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**of Lancaster**

**The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster**

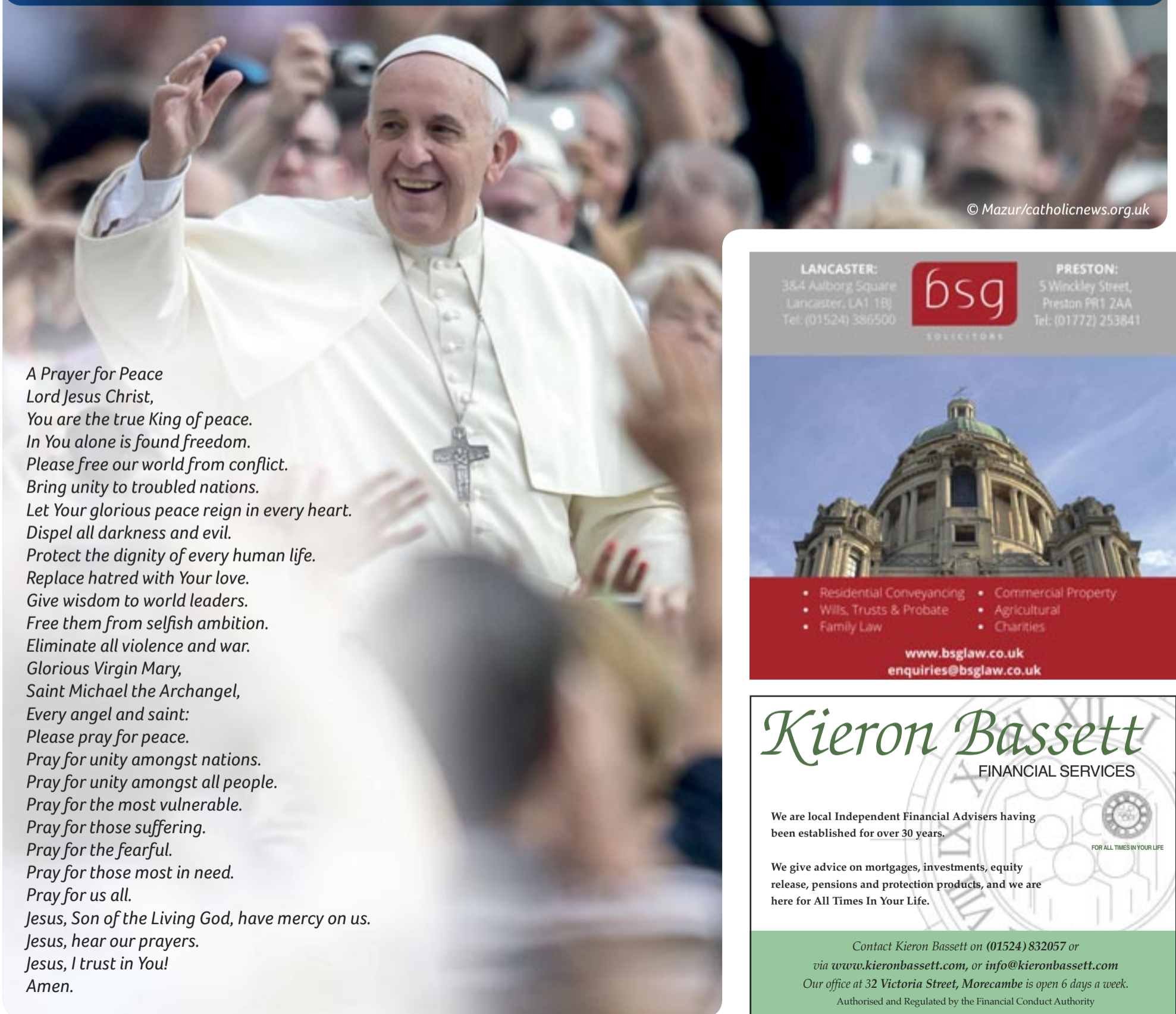
**Issue 346 + February '23**

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**THE HOLY FATHER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE**

**“To all men and women of goodwill, I express my prayerful trust that, as artisans of peace, they may work, day by day, to make this a good year!”**



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*A Prayer for Peace*  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
You are the true King of peace.  
In You alone is found freedom.  
Please free our world from conflict.  
Bring unity to troubled nations.  
Let Your glorious peace reign in every heart.  
Dispel all darkness and evil.  
Protect the dignity of every human life.  
Replace hatred with Your love.  
Give wisdom to world leaders.  
Free them from selfish ambition.  
Eliminate all violence and war.  
Glorious Virgin Mary,  
Saint Michael the Archangel,  
Every angel and saint:  
Please pray for peace.  
Pray for unity amongst nations.  
Pray for unity amongst all people.  
Pray for the most vulnerable.  
Pray for those suffering.  
Pray for the fearful.  
Pray for those most in need.  
Pray for us all.  
Jesus, Son of the Living God, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, hear our prayers.  
Jesus, I trust in You!  
Amen.

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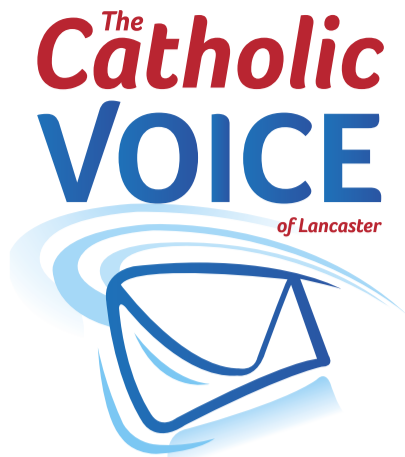
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Cardinal Vincent  
Nichols at Manger  
Square Hotel,  
Bethlehem, meeting  
Friends of the  
Holy Land grant  
recipients

## Reflections on an unforgettable year: 2022 – By Cardinal Nichols

**B**ooks will be written chronicling the events of 2022. These simple reflections do not attempt to do that.

Rather, in the context of such a difficult year, marked by the death of our beloved Queen, the terrible conflict in the Ukraine, the soaring cost of living and its painful consequences, there is just one focus that I wish to highlight.

It is, unsurprisingly, the burden of suffering and loneliness carried by many, those who are unable to meet the expectations of previous years of plenty and struggling to find new balances between harsh reality and usual comforts.

Into this picture comes my experience of visiting Palestine in late November and being with the people in the West Bank, principally the Christian communities there.

I came away with a fresh understanding of the limitations with which they live, the great difficulties of holding together their residing love for their homeland and pursuing the futures they wish, especially for their children. I saw the practical poverties which they have to bear, especially with regard to water supplies and power. Yet, I came away full of admiration for their tenacity, for their perseverance in daily efforts of kindness and solidarity and, above all, for their joyful and vibrant faith as a community.

In this they give us an example to be followed, as well as a charitable cause to be supported. They show us how faith in our Blessed Lord is transforming, for, as St John tells us, 'grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ' (John 1.17).

In 2023 may we too deepen our faith and love for our Lord, Jesus, the Christ. Only then will we have the resources to support all who are in need through the difficult times ahead, not begrudgingly, nor with political ideologies urging us on, but simply out of love for Him who never leaves us, never fails us, but is always 'Emmanuel', God with us.

*A happy new year to you all.*  
*+Vincent Nichols*

# Advent Celebration at Our Lady Star of the Sea

**O**ur Lady Star of the Sea, St Annes, celebrated the start of Advent with children and young people leading us in the nativity story. Our theme was that whilst rejoicing in the coming of Christmas we should also be aware of those less fortunate than ourselves. The music was both meaningful and happy and was followed by a three - course meal with wine. Most of all we came joyfully together as a parish family celebrating with our friends. We placed an unlit candle at each place setting and everyone was asked to take the candle home to remind them that whenever we do something for our fellow man – no matter how small – we light a candle.

The centre piece of our celebrations was a depiction of a cathedral on stage with its many colourful windows glowing with light. It was made by Christopher and Kimberley from the parish with many of the windows painted by Connect More a local art and peer support group.

*Jane Humphreys*





# Coming Together in Preston

Following the call from Bishop Paul Swarbrick, inviting schools in Preston to come together to form a Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in the Preston area, Our Lady and St Edwards, St Augustine's, St Bernard's, St Clare's, St Teresa's, St Joseph's and The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School have worked together to form Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

As the seven founding schools, we saw this work as a unique opportunity to work in collaboration and trust. Working together with families and parishes in a spirit of openness, honesty and ongoing development for the good of the young people in our care. To have Mater Ecclesiae – Mother of the Church – as our patron, as we are called 'One family in Christ'. It seems fitting that the start of the new liturgical year marks the start of this Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

*Catherine Monaghan,  
Headteacher, St Joseph's  
Catholic Primary School  
Preston*

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# YOUTH MATTERS



Workington outreach.

## What a year it's been!

When we started the year 2022 Covid restrictions were still in effect and, while we were pretty much out of the woods, it's fair to say that the future wasn't 100% secure for Castlerigg and the Youth Service. Fast forward twelve months though, and things couldn't look more different. So, it's worth a few paragraphs looking at where we are at as a Youth Service and what we want to do during 2023.

Since the start of 2020 (*a handy pre-Covid reference point*): We have gained twelve new groups and we haven't lost any! We have transformed the building and revamped the programme dramatically. In both cases, what we had before had done a lot of good over the years, but in both cases they were at least a little bit out of date. We've put in a lot of work in both areas these last few years and it's really starting to show.

One of the main parts of the building that visitors comment on is the games room. It's been completely transformed this last year with a new lick of paint, a carpet, new lights and, well... pretty much everything. Look out for some brand new games in the new year too!

**Our priorities in 2023 are many, but getting out more into parishes and schools will be a big part of it all.** Fancy a visit from the Castlerigg team? Give us a call and we can talk!

## Thanks to our amazing team

As you may know, there is a huge recruitment drought in ministry at the moment. It's proving quite hard to get staff all across the country (*it's a Covid*

*hangover, basically*) and we were very much affected by that. We started the year with four volunteers and three leaders – the normal complement being seven or eight with four. That meant that the people we started with had to really put in a shift. They worked incredibly hard with a great deal of generosity and as a diocese we are so grateful to them.

We had some crafty recruitment ideas which meant that our numbers padded out as the term progressed and we are now pretty much at full strength, at least on the ministry side of things. We are starting 2023 with ten amazing people and a few more in the pipeline.

An important word should also go to our house team. The people who cook the meals, look after the building and keep the admin ticking over are a huge, valuable part of the operation. They too have been under-strength this year (*recruitment in Keswick is always tough, never mind Covid!*) and we're so grateful to them for everything that they do for us. They're seriously nice people to have around the building too!

## What's been happening lately?

2022 ended really nicely. On Sunday December 18th (*World Cup Final day, as I call it*) the team left for a well deserved Christmas break and the last week before that was a real treat.

We spent Monday to Friday on site at St Joseph's school in Workington leading a mission week looking at the meaning of Advent. We worked with every student in Year 7 to 10 and with a handful of Year 11s and – a nice bonus – a few pupils from local Catholic primary schools. We

really love getting out to schools and parishes and now that we've got a few more staff, we're looking to do way more of it in 2023!

Saturday 17th saw our first ever Castlerigg Christmas Fayre. It was a first for us and we had no idea how it would go. Happily, it went really well. A good amount of people turned up, we raised some money for the Youth Service and it gave a lot of people a chance to see the new look Castlerigg Manor. We will definitely be repeating it again in 2023 so check out our socials for more details (*see below*) ...

## What's coming up?

There's a lot of exciting stuff ahead. Check out our website for the full list. We will lift out just a few here, all of which you can sign up for online:

**World Youth Day** is happening in Lisbon, Portugal. It's a chance to deepen your faith and make some friends, as well as a chance to see the Pope and be part of a crowd of millions of young Catholics from all over the world. We are charging £850 for the week – trust me when I say that's very cheap for WYD!

**Easter Retreat 2023** is happening at Castlerigg April 6-9th, and it's just £65. However... we don't want money to be an obstacle for anybody, so anyone who wants to go but can't afford it is invited to get in touch. We journey through the Easter weekend together and for a lot of people – including the Castlerigg team – it's a real highlight of the year.

**LIT** is our open retreat for anyone who is being confirmed, or who has been

confirmed recently. It's happening in May at Castlerigg!

## A few ways to connect

If you haven't already, give us a follow on social media. For adult leaders/ teachers, we are @YS\_Castlerigg on Instagram and Twitter and we are @CastleriggManor on Facebook. For Young People, we are @CastleriggManor on Instagram and Ticktock, and the Facebook page has a lot for young people too.

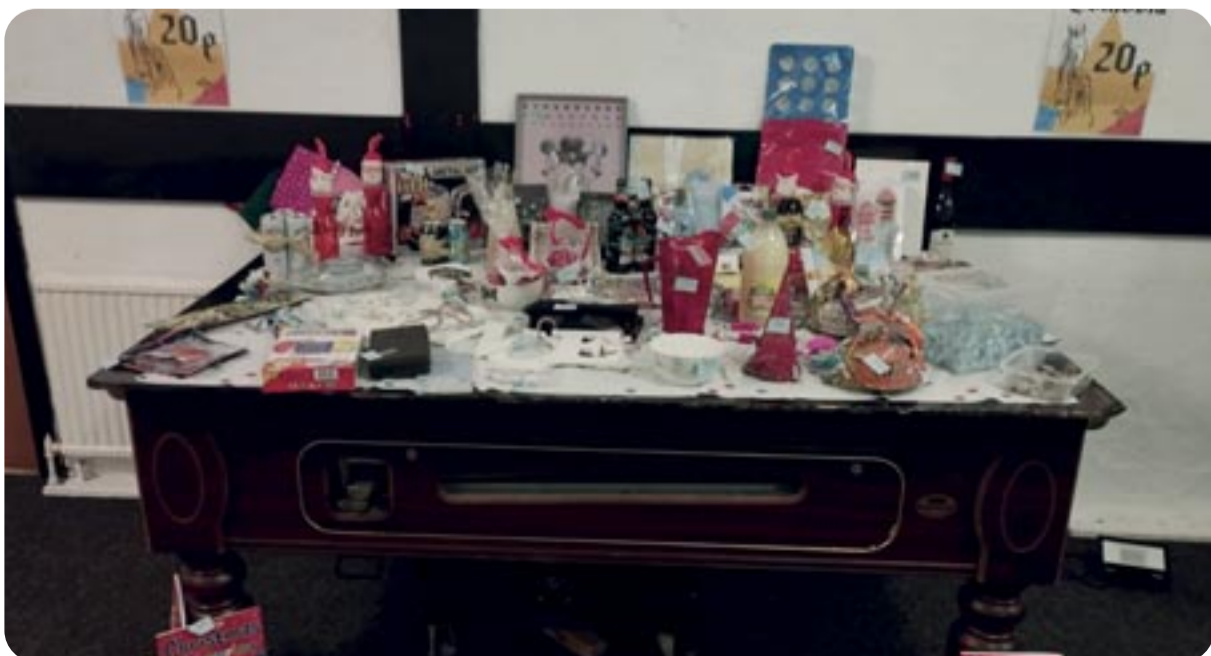
You can also share your details with us so that we can keep you up to date. Head to [castleriggmanor.com](http://castleriggmanor.com) and scroll down to 'Stay in Touch.'

Finally, don't forget the Castlerigg Lottery. Again, you can sign up through the website. It's £3 per ticket and there is a draw each month. Half the pot goes to the winner, and half to the Youth Service! Full disclosure: this isn't the type of lottery that will have you going round the Caribbean on a Yacht, but a win will pay for a nice night out for the family, or maybe even a weekend!





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Achille Ratti climbing club members - Sue Crook, David Jackson, Fr Philip Conner, Angela Powell, Angela Soper, Jean Lochhead (club treasurer), Natasha Fellowes (club secretary), Adrian Crook.

# Achille Ratti Climbing Club supports CAFOD

**F**or many years members of this mountaineering club have shared donations raised from their activities and CAFOD is very privileged to be a beneficiary.

During this year's annual Mass of Remembrance, the names of deceased members were read out, and prayers were offered in thanksgiving for their lives and contributions to the legacy of the club. In his homily, Fr Philip Conner, parish priest of Christ the Good Shepherd in Workington preached the significance of mountains as ways in which God has manifested to humanity. The Bible tells of people being called to the holy mountain to learn the ways of peace and justice. Experiences in the mountains can both encourage and challenge us to go

forward, to climb upwards, in the right balance of hope and fear.

During Mass, I was reflecting on the context of CAFOD's work. We are entrusted by the bishops to lead on the Catholic Church's response to poverty and relief of suffering internationally. Currently operating in the context of a post-COVID world. There is increased hunger and more people than ever are displaced because they have been forced to leave their homes due to environmental disasters and human conflict. Faced with what can sometimes seem like insurmountable challenges, we could easily lose hope and become fearful, and then I thought about how the Achille Ratti club started.

Achille Ratti began as a boys' club in Blackpool operating in the context of two world wars. The founding Bishop wanted to respond to a need to give formative experiences and practical skill training to young men from the diocese of Lancaster and the club took its name from the mountaineer who became Pope Pius XI, also known as the fearless Pope. Despite the external challenges, it was the spirit of courage and friendship, coupled with a love and respect for mountains that sustained the club. Since the opening of the club's first hut in 1942, it has been able to carry out its activities thanks to the generosity of time, funds and skill-sharing gifted by members. The club continues to offer friendship and refuge in the majesty of the mountains of the Lake District

and Snowdonia, it is open to people of all faiths, encouraging communion of friendship and sustenance both in spirit and practice.

It is the same spirit of courage and friendship from which CAFOD draws hope. We are encouraged by courageous partners and communities overseas, those who experience and face up to adversity, by proposing alternative ways to sustain their communities and livelihoods in some of the most challenging circumstances of our time. We give thanks for the friendship of CAFOD supporters who gift their time to organise fundraising and awareness-raising events and inspire others to participate in bringing about a better world for all. *Angela Powell, CAFOD*



**L**ent begins this year on 22 February and attention is turning to Lenten plans and commitments. Across the country, schools, parishes, groups, and individuals are lacing up their walking shoes to walk in faith and solidarity, with CAFOD's Big Lent Walk.

*"Excitement is building with dozens of groups and schools already signing up," says Monica Conmee, CAFOD's Head of Education. "We've seen a lot of energy building over the last couple of years for walking challenges, and the children and young people in many of the schools we speak to are just raring to go. It's exciting to see!"*

During lockdowns in England and Wales, CAFOD launched the Walk for Water in Lent 2021 which raised £750,000 for vital water projects in some of the most drought-stricken regions of the world. Walk Against Hunger followed last Lent 2022.

*"The Big Walk is something to look forward to", says Patrick Gardner, CAFOD representative in Lancaster Diocese.*

*"It's a great way for children and adults to step outdoors to appreciate our God-given environment and to act out our faith as part of something that brings about change for the better".*

Last year, local CAFOD supporter Ursula Leonard from St Joseph's parish in Cockermouth, together with a group of parishioners, set herself a challenge to walk 200km to raise funds to help some of the 200 million children in the world whose lives are at risk of malnutrition.

Before her walk last year, Ursula said:

*"In many parts of the world people don't know where their next meal is coming from. It really doesn't matter if you are a rambler or a runner, this is such an important issue, raising awareness of the effects of malnutrition, and raising funds to alleviate hunger."*

It's an event for a school, a parish, or a group of friends to plan now to walk together. Or simply, a chance to commit to some timeout and quiet reflection along the way,

Walk when and where you choose over 40 days, alone or with friends, have fun or take time to pray and reflect. As a Lent commitment, it's an inspiring way to actively commit to bringing our faith physically into every day of Lent, and support people as they overcome poverty. Find out more and sign up online at: [walk.cafod.org.uk](http://walk.cafod.org.uk)  
Thank you for your support and prayers this Lent. *Patrick Gardner, CAFOD*



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# THE BIG LENT WALK

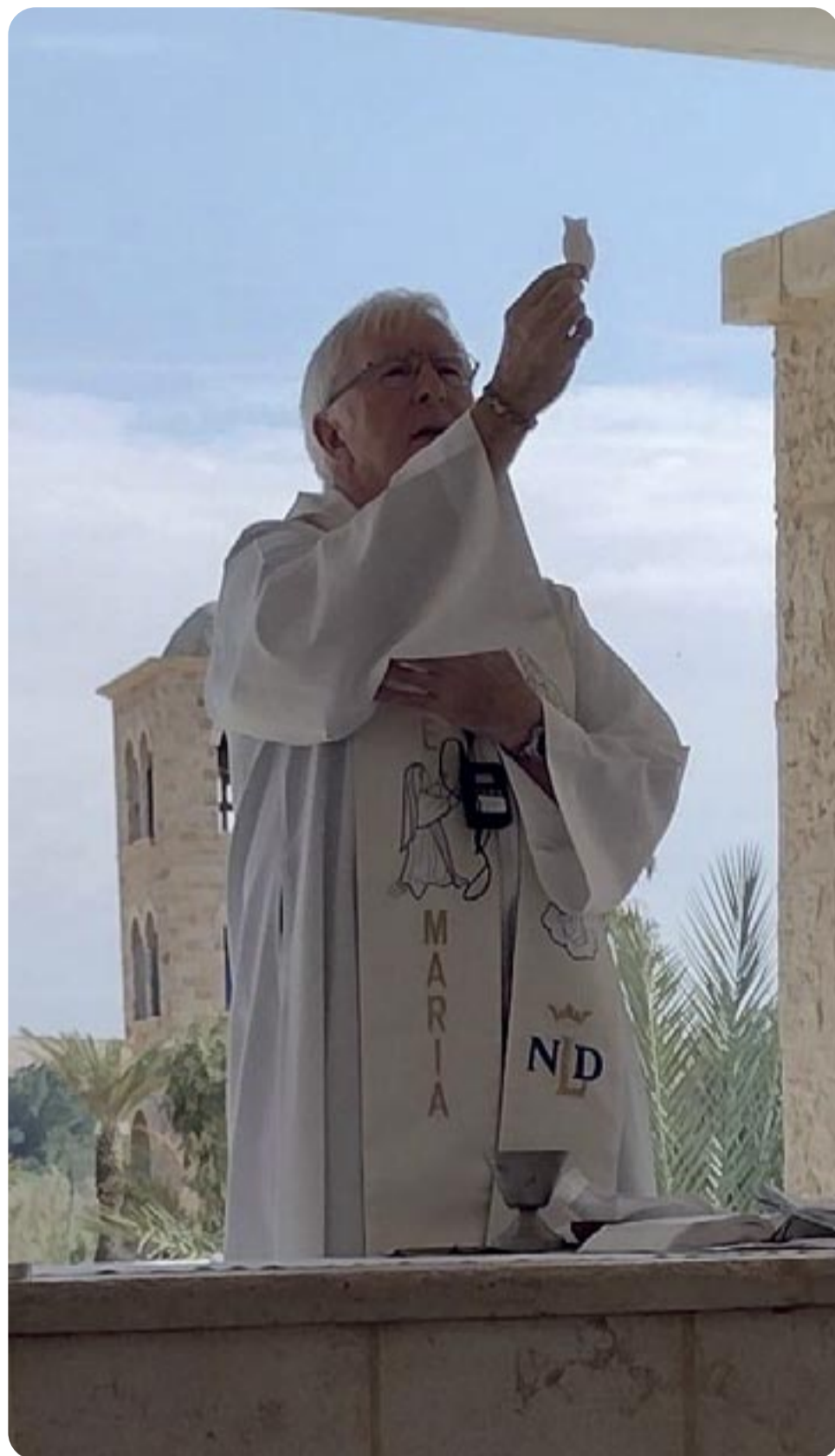
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# Holy Land Pilgrimage St Wulstan's &



**C**anon Alf Hayes led us on our eagerly awaited eight- day pilgrimage to The Holy Land at the beginning of November '22. The pilgrimage was organised by Northern Star Travel whose company we would highly recommend as we felt we had the most knowledgeable, likeable and spiritual tour guide possible in John, who we came to view as one of the group throughout our time there.

It certainly was a jam-packed itinerary as John was determined we should see and experience as much as possible while we were there so early starts, a lot of walking and hill climbing became the order of the day and we willingly conformed to soak up the experience of walking in Our Lord's footsteps.

We began by visiting the Nativity Church,

the birthplace of Jesus and celebrating Mass in the basilica of St Helen. We also visited The Shepherds' Field and marvelled at the thought that this was the very spot where the shepherds received the good news of our Saviour's birth. We then moved on to Ein Karem, the birthplace of John the Baptist followed by The Visitation Church and the grotto of St Jerome and Milk Grotto.

Most pilgrims had never heard of the Chapel of the Milk Grotto where tradition says it is the place where the Holy Family found refuge during the massacre of the Holy Innocents, before they could flee to Egypt. The name is derived from the story that a "drop of milk" of the Virgin Mary fell on to the floor of the cave and changed its colour to white. The space, which contains three different caves, is visited by some in the hope of healing infertile

couples. As well as daily Mass, there was time for prayer and scripture readings as we pondered and reflected at each place and John, our guide, was a fountain of information as we moved from one place to another. The second day we travelled to the Mount of Olives and visited the Chapel of the Ascension and Pater Noster church where Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer. We enjoyed panoramic views of the old city of Jerusalem and walked the Palm Sunday route to reach Dominus Flevit Church where Jesus wept over the fate of Jerusalem before our visit to the Garden of Gethsemane and the church of All Nations for Mass on the Rock of Agony.

Highlights of that day too were visiting the upper room where Jesus had his last Supper with his apostles, Tomb of King David and Church of Dormition, Church

of St Peter in Gallicantu and the house of Caiaphas where Jesus was held for a night after he was arrested from the garden. This was particularly moving as we could see clearly how and where he was tortured and mocked by his captors.

The following day saw us walking the Stations of the Cross from Via Dolorosa, to reach the most sacred place for Christians, which is The Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We knelt at Golgotha and the tomb of Our Lord before later moving on to visit St Anne's church where the parents of the Virgin Mary lived, viewing the pool of Bethesda before travelling on to Bethany to visit the tomb site of Lazarus.

Ancient Jericho the following day was our next port of call as we proceeded through the Judean wilderness. Mass



# St Edmund's Fleetwood and Friends



Continued on pages 10 and 11 >>

was celebrated in The Good Shepherd church and we saw the sycamore tree which some believe to be the actual one that Zacchaeus climbed. From the top of the ancient 'Tel' we enjoyed beautiful views of Elisha's fountain and after visiting Qumran, where the dead sea scrolls were found, many pilgrims took the opportunity to float or paddle in the Dead Sea.

As we headed north to Galilee the next day, we visited the River Jordan where we celebrated Mass and renewed our Baptismal promises before visiting Mount Tabor the place of The Transfiguration of Jesus. A scenic boat ride across the sea of Galilee the following day was enjoyed before moving on to Capernaum, the home of Our Lord during his ministry. Mass was celebrated on the mount of the Beatitudes. Our final day saw us visit the

Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth and Cana where the married couples in our group had the opportunity to renew their marriage vows during our Mass there.

I have managed to include the main sites we visited but I cannot really express the depth of feeling we felt, as a group, throughout our pilgrimage. The camaraderie, good humour and acceptance of each other helped to forge relationships and enhance and deepen our faith each day and this was due, in no small part, to input from Canon Alf and our guide John as well as being in the special places we had previously only read about in the Bible. We would like to thank Canon Alf, John and anyone who helped in any way in arranging this pilgrimage and making it such a memorable one for us all.

*Jenny Phillips, Cottam*

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## What some of the Holy Land Pilgrims had to say ...

*So many experiences and happy memories for me. I think it must be the Secret Pit and the harrowing words of Psalm 88 as they were read out that stand out for me. - Ania*

*We had a particularly packed itinerary that Sunday in Jerusalem; Stations of the Cross, Golgotha, tomb of resurrection.....Oh and Mass at the site of Martha and Mary's house and, of course, Lazarus' tomb.... Take me back please. - Kim*

*My life has been so enriched by the past week. So much friendship shared by all. I shall treasure my memories forever. - Anon*

*Great pilgrimage. Thank you all for your help and companionship- still trying to process all that we saw, heard and learnt. - Tony*

*So many beautiful Masses in wonderful places. Thank you Fr Alf. - Anon*

*An unforgettable pilgrimage with wonderful people. - Anon*

*Thank you for a wonderful pilgrimage and super warm companions. Loved you all. - Anne*

*So quiet now in my house - just the gentle hum of the washing machine. I truly had an amazing and very special time, John, our guide, was truly a man of faith. When he said to us at the end, "Now, go home and be apostles." It really touched me. - Viv*

**I**t became clear early on in the pilgrimage that a good number of pilgrims had close links to Cardinal Allen high school in Fleetwood either as past pupils or parents and, in some cases, even teachers! The four ex teachers having clocked up a total of 134 years at the school! The Catholic high school opened its doors in 1963. **Happy 60th Anniversary!**







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# Spotlight on the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service

## What is the mission of the Education Service?

Ultimately, we want as many children and adults as possible to come to know Jesus Christ and to enter into relationship with Him. We want Catholic schools to keep this mission at their heart, to bear witness to the Gospel and proclaim the teaching of the Church.

The Diocese has 84 institutions for education – 11 secondary schools, 70 primary schools, 2 private schools and one sixth form college. They each have different needs and operate in different contexts, but ultimately they share a single mission – to share the Good News and invite everyone to come to know Jesus.

In the briefest possible terms our job is to try and remove any obstacles, and

provide any support necessary, to enable our schools to deliver on that mission.

## How does the Education Service manage this? What does it do?

Too many things to list here! There are lots of things, but some of the main functions include advising during the appointments process, primarily of new Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers, Chaplains and Heads of RE. This ensures that we have strong, faithful voices in key leadership positions in our schools.

Then there is formation – we provide training to school leaders, as well as opportunities for spiritual development and reflection on the unique nature of Catholic leadership. We also support those who are new to education, as well as those who deliver or lead RE, and we oversee the Catholic Certificate

of Religious Studies (CCRS), a teaching certificate for those looking to teach in our schools. We also provide training and advice on curriculum RE at all age phases in our schools, to make sure that what we deliver is high quality and aligned with the teaching of the Church.

We support governing bodies to uphold the Catholic ethos and identity of our schools and give training to help Foundation Governors – whom the Bishop appoints – to know and understand their role. We also oversee the inspection process, which we use to ensure our schools retain their Catholic mission and standards. Our starting mindset is always about supporting our schools, nonetheless part of our responsibility is also to hold schools and their governing bodies to account, and inspection is

one way we fulfil this function.

Finally, we inevitably have a lot of 'back-office' functions, such as providing bespoke advice and support, working with external agencies like the Department for Education, Local Authorities and Ofsted to represent the interests of the Diocese, and just generally ensuring our schools are supported to uphold their founding mission and purpose.

This is not all of course – we are accountable! There is a Board of Education and Formation, which acts like a governing body for the service, whilst we are also accountable to the Diocesan Trustees who regularly meet and review the work of the Service. If there was anything we were not getting quite right, these bodies are there to tell us!

Michael Merrick, Paul Lovell, Julie Jones, Heather Watts, The Very Reverend Fr Michael Docherty and Fr John Millar.



**Who works at the Education Service?**

We have a fairly small team, although we like to think this makes us very responsive and dynamic! Fr Michael Docherty is the Episcopal Vicar for Education and Formation and works part-time – he acts with the Bishop’s authority to strategically plan and manage the provision of Catholic education in the Diocese. We also have Fr John Millar, who also works part-time and with Fr Michael provides formation support for school leaders, leaders of RE and inspectors.

We then have Michael Merrick, who is the Diocesan Schools Commissioner (DSC), and Mrs Julie Jones, who is the Deputy DSC. Between them, they work closely with Headteachers and governors to provide the majority of the practical support outlined above.

Finally, we have Heather Watts, the longstanding Office Manager who keeps everything running smoothly and to a high standard, whilst Paul Lovell works with the Education team to manage school buildings, keeping them well maintained and consulting on changes and developments.

We also have a team of wider officers who work with the Diocese on ad hoc basis, providing bespoke support for training, appointments and governance. These are Fran Wygladala, Len Hampson and Margaret Wright, amongst others.

**What is academisation and why is it important?**

Obviously academisation is an important part of the current agenda and Bishop Swarbrick has expressed his wish that all schools in the Diocese join one of our three Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs). This is because he saw that we would be better able to safeguard and support our schools in their Catholic mission if they came together as families of schools, with the enhanced freedoms but also opportunities that academisation allows.

We’re pleased to say that nearly a third of our schools have already heeded the Bishop’s call and others are going through the process of academising now – we’re here to support with that process, as well as ensuring that our Catholic MATs uphold the mission of the Church.

We have three MATs across the Diocese - in Cumbria and North Lancashire we have the Mater Christi MAT lead by Jacky Kennedy, in Preston and surrounding we have the Mater Ecclesiae MAT lead by Mia Barlow, and in the Blackpool and the Fylde we have the Blessed Edward Bamber MAT led by Helen O’Neill.

We have a close working relationship with the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and we are delighted with the progress that has already been made. *continued >>*

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**What is the big focus this year?**

There are lots of projects at the moment and this is a time of great change in Catholic education as several national initiatives have been released that need to be implemented across the Diocese. So we have a new inspection framework to implement, a new curriculum document to introduce and provide support for, as well as a new prayer and liturgy document to disseminate and provide formation opportunities for. We also have new questions that have come with academisation, such as how we support our MATs and our CEOs and how we provide training and oversight in this new landscape in which we sit. It is lots of work but we are very excited by

the opportunities it holds.

**How can people help support our Catholic schools?**

We know our schools were founded by the faithful, who wanted a Catholic education for their children, and it is our great privilege to be the one's to preserve and enhance that legacy.

However, it is not something that can just be 'contracted out' to the Diocese – the best Catholic schools need the support of parents and the wider parish to be the wonderful engines of prayer and evangelisation that they can be. So in the first instance we would say the best way to support them is simple: use them!

For those unable to donate time, then prayers are always vital, as well as advocating for our schools whenever you get chance. This could be with children – letting parents new to the area know about our schools, or speaking to new parents about our schools – but it also includes adults. Recruitment is a challenge in all schools, but recruitment for Catholic schools is that much harder, so if you know someone who is considering teaching, or even someone who is not sure about what they want to do, then do mention the possibility of training to teach in our schools! Similarly, we always love to hear from Catholic educators who are not currently teaching in our schools but would like to make the switch and 'come home'.

An ongoing challenge which requires a greater time commitment, but which is absolutely vital, is school governance. We are always on the lookout for governors in our schools and, going forward, Directors for our MATs. We would say if you know someone who you think could help, or if you yourself felt you had time to offer, then we would love to hear from you and we could talk about the possibility of becoming a Foundation Governor or Director.

Lastly, financial support for the education mission of the Church is always welcome. Do continue to support our schools as best you can, if you can.

*The Very Reverend Fr Michael Docherty*



**We would like to thank these schools for always supporting the paper**

**Our Lady and St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School**  
 Emerald Road • Margerit • Cambria • CA5 8HN  
 ☎ 01524 82582 • ✉ head@ol-pat-margerit.cambria.sch.uk  
 Website: www.ol-pat-margerit.cambria.sch.uk  
 Headteacher: Mrs J Hampton  
 Assistant Head: Mrs H Long  
 At Our Lady & St. Patrick's we respect Christ in everyone  
 and we grow together in faith and love to serve the community.

**Cardinal Allen Catholic High School**  
 Melbourne Avenue, Fleetwood  
 FY7 8AY  
 Headteacher: **Andrew Cafferkey**  
 Tel: 01253 872659  
 E-mail: head@cardinalallen.co.uk

**Saint Bede's Catholic High School**  
 Headteacher: Mr P Marsden  
 Talbot Road, Lytham St. Annes  
 FY8 4JL  
 01253 737 174  
 www.stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk  
 contact@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

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 Email admin@ccc.lancs.sch.uk  
 www.ccc.lancs.sch.uk

**Christ the King Catholic High School**  
 Lawrence Avenue, Frenchwood,  
 Preston PR1 4PR  
 Headteacher Mr S N Corless  
 Tel: (01772) 252072 Fax: (01772) 885674  
 Email: reception@ctk.lancs.sch.uk  
 Web: http://www.ctk.lancs.sch.uk

**Our Lady's Catholic High School**  
 St Anthony's Drive, Fulwood, Preston,  
 Lancashire PR2 3SQ  
 Headteacher: **Mr Charnock**  
 Tel: 01772 326900  
 Email: admin@olchs.lancs.sch.uk  
 Web: http://www.olchs.lancs.sch.uk

**English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School**  
 Sizer Street, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 7DR  
 T: 01772 556092  
 E: head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk  
 www.englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk  
 Headteacher: Annalisa Howarth  
 Deputy Headteacher: Michelle DeCarteret  
 BLT: Jo Jackson & Vikkie Thomas  
 Judged once more as Good – Ofsted December 2017  
 Judged once more as Good with Outstanding Catholic Life  
 – Section 48 March 2019  
 'Our children are all unique, beautiful individuals but together we are a masterpiece, brothers and sisters in Christ.'

**Teacher Training with the Catholic Teaching Alliance**  
 The Catholic Teaching Alliance (CTA) is a partnership between 70 Catholic primary and secondary schools, and a post-16 college, led by Our Lady's Catholic High School with a shared vision and commitment to providing PGCE with QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) courses in partnership with the University of Cumbria.  
 Contact: 01772 326931  
 Email: CTASchooldirect@olchs.lancs.sch.uk  
 Website: www.catholic-teaching-alliance.org

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# Spring Cleaning

*"St Francis, faithful to the scriptures invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness"*

*Pope Francis, Laudato Si # 12*

**S**pring is the time when nature wakes up from its slumber. It is time to throw open the windows, chuck out the junk and give everything a good dusting. That's also a pretty good description of a productive Lent. As we watch nature waking up, Pope Francis' words give us a wonderful pointer to the purpose of Lent: *"Nature is filled with words of love. But how can we listen to them amid constant noise, interminable and nerve-racking distractions, or the cult of appearances". (Laudato Si # 225).*

Lent is a time to cancel out all that noise; recognise and reject the distractions of the modern world and be truly ourselves in our encounters with others. Then we will hear more clearly the Lord's call to love; we will hear more clearly the cry of the earth and we will hear more clearly the cry of the poor. They are all connected.

We are spiritually deaf because our ears are filled with all the noise of "progress". Yet, have we not lost far more than we have gained over the last few decades? We are familiar with the extinction of species, but the American ecologist, Robert Pyle alerts us to another extinction *"the extinction of experience"*.

It relates to our disconnection from the natural world and from cultural tradition. Our forebears lived largely in harmony with nature. They understood the seasons. They knew the animals, the birds and the plants. Many grew their own food. For many children today, "eats" just come on the supermarket van. Children's dictionaries removed words like "acorn" and replaced them with words related to computer technology. It is their loss. The same dissociation makes us immune to the plight of others, sometimes described as *"compassion fatigue"* or, as Pope Francis puts it *"the globalization of indifference"*. Everything is connected.

Our cultural tradition is Christian, yet many children grow up with no

knowledge of Jesus. Our young people are largely absent from our churches. There is a huge loss of cultural identity. Our supportive communities have been replaced by anonymous and often malicious electronic communication. There is a growing library of medical evidence linking anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions with this dissociation from the natural world and loss of cultural identity. It is not surprising (but extremely worrying) that the Oxford Children's Dictionary's Word of the Year in 2021 was *"anxiety"*.

Adults who a couple of generations ago might have enjoyed the conviviality of a parish social club may now sit at home and binge on boxed sets. With the rise of this instant gratification, true gratitude has become increasingly rare in our current society. Gratitude is part of humility, of recognising our interdependence with others. It is an aspect of love.

Like his predecessors, Pope Francis calls us to an ecological conversion. Lent is a good time to start. We need to live simply and in harmony with the natural world so that our fellow human beings and the other creatures and plants may simply live. This is more than simple environmentalism, it is a call to Justice. It is a call to give glory to God and gratitude for the wonderful book of nature.

After their Autumn 2022 conference, our bishops published three resolutions relating to environmental protection. The first about abstinence from meat on Fridays; the second calling for dioceses to declare target dates for carbon reductions; and the third commending the CAFOD *"Live Simply"* Award to parishes and schools as a response to Pope Francis' call to *"work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us"*.

We can make the best of Lent by sharing the journey with others. The Environmental Justice Group invites

parishes to put *"Live Simply"* on the agenda for their next parish council meeting. We also invite school Governors to reflect on the positive contribution that *"Live Simply"* can make to the faith life of the school. It will start a journey that will go far beyond Lent - a journey that will be particularly relevant to our young people in this time of anxiety.

*Lancaster Diocese  
Environmental Justice Group*

## The Catholic VOICE would like to hear from you!

If your parish or school has any news or if you would personally like to submit an article for publication please, please send us what you have. Contact details can be found on page 2.

**Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust**

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is the latest school to join The Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic family of schools. Sacred Heart joined the BEBCMAT family on 1st January 2023 - we are delighted to welcome them into our growing family of 8 schools across Blackpool, the Fylde and Wyre regions. We look forward to working closely together for the benefit of our pupils, families, staff and parishes. Places are available for Reception class for September 2023. We warmly welcome you to visit us during the school day to see our fabulous learning in action. Please contact the school office on 01253 821392 for more information.

Logos of member schools: St. Peter's Catholic Academy, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, St. Andrew's Catholic Primary School, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, St. John's Catholic Primary School, St. Michael's Catholic Primary School, St. Nicholas' Catholic Primary School, St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School.

# IMPACT Youth Groups

Terry Mattinson, Youth Worker, reports on the activities of the Preston and Fylde IMPACT groups during 2022.



Year 8 Students Our Lady's, Fulwood with items for the Salvation Army Preston following their Bake Sale which raised £125.

## Residential

We held our second residential since COVID in October at Castlerigg Manor and it was a fantastic event. We even had a Zoom connection with a Salesian Family Youth Centre in Los Angeles California, young people connecting with the other young people across the pond! Our young people said:

*'We found the weekend gave us time and space, to relax and have fun, lead workshops and have some special time in the chapel'*

## Christmas Young People 'Care'

During the Advent last year students and staff from Our Lady's Preston, St Bede's Lytham St Anne's, St Cecilia's Longridge

and members of Impact Youth Groups sent out Christmas Cards to Care Homes, delivered Toys, Mince Pies, Selection Boxes and much more to the Salvation Army in Preston. They also handed cheques to Salvation Army Blackpool and Fylde Foodbank Lytham St Annes, as well as delivering a Christmas card, Biscuits and Chocolates to the staff in the Emergency Dept at Royal Preston Hospital for all their work and dedication. The Emergency Department at the hospital has been in receipt of regular gifts during 2022.

## Pax Chrisiti Youth Project

Romero Action Youth Group in Our Lady's Catholic High School in Preston have

been awarded a grant of £1,500 pounds for a peace project to work with primary schools on the theme of peace to start in 2023. This will be a youth led project by a group of Year 9 students, watch this space for more news in the *Catholic Voice*.

## INSPIRE 22 UK Youth Led Project

The Change Youth Group based at St Cecilia's, Longridge have been given funding to support social and community action projects in the Longridge and urban area of Preston, six to eight students from Year 9 are involved in the project which runs through to August this year with the support of the Impact Youth Groups

and Lancashire Boys and Girls Clubs.

## Million Minutes Grant

Change Youth Group in St Cecilia's Catholic High School have been awarded a grant of £500 to undertake community projects in Longridge and the urban area of Preston starting this year. Once again this will be a youth led project to empower young people.

## Fylde and Preston Action Youth Groups

Both groups firmly established themselves during 2022 meeting at St Joseph's Ansdell and St Clare's Preston on a regular basis. Lots more to come from them during the course of the year.

Terry Mattinson

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