



**Danil fits the bill**

**Page 5**



**A network of friends**

**Page 6**



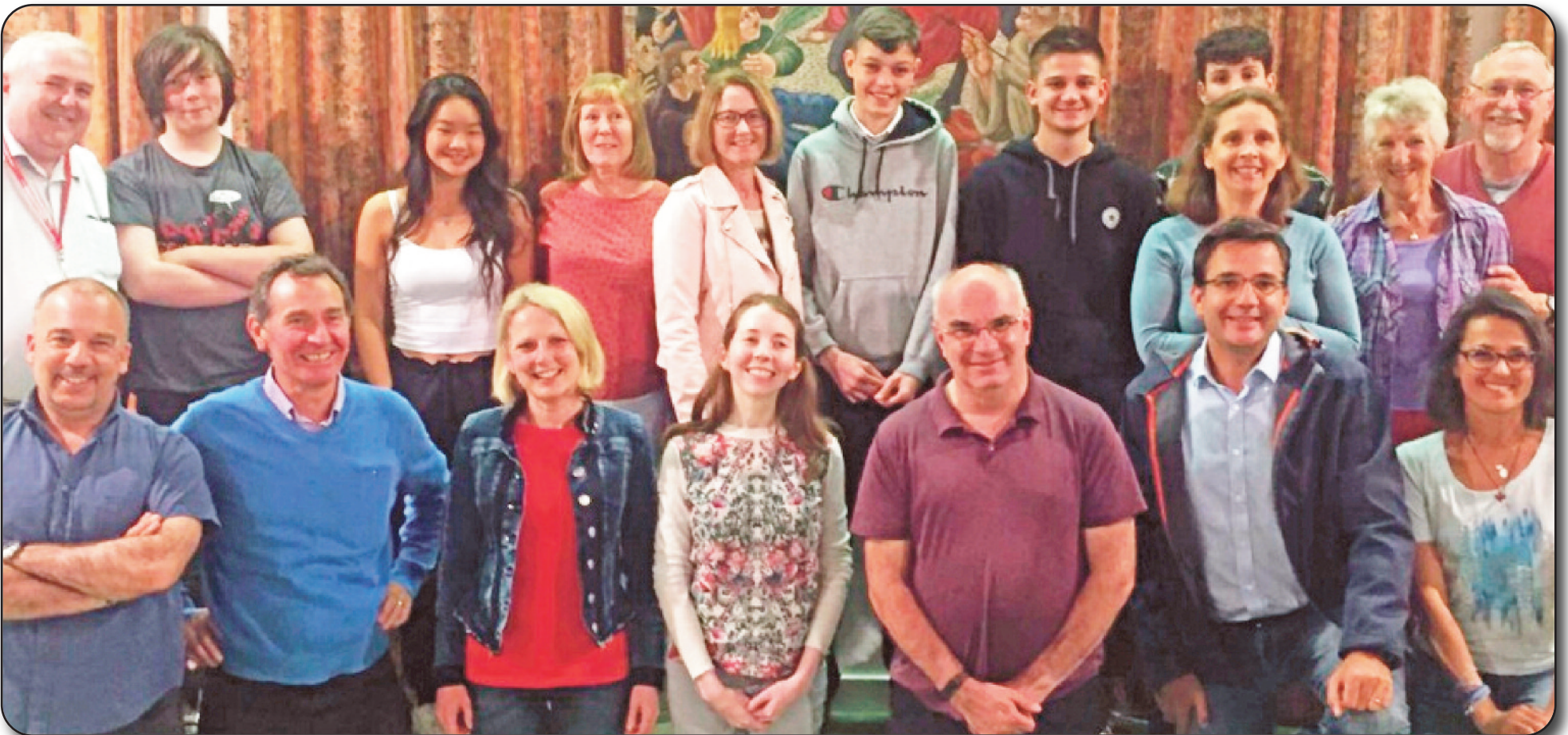
**A saint for troubled times**

**Page 11**



## Mission to Ecuador

### *A pioneering priest and parishioners*



This summer I was very fortunate and privileged to spend two weeks in Ecuador as a member of the Mission team from St Columba's. The Mission was organised by our Priest in Charge, Father Alessandro, who spent several years as a missionary priest in the the Diocese of Portoviejo near the west coast of Ecuador, before coming to Chesham in 2016. It was his vision for members of his present parishes in Chesham and Great Misenden to live and work with the members of his previous parish in Manta. In total, our party of 'missionaries' numbered 30, of whom 11 were young and vigorous, and the remainder older and even more vigorous!

The two weeks were a high powered and 'full on' combination of working times, going on spectacular sightseeing visits and outings, and a fair bit of travelling. Here are some of my overriding and never to be forgotten impressions of an amazing fortnight...

Our Ecuadorian Hosts. I have to begin with them because they were the most welcoming, kind, generous, positive, cheerful, lively, spirit-filled and wholehearted group of people I have ever come across. They were not financially wealthy at all, but were rich in all the finest human qualities, and they gave of their time, their money, their effort, their personalities and their homes to us with complete

selflessness and joy. Every mealtime, gathering, even the long and tedious coach journeys were filled with their infectious laughter and good fun that transcended all language barriers. In short they were the personification of God's love, and saying goodbye to them all was a very emotionally draining experience.

The Missionaries. Well I suppose we were quite a diverse and motley crew! Some of us knew each other quite well before we went, others we knew but hadn't seen for some time, others we barely knew or didn't know at all. I don't think there was one of us who wasn't a little bit nervous and unsure of what was to come, but during the Mission two wonderful things happened: we all got on really well and became united in our common aims, having a very good laugh in doing so, and we formed a formidable working team, so that everyone contributed fully and beyond to the successful completion of all the projects that been set up. Two houses were built, over 50 children had their knowledge of English increased, a group of sick and elderly people were magnificently cared for, and 40 children at an orphanage had the time of their lives for 4 days! The miracle was that every member of our group found a role in which they could excel, and everyone gave everything they had.

*Continued on page 3*

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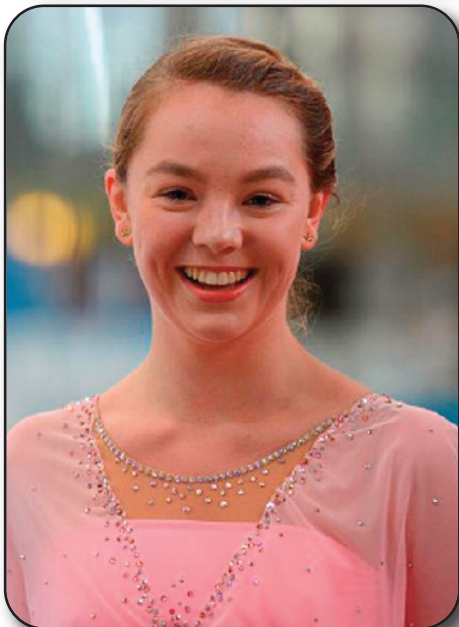
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# News beyond Northampton

## London



Princess Alexandra of Hanover, a member of the royal family of Monaco, has reportedly been removed from her distant place in the British line of succession after having become a Catholic.

Because the British monarch is head of the Church of England, which is the established church, British law bars Catholics from succeeding to the throne.

The Succession to the Crown Act 2013 allowed heirs to the throne to marry Catholics, among other changes. However, the law still stipulates that the acting British sovereign mustn't be a Catholic. Catholics have been barred from the English throne since the Act of Settlement 1701.

## Tulsa

Whether you dress up as a ghoul, a hero, or a saint, Halloween has a Christian origin that should inspire us to remember our mortality and our redemption in Christ, Bishop David Konderla of Tulsa has said.

"In contrast to popular culture's observance of Halloween, even the customary appeal to the 'frightful' has a devotional meaning in the Catholic tradition. Props such as skulls and scythes have historically recalled our mortality, reminding us to be holy because we are destined for judgment," the bishop said, citing Hebrews 9:27 and Revelation 14:15. "Visible symbols of death thus represent a reminder of the last things – death, judgment, Heaven, and hell."

Halloween has origins in the Catholic liturgical calendar, he said, but the customs surrounding it have "drifted from the feast's intended meaning and purpose." The name itself derives from the archaic English phrase "All Hallows' Evening," referring to the Eve of All Saints.



A new law in the Republic of Ireland will prohibit primary schools from taking religion into account in admissions, a practice known as the "baptism barrier."

Previously, when a religious school was full, the admission process to determine which students would move off the waiting list could take religion into account.

The decision to ban Catholic schools from prioritizing Catholic students on wait lists is being criticized as discriminatory, since it would not apply to other religious schools. The Catholic Church runs more than 90 per cent of schools in Ireland, which also receive government funds.

Although Catholic schools will no longer be able to use religion as a deciding factor in admissions, schools of minority religious groups, such as the Church of Ireland, can still use religion as a deciding factor to protect their ethos.

Richard Bruton, Minister for Education and Skills, signed reforms Oct. 3 that amend a section of the Equal Status Act 2000.

The new rules will apply to oversubscribed schools, which are mainly found in urban

areas. Schools with extra space will be obliged to accept all applicants, regardless of religion, according to the Irish Times.

Bruton justified the changes by saying he wanted make it easier for parents to access their local schools and schools that meet their needs. The Irish National Teachers' Organisation said they had not received specific guidelines on how to change their admission policies, the Irish Times reported.

Catholic organizations within Ireland have expressed worry that Catholic children and their parents could end up discriminated against under the new proposal, which they also fear could threaten the ethos of schools' Catholic education.

The Association of Trustees of Catholic Schools, Catholic Primary Schools Management Association, and Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland have all spoken out against the changes.

Ireland's Constitution protects the right to religious education and also has protections against religious discrimination. It acknowledges the right of parents to "provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children

## Indonesia

CAFOD has joined forces with Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to reach tens of thousands of people affected by Indonesia's devastating earthquake and tsunami. Chris Bain, CAFOD's Director, said: "I have been horrified by the devastation of the tsunami in Indonesia. So many lives have been lost and affected by this disaster. There is so much to do.

## Getting into print

Send news reports, photos and other material to the editor, Fr. Paul Hardy, St. Edward's, Burchard Crescent, Shenley Church End, Milton Keynes MK5 6DX (vine01@btopenworld.com).

We promise to print your news as soon as we can find space for it. Material should be emailed whenever possible. If this cannot be done for digital pictures they should be sent to us on disc. Send photographs in jpg format, as separate attachments, and not embedded in Word documents. Urgent and dated items should reach us by the first Sunday of the month before publication.

A booklet of advice on writing news reports for The Vine is available on request.

Parental permission must be sought before photographs of children are sent for publication. While we accept unsolicited feature articles, we reserve the right to edit the text or not to publish. Letters for publication must include a name and address, which will be omitted on request.

The content of each issue is decided by the editor.

Views expressed in The Vine are not necessarily those of the editor or of the diocese. The publisher of The Vine deals with all advertising. To place an advert ring 01440-730399. For difficulties with distribution contact the editor.

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### Feast Day Mass

The Shrine of the Miraculous Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Church of the Holy Child and St Joseph, Midland Road Bedford MK40 1HU. Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 7.30 pm All Welcome!



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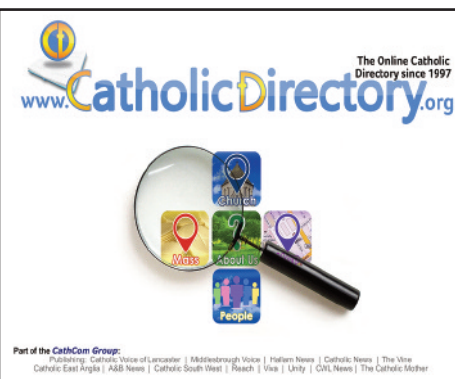
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#### **Ecuador: from front page**

The Experiences. These were many, varied, generally incredible and some extremely amusing! We started off by quite literally walking the line at the Museum of the Middle of the World at the Equator, and here are just a few that followed:

- Visiting the presidential palace in Quito
- Driving up narrow, near vertical, and seriously windy streets to the highest point of Quito where we climbed the huge and beautiful statue of the Virgin of the Apocalypse (200 metres high!)
- Going out for the evening in Quito for a quick 90 minute drink and returning 4 hours later as our exhausted coach driver lost his way and the even more exhausted coach broke down!
- Adding 2 hours to our 6 hour coach journey from Quito to Manta as the by now seriously worn out coach broke down once again and had to be replaced (we entertained ourselves while waiting for the 'new' coach with aerobics practice and Irish dancing – much to the bemusement of the locals!)
- A day of walking through thick coastal rain forest (in pouring rain) in the morning and a bracing hike (in the sunshine) by the Pacific Ocean in the afternoon
- Many happy afternoons after work in 'Paddy's Bar'!
- Salsa night at St Marta's convent!
- Climbing on to the slippery, shiny and rather sloping roof of the local cathedral (no handrail, barely any foot grip) following the lead of the esteemed and very reverend Archbishop of Portoviejo who scampered across like a particularly surefooted cat!
- Enjoying the spectacular Ecuadorian 15th birthday celebrations of one of the young ladies in our party!
- Leaving at 5.30am to make the journey to go see whales, the most graceful and wonderful of sea creatures, at amazingly close range
- Watching most of our party cover themselves in sulphurous mud to cool off after a long forest walk
- And so on – there are even more mad memories, but I'm sure you get the idea!

The Message. Through all the craziness, there was such a clear message of simple spirituality that shone through. The people we met and lived with for these two weeks

taught us that we do not need to make our lives so complicated, that you can find happiness in so many simple ways, and that you can encounter God so much more easily if you do not have so many barriers to prevent Him talking to you. We took part in and celebrated a number of Masses, and the common factor in all of them was joy. Whether in the big open air Masses in the church square at Manta to which hundreds of people came on the Sunday evenings, or the smaller Masses in the bamboo temporary church next door to the ruined main church, or the Masses in the scarred and damaged churches around Manta, the spirit of praise and celebration came through enormously in the music and in the fantastic enthusiasm of the people. There is evidence of the effects of the 2016 earthquake everywhere you look, and the churches remain badly damaged – neither the cathedral in Portoviejo nor the church of La Dolorosa in Manta can be used as they are still very unsafe. One of the results of the Mission will be a fund-raising drive to help rebuild and restore these beautiful buildings. We owe it to our brothers and sisters there whose spirit remains unquenched.

In Conclusion. It was an intense, brilliant and life changing two weeks. A holiday it was not, however, and although I was incredibly sad to leave, I was also pleased to get home (ah the pleasure of a hot shower!). I would love to go back at some point, and see how they are all getting on. Enormous and heartfelt thanks to everyone who came along for the ride, to our fabulous Ecuadorian hosts, to the tireless and always good-humoured Father Giovanni, but above all to our simply amazing Father Alessandro who gave everything to the Mission, both before, with all the organisation of our many 'spontaneous' events, but particularly during our time there. His energy, enthusiasm, general madness and love of life shone through at all hours of the day and night!



#### **Advertisement for Director of Heritage Centre Nottingham, England**

##### **Overall purpose: Management and development of Heritage Centre**

The Little Company of Mary (LCM) is an International Congregation of Religious women, founded by the Venerable Mary Potter in Nottingham, England in 1877. We invite applications for a Director for the Heritage Centre in Nottingham. The role is required to ensure the provision of a unique, innovative and interactive service that honours the legacy of Mary Potter and the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary. The centre opened in 2010, is home to the artefacts of the LCM and provides an interactive experience journeying with the Founder, Venerable Mary Potter. The centre depicts the life and spirituality of the founder as she began the LCM in Hyson Green, Nottingham and how the story continues to the present day. It provides space for individuals, local and international groups to meet with guides and avail of the experience.

The successful applicant will:

- Promote the life and vision of Mary Potter and the Mission and Spirituality of the LCM by working on projects and programmes that will assist the LCM to further develop the Centre.
- Be accountable for the day to day operations of the Heritage Centre and work with LCM Sisters on future programmes and opportunities.
- Ensure effective and efficient operation of the Heritage Centre, is responsible for the overall monitoring of planned maintenance, staff and resources inclusive of budgeting.
- Further develop the Heritage Centre by means of networking and promoting the Heritage Centre locally and internationally.

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Applications close: 17 December 2018 at 5.00 pm

Interviews: Week commencing Monday 28 January 2019



# Diocese launches satellite

On Friday 7th September, one hundred and twenty smart, smiling pupils flooded excitedly through our school gates ready to embark upon their secondary adventure.

We used this first day to remind our pupils that they are pioneers. They will shape our ethos and culture for the year groups that follow and our staff will walk humbly alongside our pupils each and every day as they embark upon this learning adventure. We talked about the unique God-given talents that each individual brings to our school. We even got a glimpse of these towards the end of the first day as the pupils sang some of the songs from their recent Year 6 productions and leavers celebrations.

We also talked about one of our biggest strengths being our diversity. We are truly proud of the breadth of faiths, backgrounds and cultures that are represented in our school. As a learning community, our biggest resource is each other.

Our temporary building, at Bierton Hill, has been well-received by our pupils. The classrooms are spacious and well-resourced, once we work through the usual teething issues

that come with the “newness”, especially ICT! We are planning already for our move into the new building at the Quarrendon site which is progressing well. When we look at the world around us, we question the values that inform decisions made by societal leaders. As we welcomed hundred and twenty pupils in our assembly hall on the first day, we could see our future doctors, lawyers, teachers and politicians who can be such a driving force for good. Please keep them in your prayers as they set out on this exciting journey.

We are truly grateful for the prayers and messages of goodwill from our local parishioners as we have started out.

We pray this prayer in school on a regular basis as it really underpins our identity, purpose and missions as we embark upon this pioneering work:  
Just think,  
You're not here by chance,  
But by God's choosing.  
God's hand formed you  
And made you the person you are.  
God compares you to no-one else.  
You are one of a kind.

You lack nothing  
That God's grace cannot give you  
God has created you to be here  
At this time in history  
To fulfil a special purpose  
For this generation

*Adam Palmer*

The satellite plan, a partnership school is a satellite of St. Michael's, High Wycombe, and is the first such school in Buckinghamshire.

The satellite plan, a partnership between the County Council, St Michael's governors and

trustees, and the Diocese of Northampton, would cater for students between 11 and 19, growing over time to six forms of entry.

The decision follows public consultations that generated up to 99% support. Mike Appleyard. Bucks County cabinet member for education, said: "There has been extremely strong support for St Michael's satellite, a level of response rarely seen in such consultations. Faith schools do deliver good results and by and large parents like them. We've taken account of the way people in Aylesbury feel and I hope we'll be providing a school they will welcome."

**“Behind the Catholic teacher there is a believing community, in which, throughout the centuries of its existence, a certain wisdom of life has matured; a community that conserves within it a treasure trove of knowledge and ethical experience that is important for all humanity.**

*Pope Francis*





# Danil fits the bill



A meeting with employers at St Paul's Catholic School's annual Work Related Learning Day has resulted in Year 13 student Danil Clements heading towards an apprenticeship with banking giant Santander.

Danil found out about Santander's programmes when he was researching apprenticeships on Unifrog. So, when he knew Santander were visiting St Paul's, he decided to attend their 'Money, Money, Money' session and speak to their representatives. He discovered that Santander had just one apprenticeship place left and they interviewed him on the spot and gave him a four week work placement over the summer.

During his placement Danil worked at Santander's three head offices in Central Milton Keynes and at Shenley Wood. He had four mentors from the apprenticeship course and worked on a range of projects including looking at real time errors on Santander's mobile app, fraud security, creating a website page for mortgages and finding bugs on web pages.

At the end of his placement Danil had to deliver a presentation giving feedback on his mentors, summarising what he had learned and using some management tools.

On his return to school Danil received an email from Santander giving him feed-

back on his professionalism and how much value he had brought to the team and confirming that they welcomed him to apply for their 2019 Apprentice programme.

Danil said: "I really liked the work environment at Santander, their offices and the atmosphere were both great, so I am very pleased to get this fantastic opportunity to learn with them. My dad works in cyber security and, in the future I think that this and tackling fraud are areas I'd like to work in too."

Now, Danil is preparing for his A-Levels in Computer Science and Engineering and his EPQ on internet security which looks at how you are never really safe online.

Fiona Nodwell, Head of Sixth Form at St Paul's, said: "We are so happy that Danil's hard work has impressed Santander and gained such positive feedback. They have told us that if they run the same programme this year (which looks likely) they will be in touch to see if we have any Year 12 students that would be interested."

"At St Paul's we help all students to achieve their ambitions whether that be progressing to university, aspiring to a higher level apprenticeship or building their skills to help them move confidently to higher education or the workplace."



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# A network of friends

With the Church being criticised from all sides, belonging to a group of strongly supportive Catholic's has never been more important.

John Mulligan, President of Province 14 commented "The Catenians are an association of Catholic laymen who are committed to their Faith, their families, to those in need and to each other. Our primary purpose is to establish a network of friends, which enhances their family life, strengthens their Faith and sustains them in difficult times. We support each other, the Catholic Church, young people and those in need".

"Catenians have a strong presence as active members of many parishes in the diocese, support our parish priests in numerous ways and are major supporters of the National Office for Vocations", said Denis Murphy, Director of Province 14 and Board Member of the National Council. He went on to say, "In response to a suggestion from Bishop John Arnold, we have developed the 'Catenian Catechist Initiative' which supports the wishes of Pope Francis that we should become Missionaries. We support our young people through the Bursary Fund, 'Helping Young Catholic's Make a Difference', by sponsoring their activities through the Individual Project Awards in such places as, Zambia, Mantanan Island, Zimbabwe, Malawi and closer to home, The Lourdes Award. To date over £1,000,000 has been donated. The Association is the main sponsors of 'Flame' and organises the annual public speaking competition for 6th form students, which attracts Catholic youth from all over the country. In addition, each circle organises its own local charitable projects, collectively raising

significant sums each year".

Speaking of the significance of association to members he added; "Our friendships are developed through meeting together locally once a month and enjoying a varied programme of social events together with our families and the widows of members.

The Catenian Golf Society and the Caravan and Camping Fellowship cater for these special interests. The Rosary Group members commit to one decade of the rosary daily and have so far re-cycled 175,000 rosaries to other countries. In alternate years there is an official pilgrimage to Rome or the Holy Land and we support pilgrimages to national and local shrines".

Sean Duff, Membership Officer for Province 14, which includes circles in Bedford, Milton, Keynes and Luton said that many Catholic men are not members of any Catholic based groups and yet it is from within Catenians groups, that we can openly discuss our faith with like-minded and supportive people. It helps keeps us both individually and collectively strong, especially when our faith is under fire from outside. Membership is open to Catholic men aged 18 and over and through them their families. To find out how to become a Catenian in Province 14 or other circles in Northants Diocese, contact Sean Duff membership officer at: sean-duff@hotmail.com or visit [www.thecatenians.com](http://www.thecatenians.com)

The Catenian Association is active in the UK, Australia, Ireland, Malta, Nazareth, Southern Africa and is growing rapidly in India.



**Pictures:**

**Above: Denis Murphy presenting the 40 year membership scroll to Ralph Steel and his wife**

**Below: Ciaran Webb of St Columbus College St Albans, receiving his bursary fund cheque for £200 from Catenian, Dennis Cooper**

**Bottom: UK & Zimbabwean Catenians**





# In the footsteps of Pope John Paul



The two parishes of Sacred Heart Flitwick & Sacred Heart Leighton Buzzard joined together with parishioners from St Mary's Dunstable, St Francis Shefford & Turvey Abbey, on pilgrimage to Krakow, Poland 'In the Footsteps of St John Paul II'.

We left Heathrow on Monday afternoon, arriving in Krakow early evening, and were taken for dinner at Hawelka, which was one of the oldest restaurants in the Old Town Square. All lunches & dinners were included in this tour, arranged by Special Pilgrimages Ltd. Our first day was a walking tour of Krakow: we visited Wawel Cathedral and saw the famous 'Pope's Window'. After lunch we celebrated Mass in St Florian's Church which was St John Paul II's first parish, and later in the afternoon visited the Jewish Quarter where Stephen Spielberg made the movie "Schindler's List". He needed an authentic Jewish quarter for the scenes depicting the Jewish ghetto of Podgorze in Krakow.

On Wednesday we left for a tour of Czestochowa to visit one of Poland's most important Pilgrimage destination, the 14th century Paulite Monastery of Jasna Gora, housing the icon of the 'Black Madonna', crowned in 1717 with Papal diadems. We celebrated Mass in the Rosary Chapel and had the afternoon to further explore the area. The paintings of Jerzego

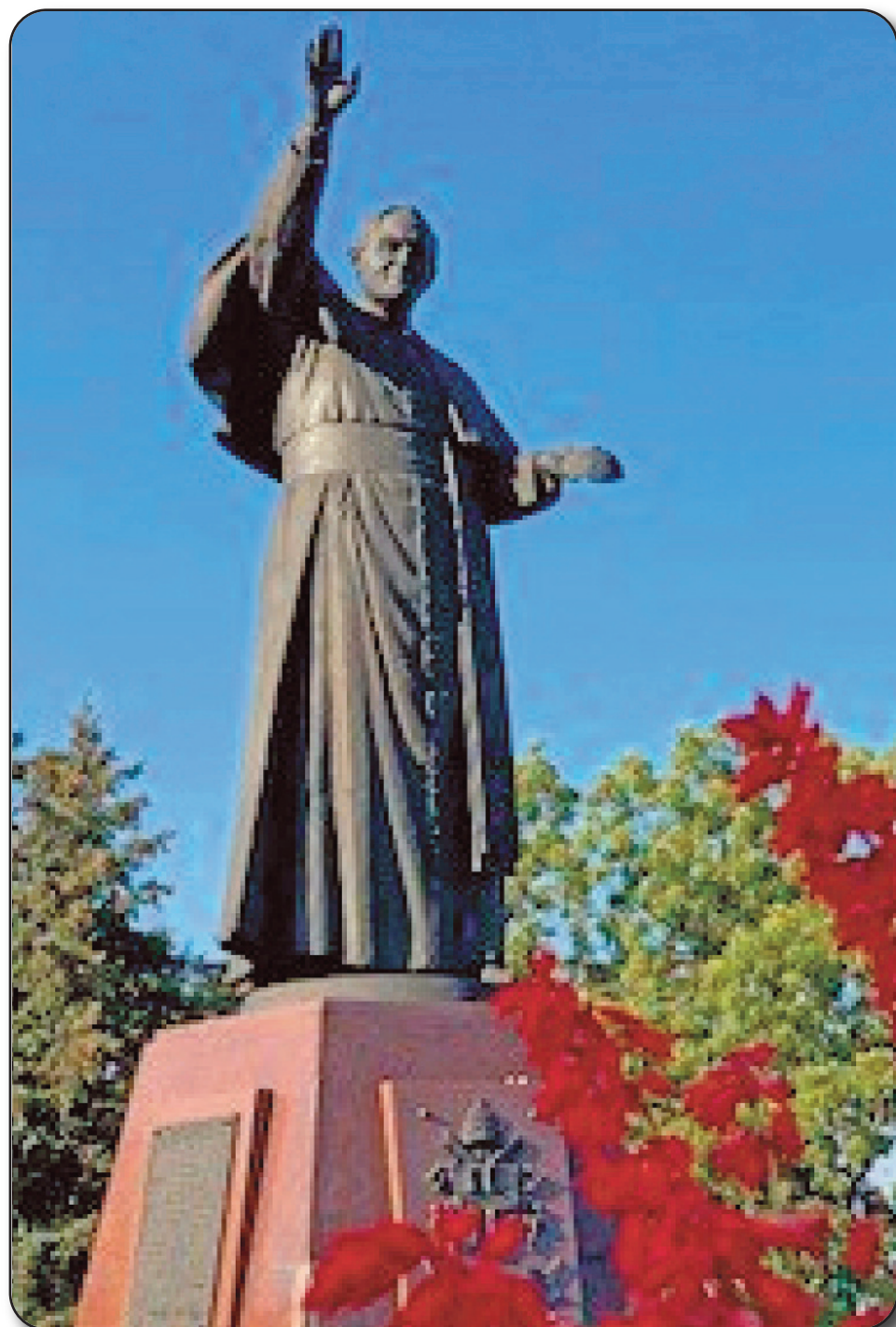
Dudy Gracza 'Golgotha of Jasna Gora' displayed in the Knights Hall were extremely thought provoking.

Thursday we visited Wadowice, the birthplace St John Paul II. The family home has been turned into the most innovative museum, showing his early birth years, youth and priesthood to Pope. We celebrated Mass in the Basilica and saw the font in which he was baptized. In the afternoon we set off for Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, visiting the Bernadine monastery, with a quick view of the famous Calvary paths along which over 40 churches, chapels, way-side shrines and bridges have been built, spread over 20km, imitating the layout of Jerusalem.

On our last day we celebrated our farewell Mass at the Old Convent Chapel in the Divine Mercy Sanctuary, followed by a short talk from a gentle Irish Nun, Sr Mary Clare.

The majority of pilgrims opted to go on the excursion to Auschwitz; to say it was harrowing and upsetting would be an injustice to those who lost their lives in the most horrific and inhumane way. It was a sad end to the Pilgrimage but we can reflect on the many wonderful blessings we had on journey 'In the Footsteps of St John Paul II'.

*Roslyn Penn*



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Pupils, parents and staff gathered recently to recognise the efforts and achievements of Key Stage 4 pupils during the 2017/18 Academic year.

The awards were presented by motivational speaker Tola Adeliyi, a teacher of Science, a Youth Impact Coach and a Motivational Speaker. During his entertaining speech Tola gave examples of famous people including Einstein, Michael Jordan, Muhammad Ali and Oprah Winfrey who had been earmarked as low achievers at school and told they would never amount to anything. Tola described how their perseverance had paid off as they all went on to achieve fantastic careers. He told our students that they should never be discouraged but should find what makes them special and persevere with their studies.

Pupils were rewarded for outstanding achievement in subject areas, for setting an example as a year leader and for exceptional contributions to the school community. Jo-Anne Hoarty, Headteacher at St Paul's, said: "We're very proud of all of our nominees and winners as they truly are beacons representing all aspects of our school motto to Love, Serve and Do the Best that is Possible."

Some notable winners included Sarafina Otis, who won awards for PE, Year 11 Year Leader and the Waitrose Cup for Excellence, awarded for the best public examination results. Teachers said that in her time at St Paul's she has come to encapsulate all of the core values that define the school and they have no doubt that in her adulthood she will go on to share these gifts and talents with the world to enrich it, as she has enriched the people around her here."

James Brady received the award for Mathematics and was also the recipient of the Maureen Grant award for the student who has overcome great challenges to be successful. Teachers nominated James as he has overcome significant levels of anxiety to achieve fantastically well. His increasing maturity and self-awareness has enabled him to become more adept at choosing different strategies to use when he does become anxious so that by the time he sat his GCSE exams, he was well prepared and managed this process extremely well.

Andrea Troso received the award for Year 10 Year Leader. Teachers said: "Andrea is a polite and well-mannered student who is always supportive to those around him. During form time he can often be found helping students, he is also a positive role model. During

work experience he was exemplary and organised his own placement, receiving extremely positive feedback from his employers."

To recognise their sporting success and contribution to school teams, Ben Hampton was declared Victor Ludorum and Shaniah Herelle, Victrix Ludorum.

The Headteacher's Award, for the student who has done their very best, was received by Zuzanna Rohnka. Summing up her success, Mrs Hoarty said: "Zuzanna has always been a very pleasant student who has been a real credit to the Year Group and St Paul's. She seeks out teachers to ask for advice and help to ensure that she always tries 'to do the best that is possible' in every subject of the curriculum. Zuzanna is always thoughtful towards others, and goes out of her way to help both staff and students and always volunteers for different opportunities such as charity work."

Students received a certificate and trophy and category winners were also given vouchers.

• Pictures show some of our award winners and nominees with Mrs Jo-Anne Hoarty and Tola Adeliyi.





# Catenian's empty chair

In 2012 the Chiltern Catenian Circle, at the instigation of Michael Stothard, who is a parishioner in Leighton Buzzard, adopted a scheme to collect money at their meetings to help the destitute and the homeless. The concept was that there was to be an "Empty Chair" at each meeting to represent a poor person who could not afford to join us and we were invited to "make a donation" to buy this person a meal.

This has proved to be a very successful project and during the past six years the Chiltern Catenians have been able to donate a total of £6,000 to local charities supporting those in need. The most recent donation of £500 was made to NOAH which is based in Luton and is devoted to Alleviating Poverty and Bringing Hope to the homeless. NOAH is an acronym for New Opportunities And Horizons and they provide meals, night shelter beds, washing facilities and assistance with accommodation, benefits and employment.

The cheque was collected on behalf of NOAH by Steve Gill who is member of the South Bucks Catenians.

*Michael Pitt-Payne*



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## 'Another strong performance'

Students at St Paul's Catholic School celebrated another strong performance on A-Level results day with 65% achieving grades A\* - C, nearly a fifth of all grades were A/A\*. The overall A-Level pass rate for the school was 98%. For those taking BTEC National Vocational courses, 63% gained a Distinction or Distinction\*, with 89% achieving a Merit or higher: an excellent achievement in the light of new reform which has made the qualifications harder.

Jo-Anne Hoarty, Headteacher at St Paul's

Catholic School, said: "We are delighted with these results and our continued year on year improvement. Students have worked very hard and we are thrilled that so many of them will achieve university places or apprenticeships. Once again the progress made by our A-Level students is extremely positive."

As a result of their achievements, St Paul's students will be going on to study at universities around the UK, with an ever increasing number electing to go to Russell Group universities. A growing number of our students

have gained places on prestigious Degree level apprenticeships and school leaver programmes, illustrating the diverse range of opportunities that we prepare our students for. We are very enthusiastic about these students who make conscious choices to join these programmes.

Jo-Anne added: "It is very pleasing to note that again our Extended Project results are outstanding: 52% of the students who did Extended Project alongside their A-Levels gained an A8



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# The bishops report on their visit to the Vatican departments

As we end our visit, 'Ad limina Apostolorum', we offer these reflections on our days together in Rome. On Friday 28 September, we were immensely privileged to share conversation with Pope Francis for over two hours. It was a most remarkable and intimate experience.

We asked the Holy Father for a message which we could bring back to our dioceses, to our priests and people. His message was simple: we are to live the gift of our faith with joy. Joy was his great emphasis. He explained that this joy is rooted firmly in our relationship with Jesus. It is a joy of knowing that he is with us; of knowing the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives, drawing and guiding us towards the will of God; a joy of knowing our Heavenly Father is waiting for us, longing to hold us in his embrace of loving mercy. This is the joy of the faith by which we are to live. He added that this joy is the source of lasting peace in our hearts and lives, no matter our circumstances.

As we spoke with Pope Francis we realised, more and more, that he simply radiates this joy and peace. He is indeed gifted with a unique grace of the Holy Spirit of God. Even in this time of turmoil, the Holy Father is so clearly rooted in God and blessed by God. His peace is secure. His life is serene. We know, because he showed us his heart. It is the heart of a loving father. In our turn, we affirmed our deep communion with him and promised him our love, support and prayers. We expressed confidently these sentiments on behalf of all the faithful Catholics of England and Wales.

We spoke with the Holy Father about the difficulties of fulfilling our role as bishops. In turn he reflected on the importance of prayer and preaching in our lives, and of paternal closeness to our priests and people, with care and with firm justice. He spoke of the encouragement he wishes to give to priests today, who can sometimes feel vulnerable in the face of difficult circumstances, in a critical environment. He spoke, movingly, of the wounds inflicted by abuse and neglect, wounds that wreak such harm in the lives of its victims and in the life of the Church. Wherever they are found, these are wounds in the Body of Christ and are painful to touch. He encouraged us, in our pastoral work, never to neglect even the tiny flames of faith

that exist in so many communities and people.

We have been given a warm welcome in our visits to all the departments of the Roman Curia. We were asked to speak freely about our endeavours and problems. In the officials of the Holy See we have found a spirit of true co-operation. Everywhere we have been encouraged and given helpful advice. We have seen clear evidence that the life of the Catholic communities of England and Wales is generally well respected and even admired here in Rome. Our reports of the Eucharistic Congress 'Adoremus' have been well received, as has

the strength of our compasioate outreach to those in need.

Indeed, the leaders of Catholic charitable works from England and Wales were present in Rome at this same time, at the instigation of Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) and we were able to spend time and pray together. In encouraging this work of outreach, Pope Francis urged us always to walk with those engaged in its projects so as to draw them nearer to the Lord who is the source of compassion and mercy. We know so well that it is from our prayer, especially before the Blessed Sacrament, that the mission of each of the

baptised truly springs.

In a number of our visits we have been accompanied by two bishops of the Church of England, Bishop Martin Warner and Bishop Christopher Foster. On one occasion we were joined by Sister Frances Orchard CJ of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales. We also visited the Pontifical Commission for Communication, whose Prefect, Dr Paolo Ruffini, is a layman. These are all 'firsts' - examples of openness and change.

Our 'ad limina' visit is now completed. We have celebrated Mass together in the four great Roman basilicas, at the tomb of St Peter and the tomb of St Paul. We have been embraced by the Successor of Peter, Pope Francis. Our pilgrimage has been richly blessed and we are glad to share this sense of the deep encouragement and powerful grace we have received.

Pope Francis commended us to our Blessed Lady, Mary our Mother, reflecting beautifully on her role as the 'untier of knots', a deep devotion in his own life. May she always be at our side.

We pray that God bless and strengthen our Holy Father, Pope Francis. May God guide us in all our ways that we may share the joy of our faith and the ways of peace.

## Mass of reparation

What better place to hold a Mass of Reparation for the Irish Referendum than at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is the Protectress of the Unborn? The Latin Mass Society has been holding a national series of Masses of Reparation following the decision regarding abortion in Ireland earlier this year. By kind permission of the Rector of the Shrine, Canon Seamus Keenan, there will be a Latin High Mass at 12.00 noon on Saturday 10 November at the beautiful church of the Holy Child and St Joseph, Bedford. This will be the Latin Mass at its very best with professional musicians and a rich liturgy. The celebrant will be Fr Patrick O'Donohue from the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter.

High Masses are quite rare these days and you are encouraged to experience this traditional act of worship for yourself.



## Ecumenical retirement

On September 8th, the Parishes of St Paul the Apostle, Thrapston and St Thomas More Raunds said farewell to Father Brian Leatherland upon his retirement.

At the party after his farewell Mass many parishioners and friends gathered in St James' Church Hall for a retirement buffet supper. Not only parishioners from Thrapston & Raunds attended, but also from The Most Holy Name of Jesus, Oundle, where Father Brian was also Parish Priest.

As can be seen from the photograph both the local C of E Rector, the Rev. Nolan Robson and the local Baptist Minister, the Rev. Mat Hussain also attended to say their farewells in true ecumenical style.

Speaking at the event Father Brian thanked everybody for making his time as Parish Priest so enjoyable, and in reply the Parishes wished him well for the future with a gift.





# A saint for troubled times

Oscar Romero was Archbishop of San Salvador. He became a fighter against injustice and a severe critic of the government. He was assassinated on March 4

Born on August 15, 1917, Oscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdamez was sent to study for the priesthood in Rome and was ordained in April 1942. He embraced a simple lifestyle; he was a popular preacher who responded with real compassion to the plight of the poor. He gave dedicated pastoral service to the diocese of San Miguel for 25 years – a greatly-admired workaholic in a cassock!

There followed seven years of pastoral famine in the capital city, San Salvador, as an ecclesiastical bureaucrat. Ordained Auxiliary Bishop in 1970, he gained a reputation as a stubborn and reactionary prelate. Seemingly unsympathetic to the new social justice thrust of the Latin American Church, he was suspicious of the clergy and the Base Christian Communities of the archdiocese

working alongside the exploited rural poor, promoting social organisations and land reform.

A brief spell back in the countryside as Bishop of Santiago de Maria opened Romero's eyes as he reconnected to the semi-feudal misery and hardship of the campesinos and witnessed the murderous repression being suffered at the hands of the security forces. In February 1977 he was the surprising choice to be the new Archbishop of San Salvador. Over the next three years the social and political conflict in El Salvador intensified with electoral fraud blocking change, and peaceful prtoral programmes to support the victims of the violence. wealthy classes, harassed by the security forces and publically opposed by several episcopal colleagues.

With the emergence of armed guerilla groups on the far left, civil war loomed. Archbishop Romero, reject-



**Oscar Romero**  
**Canonised on October 14, 2018**

ing the violence perpetrated by the left as well as the right, strained every nerve to promote peaceful solutions to his nation's crisis. He was vilified in the press, attacked and denounced to Rome by Catholics of the wealthy classes, harassed by the security forces and publically opposed by several episcopal colleagues. In a society of cover-up and lies, he spoke

the truth of what was happening in the countryside; he denounced the killings, the torture and the disappearances of community leaders; he demanded justice and recompense for the atrocities committed by the army and police and he set up legal aid projects and pastoral programmes to support the victims of the violence.



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**Day 3. Verona.** Our first excursion takes us by coach to Verona – a city of Roman ruins, medieval buildings, culture and romance. On our guided tour of the city which takes us into Verona's historic heart, we will see Juliet's balcony and Verona's great Roman Arena. Later in the afternoon, we take a guided tour of a local winery, before enjoying a dinner and a wine tasting.

**Day 4. Cruise on Lake Garda.** Today, our excursion takes us on a cruise across Lake

Garda to the attractive island of Isola del Garda. Looked over by the impressive Scaliger Castle, an extraordinary Venetian neo-Gothic style villa, this delightful place currently privately owned by the Cavazza family, who opened it up to visitors in 2001.

**Day 5. To Oberammergau.** We leave Italy and Lake Garda behind today, as we make the scenic rail journey (Standard Class) through the Italian Alps to Germany and into Bavaria. We travel to Oberammergau where we check into our hotel in or around the Ammergau region, for the next two nights.

**Day 6. The Passion Play.** Today we are treated to Oberammergau's brilliant Passion Play. Detailing the death and resurrection of

Christ during his final days, this production occurs once every ten years and attracts nearly half a million audience members over the course of its run. Our top tier tickets provide us with excellent seats at the front and near the centre, under the impressive dome which houses the stage. The production has a break halfway through, during which we enjoy a special Passion Play dinner.

**Days 7-8. London via Cologne.** Leaving the wonderful Oberammergau behind today, we make our way by rail to Cologne. Here we spend the night before leaving Germany on Day 8, as we head to Brussels in Belgium. On arrival, we board the Eurostar service to London, where our tour concludes.



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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same. So, if you want to try the CRYPTIC puzzle, for instance, but are unsure, use the QUICK clues to help you work out the solution. Similarly, if you try the QUICK clues, use the CRYPTIC clues to help you prove the solution

CRYPTIC Across

- 1 Angel of the bottomless pit's one rotten fellow (7)
- 5 Check car's tyres at the front (5)
- 8 Picnic things are put in this stylish con tainer (4,3)
- 9 Poke around firm in Israel (5)
- 10 It amplifies the matter of fruit on the turn (5)
- 11 Within visual range for observation (7)
- 12 Total lack of interest to cross a yard by track (6)
- 14 Zambia's evacuated, following small brown lines on a page (6)
- 17 Say farewell to lion-hearted after salute... (7)
- 19 ...awards partly leave them mystified (5)
- 22 The rise of Southwell? (5)
- 23 Rat one that double-crossed (7)
- 24 Somewhat dark Welsh river seen in a wasted day (5)
- 25 James' and John's dad, retiring bishop, drifted away during last Letter from America (7)
- 6 One of ten sides last month suffering no end (7)
- 7 Dorcas the Greek gets to name it on headgear, but not all (7)
- 12 Charged with using cue cards, Rabbi pulled out (7)
- 13 On English vessel find a set forever young (7)
- 15 Jesus Christ the Gambler, said John? (3,4)
- 16 Conquistador, the first in Colombia with, surprisingly, zero time in there (6)
- 18 The event to broadcast? (5)
- 20 Greek character with very little English, Theodorus, is turned down (5)
- 21 Eastern wrap snacks are easily tucked into (5)

QUICK Across

- 1 Hebrew version of the Greek Apollyon (7)
- 5 Inspect (5)
- 8 Insulated container which keeps food cold (4,3)
- 9 Progenitor of the Israelites (5)
- 10 Electronic receiver that detects and de modulates and amplifies transmitted signals (5)
- 11 Perception (7)
- 12 Absence of emotion or enthusiasm (6)
- 14 Group of lines in a poem, play, etc (6)
- 17 Toodle-pip! (7)
- 19 US TV Awards (5)
- 22 Increase in size, magnitude, number, or intensity (5)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Racing here is one from an Aberdeen, perhaps (5)
- 2 Bother with navy getting deck out (5)
- 3 Judge's board he upset (7)
- 4 Note number on top have the spirit to support head (6)
- 5 How meats are cooked in France, on Sunday, in early summer months (2,3)

- 23 Someone who be trays his country (7)
- 24 Dark-skinned (5)
- 25 Father of apostles James and John (7)

QUICK Down

- 1 Racing venue in Berkshire (5)
- 2 Festoon (5)
- 3 In the Book of Judges, the only female judge (7)
- 4 Small measure of spirits; mug (6)
- 5 Of meat cooked in its own gravy (French) (2,3)
- 6 Ten-sided figure (7)
- 7 Woman in Acts, from Joppa (7)
- 12 Defendant in a criminal proceeding (7)
- 13 Eternal (7)
- 15 Euphemism for Jesus Christ in John (3,4)
- 16 Hernando -----, 1486-1547, conquistador (6)
- 18 Pass on (5)
- 20 Subdued (5)
- 21 Ranees's wrap (5)

SOLUTION

Across: 1 Abaddon, 5 Audit, 8 Cool bag, 9 Jacob, 10 Turner, 11 Insight, 12 Apathy, 14 Stanza, 17 Cherio, 19 Emmys, 22 Swell, 23 Traitor, 24 Dusky, 25 Zebedee. Down: 1 Ascot, 2 Adorn, 3 Deborah, 4 Noggin, 5 Au jus, 6 Decagon, 7 Tabitha, 12 Accused, 13 Ageless, 15 The Lamb, 16 Cortez, 18 Relay, 20 Muted, 21 Saree. EXPLANATIONS: Across: 1 A+bad+don, 5 Audi+it, 8 cool+bag, 9 Ja(Co)b, 10 re+nut [rev], 11 in+sight, 12 a(path)y, 14 s+tan+Z(-amb)A, 17 cheer+(-l)io(-n), 19 hidden word in 'THE M MYSTIFIED', 22 S+well & pun, 23 double def, '24 'Uk' in 'd(-a)'y', 25 'e(-B)bed' in 'Zee'. Down: 1 A+Scot, 2 ado+RN, 3 ana, 4 No+G+gin, 5 Au+ju+S, 6 Dec+agon(-y), 7 Tab+it+ha(-t), 12 ana of 'ue+ca(-R)ds', 13 A+gel+E+SS, 15 The homophone of 'gam-boller' & pun, 16 C+ 't' in ana of 'zero', 18 double def & pun, 20 Mu+Ted, 21 hidden word in 'snacks ARE Easily'.



Celebrating our Schools

If your School would like to wish our readers a Happy and Holy Christmas in the next edition, please get in touch by Monday 12th November Contact Janet on 07931 836907 or email [janett@cathcom.org](mailto:janett@cathcom.org)

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