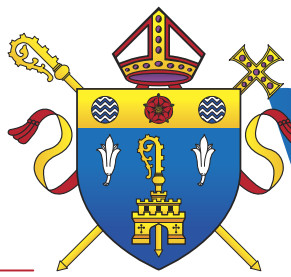


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The Catholic



VOICE

of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 323 + October '20

INSIDE: p06 On the Road to the Priesthood
p14 A Catholic V.C.



“

If we destroy Creation, Creation will destroy us.

” Pope Francis

“

We must protect creation for it is a gift which the Lord has given us, it is God's present to us; we are the guardians of creation.

” Pope Francis

God saw what he had made and it was very good.

– Genesis 1:31

“

Let us protect with love all that God has given us.

” Pope Francis



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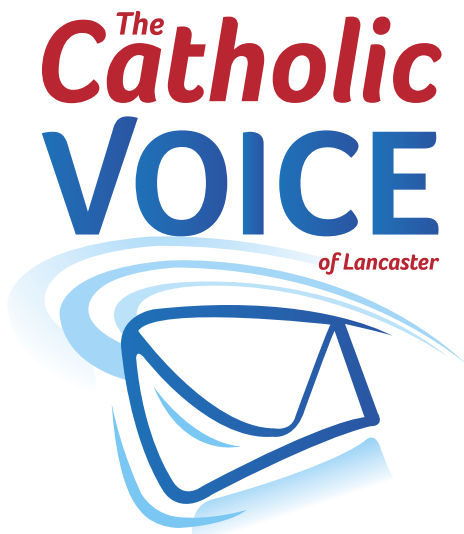
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EDITORIAL

There are many sets of pressures - social, emotional, political and financial facing our world today. Each forms a complicated web at a global and national level and impacts on our own daily lives. With the endless debates, demonstrations, speeches, arguments and media coverage, we can sometimes become wrapped up in viewing everything through the prism of how decisions affect our own day to day lives. It is difficult to take a wider view. But the Church is constantly encouraging us to think in terms of the 'Common Good'.

We owe everything in our lives today, including life itself, to God our Creator. Everything we have both spiritually and materially is a gift from God for us to use to grow His kingdom on earth. We must value what we have, not to simply guard it for our own ends but to ensure that everyone can share the fruits of God's creation. Consumerism cannot and must not drive the diminishment and destruction of the amazing natural world

around us. Not only is it good and wonderful in itself, but our dependence upon it is total, and our abuse of it damages the poor most of all.

On 1 September Pope Francis inaugurated a World Day of Prayer for Creation which will be celebrated each year. He said that the Care of Creation should also contribute "to shaping the culture and society in which we live," adding that economics, politics, society and culture "cannot be dominated by thinking only of the short-term and immediate financial or electoral gains." So there in a nutshell is our Christian challenge!

To help parishes get to grips with the challenge, Boarbank Hall is holding a Retreat by Zoom over the weekend of 16-19 October, more details below. The **Catholic Voice** encourages parishes to engage with the initiative so that we can truly become the 'living stones' that God wants us to be.



Living Laudato Si': Your Parish and Your Planet

**A Zoom Retreat 16-19 October 2020
led from Boarbank Hall**

Why? Faith is the place to start.
What? Understanding is the place to start.
How? Sharing experience is the place to start.
When? Now is the place to start.
Where? Your parish is the place to start.
Who? Are YOU the place to start?

What will happen? A long weekend of talks and discussions and practical activities on living the message of Laudato Si' in and through your parish.

Who is it for? Any interested parishioner is most welcome to join us. The weekend is aimed especially at people with parish responsibilities or who are part of or want to start a relevant parish group.

Times: Sessions will be on Friday night, Saturday morning and night, Sunday afternoon and night and Monday night (leaving people free during the day on Monday).

Speakers include:

Trish Sandbach, who worked in education for CAFOD for many years and led to St Benedict's, Garforth, in the Leeds diocese, to winning a Livesimply award. (see <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award>).

John Paul de Quay, a founder member of the Ecological Conversion Group and Journey to 2030 (see <https://journeyto2030.org/>)

Sr. Margaret Atkins, an Augustinian Canoness at Boarbank Hall, a teacher of philosophy and theology, with a lifelong interest in the natural world, and author of Catholics and Our Common Home: Caring for the Planet in a Time of Crisis (CTS).

A panel discussion for sharing advice on practical projects.

Cost - voluntary donations gratefully accepted, but there will be no fee for the weekend.

To apply simply email Sr. Margaret Atkins on margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk



Desert Island Hymns

I suppose most people have a favourite hymn, including many who don't attend church regularly. Hymns, like all kinds of music, arouse memories of times, people, places, events, both good and bad, happy or sad. It is said that St Augustine declared "To sing is to pray twice", although some scholars doubt this. BBC "Songs of Praise" which began in October 1961 continues to be popular and is regularly watched in our house.

You have been able to switch on your wireless and listen to Roy Plomley's "Desert Island Discs" since January 1942, and recent restrictions the consequences and effects of the coronavirus have resulted in many people in 'lockdown' feeling as though they are alone on a desert island!

With this in mind I have taken the opportunity to think about some of the hymns that have impacted on my life evoking a mix of memories ...

'Eternal Father, Strong to Save' - (The Navy Hymn) appeared in the first edition of Hymns Ancient & Modern in 1861. Whenever I hear it brings to mind one of my earliest childhood memories.

Back in January 1952, aged 5, I would walk with friends after school to my Gran's house. Sometimes I would go and see her next door neighbour an old man called Mr. Turner. He always had a newspaper and I remember being drawn to the dramatic pictures of the 12 day events unfolding out at sea 400 miles west of Land's End. A cargo ship the "Flying Enterprise" sailing from Hamburg to New York sent out an S.O.S on 28th December and was in serious trouble, having been hit by a freak wave in very heavy seas, was capsizing. The crew and 10 passengers were rescued and one of the ships trying to help was a tugboat called the "Turmoil". The 27 year old mate Kenny Dancy from the tug unbelievably leapt across to the Enterprise and with her captain Henrik Carlsen were the only two on board the heavily listing ship as desperate attempts were made secure a towline. The events gripped the nation and each day I would go to Mr. Turner's and watch how the rescue attempts were going. In the afternoon of 10 January Carlsen and Dancy finally abandoned ship jumping off the ship's funnel, the 'Enterprise' was almost lying on its side by then, and less than an hour later, she finally slipped beneath the waves.

(Conspiracy theories still exist today that amongst the ship's varied lost cargo was a consignment of zirconium intended for America's developing nuclear programme. Kenneth Dancy died aged 88 on 3 August 2013).

'All Things Bright and Beautiful' - the words written in 1848 for children by Cecil F Alexander was set to a 17th century tune 'The 29 of May' by John Playford. I remember this Hymn in particular as it was during the choir singing practice of this children's classic at my primary school that it was decided I was singing 'flat' and was told to leave the hall and return to my class. This instruction came from a lady, (can't recall her name, who was not a teacher but came into school to help with singing; like the nit nurse she only came into school now and again). Of course the 1950's was a time when inclusivity was not seen as particularly important. We were taught geography from a map of the world a quarter of which was coloured pink and belonged to us! You

didn't build an empire being sentimental nor tolerate anyone out of tune in the school choir. Thankfully she didn't pick the school football team - Mr. Ley did!

Abide with Me - (Football's hymn) the lyrics were written by Henry F Lyte close to his death in 1847. He wrote several hymns including "Praise my soul, the King of Heaven". It is sung to the melody 'Eventide' composed by William H Monk in 1861.

It has been sung prior to the kick-off at the football's big day since 1927. I heard it for the first time in 1951 watching my first FA Cup Final at my Uncle Harry's on his 9 inch black & white television set along with half the men on his street. In the 1950's the FA Cup Final was special, it was the only football shown live on TV and always featured on the front page of the weeks' Radio Times.

Prior to the kick-off fans sang along from their Daily Express song sheets the community singing led by Arthur Caiger on his podium in the centre circle resplendent in his white suit.

Nowadays in the world of the Premier League and the Champions League, for the top teams, the FA Cup seems something of a nuisance. In the 1950's no 'big' club played a "weakened" team, today some teams turn out a side consisting of fringe and Academy players, the kit man, and the bloke who had come to read the meter! To be in the 'The Final' was every players dream, and each final used to involve a host of different clubs. But since the Premiership the 28 Finals have featured either Arsenal, Chelsea, or Manchester United a total of 26 times - BORING!

First Saturday of May was FA Cup day, the special end to the season and then cricket could begin.

'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' - the words by Charles Wesley were written over 280 years ago when the opening line was "Hark how the welkin rings!" (A welkin meaning the sky/or heavens) and words adapted more to what we know today by another Methodist minister George Whitefield in 1758.

The music originally comes from a piece originally composed by Mendelssohn, and adapted by Waltham Abbey organist William H Cummings in 1855 to as it is now.

By the late 1950's I was at Grammar School - hated most of it, everything in fact except sport, English and History. This carol must have been the favourite of the school music teacher Mr. Longstaff - known affectionately as "Wimpy" because he looked like the character in the 'Popeye' cartoons. It was always sung at the final assembly before we broke up for the Christmas holidays, and to be looked forward to. Nowadays, 'In the bleak mid-winter' is my favourite carol.

Dave Yates, Ansdell

+++++ Editors note:

It would be great to hear from readers which hymns have a special place in their hearts. Please let us know by e mail at voicenews@hotmail.co.uk or write to me at 99 Commonsides, Ansdell, Lytham St Annes FY8 4DJ.



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Our Plans:

Usually the problem Youth Ministry projects have is too much demand and not enough resources. Right now, we've got exactly the opposite problem. We've got an awesome team who are very much 'ready to roll,' but there isn't that much rolling to be had!

Like many things, Covid-19 has taken its toll on the Church's work with young people. Happily though, we are coming up with idea after idea and it seems to be working. We are finding new and creative ways to work with young people and also inventing new ways to use a building that's usually full of school retreats.

Here's a little taste of what's going on at the moment:

More details about everything below can be found on our website or by getting in touch:

www.castleriggmanor.co.uk

Getting Out and About

We've currently got regular 'gigs' in two parishes and two schools. Once we've

ironed out a few details, we hope to be adding two more parishes and two more schools to that in the next few days.

If you're reading this and wondering if we can come in to your school or parish, then the answer may well be yes! Get in touch and we can start the conversation.

Our New Training Centre

One initiative we have started recently is our new Training Centre, aimed largely at adults who work with young people. We are offering First Aid courses in Keswick as well as Youth Mental Health Courses, and we're also offering a load of courses online too, including mental health and safeguarding. Keep an eye on our website for more details.

The ENGAGE course also started last week with it's first cohort of around a dozen people. ENGAGE is an online Youth Ministry course for adults who are interested in working with young people. There will be a second cohort probably early in the new year.

Open Retreats At Castlerigg - Young People

In addition to getting out around the diocese more, we're also thinking of new ways to minister to young people and young adults at Castlerigg.

We've added a lot of open programmes to our timetable, including a Sixth Form retreat, open retreats for confirmation candidates, a study weekend for young adults, and next year we are hoping to add an open weekend for altar servers as well.

You'll also be glad to hear that we've kept the Advent Retreat and Easter Retreat in our calendar too.

Our retreat calendar for 2020-21 will end with a brand new 'Summer Week' open retreat in August!

Check out our website for more details on any of the above or feel free to get in touch with our new director - jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk

Changes at the Top

In late August, Bishop Paul decided to make some changes to our Youth Service Management Group, the group that looks after and supervises the Youth Service on behalf of the Bishop and the Trustees.

We said goodbye to Deacon Michael Harrison, Joanne Nicholson, Richard Teasdale, and Sr Harriet Thomas following the completion of their set terms of office.

We are extremely grateful to them for their generosity and care for Castlerigg.

We welcome on to the group Rosey Kennedy, Ruth White, Freddie Morton and Stephen D'Arcy.

Paul Briers, Jon Lord, and Nigel Ranson stay on the group as do (by virtue of their jobs) myself, Jack Regan and Sr. Sheinrose La Torre.

+++

Our new team at Surprise View!



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October 22-23
December 14-15
February 25-26

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How do I respond to a panic attack?

How is anxiety linked to depression?

How can I help a young person who is self-harming?

What about eating disorders?

How likely is recovery?

What is psychosis?

What should I do if somebody is suicidal?

Dates for the Diary

- Oct 16-18th Young Adults Retreat
- Oct 22-23rd Youth Mental Health First Aid Course
- Oct 23-25th Family Weekend
- Nov 13-15th Open Sixth Form Retreat
- Nov 14th Study Day (Catholic Social Teaching) [For adults]
- Nov 20-22nd Catechists' Retreat
- Nov 27-29th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 9-11)
- Dec 4-6th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 6-8)
- Dec 11-13th Advent Retreat
- Dec 14-15th Youth Mental Health First Aid Course
- Dec 18-20th Past Teams Retreat
- Jan 9th Study Day (What is the Church?) [For adults]
- Jan 22-24th Young Adults Study Weekend
- Feb 10-12th School Staff Conference
- Feb 25-26th Youth Mental Health First Aid Course
- Mar 13th Study Day (Salvation History) [For adults]
- Apr 1-4th Easter Retreat
- May 7-9th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 6-8)
- May 15th Study Day (Understanding the Bible) [For adults]
- July 17th Study Day (Understanding Vatican II) [For adults]
- Aug 7-11th Summer Week (Year 10-13)
- Date TBD Altar Servers Retreat (2021)

Online courses for adults, check website for dates
 – Introduction to Youth Mental Health

Parish Youth Days
 – Get in touch to book us!

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On the Road to the Priesthood



My name is Philip Wrigley, 41 years of age from Carlisle, a 5th year seminarian studying for the secular priesthood, and here is my vocation story.

In my teenage years, I used to altar serve at Morton Chapel & St. Edmunds parish with Fr Dewhurst. I had the great pleasure to serve for the late Bishop John Brewer on his occasional visits to our Parish. It was Bishop Brewer who first sowed the seed to think about joining the priesthood. Before Mass, in the sacristy, he was asking me about how long had I served and if I'd ever considered joining the priesthood. I was ashamed to say "No" to him immediately. Bishop Brewer smiled and said "Trust in the Lord, as you do not know what the Lord has planned for you". Ever since that chat, the priesthood has always been in the back of my mind over the years to come.

It was around 2008 when I started thinking more deeply about my life's direction. My occupation at that time was working at Preston Hospital in the Computer department, fixing and maintaining their computer systems. A good paid job, but I felt something was missing, I wasn't being fulfilled in my work, doing the same day to day activities in the office.

I was a regular church goer, every Sunday I would attend Mass at English Martyrs Church in Preston, but I thought to myself, one hour per week on a Sunday morning didn't feel adequate to me anymore. So I made the effort to go more regularly, Tuesday or Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. The more I prayed, the more Jesus was speaking to me, pulling me towards the idea of the Priesthood.

My parents are split Christian denomination, my Dad's side of the family are Catholic and my Mum's side Evangelical. As you can imagine, a few interesting topics of conversation around the dinner table, over the years! I was scared and nervous about telling my mum about my discernment, because I knew how strong her beliefs were against the teachings of the Catholic Church. It took me years to find the courage to talk to her about it, and tell her my plans for the future.

It was the visit of the Pope to the UK in 2010, for the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman, when I decided that enough time had been spent thinking about the Priesthood, and I needed to start getting the ball rolling. So I contacted the vocations director who was Fr Manny Gribben at that time and started my monthly meetings with him.

My discernment process didn't go smoothly, I was rejected at the interview stages by Bishop Michael Campbell, but with perseverance I was given a twelve month pastoral placement in my diocese, and then I was able to see the bishop again. I spent eight months in Workington with Canon Paul Swarbrick & Fr Paul Harrison, and four months in Lancaster with Fr Philip Conner. This pastoral experience was invaluable and allowed me to focus more deeply on God's plan in my life.

Finally I was accepted by Bishop Michael

Campbell, and was asked to study at St. Marys College, Oscott for my Seminary training. This is a fantastic Seminary, with a lot of history behind it. Training for the priesthood takes six years. Years one and two are focused on Philosophy, while the others are on Theology. Last December I received my BA Hons (2.1) in Fundamental Catholic Theology, a wonderful occasion, and it was nice that my parents came down to Birmingham for the graduation ceremony.

Unfortunately at Oscott we study for two degrees, so I have one more to go, which is a Bachelor of Sacred Theology (STB) affiliated with Leuven University in Belgium.

At the time of writing I have just completed year four, which was the best year to be in. The first five months of the academic year, was on extended parish placement back in the Lancaster Diocese.

Bishop Paul Swarbrick sent me to Barrow in Furness to Fr Manny Gribben & Fr Ajish. It was my first visit to Barrow, somewhere I haven't explored before. The parish is large, and the opportunities to be involved was vast. I started Rosary groups in three primary schools, I introduced afternoon prayer from the 'Divine Office' at St. Bernard's secondary school. I led a school 'Advent' assembly for St. Bernard's about the 'Word became Flesh' (John's Prologue), and visited many housebound, sick and bereaved parishioners.


Once my placement came to an end, Oscott College took my year to the Holy Land for a two weeks pilgrimage, which brought the Gospel alive. It was a study pilgrimage and we had lessons in the afternoon, we also saw so many wonderful sites. The first week was in Jerusalem, staying in the Christian quarter, so it was easy to get around and explore in our free time. We had a wonderful experience celebrating Mass in the Holy Sepulchre at Calvary. We prayed the 'Stations of the Cross' walking along the 'Via Dolorosa' the route Christ took during His Passion. We visited Mount Zion, Garden of Gethsemane and Hezekiah's Tunnel to name a few. Then we had two days in Bethlehem, celebrated Mass in the 'Church of the Nativity' in the Chapel of St. Joseph which is directly behind the wall to the Nativity site. That afternoon we went onto the Shepherd Fields, where tradition says the 'Angel Hosts' appeared to the Shepherds. We visited the Dead Sea, and floated on top of the water, then made our way to visit the area of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran. The following week was spent up in Galilee, staying on top of the Mount of Beatitudes. We visited places like Capernaum and Tabgha and enjoyed a boat trip out on the lake.

The last few days we visited, by coach, Caesarea Philippi, Mount Tabor (site of the Transfiguration), Mount Carmel (site of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal), and Nazareth visiting the Church of the Annunciation, and the Synagogue that Jesus preached from the scroll of Isaiah. It was such a wonderful two weeks, and highly recommended to visit during your lifetime.


When we arrived back in cold, damp Birmingham we were on such a high, as

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you can imagine it was difficult to get our minds and thoughts back into studying. Luckily the following weekend, we were off again on our travels. *(It's a hard life).*

During year four we receive Candidacy, a time when the Church accepts that you indeed have a vocation to the Priesthood, and the focus changes from that point onwards toward Diaconate Ordination. In preparation for Candidacy, year four went on a retreat to Walsingham for three days. Having guided conferences from the Spiritual Director at Oscott Fr James Preston, we had a great place to really spend time in pray discerning our vocation. It is a crucial point in our training to confirm within ourselves, that the priesthood is the right path, and it is God's plan for us. If there are any doubts, then now is the time to step back from formation. The college requires total

commitment from this point onwards, so Candidacy is a big deal. The date has been rescheduled for the 13th September for seminarians to receive Candidacy *(due to the Covid-19 virus)*, an important scrutiny meeting by Oscott staff takes place to confirm whether we are ready to receive this milestone in our priesthood training. After Candidacy seminarians will be allowed to wear the colours of the Church, meaning to wear a Roman Collar.

Like for many of us the Covid-19 virus has turned our world upside down. Killing many thousands of people and making us live in isolation. But in this technological world we live in computers and the internet have made isolation easier. With Oscott College closing with two months of the academic year to go, we had to continue our lessons using 'Zoom' a video conferencing online system. We had to

upload all our essays onto the college's interactive learning environment package, meaning all our work still had to be completed. Even our oral exams were performed through 'Zoom' a new experience for us all.

I am looking forward to starting College again, with social distancing remaining a challenge for some time longer. Please keep me and my fellow seminarians in your prayers, as I will keep you all in mine, and please continue to pray for Vocations. *Philip Wrigley, Seminarian*






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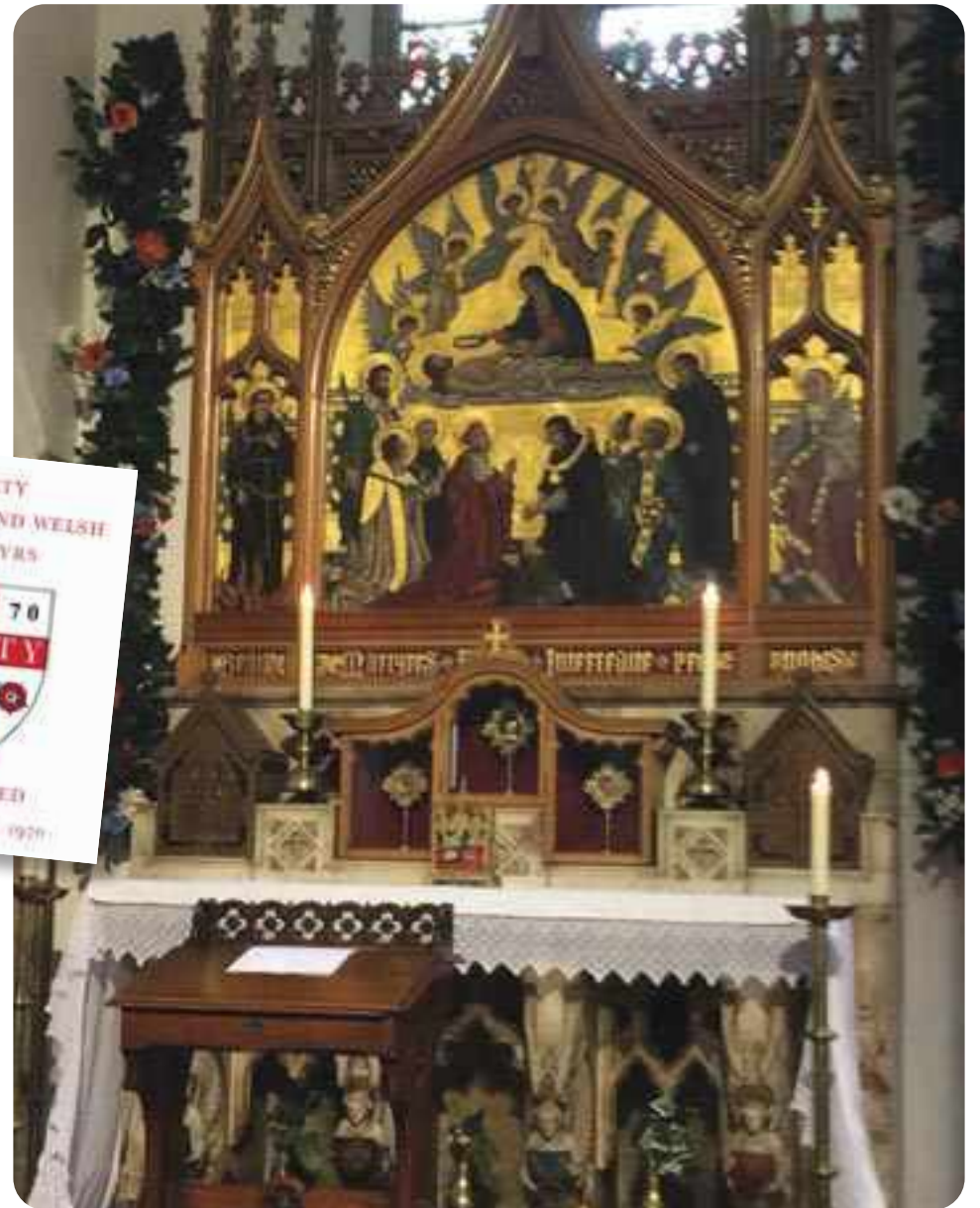
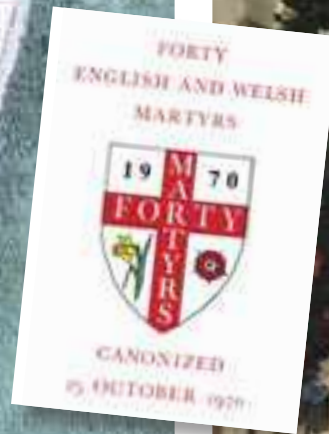
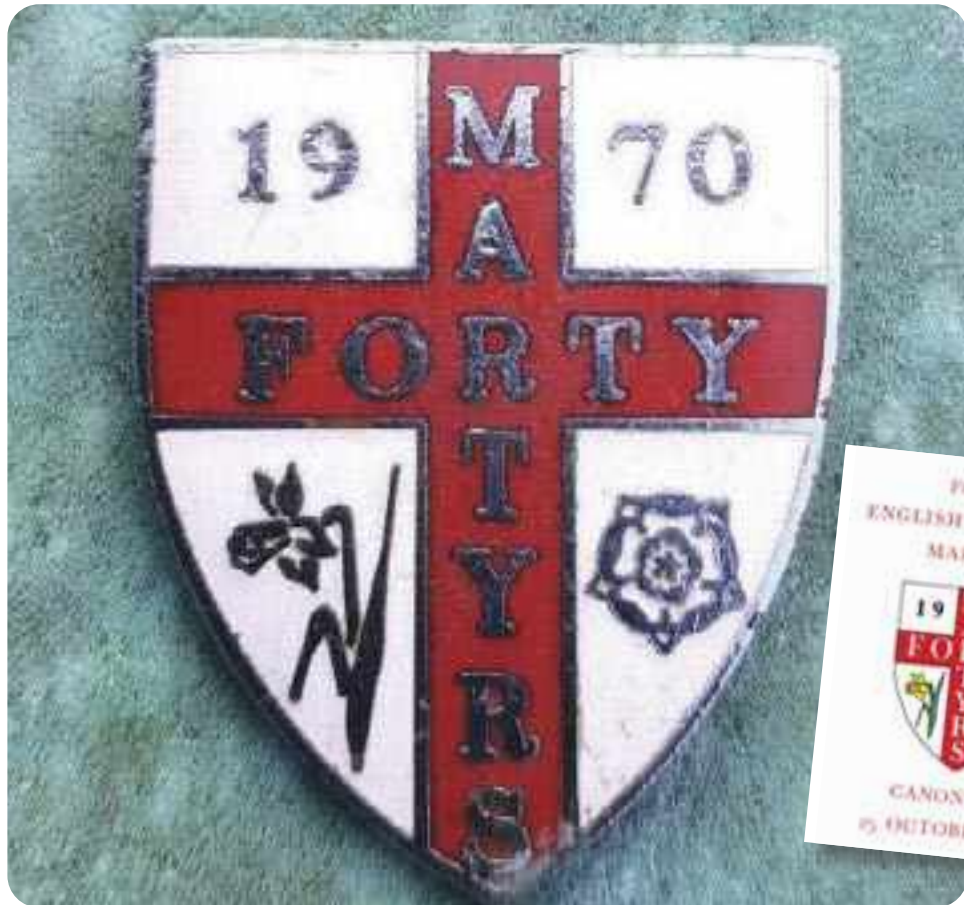
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The Canonisation of the Forty Martyrs of England & Wales – Final part



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Fifty years ago this month, (October), some 10,000 English and Welsh pilgrims, together with the Bishops of England and Wales and representative Bishops from Scotland and Ireland, were amongst the large congregation who attended the canonisation Mass in St Peter's Basilica.

Special guests included descendants of many of the Martyrs, including the Duke of Norfolk, England and Wales's most senior Catholic layman and himself a collateral descendant of the soon to be St Philip Howard. The (English language version of the) service booklet, which I am lucky enough to have a copy of, runs to 112 pages and included Faber's hymn Faith of Our Fathers. As the Pope was carried through the basilica on the Sedia Gestatoria, a portable ceremonial throne on which Popes were carried on the shoulders of Papal Gentleman until its use was discontinued in 1978, the Anglican hymn All People that on Earth Do Dwell was sung. In recognition of the unique significance of the event for English and Welsh Catholics, the Maestro Perpetuo of the Sistine Chapel Choir, which would normally sing at all canonisation Masses, agreed that the Westminster Cathedral Choir could sing in its place. Amongst the pieces performed, the cathedral choir sang the Kyrie, the Gloria and the Agnus Dei from the Mass of Five Voices by William Byrd (1543 - 1623), perhaps the greatest Tudor composer who was a contemporary of twenty five of the forty Martyrs and who, whilst being a lifelong Catholic and recusant himself, is believed to have escaped the harsher penalties due to his musical genius.

In his eulogy for the Forty Martyrs, the Pope, speaking In English, expressed

the hope that the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches would one day be reunited. He said:

"There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and the worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican church, when the Roman Catholic church - this humble 'servant of the servants of God' - is able to embrace her ever beloved sister in the one authentic communion of the family of Christ: a communion of origin and faith, a communion of priesthood and of rule, a communion of the saints in the freedom and love of the spirit of Jesus."

At the conclusion of the Mass, Soul of My Saviour was sung, the beautiful words of which are based on the original Latin text Anima Christi which is attributed to Pope John XXII (1249 - 1334). The hymn was written by Edward Caswall who, like Faber, was an Anglican who later converted, was ordained and became an Oratorian Father.

In accordance with tradition, the Pope was presented with relics of the new Saints, including a piece of the rope with which St Edmund Campion was hanged in 1581. The Catholic writer, Auberon Waugh, described the canonisation as *"the biggest moment for English Catholicism since Catholic emancipation"*.

On 22 November 1987, Pope John Paul II beatified a further eighty five Martyrs of England and Wales. All of the Martyrs, both canonised and beatified, are now commemorated in England on their feast day of 4 May. Prior to revisions made to the liturgical calendar in 2000, the forty canonised Martyrs had their own feast day on 25 October. In Wales, the feast is still kept on 25 October.



Today, many of the Martyrs, both canonised and beatified, are depicted in stained glass and in other forms in our churches. Many of them pre-date the 1970 canonisation; hence the inscriptions of those now canonised often still refer to them as 'Blessed'. The Martyrs are particularly commemorated at St Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs in Preston which has been a focal point, in recent years, for an English Martyrs Pilgrimage organised by the Latin Mass Society.

Relics of the Martyrs can be found at the Ladywell Shrine at Fernyhalgh, near Preston where the Burgess Altar is preserved. This wooden altar, dating from 1560, is designed to fold away like a sideboard and is said to have been used by St Edmund Campion, St Edmund Arrowsmith and Blessed John Woodcock for the celebration of Mass. Arrowsmith House, Hoghton is where St Edmund Arrowsmith celebrated his final Mass.

Many other churches in Lancashire, often hidden away in remote and beautiful locations, can claim a link to a Martyr. In some respects, the veneration of the Martyrs had fallen 'out of fashion' in more recent times but now, once more, interest in, and devotion to, these great men and women is being revived. Of particular recent interest for the Diocese of Lancaster was the blessing of a new Martyrs icon at St Joseph's Church, Skerton, Lancaster. This stunning piece of art by Shropshire craftsman, Martin Earle, was blessed by Bishop Paul Swarbrick on 2 November 2019 and depicts the fourteen men, both lay and religious, who were martyred at Lancaster. These include St Edmund Arrowsmith and St Ambrose Barlow (amongst the canonised Forty Martyrs), together with Blessed

Roger Wrenno and Blessed Robert Nutter (who were beatified in 1987). Each of the two groups of seven Martyrs flank an image of the Holy Family and the icon, which is inspired by some of the great medieval altarpieces celebrating the Communion of Saints, is rich in imagery, symbolism and detail. This includes the pattern beneath the feet of the Holy Family which depicts Lancashire roses and the curlew and the pattern at the feet of the Martyrs which is inspired by a wallpaper design in the Ramsgate home of the celebrated Gothic Revival architect, Augustus Welby Pugin, whose younger son, Peter Paul Pugin, is the architect of St Joseph's Church.

Plans are well underway to develop a 'Martyrs Walk', which will be described in a booklet, and will take in St Joseph's Church and the icon; St Peter's Cathedral; Lancaster Castle where the fourteen Martyrs were imprisoned; and the site of the Martyrdoms on Lancaster Moors near Williamson Park, which today is marked by a simple plaque with the poignant words, "Can you drink the chalice that I am about to drink? They said to him, "We can".

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the canonisation of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales this month, let us pray for them to intercede for us and for our country and also for the eventual canonisation of the remaining beatified Martyrs of England and Wales.

I am grateful to Fr Philip Conner of St Joseph's, Lancaster, for information on the Martyrs icon and the proposed Lancaster Martyrs Walk. I am also grateful to Michael Durnan, Preston, for use of his photograph of the Martyrs icon at St Joseph's Church, Lancaster.

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26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Alleluia, Alleluia!
 If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.
 Alleluia*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 21:28-32

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, "What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go", but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?" "The first" they said. Jesus said to them, "I tell you solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him"

**The Gospel of the Lord
 Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

+++ HOMILY ++++++

"He thought better of it and went. Tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you"

Our Lord gives us another parable about a father and two sons. This time it is the father who is taking the lead. **The first son refuses his father's request but then thinks better of it and goes to work. The other son says that he will go but doesn't. The father accepts both situations without complaint. What made the first son change his mind? Did his conscience prick him or did he see the action of his brother? The second son, what made him say one thing and do the opposite? Was this also as a result of his brother's actions? There is also no mention of age because it is irrelevant. What made the father so benevolent in his actions? It is easy to speculate because we don't have many details but we can see how the father works.**

We are asked to go and work in the vineyard every day of our lives. Our initial call came through Baptism which is something that we have to work on and build on. There are times when we listen to God's call and reject it out of hand, just like the first son. We may then not be bothered about what we have said. But, there are times when our conscience does play a big part

and helps us to change our mind and respond favourably to God's call. Of course, there are times when we will pay lip service to what God wants of us and we go our own way. The attractions of the world can be too enticing for us. We can get lost in the razzamatazz of a world that promises so much but delivers nothing.

In this parable our Lord is showing us something of the Father. He doesn't remonstrate with the first son but accepts what he said. It is the same with the other son, he doesn't go to find out why the change of attitude. The Father allows us to make up our own mind in how we follow his call.

He is not a control freak. He gave us free will and he gave it us out of love because the love that he wants from us has to be given freely. He gives his love to everybody and accepts it back from everybody. He accepts our failings when we change our minds and do his will. We are allowed to do u-turns provided we turn the right way. But we should think things through first.

Rev. Deacon Chris Barwise, Preston

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Alleluia, Alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 21:33-43

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people 'Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son", he said. "But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is

the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance."

So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do with those tenants?' They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in scriptures:

It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to see?

I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.'

The Gospel of the Lord Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

+++ HOMILY ++++++++ "He will lease the vineyards to other tenants"

God gave his chosen people a fertile and fully equipped vineyard: His revelation, His protection, a homeland of their own in Canaan and all this in order to prepare them for the future Messiah, who would bring them an eternal home in God's own kingdom. All He asked in return was their cooperation. But they had other plans. So, God sent Prophets to tell them where they were going wrong but they mistreated these messengers and wouldn't listen to them. Yet God was patient with them and again and again He forgave them.

Then one day the Messiah came; He was God's divine Son in human form here on earth. He took his human nature from one of their own people, lived among them and taught them face to face His Gospel of love and peace. He tried to soften their hard hearts and made them the final offer of the Father's mercy and pardon. But instead of accepting the Father's mercy, the chief priests and elders took the opportunity to accomplish an even greater sin. To their sins of infidelity and injustice, they added the murder of God's Messiah Son.

In God's plan of love and mercy, the tragedy of Calvary turned out to be the great 'triumph of failure'. That death brought life to the world and opened the gates to God's eternal kingdom for all peoples of the world. Some people followed Christ and a new vineyard was created in which all people could work for their Father and for their eternal life with him in heaven.

In this parable we see the history of salvation and we also see

the patience, love, mercy and judgement of God.

It is not a parable about God's rejection of the Jews and God's acceptance of the Gentiles' acceptance of Jesus. This parable identifies the tenants not with the Jews in general but with the Jewish leaders in particular. The conflict is not between Jesus and the Jews but with Jesus and the Jewish leaders. It is not the vineyard (i.e. Israel) that will suffer judgement but those in charge. So the kingdom is taken from the Jewish leaders and given to the Church of Jew and Gentile.

Christ quoted from Psalm 118:22 "stone rejected" to make it abundantly clear to the Jewish leaders that this parable applied to themselves. For they were rejecting Christ who is the cornerstone, source of strength, stability and unity.

The parable speaks of God's patience. He sends more and more prophets in the merciful hope that his people might change their evil ways. So immeasurable is his love for his people that even when the prophets are killed God still hopes that his beloved Son will make them change their ways. Jesus is his last appeal, his final challenge.

Today, we are the tenants in God's vineyard and are subject to God's expectations and we are subject to his judgement. Depending on our response to him, judgement is then made. Are we producing the grapes and wine which the owner expects of us? Rev. Deacon George Bissett, Grange-Over-Sands

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28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Word was made flesh and lived among us: to all who accept him he gave power to become children of God.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 22:1-10

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people; the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. Next he sent some more servants. "Tell those who have been invited" he said "that I have my banquet all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to

the wedding." But they were not interested; one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them. The king was furious. He despatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town.

Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find to the wedding." So these servants went out on to the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

**The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

+++ HOMILY ++++++

**“Invite everyone
you can find to the wedding”**

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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How do you feel about going to weddings? Even if you are not a big fan, I imagine that the vast majority of people are at least happy to go to their own! The people invited to the wedding in the parable in today's Gospel perhaps aren't typical, but parables sometimes have to portray a situation which we might consider a bit extreme in order to make a point. This was a royal wedding, and you might expect that everyone would want to be there, but on the contrary, everyone declined, a great rebuff to the king.

In the parable, the king clearly stands for God himself, and the invitations to the wedding feast are the call that he gives to us all.

The first group of servants sent out represent the prophets of Israel and the invited guests who refuse to come are the chosen people of Israel.

The king sends out a second group of servants to plead with his guests to honour the invitation and these servants represent the first apostles and their mission to the Jewish people.

The initial invitation speaks of God's gracious call to his chosen people, the second invitation, saying that 'everything is ready' shows how patient God was with the people of Israel, still hoping that they would have a change of heart.

The king was so furious that he had been rebuffed and his servants maltreated and killed that he despatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. This may strike us as being a rather harsh reaction in connection with invitations to a wedding feast. What we have to bear in mind is that Matthew was writing his Gospel between the years AD 80 and AD 90. A very significant event had taken place since the time of Jesus, the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple by the Romans in AD 70. Complete disaster had come to those who did not recognise the Son of God when he came, and this was the point that Matthew was getting across.

Finally, the invitation is extended to anyone in the highways and byways and this represents the carrying of the Gospel to the Gentiles after Christ had been rejected by the Jewish people.

What can this parable teach us today? It reminds us that God invites everyone to his Church, but not everyone can be persuaded to come in. We shouldn't be surprised, but it may not be those we expect who enter the Church and get to heaven.

However, we should never forget that God is a gracious host who hopes that everyone will accept his invitation and come to the banquet.

Rev. Deacon Michael Harrison, Lytham

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time



29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Alleluia, Alleluia!
Your word is truth, O Lord,
consecrate us in the truth.
Alleluia!

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 22:15-21

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, 'Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are

not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, 'You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay tax with.' They handed him a denarius and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God.'

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise be to you Lord Jesus Christ

+++ HOMILY ++++++

“Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God”

The martyr of El Salvador, Archbishop Oscar Romero, said that when we leave Mass our faces should be shining like the sun because we have received Jesus into our hearts in the Blessed Sacrament. This idea is also found in the alternate Gospel Acclamation for today, “You will shine in the world like bright stars because you are offering it the word of life”.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, after conversing with Almighty God, his face shone so intensely that he had to wear a face-mask so as not to dazzle everyone. How much more should our faces shine because we have the Son of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, in our hearts every time we receive Holy Communion! Wouldn't it be something if we had to wear face-masks because we were on fire with the radiant truth and beauty of Our Lord, and not

because we're protecting each other from a virus! If our faces shine like bright stars through the working of God's grace in our lives the world will take notice because everyone is drawn to beauty and exuberant life.

And they will ask, ‘why are these people so alive, so radiant, so happy?’ We want them to be curious and ask these questions because Jesus wants everyone to have His word of life, the revealed Truths of the Catholic Faith. The key to being such shining Christians is how we receive the Eucharist.

St. John Vianney gave three tips about how to receive the Blessed Sacrament that will help make our faces shine like the sun:

Be grateful. Give thanks to God after receiving Holy Communion. Thank

Him for coming down into your heart sacramentally, really and truly present in the small host you have reverently and attentively received or spiritually present if you're making a spiritual communion.

Feel wonder. Every time we pray the Nicene creed we say, “I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ...God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God...through Him all things were made.” The only begotten Son of God, consubstantial with the Father, come down Incarnate from Heaven is in your heart. At the end of Mass spend time pondering this wonder.

Make a firm resolution to sin no more. When we truly appreciate that our eyes see, our mouths touch, and our hearts receive the incarnate God in the Blessed Sacrament, the memory of our past sins, and the prospect of committing sins in the future becomes increasingly painful.

This is a good and healthy pain, because it is the working of the grace of contrition and repentance cleansing us, getting us ready to more worthily receive Holy Communion.

To sum up: Be grateful. Feel wonder. Make a firm resolution to sin no more. If you do all three every time you go Mass or receive spiritual communion, “You will shine in the world like bright stars because you are offering it the Word of life”. Even if you are wearing a face-mask people will see it in your eyes and wonder why.

*Rev Deacon Nick Donnelly,
 Barrow-In-Furness*

Deacon Nick has a new book published by TAN Books, ‘A Catholic Survival Guide for Times of Emergency’ written to help Catholics during emergencies such as the pandemic. Available at Amazon.co.uk

Liverpool Seafarers Centre urges churchgoers to keep stranded seafarers in their prayers as crew-change crisis goes on



Ecumenical charity Liverpool Seafarers Centre has called on churchgoers to continue to remember seafarers in their prayers as it made fresh calls to repatriate those stranded at sea.

The Crosby charity echoed the International Maritime Organization's plea to governments ahead of a UN General Assembly meeting as it warned of the devastating impact on the mental health of those still stuck on ships due to coronavirus travel restrictions.

Centre chief executive John Wilson said it was becoming increasingly urgent to resolve the crew-change crisis, which has left more than 300,000 seafarers still trapped at sea.

And he called on churchgoers to continue to remember in their prayers those who make a living from the sea as well as lobbying their MP to act to end their plight.

Mr Wilson spoke as the IMO has called on governments to designate seafarers as key workers, implement its protocols to allow safe crew changes and remove restrictions on flights, travel and medical care.

He said: “We are now six months into the pandemic

with no end in sight for the thousands of seafarers trapped on board ships long beyond the time their contracts should have ended. Those workers that we have visited from Liverpool Seafarers Centre describe feeling forgotten and abandoned. They are missing their families and their home life, and the isolation they feel from living in cramped ship conditions for such a lengthy period is impacting on their mental health.

“We also need to appreciate the detrimental effect this situation has on the families around the world, who are going through this challenging time without their loved ones. For those unable to get to work, there is the added blow of being unable to earn money, which will prove difficult in these troubling times. In the Philippines, for example, education is moving online but few have the necessary hardware to support this.

“We are calling on governments to do what they said they would and help these vital workers return home.”

Jenny Brookfield

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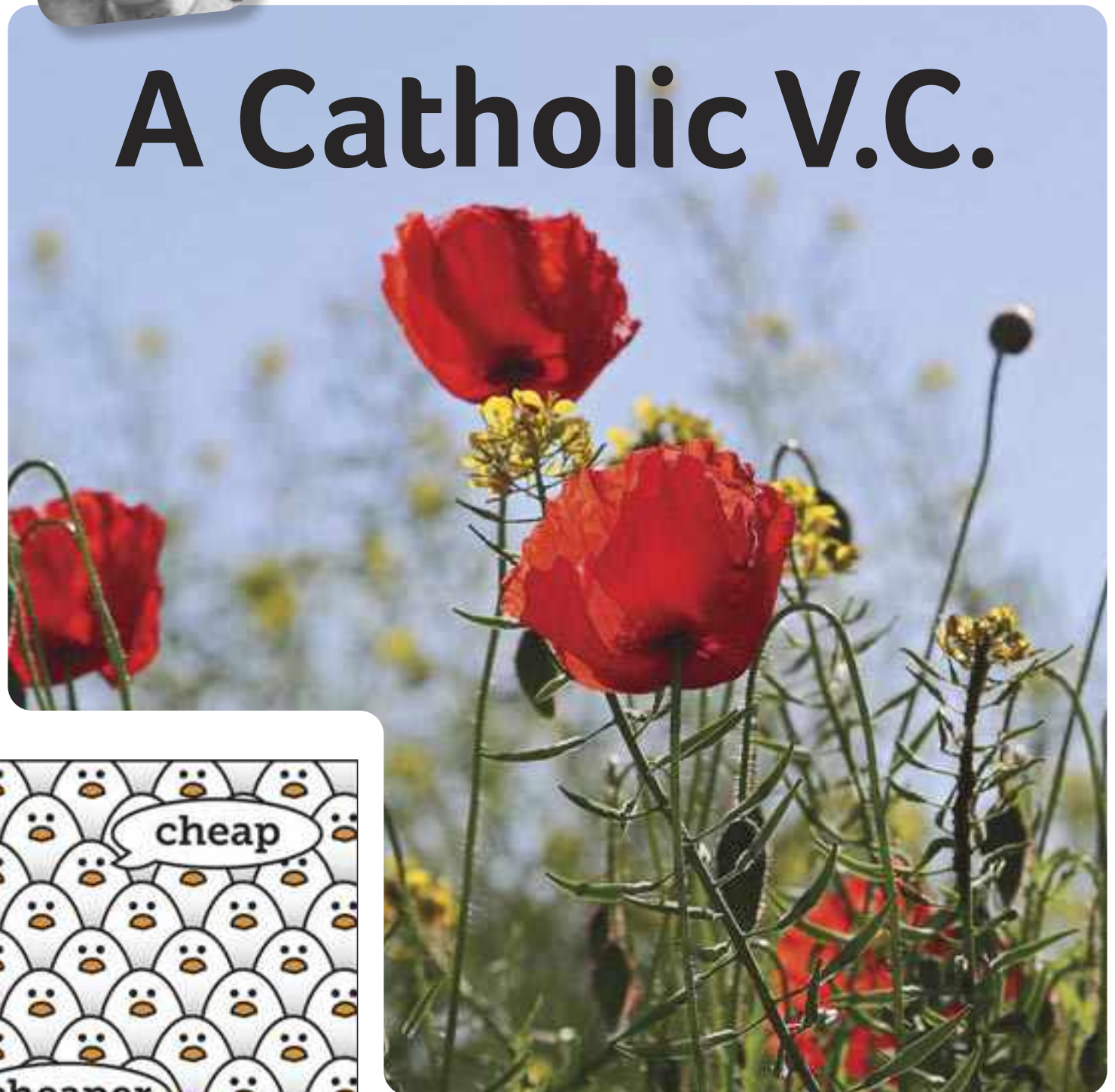
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Today we particularly remember prisoners and their families

Let us Pray

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care.

Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day. **Amen**



On 15 August, normally the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we marked the 75th Anniversary of V.J. Day. Although already close to defeat, the Japanese surrender finally came about after the Americans dropped atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Even though the War in Europe had ended in May 1945, soldiers in South East Asia kept fighting for a further three more months.

One such soldier was William Basil Weston, a 21 year-old Lieutenant, who, on the 3rd March 1945 led his men on what was to be a fateful mission in the town of Meiktila, some 60 miles south of Mandalay. Following an afternoon of fierce fighting, during which the young Weston had led his platoon in an assault on enemy bunkers positioned throughout the town, the company had nearly achieved its objective of securing an important section of ground before dusk,

but were prevented from doing so by a particularly well-held enemy position.

The lieutenant, realising the limited time now at his disposal and the importance of clearing the area before nightfall, ordered tanks to fire whilst he would lead his men on a final assault. True to type, Weston led from the front and was first to enter the bunker. As he did so, he was hit by fire from the enemy within, and fell to the ground wounded. Mindful not only of his mission, but also of his men coming-in behind him, Weston deliberately pulled the pin from a grenade and fell forward. The device duly detonated, killing him and most of the occupants of the bunker. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his outstanding bravery in May of 1945.

Weston had been born in Ulverston on 3rd January 1924, to William and Rose Weston, and was baptised at Saint Mary's Catholic Church in the town three days



later. His father was to die when William junior was only three years old.

At the outbreak of war, William was too young to sign-up, but did so when he was 18 in 1942, and was commissioned in the Green Howards (*The Princess of Wales' Own Yorkshire Regiment*). He was attached as a lieutenant to the First Battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment in 1944, the same year as his mother died.

The London Gazette, records his citation, issued by the War Office on 15th May 1945. Part of it reads, *"Throughout, the leadership was superb, encouraging his Platoon to the same fanatical zest as that shown by the enemy. His bravery, his coolness under fire and his enthusiasm inspired his Platoon. There was no hesitation on his part and no matter how heavy or sustained the enemy's fire he boldly and resolutely led his men on from bunker to bunker."* It concludes, *"The final supreme self-sacrifice of this gallant young*

officer within the sight of victory was typical of the courage and bravery so magnificently displayed and sustained throughout the day's operation."

William Basil Weston's family received his medal later that year. It was held with pride for many years by his nephew Basil Weston, who was named after him. Mr Basil Weston played the organ for many years at St Mary's until he was forced to retire a few years ago. He put his uncle's medal group, including the V.C., on permanent loan to the Green Howard's Regimental Museum in Richmond. Lieutenant Weston is buried in the Taukkyan War Cemetery in Rangoon. The Latin inscription on his memorial stone translates as *"Stay a short time travellers, and pray for my soul."* Parishioners and friends erected a stained-glass window in his memory in the Catholic Church at Ulverston. Mass was said for the repose of his soul on 15 August this year.

Canon Paul Emberry, Ulverston

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Young People Recognised

by

MILLION MINUTES

Four young people of the IMPACT group have been awarded the Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Award for their work in promoting the common good in their local community. They were nominated by youth worker Terry Mattinson for designing NHS banners and helping at their local foodbank.

The award is powered by Million Minutes (a Catholic youth charity). They support projects helping young people to transform their lives and help them

put Catholic social teaching into practice (millionminutes.org/cst). The Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Award was established in 2020 as a positive response to the global pandemic, celebrating and recognising amazing individuals across the country, all contributing to what the Church calls the 'Common Good'.

Each certificate has been signed by Cardinal Vincent Nichols..

To find out more about Blessed Pier, after whom the award is named please visit: millionminutes.org/info-on-blessed-pier

“Young friends, don't wait until tomorrow to contribute your energy, your audacity and your creativity to changing our world. Your youth is not an “in-between time”. You are the now of God, and he wants you to bear fruit.

” Pope Francis

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