



Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

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a new sense
of purpose**

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leads a music
workshop

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Farewell fossil fuels



'You're the last, but not the least', they said. Milton Keynes was the fifteenth and final venue for the nationwide unveiling of CAFOD's new climate change programme on November 1st.

CAFOD staff member Rob Elsworth reminded the audience that climate change isn't just about getting a warmer summer. Rob, a policy analyst on climate and energy, explained why CAFOD is involved. Climate change is a serious threat to the poorest communities. Twenty six of the thirty countries most at risk are under-developed. Four hundred and twenty three million people are at risk, living in communities which are not able to combat change. It is a great threat to all the development which has taken place in the last fifty years.

60% of all the pollution which creates climate change comes from the use of fossil fuels. So CAFOD's first aim is to sustain the transition from fossil fuels to sus-

tainable energy for all. Already involved in a scheme in Kenya, CAFOD wants to encourage individuals and parishes to put pressure on politicians.

Maria Elena Arana developed the theme. Already the signs are positive. Both Conservative and Labour leaders have backed the campaign. Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Parolin calls climate change a 'moral imperative'. Pope Francis talks of the need for development that respects creation. The key principle is to find ways of producing and consuming that cares for the earth and restores it.

CAFOD Diocesan representative Deborah Purfield encouraged everyone to write on a paper heart a personal initiative which they will take. She drew attention to the 'festive' Fairtrade stall and the information displays which had been set up. Bishop Peter closed the launch with a celebration of Mass for the feast of All Saints.

Bishop Peter's Christmas message

When I discovered that it was not Father Christmas who had drunk the glass of sherry and eaten the mince pie on the mantelpiece, something magical went out of my life – for an instant!

It was only for an instant because suddenly the mystery of the birth of the Son of God lit up like the lights on the Christmas tree.

God's love for each one of us is laid before us in the manger in the stable in Bethlehem. Poor and rich, simple and wise, the shepherds and the wise men came and knelt before the new born child, Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

Together let us kneel before the crib this Christmas. Bring family and friends and those of us who are not so sure. May the light and love and peace of Christ enter more deeply into our hearts.

With prayers and blessings for Christmas and the New Year,

+Peter
Bishop of Northampton

Note

All stories and pictures for publication in The Vine must be sent directly to the editor, Fr Paul Hardy:
vine01@btopenworld.com

Pictures must be sent as independent jpgs, and not embedded in the text

We wish all our readers
every blessing
for Christmas and the
New Year

23rd January 2015
**Talks on Divine Mercy
and The Knighthood of
St Michael the Archangel**
By Fr Piotr Prusakiewicz
CSMA



Individual blessing of the relic of St Faustina

Holy Mass 6.30pm

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and
St Anselm RC Church

1 Elwes Way, Great Billing, Northampton NN3 9EA



Contact: Fr Damien Walne
Phone: +44 (1) 604-406-410
Or Noreen Bavister
Phone +44 (0) 7795 318605
Email: holyangelsinfo@gmail.com



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 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@btopenworld.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 01440 730399. Difficulties with distribution should be referred to Mrs Busby.

Rome

As Pope Francis and leaders of other churches and religions signed a declaration pledging to work together to help end modern slavery in the world by 2020, he urged governments, businesses and all people of good will to join forces against this "crime against humanity." Tens of millions of people are "in chains" because of human trafficking and forced labor, and it is leading to their "dehumanization and humiliation," the pope said at the ceremony Dec. 2, the U.N. Day for the Abolition of Slavery. Every human person is born with the same dignity and freedom, and any form of discrimination that does not respect this truth "is a crime and very often an abhorrent crime," the pope said. Inspired by their religious beliefs and a desire "to take practical action," the pope and 11 leaders representing the Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox, Anglican, Buddhist and Hindu faiths made a united commitment to help eradicate slavery worldwide. The leaders signed the joint declaration at the headquarters of Pontifical Academy of Sciences in the Vatican Gardens. The signatories included: Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury; Rabbi David Rosen, international director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee; Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi al-Modarresi, an influential Shiite scholar; and representatives signing on behalf of Ahmad el-Tayeb, the grand imam of Al-Azhar University — a leading Sunni Muslim institution in Cairo — and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

Vatican City

The Year of Consecrated Life began on November 30 with a Mass celebrated by Cardinal João Braz de Aviz in St. Peter's Basilica.

The prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life took the place of Pope

Francis, who was in Istanbul on the final day of his apostolic journey to Turkey.

The Mass was preceded by a November 29 prayer vigil at the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and by the November 28 release of an apostolic letter by the Pontiff to all consecrated persons—that is, those who have made vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. The year will conclude on February 2, 2016.

In his apostolic letter, Pope Francis said that the year's aims are "to look to the past with gratitude," "to live the present with passion," and "to embrace the future with hope." He stated:

Guinea

Pope Francis has named Cardinal Robert Sarah, the president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, as the new prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

The Guinea-born cardinal succeeds Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera, who led the Congregation from 2008 until his August appointment as Archbishop of Valencia, Spain.

Pope Francis reportedly offered the new post to Cardinal Sarah during a private audience with the African prelate on November 13. Vatican sources report that the cardinal was reluctant to leave his current position as the head of the Holy See's charitable agency. It has been widely rumored, however, that Cor Unum will be folded into a new Vatican congregation, along with other offices including the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the Pontifical Council for Migrants.

Australia



Australia's ambassador to the Holy See, John McCarthy, arranged for Mass to be offered in the chapel of the Venerable English College, Rome, on Tuesday, 2 December for Phillip Hughes and his family.

The Vatican Cricket XI (Saint Peter's Cricket Club) attended along with representatives from the Pontifical Council for Culture and supporters of the Vatican team. The Mass was celebrated by Fr Anthony Currer, an English priest working at the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, who is captain of the Vatican XI, together with Australian Columban Fr Robert McCulloch, committee member, and Fr Eamonn O'Higgins, team manager.

Phillip was knocked unconscious by a bouncer, during a Sheffield Shield match at the Sydney Cricket Ground, on 25 November. He died on 27 November just three days before his 26th birthday.

In this time of preparation for Christmas, let us ask the Lord to be founded firmly on the rock that is Him, our hope which is Him. We are all sinners, we are weak, but if we place our hope in Him we can go forward. And this is the joy of a Christian: knowing that in Him there is hope, there is pardon, there is peace, there is joy. And not to place our hope in things that are today, and tomorrow will not be."


Pope Francis

Are you a past student of Endsleigh College? I am trying to contact students of the 1962-85 cohort with a view to organising a reunion to mark the 50th anniversary of our graduation next summer.

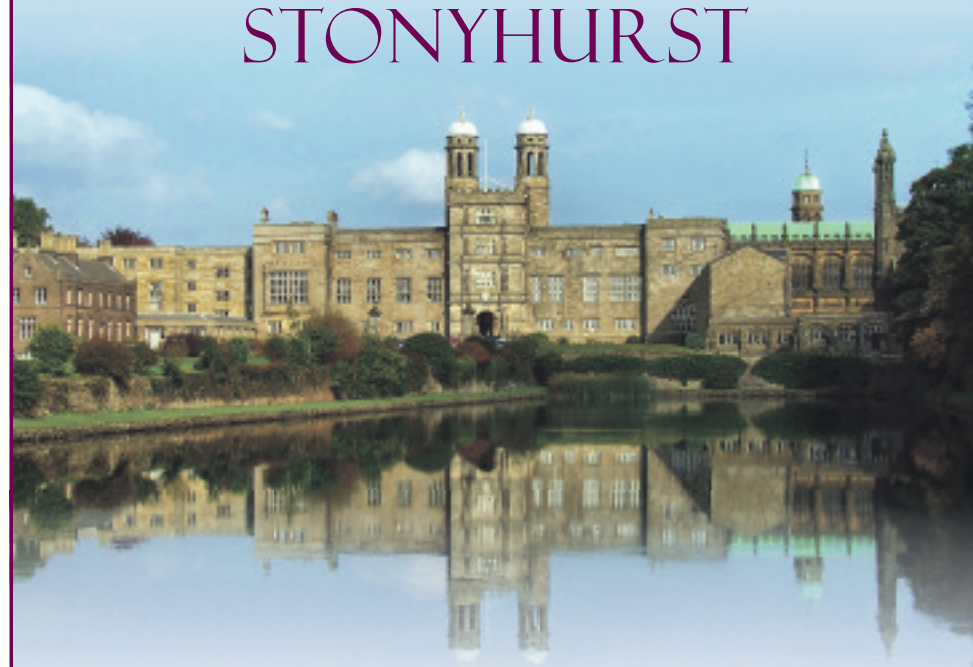
Please contact me at angela.brewer@ntlworld as soon as possible.

Angela Brewer (nee Crisp)

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Inspiration from noted hymn writer



Saturday 15th November saw a gathering of musicians at St. Gregory's school, Northampton, from the Diocese and beyond for a day led by the renowned American composer, Marty Haugen. Marty has been a regular visitor to these shores over the last 20 years attending conferences and leading workshops upon the invitation of Suffolk-based composer and publisher, Stephen Dean of Decani Music. Marty's music features prominently in our Catholic hymnbooks with songs such as 'All are welcome', 'Gather us in' and the 'Mass of Creation', revised on the introduction of the new translation.

Some of those attending were regulars at such events, for others it was their first experience of a day of this kind. Comments from participants as the day progressed showed the value of gathering alongside others to celebrate music ministry and to benefit from Marty's wealth of experience in this area. Marty took us through the liturgical year, making connections between the liturgy we celebrate and other aspects of life, such as seasons and other events. For each liturgical season there were musical examples so our sight-reading was put to the test!

The range of music covered was vast in

terms of style and substance. We sang songs from Marty's new collection, 'Sing for Peace', connecting with world events and a renewed emphasis from Pope Francis on working for justice and peace in our world. 'Look and see the face of Christ' is a contemporary and challenging setting of the Gospel reading from Matthew 25 which we were to hear at Mass the following week. We learned new responsorial psalm settings from 'The Lyric Psalter', a collection of melodic psalms for every Sunday and Solemnity of the 3 year Lectionary cycle written in conjunction with Tony Alonso. Those present commented on Marty's spiritual approach in his presentation and his quiet enthusiasm in communicating the breadth of ministry that a musician undertakes in their parish. Participants left inspired with a renewed sense of purpose as well as new repertoire to give voice to their communities.

We are very grateful to Marty for sharing his time and his expertise with us and to Stephen Dean for facilitating this with the Music Section of the Diocesan Liturgy Commission.

Jane Porter

Portrait photo: Antony Denman



170x 4 col

Need to find a
Church this
Christmas?

www.catholicdirectory.org

New rules for funerals



The Diocesan Liturgy Commission has issued a new set of guidelines for funerals which put aside a number of customs which have recently developed. 'There needs to be', says the Commission, 'a consistency by all clergy for a common approach which everyone knows is shared across the parishes of our diocese. Our funerals are to proclaim faith in the resurrection, praying for the soul of the dead, giving thanks for their life, and support for the bereaved'.

The guidelines begin by re-enforcing existing liturgical and pastoral norms. Families should not come to the priest with funeral plans already made. The decisions should be taken by the priest and family together. A number of common customs are banned. The Scripture readings must not be replaced by anything else. Christian symbols alone are allowed on the coffin. Other items, such as personal mementoes and Mass cards should be placed on a table nearby. Flowers must not be left on the coffin, and photos could be placed on the floor in front of the coffin. Flags and political symbols are banned from the church, and secular music, if demanded, must be played outside of the funeral liturgy. A short eulogy (no more than three minutes) is allowed at the start of the Liturgy of Commendation., but it must be seen be-

forehand by the priest. It would be better, say the guidelines, if the eulogy takes place at the wake, or at the reception of the body. The guidelines forbid one of the most common of funeral customs. After a cremation, ashes must always be buried. They are never to be scattered. The guidelines warn against burying ashes on church land. 'A parish needs to be very careful about the future consequences'. No explanation is offered.

Traditional Catholic customs are encouraged, such as an overnight stay, in the church, a month's mind Mass, the blessing of headstones, an annual blessing of graves and a parish Requiem Mass each November.

The guidelines emphasise flexibility in the context of continuity. 'We must take into account where those involved are on their faith journey. People will come with different levels of understanding and knowledge of Catholic faith and practice, some with none. The diverse nature of our communities means that there will be a wide range of cultural and personal backgrounds, which will shape people's attitudes and requests. Mindful of all these factors we must also be faithful to our own tradition of proclaiming God's mercy and forgiveness and the hope of resurrection to eternal life'.

Schools campaign for cancer research

In July 2014 St Margaret of Scotland Catholic Primary School along with Cardinal Newman, St Joseph's Infants and Juniors, Sacred Heart Primary and St Martin de Pores Primary organised various fundraising activities for Cancer Research in memory of our Headteacher Mrs

Catherine Cassidy who died in December 2013. Between us we raised an amazing £3,854.99. A very big thank you to all our partnership schools, their children and parents and also to our parents and children.

Moving prayerful powerful

On the 15th November St Columba's Church presented *Music for a While* an evening of sacred and secular music and readings celebrating 30 years of music in the parish.

The mood of the evening was set with the Church in soft theatrical lighting and candle light. The evening was divided into two halves. The first was a variety of sacred music including Vivaldi's *Domine Fili* and Priscilla Marie Winans-Love *Holy Spirit Come Fill This Place*. The second half was secular with classics like *Bridge over Troubled Water* and *Bring me Sunshine*. There were excellent solo performances, ensemble pieces and duets interspersed with moving and comical readings. The sound of the full choir was moving, prayerful and

powerful. The organists and pianists were accompanied by the youth music group. A group of the young people of the parish got a rousing ovation, from a full church, for their rendition of *Sky Fall* and the young violinist playing Massenet's *Meditation* gave a stunning performance.

The evening certainly enhanced the sense of community, worship and enjoyment of the parish. The musical talents of the choir members was uplifting and a true sign of their love of God in our community. As Saint Augustine says 'singing is for one who loves'

Donations were received towards the fund to replace the ageing organ which was second hand in 1960. Any help with this project would be welcome



Playing ecumenical games



Our diocesan Ecumenical Commission held a meeting at St. Augustine's, Milton Keynes on 11th Oct. when Mgr. Vladimir Felzmann spoke about the contribution sport made to Ecumenism, and the advantages it offered.

He had been responsible for the Catholic contribution to the welcome given to the athletes and visitors to the London Olympics in 2012, and had set up the John Paul II Foundation for Sport. This encourages young people, especially in the inner-city areas to enjoy sport. Mgr. Felzmann spoke of the fascination of sport as reflecting our status as creature: from dust to life with God: from Ash Wednesday to Easter resurrection. He

also said that there was a unity in our life of the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions, each can influence the other. Whether we win or lose at sport there is always a new beginning, we can hope for better luck next time! He concluded by saying that sport helps us come fully alive, and so give glory to God.

The Ecumenical Commission also heard from Mr. Tim Cutting who is working with the Churches to respond to the Rugby World Cup visitors in Milton Keynes, where some matches will be played, and some teams will be based in the town. Many of the teams coming have strong Christian traditions.

Queen and Bishop applaud St. Louis students

St Louis Catholic Primary School, Aylesbury has said goodbye to two pupils who have never had a day off sick or been late to school in SEVEN years. Jeremy Thurairajah and Cameron Machin have been on time and in school every single day since they started in the Reception Class. Their magnificent achievement was celebrated in the school's Leavers Assembly on the final day of term. Both boys received gifts of watches and a photographic record of their seven years at St Louis school. Head Teacher, Margaret Louisy praised the boys and their families for their hard work, kindness and enthusiasm and said they were 'exemplary pupils', well liked by both children and staff. She also surprised and delighted the whole school by reading out two letters of congratulations, one from Bishop Peter and the other from Her Majesty the Queen. Bishop Peter thanked everyone associated with the school for their hard work and commitment throughout the school year, particularly thanking and praising the two boys. He said that were an excellent example to us all, children and adults alike as even the Bishop has to be in the right place at the right time! The boys are pictured with their letters of congratulations.



New Head for Thornton

The Trustees of Thornton College have announced that Mrs Jo Storey has been appointed as the new headmistress from September 2015. Mrs Storey is currently the Deputy Principal at New Hall school, Chelmsford, one of the most successful Catholic boarding schools in the UK. Miss Agnes Williams, who has led the school from strength to strength over an eighteen year period, is set to retire at the end of the academic year.

After graduating from Loughborough University with a 2.1 in Mathematics and Education, Jo was employed as a risk analyst at London Underground. She moved into education as a lecturer and Senior Lecturer in mathematics and statistics in Cambridge, and an educational technologist at Cambridge University. After some time teaching abroad she returned to England to take up a Head of Department position at King Edward V11 school. She has been appointed as Vice Principal (Academic) to New Hall school, and was soon promoted to her present position as Deputy Principal.

Jo is married to husband, Darryl, and has one daughter, Sinead. A keen sports-woman, Jo has a golf handicap of 10, and enjoys tennis, netball and marathon running in her free time. She also enjoys walking her dogs, a Bichon Frise called Snowbell, and a Bernese mountain puppy called Buster, with her family.

Sister Helen Mary Haigh, Chair of Governors at Thornton, said, 'Jo has a clear understanding of the ethos at Thornton and will bring to her headship a wealth of experience and vision. She has committed to



continue to promote the school's strong tradition of excellence and innovation in teaching and learning in order to educate the whole student – including the student's intellectual, physical, social, moral and spiritual life'.

New headmistress Jo Storey said, 'I am delighted to have been appointed to lead this highly successful school, and to build on the exemplary leadership of Miss Williams. I believe the school to be one that embodies all that is great about education; a welcoming and inclusive community, where the pursuit of excellence is tailored to the talents of each pupil, and where pupils feel valued as individuals. I am sure I am going to feel very much at home when I join Thornton'.

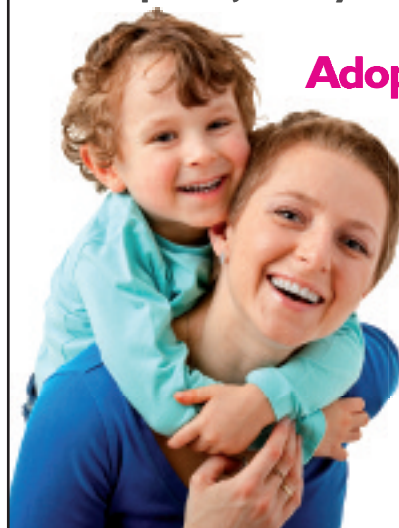


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Wednesday 4 February 2015

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Venue: St Francis' Children's Society, Collis House, 48 Newport Road, Woolstone, Milton Keynes MK15 0AA.

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LIFE house opens in town



A LIFE house has recently opened in Northampton providing accommodation for three residents. The Life Charity is an organisation which supports vulnerable mothers and children in a practical way. Below is a short summary of the activities of the organisation and how it provides for those in its care:

The LIFE housing projects offers support to young women with medium or low level needs who are either pregnant or have young children. The service targets those who have either a chaotic family background, or are disadvantaged and means they require more support than is available from the universal public services.

A LIFE house provides for pregnant women or mothers from the age of 16 onwards or for those of small children up to the age of 5. The charity provides much more than just a roof over the heads of the disadvantaged young mothers we help. The houses are small and set in residential neighbourhoods so they blend in well, enabling the mothers to become integrated in the community.

The Northampton project is based on a three bedroom house in which the mothers have their own bedrooms with en-suite facilities but share a lounge and kitchen facilities, they also share the housekeeping and are responsible for cooking their own meals. The project will run a series of one-on-one and group sessions to help develop basic life skills the mothers may never have had the opportunity to learn before.

When, earlier this year, it was known

there was to be a Life House in Northampton a group of volunteers in Northampton formed a Support Group with the aim of helping with various tasks required in making the house homely and comfortable, sharing domestic and other skills with the young mothers and fund raising. With the house now up and running the current focus of the Support Group is to raise funds for the ongoing needs of the house. If anyone is interested in joining the Northampton Support Group then please email Kathleen Fisher at Kathfish@hotmail.com. The LIFE House project receives no funding from the Local Authority, but has to rely on the generosity of local donors. Life received a grant of £3000 from the Bernard Sunley Foundation to repair and furnish the house but the future of the house is dependent on donations.

Would you and your congregation be willing to become supporters of the local LIFE House, either by a one-off gift, or better, by a regular donation. If you would like to know more about LIFE, do have a look at their web-site: www.lifecharity.org.uk/housing.

Anyone who can help please contact mary-lubrano@lifecharity.org.uk or call 07999 550452 or 019260312272.

In the meanwhile, may I ask for your prayers and the prayers of your congregation for the work of the Northampton LIFE house, its residents and support worker.

**Your next deadline:
January 1 2015**



Myanmar comes to Long Crendon

On the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul Sister Eugene of the Order of St Paul and the Myanmar Catholic UK Association organised a charity event to raise money for the Missionary Sisters of St Paul and the students of Rahkine State in Burma. As the weather was fine the festivities took place on the lawn behind the Church of Our Lady of Light in Long Crendon.

The event was well attended by local

parishioners and a large number of visitors from many parts of the country who enjoyed a sit down meal of traditional Burmese food while they were entertained by Burmese singers and dancers who were dressed in national costume. A number of parishioners organised a raffle and this alone raised more than £500 for the project.

Michael Pitt-Payne



Homage to Newman & Challoner



Living the gospel today

Holy Family, Langley was the venue of this year's Diocesan Justice and Peace Conference - ***Living the Gospel in today's World***. Over 40 people attended from around the Diocese including Bishop Peter, priests and deacons. There were stalls with information on CAFOD, Pax Christi and the Medaille Trust and a large selection of Fairtrade products for sale. The day opened with Mass celebrated in the church and then after welcoming refreshments, there was a wonderful liturgy prepared by Maureen Borbonne from the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission. The format this year was different to other years in that there were two invited speakers rather than one speaker and workshops.

David McLoughlin (Theologian, Newman College Birmingham) gave a talk on **Justice in the Gospels** which was very well received. He gave new insights into the scripture especially Deuteronomy and Leviticus and linked this with Jesus' interpretation of the law. David's talk was re-

ally very helpful, illuminating and inspiring. The discussion which followed linked Jesus' words and actions that David had referred to in his talk to our communities and way of life for all of us in the 21st Century.

The afternoon session was given by Canon James Cronin (National Director APF) who talked about the work of Missio and about the difficult situation for some Christians around the world. There was time for discussion over tea thereafter.

It was a great opportunity for the Justice and Peace Commission (via CAFOD) to give an update of the Fairtrade status in the Diocese and what steps were needed at both parish and diocesan levels to make the Northampton Diocese a Fairtrade Diocese. The day ended with a short prayer. If you would like to join the Commission or have any ideas for future events please contact Father Tony Brennan on 01582 502400.

Deborah Purfield



Two contrasting venues provided a fascinating experience for the parishioners of St. Peter's, Marlow, on their annual outing, organised by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. By happy coincidence, the outing fell on St. Vincent's Feast Day.

The first venue was the elegant (Grade I listed) Georgian Milton Manor near Abingdon, home to the Catholic Barrett family for a quarter of a millennium. It also has strong historical links to Bishop Richard Challoner, the C18th Vicar Apostolic of the London District, who revised the Douay Rheims translation of the Bible, wrote the "Ordo Administrandi Sacramenta", handbook of the English Church for two centuries, and the forerunner of the later Catechism.

Our Mass of welcome was celebrated in the remarkable Manor Chapel by Canon Anthony Griffiths, who felt privileged to be able to wear Bishop Challoner's own vestments during the Service.

After Mass, we were given a conducted tour of the Manor. It began with a closer look at the Chapel itself; it is in neo-Gothic style, has a beautiful mixture of Flemish and Mediaeval stained glass and a display of classical vestments.

Then, we viewed the rest of the house with its Georgian influences of style, some splendid Oriental decor and furnishings, and an elaborate display of exquisite china and porcelain. There were also many items redolent of the Barrett family's historic links to the crafts of lace-making and the production of gold and silver thread.

The final highlight was the neo-Gothic library. (Both this and the Chapel, in their neo-Gothic styles, had been strongly influenced by Horace Walpole's Gothic fantasy

at Strawberry Hill).

The library book cabinets especially revealed the Gothic influences and, whilst many of the books have now gone, there were still plenty to arouse great interest and in some places they had been replaced by further displays of the most beautiful chinaware.

Following lunch, we moved on to the International Centre of Newman Friends at Littlemore near Oxford. The buildings here of mellow Cotswold stone provided a striking contrast to the Georgian splendour of Milton. It is run by a community of nuns, The Spiritual Family The Work. We were delighted to see the great Cardinal's private dwelling room and his chapel, where we could quietly pray and meditate for a few precious moments, but again the final highlight was the Newman Library. Here, we were given a fascinating insight into Newman's life and work by Sr. Kristien and then were able to look through the Library itself, which contains not only a marvellous array of Newman's books but also a wonderful exhibition of Newman memorabilia, including pictures, photographs, sculptures, original letters and other objects.

Perhaps most poignantly, at one end of the room, marked the spot where Newman had had his conclusive meeting with Blessed Dominic Barberi, when he reached his momentous decision to convert to Catholicism.

All in all, the combination of two such contrasting venues made for a uniquely inspiring outing and we all went home with very many memorable impressions.

Malcolm Thomas.

EBOLA CRISIS APPEAL

Thousands of people have died from the deadly Ebola virus, in the largest outbreak ever known.

"Ebola leaves orphans in its wake who have now lost their source of food, education, love and care. It has taken our farmers away from the fields. It has shut down our roads and market places – destroying future economic prosperity." **Patrick Jamiru, Director of Caritas Kenema in Sierra Leone**

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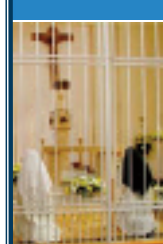
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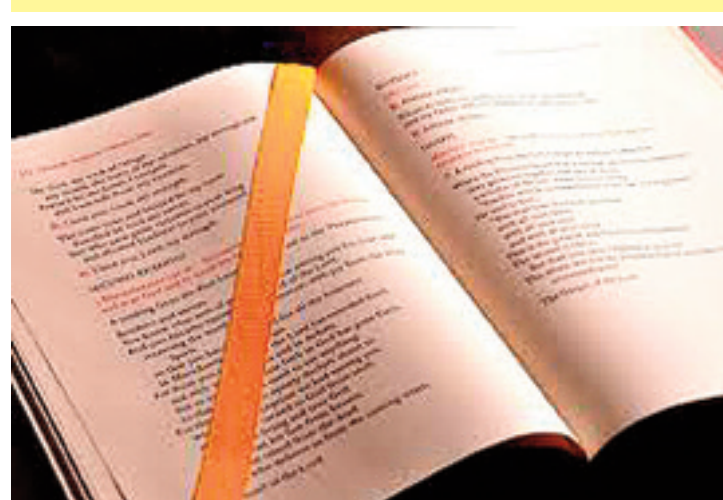
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Hear the Word



Come, let us adore him

The Christmas season is a time of giving. Many children look forward to receiving gifts from Santa Claus. Families and friends give gifts to each other, to celebrate the joy of the season. We find this note of giving in the scripture readings of the nativity. When St Luke tells us of the shepherds who came to adore the newborn Christ, he does not specifically mention any gifts, but many Christian artists have depicted them offering a lamb. When St Matthew tells us of the Magi who came to worship Christ after his birth, he reports their precious gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Gold is for a king, frankincense is for the worship of God, and myrrh is for the future anointing of his dead body.

According to the scriptures, the shepherds and the Magi were both alerted by a heavenly sign. The shepherds saw a choir of angels in the sky, while the Magi followed the guidance of a star. For the shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem, the journey was short, but the Magi had a long and arduous journey from distant lands.

In some ways, both the shepherds and the Magi could be regarded as outsiders. While shepherding was an honourable task (once practised by Moses and David), in reality shepherds were often despised. Because they were working all hours in remote areas, it was difficult for them to observe the religious feasts. Moreover, because their job was often dirty, it was hard for them to keep the Jewish laws of purity. Yet these outsiders were the ones who first received the news of the Saviour's birth. As Luke's Gospel progresses, we meet other outsiders who welcome the Good News joyfully, such as the despised tax collector Zaccheus.

In a different way, the Magi were outsiders. They were not even Jewish believers, but rather followed an eastern religion. They thought that human destiny was written in the stars. By following a special star they came to discover the newborn Jewish king, to whom they gave their precious gifts. St Matthew indicates that these outsiders showed honour to the newborn Christ, while plans to destroy him were being made by Herod the Great (named as King of the Jews by the Romans). As Matthew's Gospel progresses, other outsiders find faith in Christ, such as the centurion whose servant is healed by Jesus.

Despite being outsiders, the shepherds and the Magi both came to worship the infant Christ and present their homage to him. Their stories can help us to enter into the Christmas celebration. Whether our journey to Christ has been short or long, easy or difficult, we come to adore him. Whether we feel close to him or whether in some way we feel ourselves to be outsiders, we can make our way joyfully to him this Christmas.

In this season of gift-giving, we are mindful of the greatest gift of all, which is God's gift of his Son, born as our Saviour. As St John tells us, he is the Word made flesh, God's presence among us within human form.

Our joyful response is well summed up in the Christmas Preface: "In the mystery of the Word made flesh, a new light of your glory has shone upon the eyes of our mind – so that, as we recognise in him God made visible, we may be caught up through him in love of things invisible."

The Christmas carol invites us to join the shepherds in their journey to worship the newborn Saviour: "O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem." We can encourage each other as we come into the Lord's presence: "O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!" As we contemplate the nativity scene, we can be filled with thanks to God for not abandoning us, but instead giving us the most precious Gift of all.

Father Jeremy Corley



'Thank you'

St Peter's Marlow has a large number of parishioners who work tirelessly to keep the parish running smoothly. Sounds familiar?

Recently, St Peter's Pastoral Council organised a Cheese and Wine evening in our Pugin Rooms with the sole purpose of saying a huge 'thank you' to all our volunteers. We were joined by a couple of jazz musicians to get us in the swing. For the volunteers, it was an opportunity to meet each other in a relaxed setting, rather than over, as is more usual, a duster or spreadsheet. For others, it was a chance to meet new people and put faces to names.

It is easy to take our volun-

teers for granted – so often they are noticed only in their absence rather than in their presence – and yet without them very little would be possible. So it was a pleasure to hold an event just to say thank you to all who are involved in liturgical ministries, as parish reps, those who oversee the financial and infrastructure needs of the parish or those involved in the parish groups that support the community and those in need.

We are pleased to say that based on the unanimously positive feedback, even from those who were not able to attend; we have instigated it as an annual event.

Stitches for CAFOD

Altar servers at Our Lady Help of Christians and St. Lawrence, Olney display a beautiful quilt.

Parishioner, Vivienne Young, wanted to do something for CAFOD. Over three months she made the quilt and gener-

ously donated it to be raffled. More than £300 was raised to support the work of CAFOD in bringing hope and compassion to poor communities.

Photo left to right Emily Wheeler, Damien Dippolito, Anthony Loader. "



New safeguarding website page

As part of the ongoing Safeguarding training in the diocese the group of more than 40 volunteers attending on Saturday 1st November had a real treat. The new user friendly Safeguarding webpage was introduced by its creator Helen Moore from the Safeguarding Office, under the careful guidance of Diocesan Webmaster Brin Dunsire. The aim of the page is to increase accessibility to Safeguarding information for all members of the Catholic community across the Diocese.

Regular users of the Diocese of Northampton website: www.northamptondiocese.com will notice that Safeguarding now displays prominently on the right hand side of the home page. One click directs the user immediately to the contact information for the Diocesan Safeguarding and Welfare Office who are here to support with all issues relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults within the Diocese.

Using the menus within the Safeguarding

page opens up a host of information to the user, including details of forthcoming training events and newsletters to keep up to date with Safeguarding in the Catholic Church of England and Wales.

There is a secure area for those in a Parish or Religious Safeguarding Representative role which provides access to documents and information needed to effectively carry out the vitally important role fulfilled by these able and committed volunteers.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator Kay Taylor-Duke said that the introduction of the site to the Parish Safeguarding Representatives and volunteer group leaders attending the training session was really favourable, adding that it was exciting to see how keen the fantastically committed band of Safeguarding volunteers were to learn about how to ensure there was ongoing good practice in this crucial part of all ministry.

Pictures: top, Helen Moore; below, Kay Taylor-Duke



Book Review

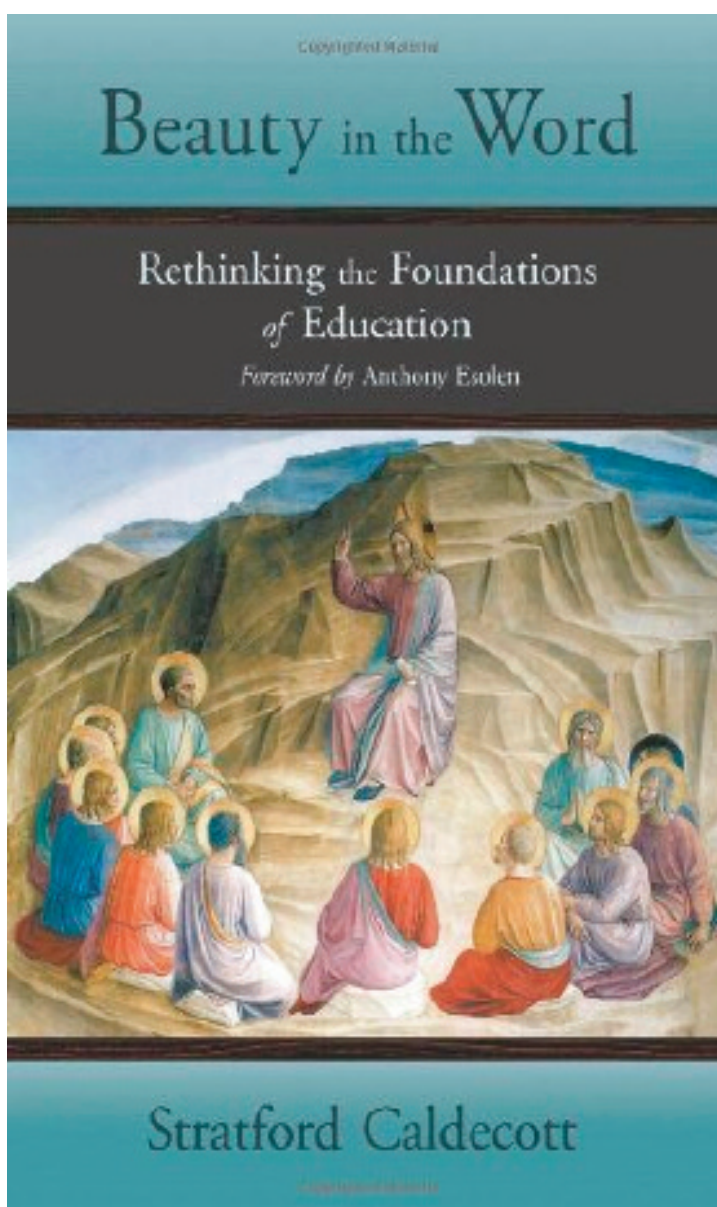
Beauty in the Word

By Stratford Caldecott.
Angelico Press. £9.95 S

Stratford Caldecott has written a thoughtful contribution, from a Catholic perspective, to the debate about education that has been on-going for the last 100 years. At times this debate has swung from a child-centred approach to a teacher-centred one; neither, Caldecott suggests, is right on its own; there has to be a finely tuned balance between the two. The author does a survey of educational theories by Rousseau, Froebel, St John Bosco – “education must serve the supernatural dignity and destiny of the child” – Rudolf Steiner and the American, John Dewey. The author does not romanticise childhood although he believes that in some ways it “represents a more perfect state, where we can see more completely what it is simply to be human.” Following the approach of the French mystic Simone Weil, he quotes her insight that “because prayer consists of attention, all worldly study is really a stretching of the soul towards prayer.” At a human level this means that children should be educated “for relationship, attention, empathy and imagination.”

The author emphasises the importance of learning by heart; in other words, recognising the potential of memory, not as a “feat” but as part of the process of self-understanding. It is interesting to note that current educational theories are now rediscovering this lost art. It is said that the late Lord Wavell knew all the poems in his anthology “Other Men’s Flowers” by heart – the legacy of his education at Winchester. For Caldecott, this emphasis on the importance of memorialisation goes alongside the “cultivation of the imagination and a poetic or musical vision of the interconnectedness of all things.” Needless to say, the insightful approach of this book is a far cry even from the current reforms in education being attempted by Michael Gove, which seek to educate young people to be better qualified for the workplace. From the perspective of Christian humanism, education should be bound up with “our capacity to realize that Being...is one, good, true and beautiful.”

Francis Phillips



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Travelling image

The Guardians of the Miraculous Relic Image at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bedford received a request to take the Relic Image up to Scotland and the home parish of the Glasgow midwives as part of the Church's Prayer support for Connie Wood and Mary Doogan (the "Glasgow Midwives") in their appeal in the Supreme Court in London. At the Sessions Court in Edinburgh their right to withhold participation in abortions on the grounds of conscience was upheld but their employer the Glasgow and Clyde NHS appealed against this. The final decision will be reached after the London Supreme Court case which starts on Tuesday 11 November.

The Bedford Team, having received official permission to take the Miraculous Relic Image out of England, after a long journey arrived safely at Uddington in the southern suburbs of Glasgow where they were warmly welcomed by the Parish Priest Fr Dominic Towey and a large crowd of the parishioners from St John the Baptist Church (Diocese of Motherwell). After the packed reception ceremony, attended by both Connie and Mary, the church remained open for the veneration of the Miraculous Relic Image.

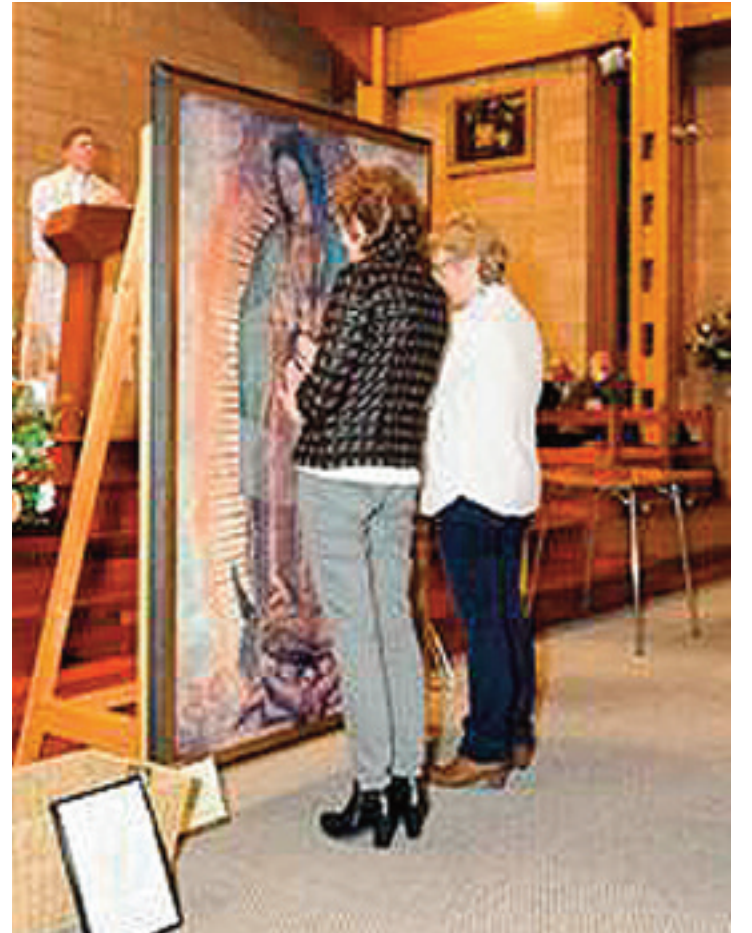
The following day there was well-attended all-night Vigil-even at 4.00 am a dozen or so people were pres-

ent. Over the weekend it is estimated that over 2500 people attended the various Masses and events.

On the final day of the visit, a very moving testimony was given by Mary Doogan who, having placed her hands on the Relic Image, went on to say that although she and Connie had received support from Royalty and MPs, to them having the Miraculous Relic Image at their church was the greatest support of all and she stressed the importance she placed on her devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe as the "Protectress of the Unborn"

At the Shrine in Holy Child & St. Joseph, Bedford, at the same time as the court case was beginning, to show solidarity with the midwives there was a special prayer service with Exposition, Readings and Prayers organised by the Guardians of the Miraculous Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Bedford SPUC group. At the same time, Srs Roseanne and Andrea of The Gospel of Life up in Glasgow joined us, and the many groups throughout the United Kingdom, in praying to uphold the Midwives cause and defeat the Glasgow and Clyde NHS appeal.

Pictures: right, Connie Wood and Mary Doogan venerate the image. Below: service in St. John The Baptist.



The Miraculous Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe visited St John's Cathedral, Norwich for a week earlier this year.

During this time more than 1,000 pilgrims from throughout the East Anglia Diocese-including St Neots, Peterborough, Cambridge and Yarmouth as well as Norwich-came to pay homage and to pray. Pilgrims were joined by a group of visiting Carmelites who had travelled from Aylesford Priory in Kent. The very successful visit owes much to the support and organisation from KSC Province 27 East Anglia under the direction of Chris Brookes, the Provincial Grand Knight.

Among the very positive outcomes was the establishment of 4 new home shrine devotions and also record repository sales.

At the end of the visit, following the Mass of Return, Fr James Walsh The, Dean, said 'this was a spiritual and uplifting experience for us and for all who came to venerate Our Lady's Miraculous Image. We hope to be blessed from a future visit in your busy programme of Pilgrimage'. The date has since been confirmed for 2017. Other requests for future visits were also received from Aylesford and Peterborough.

Zambian insights into Scripture

Saturday 8th November, Tarcisius Mukaka a lecturer in Biblical Studies & Biblical Languages at St. Mary's University College Twickenham, led a reflection on "Unsung Heroines: Women in the Bible". This was the first of a series of monthly talks which will take place on the second Saturday of the month in St. Teresa's Parish Centre Beaconsfield.

Tarcisius Mukuka is an alumnus of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and holds a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture and Biblical Languages (1993). He also holds a United Kingdom QTS in Classical Civilisation (2004).

He is currently completing a doctorate in Contextual Biblical Criticism with a thesis entitled: "Matrix of a Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Contextual Biblical Hermeneutics and Postcolonial Theory in *Bemba-land* and the *Copperbelt*(Zambia)."

In 2010, he carried out empirical research in Zambia on how colonial and postcolonial intents impacted on the transmission, translation and reception of the biblical message, particularly in North-Eastern Zambia and the *Copperbelt* province.

He currently teaches Biblical Apocalyptic Literature, Biblical Hermeneutics and New Testament Greek at



undergraduate level and Pastoral use of the Scriptures at postgraduate level.

Being a bishop of Northampton in time of war

Bishop Frederick William Keating of Northampton often expressed himself uneasy about the states of European societies in the seemingly peaceful years in the first decade of the twentieth century but like the rest of Europe was profoundly shocked when the continent was participated suddenly into war in August 1914.

Though born into a military family - his father was a Chelsea pensioner injured in the Crimean war - the Bishop had no illusions about the 'glory' of war. The Bishop was educated in Birmingham and his family, originating from Ireland and Daventry on the edge of the Midland Plain, had experienced first-hand the consequences of the materialistic industrial revolution. He graphically described a picture of the stable village communities which his forbears had known in their childhood. 'But when minerals were discovered, 'clever men' with scientific instruments and rough men with spades set up hideous machinery and long rows of dull brick cottages and the beauty of the place was laid low.' Air and water pollution then led to ill health. Through the wage earners being employed separately from the household, family life was dislocated which he believed fundamentally weakened society at its roots.

The Bishop told the Franciscans at their school at Buckingham that their simple lives were not just picturesque or interesting but an example to the worldly that the world could be based on a nobler set of values. As Christians and lights in the world they were encouraged to follow a God who put suffering before riches, service before pleasure and obedience unto death before power.

The Bishop constantly preached that a

person's private faith should cost something, though he did not expect that they would be asked to lay down their lives as the early martyrs had. Already before 1914 he was searching for the creation of a just and fair society, writing pamphlets on social issues for the Catholic Social Guild based on the ideas of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical 'The Condition of the Working Classes' which called for better relations between employers and the employed, based not solely on gain but on an awareness of each person's human dignity.

In August 1914, prayers were said for a peaceful solution of the Balkans crisis as the Anglo French Association unveiled a memorial to the Roman Catholic French prisoners of war held at Norman Cross during the Napoleonic wars. Mr Rothschild remarked that it was strange that one hundred years later Europe was on the eve of another war. Germany's violation of Belgium's neutrality made it almost certain. People on holiday on both sides of the channel frantically attempted to return to their home countries, including members of all the royal families of Europe. Father Heptonstall, the curate

of Peterborough, arrived home by cattle truck and cargo boat.

After time to gather his thoughts Bishop Keating advised his diocese on the issues involved in Britain's conflict with Germany and their duties as citizens. He was clear from the first that the outbreak of war between Christian countries was a calamity, 'a terrible madness flooding the world with untold misery which it was the Christian duty to minimize and alleviate as far as possible. The strength for their task, as they were merely human would be gained from frequent use of the Church's sacraments.'

The laity's first task was to help the wounded soldiers and the 4,000 homeless and penniless Belgian refugees who had entered the diocese through its eastern ports. At Peterborough, Canon Cary Elwes, who had numerous Belgian friends, organised their welcome. The Northampton Belgian Aid was initiated by the Catholic Men's Club. Meanwhile private hospitals were turned into hospitals and barracks. Bedford was overwhelmed by the arrival of the Catholic Scottish regiments.

The task of the clergy, the Bishop believed, was to strengthen themselves to show courage and trust in God, and help

their people spiritually through the Mass and extra prayer opportunities. He asked them to pray not just for their own side but for the values of goodness and peace over aggression. He wanted patriotism to be balanced with compassion for the poor and the soldiers' families. He was also concerned with the well-being of the Roman Catholics of German extraction who had peacefully resided in the diocese for more than a generation.

Bishop Keating expected the laity to pray for the soldiers who worked to free Belgium from the invaders who were systematically destroying her industry and agriculture. He made the distinction between the German people, many of whom in the South were fellow Roman Catholics, who were not to blame for the acts of their rulers. The enemy was specifically identified as governments who were influenced by the ideas of rationalism and excessive patriotism. He pointed out that these forces had to be resisted in England as well as elsewhere and increased his personal evangelization in order to bring more people in touch with the civilizing influence of true Christianity based on compassion rather than self-interest.

Amidst these practical concerns privately Bishop Keating was already evolving ideas of the restructuring of national and international politics, as he believed it was the duty of his generation to work for better relations between nation States and social classes in the future, in order to ensure that a relatively small issue could not lead to a full European conflict again.

At Christmas, he wrote that prayers to the Prince of Peace would help to shorten the length of the conflict and ensure the victory of those desiring Justice and Peace.





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There's hope for Milton Keynes

If you had been out and about in Milton Keynes during the October half-term, you might have seen a small army of young people in bright, purple, hooded sweat-shirts taking to the streets. Over 130 young people (50 of whom were from St Augustine's and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes) of secondary school age were involved in a initiative called HOPE MK. They gave up their half-term holiday in order to do something positive in their community and were involved in a variety of projects including: 'drop-and-play' sessions: taking games and sports equipment to different estates and engaging with children and families, 'creative evangelism': where young people thought of interesting ways to talk about faith to people who were shopping and 'messy Church': a range of activities for young children at Cornerstone in the city centre.

On Friday, the young people really put their faith into action: they began the day with no idea what they would be doing. There were no pre-planned projects, only the young people's own initiative and the power of the Holy Spirit! Some groups were given a set amount of money, to be generous to somebody in whatever way they saw

fit. Others were given a small amount, to 'trade-up' and see what they ended up with, in order to bless a stranger, whilst always being ready to talk to people about why they were taking part in the project and their faith in Jesus.

Dani is a year 8 student from St Paul's and is from Our Lady of Lourdes parish. She told us about her experience, "On the first day I was actually quite nervous because I didn't know anyone and I was worried that we weren't going to have any fun but actually we've had loads of fun. I hope I have inspired people: There were some people from the local area who came along and saw us playing and wanted to join in, so we tried to give them a good time. We also did litter picking to clear up areas of Woughton. I feel closer to God because I feel as if I have learnt more about him and I have opened up more to him and I can see the great works that he does. For example, loads of people showed up for our bird-house project which was an answered prayer. If anybody was thinking about doing it next year, I'd say come along because you get to have lots of fun and grow spiritually."



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