



Northampton Diocesan News

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Children's Society expands its site

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MK Catenians fund theologian Sinead's trip to Palampur

The Milton Keynes Circle of the Catenian Association recently presented a cheque for £300 to local girl, Sinead Callaghan. Sinead and fourteen other students from Durham University are going to a village school in Palampur in north-

ern India for a period of five weeks this summer to teach English, carry out refurbishments and organise games.

The Catenian bursary fund helps Catholics aged 16-24 take part in Community projects at home and abroad which have a clear benefit for

others as well as the participant. The award is to cover some of the travel and living costs involved in the trip. Sinead is a recipient of that fund.

Sinead has been an active member of the Parish of St Thomas Aquinas and All Saints,

Bletchley, all her life, both as a parishioner and leader of groups such as Phoenix and Celebration. She also acts as a leader at youth Masses and retreats. Sinead is the youngest of five girls in the Callaghan family, all past pupils of St Thomas Aquinas

and St Pauls schools. She is now studying Theology at Durham University.

Sinead is a credit to her family, her schools and her Parish. We wish her well.

Photograph: Fr Christopher Perry, Bill Fleming
Photo credit: Mike Too-Chung.



Dancing Feet

Young dancers captivate High Wycombe's May Fayre. See the full story on page 7.



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Hallam

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed as the new Bishop of Hallam, the Right Reverend Ralph Heskett CSSR, until now the Bishop of Gibraltar.

Bishop Heskett thanked the people and priests of Gibraltar as he announced his leaving for Hallam. "My first visit to Gibraltar was in 1981. I think that it is fair to say that I immediately fell in love with Gibraltar and its people. Today, 33 years on, I am still in love with Gibraltar and its people! "So it is with great sadness that I announce that I must take my leave. I have been asked by Pope Francis to be the next Bishop of Hallam in the UK in succession to Bishop John Rawsthorne. "I came to Gibraltar to be bishop in a spirit of obedience to Pope Benedict and now, I must leave in a spirit of obedience to Pope Francis to take up the new mission he has



entrusted to me. To be asked to pastor and shepherd of two different diocesan families is a privilege I do not deserve and a responsibility I feel inadequate to undertake. This will be a great personal challenge for me as I leave Gibraltar and the priests and people I love. It is also an invitation to be generous in serving the diocese of Hallam. "The Right Reverend John Rawsthorne, Bishop of Hallam, said he was delighted at the appointment, having known Bishop Heskett as a parish priest in Liverpool. "He will fit in very well in Hallam. He has a lot of parish experience as he is a very fine pastor as well as being a good preacher. The people of this Diocese are very warm and welcoming. They will take him to their hearts in no time at all. My 17 years here have been marked by the welcome and close collaboration of all of the priests and the people of Hallam."

Born in Sunderland in March 1953, Bishop Heskett was ordained to the priesthood on 10 July 1976. From 1987 to 1990 he was Superior of the Redemptorist Community at Kinnoull, Perth, Scotland and director of Missions. He then served as a parish priest in Liverpool and Southwark, and was a member of the Mission Team.

Westminster



The Catholic Grandparents Association (CGA) was formally launched in England and Wales on the 9th May 2014. The event held at Westminster Cathedral Hall, was attended by around 100 representatives from all over England and Wales. Along with many people from both dioceses and parishes there was also a strong representation from Marriage Care, The Catholic Women's League, Grandparents Association and Familias, the National Association for Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Coordinators. Following the welcome from Bishop John Arnold (Westminster), Catherine Wiley, Founder of the CGA gave an encouraging speech which charted the birth and history of the association and how it has continued to develop globally over the past twelve years. The Association is now active in many countries including the Philippines, Australia and Malta and very soon it will launch in the United States. She said that she was 'overjoyed that the Association is now formally launched in England and Wales, in the country where it all began'. She paid tribute to Bishop Kieran Conry who initiated the CGA in his Diocese of Arundel and Brighton under the direction of Katherine Bergin, Diocesan Coordinator for Marriage and Family Life. Katherine is now the National CGA Coordinator for England and Wales. From this beginning followed a pilot in Arundel and Brighton which was led by Christine Evans and currently has set up six groups across the diocese. Cardinal Vincent Nichols, who had taken time out from his schedule to join the launch, said that what had particularly struck him were the two principle aims of the Association, to keep prayer at the heart of the family and to pass on the faith. Speaking of his own experience, he said that 'Grandparents are often the real point at which creativity is introduced. Sometimes things between parents and their children are not always that easy. You (grandparents) know because you've done it....the grandparents are like... an escape valve. You know, you can deal differently with the children.' In conclusion he added, 'So thank you very much for the Association, thank you very much for those two key objectives that you have set yourselves, they are intensely relevant to this moment in the history of the life of the Church. And I hope the Association now goes from strength to strength. Thank you all very much indeed.' The day concluded with Mass celebrated by Bishop Kieran Conry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Important note

If you are providing photos with your news story (as we hope you will), please remember that pictures taken using a telephone often don't reproduce well in print.



New icons for new saints

These new icons can be borrowed for use in your parish

Formerly called 'Low Sunday', Divine Mercy Sunday was fortuitously changed when Pope John Paul II canonised Saint Faustina on the Second Sunday of Easter in the Jubilee Year 2000. He then proclaimed to the world: 'From now on throughout the Church this Sunday will be called Divine Mercy Sunday'.

It was only fitting, therefore, that Pope Francis should choose this day for the canonisation of Popes John Paul II and John XXIII. What a grace-filled occasion to have two Popes canonised by our reigning Pope in the presence of the Pope Emeritus!

To mark this remarkable occasion Father Wayne Coughlin, in Great Missenden, commissioned an icon of each Pope. These were written by local iconographers Constantina Woods, for St John Paul II, and Bella Cherry, for St John XXIII. The icon of Pope St John Paul II is to find a permanent home in the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary where he will be a special focus of devotion for the Polish community.

St Anne's Church in Wendover is an ecumenical building where the icon of Pope St John XXIII will become its eventual home. This is particularly appropriate for John XXIII who, in calling the Second Vatican Council, ushered in a renewed ecumenical dimension to the Catholic Church.



Bella Cherry and Constantina Woods with by Father Wayne and Father Roman Werner SChr

The icons of now St John XXIII and St John Paul II were appropriately blessed on Divine Mercy Sunday, 27th April, by Father Wayne and Father Roman Werner SChr, our Polish Priest. It was a wonderfully and powerfully emotive sight to see these two icons being processed into Church by the iconographers. What is

more, they were invited to stand with the icon they had created for its blessing!

We were also fortunate in being able to celebrate the third of the Sunday Masses with our Polish brothers and sisters and so celebrating this momentous day in the life of our Church.

Furthermore, in this wonderful spirit

of different parishes coming together to share their God-given gifts, for the afternoon Devotions we were joined by people from Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Luton and from across the Diocese!

Father Wayne will be very happy for other parishes to borrow the icons.

Living the rosary



Foundation stage children from St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School in Northampton made a live rosary. These young children learned about the beauty of the mysteries of the rosary. Then the children went onto the play-

ground and each child curled themselves into a rosary bead, with one child becoming a crucifix.

The result was electrifyingly inspiring. The children became a rosary showing the love and unity of our Catholic Faith.

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Winslow goes Romanian

The SVP Conference and CAFOD from St. Alban's Winslow joined together to organise a fundraising evening with a Romanian theme on the 17th May and what an evening it was!

Well attended by parishioners from our small community, everyone was interested and eager to find out more about the country and the SVP Conference project in aid of a Romanian Nursery. The sponsored nursery is located in the village of Gheraesti - Neamt, in the Northeast of Romania

There was Romanian food, music and dancing, traditional costumes and a presentation on Romania. The proceeds from a

raffle, which raised a further £80, are to be donated to CAFOD.

The aim of the Romanian project is ongoing to provide some much needed educational materials and toys. The first consignment has already been sent and both children and teachers in Romania were delighted.

The evening raised in excess of £360 through ticket sales and donations. We say a massive thank you to everyone who attended and donated food.

And there will be a massive thank you from the children, teachers and parents in Gheraesti – Neamt, Romania.



Bedford hosts pro-life groups

On the Feast of St Augustine of Canterbury, May 27th, the Mass for ProLife Organisations was held in Bedford at the Church of The Holy Child and St Joseph, the home of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Bishop John Sherrington, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, was the principal celebrant, assisted by local priests and Fr Jacob Hausman (Chaplain to the Helpers of God's Precious Infants). The reading, from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians, was by Mr Ed Smith (Chairman of the Alliance of ProLife Students) and the bidding prayers were led by Mr John Smeaton (CEO SPUC)

and Mr Christopher Langley (Good Counsel). In his homily, Bishop John focussed on the protection of human life from conception to natural death, expressing his concern on the abortion crisis (8 million killed since the passing of the abortion act) and the assisted suicide bill; the sick and elderly needed care, love and respect not killing.

In spite of the appalling weather, people had travelled long distances to join us from Norfolk, London, Leeds, Luton and Northampton. In the large congregation were Dr Robert Hardie (President, Catholic Medical Association)



Ed Smith (Chairman, Alliance of ProLife Students), Alithea Williams (Vice Chairman, Alliance of ProLife Students), Christopher Langley (ex-Luton GC), Bishop John Sherrington (Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster), John Curtin (Northampton CC SVP President), John Smeaton (SPUC CEO) Margaret Langley (ex Luton GC)

Back to the catechism

Young members of St Brendan's Parish, Corby were each recently presented with a copy of YOUCAT, the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The books were made available to parishes across the Diocese by Northampton Youth Ministry Office (NYMO); and they were enthusiastically received by the young parishioners.

The teenagers are all actively involved

in the life of the Parish as readers, members of the Folk Group and as altar servers.

The presentation was made on 16th February 2014, the second anniversary of the death of Sister Kieran Byrne, OSC, who for many years had been involved in Catholic education and in supporting the young people of the Parish.





St Francis' Children's Society held the official opening of their brand new Family Centre on May 8.

The weather wasn't entirely kind, but nonetheless, around 70 people turned out to mark the occasion. Guests included adoptive families, representatives of local authorities and other adoption services, St. Francis' fundraisers and donors, and Milton Keynes Mayor, Cllr Brian White. The Centre was officially opened by 5 children who themselves were adopted through the Society. Ranging from 5 to 18 years old, Lois, Sheneka, John, Sean and Demi all joined together to "cut the ribbon". A piece of artwork featuring all of their handprints will shortly be displayed in the entrance hall of the Centre to commemorate this grand opening.

Once everyone had moved indoors, Kalista and Alex, also adopted through the Society, cut a specially made cake. A buffet was provided by MacIntyre Catering, and guests were able to enjoy a glass of something fizzy as they took a look around the new facilities!

Entertainment for the evening was provided by MK magician Chris Richards, who wandered amongst the guests and wowed them all with his close-up magic tricks.

St. Francis' Children's Society CEO, Alison Miller, said: "We are delighted to finally open the doors of our Family Centre. After almost a year of building and fundraising, we now have a fantastic space which will greatly enhance our already extensive adoption support servic-

es. Significant numbers of children in care come from complex backgrounds and have had traumatic experiences; some of these children need specialised support in order to settle and thrive throughout their developing life. Our aim has always been to support children and their adopters on their adoption journey, and the Centre will be invaluable to our continued success in this area."

Cllr Brian White, Mayor of Milton Keynes, said: "I was present at the opening of the Society's offices in Woolstone nearly 14 years ago, and was part of the planning committee which approved this new Family Centre. It is wonderful to be back, and to see how the Society is growing and expanding its support services for adoptive families across the region."

The Centre is a new, self-contained annexe positioned to the rear of the Society's site, and the space is light, inviting and encouraging. Although the Centre is now operational, the Society are still fundraising to fully furnish it. Pledge forms were available on the night so that guests could offer to buy individual items for the Centre, and the Society were delighted with the response. The Society will be purchasing some specialist equipment for use in therapy sessions, but they also need to purchase the basics, from sofas to cutlery, and coffee tables to lamps.

Anyone interested in making a donation to help furnish the Family Centre should contact the Society's fundraiser, Dominik Byrne - dominikb@sfcs.org.uk.



New SFCS Family Centre opens

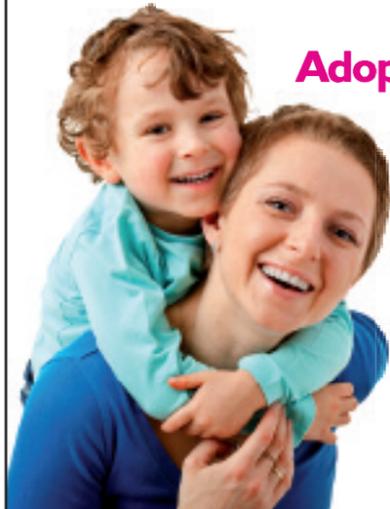


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Priests' study week in Roman villa

Forty priests of the diocese accompanied Bishop Peter to Italy for a study week from May 12-16. They stayed in the Villa Palazzola, which overlooks Lake Albano, twenty miles south of Rome. It boasts a sun-trap of a terrace, and a fine outdoor swimming pool, although only two hardy souls were seen in it.

The villa began life as a rich Roman Consul's summer hide-away. In turn it became a Cistercian monastery, a Franciscan friary and a hospital for recovering alcoholics. All the patients died in the Spanish flu which swept Europe after World War 1. Seminary rector Mgr (later

Cardinal) Hinsley bought the villa as a summer home for the student priests from the Venerable English College in Rome. It is now used as a student facility and as an hotel.

'The Joy of the Gospel', the Apostolic Exhortation from Pope Francis, was the theme of the week. Two speakers offered their reflections. First was Mgr Rod Strange, rector of the Beda College in Rome, and a regular columnist in The Times newspaper. He was followed by Mgr Pat Kilgarriff, former rector of the English College, and now parish priest in



Pictures: Andrew Behrens, Paul Hardy, Seamus Keenan. Above: Mgr Rod Strange talks to the group. Top left, leisure on the terrace. Braver souls at the pool. Below: Dining and wining.

Malvern. The priests had a free day on Wednesday. Some attended the papal audience. Others explored Rome and had a tour of the Venerable English College. The week ended with a concelebrated Mass in the

parish church at Castelgandolfo, directly across the lake from Palazzola. And then it was back home to a parish weekend, with numerous weddings and First Communions.



Bedford marks two more deacons in training

Bishop Peter visited Holy Cross Church in Bedford earlier this year to formally accept two candidates for the Diaconate.

Tony Quinn and Crispin Walking-Lee began the three year training course for

the diaconate almost a year ago.

They are both married with families. Their wives give them great support and attend the monthly meetings at Wonersh with their husbands.



Immaculate Heart of Mary Church (Great Missenden) and St Anne's Church (Wendover)

Further information available at www.ihmissenden.org.uk (01494) 862049

Friday, 25th July
Vigil of the Parish Solemnity of St Anne
Mass in St Anne's Church, Wendover (7:00pm)
Celebratory Meal
Guest Preacher: Fr Oliver Holt OSB
ALL WELCOME!

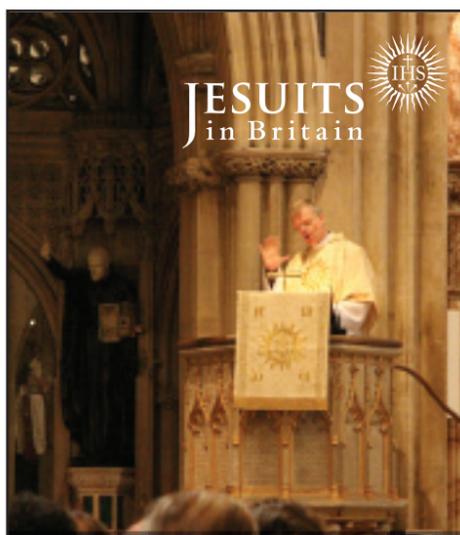
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2014 theme - the Joy of Conversion

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Team St Teresa beats the bounds at Blenheim Palace

On Sat May 10 'Team St. Teresa' from St. Teresa's parish in Beaconsfield entered the Pink Ribbon Breast Cancer Care walk. Held annually in the beautiful grounds of Blenheim Palace, this 10 kilometer walk celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. The aim of the charity and its events is to provide help and support for individuals and their families who are affected by this devastating illness.

Despite dire weather warnings our team, comprising of Marina Macleod, Benedicte Nolan, Sian Lloyd White, Annie Dunster, Suzanna Goode, Debbie Keegan, Nina Costley, Juliette French, Joan Fisher, Gerard and Benedicte Nolan, and Jonathan, Sian, Seamus and Niamh Lloyd White set out and

completed the challenge. It really was a wonderful day, and due to the generosity of parishioners, friends and family we raised over £3,500. What's more the weather warnings were wrong and the weather was kind! Many thanks again to all our sponsors and to those who took part.

Kevin Broderick

Students dig deeper



Year 8 at St. Paul's school, Milton Keynes, used their days of recollection this year to reflect on the CAFOD theme 'Dig deep'. They thought about what this means because generally "Dig deep" seems like quite a vast subject. So they did some teamwork activities, that proved to them that through perseverance, anything and everything is possible. They watched a video which showed some statistics of world poverty today and it opened their eyes to the things people in this world

are suffering and going through. They also had a world auction which showed how unfair world trade is to the LEDC's. At the end of it all they made some prayers for those who are suffering with droughts, floods and all the terrible natural disasters. They wrote these in vegetables to symbolise how ripe their fruits will be and all the things they can make. 'We should all try and dig deep in ourselves' say Year 8, 'and think of what others round the world are going through'.



World Cup - Fair play or foul?

With the World Cup finally here, CAFOD is encouraging people to remember the needs of those living in severe poverty and hardship in São Paulo and other cities where the tournament is taking place. The World Cup is costing Brazil **£8.8 billion** – the most expensive World Cup in history! 90% of that money is coming from Brazilian taxpayers.

In Brazil, £8 billion would pay for more than two million new homes in a country where one fifth of the population, or 40 million people, are living in poverty. The price of public transport, food and rent is rising sharply, little is being done to improve housing, schools and hospitals. At the same time, billions of pounds are being spent on hosting the World Cup. For many people, the World Cup has meant losing their homes.

Everyone wants the World Cup in Brazil to be a huge success, but that shouldn't be at the expense of the poorest and most vulnerable people.

We particularly want to show solidarity with the thousands of families who have faced eviction from their homes to make way for construction projects relating to the World Cup, with no respect for their rights and no proper arrangements made for rehousing them.

Supporters can also make donations to support our work in Brazil, including our partners working to help the poorest communities in São Paulo, via www.cafod.org.uk/brazil.

Does this mean CAFOD is against the World Cup taking place in Brazil? We are simply asking those authorities to put the needs of their poorest citizens first, ensure progress in all the areas outlined in our letter, and protect citizenship and human rights.

Does this mean CAFOD endorses the 'riots' in Brazil? CAFOD always opposes violence in any form.

But the World Cup will be good for all the Brazilian people because of all the tourism, etc.? It definitely will be good for Brazil, and we saw that ourselves with the boost that London got from the Olympics in 2012. But the poorest people are losing their homes or their livelihoods to enable the World Cup to happen, and that's wrong.

Is it any of our business? And what's the World Cup got to do with CAFOD? Clearly when governments in countries where we are working in are taking action which works against the objectives of CAFOD and its partners to help the poorest and most vulnerable people, we have a duty to speak up. When the spotlight is on a country, we should use the opportunity to highlight these problems and hopefully get something done about them.

What will happen when an action is taken on the website? Each time an action is taken via the CAFOD website a Portuguese translation of the email will be sent to the Brazilian authorities.



Picture: A football team playing at CAFOD partner, GCASC's project 'Growing towards peace' in Northeast Brazil. Before each game the young people have 'conversation circles' to debate issues such as drugs, respect, unity and solidarity/ This helps them overcome problems of violence and drugs prevalent in their area.

Photo: Aity.

New head leads the music

St. John Rigby Catholic Primary School in Bedford, celebrated the Mass of Induction for new Head Teacher, Mr. Adam Palmer. The Mass was concelebrated by Mgr Kevin McGinnell and a number of priests serving the parishes associated with the school.

Adam was joined by his wife Catherine and his three children. Governors, staff, school families and colleagues from his previous schools were also present to mark this joyful occasion. The school song group led the music with a little help from Adam on guitar leading the Mass settings.

Adam was presented with the school mission statement, a copy of the Word of God and the Diocesan candle. In a brief speech Adam thanked his colleagues, past and present for their support and guidance over the years. He went on to talk about the great privilege as well as the great responsibility he has undertaken by reflecting on the words of the Risen Christ to the disciples in the Upper Room.

"Happy are those who cannot see, yet believe". There are fewer places where the presence of Christ is more evident than in our schools. We must never let the pressures and politics of education stand in the way of our joy in witnessing that Jesus is present amongst us."

Picture: The morning after the mass Mr. Palmer shows the children the special gifts that were presented to him.



Generous Lent

At St Gregory's School in Bedford, this season of Lent, as always, has been an opportunity to support those less fortunate than ourselves.

The Thursday Soup Kitchen proved extremely popular with both staff and pupils. Fund raising for the AVOCA Charity culminated on *Oscar Romero Day* where the full range of the pupils' entrepreneurial skills was in evidence. Their creativity, leadership qualities and powers of persuasion were inspiring. The funds raised so far are in excess of £1,900, a truly remarkable achievement!

Families have also been generous in donating football boots which were shipped out to Soyapango in Central America.

Following on from our AVOCA fundraising we were visited by Adam Bates one of the football coaches who travelled to El Salvador. The coaches ran football camps in three different areas for pupils ranging from 5 to 15 years. The kit and boots that we had provided were divided between the different communities that they visited. Adam spoke movingly about the warm reception that they were given and he presented the school with a framed shirt which had been signed by a number of the children from San José.



Obituaries

Mrs Cathie Clifford



Catherine Sarah Duffy was born in Coatbridge, Lanarkshire on 4th May 1948, the fourth daughter of Pat (a railway guard) and Sarah Duffy. In July 1971 she married Ray in St Monica's church in Coatbridge. She then moved to London with her new husband and in 1973, to Middlesbrough. There she gave birth to three sons, the first of whom died before Catherine saw him. In 1980, the family moved to Northampton where she gave birth to her fourth son in the late 80s. She eventually became the Secretary to the General Practitioner's Liaison Group in Northampton General Hospital.

In 1995, she became secretary to the Bishop of Northampton, a job which she loved. Cath retired in May 2008 but was diagnosed with Breast Cancer in May 2010. Archbishop Kevin McDonald, who preached at her funeral, paid his own tribute. 'Cathie was a woman of deep faith in God and her response to God's love found expression in her love and fidelity to Ray and to her sons Adam, Richard and James as well as her grand-daughter Grace. She was also highly competent in the world of work and the last thirteen years of her life were spent as secretary to the Bishop of Northampton- or rather to three bishops of Northampton! During my time as Bishop of Northampton she was a cheerful, positive and very competent presence in Bishops House. She will be deeply missed by her family and by many friends and fellow parishioners.'

Fr Mark Elvins

Fr. Mark Elvins died in Oxford on May 1. He was resident priest at Winslow between November 2011 and April 2013. The son of an Anglican vicar, he joined the military and then, in civilian life, as a gallery manager and as Assistant Editor of *Debrett's Peerage*.

On Christmas Eve 1968, as an Anglican Deacon, he was received into the Catholic Church. He was ordained a priest at Arundel on Easter Sunday 1973 and was Assistant Curate at Arundel Cathedral. From 1980 until 1990 he served at St Mary Magdalene's parish church in Brighton, holding additionally the post of Chaplain to the Master of the Worshipful Company of Scriveners of the City of London. From 1990 until 1993 he was parish priest of Henfield. In 1999, he was professed in the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin and was a Provincial Definitor from 2006 to 2011.

During the academic year 2005-2007, he was the Roman Catholic Chaplain to the University of Central



Lancashire. In 2007, Elvins was appointed Warden of Greyfriars, Oxford and upon the dissolution of the permanent private hall was appointed Guardian of the friary (Greyfriars) from 2008 to 2011.

Throughout his life he was particularly concerned for the homeless and was the founder of Simon House in Oxford (1967), St Thomas Fund for the Homeless in Brighton (1980), and Becket Homes in Canterbury (1997), as well as being a co-founder of the Thomas More Legal Centre. In 2011, he founded Regina Palestinae (Our Lady of Palestine), a charity for the support of poor families in Palestine.

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Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Blessed Virgin Mary to Saint Dominic, "One Day through the Rosary and Scapular I will save the World."



"Whoever dies clothed in this (scapular) shall not suffer eternal fire."
This is Mary's Promise made July 16, 1251 to Saint Simon Stock.

Prayer of St. Simon Stock
O beautiful Flower of Carmel, most fruitful vine, Splendour of Heaven, Holy and singular, who brought forth the Son of God, still ever remaining a Pure Virgin, assist me in this necessity. O Star of the Sea, help and protect me! Show me that Thou are my Mother.

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Yes, please remember my intention's in prayer.

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Slough gives home from home



In response to a significant increase in rough sleepers in Slough, two charities joined together in a new approach to provide temporary emergency night shelter.

The London and Slough Run (LASR) and Slough Homeless Our Concern (SHOC) reached out to local churches and communities inviting them to open their doors and take in homeless people who would otherwise be sleeping in doorways and graveyards.

The response was hugely positive. Nine churches signed up for the programme each providing a night of shelter, food and friendship every week. Their local congregations prepared hot food and drinks and then sat to chat with their guests before lights out. The following morning, the guests were driven back to SHOC where they got further support throughout the day.

The initiative, which started in January, finished at the end of March and the rough sleepers returned to the streets. The two local charities were proud to have succeeded in keeping up to 25 people indoors on the coldest nights of the year.

Currently, in Slough there are 40 rough sleepers – men, women and even teenagers. The numbers reached this record high in a relatively short space of time following policy changes which allow other boroughs to send homeless people to Slough.

Funding this venture is a challenge and both The London and Slough Run and SHOC need help to pay for the winter shelters and to plan for next year when they fully expect to have to repeat the programme. Donations can be made through <http://www.justgiving.com/LondonandSloughRun>.

Ray Waite Chairman of SHOC said "This new community approach has been a great success and already we are planning for next year. We are hugely dependent on the community and hope that we can run the programme for an extra month next winter. We are looking for local businesses to work with us so that we can provide shelter for more people and help them to get off the streets permanently."

John Power, Chairman, The London and Slough Run, said: "We can be grateful that for 63 nights, up to 25 people did not have to endure the bitter cold, the rain and winds. We know that some of our guests were able to help themselves get off the streets permanently. Simply by keeping off the streets at night enabled them to find longer-term solutions."

"I felt strangely energised, humble and proud to be one of the team as guests and volunteers worked together" said Mark Johnson, Burnham & Slough Deanery Lay Chair and Volunteer.

The London and Slough Run is a soup run which has been going for 30 years providing hot food and drinks to homeless people each week and has signed up to a housing justice winter night shelter franchise (a leading authority) who have accredited the scheme. SHOC has been helping homeless people in Slough since 1997, providing much needed support providing training, help with housing and processing through the local council systems.

For more information visit: www.thelondonandsloughrun.com for the London and Slough Run and www.slough-homeless.org for SHOC.

Pastoral Letter

Bishop Peter began his Pastoral Letter for the feast of the Ascension with a word of gratitude.

'I want to thank you all for your witness to the faith, and for all that you contribute to the family of the Church by your presence and your prayer here at Mass. I also want to encourage you on the journey to heaven'.

The Bishop then invited us to be men and women of hope, even when life is difficult. 'The faith that we express today, that Jesus is risen from the dead and that he now sits at the right hand of the Father, gives us hope both now and for the future. Whatever your situation, and for some of us life is very tough, God is calling us to be people of hope. It is a hope based on the forgiveness of our sins and on God's infinite love for each one of us.

What stops me being a person of hope is relying on my own resources. When I do that, so often I fail. Of course, I have to do my best, but all the time my trust must be in God and not in myself. At times, what God asks of us can seem too much - being faithful to him as a single person, or in my marriage, or after the loss of a spouse.

The big challenge to us is what Christ asks of the disciples and of us before his Ascension - "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you."

Looking round at most Masses, we can see how that command has been fulfilled as we gather from many nations and languages but so many of our family and friends are missing except, perhaps, at Christmas; and so many of our neighbours have no knowledge of Jesus and our faith. But the Gospel ends with Jesus' promise "to be with us until the

end of time."

Jesus leaves us with the responsibility of continuing his saving work of love but also with the grace of his presence in the Spirit. That gives us confidence and hope that must shine out as we leave Mass today. If it does not because of pride or hurt or selfishness, pray that the Spirit may come down upon you to heal you.

In these weeks I am privileged to see the work of the Spirit in the parishes as I confirm both young people and adults around the Diocese. I have been moved by the way young people have received the Sacrament and by the way clergy and catechists have prepared them. The Holy Spirit is at work in you, making you witnesses to Jesus Christ in a world which is both searching for and seemingly rejecting faith in God'. The Bishop also reminded us that he is about to ordain four more Permanent Deacons, and to see a student priest ordained to the diaconate.

'Today is also World Communications Day. Not only do we have to think of our individual call to proclaim the Good News. Key to communicating "to the whole world" is the Church's work in the media. For Pope Francis that is about encountering people respectfully and engaging with their questions and their doubts. So, with my thanks and encouragement to you I ask for your prayers and support for the Church's work in the media.

"May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit, and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers." (Eph 1:18-19)

+ Peter

Bishop of Northampton

Greater than Tesco

This Lent the Holy Father asked for a 'Twenty Four Hours for the Lord' to be celebrated in at least one church in each diocese. This would be a time of adoration, of prayer and penance.

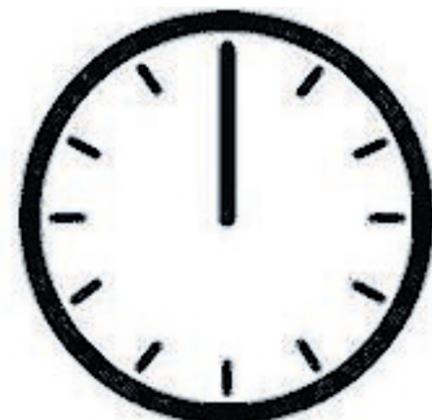
SS Philip and James, Bedford, helped by other priests in the town, was happy to respond to Pope Francis' wish. Beginning on the Friday evening, and ending with First Vespers for Laetare Sunday, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and the Confessional manned.

The response made the work and

sleeplessness well worth it. Even between two and six in the morning there were constantly people coming and going – though at times there were only two people in church. Confession at three o'clock in the morning may not be the usual thing but there were those who came.

And why not? Go to Tesco's at any hour of the day or night and you will see people on their errands – and there is something greater than Tesco's here.

Next
deadline
June 30



They carry a banana for every person in Europe

Greg Watts 23.4.14. Seafarers
 “There are few industries as defiantly opaque as this one. Even offshore bankers have not developed a system as intricately elusive as the flag of convenience, where ships can fly the flag of a state that has nothing to do with its owner, cargo, crew or route,” says Rose George, whose book *Deep Sea and Foreign Going* goes behind the scenes in the hidden world of shipping.

This month [July 13] is Sea Sunday, when the Church asks us to pray for seafarers and support the work of Apostleship of the Sea, whose chaplains and ship visitors provide practical and pastoral help in ports around Britain.

To experience the reality of the life of a seafarer, George joined the crew of Kendal, a container ship sailing between Felixstowe and Singapore. The journey took 39 days.

She soon discovered that much of what we buy in the high street – clothes, mobile phones, fruit, cars, fuel – has been transported by sea. The largest container ship, for example, can carry 15,000 boxes and hold 746 million bananas, one for every person in Europe.

Yet despite the changes modern technology has brought to shipping, communication is still a major problem. Only 12 per cent of a ship’s crew have internet access at sea and two thirds have no access at all. Mobile phones often don’t work and satellite phones are expensive. As a result, seafarers often lose contact

with their family back home for weeks or months. Their child could be born, a parent or relative die, or some crisis could occur, and they wouldn’t know.

This is one of the areas where the Catholic Church and other churches have supported seafarers through missions. Many ports have seafarers’ centres, like the one in Immingham in Lincolnshire.

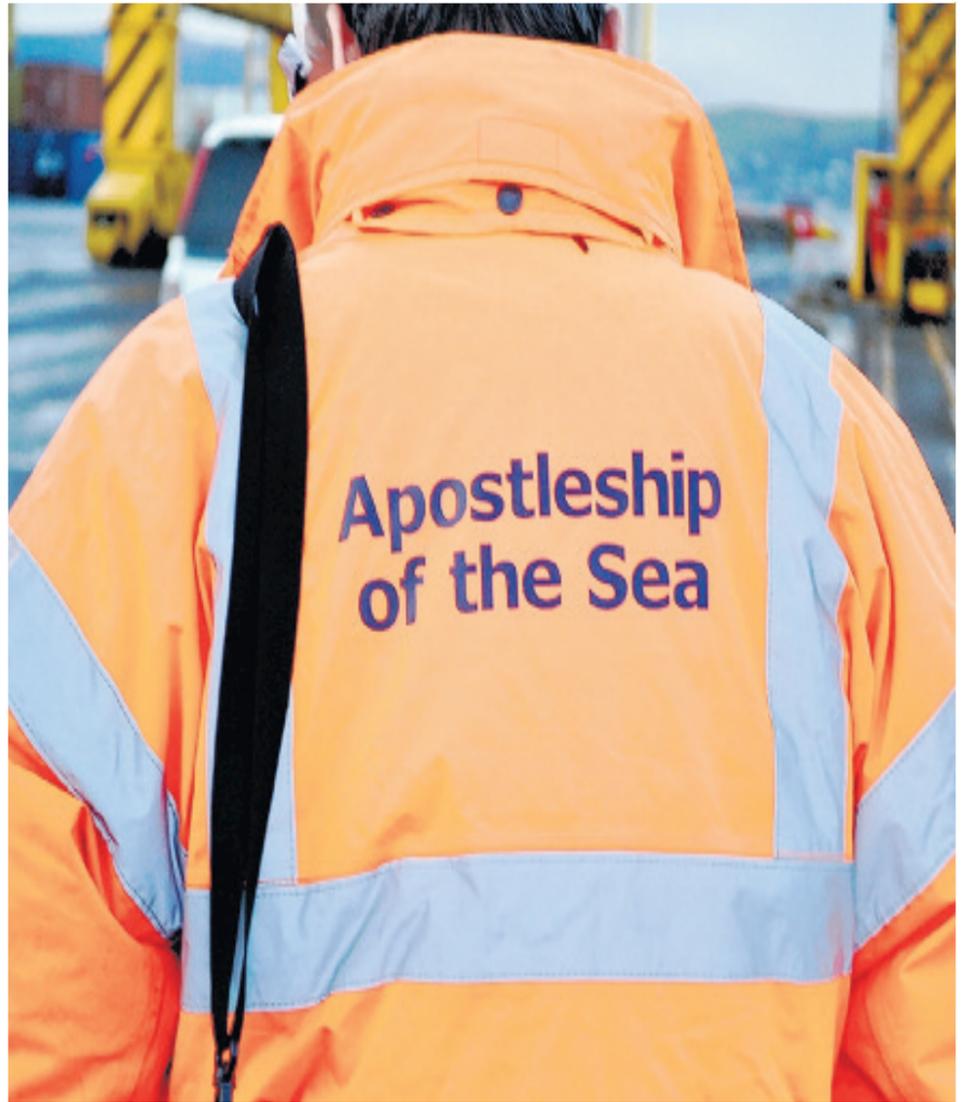
Father Colum Kelly, Apostleship of the Sea port chaplain, lives in a flat above the seafarers’ centre in the docks. He told George that one of the most common requests from seafarers is for batteries, because a battery can mean a lot when you have been without one for several weeks. “Never underestimate the value of the small gesture,” he said.

George said of Father Colum, “His is a ministry of small gestures with great impact. A SIM card, a battery, a gift for a man who has spent yet another Christmas at sea.

“Colum’s combination of dog collar and hard hat puts him in a unique and useful position. He can be minister, but also listener. Often seafarers tell him things they would not dare tell people they consider to be more official. He is a safe pair of ears.

“He stays because the newly ratified Maritime Labour Convention might fill those gaps between paper and practice and make decency required and indecency impossible. But if not, Colum will be there with his hard hat, confronting strangers who come to a strange land that they feed, clothe and equip.”

Colum’s combination of dog collar and hard hat puts him in a unique and useful position.



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New head for Slough School

St Joseph's Catholic High School in Slough has a new Headteacher.

Mr Stapleton's Induction Mass was held on Tuesday 26th November in the school hall.

Mgr Kevin McGinnell, the Episcopal Vicar for Education, was joined by Fr Kevin O'Driscoll, Chair of Governors and parish priest of Holy Family, and a number of local priests to concelebrate Mass that had been specially prepared by the school chaplain, Theresa Hargreaves.

During the service the School Mission Statement, a candle and a bible were presented to the Head to inspire him and guide him in the ways of Christ Jesus.

The event was attended by many pupils, former colleagues, representatives from local schools and the staff who offered him best wishes in his new role. Mr Stapleton's wife and two daughters, parents and sister were also present to share in this special occasion. Afterwards refreshments were served in the library.

Who is My Neighbour?

"The Luton Knights of St Columba, Luton Council, are proud to announce that they will sponsor 2 delegates from the Northampton Youth Ministry centred at Holy Ghost, Luton to the national Knights of St Columba Conference to be held at Hinsley Hall, Leeds from 15th - 18th July.

The theme of the Conference is "Who is My Neighbour". Keynote speakers will include Fr. Peter Cullen, Catholic Chaplain to University of Sheffield, on Understanding faith, agnostics and faith cultures; Fr. Paul Farrar, Youth Chaplain on Learning on the Lives and Actions of Saints to the present day, Ms Carol Hill, Director of Catholic Care on Serving the Poor and Marginalised in today's society, Sister Eileen Keating of Sisters of Presentation on Evangelising and Educating the Underprivileged in Missionary and Home Territories and Tony Britten, Past Supreme Knight on the Mission of the Order and Serving God by Serving Others.

The two delegates are Tom Backhouse, Head Boy at Cardinal Newman School and James MacPherson also connected with Cardinal Newman School"

Champions



The sporting success of St Gregory's School, Bedford, goes from strength to strength!

Year 8 Footballers are currently in the unique position of being both Girls' County Cup winners and Boys' County Cup winners. An incredible achievement for a year group of only 90 pupils!

The Year 8 boys retained the trophy they won last year by once again beating Barnfield West. The team delivered an outstanding performance of strength and skill resulting in another County Cup for the boys.

The Year 8 girls were entered into the County Cup for the first time ever this year and after an incredible run made the final against Stopsley High in Luton. The girls were very nervous as this was uncharted territory, but their nerves were soon calmed as they quickly went into a thrilling final. St Gregory's emerged the victors following a last minute goal, giving a final score of 3-2.

All of the girls were thrilled that in their first season of County football they are now County champions



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