



Papal football fan

Pope Francis leads Sunderland to victory.

Page 2



A very special birthday

Polish church celebrates sixty years.

Page 5



Papal Nuncio visits the diocese

'You have lifted our spirits'

Page 6



Festive day for Kettering school

Sister Marion cuts the cake.

Page 10



Nuncio sees Church at Work

The papal nuncio, Archbishop Antonio Mennini, visited the diocese from October 28-30. He is pictured here in Bishop's House, Northampton, with Bishop Peter and his two secretaries, Monsignors Santiago and Brady.

For the full story see page 6.



Is This a Record?

On Saturday 5th October 95 year old great grandmother Muriel Barfoot was baptised and received into the Church by Fr Willie Strain at St Augustine's, High Wycombe.

Her daughter, Nina Kelly, and grandchildren John, Julia and Imogen Kelly were godparents.



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Vatican City



Move over Archbishop Ganswein, there's a new kid in town. Well, just temporarily. For about an hour on Saturday evening, October 26, during Pope Francis' meeting with families in St. Peter's Square, a little boy took over as prefect of the papal household: he helped bring guests up to the pope, he tried to take presents off the pope's hands, he adjusted the pope's microphone... He didn't leave the

pope's side, just like a perfect prefect would do during many public and private audiences. But the little boy got a lot more leeway than the archbishop and was allowed to sit in the papal chair when his legs got tired, he got some candy from the pope's other helpers, and he got a ton of head-pats, smiles and smirks. Not bad for a first job.

Mongolia

When Bishop Wenceslao Padilla arrived in Mongolia with two other missionary priests in 1992, there were no Catholics in the Central Asian country. His mission was much like that of the early apostles: to take Catholicism to a land that had not yet encountered it. Twenty-one years later, there are more than 900 Catholics in Mongolia, 71 religious priests and sisters from 12 congregations, four Catholic parishes and a 600-seat cathedral in the capital, Ulan Bator. In a recent interview while visiting Perth, Bishop Padilla said he found the progress of the Catholic Church in the former communist nation astounding, but that challenges remained. He told The Record, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Perth, that while he was pleased with the gradual spread of Catholicism, the Mongolian church remains very much in its infancy. "When I see the people who have joined the Catholic faith, I am really very happy," he said.

Sunderland

One wonders what Cardinal Basil Hume would have made of the images of a beaming Pope Francis holding aloft a Sunderland football shirt printed with 'Papa Francisco', just days before the club's big derby game with Newcastle United. Hume of course was a huge Newcastle United supporter and would have been crestfallen at what now looks like a clear case of divine intervention in the stunning 2:1 defeat of his team on Sunday.

Pope Francis is famously a card-carrying fan of San Lorenzo football club in his native Buenos Aires. Despite being domiciled in the Vatican, he still pays his monthly club membership subs according to the club's vice president, Marcelo Tinelli. Pope Francis also granted Italy's and Argentina's national football teams a private audience at the Vatican in August.



Rosary link

'The harvest is great but the labourers are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest...'Lk10:2
The Rosary Link for Vocations is taking Jesus at his word as parishes and prayer groups are uniting quarterly around the Diocese in prayer for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. All are welcome to join us as we offer the Mass, Rosary and Exposition for Vocations at:

- Tue 3 Dec:

St Mary, Dunstable - 9.30 am
- Fri 7 Dec:

Christ the King, Milton Keynes at 7.30 pm
St Thomas Aquinas - Bletchley at 8.30 am
St Francis of Assisi, Shefford at 9.30am
Our Lady of Ransom, Kempston at 7.30pm

Sat 8 Dec: Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Wellingborough - 10.30am

For more information contact Fr Damien Walne 01604 406410

Getting into print

Send news reports, photos and other material to the news editor, Mrs Margaret Busby, 1 Bewcastle Close, Bedford, MK41 8BQ: e-mail:vine02@globalnet.co.uk We promise to print your news as soon as we can find space for it.




Material should be e-mailed 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 minors 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 by request.





The content of each issue is decided by the editor, Fr. Paul Hardy, email: vine01@btpenworld.com Views expressed in The Vine are not necessarily those of the editors or of the Diocese. The publisher of The Vine, Bellcourt, deals with advertising. Those wishing to place advertisements should telephone 01636-525503. Difficulties with distribution should be referred to Mrs Busby.



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A Breathtaking Experience



"I want to tell everyone about it. But how many will want to listen?"

Those were the words of one of 75 people from the Diocese on our pilgrimage to the Holy Land from 7 to 14 October in this Year of Faith.

It was a breathtaking experience for us all. From the opening Mass on the shores of the Sea of Galilee to our final Mass in the Church of the Visitation, the birthplace of John the Baptist, there was an intense and seamless journey bringing alive the scenes in the Bible, and making Christ present among us in his humanity and in his divinity.

We walked in the footsteps of Jesus, true God and true man. We prayed in Bethlehem where he was born, in Nazareth where he was brought up. We pondered on the site of the synagogue where he unrolled the Book of the Prophet Isaiah and proclaimed that the scripture was being fulfilled even as people listened.

We sat in a boat in silence on the Sea of Galilee, seeing the same contours of the surrounding hills and mountains on which Jesus had gazed as he taught his disciples, walked on the waters, saved Peter, and calmed the storm.

For three nights we were based in Nazareth before moving to Bethlehem for four nights. We were beautifully cared for in the hotels and expertly guided by Ibrahim and Nab-ill.

On the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, we travelled through the Judean desert. It was stark and wild. How hard it must have been for the pregnant Mary and Joseph to make their way to Bethlehem? On our way we went to the River Jordan where John baptised Jesus.

Our days were packed. One day began with the sight of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. We

descended to the Garden of Gethsemane and into the Church of All the Nations. There is the rock where Jesus sweated blood. From there we prayed the Stations of the Cross along the Via Dolorosa completing the final stations as we entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. All of us, younger and older, with and without sticks climbed the stairs to pray on the rock of Calvary where Jesus died for us all. We then moved down and across the church to queue to enter the tomb. Three by three we knelt at the place of the resurrection.

For me one of the great joys of the pilgrimage was the way in which all of us from so many different parishes and backgrounds gelled as a group. There was much laughter as many of us floated in the Dead Sea and in our gatherings where we shared good food and drink. Truly, we represented the whole Diocese, and prayed for you all, parishioners and religious, deacons and priests. As your bishop, I was blessed a hundredfold.

I want to end with thanks to Father Chris Whitehouse, the director of the pilgrimage, and to Father Michael Patey and Deacon John Hamilton for their input and of course, Palestine Pilgrimages. Above all, I thank God for the people who represented the Diocese, for the grace of our visit and the hospitality of the peoples of the Holy Land.

+Peter
Bishop of Northampton
October 2013

Pictures: top, Bethlehem.
Centre: the pilgrim group



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Pope Francis

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Marlow's Day Out

This year's outing provided a double treat for parishioners of St Peter's, Marlow, with visits to both St. Mary's in the historic village of East Hendred in Oxfordshire and also to Douai Abbey.

We enjoyed seeing the lovely gothic-inspired church of St Mary with its much admired stained glass. It was built and consecrated after the Catholic Emancipation Act and the 1850 restoration of the English hierarchy.

It serves East Hendred and surrounding Downland villages. Its building was largely due to the generosity of Charles John Eyston, a member of a distinguished Catholic family who trace their ancestry back to St Thomas More.

The Eyston family home is neighbouring Hendred House, formerly the Manor of Arches, one of five mediaeval manors in the village. It has been the family home for nearly 600 years. It has one of only three Catholic chapels where Mass has been celebrated since the Reformation, in fact Mass has been celebrated there since the 13th century.

Their chapel, dedicated to St Amand and St John the Baptist was where we were privileged to hold our own Mass celebrated by Canon Anthony Griffiths. Afterwards, in the parish hall we were treated to a fascinating talk on the history of East Hendred by local historian Norman Francis.

Next we visited the Benedictine Douai Abbey at Woodhampton, near Thatcham. Founded in 1903 it was home to a community of monks from Douai, France, who had been evicted by the anti-clerical Law of Association in 1901, their predecessors having been forced out of Paris during the Revolution. The Abbey Church was finally opened in 1933 but completed only in 1993 owing to financial constraints.

This Grade II listed building is built in the Gothic Revived style and is most impressive. Its patron is St Edmund, King and Martyr.

It holds conferences, courses and retreats. Its new library and archive house rich resources for study and research. However it is perhaps renowned for its splendid acoustics, which have led to its being widely used for sacred concerts given by leading performers.

Finally we met the Abbey Guest Master who invited us to take afternoon tea in the Refectory – a perfect end to a memorable outing!

Malcolm Thomas.

Pictures; top. Douai abbey
bottom, chapel at Eyston.



The most recent day course, organised by the Pastoral Area for Central Bedfordshire, was for Catechists. This was the third such event, the others having been for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers. They have all been most successful and very helpful – this last one was no exception.

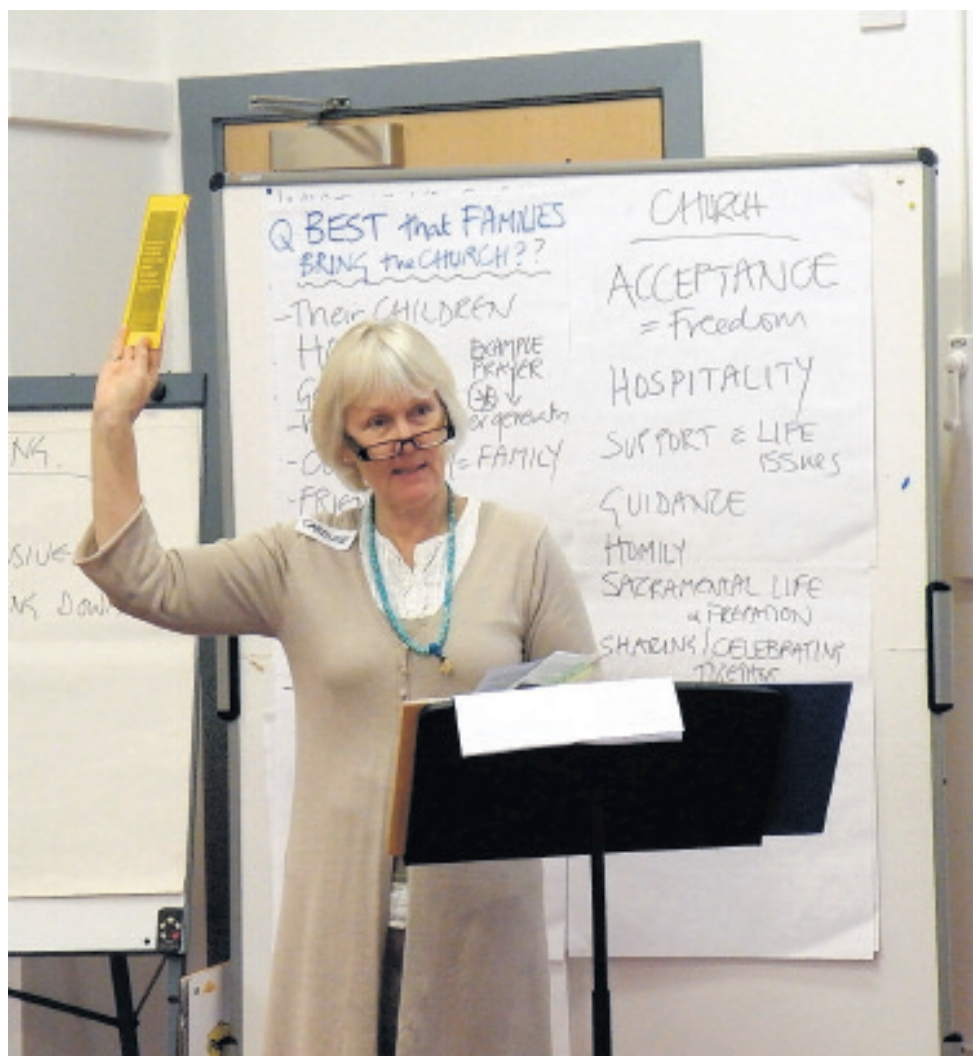
"At the Heart of being a Confident Catechist" was the theme. The day was hosted in Leighton Buzzard, and Catechists and Leaders of Children's Liturgy gathered from Biggleswade, Dunstable, Flitwick, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard and Shefford.

The course leader, Caroline Dollard was inspirational. She is based in the Diocese of Middlesbrough and has a wide range of credits to her name. Her special interest is catechesis, while providing retreats, courses and spiritual accompaniment for people from all walks of life.

With the exception of Dunstable parish, our families and their children do not have access to Catholic schooling, and so the formation in the faith of our children and young people relies heavily on our parish communities in the Ministry of Catechesis.

The day was structured so that we had time

Confident Catechists



for personal thought, paired and group discussions as well as much thought provoking leadership from Caroline. What are our aims as catechists? The over-riding answer was to ensure our children know that "God is real in their lives, loves them and they are special". We thought about a whole range of key skills for a catechist in relation to how Jesus himself was as a "Catechist" – kind, generous, welcoming, listener, humble, patient, in empathy – to name but a few.

An over-riding element which prevailed was that whatever catechists do for our children and young people, it will be lost if there is not the back-up from the family. Parents are key to

giving example, leadership and support. This also applies for the other big concern – keeping the youngsters involved in church life between First Holy Communion and Confirmation, and then beyond.

We concluded: "We will be most proud in 2014 if more teenagers think like Amy – a young woman who grew onwards from her Children's Liturgy and we see our children becoming actively involved in parish life."

Theresa Short, Sacred Heart,
Leighton Buzzard

Pictures:
left, Caroline Dollard

Wszystkiego najlepszego z okazji urodzin

On Sunday, October 13th 2013 the Polish community in Luton and Dunstable celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Polish Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Dunstable.

Many distinguished guests graced the ceremony with their presence, amongst them Monsignor Kevin McGinnell, the Episcopal Vicar for Education, the Mayor of Luton, Sheila Roden, the Mayor of Dunstable, John Chatterley and Mayoress Ann Chatterley.

The celebrations began with a thanksgiving Mass celebrated by the Rector of The Polish Catholic Mission in England and Wales, Father Stefan Wylezek. Also present were: Father Wojciech Swiatkowski, the Provincial of the Society of Christ for Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Iceland, the current head of the Polish Parish Church in Dunstable, Father Arthur Stelmach, alongside a number of former parish priests.

Within the congregation were the clergy from neighbouring Roman Catholic parishes in Luton and Dunstable with whom the Polish community has a long history of cooperation. Also, the few remaining founders of the parish and representatives of various groups and organisations who work with and for the parish were present. These included members of the Ex-Serviceman's Club, teachers and pupils from the Polish Saturday School, Rosary Circle and the Social Club.

The special liturgy was complemented by the beautiful singing of the choir from the Polish Parish Church in Hammersmith, London.

After the service, the guests enjoyed a meal in the parish hall. In his opening speech, Father Artur Stelmach welcomed everyone and gave a brief history of the parish. He reminded those

gathered there of the many difficulties the founders of the parish faced back in 1953. The ideals and the deep love for the country they had left behind helped the post Second World War generation of Poles to build a place where they could meet and worship. It is still a place where today's young and vibrant Polish community can observe their colourful traditions and pass this rich cultural heritage onto their children, many of whom were born in the United Kingdom.

The Mayor of Luton, Sheila Roden, informed guests of the importance of harmonious co-existence and tolerance amongst

The many ethnic communities who live in Luton today. The town, where over 100 different languages are spoken, is very proud of its *Luton in Harmony* initiative which brings communities together, enriches the cultural landscape of the town and helps overcome stereotyping.

The Mayor of Dunstable thanked the parish for the invitation saying that he was impressed with the hospitality of the Polish community and glad to learn more about its activities. Mr Chatterley said that year 1953 had been a very important one, not only for Poles but also for the British as the year of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth the Second.

A short performance by pupils from the Polish Saturday School, beautiful singing by the choir and a moving recital by Dorota Bacik-Gorczyńska added to the mood of celebration. The afternoon culminated in the eating of the truly impressive anniversary cake made by one of the local parishioners.

Mrs Renata Upperton

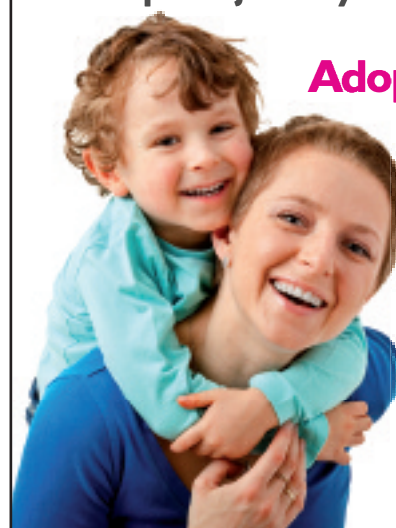


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Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the papal nuncio to the Court of St. James, celebrated Mass at Holy Ghost, Luton, on October 29. It was a right Roman occasion. Archbishop Mennini was born and brought up in Rome. His late father was the managing director of the Vatican Bank when Archbishop Paul Marcinkus was its president. But the celebration, in the generously crowded six hundred seater church, was also a vivid reminder of the history and the cultural variety of the diocese.

A hearty brass fanfare greeted the entrance procession. There were papal knights in the front, and Knights of St. Columba in the rear. Bishop Peter warmly welcomed Archbishop Mennini and his secretaries, Monsignori Santiago and Brady. 'You have lifted our spirits in the few hours you have been with us'. The Mass continued, appropriately, with the reading from the Prophet Micah, which contains Bishop Peter's Episcopal motto: 'You have already been told what God wants of you; to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God'. And there followed a note of sad nostalgia. The responsorial psalm, never published, had been composed by Bernadette Farrell for Bishop Frank Thomas' funeral: 'show us your ways, Lord, that we may walk in your truth, all the days of our life'.

In his sermon Archbishop Mennini, who arrived in

London in 2010, after service as nuncio in Bulgaria, Russia and Uzbekistan, thanked Bishop Peter for his welcome. 'As the representative of the Pope it is good to be with you in prayer for the local Church'. He reminded the congregation and concelebrants that Jesus sends us out as witnesses to an unbelieving world. We must live by the word of Micah, for modern man listens more readily to witnesses than to teachers. Trust in the promise of our saviour: 'Know that I am with you always'.

Then it was time for the cultural diversity. The Bidding Prayers were delivered in Irish Gaelic, Polish, Italian, Urdu and Swahili. The Mass ended with an Apostolic blessing and a Plenary Indulgence granted by Pope Francis, followed by lively refreshments in the Parish Centre.

Archbishop Mennini had arrived in Northampton on the previous day. He had lunch with the Diocesan Consultors and then in the evening attended a reception with civic and ecumenical guests. On Tuesday morning they visited Castle Ashby. Before the diocesan Mass in the evening the Nuncio attended presentations from NORES and NYMO, visited a mosque and met members of the Luton Council of Faiths. The visit ended on Wednesday morning with Mass and lunch for Religious with the Bridgettine Sisters in Iver Heath.



A Right Roman Visit

Pictures by Margaret Busby



Pictures: top left, friendship; top, in the mosque; the Council of Faiths; musicians at Mass; left, recessional.

Sixty Years for Bro. Peter



On 8th September 2013 Brother Peter Simmonds celebrated 60 years of profession in the Salesian Order founded by Don Bosco in Turin in 1860's.

Peter was born in Tunbridge Wells in November 1927 but when he was six months old his parents moved to Bedford where his Father and Great Uncle founded the business of Harrison & Simmonds in the High Street.

Peter went to Bedford Modern School and did well and while still at school did part time work in a local factory. On leaving school he worked at De Havilland's in Hatfield where they were designing the Comet aeroplane.

In the late 1940's he saw a film about Don Bosco and he resolved to join the order. In 1950 he cycled to Rome for the Holy Year and wrote a fascinating diary which is still in the family. He joined the Salesian's and was Professed on 8th September 1953 at Burwash. Soon afterwards he was sent out to the Salesian Institute in Somerset Road, Cape Town, South Africa, where he has worked ever since.

At that time they ran a school for white boys because of Apartheid. Peter taught carpentry and then ran a repository for many years selling Catholic Statues, books etc. all over South Africa. He also spent some years as Head Master of the school.

When Apartheid was finally abolished, it was Peter who suggested they should take in children of all colours off the street! At first the community was doubtful but Peter prayed and persisted and soon his idea was accepted. In January 1990 they finally invited children in and at first the boys fought for the food, but they soon learnt that there would be plenty for everyone and more later. The boys lived in the institute for a couple

of years and were taught basic life skills, how to write a letter, appropriate behaviour, and different trades.

When Michael, Peter's younger brother, and his wife Anne visited 10 years ago, they were teaching, carpentry, leather work, metal work and printing skills. Now they also teach brick laying, tiling, and basic computer skills, both mending and programming. They still run a school for boys and girls and the Hostel now takes older boys to train. When Anne and Michael were shown around the school one small boy was asleep on his desk. The teacher said: "I never wake him, at least he feels safe here. I don't know if he has a place to sleep!" They help the lads to find jobs and somewhere to live and keep in touch with them later.

The celebrations included a special Mass with seven priests who had worked with Peter and many other friends. Later after a splendid dinner there were speeches detailing his long career and his many achievements over the sixty years.

They have a picture up on the wall outside the school marking the fact that Peter was the Founder of the Youth Project. It was taken on his 80th birthday in 2007. Peter's health is not good, he walks with crutches and is very deaf but he is always first in Chapel for the Office and he is still working. He showed us a Statue of the Sacred Heart that he had repaired and was repainting. He also invented the "Jaws" Candle Stick which will take any size of candle, and they have sold all over Africa. Peter will be 86 in November but he is still working for the Lord in any way he can.

Anne T. Simmonds



Beaconsfield Mass for Healing

St Teresa's Parish in Beaconsfield held its annual SVP Healing Mass for the sick on 26th September. Parishioners from St Dunstan's, Bourne End, joined them for the service.

The Mass was very moving as parish priest Fr Francis Higgins individually blessed and

anointed every one who wished to receive the Sacrament of the Sick. Afterwards everyone enjoyed the excellent tea provided by the SVP in the Parish Centre.

Margaret Frall



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Schools are Pilgrims

24 September, the feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, saw Headteachers of the Diocese of Northampton joining their counterparts from schools across the Westminster Province for Mass in Westminster Cathedral. It was a Celebration of Catholic Education.

Archbishop Vincent Nichols gave the homily, likening a Catholic School to a pilgrimage to Walsingham and the journey there to the work of Catholic Education.

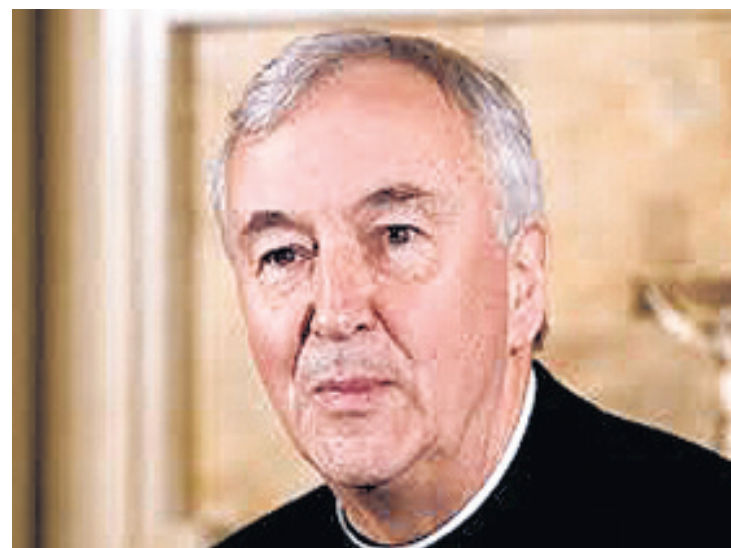
"To find these ways less travelled we have to know our destination and always be attentive to its call.

"Only by attentiveness to this presence of the mystery of God will we come to, and serve, all the good things of the Lord. And that is indeed the true purpose of Catholic education.

"To have eyes for the good things of the Lord is to live by faith, to see life with the eyes of faith. In Catholic education we strive to see the good things of the Lord in every human being, from the first moment of conception to their natural death. We see the good things of the Lord in every child who stands before us; in every venture into the realms of science, of beauty in art and music, in the wonders of our environment and in the depth of the struggle in every human heart to find and follow all that is good."

He quoted Pope Francis: 'God is in everyone's life. Even if the life of a person has been a disaster, even if it is destroyed by vices, drugs or anything else - God is in this person's life. You can, you must try to seek God in every human life. Although the life of a person is a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God.'

"The aim of every Catholic school is to reach out for that horizon of God,



in every person, in every enterprise, in every subject in the curriculum. The commitment of Catholic education...is to learn to respect and reverence the truth and love of God in all things, going beyond expediency to something more enduring, more far-reaching which truly shapes a human person for their eternal destiny"

He said that the challenge of Catholic education is to keep Christ at the centre. "And I know it is a challenge to which you are all dedicated."

"Today we renew our enthusiasm for this task. We know that it is a great contribution to our society, through the foundations for life that we give to future adults and through the diversity we help to provide within the educational systems of this country. This diversity is rooted in respect for parental choice and for their role as the first and essential educators of their own children.

"Today, on this Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, we commit our efforts to the protection of her mantle and to the power of her intercession... Mary is given to be mother to us all. So we can turn to her at every moment, rely on her help when we are in need, shelter in her embrace when we are weary and rejoice with her when we are exultant. Jesus says to us today 'Behold your Mother'. Let us take his words to heart and share their richness with all who are in our care."



Corby's Big Share

Year 6 pupils at Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School in Corby presented an assembly to the school to launch CAFOD's Big Share. Donations of cans and packets of food were sent to the local food bank. The school gathered enough to feed eighteen families for 3 whole days!

The School was also happy to present a cheque for £225 to CAFOD following a very successful Big Share event.



On 8 September the annual Mass in Italian, organised for the Italian Association of Luton and Dunstable, was celebrated by Mgr Kevin McGinnell.

It was the first such celebration since the election of Pope Francis who has taken the name of the saint called "Il Poverello" the poor little man.

After Mass there was the traditional blessing of animals – linked to St Francis' love for God's creation.

Then the statue of St Francis, given to the church by the Italian community for the millennium, was carried through the streets in procession. The Luton Forum Irish Pipe Band led the way.

The Muslim neighbours came to the doors and windows as they often have their own processions and many also recognise Francis as a holy man of God.

The procession ended with the blessing in the Parish Centre which led into a fine meal of home cooked pasta and a splendid barbecue.

Italian Faith on Show





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Obituaries

Michael Connolly

The staff at Cardinal Newman received sad news that Michael Connolly, a long serving and proud patron of our school passed away on the Tuesday 9th October in Ireland.

Michael Connolly came to the UK from Ireland in the 1950's and in 1959 Michael met his wife Kathleen Toland. Michael went on to form a house building company which grew with his hard work and guidance plus Kathleen's devoted support, into a substantial business spanning over 50 years.

His building company helped to construct our school in the 1960's and Michael maintained a strong connection with the school ever since, both as benefactor and friend. He was dedicated to supporting children at the school, helping to improve education and generously donating



funding for our 6th Form block which now has a well- appointed common room and study area in remembrance of his wife Kathleen. After his wife Kathleen passed away in 1999, Michael focused his energies and revenues from his business to found the Michael and Kathleen Connolly Foundation which was inspired by the dreams and wishes that Kathleen and he had shared.

Since its formation 14 years ago the foundation has provided

grants or bursaries to Cardinal Newman students who are looking to move into further education.

He was truly inspiring and he will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family.

Rosemary Smith

Rosemary Smith
Cardinal Newman School Headteacher
1987—1995

Rosemary Smith succeeded the founding headteacher, Mr Bill Davies, as headteacher of Cardinal Newman School. Rosemary was a person of outstanding intellectual ability. She spoke several languages and, on occasions, acted as translator at international church conferences. She led 'The Newman' through a period of transition and significant change. She dealt calmly and efficiently with the introduction of financial delegation, school inspections and the imposition of the National Curriculum. She trained as an Ofsted Inspector so that she could lead the school successfully through its first inspection. She contributed significantly for many years to diocesan education development. Rosemary was always willing to delegate and innovate. She understood what it meant to develop a school with a Catholic/Christian

ethos. She served the school well in her time as headteacher and took it forward on many fronts. The pupils were of paramount importance to her and she always found time to be supportive of colleagues.

Rosemary also played a significant part in the development of the diocese. She was a member of the Steering Group for the Diocesan Assembly of 1988, and highly supportive of its aims. She provided theological training for Permanent Deacons. Central to her life was her membership of the Lay Institute, Caritas Christi, with membership world-wide. She was proud to serve a term as its international leader.

Rosemary could be firm when needed, but most people will remember her for her gentle nature, her kindness and her great mind. May she rest in peace.

Fr. John Kelly

Father John Kelly was born in Doonbeg, Co Clare, Ireland. He studied for the priesthood at St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

After ordination in 1975 he was appointed Dean of Studies in St Flanagan's College, Ennis. Two years later he joined the Irish Mission in England, living and working in Our Lady Help of Christians, Luton, with parish Priests Fr Frank Glanfield and Fr Patrick Crowe.

On his return to his Diocese of Killaloe in 1982 he was appointed assistant priest in Birr Parish, Co Offaly and in 2000 he became parish priest in Killmurry, Co Clare.

In addition to this he was also Moderator of a cluster of four parishes in that area until his untimely death on 28 August, 2013.

Fr Tom Hogan of Ennis Cathedral said: "We have lost a wonderful, gentle, unassuming priest, a brilliant student who kept up to date with the developments in the Church and also appreciated modern technology.

He trusted people, recognising their gifts and was open to promoting new initiatives. His reflective words touched people's minds and hearts.

Safe home, Gentle John, until we meet in His eternal Home."



Happy Birthday

Kettering Town witnessed an unusual spectacle on 4th October when nearly 200 pupils walked from St Thomas More Catholic Primary School to celebrate a special Mass at St. Edward's Church, in honour of the school's 40th anniversary.

Bishop Peter, Canon John Koenig and Fr. Paul Inman led the school in a joyous liturgy, attended by pupils, staff, parents and Governors. Special guests included Sister Marion, the first Headteacher of the school, Mr. Mike Woulfe and Mrs. Maureen Everington, former Headteachers (another former Head, Mr. Tony Agnew, was abroad on holiday at the time) and many staff and Governors who served the community during the last four decades.

Bishop Peter congratulated the pupils on their singing, their responses during the liturgy and their excellent participation generally.

After the Mass, the children and guests returned to school - on foot of course (although the very youngest in Reception class had the benefit of coach transport) - for a special reception lunch.

The Headteacher, Miss Anne O'Neill said: "Everyone was extremely proud of the children; many adults, in the street as well as in the Church, commented on the way the pupils con-

ducted themselves and participated in the Mass."

"We could have celebrated Mass in the school hall, but in this year of Faith, we wanted to mark the occasion by going to the Church to make the day extra special. The staff worked hard to ensure the pupils were safe at all times so that everyone was able to enjoy the experience; special thanks go to all the parents who also walked with the children - we couldn't have done it without their help."

"The Anniversary cake was certainly eye-catching: a work of art which captured the youth and essence of the school, a special, fun place to learn. The cake was designed and made by Mrs. Clare Jessiman, whose daughter was in Year 6 last year. Sister Marion, the first Headteacher, cut the cake to affectionate applause."

Miss O'Neill added: "This is the first of several days of celebration to be held during the ensuing months. We look forward to welcoming former pupils later in the year."

Pictures: top. presenting symbols of the school: bottom, Sister Marion cuts the cake.





Welcome, Fr Wayne

On 31st October parishioners of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Great Missenden and St Anne's, Wendover, gathered in St Anne's church for Fr Wayne Coughlin's first Mass as their new Parish Priest.

In the Collect of the Mass Fr Wayne prayed 'that your faithful may be so united to their shepherd and gathered together in the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and in the Eucharist, as to worthily embody the universality of your

people and become a sign and instrument in the world of the presence of Christ'. To this prayer all present responded with a heartfelt 'Amen' and joined together with Fr Wayne in praying for the future life and mission of the parish.

After the proclamation of the Gospel, Fr Wayne's Letter of Appointment was read out, and he made his Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity as the new parish priest of the parish of Immaculate Heart of Mary and St Anne's.

Jane Larkham, representing the community at St Anne's, and Liz Clark, representing the community at IHM, signed the official documents with Fr Wayne. The conclusion of formalities was greeted by enthusiastic applause as the parish welcomed Fr Wayne before Mass continued. After Mass parishioners from both communities enjoyed light refreshments and the chance to greet Fr Wayne and one another in Wendover Christian Centre.

Listen and Learn

A welcome visitor to the diocese on Sept. 28th was Fr. Robert Byrne, the Church's national ecumenical officer. He was at St. Augustine's in Milton Keynes, talking to parish representatives about Ecumenism, national and local, at a meeting organised by the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission.

He said that the aim of the ecumenical process is to reach full and visible unity through a process of prayer and listening. In England the scene is changing radically with the growth of Pentecostal churches. When the organisation 'Churches together in England' began in 1990, it had 16 members, currently it has nearly 50. Besides the established ongoing conversations with Anglican, Methodists and the United Reformed Church, new dialogues are beginning with the Baptists, Orthodox, and Pentecostal churches.

Fr Robert stressed that ecumenism is not "an appendix which is added to the Church's traditional activity, but is an organic part of her life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she does," as Bl. Pope John Paul II said in his Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*.

He asked people to practise spiritual ecumenism: coming together with other Christians to share prayer. It is a way of exchanging gifts, without threatening anyone. It allows the Holy Spirit to guide our path to unity. We should be prepared to listen to each other, appreciate different positions, and learn from each other.

Medals for Madge and Kate

Two wonderful ladies of St Ethelbert's community were presented with the Papal Medal Benemerenti at a special Mass in the Church in Slough earlier this year.

The Mass was attended by many parishioners, friends and family who wanted to join the celebration and thank God and the ladies for their many years of service.

Parish Priest, Fr. Raymond Abuga MSP, welcomed Bishop Peter Doyle who presented Mrs. Margaret (Madge) Meehan and Mrs. Catherine (Kate) Doody with the medals for many years of devoted service. Fr. Paddy Feeney, assistant priest sent his prayers as he was travelling.

Madge Meehan, a diminutive but wiry 87, has been a member of the parish since 1957. Originally from Kill in County Waterford, Ireland,

she was married to her late husband Tom at St. Ethelbert's in 1958. She always helped her husband in working in the Church. She started off with cleaning, a task she carried out for 15 years. Then in 1975 she began helping to wash the linen, which led to taking on the role of Sacristan, a role she has carried out diligently for 12 years, right up to this year.

Madge also became a Eucharistic Minister in 1994 and was a member of the choir. She caught the 7:30am bus each morning to arrive for 7:45 am in all weathers. Of her years of service she says that it was an honour to be asked and that she has enjoyed it. She says it has kept her going strong and kept her memory good. She really is a 'little pillar of the Church'!

Kate Doody, a gentle smiling 87, has also been

a long-time parishioner of the parish which she first came to when she was 20. Originally from Cappacurry, Ballinarobe, County Mayo, she was married to her late husband, Bill. She helped to count the collection money for many years and later helped Madge with tidying and re-stocking the votive candles and the work of Sacristan, a role she has performed diligently for the last 6 years, coming in early in all weathers. She recently retired from this role. About receiving the Papal Medal she expressed her surprise and joy at the honour.

The community wishes to assure both Madge and Kate of their heart-felt thanks, love and prayers.



Well Done Annie!

The Spirit of Corby is a series of awards given to outstanding people and organisations, chosen by Corby people, who represent the best of our vibrant community.

Mrs Annie Morgan, the Learning Mentor at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School in Corby, was nominated for the Educational Spirit Award by one of the pupils and successfully won the award in September.

Mrs Morgan had worked with the pupil, as she does with many others, to help her overcome barriers to her learning. The pupil now enjoys coming to school every day.

We at St Patrick's would like to congratulate and thank Annie for all that she does for everyone within the school. Well done Annie!



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