



The Vine

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FEBRUARY 2017

Issue No. 332

Northampton Diocesan News

FREE Every Month

Salt & Light

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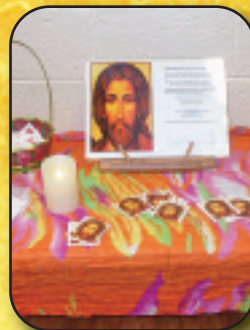
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Up, up..... and away



On the 8th December Sacred Heart Primary School pupils performed for passengers and staff at Luton Airport this December. The children sang their favourite Christmas Carols reminding all who heard them of the true meaning of Christmas and raising funds for Keech 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. Melanie from Year 6 commented, "It was a fun and challenging day because we were

singing for two hours but I really enjoyed it." Megan also in Year 6 said, "I loved singing at the airport and seeing people smiling, some people even took selfies with our choir and videoed us singing so that they could share them with their families and friends."

The choir of Sacred Heart Primary School hope to perform again next Christmas at Luton airport. Meanwhile they are looking forward to their next performance which is in February at the O2 when they are singing in the Young Voices Concert.

Renowned Theologian, Author and Director of The John Paul II Institute in Stockbridge, Massachusetts

DR. Robert Stackpole STD



Is giving talks on the **DIVINE MERCY MESSAGE** and devotion in five parishes of the Northampton Diocese.



DR. Stackpole is an expert on all matters concerning the message of Divine Mercy, as given to us by Our Lord through St. Faustina, and has written several books on the topic.

17th February 6.30pm

St. Patricks, Gainsborough Road, Corby NN18 0RJ

18th February 11am to 1pm

St Edward's London Road Kettering NN15 7QQ

18th February 2.45pm to 4.30pm

Cathedral, Kingsthorpe Road, Northampton, NN2 6AG

19th February 5pm to 7pm

Sacred Heart, Pyramid Close, Weston Favell, Northampton NN3 8DP

20th February 7pm - 9pm

St Edmund Campion, Henshaw Road, Wellingborough NN6 2AY

For More information please contact Wanda Leckie on 01536 511200 or 07886 960062



New Year Pastoral Letter

Bishop Peter's Pastoral Letter on New Year's Day asked 'what does Mary, mother of Jesus, highlight for us?' After the visit of the shepherds Mary treasured all they had told her about her new-born son, and it in her heart.

Accepting the will of God in her life and focussing on the mystery of her son in prayer are two lessons we can take into the new year. Like Mary, we can be peopled of prayer, and our lives can be directed in response to the will of God. We can pray for the grace to be faithful to the commandments, the commandments of love.

Openness to God in prayer and faithfulness to His will brought huge changes in Mary's life. It might have been easier and safer to say 'no'. But Mary's 'yes' has brought hope into a fallen world. She has given us the promise of eternal life through her son. The change in Mary's life has been infinitely positive.

Of course, change in our lives is challenging. We like things to stay the same. There is a kind of security in not changing anything. But our real security is in God, and God is calling us constantly to change, to become more like his son. So, we can ask the prayers of Mary for the grace to accept change positively.

The bishop revealed that before Christmas he went to look at some flats. His retirement is a few years away. 'I came away from the flats really depressed. I am very happy as I am, and I do not want anything to



change! Now I realise that with prayer and the support of friends that, when the time comes, I must put my trust in God and look forward positively to new opportunities. Perhaps, even more importantly, there will be new opportunities for our diocese.

Next Sunday, said the bishop, is the feast of the Epiphany. As with the wise men, May, the mother of Jesus and our mother, invites us to treasure our faith in Jesus and to ponder with her on what Jesus is asking of us in 2017. Certainly Jesus is asking us to be people of peace, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God.

'As we heard in the first reading of the Mass, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace in 2017.

Nurturing the seeds of faith



In the Bible we see the Word of God compared to a seed. This seed is sown into our hearts by the Lord and nurtured throughout our life. Throughout history, and still today, God calls people to partnership in this work of sowing and nurturing the seed of the Word of God in people's hearts. One of the important ways this is done is through the work of catechesis. Catechists truly have a vital and irreplaceable role in the life of the Church!

One of the ways the Diocesan RE Service supports this work is by running a course called 'Being a Catechist'. This is a five session course for potential new catechists as well as current catechists that provides an overview of what a catechist is called to in the life of the Church. Drawing on the words of Pope Francis, the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church the course helps build confidence, understanding and skills to encourage catechists.

The course has been run in Luton, Northampton, Slough and Beaconsfield to date and our next course will take place in

Bedford (please see dates below).

We are also taking bookings for future courses and would be happy to run it for your parish or pastoral area on request please contact the NORES office and get in touch with Alex Heath for more details.

Please keep an eye on The Vine, our monthly newsletter NORES News or our website to hear about various opportunities coming up in 2017 to grow in and share our faith.

Being a Catechist- Basic Training for the Ministry of Catechesis (Bedford Course) Holy Cross RC Parish Centre, 355 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK41 0DP

Dates:

7.30pm-9.30pm on Friday 10 March 2017 & (9.30am arrival) for 10am-4pm Saturday 11 March 2017.

Please contact admin@nores.org.uk for a booking form or see www.nores.org.uk



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 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.

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We celebrate our Patron

The feast of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated with great solemnity in Northampton cathedral on December 8. The feast owes its origin to Byzantine Christianity. Mary, mother of Jesus, was honoured under this title from the 8th century.

It was, though, much more controversial in the Roman west. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, was adamantly against it. Inevitably, the Franciscans were very keen on it. Chief among them was Blessed John Duns Scotus, professor of theology in the university of Cologne, who was ordained priest in Northampton in March 1291.

Between 1851 and 1853 Pope Pius IX consulted the world's bishops. Given their support Pius defined the doctrine in 1854. 'We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the saviour of mankind, was preserved from all stain of original sin'.

It was just at this time that the newly restored English dioceses were organis-

ing themselves and building cathedrals. So Mary Immaculate was an obvious choice as patron, as in the diocese and cathedral of Northampton.

In his homily Bishop Peter reminded the congregation that a year ago he had opened the Holy Door for the start of the Year of Mercy. Accidents and breakdowns prevented a number of people from reaching the Cathedral.

Perhaps it was a reminder that there is a real opposition to the mercy of God, to the flourishing of the Church and to 'the growth of the Kingdom of God. 'That obstacle is the reality of sin. Sin separates us from one another. Sin creates disharmony within ourselves, between ourselves and in society'.

Bishop Peter recalled the first reading which described our fall from grace. 'All of us are wounded, subject to ignorance, suffering and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin and evil'. Baptism turns us back to the Father, but life becomes a spiritual battle. The Lord alone is our light and our help.

The Bishop then turned to Mary, The



Readers and singers

Immaculate Conception.

'At the announcement that she would give birth to 'the Son of the Most High' as a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary responded with the obedience of faith. She embraced the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son'.

Mary, our mother, offers us a positive challenge in the example of her faithful obedience to God's will. For Mary, it

was a life changing act of faith and obedience. God seemingly demanding the impossible. Yet, nothing is impossible to God. And that is a true for each of us in our lives as it was and is in the life of Mary.

Bishop Peter ended his sermon with words of hope. 'Let us pray that we may be people of prayer, that we may grow in our knowledge and understanding of what we believe and how we should live, and that we may be a community of welcome and service for the praise and glory of God.



Below left: the opening prayer

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This year's Easter story

A 24 page Easter story-activity book illustrated by Alida Massari is included in the Original and Dark eggs.

Salt & Light



Declan, aged 19, is from Aylesbury. He is a veteran altar-server, is involved in peer-ministry with Confirmation groups and is a graduate of the diocese's young leader's programme, The Salt & Light Project.

The Salt & Light Project is a year-long programme for those aged 16+ who want to take on a leadership role, alongside work or study. The young leaders begin their year by going away on retreat together and, with the help of an adult mentor, plan and lead a project in their parish, school or local area. We asked Declan to tell us about how he got involved. "I was standing at the back of church and a youth-worker in our parish just came and grabbed me, saying 'This is right up your street!' The first thing we did was go away on a retreat weekend which was really good. I met some good people who I am still in contact with. It was actually really chilled out and people really enjoyed it. This was a great experience even by itself.

Through The Salt & Light Project I got the opportunity to be a young leader at the Lux. weekend (NYMO's yearly retreat for 11-18 year olds) I also got to find out more about my parish that I might otherwise not have done. I now understand how difficult it can be to organise something, even if it seems little! It's impossible to do something by yourself, you have to work with other people, so I've definitely developed communication skills while working with other parishioners.

These challenges give you good skills for the future. It's given me a new love for youth ministry. It's given me leadership skills. This has helped me with other church projects that I've since been involved in and given me confidence.

For my project, I decided to run some practical workshops with our altar servers. We had some new altar servers who had recently made their First Holy Communion. I have since continued training with these younger servers, it's like a continuous thing: I am able to help them if they do something wrong and encourage them when they do things well.

In the future I'd like to gather other young people as a sort of core team and then work with Confirmation groups. I don't want to see young people getting Confirmed and then be done with the church until they get married! Church is a permanent thing in your life and it's not just about going to Mass once a week: God can intervene in our lives! The Salt and Light Project was a good way for me to build on my faith. I don't want to just turn up and say the responses. I have begun to look at my church and say, 'what can I be involved with, how can I help other people in my parish?'"

To find out more about The Salt and Light Project, visit www.nymo.org, 'Youth leaders' and then 'Young Leadership Team'. If you know somebody who might want to do take part in the programme for 2016 - 2017, email steve@nymo.org



Haddenham's new hall



The parishioners of Haddenham and Long Crendon were delighted to welcome Bishop Peter Doyle on Sunday 4th December 2016 when he came to spend a day with them. He celebrated Masses in both parishes, conducted a service of healing in Haddenham and blessed the new meeting room which has just been built at Haddenham.

For many years, the parishioners of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Haddenham have recognised the need for a meeting room and plans have been drawn up only to be rejected by the planning authorities for a variety of reasons. A couple of years ago, Fr Leszek set up a small task force of experts under the leadership of Eugene Toolan to produce a plan which would be acceptable to the planners. After numerous discussions and modifications, planning permission was obtained and the diocesan authorities gave their approval to the plans. Work commenced in April 2016 and was completed by the end of November.

The question of how the building was to be financed was solved very neatly when Mary Chettle who used to attend Mass at the church on a regular basis, died and left a very generous legacy to the parish. This together with money from "Together in Faith" and cash in the bank was sufficient to cover the cost of the new building without parishioners being asked to make any further contribution. As Mary lived in a house in Longwick called "Rosary House" it seemed appropriate to name the new room "The Rosary Room."

The new building has been designed in the same style as the church and the car parking has been reordered to increase the number of spaces available. The building contains a meeting room, a well-designed kitchen, a wash room designed to accommodate the disabled and an office for the parish priest. The priest's small garden has been redesigned and provides a space for him to relax during the summer.

Bishop Peter, in full liturgical dress, stood before the new building and blessed it. Then he joined the people in the new meeting room where he cut the ceremonial cake and enjoyed meeting parishioners.

Michael Pitt-Payne



Common effort in Slough

These happy smiling faces are members of Holy Redeemer who completed a sponsored walk in Black Park on a lovely autumnal day in October - they were very rewarded by raising £2980. - but added to this sum was a further £760 raised by the children and staff of St Ethelbert's School, Wexham, who held a mufti day. A cheque for £3680 has been sent to Cafod and we have chosen two appeals for the money to be shared between, the Ethiopian Crisis and Water Aid. Holy Redeemer Cafod Group are delighted to be working with St Ethelbert's primary School in raising funds and awareness of the plight of the underprivileged in our world. We would like to thank everyone who helped with this year's fundraiser.



Bedford Backpackers

When Anne Reddin and I organised a Beetle Drive to help the homeless neither of us had a project in mind, but before long we decided to provide rucksacks filled with much needed supplies to support the homeless and disadvantaged in Bedford throughout the winter months.

Our target was to provide 50 filled packs to be distributed by staff at The Prebend Day Centre, run by registered charity, Bedford Concern for the Homeless & Rootless (BeCHaR). Prebend take a holistic approach to helping the homeless and support an average of 70 individuals per day. This year they are experiencing an unprecedented demand for their services.

Many people have been involved in this project, led by our Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP). We have received donations from parishioners, volunteers from the He-



bron

Soup Run, Focolare Movement and the SVP at Holy Child and St Joseph Church.

Each rucksack contains a fleece/jumper, hat, pair of gloves, 2 pairs of socks, scarf, blanket, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, soap, pack of wet wipes and a pack of tissues, pack of sanitary pads (females), disposable razor, flask,

spoon and a fork, 2 tins of baked beans (ring pull top), pen and a pack of playing cards.

We are truly thankful for the support that everyone has given to this project.

Pam Kenworthy
President
St Philip & St James
SVP Conference

Stations of mercy

The year of Mercy may have come to an end but, as we know, God's mercy never ends which was a part of the learning and experience of St. Mary's Catholic primary School, Northampton at the end of November.

We invited many members of the parishes and the community to

help us reflect on God's mercy and our own. During the course of the day each class visited the school hall where there were 6 'Stations', inspired by the Stations of Mercy at Liverpool Cathedral and manned by our brilliant volunteers.

The activities at each were different and included writing the names of people we needed to forgive in sand so that it could be wiped away as they forgave, considering the gift of the Eucharist and writing 'thank you' post its to put on a cross. We engaged in a guided meditation and blew bubbles to show how quickly

God forgives; we also took a pot of bubbles each home to remind us of that fact and that God can make us smile! We watched a DVD on the Prodigal Son and considered what practically we had done in school to show mercy and each, made a promise of something they could do NOW!



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CAFOD's view of Brexit

Brexit: Let's make all UK trade work for the common good

Millions of people in developing countries are working their way out of poverty thanks to trade with the UK. In some areas good trade rules have meant strong progress for the poorest people. Trade impacts all aspects of development, including the price of food, access to affordable medicines, and environmental protections. Most tea farmers in Malawi only make half the income considered essential for a decent life, and Ivory Coast cocoa farmers earn less than 50p a day. The environmental impacts of the goods we import are considerable, damaging the climate and decimating ecosystems.

One of the results of Britain leaving the EU, in the wake of the referendum vote last June, is that the UK will be responsible for setting our own trade policy. As one of the largest economies in the world, there are considerable incentives for global companies and other countries to play by the rules we set. The UK should use its trade policy to benefit even more of the world's poorest

people.

Brexit offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the government to embed poverty elimination into all our global trade. We can and should adopt policies that benefit even more poor communities by making it easier for them to export more valuable products to us taking into account environmental protection and respect for human rights.

In March, the government will trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty that formally starts the process of leaving the EU. After that point the government will focus on the negotiations and we anticipate it will be more difficult to influence trade policy. So we have an opportunity now to influence the principles on which the UK will found its new role in the world.

Please write to your MP and ask them to remind the Secretary of State for International Trade, Liam Fox, of the importance of a values-based trade policy that can promote our own interests, and facilitate sus-

tainable poverty reduction, respect for human rights and environmental protection, dramatically improving the lives of millions of people. There's more information on cafod.org.uk/trade to help you with your letter. Our government needs to hear our concerns!

CAFOD has a very long history of campaigning on trade and working for fair conditions for people in global supply chains. From helping to found the Fairtrade Foundation, longstanding membership of the Ethical Trading Initiative, playing a key role in Make Poverty History to detailed engagement with the World Trade Organisation, we've been at the leading edge of these debates. We lobbied successfully for requirements for businesses to be included in the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Now, let's build on what we know works for the poorest.

Thanks for your continued support of CAFOD's work.

Deborah Purfield
CAFOD Coordinator

Cathedral holds a Lampedusa cross

On a cold night, a boat filled with refugees trying to reach Europe capsized off the coast of Lampedusa. Over three hundred people perished. Moved by the loss of life, the local carpenter, Francesco Tuccio, made crosses from the wreckage of the boat and offered them to the survivors of the disaster as a sign of hope. Pope Francis carried a cross at a memorial service visiting the site of the tragedy stating that "We are a society which has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion".

As part of the year of Mercy, CAFOD asked Francesco to make crosses for every cathedral across England and Wales which he did from wreckage of boats which continued to land. The Northampton diocese Lampedusa Cross has been touring the diocese in the year of Mercy and used in many parishes, schools and groups as a powerful sign of solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are facing such difficulties. It was very moving to see how people responded to this and to read the messages of hope that were sent to CAFOD (see our blog for examples). The cross will be left as a Legacy for the diocese



and housed in the Cathedral. It is still available to borrow. If you would like to host the Lampedusa Cross please get in touch with Deborah Pur-

field at the CAFOD office : northampton@cafod.org.uk or 01844 274 723

Bletchley boost for Pope's own mission



Fr Wayne Coughlin (Parish Priest of Wendover-Great Missenden and Diocesan Director of Missio) visits the Parish of Bletchley in order to promote the papal charity. He is accompanied by Ron Graham (the Red Box representative in the parish) and some of the congregation from the Saturday morning Mass at which he preached. Fr Wayne is hoping to visit all parts of the Diocese in order to speak about Missio! If Parish Priests would like him to celebrate or preach at a weekday Mass or if you would like him to speak at your parish groups please contact him: (01494) 862049 / info@parishfamily.org.uk

Since 1922, Missio has been the Catholic Church's official charity for overseas mission. We bring the hope of the Gospel where there is turmoil, poverty and uncertainty in the world, and where the Church is new, young or poor.

Missio empowers local people to form and sustain communities of faith and we train and nurture future leaders so that the vital work of the Church in the world can take place.

Students, staff and parents take the pledge

Our annual Advent Service at St. Paul's secondary school, Milton Keynes, was a very spiritual occasion. We used as a basis for our liturgy an adaptation of the Advent Service produced by CAFOD. We were very privileged too to be able to borrow the Lampedusa Cross from the Cathedral as the centrepiece of

our service which was placed together with a child's life jacket. The Lampedusa Crosses were made by a carpenter, Francesco Tuccio, from the small Italian island of Lampedusa. When hundreds of refugees who were fleeing Eritrea and Somalia drowned off the coast of Lampedusa, he was moved to gather

the driftwood from the wrecked boats and turn them into crosses, which he offered to survivors as a small but powerful symbol of hope. CAFOD in turn sent one of these crosses to each of the Cathedrals in England and Wales. Students, parents and staff joined in the service and also completed the Lampedusa

Cross pledge cards expressing gestures of love this Advent. The service gave us all a real opportunity for quiet reflection on the true meaning of Advent in the busy lives that we lead.

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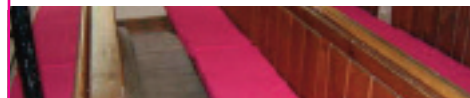
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Consecration of St John's



Bishop Peter consecrated St. John's church, Luton, on November 1. The date was significant. The first Mass was celebrated there on November 1, 1966. The building had previously done duty as a barn. But it lay to the west of the town, undergoing a rapid industrial development, and the growth of new housing estates. In fact the area came under close scrutiny from sociologists who saw new styles of life emerging and wondered in numerous books whether we were all becoming middle class.

Two former parish priests attended the celebration, Fr Tom Kenny and Canon Mark Floody. And there was a celebration of a different kind, Maureen Borbone, retired deputy headteacher of the town's Cardinal Newman school, received a Bener Merenti medal for her long service to the Catholic community.



Pictures: top right" Canon Floody, Bishop Peter, Fr. Kenny, Fr. Brennan. Right, belowan 'asperges for the congregation; below, Maureen Borbone receives her medal; below left: the Eucharist: top left: Fr. Kenny with parishioners.



Christians for Calais is sad to report the final demolition of St. Michael's, the well-known Orthodox church in the Calais Jungle refugee camp.

During the dramatic events of the overall camp demolition on the morning of Thursday 27th October the group of refugees who have lived by and cared for the church were arrested and detained. This was in accordance with the efforts of local authorities to remove all refugees in the Calais area, sending them to Centres d'accueil et d'orientation (CAOs) within a limited timeframe and arresting all those remaining.

After discussion between other caretakers of the church and with help from Broeder Johannes Maertens of Secours Catholique, it was decided that the most important contents of the church, including paintings and icons sent as gifts from churches around the world, should be taken into storage for safekeeping. Fire remained a constant threat to all remaining structures in the Jungle, in addition to the bulldozing work of the authorities. After this, the salvage team then removed and rescued parts of the structure, recognising their symbolic and historical importance. Photographers were banned from the church compound and this operation was carried out with dignity and respect, with female volunteers covering their heads and all workers removing shoes.

The CRS riot police and bulldozers surrounded the church on Friday 28th October. Remaining worshippers held a final moving service outdoors. Remarkably, the machinery and police eventually left and did not return, although there was no official reprieve, which due to the weekend and French holidays gave the church almost another week to stand – testament also to the prayers of believers in camp and around the world who had been alerted to the news, and to the support shown by volunteers of no faith too.

Sadly the inevitable took place early in the morning of Thursday 3rd November. Bulldozers toppled the famous steeple and crosses, setting aside two large crucifixes that remained inside.

St. Michael's was one of the first longstanding structures in the Calais camp and remained the most impressive building on the site, escaping the clearance of the north zone at the beginning of March 2016. It was featured on the BBC's Songs of Praise in summer 2015 and has received visitors from all around the world

Primarily, however, it remained a place of peace, calm, worship and solace in among the chaotic and often traumatic events in the Calais Jungle. We hope that all those who worshipped there have moved on to safer lives and continue to pray for them. We are reminded too that however significant this building was, the church is found among God's people wherever they may be.

Refugee jungle church demolished




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pray for us



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Our Lady of Lourdes**

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

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Thursday 9th February 2017
at the Angelus time of 6pm.
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The Luton Circle of the Catenian Association is pictured outside the Royal Palace, Madrid.

The action packed few days, in the October half term was partly organised by Catenian Brother Jesus Barrasa, who is from Madrid.

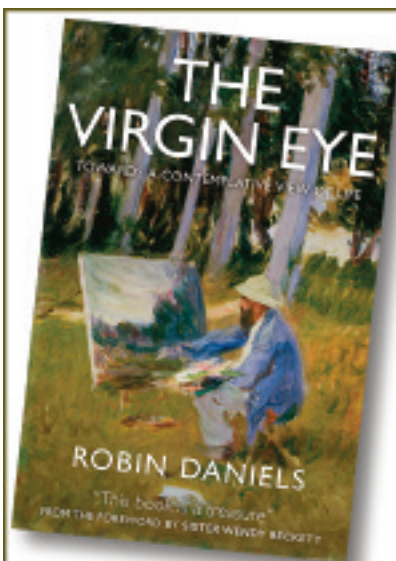
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THE VIRGIN EYE by Robin Daniels

The Virgin Eye by Robin Daniels inspires us to see the world anew through the innocent eyes of a child, so as to become more aware of God's presence in everyday life and encounters.

This book offers insights into contemplative prayer and mindfulness; making wise decisions; enjoying a creative relationship; slowing down; and managing change and stress. Daniels demonstrates how we can put St Paul's challenge request to 'pray without ceasing' into practice. He explores how we can turn suffering and trial into opportunity and growth, as we learn to see God, ourselves and other people with a pure heart and a pure eye.

This book is a treasure.

Sister Wendy Beckett, Art Critic, BBC's Sister Wendy's Odyssey

I wish it had been available years ago. It should be required reading.

Roy Godwin, Executive Director, The Fieldy-Brenin Trust and author of The Grace Outpouring

Highly recommended!

Brian M. Noble, Emeritus Bishop of Shrewsbury

It is less a book and more a journey which will not fail to transform your relationship with God, self and others.

Teresa O'Leary, Director of Pastoral Care UK for the Association of Christian Counsellors

It will be a blessing for all into whose hands it happens to fall.

Canon John Udris, Spiritual Director, St Mary's College, Oscott

This wonderful book is a fount of wisdom.

Fr Vincent O'Hara, OCD, Director of the Avila Centre

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