acquired potential partners, contacts and networks who will provide us with opportunities for action as we move into 'phase 2' of my initiative from September. The Justice and Peace Commission are busily collating resources as we begin the early planning of our work together as a Catholic community.

I recently met with Mike Duthie of the Santa Marta Group. This is a network comprising senior representatives of the Catholic Church and international police forces. They will be of great help and support to us going forward, as we begin to create local networks of people and organisations who, working together, will be better able to prevent human trafficking, report it and support the victims. Our meeting has filled me with hope that we will be able to confidently take the next steps on this in the months ahead, and I look forward to sending you more details.

**+ Patrick
Bishop of Nottingham**

**Saturday 10th June daytime
(morning start time tbc)
Corpus Christi, Grimsby Road,
Cleethorpes, NE Lincolnshire**

THE GENERAL ELECTION 2017 A letter to Catholics in England and Wales from their Bishops

As we approach the General Election on 8 June, we offer you these considerations.

As Catholics and citizens of the UK, our lives are shaped by the vision inspired by our faith. Pope Francis says:

"An authentic faith... always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it. We love this magnificent planet on which God has put us, and we love the human family which dwells here, with all its tragedies and struggles, its hopes and aspirations, its strengths and weaknesses. The earth is our common home and all of us are brothers and sisters." Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* §183

These words encourage us to approach this General Election with a positive determination to consider carefully all that is at stake.

An important duty of every UK citizen with the right to vote is to take part in this General Election. Please make sure that you are registered. Please do vote. Your vote is a matter of conscience. It is your judgement about all that God wants of us, both personally and as a society.

Pope Francis reminds us of key principles to guide our thinking:

"...a deep desire to change this world and leave this earth a better place than we found it."

To do this we must name and face every injustice and exploitation which scars our society and world.

"We love this human family with all its tragedies and struggles"

The family is the basic model by which we think of humanity, for the family is indeed the fundamental unit of the human race and therefore to be protected and nurtured. The practical expression of this love is mercy and compassion, extended especially at times of illness, homelessness, bereavement, violence and desolation.

"The earth is our common home"

We cannot be indifferent to the struggles and disasters of people who live far away from us, and must strive to assist and protect them. We cannot be indifferent to the environmental impact of how we live and organise our creation of wealth and well-being.

"We are all brothers and sisters."

Here we insist that every person has a shared dignity that should never be denied or ignored. We are made in God's image and likeness, precious to him and each other, and this must be respected and valued.

These broad principles impact directly on many of the practical issues being debated at this time. Indeed, this General Election takes place at a pivotal moment in the life of our nations as we prepare to leave the European Union.

To a great extent the outcome of this election will determine the approach taken on how this is achieved, the priorities we pursue and the values we wish to treasure as our own in the UK and as partners with countries around the world. It will determine how we can heal divisions in our society, care for the vulnerable, how our public services are run and whether we can remain a united kingdom.

These principles shape our thinking about the issues that are being debated at this time. Attached are some questions you might consider yourselves and raise with candidates or those who seek your support.

LEAVING THE EUROPEAN UNION

There are over three million EU citizens living in the UK and about a million British citizens living elsewhere in the EU. They face an uncertain future. **Where do your candidates stand on the future of EU citizens in the UK and reciprocal rights for UK citizens in the EU?**

As our formal leaving of the EU approaches, new trade deals will be negotiated. It is important that in them human and workers' rights, the environment, and the development of the world's poorest countries are taken into account. **What issues do your candidates think should be the top priority when forming new international partnerships?**

ISSUES ON FAMILY AND LIFE

In 2015 Parliament voted overwhelmingly to protect society's most vulnerable people, by preventing the legalisation of assisted dying. **Will your candidates uphold this decision? Will they support measures to promote the intrinsic value of life at every stage?**

The family is at the heart of the health and well-being of society, above all the well-being of children. **What policies do your candidates propose for the flourishing of family life?**

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

In a civilised society prisons should be places of redemption and rehabilitation. Our prison system faces unprecedented levels of violence and suicide. **Do your candidates support urgent prison reform and better resourcing?**

MIGRATION

The UK has long been a place of welcome for people from other countries. There needs to be a clear policy on migration, which works for the economy and is respectful of the unity of marriage and family life. **How will your candidates ensure that we operate a fair migration system for people wanting to enter and work in the UK?**

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

The UK is currently committed to resettling at least 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees by 2020. **Will your candidates work to ensure that this commitment is kept and options to expand the scheme are considered? Will they promote a welcoming society and stand against hate crime?**

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

Across the world millions of people are persecuted because of their beliefs. **How do your candidates intend to promote freedom of religion or belief for all, and what steps could be taken as a priority in UK foreign policy to protect religious minorities, including Christian minorities?**

HELPING THE WORLD'S POOREST

Aid provided by the UK saves lives and helps people out of poverty. **Will your candidates commit to protecting and enhancing the international development budget?**

CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE

There are many in our communities who are financially vulnerable and struggle to make ends meet or in need of decent housing. **Where do your candidates stand on helping the poorest, in terms of health, social care and housing? How will they support people with mental health problems? How will they finance these services?**

EDUCATION

Catholic schools make a positive contribution to society, serving over 845,000 children in England and Wales. **Will your candidates support parental choice for the education of their children? Will they support Catholic schools as part of this choice for faith-based education?**

MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery is a gross violation of human dignity affecting at least 14,000 people in the UK and millions more around the world. **How will your candidate give political support to the fight against modern slavery and better assistance for its victims?**

There are many other issues you will be considering. In all of them please bear in mind not only their impact on you and your family but also their impact on our wider world. The UK has a long and worthy tradition of generosity and justice. The values contained in these questions are fundamental to our way of life and the good of our society.

Lord grant us wisdom to act always with integrity, seeking the protection and flourishing of all, and building a society based on justice and peace.

Issued by the Archbishops of Westminster, Cardiff, Southwark, Birmingham and Liverpool on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

IN YOUR COMMUNITY!



END THE TRAFFICKING!!

A W A R E N E S S T R A I N I N G
E V E N T



Training event hosted by Bishop Patrick McKinney to equip people to recognise and act upon human trafficking & modern day slavery.

Saturday 10th June 2017: 10.30am—12.45pm
(light refreshments and registration from 10am)

Corpus Christi
Grimsby Road
Cleethorpes DN35 7LJ

DIocese of NOTTINGHAM

To book in contact:

Louise Cooke—Email: jpnottingham@nrcdt.org.uk
Tel: 07410 411048 or

Diane Williams—Email: formation@nrcdt.org.uk
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Ministers of Religion



Derbyshire's Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Meet For their Annual Renewal Days

St Anne's in Buxton and Our Lady of Lourdes in Mickleover were the venues for this year's renewal days for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in Derbyshire. Nearly 200 EMs took the opportunity to take time out of their daily lives to recharge their spiritual batteries. Both days were ably led by Fr Joe Wheat, from Sacred Heart Parish in Carlton, a truly inspirational speaker, with the gift of using the ordinary moments of life to move us into a deeper appreciation and understanding of the faith.

The theme was 'The Presence of Christ' in all the aspects of the Mass. We began with the presence of Christ in the people. As Christians Jesus is more to us than a mere historical figure, great teacher or ethical guide, he is alive and present with us - "where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there I am in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Fr Joe made clear to us that when the veil of the Temple was torn in two and Christ was resurrected, the final barrier between God and his people was removed. The importance of us gathering together as Christians is that it makes Christ present.

Christ is present in The Word during the Bible readings at Mass. We were asked to share a favourite piece of Scripture, to tell the story and inhabit it. The Altar of the Word is not simply a 'starter,' or the open-

ing act, it is another opportunity to feel and know the real presence of Christ.

Christ is present in the priest, who is 'alter Christus': another Christ. We spoke in groups about times in our lives when a priest has been Christ for us, often involving moments of loss and sadness but also the joyous occasions too. Fr Joe reminded us that when a priest does something during the Mass, Christ is doing it. The priest stands for Christ and the people.

Lastly, we talked about the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The priest and the congregation offer the gifts together, and we have a responsibility to ourselves and to God, not to be just mere spectators. Through the eyes of faith we know that Christ is sacramentally present, the substance of the bread and wine has fundamentally changed. We need to be fully, consciously and actively present to the real presence of our Lord.



Appropriately, the renewal days ended with the celebration of Mass, which was concelebrated by Fr Michael Eastwood, Chair of the Diocese of Nottingham's EM Commission. Fr Michael gave the homily and sent us out with the call of John Wesley to, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, as long as you ever can."

The renewal days definitely lived up to their name, leaving us uplifted, refreshed and, indeed, renewed, in our ministry."

Marriage Care seeks volunteers to help prepare more couples for the Sacrament of Marriage

"Pre-marriage courses are a special expression of preparation. And we see so many couples, who perhaps come to the course somewhat reluctant. But afterwards they are happy and grateful, because they have found there the opportunity - sometimes the only one - to reflect on their experience in non-trivial terms."

Pope Francis, Catechesis on Engagement, May 27th 2015

This year Marriage Care is marking Pentecost Sunday (June 4th) and Volunteers' Week (June 1st-7th) with a particularly important appeal for more volunteers to help us expand our services to couples. Last year the bishops published their Guidelines for the Preparation of Couples for Marriage to encourage parishes to support couples in their life-long journey of marriage, starting with marriage preparation. Their recommendations followed swiftly on from Pope Francis' reflection on marriage preparation in The Joy of Love in which he too calls for much more attention and effort to be dedicated to accompanying couples before and after their wedding.

At Marriage Care our goal is to radically increase the amount of marriage preparation courses we deliver whilst continuing to maintain our support for couples experiencing difficulties through our relationship counselling service. At present over 3000 couples a year experience either a Preparing Together day or a series of FOCCUS© sessions, around a third of all those marrying in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. We want to double these figures by the end of 2019. Our interactive courses give couples an opportunity to take time to think about the great commitment they are entering into, as well as to learn the tools they will need to draw on in the future. The

content of Preparing Together in particular draws on all we have learned from our experience of counselling couples in distress over the last 70 years.

Could you help us to do more for marriage, to reach more couples who are preparing for the sacrament? We are looking for Catholic volunteers who can commit to a three-day training course and thereafter to three days (usually Saturdays) a year delivering the Preparing Together day as part of a team. For every six new volunteers we can potentially reach an additional 100 couples a year. We are also in need of volunteers for a range of other roles, from admin and treasurer to advocacy and centre-management roles.

Here in the Diocese of Nottingham our Marriage Care team operates from two centres, Lincolnshire and Nottingham & Derby. Margo, who volunteers at the Nottingham centre shares her experience of preparing couples for marriage: "I think the marriage preparation course is such a lovely opportunity for couples to spend time on their relationship in a constructive way. Most couples make full use of this opportunity and as a volunteer it's a privilege to be part of those moments. It's also a way to give of your time and skills for free- which is good for the soul."

To learn more about Marriage Care visit www.marriagecare.org.uk. To book a place on a marriage preparation course or for counselling call 0800 389 3801. For further information or to apply for any volunteer vacancies please contact your local Centre or volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk



On Pentecost Sunday (June 4th) we celebrate the birthday of the Church. This is the day when God the Father sent the Spirit of Christ his Son to the disciples to enable them to preach God's peace, joy and forgiveness to all. In the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians we are reminded that there are a variety of gifts and all sort of services to be offered, and that these are all signs of the same Spirit of God, working through us. "The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose," writes St Paul.

So Pentecost Sunday is a very apt time to reflect on the purpose for which God has made each of us. What are our gifts? Where are we called to be of service?

Coinciding with Pentecost Sunday is Volunteers' Week (June 1st-7th), established in 1984 to celebrate the contribution of the 23 million people who volunteer in some way in their local community. This year's theme is "You make the difference". Many of us also volunteer in our parish so it's a moment to be thankful to all those who make such a difference to our experience of parish community.

Guidelines for the Preparation of Couples for Marriage - see www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/marriage/marriage-preparation/guidelines-for-marriage-preparation

Apostleship of the Sea benefit from donation

During his year as Provincial President 3 South, Keith Littlewood wanted his charity donation to go to a very worthy cause that would aid seafarers coming to our ports. That charity is the Apostleship of the Sea.

The Apostleship of the Sea is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide. They provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Their port chaplains and volunteers offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

90% of world trade is transported by ship. However, the life of a modern seafarer can

be dangerous and lonely. They may spend up to a year at a time away from home, separated from their family and loved ones and often working in harsh conditions.

The Apostleship of the Sea relies wholly on voluntary contributions, therefore the donation of £300 made by Keith will ensure the centre can continue providing the help and welfare support for the hardworking seafarers.

Keith and his wife Jenny spent a day visiting Immingham docks and had a tour of the Seafarers Centre which was all but destroyed in the floods of December 2013. The



Centre has benefited from a complete refurbishment and is well used daily by seafarers from all over the world.

New Brother for Grimsby Circle

Highgate Circle's loss is Grimsby's gain. Brother Michael O'Flynn transferred from Highgate 323 Circle at our May 2017 meeting.

Michael and his wife Jayne recently moved to North Lincolnshire from London.

Once they had settled in to their new rural home, oop north, they immediately set about joining the Grimsby Catenian Circle.

The Catenian Association is an international brotherhood of practising Catholic laymen who meet socially, at least once a month.

The Grimsby Circle of the Catenian Association meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month at the Grimsby Golf Club in Grimsby. To find out more about membership, visit their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Grimsby185/>



Won her height in books

A student at Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy has won her height in books after scooping first prize in a national poetry competition.

Kathryn Dudley, of Ilkeston, was the Under-12 winner of the Poetry Rivals Slam Final with her poem called 'I Tried.....'

The 12-year-old decided to enter the competition after reading about it in a newsletter she receives from a writing website she has signed up for.

She was among 40 children selected as finalists and they all attended a hotel in Peterborough and read out their poems on stage.

The poem centres around a car accident and Kathryn's inspiration was a bus ride.

She said: "You could write a poem in any style and about any subject and I decided to

write about a car accident. I sent it off and then I was told I was a finalist and we all had to go up on stage and read our poems out. I was nervous but it was really exciting.

"Everyone sounded really good and we had a 10 minute break before the winner was announced. I thought I might have a chance of being highly commended but my name wasn't read out.

"When they announced that I was the winner I felt exhilarated. The prize is my height in books which is great. I love writing, any chance I get I will write and I've always wanted to be an author. My family are very proud."

Head teacher Joan McCarthy congratulated Kathryn on her achievement.

She said: "Kathryn wrote a very poignant and moving poem and it's incredible to think that she is only 12. She is very talented



and works hard. We wish her every success of the future and we are sure that one day we will see her work in print."

Poetry Rivals invites children to express themselves, gain confidence in poetry writing and introduces them to the world of performance poetry.

Continued from page 5

Margaret S. liaised with Bishop Patrick and the Deanery regarding the reception of Father's body into the church and the Funeral Service. Sister Bernadette and her family also gave invaluable advice and support during this period. This was the chance for the Parish to say farewell and the church was packed to overflowing. Canon Bowdren, the Dean, was the chief Celebrant, and Father Greg Tobin gave an inspiring homily, with the church choir in fine voice. The children's choir of St Anne's Primary School stood by Father's coffin and sang his favourite song 'I was born under a wandering star'. It was an emotional moment to see the great respect shown to Fr Dennis by the children in singing the song which was Father's 'party piece' and which he enjoyed performing at many church social occasions.

The Parish Council social group led by Esther K. organised a reception to follow in the Community Centre with a tremendous amount of food donated by parishioners.

Everybody was glad of the opportunity to meet and share memories of Fr Dennis and to welcome his brother and family to the Parish.

The funeral next day was to celebrate Fr Dennis's life as a priest. Bishop Patrick officiated at the Requiem Mass with 40 priests in attendance. It was a very moving Requiem Mass with the choir led by Clare O'N. Many other churches in the town also sent representatives. There was not enough room in the church for all who wanted to attend and so the service was relayed outside via a loudspeaker and people gathered there once the church was full. Fr Gerry Murphy gave the homily, recounting his friendship with Fr Dennis from his seminary days. Fr Dennis was buried at the side of the church as he had requested. The Social Group again helped at the following reception in the Community Centre which was provided by outside caterers. Several hundreds of people were catered for over the course of the day.

During the following weeks the house was

cleared and made ready for the next Parish Priest. The PPC helped to ensure that rooms were spring cleaned, the lounge decorated and the curtains and carpets cleaned. The week after Father died, part of the wall to the car park had collapsed and needed to be rebuilt.

It was decided on advice from the diocese to rebuild the wall to the car park at an estimated cost of £40,000 which included external drain work and skip hire. An appeal for extra donations was made and at a later date a loan for the remainder was obtained from the diocese. Peter S. supervised the work for the Parish Council which took three weeks to complete.

All was now ready for the next Parish priest to move in. He will have a lovely church, house and gardens with a smooth running Community Centre. Above all, he will inherit a Parish Council well able to take on any aspect of running a Parish with a fully functioning Parish Plan to implement it.

by Margaret Robinson

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Building Peaceful Communities

The Language of Hatred

Over the coming months the Justice and Peace Commission will be keeping you up to date with our initiative, with the endorsement of Bishop Patrick, to help build, maintain and strengthen communities which are peaceful. At our Annual Assembly on Saturday 25th November at St Mary's Derby we will launch a parish resource to assist us all in this endeavour. In the meantime we hope you will follow this series of suggestions, resources and reflections on the subject.

This month we are asking you to consider how we can combat inappropriate language in the media about anyone who is not seen as 'British' or 'normal'. Whatever your political views, there is no denying that the inflammatory language used by some newspapers does the opposite of creating peaceful communities. It inspires fear and hatred of others by playing on reader's vulnerabilities. The groups targeted for hateful language are chosen specifically to connect with the demographic of the readers.

As work continues on recognising and reporting incidences of hate crime, some are suggesting that this kind of language constitutes a hate crime in itself. In fact, the United Nations have even got involved in suggesting to certain papers that they should curb their language and rein in the xenophobia they are promoting. Until such times as these papers clean up their act what can we do in the meantime? Well the obvious first choice is to not buy those papers ourselves. Some of them have been seen as the papers of the working classes for so long now however, that the bigger challenge for us will be to get our friends and family members to stop their (sometime lifelong) habit of buying these papers. If sales go down editors may be forced into rethinking some of their articles and front page headlines in particular.



Another way to force the owners and editors of these papers to re-think their language is to join the campaign Stop Funding Hate, which asks high street retailers and multi-national chains to withdraw their advertising from these papers, again having an impact on their revenue. <http://stop-fundinghate.org.uk/> One final way we can combat the language of hatred is to challenge it whenever we hear it or hear it spoken. Often people are merely repeating what they have heard elsewhere, so by asking someone to explain what they mean, we can get them to think more carefully about what it is they are saying. We can ask them to clarify, for example, if they really mean 'immigrants' or are they talking specifically about economic migrants, refugees or asylum seekers, and do they actually know the difference in these terms? By taking this simple action, we can achieve four things:

1. Get the person to really think about what it is they are saying so that they might realise they are merely repeating a cliché, with no real understanding of the issue.
2. Encourage them to inform themselves on the issue from a wider range of sources.
3. Take the hatred and anger out of the situation. By not meeting anger with more anger we will diffuse the situation and stop hate from spreading further.
4. We may potentially change the person's mind and bring about a view which promotes the Common Good.

Faith in Families – a new beginning

Faith in Families (the former Catholic Children's Society) has a new Chief Executive. Lynda Fletcher, the former Deputy CEO took over from Sumerjit Ram in November 2016 when she moved to a national charity position. Lynda has worked at the charity for many years and herself adopted two children through the agency many years ago. She has already met Bishop Patrick and is starting to make significant changes to the charity's work.

Seventieth Anniversary

Next year, 2018, will see the 70th anniversary of the setting up of the Nottingham Diocesan Catholic Children's Society. Many of us have story that connects us with the Catholic Children's Society and I thought I would share mine with you.

When I became Head Teacher of St Paul's Comprehensive, Leicester, in 1990 I discovered a very fruitful relationship with the Nottingham Catholic Children's Society. Every Advent our excellent Head of Religious Education, Bernard Eccles, organised the Advent Gift Mass which was always celebrated by Canon Fisher, the Director of the Diocesan Children's Society. At this Mass our school community presented gifts for the adopted children of the Society and Canon Fisher always returned to Nottingham with a car stuffed full of goodies.

Thus began my long relationship with the Catholic Children's Society. I joined the Schools Team of volunteers led by Janet and Brian Kennedy, who, like the parish visitors, went into schools to ask for their financial support and travelled to numerous schools across the diocese who raised considerable sums to support the Society in its essential work.

Early this century, together with the then Director of the Society, we set up the Schools Social Work Service which has provided support and help for families at one time or another for over 30 schools throughout the diocese. If schools had more funds we would be working in many more of them such is the regard for the work undertaken.

You may be aware that the Society had to remove itself from the Diocese following the passing of the Equalities Act and out of the Catholic Children's Society grew Faith in Families which continues the tradition and excellent work today in the same premises on Colwick Road in West Bridgford. We were lucky that Bishop Malcolm believed strongly in the work of the new Agency and were always grateful to him for writing the preface to our Annual Reports. This interest is shared by Bishop Patrick who has also been very supportive since taking up his post.

Our adoption work, finding some of the most difficult to place children, often in sibling groups, loving homes is arguably Faith in Families' greatest strength. Ravaged childhoods can be rebuilt



and healthy secure adulthood can be achieved. Our success in this regard is confirmed by our three successive Ofsted inspections graded as outstanding no recommendations.

What you might not know is that Faith in Families has kept a marvellous group of box collectors in some of our parishes because we are just as dependent today upon charitable fundraising from our Diocesan community as ever. Our home was with the Nottingham Diocesan community and it is our wish and need to continue that relationship.

Our social work service operates at cost price to schools and our adoption work is funded by the government at below cost. We receive no funding for our post adoption support work which is available for a life time. In the past we were fortunate to receive legacies and bequests from within the Catholic community but these have declined at a time when there are more children than ever in the care system and needing the kind of support that Faith in Families provides.

Please, therefore remember Faith in Families in your prayers and, if you can, in your wills.

Edward Hayes KSG
Chair of the Board of Trustees, Faith in Families

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Sacred Heart Statue

On Good Shepherd Sunday, our parish priest Fr Clement Orango blessed the Sacred Heart statue that had just been renovated. Chipped and with a broken hand, it had been looking in a less than splendid condition

At the end of Mass, Sheila Breed spoke about what the statue meant to her and at the end of her address there was spontaneous applause, showing what the congregation's feelings were.

"Friday was a very emotional day for myself and for others in church. Why? Because our Sacred Heart statue had come home. Some may see it only as a statue, but it has been in my life since I was a little five year old! It has helped me to focus my prayers not only in Mass but on the many times that I needed to talk to Jesus. I could come into church with my troubles and concerns, and leave with a feeling of peace. I can look at this statue and hear the words, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest." I am sure that you will agree that it is a wonderful restoration and we are very grateful for the very kind donation of £500 from a parishioner and £300 from the Friends of St. Gregory's that enabled the restoration work to be carried out. We are hoping to get a larger plinth so that there is more room for flowers. Lastly, for all the people who have been baptised and have died here, may they rest in the peace of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Amen."

Peter Fryer
www.saintgregorysileby.org



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Raising money for fish farming in Zambia

Every year during Lent, children and staff at Saint Mary's Catholic Primary Academy in Grimsby, raise money for CAFOD. This year, CAFOD set schools the challenge of turning little fish into BIG FISH... raising money for fish farming in Zambia.

There's nothing better than raising money with a smile on your face and we had lots of smiles and giggles each Friday with our 'Wear it funny for money' fundraising days. This year, children and families, staff and parishioners from Saint Mary on the Sea, raised money by holding a different event each week. These included: wearing your face funny, shoes funny, hair funny and clothes funny in exchange for donating money to our Lenten charity. On the last week of term, the children decorated eggs and made a contribution to enter a competition. We had some eggcellent entries- all of which were cracking!



Over the five weeks, we raised the grand total of... £636.61. For a school in one of the most deprived areas of the country, this was a staggering achievement. We are very proud that our efforts will be making a huge difference to the lives of so many in Zambia, who will be able to set up their own fish farms and be able to provide a better and brighter life for themselves and their families. What a fantastic gift to give!

Hits from the musicals

More than 90 students took to the stage at Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy to perform their Hits From The Musicals show.

Students across all year groups were given the opportunity to be involved either acting, singing and dancing on stage or working behind the scenes.

Anna West, Director of Learning, Performing Arts, at Saint Benedict CVA, in Duffield Road, Derby, said: "As a school that has always believed in the value and the power of the Arts, we always strive to give our students opportunities to thrive through the curriculum that we deliver and through our extra-curricular activities that we provide."



"There is so much talent in the Performing Arts at Saint Benedict, and the idea for 'Hits from the Musicals' derived from wanting to allow all students from Year 7 through to Year 13 the opportunity to have their individual moment to shine both on-stage and backstage."

"The result was a montage of songs, and dances that not only celebrated the skills and talents of our wonderful students, but also acted as a reminder of how the Arts can provide students with confidence, drive and a sense of huge self worth and achievement - which for us is the greatest success of all."

Head teacher Kevin Gritton said he felt extremely proud of everyone involved in the show.

He said: "It was a fantastic night and shows like these not only give our students from all year groups an opportunity to shine, they also help to boost confidence and it was great to see them going out on stage and giving it their all. I felt extremely proud and I would also like to thank the staff who worked so hard on bringing the production to life."

A successful 500 words for Layla!

Layla Golby, a Year 4 pupil from Grace Dieu Manor School in Thringstone, has successfully made it through to the first round of the BBC's renowned 500 words competition!

Layla's success is particularly impressive given that her entry was selected from 131,798 entries. Her piece, entitled 'Ooops - I'm off!' is one of the 5,000 entries selected to go to the Reading Agency for the second round of judging.

500 Words, established seven years ago with the aim of getting children excited about reading and writing, is one of the most successful story-writing competitions for children in the world.

"We encouraged our pupils to take part, showing them the live lesson on the day the challenge was launched," says Headmaster Peter Fisher. "We are delighted that Layla's work has been recognised, especially given that she devised, wrote and submitted her entry independently - showcasing just how self-motivated our pupils learn to become. Grace Dieu Manor School has a strong academic reputation, which is born out by successes such as Layla's."

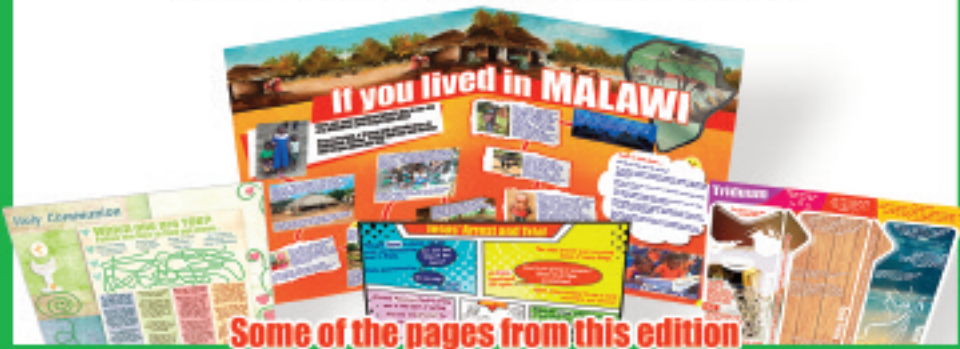


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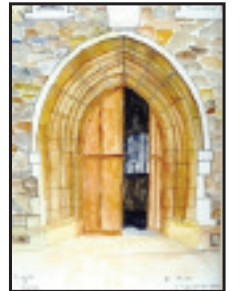
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St Mary's School, Derby and St Augustine's School in Tanzania Swap Pictures!

St Mary's Parish Arusha Project brought together children from Derby and Tanzania with the inspiring idea of swapping letters and pictures sharing what makes them happy.

St Mary's Primary School sent their pictures to Tanzania with Fr Neil Peoples, assistant priest of St Mary's Church, who was one of this year's adult visitors to the Arusha project's link schools and parishes. Four young people from the Church, Aislinn Geaney, Joe Daubney, Michael Jukka and Molly Jennings, spent three months teaching in Tanzanian schools and learning about the culture. They brought back pictures and letters from St Augustine's Primary School for the Derby children, who were thrilled to receive them. Despite living in different countries and in many ways ex-



periencing contrasting lives, children from both continents chose many of the same things when asked what makes them happy - family, friends, cars, cake, chocolate, flowers and superheroes were a common theme!

Both Schools created displays of each other's work; and St Mary's Chaplaincy Team have put together a special folder of the Tanzanian children's letters and pictures so they can share them with the school community and visitors.

Molly, Aislinn, Joe and Michael gave an enthusiastic talk to the Parish about their experiences and adventures in Tanzania, and the next group are already busy fundraising for their trip in 2018!"

Fran Wickes



U14 Boys Hockey reach Nationals again

Ratcliffe Hockey has enjoyed another fantastic season and this has been highlighted by the success of the U14 boys' team. They began the year winning all their fixtures convincingly and went into the County Tournament in January unbeaten. They played some outstanding hockey to become County



Champions winning all their matches and beating Loughborough Grammar in the final game to earn top spot. The reward for being crowned County Champions was a place at the Regional Finals. The boys remained unbeaten throughout the whole of their domestic season before travelling to Regionals at the end of the Spring Term to play the top nine school teams in the Midlands.

The team performed brilliantly on the day winning all their matches and finishing top of their group before easing through their semi-final to face a strong Repton School team. After a close game in which both teams played some super hockey the match finished 1-1, which meant penalty strokes would decide the winner. Ratcliffe held their nerve and came through 3-1 winners becoming Regional Champions and Qualifying for the National Finals.

The boys trained hard in the lead up to the National Finals which were held at the Lee Valley National Hockey Stadium, based in the Olympic Park London. The boys performed excellently on the day as one of the best top eight teams in the country eventually finishing joint 5th.

Mr Danny Willcock, Head of Hockey at Ratcliffe College said, "I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the boys on what has truly been a magical season. Becoming County and Regional champions is a fantastic achievement, but to reach the National Finals for a second season running is truly remarkable. I am incredibly proud of all the boys for the effort they have shown again this year and I would like to thank Mr Taylor for his work with the team, as well as all support they have been shown by other members of staff and their parents."




Celebrating our Schools

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE SCHOOLS ON THIS PAGE FOR SUPPORTING THE PAPER

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