



SUB TUM PRÆSDUM

The Vine

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January 2016

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Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

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Well worth it



This year's diocesan priests' retreat took place at Worth Abbey in October. Archbishop Kevin McDonald, who was Bishop of Northampton for two years before being transferred to the Archdiocese of Southwark. He retired from his role as Archbishop in 2009 because of poor health.



A Christmas greeting

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I know how much effort you put into celebrating Christmas at home and in the parish. I also know that for some of us this Christmas may be difficult for all kinds of reasons.

So, whether you are able to enter into the festivities of Christmas or are coping with a particular cross, I pray that Jesus may be with you this Christmas.

In this Jubilee Year of God's mercy we shall be listening to the Gospel of Luke at Mass. In that Gospel Jesus is presented as one who is constantly at prayer (Luke 9:51) and who gives an example of perseverance. Jesus is constantly on the move and encountering people, most of them in need and lacking status in society. The Jesus of Luke is a Saviour for the whole of humanity. He is a visitor to our world, who has come to direct our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:79).

May Jesus direct our feet into the way of peace. As his friends and disciples, may we be constant in prayer, and may we take the opportunities he gives us to lead others to him.

With every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,

+ Peter

Bishop of Northampton

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We wish all our readers a very happy Christmas



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.

London

The Bishops of England and Wales have approved the new translations of the texts to be used for Confirmation and Marriage which have now been given their recognition by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments. These will be published in January 2016 and will be used from Easter 2016.

The Order of Confirmation is the text to be used for the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. During the liturgy those who have been baptised profess their faith, are then anointed with the oil of Chrism, which is accompanied by the laying on of the bishop's hands, and are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony is the text to be used for the celebration of marriage in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Although it is a new translation, it retains familiar texts from the English tradition. These have helped shape our understanding of marriage as a lifelong bond between man and woman. Amongst the best loved words are:

*To have and to hold
from this day forward
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish*

till death do us part.

Speaking of the new translation, the Chair of the Department of Christian Life and Worship, Archbishop George Stack, said today: "These new translations explore the riches of the scriptural, theological and pastoral implications of the beautiful moments of life in which we encounter God in deeper ways in Confirmation and in Marriage. They reflect the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." (Matthew.13:51) I pray that those who study, pray and use them will "...know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19)."

The Catholic bishops of England and Wales have issued a public request that the Vatican change the prayer for the Jews said on Good Friday in the Extraordinary Form liturgy. The prayer, com-



posed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008, asks God to illumine the hearts of the Jewish people "that they acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all men." Archbishop Kevin McDonald, who chairs the British bishops' committee for relations with Jews, said that the prayer has "caused great confusion and upset" among Jews. The bishops of England and Wales said that the prayer should be revised to reflect the understanding of relations between Catholics and Jews that is set forth in the Vatican II document *Nostri Aetate*. -

Vatican

Pope Francis has appointed as two new Auxiliary Bishops of the Diocese of Westminster: Canon Paul McAleenan and Mgr John Wilson.

The joint episcopal ordinations of Canon Paul McAleenan, a priest of the Diocese of Westminster, and Mgr John Wilson, a priest of the Diocese of Leeds, will take place in Westminster Cathedral on 25 January 2016, the feast of the Conversion of St Paul. They will join Bishop John Sherrington and Bishop Nicholas Hudson as Bishops of the Diocese.

"Today I thank God for this gift of two new bishops for service in our diocese. As Pope Francis has made clear, the name of a new bishop is written by Jesus himself. So today I say "Thanks be to God!" said Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster.

"I am also most thankful to Pope Francis for this important strengthening of our diocesan family in our striving to be faithful to the Lord and to the mission he has given to us all. The role of the bishop is one of demanding service and here we are blessed by these additions to the oversight and encouragement which we can offer, in the name of the Good Shepherd, to our priests and people.

"I am delighted to welcome Bishop-elect Paul McAleenan. He has served this diocese for many years and now he will continue to do so in this new ministry. He steps forward for this ordination from the ranks of much-loved parish priests, whose faithful service and generosity are deeply appreciated. His experience and voice will be a great addition to the episcopal ministry we can offer together.

"I welcome most warmly to this diocese Bishop-elect John Wilson. In doing so I extend my thanks to the Diocese of Leeds and to Bishop Marcus Stock. Mgr Wilson has been nurtured and formed in and for that diocese. So I thank everyone there for this act of generosity. God always rewards this generous giving to the wider Church. We will benefit from his experience and his enthusiasm and we will take good care of him!

"On behalf of my fellow bishops here, Bishop John Sherrington and Bishop Nicholas Hudson, I welcome our new brother bishops. I assure them of a warm welcome from our priests and people. We all look forward to their episcopal ordinations which will take place in Westminster Cathedral on Monday 25 January 2016, the feast of the Conversion of St Paul."

Note

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Nuncio celebrates Bedford jubilee

St. Francesca Cabrini Italian Church in Bedford recently celebrated its golden anniversary. The church was built 50 years ago by the Italian immigrants who had left their homeland and families in Italy. For a few years they used the convent in Bromham Road for the Sunday Mass, but they felt like they needed somewhere they could worship and call their own. The Scalabrini Fathers were the driving force behind the building of the church.

The building of St Francesca Cabrini church involved all the Italians in Bedford: they all contributed to raise the funds to build the church. Statues of the saints from the Italian villages that the people had come from were placed inside, and every May there is a procession of saints as part of the "festa", keeping Italian traditions alive in Bedford.

St. Francesca Cabrini held a 50th celebratory mass on 4 October 2015, presided by

the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain Archbishop Antonio Mennini, concelebrating with 6 other priests. This was the only Mass that day and drew a large crowd of parishioners.

Archbishop Mennini in his homily spoke about the importance of the family life. He reminded the congregation that the family is the first and vital cell of society, because in the family we experience love and we learn the importance of the bond with others. And in the acts of faith on Sunday and in our praying as a family we open up to the encounter with the mystery of God and renew our ties with the other members of our community. Adding that Italians greatly value family life, he then encouraged all the present to work together for a stronger Christian community in Bedford.

Speaking after Holy Communion Father Giuseppe, the Parish Priest, thanked first of all the Apostolic Nuncio for his inspiring



words, but also the concelebrants, those who worked to make the Anniversary such a special occasion and all the present at the Mass. And he concluded, "While we celebrate the many achievements of our Parish community, we express our gratitude to God for the graces and gifts he has bestowed on our Italian community during the past 50 years, and we invoke this continued blessings for the future".

Also Mgr Sean Healy, who was representing Bishop Peter and the Diocese of Northampton, said a few words. He said: "the Italian community has, for over 60 years, been an integral part of the town of Bedford – your traditions, culture and language have enriched the town. To the Diocese of Northampton you have, in addition, brought the riches of your faith and deep love for the Catholic church. The Italian community here in Bedford has been a

powerful witness to the faith and to the beauty of our Catholic way of life. On behalf of the Bishop, I thank you for all you have contributed to the town and Diocese. You have enriched both! I hope and pray that your witness, lived out here in this beautiful church of Santa Francesca Cabrini, will continue for many years to come!"

After the Mass the celebrations continued in the Parish hall with a Buffet and the cutting of the cake. A few weeks later, as part of the ongoing celebrations for the golden Anniversary there was also a successful dinner and dance for the community on 5 December which was enjoyed by all.

Photo top" From left: Fr Mario, Fr Alberto, Fr Giuseppe, Archbishop Mennini, Mgr Healy, Fr Antonio, Fr Francesco.



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Jubilee Year of Mercy

Bishop Peter began his Advent pastoral letter by thanking everyone for their prayers during the Synod of Bishops. 'It was an exhilarating and exhausting experience, and a great privilege to be there'

He then turned his attention to the season of Advent and to the jubilee of mercy.

'Towards the end of these four short weeks of Advent we shall look back to the birth of Jesus Christ. Today we look forward to Christ's second coming. The language in our scripture readings can be unsettling, but that is the point, to wake us up and prepare a way for the Lord.



In the Gospel of this Mass, Jesus calls us to be alert and to hold our heads high. Jesus wants us to be fully alive, with our faith and hope in God giving all we say and do a deeper meaning. That is quite a challenge as we come up to Christmas with our eyes drawn to the shops and supermarkets in search of "the perfect Christmas." Jesus' warning about the danger of our hearts being coarsened with too much food and drink and the worries of unreal expectation hits the target. His words are another "wake up" call for me.

To keep heaven in my sights at what can be a frantic time, I need some space, a moment however short, to look beyond and to recognise the presence of God with us now. Whether you are home alone like me or with family or friends, why not join me in lighting a candle every day of Advent and pausing in silent prayer to allow Christ's light to shine in your heart and home.

To encourage us in our life with God, Pope Francis is inaugurating a Jubilee of God's Mercy. This Holy Year begins, as I mentioned, on 8 December and ends on the Solemnity of Christ the King next year. It is an opportunity to deepen our understanding and experience of God's mercy so that people will know they can find mercy and forgiveness in our communities.

To mark the holy year Bishop Peter opened the traditional holy door, one in Northampton cathedral; the other in Gewrards Cross. 'During the Holy Year it would be good to arrange for groups from the parishes to go on pilgrimage to one or other of the "Holy Doors". I also look forward to celebrating Jubilee Year of Mercy Penitential Services in the Pastoral Areas during Lent.

It would be good, too, to accompany people who are seeking God's Mercy. We do need each other's help and support when we feel far from God, "the God who is merciful

and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6).

Just as Jesus is the face of the merciful Father, so in this year we are invited to be merciful like the Father. We can rediscover what are called the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And there are the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.

That is a big agenda, but perhaps your ears pricked up at one of those ways of being merciful, and that could be your agenda.

May I also invite you to join me in this season of Advent and at the beginning of the Holy Year of Mercy in celebrating the Sacrament of Penance.

The bishop ended his letter with a reference to the reading from St. Paul at that Sunday's Mass: "May the Lord be generous in increasing your love May he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints Finally, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life you are meant to live, the life that God wants" (1 Thess 3:12-13, 4:1).

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON

EXTRAORDINARY
JUBILEE
YEAR OF
MERCY

8 DECEMBER 2015 -
20 NOVEMBER 2016



"God's mercy is from age to age"
LUKE 1: 50



The banner, pictured alongside, will hang outside many of the churches of the diocese during the Jubilee Year of Mercy. It shows a

calvary scene from the church of St. Martin de Porres, Luton. The holy year logo and motto appear at the bottom of the banner. Together they provide a summary of what the jubilee year is about. The motto, *Merciful like the Father*, (taken from the gospel of Luke) invites us to follow the merciful example of the Father, who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure.

The logo, the work of the Jesuit, Father Marko Rupnik, presents a summary of the theme of mercy. It represents an image quite important in the early Church, that of the Son having taken upon his shoulders the lost soul, demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation leading to redemption.

The logo has been designed in such a way so as to express the profound

way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love with the power to change one's life. One particular feature worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one's own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

The scene is captured within the so-called *mandorla* (the shape of an almond) a figure quite important in early and medieval iconography, for it calls to mind the two natures of Christ, divine and human. The three concentric ovals, with colours progressively lighter as we move outwards, suggest the movement of Christ who carries humanity out of the night of sin and death. Conversely, the depth of the darker colour suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father, who forgives us.

The day the cardinal came



On October 29 Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangong celebrated his 67th Birthday by celebrating Mass at Our Lady of Light in Long Crendon with Bishop Peter Doyle, Fr. Leszek Wisniewski, Fr. Eric Manley-Harris who retired as the Parish priest of Long Crendon a few years ago and a number of other priests from the local area.

At the start of Mass both Bishop Peter and Fr Leszek greeted the Cardinal with whom they are well acquainted as they both visited Myanmar earlier this year to celebrate

the 500th anniversary of the introduction of Christianity to that country and the Cardinal responded very warmly as he observed that a large number of the congregation were known to him.

It was a very happy occasion and the church was filled with local parishioners and members of the Burmese Community who had gathered to welcome the very first cardinal of Burma. The Mass was followed by a celebratory dinner of Burmese food served in the church hall which was at-

tended by a number of local personalities.

This was the first time a Cardinal has visited Long Crendon where we have a resi-

dent sister in residence from the Order of St Paul which was founded by Cardinal Bo in Myanmar (Burma).



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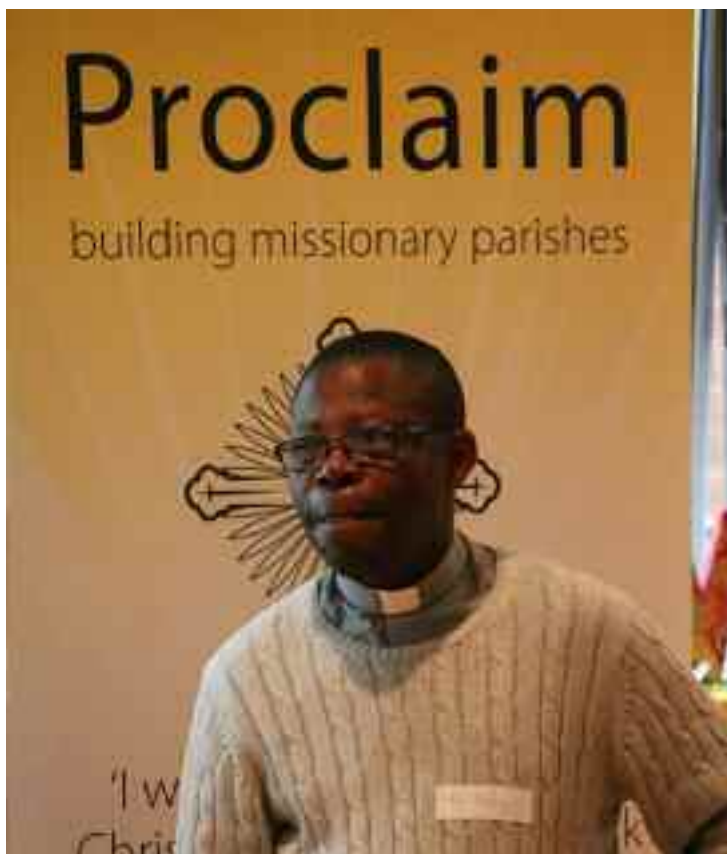
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renewal of evangelisation.

We then heard from Michelle Collins, from the host parish, who shared her experience of the Northampton Proclaim day and how she was inspired to take part in the outreach event, encouraging us all to go beyond our own fears to reach out with an open heart to spread the Good News. The diocesan initiative has a parish focus so it is for each parish to make itself, through its people and its committees, a centre of evangelisation.

Avril Baigent, from St Anne's, Wendover, also part of the host parish, recounted a very successful Family Day that had been held a fortnight before. It had been decided to have a specific target audience, whilst being as inclusive of all, so it was targeted mainly at the children and parents of the local Catholic schools. We were shown a video of the events, presented by Piera and Rosa, two of the girls taking part showing the very active participation of the children in a whole variety of events, including some delightful singing by school choirs. The day had been very well supported, with the Gospel message at the heart of the event. This had undoubtedly been a great success, bringing more children into Mass on the following Sundays. Avril concluded by emphasising the need to reflect on what had been achieved, and what the next steps should be. She underlined the importance

of two things in their success – finance and a lot of prayers!

The fruits of the Proclaim Conference in July were recounted by Alex, who pointed out that there is now a great deal of information on line which can be drawn on, such as www.catholicnews.org.uk/proclaim, as well as the handout "Companion for the Journey" and the leaflet on every day evangelising he had made available. In other words, there are plenty of resources for parishes to draw upon in planning their activities in evangelisation. We were reminded about the centrality of prayer in all our evangelisation efforts by Mike Gibbons from Rushden (St Peters), that prayer leads to change and is how we gain God's help for ourselves and other. Fathers Jude Iroh (Our Lady of Lourdes, Aylesbury), Father Andy Richardson and Bob Bryant (Our Lady of Peace, Burnham), gave us an inspirational session on the possibilities of forming Parish Evangelisation Teams. They stressed the importance of having a vision and a strategy, as well as the need for team players who will gel and work collaboratively, not just "the usual suspects", but making a selection based upon each individual's experience of Christ. It is necessary to take a view on what is needed in the community, and to translate this into realistic steps. They underlined the fundamental importance of the active support of the parish priest for success; prayer and the help of the Holy Spirit is crucial in an aggressively secular society.

Bernie Garfitt, like Bob a parishioner at Burnham (Our Lady of Peace), talked about the testimony workshop she had attended and how we can prepare and use our faith story particularly with friends in everyday life. She explained how she had learned that giving a three minute testimony was not something to be afraid of doing, but also that evangelisation through

everyday witnessing to faith was a powerful way of spreading the Gospel. While taking care to tailor one's message to your audience (be it many or just one person) letting God work through you was the key. She also spoke of the value of sharing faith stories at Mass, whether beforehand or afterwards (or even during), with the support of the priest, which can be both move and inspire others.

Ian and Maggie Milrain (St Teresa's), Beaconsfield-based representatives of the Landings programme, spoke of reaching out to non church-going catholics who need a helping hand to come back to the Church. They explained Landings as a welcoming format for people finding their way to the Church, a compassionate and listening approach to support one another. They pointed out the efforts needed to overcome the problem of making contact, but that this can be done opportunistically as the occasion arises. However, once contact with the individual is made, the Landings group provides a safe harbour as well as a welcome. The difficulty is sometimes that people are reluctant to leave the group when their church attendance has become a regular part of their lives!

Then it was the turn of Laura Cullen to introduce herself as the newly-appointed Youth Worker in the Northampton Youth Ministry Office, and to explain the work she would be doing in the southern part of the Diocese - primarily promoting World Youth Day in Cracow next summer, in the first instance. This is an important, but not exclusive, part of her task in promoting the Church in the lives of our young people. Father John Fleming (Guardian Angels, Aylesbury) added his voice to accentuate the need to encourage friendship and ecumenism so that we "get out of our Catholic ghetto" and join the community of fellow Christians in evangelical teams, many of whom have excellent existing initiatives.

Catherine Mulligan and her sister Elizabeth (Sacred Heart, Northampton) joined Bob Bryant from Burnham parish to speak of the value of the 24 week Bible Timeline study course which tells the story of salvation chronologically. It is a way of building a relationship with God, and its length should not be a disincentive to setting out in faith. It has such benefits in equipping catholics to explain their faith and thus for evangelisation.

We broke for lunch – and for prayer in the Church. As a feature of the evangelisation learning process, a gazebo had been erected on the church forecourt where fresh coffee and home-made cakes were available. As this was open directly to the High Street, although it was an open invitation to all. Participants in the event were "sent out in pairs" to the adjoining streets to invite people to join us in friendship, there was certainly at least one deep discussion about the Gospel.

The day closed with Mass celebrated by Father Wayne Coughlin (Immaculate Heart of Mary) and Father Andy Richardson. Bernie from Our Lady of Peace, Burnham parish gave a very frank and moving testimony of her journey to faith.

In Birmingham on 11th July 2015, 35 delegates from Northampton diocese, including the Diocesan Evangelisation Team, joined over 800 delegates from across the dioceses of England and Wales for Proclaim '15, a historic conference on evangelisation. The second of the diocesan "follow-up" days took place on 17th October in Damien Hall at the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Great Missenden. It was led by Alex Heath of the Diocesan Evangelisation Team, and was attended by representatives of parishes around the Northampton Diocese

Some 55 people gathered in the Damien Hall. Alex started the proceedings with a prayer and hymn to hear, and explained that we were meeting in response to the Holy Father's, and our Bishop's call to the



Family matters

In November, 'Lux.teachings', an event for 11 - 18 year olds, came to St. Thomas Aquinas and All Saints parish in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. Young people took part in a mixture of activities and listened to a talk from Fr. Christopher about the recent 'Synod on the Family'. The group then ordered in pizza before there was an opportunity to put questions to Fr. Christopher and the evening finished with prayer.

31 young people braved the cold evening

and bustled into the parish meeting room at St. Thomas Aquinas. After a game to warm everybody up, the group considered the many relationships we have that connect us to other people. Using a ball of string, each young person named somebody they had a connection to, and soon a large web formed between them. From the people who make our clothes, to the people who drive us to school, we connect, directly or indirectly, to hundreds of people every single day. The group looked at the account



of Genesis and remembered that this is no coincidence: God made us for communion.

Moving on, the group then looked at Sacraments: 'outward signs of inward grace'. Some dioramas were made (using jelly babies!) of the sacraments being administered, and the young people thought about the graces that are conferred through the physical actions of the sacraments. They were reminded that the marriage union is a reflection of Jesus' deep love for his bride, the Church!

Fr. Christopher then spoke of the recent Synod in Rome. He said that marriage is about more than being attracted to somebody, and more than having compatible

personalities even. Rather it is about self-sacrifice: demonstrated to us perfectly on the cross. He explained that we are all called to love in a self-sacrificial way, no matter what our situation and who we are attracted to.

After a time of questions and answers, the group prayed: they meditated on the well-known verses from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 to consider the demands that real love places on us! 'Lux.teachings' is a monthly event coordinated by NYMO. Each month the event is hosted by a different parish and focuses on a different topic. If you would like your parish to host an evening, email steve@nymo.org.

Prayer for refugees



The St. Vincent de Paul conference at St. Teresa's Beaconsfield organised a Service of hymns & readings on Monday 23rd November at St. Teresa's Church. The service was led by Fr. Henry Sanni ably assisted by Fr. Michael Ajoyi and Deacon Michael Phelan. Invitations were sent out to other churches in Beaconsfield and other SVP Conferences in the diocese. The serv-

ice was rather moving as stories of refugees were read as well as Bible readings. At one point Fr. Henry sang a song in his native Nigerian. An opportunity to donate to the refugees was made in the form of a retiring collection after the service.

Kevin Broderick

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This relief pumpkin sculpture is the work of **Anna Couldry** a young self taught artist, who is a parishioner of *St Gregory The Great, Northampton*. It was displayed at the side of the sanctuary during the celebration of the feasts of *All Souls and All Saints*.

Pumpkin Pope



Trying it for size

For the last year St. Thomas More school has had the pleasure of welcoming Year 6 students from St John Rigby Catholic Primary School. The purpose of the visits is to allow students to experience Secondary School life; familiarise themselves with the buildings, meet the staff, try out different lessons and activities and have the opportunity to voice any worries they may have about changing schools.

Activities have included making bread monsters out of pizza dough, creating a collage picture of St Thomas More and creating Easter chocolate nests and decorations. Most recently the students from St John Rigby came for the afternoon and on this visit they learnt about the story of St George and then had fun making dragons and acting out the tale. The pupils showed real creativity during this task and it was clear they are all very excited and looking forward to their transition to St Thomas More.

All of the pupils that have visited us are a credit to their current schools and I am looking forward to seeing them grow at St Thomas More Catholic Teaching School.

QUOTATIONS FROM THE ST JOHN RIGBY STUDENTS:

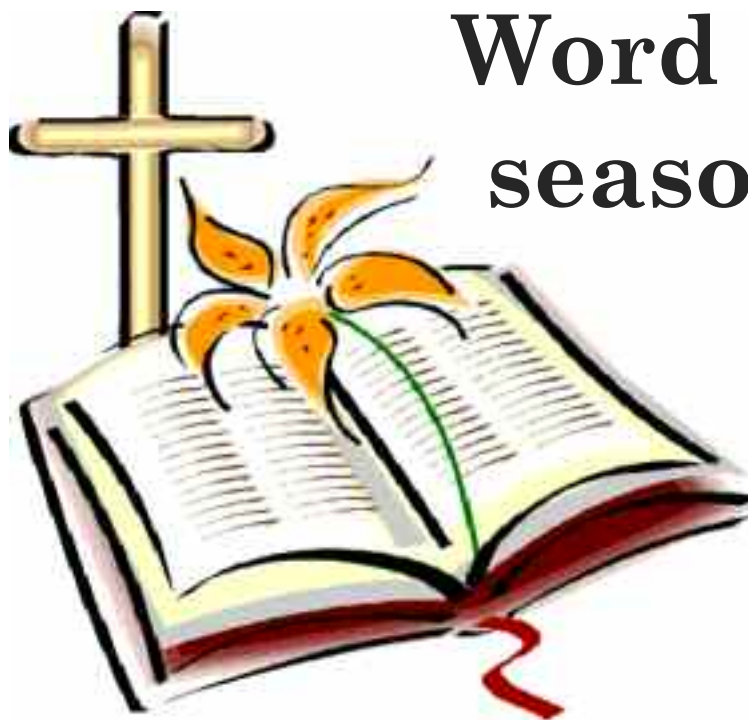
"I have had so much fun at St Thomas More and I can now say that I am most certainly ready to transfer there. I have enjoyed our lessons on RE as they have really given me a great look at Christian information. I will probably visit the Holy Room for peace and quiet 'alone time' every now and then.

I have most of all enjoyed cooking as it is my favourite subject and it has inspired me to apply to go on the CBBC Junior Cook Off. I look forward to transferring and can't wait to try new things at Thomas More. Thanks a lot."

Chanay Hendrickson, Year 6

*Miss Burrows,
St Thomas More*

Word in season



Welcoming the arrival of the messiah

One of my favourite paintings is Rembrandt's last work: *Simeon with the Christ Child in the Temple*. It was left on his easel when the painter died in 1669. It depicts an old man with his eyes seemingly closed, holding the Christ child, with Anna looking on. This is the scene of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple—one of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

The story is told in the second chapter of St Luke's Gospel. We hear how Mary and Joseph went up to Jerusalem 40 days after Jesus' birth, to fulfil two Jewish rituals. The first ceremony was the ritual purification of a mother after childbirth. In accordance with the priestly regulations in Leviticus chapter 12, the mother could offer a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, if she was too poor to afford to bring a lamb for sacrifice.

The second ritual was the consecration of the firstborn male child to God, in accordance with Exodus chapter 13. The ritual was an act of thanksgiving, acknowledging God as the giver of life. It also recalled God's protection of Israel's firstborn during the tenth plague of Egypt, just before the exodus.

St Luke's narrative focuses on the figure of the aged Simeon. He was a devout man who looked forward to the coming of the Messiah—a time when God would comfort his people by removing their burdens. Like other prophetic figures, he is guided by the Holy Spirit to come to the temple and speak.

What Simeon finds in the temple is the fulfilment of his hopes and the fulfilment of all Israel's longing, in the person of the newborn Messiah. And so he gently takes the precious child into his arms and gives thanks to God.

The old man recognizes that the coming of this child marks the end of an era. This devout representative of the people of Israel has now seen the Saviour, who will introduce a whole new time of salvation. And hence Simeon can leave this earth in peace, happy to see that God has not forgotten his people.

Whereas the common Jewish expectation had been for a Messiah to deliver his own people from foreign domination, Simeon's words reach further outwards. He speaks of God's salvation prepared for all the nations to see,

not just for the first chosen people. This will set the tone for the whole Gospel, and for its sequel in the Acts of the Apostles.

After Jesus' resurrection, the apostles will be sent out, not merely to Judea and Samaria, but even to the ends of the earth. Jesus' good news is as much for Jersey as for Jerusalem, as much for Southampton as for Samaria, as much for Gosport as for Galilee.

But there is a careful balance here between valuing the people of Israel and respecting the other nations. The Messiah will be a light to enlighten the pagan nations. His good news is intended for every nation of the world.

Yet the Messiah will also be the glory of the chosen people of Israel. Luke's Gospel begins in the Jerusalem temple with the annunciation to Zechariah of the birth of a son, John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner. And this Gospel ends in the Jerusalem temple with the disciples praising God after Jesus' resurrection and ascension.

And so our faith builds upon the faith of Israel, as St John tells us: "Salvation comes from the Jews." Yet this story indicates that the time of preparation is now over. God's first revelation to Israel is now opened up for all the nations of the world. The hopes of the prophets have come to complete fulfilment, in ways beyond what the prophets could dream.

Simeon's utterances are backed up by the witness of the devout widow Anna. She was also dedicated to God and spent long hours praying in the temple. And she too gives praise to God for fulfilling his promises, and speaks constantly of this child to all who had been hoping for God to come and deliver Israel.

Neither Simeon nor Anna saw the completion of God's plan. They did not survive to witness Jesus' death and resurrection, but they died with firm hope, because they had seen the Christ child. We too have seen the newborn Christ, and we too look forward in hope for God to fulfil all his wonderful promises. Like Simeon and Anna, let us give thanks to God, who never deserts his people.

For weekly notes on the Sunday readings see: www.tarsus.ie

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Image goes to Glasgow

The Guardians (from Bedford) arrived in Glasgow on 23 October and were warmly welcomed by clergy and people. There was a very full programme, starting with the service of Reception and then Veneration of the Relic Image on a daily basis. Many schools supported the visit and the children listened attentively to the story of the appearance of the image on the linen and the scientific investigations. The Relic Image was displayed in the devotional area of St Andrew's Cathedral. Among the thousands who came to venerate the Relic Image were Mary Doogan and Connie Wood (the Glasgow midwives) Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, Archbishop Emeritus Mario Conti, Bishop John Keenan (Paisley Diocese), Bishop Toal (Motherwell), Bishop Nolan (Galloway), Sisters Roseanne and Andrea from the



Cardinal Winning Pro-life Initiative, John Deighan (CE SPUC Scotland).

The Annual Pro-life Torchlight Procession was held on Thursday 29 October, starting at 6.30 pm in George Square and ending at the Cathedral. About 1000 pilgrims, including many young people, took part in the march which finished with the Service of return and the Mass for Life, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia being the principal celebrant. Only 600 people could be accommodated in the Cathedral and the remaining 400 following the events on special relay screens in the nearby gardens.

The Guardians left Glasgow the following morning, exhausted but full of admiration for the kindness and devotion of the Scottish people. The help given by the KSC, under the guidance of Brian Henry was very much appreciated.



Woof, woof

This year the South Bucks Circle of the Catenians voted to donate £400 to the charity Hearing Dogs for the Deaf which is based in Saunderton, Buckinghamshire. A number of Brothers and Ladies were able to visit the centre and see for themselves the wonderful work that the charity does and also hear from a volunteer speaker how they are able to change the lives of a grow-

ing number of people who have become profoundly deaf. The charity train hearing dogs to alert deaf people to select household sounds and danger signals in the home, work place and in public buildings, providing a life-changing level of independence, confidence and companionship.

Bro. Ian Mason who organised the visit thanked all those who came and supported this charity and invited any groups or associations that might like to visit the centre in the future, just let him know via South Bucks Circle secretary Gerald.cox@tiscali.co.uk. Ian is able to coordinate up to 20 people for a visit which is held every Thursday afternoon.



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Launch of new peace group



A Northampton Diocese Pax Christi group was launched at a meeting of local members and supporters on 31 October 2015.

Pax Christi – the international Catholic movement for peace – is a grassroots peace organisation working nonviolently for peace and reconciliation in over 100 countries worldwide. The work of Pax Christi UK focuses particularly on campaigning against the arms trade, against nuclear weapons, and for a just peace in Israel and Palestine.

As members met in Northampton to discern what a local expression of Pax Christi's work would consist of they spoke of the issues that prohibit peace in their local areas and how they might be engaged with. Members explored many ideas and issues including how Pax Christi's Peace Sunday (17 January in 2016) may be better promote and celebrated in our parishes, how the companies working in the arms trade within our diocese might be challenged, and how we can work locally in support of the campaign to scrap the UK's nuclear weapons.

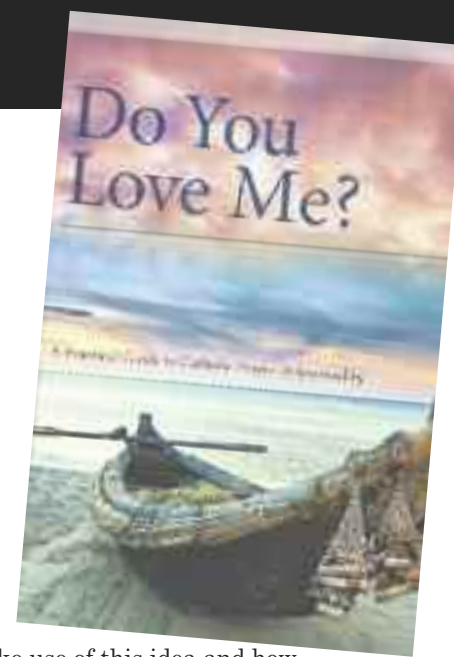
To get involved in the work of Pax Christi in the Northampton Diocese please email mattjeziorski@gmail.com

Book review

“Do you love me?”

a practical guide to Catholic Prayer and Spirituality.

CTS £5.95 Published 2014.



This is a book which is ever old and ever new and has been produced with imagination and much thought. The text of the book is prepared on behalf of the Bishops of England and Wales by a working party of the Spirituality Committee of the Bishop's Conference. Cardinal Vincent Nichols has written a Foreward and in it he says that he hopes the book will be a help to our life of prayer and in our relationship with the Blessed Lord.

The illustrations are attractive and the photos which illustrate the text from John 21 have a fresh and inviting appeal. The text of John 21 and the conversation between Peter and Jesus are a core theme in the book. The question “Do you love me?” is the question Jesus puts to Peter and to us and of course this forms the title of the book. Each section of the book follow the same format and includes a “pray -a- psalm”. I found this section particularly helpful and the section called “putting- it-all-together” which summarises the main points and highlights what the church teaches.

The book can be used by individuals or by small groups of people. In either case it is intended to be interactive so that the reader is encouraged to reflect and to jot things down in a notebook or in a file on the computer. This is an excellent idea and it would

be interesting to know how many

people make use of this idea and how many might subsequently be encouraged to keep a “Journal of the soul”.

This is a thoughtful and well designed book which gives us ancient Catholic teachings in a new and imaginative way. I am a recent Catholic convert and I am greatly encouraged by “Do you love me?” It seems to me that there is a great shortage of relevant and accessible material to encourage lay people in their journey of faith. This book helps to put that right.

My only criticism of the book is that it lacks an index which would be helpful as there are so many quotations from famous saints, writers and thinkers including Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Teresa of Avila and many others.

It is to be hoped that Parish priests will place this book on their church bookstall and encourage people to make use of it.

Margaret Inegbedion

Kettering mums inspect apostles

For several months in the Parish of Kettering, we have had blue collecting boxes for parishioners to be giving of their old unused religious missals, rosary beads, prayer cards, etc., which have been blessed, put into a drawer and forgotten. The Apostleship of the Sea have a need for the above items to be given to sailors to

provide comfort during their extremely long time at sea; they can be away from their families for up to ten months of the year. The trip to Felixstowe Docks by the Union of Catholic Mothers, was an opportunity to take the boxes to Sister Marian, RC Chaplain, Stella Maris, the Apostleship of the Sea and learn more about the work.

We set off about nine thirty, from the London Road car park, on a very dismal Monday morning but we were all in good spirits. There were thirteen passengers altogether, including Peter our driver, Brian our navigator and visiting priest from Uganda, Father Joe Kisito. All three men took up the seats at the front of the coach.

After a comfort stop we arrived at the docks about twelve noon. Sister Marian was waiting and guided us into the Passport Control Office where some confusion prevailed over the non-arrival of appropriate forms. However, eventually it was arranged for ten members to be driven by the Mariner's own mini bus driver and the remainder by Sister Marian. A police escort was provided which added to the excitement of the trip. We followed the police car, with the mini bus and Sister Marian's car in tow all around the dock area. The massive container ships, unloading on one side of the dock and at the far end loading up from the huge cranes onto the enormous ships. The workers, all wore high visibility waistcoats and hard hats. We were given a very good idea of how dangerous a place the dock can be.

After the tour, we made our way into the Seamen's Mission Centre and upstairs Sister Marian had laid on tea and cakes. We sat together at a large table and ate our packed lunch and later members drifted off to look around the chapel and hear how the chaplaincy works; the caring of seamen and the support given, I would say, is second to none. Sister Marian not only looks after Felixstowe, but Harwich, Ipswich and Kings Lynn, known as the haven ports. Everyone was intrigued by this little known work.

A meal had been booked at a pub/restaurant, the Hand in Hand, at Trimly, St. Martin, a short distance from the docks. Sister Marian was invited to join us which she agreed to do and so added to the wonderful atmosphere which permeated through our final treat.



Golden day for Sister



The community of Our Lady of Lourdes, Aylesbury, came together on Saturday 3rd October to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Bernadette Larkin, their Parish Sister.

Preparations had been in hand for some time with Sr. Anne Marie from St. Joseph's Church in Thame putting the choir through its paces. She also managed to bring a large contingent from her choir in Thame to support Our Lady of Lourdes choir.

We had much to be thankful for. Sister Bernadette had originally trained at a Primary School teacher at Coloma College in Kent in the 1960s. She then taught in both Enfield and Ponders End for some 23 years. Somehow, she also found time to help with Parish Catechetics, the RCIA programme, and a range of Ecumenical activities. In the school holidays, she helped at CWL catechism camps at Letchworth, Norwich, Bury St. Edmunds and Walsingham.

A request was made to her Order, the Daughters of Providence, to serve in Thame. In 1993, Srs Bernadette and Anne-Marie moved to Thame with Sr. Bernadette teaching for a short while at St. Louis School, Aylesbury, before being persuaded by Fr. Frank McDermott to become Parish Sister at Our Lady of Lourdes.

Celebrations began with a Concelebrated Mass with all Aylesbury clergy and Fr. Denis Labarette as Principal Celebrant.

With the augmented choir, Religious Sisters from the Order's Mother House in France and nearly 200 parishioners, Mass was a very moving occasion. A letter of congratulations from Bishop Peter thanking Sister for all her work was shared with the congregation. After Mass, the entire company adjourned to the Parish Hall for a celebratory buffet prepared by the parish's Social Team, an opportunity to reflect and rejoice in the great work undertaken by the Daughters of Providence.



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St Mary's Primary - Caddington



The importance of School Meals

Our School Council recently worked with our school meal providers, Eden, to discuss the importance of school meals and how they could be made more enticing to children and more healthy.

The children worked really hard and gave our visitors a real grilling, if you will pardon the pun!

On top of this our School Council have worked with Eden to devise a new dessert for the primary school menu. The final title of the dessert is St. Mary's Fiery Fruit Squiggle Cake and the main ingredients of this lovely cake are pineapple and wait for it.....chilli! Go on try it, you may just like it!

01582 602 420 www.stmarysprimary.org.uk

St Vincent's Primary - Houghton Regis



Support the Foodbank in Dunstable

We, the pupils of St Vincent's, were sad when we heard in assembly that some people living near us had no money to buy the food that they needed. We decided that we wanted to help them.

We asked everyone in school to buy something extra at the supermarket during October and bring it into school. The prayer tables in school were overflowing with the food that we brought in to help those in need.

We were really pleased when we received a huge thank you from the Foodbank because we donated enough food to provide 300 meals for those in need.

Year 3
01582 862 456 www.stvincentshr.org

St Joseph's Primary - Luton



Celebrating 60 Years

On Friday 19 June 2015, the community of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School welcomed all the clergy, staff, governors and invited guests to a special Mass with Bishop Peter Doyle, Bishop of Northampton.



We gathered together to commemorate 60 years of the St. Joseph's school communities and also to celebrate becoming one new community, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, from 1 January 2015.

We now look to the future of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School and all its members, giving thanks for the last 60 years and living in hope for all that is to come.

01582 572 964 www.stjosephsprimaryluton.co.uk

Cardinal Newman - Luton



Walking for Syria

On Friday 23 October 2015 staff and students at Cardinal Newman Catholic School put on their sturdiest walking boots for their long-standing tradition of a 5km sponsored walk around the beautiful countryside of Warden Hills in Luton.

Overcast skies did little to dampen the spirits of the 1450 students and staff who were raising money for charities nominated by students themselves. Each year students donate a large portion of their fundraising to one main cause and continue to support two primary schools in Africa for supplies, buildings and furniture. In 2015 students want the £5000 raised so far to support CAFOD who are helping refugees from Syria.

Headteacher, Mr Joe Richardson, who led the walk said, 'It is a great privilege to see the continued generosity, kindness and community spirit shown by our students towards those much less fortunate than themselves. As we walked, we kept in our minds all of the great work undertaken by the charities we are supporting, aware that so many people in our world are at present walking to find a place where they can live in peace and freedom.'

01582 597 125 www.cardinalnewmanschool.net



@CNSLuton @Newman6th
Cardinal Newman Catholic School

Sacred Heart Primary - Luton



Be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.

Sacred Heart pupils explored this quote when they recently participated in the Shakespeare Schools Festival, performing Twelfth Night at the Luton Library Theatre to standing ovations. The brilliant team effort of staff and pupils created a lively and energetic production of Shakespeare's comedy.

It was an amazing and memorable experience for all the cast as can be seen in the children's comments:

'When I went on stage I felt like running off but as soon as I said my first line I didn't feel like me, I was Olivia, heartbroken and lovesick.' *Farrai*

'I found out that I have big voice.' *Nicole*

'Being the main character was hard work, especially learning all my lines! I'm now much more confident and it was a night to remember.' *Isla*

'The Shakespeare School Festival has really helped my confidence grow and helped me to understand the language of Shakespeare. It has proved to me that I can do anything.' *Lucy*

Staff, pupils and parents of the Sacred Heart School are very proud of our Shakespearian actors and we look forward to participating again next year.

01582 730 781 www.sacredheartluton.org.uk

St Martin de Porres Primary - Luton



St Martin's and the Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has asked us all to celebrate a Year of Mercy starting on 8 December 2015 and ending on 20 November 2016.

Here at St Martin's we are creating a Year of Mercy Art Gallery of children's artwork along one of our main corridors. To do this we asked the children to take part in a Year of Mercy art competition. The response has been fantastic and we have received some very creative and inspiring pieces of work. We haven't chosen any winners yet but here is one example, created by Nathan Bucio in Year 6. As we walk along the corridor such images will remind us of God's mercy and forgiveness.

01582 617 600 www.stmartindepurresluton.co.uk

St Margaret of Scotland Primary - Luton



St. Margaret's celebrated Mass for the start of the new school year recently. Fr Mirek came along to celebrate with us and, during Mass, our new Young Chaplains were commissioned. He then blessed the 21 prayer bags which were kindly donated by the Diocese, along with 'Together in Faith'. These were distributed to each class and each child in the school will have the opportunity to take the bag home and use it as a stimulus to pray as a family. The children were very excited and looking forward to taking their turn.

Our Young Chaplains will be serving the school by leading prayer groups and organising other opportunities for all pupils to explore their faith.

After the blessing, one of our new Young Chaplains commented, 'Being a chaplain makes me feel really happy because I'm helping people get closer to God and helping myself get closer to God.'

01582 723 430 www.margaretofscotland.org.uk