



The Vine

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February 2015

Issue No. 310

Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

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'Wake up the world'



Bishop Peter launched the Year of Consecrated Life at the diocesan Mass for the Patron Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. The Year began on the first Sunday of Advent, and will end on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, February 2, 2016. The aim, said Pope Francis when he announced it is 'to look to the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope. Consecrated men and women would be witnesses of communion, of joy and of the gospel. 'I am counting on you to wake up the world, since the distinctive sign of consecrated life is prophecy'.

The Mass began by highlighting the Religious who work in the diocese. Representatives of each of the 21 female and 11 male congregations brought to the altar a lighted candle which became part of a display which focussed on the Pope's call to wake up the world. Perhaps

in tribute to a Jesuit Pope, the candle liturgy was accompanied by a hymn based on the prayer of St. Ignatius:

Take, O Lord, and receive
my entire liberty,
my memory, my understanding
and my whole will.
All that I am and all that I possess
You have given me.
I surrender it all to You
to be disposed of
according to Your will.
Give me only Your love
and Your grace;
with these I will be rich enough,
and will desire nothing more.


'How moved I was', said Bishop Peter in his sermon, 'when your candles came to the altar. From Corby to Slough, all the different parts of the diocese are represented. Tonight we ask that each of us be faithful to our vocation'. Quoting Pope Francis, Bishop

Peter described the Religious life as a joyful living of the gospel; a shining witness of light. 'We give thanks for your work in the diocese and your contribution to the life of the Church. Thank you for all that you do for me.' The Bishop hoped that during the Year of Consecrated Life parishes and schools would find a way of celebrating the Religious communities at work among them.

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.



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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.

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Vatican

Vatican Radio reports that 26 Catholic priests, religious, seminarians, and lay catechists have been killed in 2014. Most of the victims (14) died in the Americas, marking the 6th consecutive year that the New World has accounted for most of the Catholic pastoral workers killed on the job. Four priests and a seminarian were killed in Mexico; two priests in the US, one in Canada, and five priests and a seminarian in South American countries. In Africa, many the pastoral workers were killed by the Ebola virus after tending to other victims of the epidemic. Figures supplied by the Fides news service show 17 priests, 6 women religious, one religious brother, a seminarian, and a lay catechist died while serving the Church during the past year. The Fides figures do not include several priests who have disappeared and whose fate is still unknown. Among them are Father Paolo Dall'Oglio, who was apparently kidnapped in Syria in 2013; Father Alexis Prem Kumar, the Jesuit kidnapped in Afghanistan in June of this year; and three Assumptionist priest who were abducted in the Congo in October 2012.

England

In England, the Latin Mass Society has written to bishops, asking for their help in "ending the marginalization" of the traditional liturgy. Joseph Shaw, the chairman of the Latin Mass Society, wrote that the bishops of England and Wales have "played a crucial role" in bringing about the "almost complete disappearance of the hostility" toward the use of the extraordinary form of the Mass. But he urged them to "go beyond tolerance" and promote access to the Latin Mass. Shaw said that he recognized concerns that the use of the Latin liturgy could become a "source of division." He said that the Latin Mass Society has actively resisted any such trend. But he argued that believers are more likely to become radical in their ideas if they are

marginalized, and thus the problem "will be cured by ending the marginalization."

Canada

Following a 44-26 senate vote, Canada has designated April 2, the anniversary of St. John Paul II's death, as "Pope John Paul II Day." The vote was preceded by an impassioned December 15 appeal by Serge Joyal, a Liberal senator from Quebec, that the bill should be opposed because it runs counter to the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Proclaim

'Proclaim '15: BUILDING MISSIONARY PARISHES' is the name of a new national Bishops' initiative being launched in 2015 to support the development of parish evangelisation. It is inspired by Pope Francis' writings and has five parts which include: the provision of free parish small group materials; the organisation of a National Catholic Evangelisation Conference; an invitation to parishes to host a parish Prayer Vigil on the night of 11 July 2015 with free prayer materials provided; the invitation to dioceses, deaneries and parishes to have their own Proclaim '15 event in autumn 2015; the publication of new evangelisation resources as a fruit of the National Conference to equip local evangelisers. The resources aim to help parishes explore some of the themes and issues that will be raised through the initiative.

The sessions are written in such a way that they are faithful to themes found within Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. They are offered in an easy-to-follow (and printable) format, with key content emphasises the building of missionary parishes and formation of confident local evangelisers. The sessions are themed: Session One: Meeting Jesus – the only one who can save me; Session Two: Learning to be a missionary disciple - sitting at the feet of Jesus; Session Three: Jesus is alive - go and tell my brothers.

They can be used in several ways: given to every parishioner for personal reflection; used in a parish small group setting; adapted for use as part of a holy hour; distributed perhaps as an outreach resource to those on the margins of parish life.

Avila

Throughout 2015 the Church around the world is celebrating the 500th anniversary of the birth of Saint Teresa of Avila, one of the great Doctors of the Church, with special exhibitions, conferences, retreats and Masses. In Britain and Ireland the Centenary Year opened with celebrations in October 2014, and will close with a Mass in the two nations in October 2015. The exhibition will be in Northampton cathedral from February 3-15.

Turkey

Turkey has authorised the building of the first church in the country since the end of the Ottoman Empire in 1923. The announcement was made during a meeting of Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu with representatives of non-Muslim minority communities. The church will be built in the Istanbul suburb of Yesilkoy. The cost of building the church will be financed by Turkey's Syrian community.

A government spokesman told AFP: "It is the first new church since the creation of the Turkish republic. Churches have been restored and reopened to the public, but no new church has been built until now."

In recent times the Turkish government has softened its attitude towards religious minorities, partly to comply with European Union values, and has returned some property such as St Gabriel Monastery in Mardin to the Syrian community.

Only about one per cent of Turkish population of 76 million are non-Muslim. The Christian population of Turkey has grown in recent years due to the fighting in Iraq and Syria.

Rome

Pope Francis announced, that on 14 February 2015, feast of St. Valentine, a consistory will be held for the creation of twenty new cardinals – fifteen electors and five non-electors – originating from fourteen countries from all over the world, demonstrating "an indissoluble bond between the Church of Rome and the particular Churches present throughout the world".

The day after the consistory, the Holy Father will preside at a concelebration with the new cardinals, while on 12 and 13 February a consistory will take place with all the cardinals to reflect on the orientations and proposals for reform of the Roman Curia.

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The Vine February 2015

Town's clergy big night out



Northampton Circle of the Catenian Association celebrated the 96th anniversary of its inauguration with their clergy and ladies at the Northampton Marriott Hotel. The celebration was hosted by Circle President Edward Smyth and Joy Kenneally in the presence of 115 guests. Principle clergy guests were the Bishop of Northampton, the Rt. Rev Peter Doyle and 13 other clergy and religious. The principle Catenian guests were Province 8 Provincial President, Gordon Nunn, and Province 8 Director Odran and Margaret Steed and 19 other visitors from Province 8, including many provincial officers. The Circle was also pleased to welcome 3 of its widows.

President Edward welcomed the guests and in thanking the Clergy for their continuing support said what a pleasure it was to see so many in attendance. A toast was proposed to the visitors to which Provincial President Gordon Nunn replied on behalf of the guests.

Bishop Peter shared a brief and light-hearted account of his recent visit to Myanmar (Burma), where he represented the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales. With some thoughtful reflections Bishop Peter said it was a joy to be at this anniversary celebration and be able to

thank the Brothers for the good support they gave to the Clergy and for all that they do in the parishes.

A tombola raised a magnificent £759 which will go towards the President's Circle Charities.

Photo:

Front Row

Rev. Deacon Mike O'Leary, Rev. Fr. Ephraim Nwachukwu, Rev. Fr. Paul Inman, Rev. Fr. Andrew Behrens, Rev. Mgr. Sean Healy, Rt. Rev. Bishop Peter Doyle, Rev. Mgr. John Broadhurst, Rev. Fr. Nicholas Alldritt, Rev. Fr. Anthony Reader Moore, Rev. Fr. Damian Walne.

Middle Row

Rev. Deacon Michael Fleming, Bro. Tony Bull (Treasurer), Bro. Frank Sudlow (Secretary), Mrs. Val Sudlow, Mrs. Kim Scaccia, Joy Kenneally, Mrs. Margaret Stead, Bro. Odran Stead (Provincial Director), Bro. Wilf Murray (President Oxford Circle)

Back Row

Bro. Gordon Nunn (Provincial President), Bro. Lorenzo Scaccia (Vice President), Bro. Edward Smyth (President), Bro. Michael Ryan (Provincial Councillor Oxford).

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My name is Sinead Callaghan and I am a member of the parish of All Saints and St Thomas Aquinas in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. I am currently studying theology at Durham University and due to this was presented with the opportunity to spend five weeks in India, supporting the work of the Futuresense Foundation, who run numerous projects in developing countries. Due to a generous donation from the Cate-nians, I was able to reach my fundraising target of £2550. £1000 of this went straight to the Futuresense Foundation to support their current projects around the world. Along with 12 other students from Durham University, I spent five weeks teaching English in Dhauladhar Convent School in a rural town in Northern India. It is vital that the children learn English because as they move into secondary school, all of their lessons are taught in English. As well as teaching, we painted three new classrooms, over 50 benches and four new murals. After school, many of the children stayed because they had nothing

to do at home. We had stuffed our suitcases full of paints, pens, sequins, googly eyes, books, balls and so many more resources. We ran numerous sports clubs after school as well as singing, dancing and crafts. One day all we did was make paper aeroplanes and the children were so excited all afternoon! Toward the end of the expedition, we performed a dance to S Club 7 "Reach for the Stars". It was great to introduce them to one of my childhood songs and in return they tried to teach me one of their traditional dances but after several attempts, they realised I wasn't very good! The expedition as a whole was very enlightening and allowed me to appreciate how much can be achieved with a lot of determination and vision, especially with such limited resources. As well as this, spending so much time within a different culture enabled me to broaden my general worldview and understand more about the nature and purpose of charity work. I would like to thank all those who contributed to me achieving my goal.



A very modern missionary

Cinnamon Network: Northants faith in action

Faith groups makes a distinctive contribution in the realm of community engagement and development. Their capacity to connect with communities at a grassroots level and come alongside hard to reach groups at the margins of society is well documented. Their long term presence, strong motivation for social action, volunteering record, and provision for informal care and friendship settings has been encompassed by the term 'social capital'. The Faith Action Audit of Northamptonshire will provide an appreciation of the range of activities undertaken by faith groups in the county. This important survey seeks to enlighten those within the faith sector and more widely across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It aims to reveal the sheer scale of the contribution of faith groups within our local communities and make it clear that, while media headlines may suggest that faith is in decline, and minority faith communities are to be viewed with distrust, the truth is very different indeed. Only recently has it become more recognised that, in the face of significant social and community needs, many

faith groups have been responding to fill gaps left by overstretched public services. Such faith-based community action has often gone on 'under the radar' and undetected. We hope to demonstrate that faith communities are important stakeholders right across Northamptonshire, from urban to rural, from the deprived to the affluent. They have a part to play in encouraging community cohesion, delivering the strategy for economic development and they have to be engaged with as vital and equal partners in our county's future prosperity and quality of life. In the Old Testament, God used the prophet Jeremiah to encourage God's people to 'get involved' with life in the city. The challenge for all sectors – public, private, voluntary and community, including the faith sector - is to prioritise engagement and to avoid the parochialism and isolationism, together with suspicion and fear, which only serves to divide and not unite. Former USA President, Jimmy Carter make the following comment in his 2005 book 'Faith & Freedom' (Duckworth Press): 'Throughout the world, Christians

are faced with a choice - to retreat into rigid certainties or to engage with people of all faiths and none to build a more just and peaceful world. And the secular-minded must also make a choice. Do they dismiss Christianity as a source of conflict, or will they recognise a more complicated, and more helpful, truth?' We hope and prayer is that this survey will be a springboard for greater understanding, appreciation, co-operation and partnership. The future transformation and salvation of many of our ailing communities may just depend on it. Want to know more? Contact Nick Amis at faith.audit@entapris.com or call 07979 366654 or visit [Cinnamon Faith Action Audits](#) | [The Cinnamon Network](#). The Cinnamon Network is a not-for-profit organisation helping local churches across the UK to run projects for those people most at need in their communities. We provide start-up funding for social action projects implemented through more than 3,500 local churches involving over 50,000 volunteers, benefitting more than 700,000 people.



Catenian Mass in Turkey

Catenians from South Bucks and Valletta Circles helped celebrate an ecumenical All Saints Day in Turkey.

A Pontifical Mass took place in the Roman Catholic Cathedral Basilica of Izmir at the end of the second Levantine Symposium of Izmir (formerly Smyrna), co-organised by Brother George Galdies from South Bucks Circle.

The conference and the Mass were the realisation of a long held ambition of George, a parishioner of St. Teresa's, Beaconsfield. In 2010 he had instigated the very first gathering of Christians of Smyrna and the overseas diaspora of 'Levantine': a term given to a group of Christians from the Levant, most of whom can trace their ancestries to European lands.

This second conference and the site-seeing tours encompassed family links dating back to the 18th Century and visits to the suburbs where still stand Levantine mansions and churches that had escaped the fire of 1922, a fire which ensued from the advance of Turkish nationalist forces. The 'Catastrophe' had destroyed most of the town centre which was mainly Christian and where hundreds of thousands of Greeks and Armenians perished as a result.

The symposium programme included a talk by Bro Henry Frendo of Valletta, Pro-

fessor of Modern History at University of Malta, who expounded the connection of the British Maltese of Izmir and the Levant.

Professor Henry was invited by George to read the first reading at the Solemn Mass at the Cathedral of St John Apostle who had lived in nearby Ephesus. George had requested His Grace Ruggero Franceschini R.C. Arch-

bishop of Smyrna, to celebrate this service in memory of all the departed of what is now modern Izmir. George had also requested the participation of the Greek Orthodox Father Kirilos and Anglican Ron Evans in the solemnity, as a demonstration of unity within the Church of Smyrna; the only surviving Church of the seven early Churches of Asia Minor, as mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

The Mass was said in a combination of five of the local languages in common use in Izmir's parishes: Italian, English, Turkish,



Greek, and Latin. For the first time ever the Cathedral Choir was made up of young local converts to the Roman Catholic faith. The Cathedral resonated to their harmonious voices in Turkish.

The very young children of the Greek Orthodox parish acted as assistant altar servers and sang the Sanctus in Greek, delighting the congregation with their young voices and great gusto.

Mass ended with the shaking of hands by the Archbishop and Clergy. Everyone adjourned to the Cathedral Parvis to meet or renew acquaintances and sample the deli-

cious wines from in Levantine families' vineyards. Everyone agreed that this was an emotional gathering. Much gratitude went to Fr. Max, rector of the Cathedral, who invited everyone present to turn this into an annual event and hopefully start a fund for the restoration of the Basilica's organ whose pipes had been sold off for cash several decades ago.

The writer is convinced that such initiatives will boost local morale, bring more Christians back to our Church, and act as a beacon to those considering turning to Christ.

Family: blessing and challenge

In his pastoral letter for the feast of the Holy Family Bishop Peter wrote about the blessings and challenges of family life.

Friends had described to him the birth of their child. 'They said it was like a grenade being thrown into the household! What that tells me is how demanding and vital the role of parents is. Perhaps we do not recognise enough the primary role and ministry of parents in the life of the Church, and I would like to salute all of you who are parents for the way in which you love and nurture your children'.

The bishop listed the many types of family to which we may belong. 'the families focused on their handicapped child..... the childless family.... the family where relationships have broken down.... the family that has grown up and moved away..... the family in pain or in mourning..... the family full of life.

Our families are all different and rarely are we able to tick all the boxes. But it is in our families that we live and love and try to flourish. For most families life is a matter of coping. There are so many competing needs to juggle and balance, and that can be very stressful. However, it is here that God is present in the midst of all the tensions and different demands. It is here that we live our faith, not free from problems, but with compassion and with the love of God.

In today's Gospel Joseph and Mary bring their first-born to the temple in accordance with the law of the Lord. Almighty God is at the centre of their relationship. It is God who has taken the initiative in their lives, calling Mary to be the mother of his only Son and Joseph to be their guardian. In the same way he calls many of us to the Sacrament of Marriage, to be signs in the world of his creative and ever-faithful love.

I would like to thank and encourage the many couples who are responding to that call while, at the same time, being supportive of families where things have not worked out. I would also like to encourage young couples to consecrate their love for each other in the Sacrament of Marriage. It does not have to be an expensive business!

As you know, next October, there is a Synod in Rome, a gathering of Bishops, on the theme of the Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the contemporary World. I feel very privileged to have been chosen with Cardinal Vincent Nichols to represent the Bishops of England and Wales at the Synod. Before then, Pope Francis has asked us to give some time to reflect on the gift of Marriage and Family Life, and on the call, the journey and the mission of marriage and family life, and to pray for the Synod.

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Our Lady of St Gregory's

Last summer a bespoke carving of Our Lady, in lime wood, was commissioned for St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Northampton from master craftsman, Mike Painter.

Bishop Peter was invited to the School on November 4th to say Mass and bless the new carving. The Bishop blessed the carving announcing that the carving was called 'Our Lady of St. Gregory's'. The Head Boy and Head Girl said that 'our statue is so important because it is what makes our School an individual and unique school. The statue will be here longer than anyone else will be here. It is a gift that will stay in St. Gregory's School for ever.'

Many guests came to share the occasion. Father Damien and Deacon Michael accompanied the Bishop. During the offertory procession, Mike Painter offered his gifts as a symbol of his craftsmanship.

Some of the children said the Prayer of the Faithful in their first language: English, Polish, German and Swedish. Guests, Governors, Staff and pupils all enjoyed this joyous occasion.

After the Mass, Bishop Peter visited the new Emmaus Room and added his fingerprint to the cross in that Room. His fingerprint is now with those of pupils, staff and Governors to show the School's community and love.



Bishop Peter makes his mark on the cross in the Emmaus room.

Working with Islam

A mission priest remembers

Fr Joe Joyce of the Columban fathers, who has worked in the Philippines, South America and many years in Pakistan, gave a talk on "Working with Islam" at St. Teresa's Church, Beaconsfield on Tuesday 16th September. The session was well attended and Fr. Joe answered questions afterwards.

Angels we have heard

Young parishioners from St. Edward's, Milton Keynes, present the traditional Christmas story.

Although one of the shepherds kept dropping the sheep, and Joseph seemed worried that his trousers were falling down, the angels were clearly enjoying it, and the audience appreciated the high quality acting and the singing.

In a new twist to the story, baby Jesus was baptised a week later.



At the November meeting of the Milton Keynes Circle of the Catenian Association, Brother Gordon Porter was presented with a scroll marking forty years membership of the Association. The presentation was made by Provincial Director, John Davis. Brother Gordon originally joined Salisbury Circle in 1974 and transferred to Milton Keynes Circle in the mid-1980s. He served as President of the Circle in 1990 and again

in 2006. Brother Gordon has recently been elected to the office of Provincial Vice President. Brother Tony McManus was on hand to record the occasion.

Photo: Brother Gordon Porter (middle) being presented with his 40 Years Scroll by Provincial Director, John Davis (right). Circle President, Brother Mal Nally, is on the left in the photograph.



The Catenians


Strengthening family life through friendship and faith

Milton Keynes Circle of the Catenian Association held its Christmas Dinner and Ladies and Clergy Night at The Swan Revived Hotel, Newport Pagnell, in December. The event was well supported and thoroughly enjoyed by all. After the meal, brothers and their guests

were entertained with a programme of music, song, storytelling and poetry. The night ended with all present in good voice singing their favourite Christmas carols.

Photographs: Richard Golden





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The Vine February 2015



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The Cluniac nuns of Northampton

The Abbey of St Mary in the Meadow, Northampton, otherwise known as Delapre Abbey is a graded II listed building, currently undergoing a £5million refurbishment since it is one of the most important historical sites in Northamptonshire.

It was founded around the middle of the 12th century by Simon de Senlis and was the home of the Cluniac nuns who followed the Rule of St Benedict. The Community of about twelve spent their lives in works of charity, hospitality and prayer, as an enclosed order. Only one other Community of Cluniac nuns is known to have existed at that time in Arthrington, Yorkshire.

Their male counterparts were more numerous, with one Community in Daventry and another in Northampton where the abbey was built on the site of what is now St Andrew's Hospital.

Altogether there were some thirty-five houses throughout England and three in Scotland. The Motherhouse of the Order was in Cluny, France. Strictly speaking only the Motherhouse and one other was designated as an abbey, other communities were classed as priories.

In the year 1290, Eleanor of Castile, the wife of King Edward, died and her funeral cortege, en route to London, rested overnight at Delapre whilst the sisters prayed over her mortal remains. The King marked each of the late queen's resting places with a stone cross and Northampton's is the most complete structure remaining.

Fast forward 170 years and Delapre is back in the thick of it as the Battle of Northampton is fought in the acres surrounding the Community. King Henry lost this confrontation and ended up a prisoner on the premises before being hauled away. Meanwhile the nuns had the grim task of binding up wounds as well as burying victims of this short-lived skirmish (the weather and boggy conditions were not exactly conducive to a prolonged engagement). The action was viewed, as a chronicler

tells us, by one archbishop, the Bishop of London and a few other interested parties, all keen to see if the outcome would affect their livelihoods no doubt. Their viewing point was from the top steps of the Eleanor Cross!

Some 78 years later, in 1538, the King's Commissioners were on the scene to assess the value of the Community, remove goods and chattels, pension off the nuns or at least some of them and sell off the buildings, initially to the Tate family. Over the ensuing centuries, the original buildings were desecrated, knocked down or partially absorbed into a hotch-potch but quite attractive blend of styles.

Today Delapre is a jewel amongst delightful spaces, with rolling meadow land, and ancient trees, some as old as the Community it is claimed. Before construction works begins on a new heritage centre and restaurant, archaeologists will be called in to try to find the earliest remains of the Community buildings which hopefully will include the monastic church.

Dennis H. Sear



Right or wrong?

Exploiting animals involves causing suffering and killing for food, clothes, sport, entertainment, medical experiments etc...

If we can exploit animals: The strong can exploit the weak.

The end justifies the means. Violence is acceptable.

Our trivial gains come before the lives of other creatures.

Those with plenty can take away the little that others have.

Replacing 'Do unto others as you would be done by' with 'Do unto others what you would on no account have done to yourself'.

The superior or more intelligent can exploit the inferior or less intelligent. The 'holy' can exploit others. If a more intelligent or more 'holy' species dominates this planet (say through evolution or alien invasion) it can with equal justification enslave and exploit humans.

Vices cause us to exploit animal - greed, self-interest, materialism, arrogance, self-indulgence and lack of compassion.

Virtues cause us to oppose exploitation - humility, love, compassion, simple living, good example, doing on to others as we would be done by, seeing the presence of God in all things, and treating everything with respect.

The exploitation of animals is harmful: Cruelty (causing unnecessary suffering) is a grievous sin. It is immoral, unethical, unjust, ruthless and inhumane. It has a hardening effect. It debases us.

Medical experimentation means testing a drug on one species (e.g. a dog) for use on another species (us). Because it is so unscientific it results in damage and death to humans. Prescribed drugs hospitalise and kill thousands of people every year in this country alone (ref. British Medical Association 2006).

Eating meat and dairy produce is unhealthy and leads to many of our common illnesses - heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity, thrombosis, haemorrhoids... (ref. World Health Organisation/Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine/ Oxford University report 2013).

Growing animals for food involves destruction and pollution of the land, forests, waters and atmosphere. For instance:- Farm animals are a major cause of global warming. Rainforests are being destroyed to raise cattle. Livestock grazing is causing deserts. Livestock are a major cause of acid rain and water pollution.

Growing animals for food involves waste of food, water, land and other precious resources (money, time, energy etc...). These resources are taken away from the poor to grow meat for the rich, causing starvation. For instance:- Amount of grain needed to

end extreme hunger - 40 million tonnes. Amount of grain fed to animals in the West - 540 million tonnes (ref. United Nations).

Nearly half of the world's grain harvest is fed to farm animals. The resulting meat gives us back only about 10% of the calories and protein which was fed to the animals (ref.

species. Religions tend to give to animals with one hand, and take back with the other. They pay lip service to respect for animals, but condone almost every abuse. Civilisation, with religion at its core, is generally based on the mass exploitation of other life forms. We eat them, we wear them, we test things on them, we use them for sport and entertainment, and we destroy their habitats, putting profit before pain.

Whatever we do to the least of God's creatures, we do to Christ.

If we confine justice, compassion and rights to our own kind, we are no better than 'the publicans and the pagans'; don't they do as much as that?

Dominating, exploiting and killing the helpless, because we have the power to do so, is not Christian.

Our only superiority, our only boast and justification, lies in sacrificing ourselves for others who are more weak, helpless and needy.

That is our glory and our privilege.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan, for those who have eyes to see, means for us now that any creature in need is our neighbour.

If we can exploit animals for our gain (because we are more intelligent, have a superior soul, are only obliged to show justice to our own kind etc...) then it follows that the angels can exploit us for their gain for the exact same reasons.

Shouldn't the strong have concern for the weak, and the privileged for the less privileged?

Isn't it better not to kill than to kill, given the choice? And don't we almost always have the choice?

Speciesism is basically exactly the same as racism. The root for both is xenophobia - excluding those that are different. Our obsession with hierarchy on earth and in heaven blinds us to the fact that hierarchy is basically an animal behaviour pattern which aids survival, and all that should concern us in this context is that we should be humble and put ourselves last, or we may find that 'inferior' species will be entering heaven before us 'superior' humans. For further information contact:- Movement for Compassionate Living

www.mclveganway.org.uk Catholic Concern for Animals www.catholic-animals.org Christian Vegetarian Association (UK) www.christianvegetarian.co.uk Viva! www.viva.org.uk People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) www.peta.org.uk

A personal view by Virginia Bell, of the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Milton Keynes.



MCL/Viva!).

The U.K. imports about 90% of its protein animal feed from poor countries (ref. Viva!). 10 acres of land growing cattle will feed 2 people; growing soya 10 acres will feed 61 people (ref. Vegfam).

Corn produces 211 lbs. of edible protein per acre; rice produces 265 lbs.; beef produces only 20 lbs. (ref. USDA/FAO/WHO/UNICEF Protein Advisory Group 2004).

It takes 25 gallons of water to produce 1 lb of wheat or vegetables; it takes between 2,500 and 5,000 gallons to produce 1 lb. of beef (ref. University of California).

Outstanding people throughout the ages have shown concern for all life (e.g. St Francis of Assisi, Albert Schweitzer, Leonardo da Vinci, Gandhi).

The Gita says 'The whole of creation is divinely related' and 'Sages look equally on a Brahmana endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and even a dog and an outcaste, visualising the presence of the Supreme Lord in all of them'. But religion in general has made God into a tyrant who excludes all life forms, all species except one, from justice and compassion. During the 2000 years since Jesus Christ, my church has done almost nothing to oppose animal abuse, on the contrary.

There are notable exceptions of course, but during the decades I have attended Mass, the sermons have urged me to live a good Christian life - but only towards my own

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Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes



Jesus says: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am among them." Matthew 18:V, 20

You are invited to a Rosary gathering/procession to honour the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the vigil of her Feast. Tuesday 10th February 2015 at the Angelus time of 6pm.

Meeting outside
Christ the Cornerstone church
300 Saxon Gate West
Milton Keynes MK9 2ES

note: these devotions will not be cancelled due to bad weather. Praying in the wind, cold and rain is penance and reparation (wind and rain bless The Lord).
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This is the name of the new charity which has been set up in Bedford. The name “Empowering Vulnerable Children-Uganda” means just that-helping vulnerable and abandoned children in Uganda to find a place of safety and to obtain a basic education.

For several years, the parishes of The Holy Child and St Joseph and Our Lady of Ransom (both in Bedford) have supported the orphanage through their links with Fr Boniface Kaayabula in Masaka.

In the summer of 2013, Fr Boniface was in Bedford for 2 months and the idea of forming an official charity took off. A board of Trustees (3 of whom are based in Uganda) has been formed and the charity registered(1156189) with the Charity Commissioners. Sponsors (supporters) give £20 per month or £240 per annum to pay the boarding and tuition fees. At present 36 sponsors are supporting 53 children but it is planned to double the number of children helped over the next 12 months. There are still over 100 children needing sponsorship, a number which is continually increasing.

At present EVC works in Southern Uganda around the area of Masaka. The

people are desperately poor; many have died of AIDS, cholera and malaria and there are serious cases of malnutrition. Many children have been abandoned by their parents and often go hungry and have very minimal clothing. They face destitution or travel to the urban areas where they suffer abuse. There is very little clean drinking water, food is scarce and there is usually no electricity. The charity, which operates under a strong Christian, prolife and work ethos, aims to raise funds for these desperately poor children to receive an education in a loving, caring and supportive environment so as to provide a route out of destitution.

The charity also seeks to provide funds to build schools and dormitories and to furnish them with additional facilities (such as water bore holes to provide a source of clean drinking water).

The web site, www.evcuganda.org, is a good source of information, giving details of the orphanage and also our future fundraising events. Our first important public event will be the **Grand Launch on 21 February 2015** in the Harpur Suite in Bedford.



Bedford launches aid for Uganda



A resolution for the new year

We often make resolutions for the New Year, promises that will improve our lives and those of others. **Why not make volunteering for CAFOD your resolution?** Share your blessings by helping others in their hardship. We will support and train you where ever this is needed. We need people to work in schools raising awareness of poverty and our work to alleviate it. Margaret, one of our school's volunteers says "I became a CAFOD Schools' Volunteer because I wanted to help young people and children understand injustice issues in our world. My engagements with the students, through assemblies and workshops, allow them to understand that we can all play a part to help our brothers and sisters; prayer being a good start. It is

so fulfilling and rewarding!" We need people to help out in our local Churches, or contact their MPs on issues of importance. If you would like to get in-

general election that would be great. We need our MPs to know what their constituents want but they will not know unless we tell them. Our work also relies on

can help out see our website <http://www.cafod.org.uk/Work-with-us/Volunteer>

There are so many ways to get involved, meet other volunteers and use your skills and talents. No matter how much or how little time you have there is still a role for you. We would love to hear from you. Please contact CAFOD Northampton on 01844 274723 or Northampton@cafod.org.uk. Let's try and make this a happy New Year for all.

"Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable. Speak out in order to judge with righteousness and to defend the needy and the poor." Proverbs 31:8-9



involved in our *One Climate, One World* campaign especially with the lead up to the

your continued prayers so do remember us in your prayers. For a full list of ways you

Bishop Sheen: Mentor and Friend

By Mgr Hilary C Franco
New Hope Publications

Mgr Franco first met Bishop Fulton J Sheen in 1959. Their friendship lasted until Sheen's death in 1979 and is a testament to Franco's filial devotion to the memory of the Church's greatest communicator at the start of the television age. The book has been made in collaboration with Lisa and Geno Delfino and its style bears the impression of an oral rather than a written account. Franco was somewhat in awe of his mentor but provides telling details of Sheen's personal humility (in the face of much pressure to live within the role of a "celebrity") and his desire to communicate the love of Christ to everyone he encountered. For Sheen, this was the core of his priestly vocation; asked by Franco why he had become a priest he replied simply, "I was called to tell this story. I never tire of telling it...I love my calling."

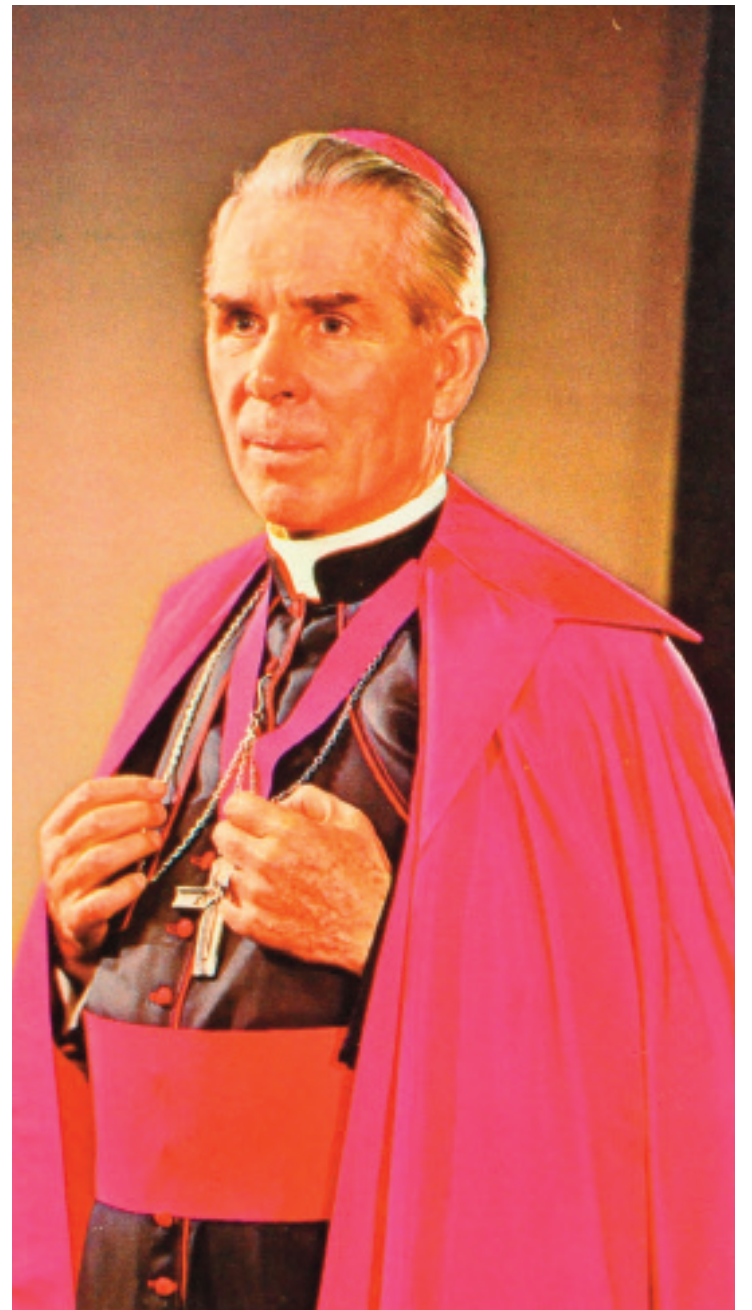
In 1962 Franco began to work fulltime for Sheen who was head of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Although Sheen's famous TV series, "Life is Worth Living" had ended in 1957 he still had a TV slot, the Fulton Sheen Program, running from 1961-1968. Millions of dollars were annually donated to the Society from Sheen's television audiences, all of which was sent to missionary causes around the world. At 3 pm all the office staff would recite the Rosary with Sheen. Often he and Franco would walk to work "showing the collar" as he put it. The bishop insisted on clerical dress because "for those who see it, the collar is a symbol of the presence of Christ in our everyday world." On the increasingly controversial annual St Patrick's

Day Parade in New York, Sheen told Franco that St Patrick's sanctity lay in his conversion of thousands of Irish people from paganism; "We should pray for all those who are spending this day drinking in the bars. Pray that somehow they find inspiration in the true story of St Patrick's life" he commented.

Franco is discreet about the well-known clash between Sheen and Cardinal Spellman of New York, who was angry that Sheen refused to hand over money to the diocese that had been donated to him specifically for the foreign missions. He merely comments that Sheen seemed "uneasy and burdened" after meetings with Spellman. But he dispels the rumour that Spellman exiled Sheen to the humble diocese of Rochester in 1966. Sheen was weary of being seen as a celebrity priest and longed "to nurture and save souls for Christ on a more personal level."

The three years Sheen spent in Rochester were not happy; the diocese resented the changes that he wanted to introduce, so thwarted them. As Franco indicates in this warm memoir, this also coincided with a time of turmoil in the Church at large when, after Vatican II, many priests abandoned their vocation – and Sheen was the unfortunate recipient of this fallout.

Francis Phillips



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Let's All Go For A Walk!

The staff and students at Cardinal Newman Catholic School in Luton continued their long standing tradition of the annual sponsored walk.

The students' efforts raised over £6000 which will support projects chosen by the elected members of the School Parliament. These include, Medecines Sans Frontiers, charities fighting Ebola, links with schools in Africa and our nominated charity, Cancer Research UK.

Mr Richardson said 'It was a great day and I am very proud of the students and all they have achieved'.



01582 597 125 www.cardinalnewmanschool.net

Bishop Peter, do you always smile?

St Vincent's Catholic Lower School in Houghton Regis opened on Thursday 5th September 1974. By 2007 the school needed to increase in size and became St Vincent's Catholic Primary School.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary the school community were joined by Bishop Peter to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving. After Mass, Bishop Peter enjoyed spending time in the classrooms answering the children's questions including, 'Bishop Peter, do you always smile?'

As commented by the children Bishop Peter smiled throughout the visit and the whole day was a marvellous start to our year of celebration.



01582 862 456

www.stvincentshr.org



At St Joseph's Infant school we are working hard to develop our outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since June we have been working with a charity called 'Groundworks' to improve provision for outdoor learning.

Plans include making a sensory path, a water feature and converting a learning hut into a huge sandpit.

A recent bid to Affinity Water to secure some funding has been successful and this money will be used to make a 'Water Wall' and to purchase and fit water butts.

We were also very grateful to the staff from Lloyd's bank who spent a day with us painting vegetable beds, putting up a shed and making an outdoor stage.



01582 573 446 www.stjosephsinfantschool.co.uk



At St Margaret of Scotland Catholic Primary School we held a remembrance service to commemorate the 100 years passing of World War 1.

Each child made a poppy which formed part of a whole school display.

As part of the service our talented choir performed a moving rendition of 'Keep the home fires burning' with the whole school joining in for 'It's a Long Way To Tipperary'.

Mr Edmonds performed the last post to mark the 2 minute silence, which was very emotional.

Our children really responded to this service with a great deal of respect and an understanding of the importance of the service.



01582 723 430 www.margaretofscotland.org.uk

Sacred Heart Primary School pupils performed for passengers and staff at Luton Airport this December. The children sang a medley of Christmas carols reminding all who heard them of the true meaning of Christmas and raising funds for the Sue Ryder Hospice.

Passengers arriving from and travelling to a variety of destinations commented on how touched they were by the children's performance. The children also enjoyed experiencing the hustle and bustle of the airport.

"It was great because we were raising money for charity and also making people happy." Lucy Year 5.

"I really enjoyed singing Christmas Carols at the airport and welcoming people to Luton, it was lovely to see them smiling and some people joined in!" Isabel Year 5.



01582 730 781 www.sacredheartluton.org.uk



Book Day at St Martin de Porres Primary School

At St Martin's we are encouraging our children to have a real love for books. On Wednesday 19th November we held a Book Day and all the children and staff came to school dressed as one of their favourite book characters.

We had a great fun day celebrating the books we really like. Every class in the school runs a reading challenge for the children and they are encouraged to take home the class reading mascot so they can read with it in a special place.



01582 617 600

www.stmartindeporresluton.co.uk

A Visit from Danny Lawrence

Pupils at St Mary's Primary School had been waiting for the Commonwealth Games gymnast Danny Lawrence to visit our school for a month. We had gathered our sponsors and were ready to take part in a workout that Danny would lead. Each class took part in the workout which was amazing.

Danny treated the whole school to an exhibition of his skills, these included walking on his hands and doing a press up whilst doing a handstand! It was a fantastic day and inspired us all to think what can be achieved with hard work and commitment.



01582 602 420 www.stmarysprimary.org.uk



St Joseph's Catholic Junior School achieved 'Silver' RE Quality Mark in October 2014. This is an external validation and national recognition of schools that provide a high quality RE curriculum; enabling pupils to be reflective, to explore beliefs and ask questions.

Pupils said: "There is a prayer table in every classroom, and we write our own prayers to share in lessons. We light candles and sometimes sing our prayers. Crosses and pictures around the school remind us of God's love for us."

Head teacher Mrs. Lee said: "This is a wonderful achievement and I am very proud of all that we are able to celebrate about the school."



01582 572 964 www.stjosephsjunior.luton.gov.uk