



**Chaplain
to
Guardians**

Page 5



**Annual
schools'
Mass**

Page 6



**Road
to
Rome**

Page 8



**CAFOD's
Triathlon
boy**

Page 12



Toast of the town



At a ceremony at The Cube, Corby, Fr Gerard Byrne, of St. Brendan's and St. Patrick's was one of the recipients of the Spirit of Corby awards. He won the Community Spirit Award (sponsored by Northamptonshire Police), recognising his cycling initiatives. Corby Council spokesman said "Fr Gerard has cycled the length of Britain and Ireland on his time off from the day job, and last year cycled from Canterbury to Rome to raise thousands of pounds for

Corby's Lakelands Hospice and the Air Ambulance. As well as being a very well thought priest Gerard has also given up his time to set up a cycling club so others can get involved. He is a fund-raising inspiration and a good mentor to those who wish to take on various cycling challenges both locally and long-distance'.

Picture: Northants Telegraph

Northampton Cathedral goes worldwide



Bedford, Northampton and Milton Keynes have recently been added to the Google Maps 3D facility, whereby buildings in a city or town are shown in full 3D, so that you can 'fly' around them as if you were a drone camera. This photo of the cathedral is computer generated, not taken from a plane, balloon or drone.



The Mayor of Northampton, Gareth Eales, visited the cathedral and its grounds to get a first-hand idea of the plans for the Cathedral Centre and its potential contribution to community life in Northampton. He was shown around by the Dean, Canon Mark Floody and met with Bishop Peter.

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Pastoral Letter from all the bisops on abortion: summary

In 2015 alone, in England and Wales, 185,824 abortions took place. there is widespread unease among many people who recognise that a woman's decision to have an abortion carries with it tragic consequences. At the same time, there are strong voices that advocate a woman's choice.

2. What does it mean to choose?

The life of both mother and child are precious, valued and to be protected. Those who hold that the freedom to choose in the question of abortion must focus on the good of one of these lives alone.

A subjective desire is often claimed to be a rightful choice.. Following slogans is never a firm basis for good decisions. Rather, we hold that such decisions require a grounding in good formation and sound perspectives.

In making choices, we should always seek to do that which upholds human dignity in the service of human life. In the case of abortion, decisions

and choices need to acknowledge the duty to cherish human life and to foster its flourishing beyond the circumstances of any one person, however challenging these may be.

3. Recognising the difficulty of decisions

Deciding to have an abortion is a grave decision. The process of decision making occurs in diverse circumstances and is influenced by different considerations. In such situations, the capacity to exercise choice can be compromised with a consequent limitation on a person's moral culpability. Pope Francis has written of those who have had an abortion:

"I am well aware of the pressure that has led them to this decision. I know that it is an existential and moral ordeal. I have met so many women who bear in their heart the scar of this agonising and painful decision. What has happened is profoundly unjust; yet only understanding the truth of it can enable one not to lose hope." (Letter to Archbishop Fisichella for the Year of Mercy, 1 September 2015)

Both Popes, however, recognise the burden of guilt that often accompanies the decision to destroy a human life in the womb. Both speak insistently of the unfailing mercy of God for all who turn to Him in repentance and with a desire for forgiveness.

4. The Intrinsic Value and Worth of Every Human Life

The challenge that faces our society today is to recover an understanding of

the immeasurable good of each unborn child and to value his or her life with even greater respect.

A particular contradiction occurs in relation to the legislation permitting the abortion of an unborn child diagnosed with a disability. after they are born. The past fifty years have witnessed a deepening of society's respect and understanding for people with disability, and legislation has helped disabled people achieve fulfilling lives. We hope that greater reflection and consistency in the approach to unborn children with disabilities will lead to a change in understanding, with greater protection provided through new legislation.

In comparison with fifty years ago, our society and Church have a much greater acceptance of single mothers, and often provide assistance for those who need it. Much more, however, needs to be done.

We recognize that there has also been an erosion of respect for those with conscientious objections against abortion. This has affected members of the medical and healthcare professions who face increasing difficulty in being able to combine their dedicated professional work with their personal conviction. So much talent is being lost to important professional areas. Personal conscience is inviolable and no-one should be forced to act against their properly formed conscience in these matters.

5. Learning to respect life

There is an urgent need to teach about the inviolability of human life, from conception to its natural end, and to help everyone appreciate the value of every human life, without exception.

We thank those generous young people who strive to promote pro-life values.

They are a real encouragement and inspiration, in the Church and in society. It is vitally important for young people to gain a deep understanding of the meaning of human sexuality and the place of the sexual relationship as an expression of love within marriage.

6. Giving thanks and looking ahead


We have the highest regard for every woman who, in difficult and adverse conditions, has made the courageous decision to continue her pregnancy and give birth to her child. We thank the charities, and those who donate to them, for their solidarity and support.

It is our desire and aim8 ptniversary needs to bring about a new debate to change attitudes towards human life in the womb, to promote what it means to make good and authentic choices, and to protect and care for mothers and their children.


As Catholics, we urge that, throughout our countries, prayer and fasting be used for the protection of human life, especially for life within the womb, for all expectant mothers, for fathers and families.

Let the final word come from Pope Francis, preaching in 2005 on the Feast of St Raymund, when he was Archbishop of Buenos Aires:

"All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth...to give life is to open our heart, and to care for life is to give oneself in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others. Caring for life from the beginning to the end. What a simple thing, what a beautiful thing...So, go forth and don't be discouraged. Care for life. Its worth it'.



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Leadership Scale : L19-23

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All appointments will be subject to an enhanced DBS clearance in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy. Further details and an application pack are available from Mrs Jan Hayes at the school at janh@thomasbecket.org.uk application forms can also be obtained from the school website at www.thomasbecket.org.uk or downloaded documents from the CES website at www.catholiceducation.org.uk/employment

A Catholic, learning, listening school.

"It is not enough that children are loved, they must know that they are loved"

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.

Farewell, Fr Ken

Blessed with a warm, sunny afternoon on Sunday 27th August, parishioners of St Mary's Woburn Sands and friends from the local community Churches Together group gathered for Father Ken Bowen's farewell event. It was an opportunity to thank Father Ken for his twelve years as Parish Priest in Woburn Sands and to wish him well for the future.

Tributes were led by Budge Wells, Parish Facilities' Manager and David Borrett, Chair of Parish Committee. Father Ken was presented with a book of farewell messages from the Parish and will receive the proceeds of a special collection held in Church during August.

Father Ken moved to Marlow in September and whilst he will have more time to travel and read, he will also help out in St Peter's Parish from time to time.

The highlight of the event was the fantastic cake made by Samantha Fabbro, one of St Mary's very talented parishioners. Samantha took inspiration from Father Ken's love of an exotic holiday and created a wonderful cake which portrayed Father Ken relaxing with a book on a beach. The detail was exquisite and Father Ken was truly delighted with it.

Regular Mass-goers in Woburn Sands are very familiar with the Dr Maria Montessori quote 'Look for the good and the good will grow' and this has well and truly been ab-

sorbed into the Parish psyche given the references to it in the tributes and in the detail shown on the book featured on the cake! The Parish has listened and applied that teaching particularly with regard to the setting up of the four Parish themes of 'spirituality', 'youth', 'outreach' and 'social'.

'We are the Church' and 'The people are the Church' has given inspiration to take more responsibility in making our Parish a loving place of spirituality and warmth.

This type of Parish event can only happen through the help and encouragement of many people. Thanks are due especially to Jo Marr, Samantha Fabbro, Anne-Marie Howard, Julie Gibson, David & Alison Borrett, Budge Wells, Mary Wilding, Brian Lodge, Jayne & Mick Fagan, Liam Colgan, Pauline Mulligan, Mrs Harte, Margaret Rooney and also all those who brought food and drink to share.

Father Ken sends his thanks to all involved and will keep us in his prayers.

The Parish extends a warm welcome to Father Francis Higgins, Father Pius Amoako, Father Lijo Payikkattu MSFS and Father David Barrett of the new Milton Keynes 'cluster' which includes St Mary's, Woburn Sands.

Miriam O'Neill
St Mary's, Woburn Sands



Fr Kenneth Bowen



Ordained May 3, 1982
Our Lady of Lourdes, Milton Keynes,
1982-1986
Army chaplain, 1986-1987
Burnham 1987-1992
St. Clare, Aylesbury, 1992-1996
Thrapston 1996-2005
Woburn Sands 2005-2017

Avril to oversee new forms of pastoral ministry

Looking to the future needs of our diocese, the Bishop has appointed a new role to encourage and support new forms of lay ministry. Previously a parish pastoral worker and the Diocesan Youth Coordinator, but also a volunteer in her own parish, Avril Baigent is excited by the possibilities:

"Everywhere we look in parishes, we have people of skill and experience. We have people from all walks of life with much to offer to the Church.

Many people give freely of their time, but we will need many more if we are to find new ways of being Church. Volunteering in the church can be so life giving, whether it's taking communion to someone in hospital, sharing the faith in prayer and Bible study, raising money for Cafod, or helping the homeless in a soup kitchen. There are also lots of jobs behind the scenes in finance and admin, cleaning and maintaining our churches, or serving as governors of our schools. There are many ways that we

can be Jesus' hands in our world today."

Paid for by the Together in Faith lay formation fund, Avril's role is to help parishes reflect on how they can grow pastorally into the future. At this time she is concentrating on hospital and prison chaplaincy, as well as visiting priests and pastoral areas to listen to local needs.

Elisa McCarthy



The Feast Day Mass of Our Lady of Guadalupe Protectress of the Unborn



The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe
The Holy Child & St Joseph Bedford
Tuesday 12th December 2017 at 7.30 pm

Principal Celebrant:
Fr Jeremy Davies Spiritual and Faith Advisor
to the Guardians of Our Lady of Guadalupe
All welcome to the Reception after Mass

Honouring the parish patron

"Welcome, Pilgrims!" was how we were greeted when a very comfortable, modern-day coach dropped off 24 pilgrims from St Edward the Confessor in Milton Keynes to the Feast Day activities in Westminster Abbey on Saturday, 14th October. It was a reverent greeting given to people who have celebrated the Feast Day of St Edward the Confessor for nearly 800 years.

Our church in Milton Keynes, named after St Edward the Confessor, decided to take advantage of Westminster Abbey's annual celebration for its founder (then King Edward), celebrated as close to 13th October as possible, to mark his Feast Day. Every year, the Abbey invites all churches across the kingdom with the name of St Edward the Confessor to come to an exclusive day of prayer and reflection at the Abbey. All other visitors are not allowed to enter the Abbey as the day is reserved for worship and not general touring.

The day is full of activities. Visiting pilgrims are welcomed with a rite of foot or hand washing on arrival at the Abbey. Throughout the day, pilgrims

are able to pray at the Shrine, priests are on duty for individual spiritual counselling and the Sacrament of Reconciliation and prayer tours around the Abbey are available. There are even opportunities to renew baptismal promises and to participate in healing liturgies with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing. Healing is one of the main devotions for St Edward. For the children, a good number of activities are offered.

The custom to wash the hands and feet of pilgrims has been an age-old tradition of welcome when the faithful have come to worship after travelling for days on the dusty roads – many of whom would have walked when transportation would have been reserved for the wealthy or privileged classes.

St Edward is one of the saints that is venerated by the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church and Eastern Orthodox Church – so quite a few communities are invited to the Abbey, which itself is one of the primary churches for the Church of England. The shrine in the Abbey is the actual tomb of King Edward and has a promi-



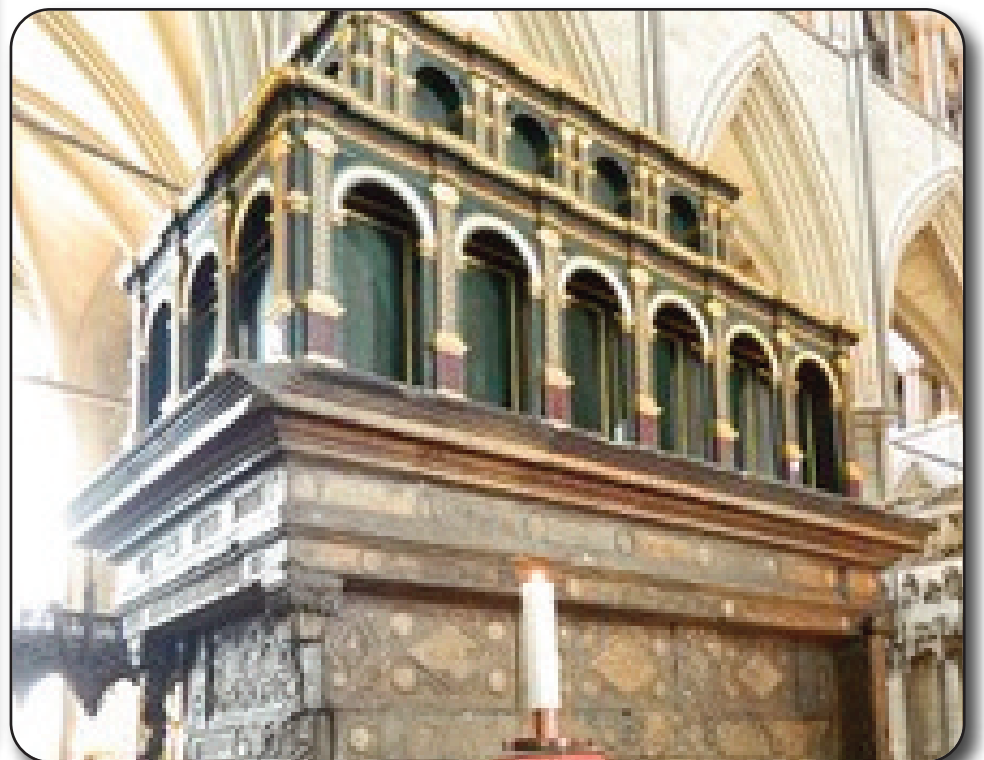
nent place just behind the altar of the Abbey in its own alcove.

All the services are Church of England. These services would rival many a service in the Roman Catholic tradition with their pageantry, music and number of celebrants. The experience was inspiring and beautiful and reminded us that in the very beauty and majesty of the service is the peace and love we feel towards our One Father, and it was an amazing feeling to join in with other faiths to worship together in a way that transcended our difference.

Saint Edward was one of the national

saints of England until King Edward III adopted Saint George as patron saint in about 1350. Edward is regarded by some as an unlikely saint, and his canonisation as political. Although some argue that his cult started so early, it must have had something credible to it. He was regarded as a saint long before he was officially canonized as Saint and Confessor by Pope Alexander III in 1161.

When Edward died in 1066 he was succeeded by Harold Godwinson, who was later defeated by the Normans under William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings, 1066.





Quality in Corby school

In May Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School was selected to show case our efforts in Health to several Northamptonshire MP's and Health and Sport Professionals. We were chosen as our school has worked closely throughout the year with Northamptonshire Healthy Child Initiative. We are based in a socially deprived area where Health is not particularly viewed as important. Previous attempts were not met with open arms. Not ones to give up we carried on trying to make changes to make our children and families part of a healthier school community.

This year Our Lady's School achieved the Gold School Games Quality Mark. We gained this quality mark through meeting the School Games Criteria. We entered above the expected number of level 2 competitions. We believe that the higher level quality of PE lessons being delivered in school has helped to raise the amount of competitions that we are finishing higher up in. As a school we had three teams qualify for the School Games Final at Moulton College – the only school in Corby to have three teams. Our children enjoy their PE lessons therefore are very keen to attend the clubs and competitions.

This year we held a fully inclusive school sport day which included several members of the community. The local secondary school provided sports leaders to help run the events, the local gym came along to promote health and fitness for all families, Corby Town FC ran one of the events and the local Nursery participated in a mini sports

day over lunch organised and run by our own school leaders while the rest of the children of Our Lady's enjoyed a family picnic.

Our Lady's school was experiencing some challenging behaviour. We felt that these children would benefit from the values and discipline taught in kickboxing. We brought in a local kickboxing instructor who allowed these children to participate twice per week. Together they worked on many aspects such as respect and social skills. These children were not only being active they came away with the confidence and skills that they needed to manage their own feeling and behaviour better throughout the school day. This club had a huge impact on the children's behaviour and learning in the classroom. They were now experiencing a 'good' lunch time resulting in a positive start to the afternoon therefore improving their learning capacity. 6 of these children of now fully fledged members of the kick boxing club outside of school.

Having identified a few children in ks2 who were overweight, we discretely encouraged them to take part in the kickboxing sessions for extra activity. The children thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and after requesting more sessions we directed them towards the local kickboxing club outside of school. They are now fully competing members of this club and travel internationally. Their weight at this club has been monitored and this has been done in a positive manner resulting in excellent weight loss.

Guardians of Our Lady of Guadalupe welcome new Spiritual and faith advisor

As our Mission has developed and the demands of the Annual National Pilgrimage Tour of the Miraculous Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe have increased, the Guardians of Our Lady of Guadalupe, based at the Shrine in Bedford, have felt for some time that it would be helpful to have an appointed Spiritual and Faith Advisor. Rev Jeremy Davies, of the Westminster Diocese, was invited to take on this role.

They are delighted to announce that, with the approval and confirmation of Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bishop Peter Doyle, Father Jeremy has been appointed and takes up his new position as of 2 November 2017.

Father Jeremy studied English Literature at St Edmund Hall, Oxford and subsequently Medicine at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He graduated with a medical degree in 1967 and then worked in mission hospitals in Guyana, Nigeria, and Ghana. He was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in 1974 and appointed to the Deliverance Ministry in 1986. In 1993 he co-founded the International Association of Exorcists. He has written many books and articles, and he lectures on the subject internationally. This work was carried out in conjunction with his role as a parish priest within the Westminster Diocese

He has been a friend and supporter to the Guardians since our conception and has been Co-Celebrant at the Feast Day Masses and many other celebrations. This year he



has agreed to be our Principal Celebrant at the Feast Day Mass on 12 December. His continuing works and ministry on behalf of the Pro-Life movement are well known, publicly defending the sanctity of human life through his preaching and active participation in Pro-Life vigils.

Father Jeremy was a founding member of the outreach counselling service provided until recently by Luton Good Council to women seeking or recovering from abortion by providing emotional support and aid in finding life-giving alternatives.

His extensive knowledge of Catholic interpretation and the workings of our Church will allow the Guardians to discern and evaluate decisions, moving forward with wisdom and certainty. We are very much looking forward to his ministry among us.

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St. Mary's, Dunstable, was crowded with 800 youngsters on October 13 for the annual schools' Mass. Teenagers were even squatting in the side chapels, but that was no match for the chaos in the car park as coaches arrived together and teachers carefully guarded the children. 'This is nothing', said one of the lady-custodians of the car park entrance. 'A few minutes ago we brought Dunstable to a stand-still'. Bishop Peter thanked head teachers and teachers. 'Its great that you have all come'.

As always, the children were meticulously prepared. Prayer batons from each school were carried in the entrance procession by students from St. Joseph's High School, Slough and St. Thomas Becket, Northampton. Bedford provided the readers; the first reading by a pupil from St. John Rigby primary and the intercessions from St. Thomas More. The offertory gifts were presented by pupils from Bishop Parker school, Bletchley.

It happened to be the feast of St. Edward The Confessor and the readings reflected his feast; the call of David to be king, and Christ's proclamation of his mission in the synagogue in Capernaum. Bishop Peter picked up the theme: 'today we are thinking about how God chooses each of us. God looks at the heart and sees that we can be his friends. Pray that each of us will be faithful friends of Jesus.

At the end of Mass each school was invited to choose a prayer baton. It couldn't be their own. It had to be for a different school, for which in their own community they would pray regularly. And then, so to lunch, after much enthusiastic waving of school banners.

Its great that you have all come





Pictures by Ann Hoskins & Neil Roseman



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

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

You are invited to a
Rosary gathering/procession on the vigil
Thursday 7th December 2017
at the Angelus time of 6pm

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

Our Lady promised:
"The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in Heaven.

For more information please phone
 Monica on 07401 366 330

Another road to Rome

Twenty Milton Keynes teenagers spent their half-term week in Rome, marking the 40 years of Celebration, the annual catechetical weekend. The trip was led by Fr Paul Hardy and adults from St. Edward's.

Rome was very crowded. They queued for 90 minutes to get into St. Peter's. But they saw all the sights, including the Wednesday papal audience. There were two extra treats – a tour of EWTs headquarters and a paddle in Lake Albano. But by far the most popular item on the trip was the ice cream.

An appreciative parent wrote: 'We would just like to thank you and all those involved in organising and leading the trip to Rome.

Our son thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience and I know he will cherish the memories for ever.

Please pass on our thanks and appreciation for making the trip such a success'.



Mary Immaculate joins Our Lady of Peace

Our Lady of Peace Nursery and Primary School Burnham, Slough celebrated the blessing of the Statue of Mary Immaculate and the child Jesus.

Parents, Governors and staff were invited to attend the Celebration of Holy Mass, which was held at Our Lady of Peace School on the 8th September. The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Father Andrew Richardson, our parish priest and chaplain, celebrated Mass and blessed the Statue of Mary Immaculate and the Child. Mrs Jean O'Keefe, our headteacher, Mrs Jan Holden the Deputy headteacher, staff and Year 6 pupils all joined in praying

Picture right:
The Angelus, led
Fr Andy and
pupils



St Mary's excels in phonics

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for school standards has written to St. Mary's Primary school in Aston Le Walls to congratulate the school, staff and pupils in their outstanding achievement in the 2017 phonics screening check

With 100% of pupils at St. Mary's reaching or exceeding the pass mark the school is in

the top 3% of all primary schools in the country.

Early fluency in decoding is the first step in acquiring the key skill of reading. There is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating that systematic phonics is the most effective method for teaching children to read. The success in teaching phonics means that

pupils are developing a firm foundation in reading, from which they can become increasingly fluent and develop a lifelong love of reading.

St. Mary's welcomes parents to visit the school.

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Obituary

Canon Michael Griffiths

Canon Michael Griffiths died at Swansea on November 2. He was 69. Michael was ordained on June 2, 1979 and served as curate at St. Patrick's, Corby, until 1982. He became chaplain to Our Lady & Pope John school until 1984. He then transferred to St. Joseph's, Bedford, and became parish priest of St. Clare's, Aylesbury from 1989 to 1992. This was followed by time as parish priest in

Towcester, Great Missenden, Bourne End and Wellingborough. He went to Our Lady's, Luton in 2003 and, after a brief spell as chaplain in the South Atlantic he moved to Biggleswade in 2008 and Our Lady's, Corby, until his retirement in 2014/ He was appointed an Honorary Canon in 2007.



Give a Gift that makes a difference this Christmas



We are encouraged to live a lifestyle which is more aligned with those who are poor and oppressed and to challenge ourselves to *see through the myths of materialism, consumerism and wealth*. The false beliefs which emanate from these myths include the idea that more is better, there is no such thing as enough, we will be happier with the newest model/latest upgrade/latest fashion, the more financial security we have the more secure we will feel, etc.

But what these myths effectively do is to place our source of happiness or security outside of ourselves, on exterior goods or items, rather than drawing from our inner source of true happiness and true security, therefore impoverishing our inner life. No wonder Pope Paul VI called the unrelenting desire of the acquisition of worldly goods 'soulstifling materialism'. We know that deep down material goods cannot bring us lasting happiness. The irony is delicious; we are consumed by consumerism, and impoverished by wealth.

Therefore this Christmas why not give *World Gifts* to your friends and family? *World Gifts* are CAFOD's charity gift range of unusual, ethical presents that will delight the recipients. These gifts help transform the lives of poor communities and families in developing countries. Now beat that for gifts!

Earlier this year we had Julian from Myanmar share his experience of working in the country and how difficult it was for the Rohingya people. Now over 500,000 people are estimated to have fled into Bangladesh to escape violence in neighbouring Myanmar.

Rajida had to walk to the border while heavily pregnant. She gave birth to her daughter in Bangladesh, under plastic sheeting in the middle of a rice paddy. She says, "When I saw that she was healthy, I was so happy. I gave thanks to God."

When you buy *World Gifts* for example emergency shelter, you will give hope to refugee families whose lives have been turned upside down. In this case, CAFOD is working through our partner, Caritas Bangladesh, to provide emergency shelter, urgently needed food and clean water for families like Rajida's.

As we prepare for Christmas we ask of ourselves whether we are ready for the arrival of God into our lives. God's gateway into this world is through the poor, the displaced and the marginalised, which it continues to be so for today. Unless we are Advent people, waiting for the coming of Christ in expectant hope, we will surely miss God's arrival into the world today through those who are poor and displaced. That is why we can say with confidence that when the poor become invisible God becomes invisible

For more information please visit our website or get in touch : Deborah Purfield - 01844 274723, northampton@cafod.org.uk



Altar Servers

Bishop Peter has kindly agreed to celebrate the next annual diocesan servers Mass at the cathedral on Saturday June 16, 2018, at noon.

Please put this date in your diaries as we would very much like to see altar servers from all of our parishes to join with us at what promises to be a memorable occasion.

Further details will be circulated to parishes nearer the time. In the meantime, if you are working as an MC in your parish and would like to receive information and news from the diocesan Guild of St. Stephen, please contact the Diocesan Director, Rev Peter Griffin on pfgriffin@hotmail.co.uk

Milly, 14

Milly dreamed of becoming a nurse – until she was blinded by cataracts and lost her love for life. She was plunged into darkness and despair. Living in poverty in Uganda, East Africa, Milly's family could not afford the sight-restoring surgery she needed.

When Dr Ludovica removed the patches from her eyes, Milly exclaimed in joy at the yellow flowers on the surgeon's dress. Imagine her excitement at seeing her favourite colour again? You can bring that happiness into someone's life by supporting us today.

**Please support Christian Blind Mission today
and bring colour back into someone's world.**

***...to proclaim freedom for
the prisoners and recovery
of sight for the blind, to set
the oppressed free*** Luke 4:18



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Title:	First Name:	Surname:
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- ☐ **£24** could restore sight in an adult's eye
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☐ **OR** Please debit my Visa/Mastercard/Maestro Card



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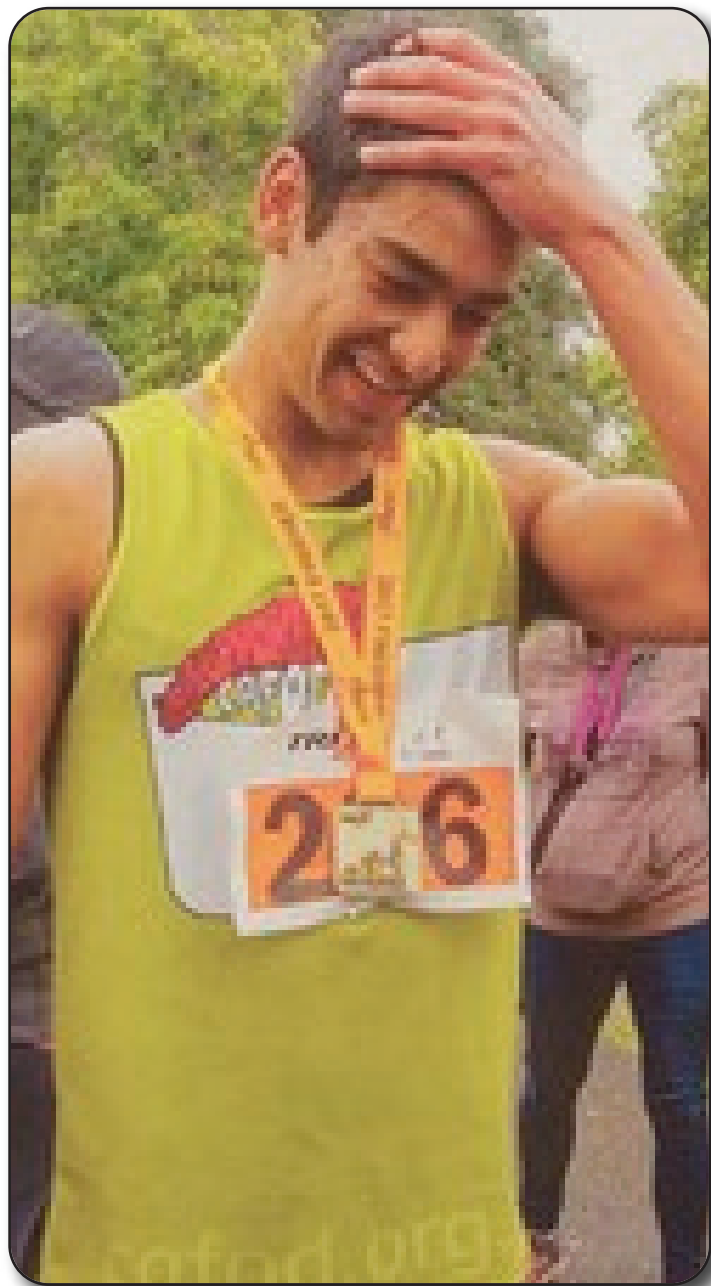
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Our triathlon boy

My name is Michael Jones, I belong to the parish of Holy Family, Langley. I'm a university student who recently competed in the Reading Triathlon on Sunday 3rd September to fundraise for CAFOD. I'm an active person and I was looking for a challenge, both mental and physical to keep me occupied. At the same time I found out I could fundraise for any charity of my choice, which gave me another incentive to take up this challenge. I specifically chose CAFOD's Syria Crisis Appeal as the crisis is one that is spoken about so much and deeply saddens me. I feel very privileged to have good health, a safe home and endless opportunities, so I felt compelled to raise awareness through fundraising.

The triathlon was an immense challenge, I trained as hard as possible, twice a day for at least 3 hours of strenuous exercise a day. I should be saying I'm glad it's over but the truth is I don't know what to do with

myself now! The day before, I felt very calm and had a blessing before Mass. On the day itself, I was very nervous but I had amazing support from my Mum, Dad, little brother Philip and my Auntie Christina and Uncle Paul. They cheered for me at every stage of the race, and I competed in all stages with a big smile on my face. My dad funded all my training, bike hire and gear. And my mum made sure I ate like a king, with the most nutritional meals prepared every day. I definitely couldn't have done this without my family, they were immense. Everyone that donated and supported me gave me the confidence to train harder and I am forever grateful for the support! Together, we've raised £934 and there is still time for more! This experience has been one of the best things I've ever done, I had so much fun, and felt privileged to raise money for CAFOD and such a worthy cause. I would definitely do it again! Fr Kevin has said he'll join me for the next Triathlon!



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