



# The Vine

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DECEMBER 2016

Issue No. 330

Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

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## Luton's sunshine pilgrims



On a bright and balmy Saturday morning in late September more than two hundred parishioners from the Luton Pastoral Area journeyed together as pilgrims to visit the Cathedral in Northampton. Our purpose was to celebrate the Jubilee Year of Mercy, seek God's grace by passing through the Holy Door and share in the celebration of Mass on feast of Our Lady of Walsingham. After a welcome from the Dean, Fr Mark Floody, Fr Brendan Seery gave an interesting talk on the history of the Cathedral building from its foundation in 1825 on a site once occupied by a Benedictine abbey, itself dating back to the middle ages. After refreshments and an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, pilgrims attended Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter with the priests and deacons of the Luton Pastoral Area. In his sermon Bishop Peter spoke of the power of pilgrimage. 'The greatest gift', he said, 'that we can take home is the grace of God's mercy which we are called to live in the corporal works of mercy; feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, healing the sick, visiting the prisoner and, yes, burying the dead. Yes, you can take home the richness of God's mercy'. After a moving and uplifting celebration, everyone made their way to the Cathedral gardens for a picnic in the sunshine. A day to remember!



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## Westminster

The Catholic bishops of England and Wales have launched a web site to serve the needs of those near death.

The site, The Art of Dying Well, offers information, encouragement, and counsel both for terminal patients and for family members, as well as links to prayers and rituals. The site was inspired by a 15th-century manuscript, Ars Moriendi, which filled a similar role. The site is produced with the cooperation of chaplains and medical experts, with a special emphasis on palliative care.

The site also encourages visitors to send photos of those who are confronting death. These photos are sent to five convents and abbeys, where religious have promised to pray for those people.

## Three Faiths Founder has died

Sir Sigmund Sternberg, philanthropist, renowned interfaith campaigner and co-founder of 3FF, has died. He was 95. A true giant of the interfaith movement, Sir Sigmund spent most of his life building better relations between people of different faiths and beliefs.

He founded 3FF, the Three Faiths Forum, together with Revd Dr Marcus Braybrooke and the late Sheikh Dr Zaki Badawi in 1997. The founding of 3FF was only one of his many achievements in the field, which include strengthening the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ), helping to form the International CCJ (ICCJ), and working to better Catholic-Jewish relations.

Born 2 June 1921 in Hungary, Sigmund Sternberg relocated to Britain in 1939, on the eve of the Second World War. He started trading in metal and built up a company so successful that he was able to sell most of his business interests in 1965 and devote his time to charitable interests. He formed the Sternberg Founda-

tion in 1968, joined the ICCJ in 1979, and founded the Sternberg Centre for Judaism, then Europe's largest Jewish cultural centre, in 1981. He became President of the Movement for Reform Judaism in 1997.

He worked tirelessly to resolve conflicts within and between religions both in the UK and internationally. One of his most notable achievements was successfully finding a peaceful solution to a conflict over a Catholic convent set up in the grounds of Auschwitz in 1984. He also organised the very first papal visit to a synagogue in 1986.

Sir Sigmund received numerous awards and honours for his work, including a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II, a Papal knighthood from Pope John Paul II, and the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.



## Dublin

The little-known story of the Turkish Sultan who was one of the few people to come to the aid of Ireland during the Great Famine, is the focus of a new film currently in production, starring Irish actor Colin Farrell.



Turkish Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, Taner Baytok. It reads: "The Great Irish Famine of 1847 - In remembrance and recognition of the generosity of the People of Turkey towards the People of Ireland."

The story is also remembered in the insignia of Drogheda United Football Club -

which depicts a Turkish star and crescent moon.

Between 1845 and 1852, Ireland endured the terrible loss of a million dead and the mass exodus of more than one million people never to return. When the Turkish Ottoman, Sultan Khaleefah Abdul-Majid I, heard about the unfolding disaster, he declared his intention to send £10,000 to help Irish farmers. However, Queen Victoria intervened and requested that the Sultan send only £1,000, because she had only given £2,000 herself.

So the Sultan sent just £1,000 in cash - but also secretly sent five ships full of food. The English courts attempted to block the ships, but the food arrived in Drogheda harbour and was left there by Turkish sailors.

It probably saved thousands of lives. (That £10,000 would be worth over a million now)

The movie is built around this charitable act from a Muslim country to a Christian one, separated by 4,000 miles. The generosity of the Sultan was all the more impressive, as his own empire was experiencing enormous internal difficulties at the time.

In 1995, a plaque was unveiled in Drogheda by Mayor Alderman Godfrey and the then

## Rome

In a stunning move, Pope Francis has replaced all of the members of the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship, the body in charge of liturgical questions. On October 28 the Vatican announced that Pope Francis has appointed 27 new members to the Congregation for Divine Worship, completely transforming the membership of that body.

The new appointments give a distinctly more liberal character—as well as a more international complexion—to the congregation. Among the prominent new members of the congregation will be Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Secretary of State, Cardinal Beniamino Stella, the prefect of the Congregation for Clergy, and Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, the president of the Pontifical Council for Culture. Probably the most controversial new appointment is that of Archbishop Piero Marini, who clashed frequently with liturgical conservatives during the years when he served as master of ceremonies for papal liturgies under St. John Paul II.



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(vine01@btopenworld.com). We promise to print your news as soon as we can find space for it. Material should be emailed 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 children 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 on request.

The content of each issue is decided by the editor.

Views expressed in The Vine are not necessarily those of the editor or of the diocese. The publisher of The Vine deals with all advertising. To place an advert ring 01440-730399. For difficulties with distribution contact the editor.



# Children show mercy



St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Primary School have had a very busy week of Harvest celebrations. They had a visitor from Noah Enterprise who came to the school to explain the work done by this charity and how the pupils and their families could help support them. In line with the Catholic Year of Mercy, the children have been learning about the importance of sharing what they

have with others. Over the course of the week more than 1,000 items of food were donated by the families and staff of the school. It was an act of huge generosity which was gratefully received by 'Noah'.

**Caroline Forde**  
*RE Lead Specialist*

## Mission International

On Thursday 13 October Fr Alessandro Renò was officially welcomed to the Diocese, the Pastoral Area of South East Buckinghamshire and as the Priest in Charge in the parish of St Columba, Chesham.

Fr Michael Spain, the Dean from St Joseph's Gerrards Cross, presided at the induction Mass. Fr Andy Ollard, from

Our Lady's Chesham Bois concelebrated; also present was Deacon John Crowshaw from St Aidan's Little Chalfont. Churches Together for Chesham (CTFC) were represented by Rob Gorst, Pastor of the King's Church Chesham and chair of CTFC.



Before the Mass the Mayor, Noel Brown, and Deputy Mayor, Emily Culverhouse welcomed Fr Alessandro to the town.

Fr Alessandro, from Italy, was ordained in 2014 in Ecuador where he had been working in the suburbs of Portoviejo. He arrived in the Diocese in Holy Week last year and has now begun his new mission in Chesham.

During Mass Fr Alessandro made his Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity on Assuming the Office of Priest in Charge. There was a wonderful sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit during the Mass attended by many parishioners, young and old, of St Columba, the other churches of the pastoral area and fellow Christians of the town. The reception afterwards demonstrated a true sense of community.

Fr Alessandro wrote 'Prayer is the key word for our future. Please pray for me as I will for and with you. In fiducia cordis, and a big hug, remember to keep your smile'.



**O Mary conceived  
without sin, pray for us who  
have recourse to thee**



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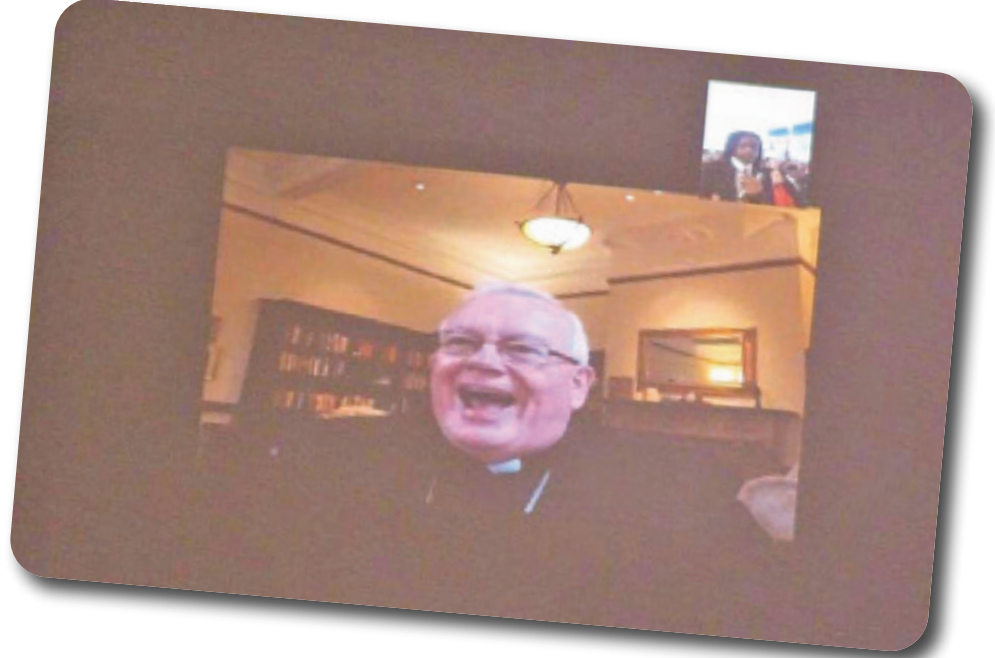
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, loved, adored and glorified  
throughout the whole world, now and forever.**  
**Say six times a day for nine days.**



# Our technological bishop



On Thursday, 13th October, we experienced a very special moment at St. Joseph's – through the wonders of technology, we had an exclusive interview with Bishop Peter!

As a school, we wanted to do something special to mark 'Education Week' and what better way than to invite Bishop Peter to speak to us about our Catholic Education! We know Bishop Peter's schedule is incredibly busy, so we thought we would let technology help us out and arrange an interview via FaceTime. Bishop Peter was more than willing to give this a go, and so the plans were made! At 9:55am, Year 8 gathered in the hall with their teachers, poised to hear the wise words of our Bishop. It was not an easy venture, but with many cables and a sturdy Wi-Fi connection, it was made possible. At 10am the iPad rang, and Bishop Peter greeted us all with a cheerful smile and a

very warm welcome! The students were able to watch the call on the big screen in the hall, and heard Bishop Peter loud and clear through the surround sound! We had 6 Year 8 students, along with Head Girl Maisie and Deputy Head Boy Kudzai questioning the Bishop.

He was asked a range of questions, from 'How long have you been a Priest?' to 'What's your favourite TV programme?' (his answer: live Rugby!) He was also faced with a difficult question from Aaron who asked: "Does God talk to you? And why doesn't he talk to us?" Bishop Peter assured us that just because he is a priest, he doesn't have God on speed dial, or experience anything other than each of us can. He told us that although we would all like to hear a physical voice speak to us, it doesn't happen directly. Bishop Peter said: "We hear God in our prayers and

through other people, through one another. When I need to hear from God I open my heart and try and understand what he is saying". It was a reminder for us as a school to open our hearts and minds to God every day, and to be persistent in our requests to him. We always strive to see God in each other, and Bishop Peter really encouraged us make time to sit quietly every day in God's presence, and to remember that "God is with you always".

It was a really special moment for us as a school, and we were thrilled Bishop Peter made the time to talk to us. It was a brilliant way for us to mark 'Education Week', and a great reminder of the value of our Catholic Education here at St. Joseph's.

**Jo French**  
*School Chaplain*





# Sisters of Nazareth Leave the Diocese



**O**n September 30, 2016 at 12.00 PM, Bishop Peter celebrated a Thanksgiving mass for the Sisters of Nazareth who are leaving the Diocese due to lack of vocations in the UK Region. The Sisters have worked in the Diocese for 141 years.

Mgr. Sean Healy V.C., Fr. Mark Floody, Mgr. Tony McDermott, Fr. Philip Swinger, Fr. Benny Joseph, Fr. Prince Kurian and Fr. John Martin, a Trustee of Nazareth Care concelebrated mass with the Bishop. Also present was Sr. Mary, Superior General and Sr. Anna Maria, Regional Superior. There were also Sisters present from the nearby communities, friends and benefactors and some of the students from St. Mary's Primary School who carried the gifts to the altar during mass.

The Sisters of Nazareth first came to Northampton, at the invitation of Bishop Amherst on 18th November 1875 to open a foundation for the care of older people and children, it was the 6th foundation for our then expanding congregation. The first Home was in St George's Terrace and the annual rent was £30 per annum. This house was very small but at that time it was very difficult to obtain a house anywhere in or out of town and there was much opposition from people of other religions to the Sisters coming to the town.

As the numbers for admission increased the Sisters were compelled to look for new premises. Eventually some land owned by the Bishop next to the Cathedral in Barrack Road was given to the Sisters and a new building was erected and opened in November 1878. Local people were very generous in helping the Sisters to prepare the building for the residents and children. A new wing was added to this in 1889. In 1958 a separate house 'Westwood' was purchased for the children on Harlestone Rd and in 1964 our present Care Home was opened for older people and 48 residents from Barrack Rd moved to their new home.

141 years is a long time and many Sisters, residents, children and staff have worked and been cared on both sites. It is with sadness that we as a Congregation find it necessary to move our community of Sisters from living here on a permanent basis. This is due to the shortage of women joining religious orders in the West which has led to decreasing numbers of Sisters in our houses.

Two years ago the Sisters began discerning the lack of vocations and were asked, "What is your priority given that there are no vocations with the region?" It was soon realized that the priority was community life. Therefore a process of 'Clustering Communities' was undertaken whereby one community would close to sustain other communities. After much deliberation, the Northampton Community was chosen as part of the Clustering Process. With this in mind, the Sisters here in Northampton felt that it was important to pass on three significant values so that what has been built up over the years would continue in their absence. These values were their Ethos, their Core Values and their Mission Statement.

The Ethos of the Congregation describes the focus and aspiration of Victoire Larmenier, the Foundress of the Sisters of Nazareth, which



was rooted in Gospel Values. Her aspiration was seen in the welcome and hospitality she gave to all who came in contact with her. This Ethos was passed on to the 'Friends of Nazareth' who work with generosity and love to support the ministry being done in Nazareth Care.

The Core Values describe how the Sisters live while embracing their Foundress's focus and aspiration. This is done through Love, justice, hospitality, respect, compassion and patience. The core values are at the root of who the Sisters are in the service of others. These Core Values were passed on to Nazareth Care who will continue in this service to others.

The Mission Statement has guided the Sisters to live justly and to act with compassion. This Mission Statement was passed on to the Pastoral Team who will continue to carry out this mission to all who long for the values the Sisters hold dear.

Fortunately, when the Sisters leave Northampton, there is in place a trust called 'Nazareth Care' which will be the operating arm of the services begun by the Sisters. The Care Home will not be closing or should not be affected in any way. Two Sisters will be returning from the Finchley community for 2-3 days each week to assist with the pastoral care of our residents and they will also continue to have a governance role within the home.

This will be the first time the Sisters will have a Home without a permanent community of Sisters on site so it is a time of transition for them. The Sisters will continue to work closely with staff in providing a high standard of care for the residents and would like to say 'thank you' to all who have supported them over the years. They now, more than ever, need your continued support and prayers as they enter this new phase in their history.





# Brushed, combed, scrubbed and rehearsed



Teachers know that when their pupils are asked to do something at the annual schools' Mass they are under the spotlight. So, this year as ever, everything was done to perfection at St. Mary's, Dunstable, on October 14. The children were brushed, combed, scrubbed and carefully rehearsed. This year the focus was on the Year of Mercy.

Bishop Peter began with a geography check. Which of them came from schools in

Northamptonshire, or Bedfordshire or Buckinghamshire or Berkshire? He had to admit that geography wasn't their strongest point. 'But', he said, 'we are still a very big diocesan family'. Then he turned technical. On the previous day he had talked to a Year 8 group via Skype. The class had asked him challenging questions. Does God talk to you? 'Why doesn't God talk to us?' 'God speaks to us through Jesus, his Word' said Bishop Peter. 'And I'm delighted that some of you do meditation in school'.



Then the bishop turned to the theme of mercy. 'Jesus said, blessed are the merciful'. God's mercy is his loving kindness. 'So take home with you this message: God is merciful, and we have to be merciful like him. You all have your own school banners. But let the badge of all our schools together be 'mercy and loving kindness'.

Candle carriers, offertory gift carriers, servers, readers and musicians performed

to perfection. No-one needed the hi-viz jackets laid out in the porch and, duty done they wasted no time getting to their packed lunches in the parish hall.

Candles: St. Michael's, High Wycombe.  
Music: Our Lady's, Chesham Bois.  
Reading: St. Mary's, Aston Le Walls.  
Bidding Prayers: Thomas Becket, Northampton.





# Jo-Anne takes the helm

Parents, pupils, staff, governors, families and other members of the school community gathered on Monday 10th October at a Mass to celebrate the induction of Jo-Anne Hoarty as Headteacher of St Paul's Catholic School.

Mgr Kevin McGinnell, Episcopal Vicar for Education, celebrated the Mass. Bishop Peter's mandate was read by school chaplain Fr. Paul Hardy. 'In this Jubilee Year of Mercy', wrote the Bishop, our schools need to reflect the hope of Pope Francis when he says: The church's first truth is the love of Christ. The church makes herself the servant of this love and mediates it to all people. Wherever there are Christians everyone should find an oasis of mercy'. Mrs Hoarty accepted the role. She swore to do her best, as Headteacher, by word and example, to demonstrate the values of the gospel of Christ as the way of life all should follow. Governors,

school staff and families and all those present agreed to support and encourage Mrs Hoarty in her role.

The Signs of Service, including the school mission statement, were then presented to the new Headteacher.

During the evening the former Headteacher, Mr Michael Manley, was presented with the Benemerenti Papal Award for his services to Catholic Education. The Benemerenti is a medal instituted by Pope Gregory XVI in 1832, and is awarded to people who have exhibited long and exceptional service to the Catholic Church, their families and community. The word benemerenti means 'to a well deserving person', and is featured on the back of the medal, surrounded by a crown of oak leaves; the ribbon is made of Papal colours, yellow and white.



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# Gifts transform lives

Parishes and schools have been fantastic in supporting Harvest Fast Day! Thank you so much! At St Paul's school (Milton Keynes), nearly 300 Year 9 students attended a CAFOD Harvest Fast assembly where they heard from CAFOD school volunteer Cathy Stormonth about life in Bolivia. Many students and staff dressed in their brightest clothes inspired by the bright colours of Bolivia (see picture)



Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in South America, where almost half of the population

(about 2.5million people) lived on less than 90p a day! Climate Change makes growing food incredibly tough and

firewood. They are also often the only means of getting sick people to health clinics, many of which are miles away.



As Mary looked after Jesus, wrapping him in swaddling clothes and laying him in a manger. In Niger in West Africa, CAFOD's partners are helping mothers and their babies be healthy, especially those who aren't getting enough to eat. (see picture)

Another great gift reflects the flight into Egypt. As Joseph, warned in a dream, took Mary and baby Jesus to live in Egypt until it was safe for them to return home, many people who have fled from the war in

Syria are living in refugee camps in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon. Winters there can be very cold. CAFOD's partners are helping families in the camps get the things they need including blankets, a stove and fuel to see a refugee family safely through the winter.

These are only some of the wonderful life-changing gifts which you can give family and friends this Christmas starting at just £4.

Wishing you all a very Joyous and Peaceful Christmas. Thank you for helping us transform lives! For further information or to order your catalogue get in touch with Deborah Purfield – northampton@cafod.org.uk or 01844 274 723.

many people, especially children, are malnourished. Thanks to your support, CAFOD's partners have helped build wormeries and constructed green-houses. This has enabled families to grow crop and have plenty left over to sell. Their lives have been transformed!

Head of Year 9, Lisa Shepherd, told students that 'If every student in Year 9 contributed one pound each that would be enough to transform lives in Bolivia' to which the Year 9 students agreed with.

We all like giving and receiving presents and Christmas is an ideal time for this. But have you ever given a gift which has transformed someone's life? Just as the donkey carried Mary and Jesus, in Ethiopia, for example, donkeys are a valuable asset for families. They can carry heavy loads of water or

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# Following Francis



On the 3rd of October 32 pilgrims from Sacred Heart Parish - Flitwick, St Francis – Shefford, St Mary's – Dunstable and Turvey Abbey led by myself with spiritual leaders Canon Bennie Noonan and Deacon Philip Pugh set off late afternoon for Rome airport. Tamara from the tour operator 'Special-Pilgrimages' met us at the airport and they were on hand to transfer us by coach for the two and a half hour journey to our hotel, the Hotel La Terrazza in Assisi.

Our first day in Assisi coincided with the Feast of St Francis. We had a morning excursion to The Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, this is the place where the Franciscan community were given the rules of the order and where St Francis left his earthly life, dying naked on the ground. Inside the monastery you will find a famous rose garden, where St Francis threw himself to atone for his sins: the plant miraculously missed all the thorns and didn't hurt the body of the saint in any way, even today, the rose has no thorns. The Porziuncola chapel built inside was given to St Francis by the Benedictines, and is important because it was the initial nucleus from which the Franciscan order was born. The next day, a third of the group had a day excursion in Rome, while the others explored Assisi. The excursion to Rome included a visit to the San Sebastian Catacombs, the Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, a beautiful Baroque church known for its collection of relics. Then a visit

to the Holy Stairs or 'Scala Sancta' these are the stairs Jesus climbed on his way to trial with Pontius Pilate and some of the pilgrims climbed the stairs on their knees reciting decades of the rosary. We then visited St. John of Lateran, the official seat of the Pope and the oldest of the Papal Basilicas and then the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, the oldest of Rome's churches dedicated to Mary. Our final destination was to go through the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica, it was a long wait but very worthwhile.

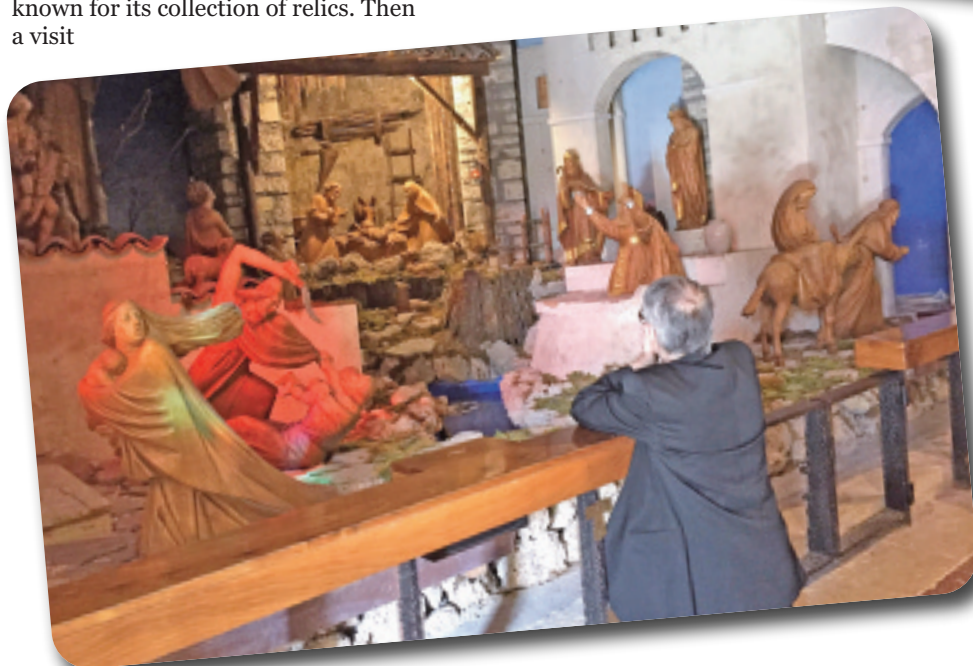
For our last day in Assisi, we had a walking tour which brought us to the Basilica of Santa Chiara, inside the Cappella del Crocifisso is alleged to have spoken to St Francis in San Damiano, ordering him to repair the church. Relics of St Francis and St Claire are kept behind the grate. We then visited the house where St Francis lived when he was a young boy. The Basilica of St Francis it is here where you will find the tomb of Saint Francis, in a crypt under the altar, the most important decorations are the series of 28 frescoes ascribed to the young Giotto along the lower part of the nave. We then celebrated



Mass in one of the chapels next to the Basilica.

On our journey back to Rome for the airport we stopped at the Sanctuary of Greccio, this is a spectacular place located at 2000ft on a steep rock overlooking the "Holy Valley", where St. Francis used to wander. In December 1223, St. Francis devised the first living crib. The idea was to discourage would-be pilgrims to go to Bethlehem, as it was a risky adventure, the Holy Land being then under the control of the Turks. We celebrated Mass, saw the many wonderful cribs from all over the world and continued on our journey to the airport and our flight back to Luton. A wonderful and blessed pilgrimage, with fellowship that will continue and strengthen our faith for many years to come.

Ros Penn



The Feast Day Mass of  
Our Lady of Guadalupe



Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm  
Principal Celebrant  
The Most Rev. Archbishop Bernard Longley  
The Holy Child & St Joseph, Midland Road, Bedford MK42 1PU  
The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe  
Contact Rev. Fr. 01234 340758 email: mky@outlook.com

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# THE QUALITY OF MERCY

This Year of Mercy reminds us that Scripture often speaks of God's mercy before his justice. When God revealed himself to Moses on Mount Sinai, he called himself "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exodus 34). Only then did God refer to the element of justice: "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty."

God's mercy is nicely described in Portia's speech from Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice* (Act 4, Scene 1): "The quality of mercy is not strained. It drops as the gentle rain from heaven, upon the place beneath." Portia goes on to say: "In the course of justice none of us should see salvation. We do pray for mercy, and that same prayer does teach us all to render the deeds of mercy."

Portia's speech echoes the Book of Wisdom—probably the last Old Testament work to be written, as well as the most philosophical. The book's 15th chapter beautifully speaks of God's mercy: "You, our God, are kind, loyal and slow to anger, and you govern all things with mercy. Even if we sin, we are still yours, since we acknowledge your power; but knowing that you acknowledge us as yours, we

do not wish to sin."

Mercy is also mentioned in the 11th chapter of the Book of Wisdom, the first reading on the 31st Sunday of Year C (October 30th). The scriptural author marvels at how God combines almighty power with gentle compassion: "In your sight the whole world is like a drop of morning dew falling on the ground. Yet you are merciful to all, because you can do all things."

In fact, the very existence of everything depends on God's mercy: "Yes, you love all that exists. You hold nothing of what you have made in abhorrence, since, if you had hated anything, you would not have formed it. You spare all, because all things are yours." As Pope Francis says in his recent encyclical on the environment: "God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things" (*Laudato Si'* #77).

The 6th chapter of the Book of Wisdom also reminds rulers of their re-



sponsibility to use their power gently: "Listen then, kings, and understand! For power is a gift to you from the Lord, and sovereignty is from the Most High, who will himself probe your acts and

scrutinise your intentions." As Portia's speech declares: "Earthly power does then show most like God's, when mercy seasons justice."

Mercy and judgement are both mentioned in the same passage from the Book of Wisdom: "Ruthless judgement is reserved for the high and mighty. The lowly will be compassionately pardoned, but the mighty will be mightily punished." God wishes to show mercy to those humble enough to receive it, but the high and mighty can be brought low, because God is higher than all the earth's powerful rulers

Finally, the Book of Wisdom holds out the hope of divine mercy for the faithful who have passed from this life. Many Catholics recognize the opening of the 3rd chapter, because it is often

chosen to be read at funerals: "The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God; no torment shall ever touch them." This text has consoled countless people at times of bereavement.

The reading outlines God's promise of mercy in the next life: "Those who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen." A similar statement occurs in the 4th chapter, describing the reward offered to good persons who die prematurely: "Grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord, and protection awaits his holy ones."

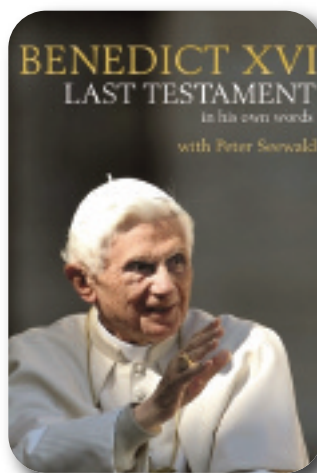
Whereas in this earthly life, many people suffer injustice and even die without receiving visible rewards, God mercifully promises a good recompense in the life to come. If God is indeed "gracious and merciful" (Exodus 34), these qualities do not finish when we leave this earth, but we are promised a full experience of them in the eternal life of heaven.

[For weekly notes on the Sunday scripture readings see: [www.tarsus.ie](http://www.tarsus.ie) ]

**Scriptural Notes by  
Father Jeremy Corley**

## Book Reviews

### ***Last Testament: In His Own Words* by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, with Peter Seewald**



In this most touching and revealing book - the nearest Pope Benedict will probably ever get to writing an autobiography - the author speaks with disarming honesty and humility of the causes célèbres which impacted his pontificate, as well as his inner life, his life of prayer and his firm belief in God. This book comes as a final and fitting sequel to his previous works on Jesus of Nazareth.

Fr Stephen Wang said: "I've seen snippets online and I'm dying to read the whole book. It's not often (in fact never before!) that we get the chance to overhear a Pope reflecting on his papacy after the event."

**Fr Stephen Wang**

Dame Joanna Bogle writes: "I am hugely looking forward to this book - it is THE book of 2016 and a must-read. Benedict XVI is one of the great men of our era, and one of the finest minds in the Church and in the world. He is also hugely readable, with an extraordinary ability to open up the great truths of the Christian faith in a simple and attractive way. This book is his last direct gift to us."

**Dame Joanna Bogle**

Available from CTS £14.95 RRP: £16.99

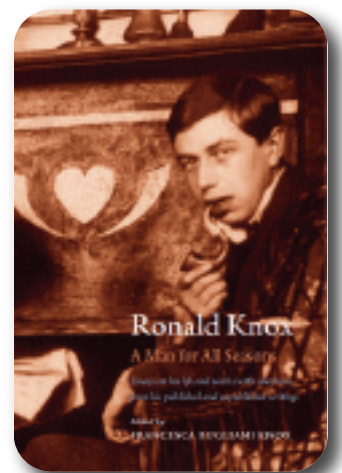
### ***Ronald Knox: A Man for all Seasons***

A new book: *Ronald Knox: A Man for all Seasons* (ed by Francesca Bugliani Knox) is being launched next Monday at Heythrop College. Fr Nicholas Schofield, archivist of the Archdiocese of Westminster, will be giving the introduction.

Ronald Knox occupies a conspicuous role in English religious, cultural and literary history, and he was also one of the leading lights of the English 'Catholic revival' of the first half of the twentieth century. This collection of essays examines his many interests, setting them in their historical context. It discusses the profound effect that the Great War had on his religious life, his engagement with Benedictine spirituality, the distinctive characteristics of his apologetics and preaching, and his engagement with a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

Like Thomas More, whom Erasmus famously dubbed 'a man for all seasons for all men,' Ronald Knox was a man of many talents. He was a classicist, writer of fiction, translator, theologian, essayist, journalist, historian, preacher and spiritual guide. His aptitude for writing in a variety of literary genres was evident from an early age.

This volume addresses Knox's original contributions to each area of his interests, literary as well as theological. It illustrates his insights into Virgil's *Aeneid*, explains the value of his fiction and discusses the merits of his translation of the Bible. It also looks into Knox's deep understanding of the liturgy and the reasons why his spirituality had and continues to have such a strong appeal. Finally, it suggests that many aspects of his theology and his use of humour and satire remain pertinent today. Two extensive selections of Knox's unpublished writings and correspondence, as well as published pieces that are now difficult to trace, complement the essays in the volume.





# School gains challenge award

St Thomas More Catholic Teaching School is the 373rd school nationally to achieve the prestigious NACE Challenge Award. This Award is given for high quality work by the whole school, teachers and governors, in challenging all pupils, including those with high abilities, to achieve their best.

NACE Chief Executive Sue Riley said: "St Thomas More Catholic Teaching School has worked hard to win the NACE Challenge Award status. It has shown itself to be committed to developing a school and providing an education where all pupils are challenged to be the best they can be."

The Award is given by the National Association for Able Children in Education, a leading national education organisation and charity, established for over 30 years. The Association exists to support teachers in providing for pupils with high abilities whilst enabling all pupils to flourish. It provides advice, training and resources for teachers, including The NACE Challenge Award Self-Evaluation Framework which St Thomas More Catholic Teaching School has used to review and plan what it provides for more able and talented pupils. Many thousands of primary and secondary schools are using The NACE Challenge Award Framework to develop their work.

Assessors, for the award, were impressed by the strong leadership and management of provision which keeps the needs of more able learners at the forefront of the school's work, supported effectively by governors. They judged the quality of the school's work by observing lessons, interviewing the pupils, teachers, parents and governors and by looking at the pupils' work. The accreditation was made on the basis of the high quality and commitment they saw across the school.

*Sue Riley, Chief Executive*



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# Harmony, harmony, let's all sing in harmony



These words kick-started the concert given by the Cantare Singers at the Cathedral of Our Lady Immaculate and St Thomas of Canterbury on 28th September. The evening raised over £1500 for the new Diocesan Centre.

The Cantare Singers are a four part, male and female choir based in Northampton. The group has raised thousands of pounds for good causes during the 40 years since they formed. For more information please see their website [www.cantaresingers.com](http://www.cantaresingers.com)

At the end of the concert, Cathedral Dean, Fr Mark Floody, thanked everyone for supporting the event. Special thanks was given towards the wonderful singing of soloists, Linda Treacy, Jacqui Woods, Andrew Howes and John Sheldon as well as Loren Lantsbery who was the accompanists for the evening.

For more information on the Diocesan Centre and how you can offer your support please contact the Campaign Office on 01604 712065.

## ***The Northampton Safeguarding Commission is looking for new members!***

If you have experience or expertise of working in a safeguarding capacity relating to children and/or adults, then you would be an ideal candidate to join our Commission as a member. The local Commission are looking for new members to join and be part of the safeguarding structure of the Catholic Church in this very important work. As a member, your role will include attendance at Commission meetings which take place approximately four times each year.

Here is a statement from one of our current Commission members on what the role means to him. "Being part of the diocesan safeguarding commission offers me the opportunity to shape the way

we as a church respond to the needs of young people and vulnerable adults. Supporting strategies that affect people during some of the most challenging times of life. Realising the positive effects our decisions have on the lives of individuals; protecting, caring and promoting safer environments for all". If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Commission member, please either contact Danielle Dixon, the Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator or refer to the Diocesan website.

***Danielle Dixon  
Safeguarding Co-ordinator  
Northampton Diocese***

## **A great knit**



Pupils from the Sacred Heart Primary School Knitting Club have been busy making poppies for charity. Along with staff and helpers, they knitted over 120 poppy brooches which have been passed to the British Legion to sell as part of the Poppy Day Appeal. The Knitting Club are keen to support all charities; previous projects included making tiny jumpers for babies in Africa, and bonnets for premature babies.