FREE

The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 347 + March '23

INSIDE: pg15
Faith into Action at Our Lady's Catholic College, Lancaster

LENT 2023

This is what Our Saviour was prepared to do out of love for us!

What are we prepared to do to live out this example of love?

- Improve our prayer life
- Seek forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Offer some of our time for the benefit of others
- Give up something and use what we save to increase our charitable donations
- Be more forgiving of others, be patient and kind
- Live more simply

LANCASTER:
3&4 Aalborg Square
Lancaster, LA1 1BJ
Tel: (01524) 386500

bsg
SOLICITORS

PRESTON:
5 Winckley Street,
Preston PR1 2AA
Tel: (01772) 253841

- Residential Conveyancing
- Wills, Trusts & Probate
- Family Law
- Commercial Property
- Agricultural
- Charities

www.bsglaw.co.uk
enquiries@bsglaw.co.uk

Kieron Bassett
FINANCIAL SERVICES

We are local Independent Financial Advisers having been established for over 30 years.

We give advice on mortgages, investments, equity release, pensions and protection products, and we are here for All Times In Your Life.

FOR ALL TIMES IN YOUR LIFE

Contact Kieron Bassett on ***(01524) 832057*** *or via* ***www.kieronbassett.com,*** *or* ***info@kieronbassett.com***
Our office at 32 ***Victoria Street, Morecambe*** *is open 6 days a week.*
Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

The Catholic VOICE of Lancaster

CONTACT US:

The Catholic Voice of Lancaster is published on the last Sunday of the month previous to publication date.

The Catholic Voice of Lancaster is published by its owners. The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lancaster, a registered charity, (No. 234331), and is wholly independent of and separate from any previous newspaper published by or on behalf of the diocese.

EDITOR:
Edwina Gillett
01253 736630 / 07969 967268
edwinagillett@hotmail.co.uk

ADVERTISING:
Charlotte Rosbrooke / CathCom Ltd.
01440 730399 / 07932 248225
charlotter@cathcom.org
www.cathcom.org

DESIGN & LAYOUT:
Rob Hotchkiss / Hot Creative
01253 730343
rob@hot-creative.co.uk
www.hot-creative.co.uk

PUBLISHED BY:
CathCom Ltd. N2 Blois Meadow Business Centre, Blois Road, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7BN
020 7112 6710
www.cathcom.org

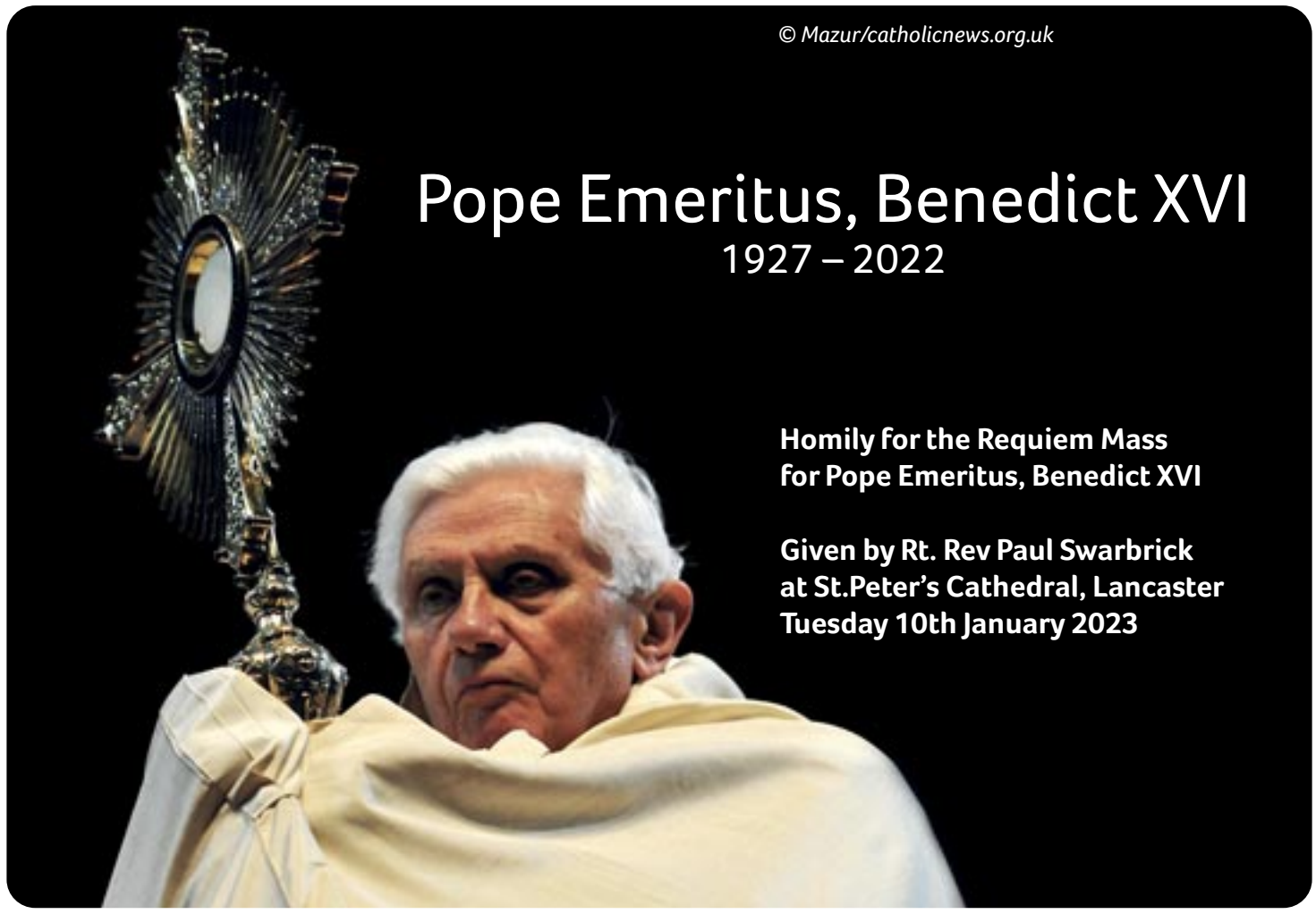
Articles to:
voicenews@hotmail.co.uk

Letters to:
voiceletters@hotmail.co.uk

POSTAL ADDRESS:
FAO Edwina Gillett
99 Commonside, Ansdell,
Lytham St. Annes FY8 4DJ

Please send articles for publication on CD or by email, supplying any photos separate to the text (i.e. in jpeg format). Otherwise please type double spacing or write very clearly. Last date for copy is the LAST DAY of the month prior to publication. Photographs will be returned if you remember to put your name and address on the back of each and enclose suitable stamped and self-addressed packaging.

PLEASE RECYCLE OUR PAPER



Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI
1927 – 2022

Homily for the Requiem Mass for Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI

Given by Rt. Rev Paul Swarbrick at St.Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster Tuesday 10th January 2023

He died on the morning of 31st December 2022, as a consequence of which, the New Year news headlines were dedicated to a man of Faith; Fireworks took second place for once.

He completed 95 years in this world, having lived through some of the most violent events of the last century.

He was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood in 1951. His years of service to the Church included him having a significant place in the Second Vatican Council. His most productive years have been intent on the Church retaining a clear and balanced understanding of the work of that Council.

I have no intention to give any sort of *'potted'* biography of Pope Emeritus, Benedict. Enough can be found elsewhere and is widely available. In any case, a *'potted'* biography is hardly a worthy offering for such a figure. What I do intend to express is the Church's debt of thanks to God for having given us such a Servant, Shepherd and fellow Pilgrim in these times. It is fascinating to reflect on how the Lord works, calling such a man to such a vocation and ultimately to the highest Office. Given his simple origins, his natural shyness, and his preference to remain out of the public gaze, it could be considered cruel for him to be elected in succession to the late Pope Saint John-Paul II. But then, who else could have done it? In asking this, I am not thinking of his talents and outstanding ability as Theologian, nor of his unquestionable orthodoxy. I am thinking firstly of his humility, and the depth of his love for Christ.

The Letter to the Hebrews mentions the place of suffering in the Christian vocation. Indeed, there is genuine suffering in accepting leadership in the Church. It is the suffering spoken of by Our Blessed Lord when He talked to Saint Peter of how someone would tie a rope around him and lead him in a way he would rather not go. But such suffering can be accepted even joyfully because it is accepted with awareness of what Our Lord has done for us, out of love for sinners. Even at 77years old, when most of us are well retired, those who love enough can accept this vocation to high office, leaving the rest of us ashamed of our lack of love, but also grateful for such an individual.

Benedict's brief eight years as Pope were marked by his focus on the centrality of God's love as revealed in Jesus Christ. He upheld the Tradition of the Church and the Teaching of the Magisterium, as well as speaking out on matters of Social Justice. He worked tirelessly for the Unity of the Church. The presence here this evening of so many leaders of other Christian Denominations and traditions is testament to the respect in which he and his work are held.

Throughout his life, Benedict served only one Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. As he met with crushing difficulties he could so easily, following the example of his predecessor, Pope Saint John-Paul, have hung on to the bitter end, come what may. He prayed about this and eventually came to a decision that sent shock-waves through the Church; he chose to resign the Petrine Office. This too became evidence of his humility and his courage.

There are those in the media, and sadly also in the Church, who tend to compare Pontiffs, as if trying to set one against the other. This was unfortunately the case with Pope Emeritus, Benedict, and his successor, Pope Francis. In fact, they are not rivals, but co-workers. Pope Francis is, in a real way, the gift of Benedict to the Church. Benedict's final nine years carried no lessening of zeal or concern for the Church. His loyalty up to the end brings to mind the example of our late Queen, Elizabeth, a tireless, dedicated servant of Christ over so many decades of turbulent life. We have truly been blessed to witness these outstanding witnesses to Faith.

The remarkable Authority of Jesus, seen and spoken of in the Gospel, is with us still. It is not of human origin; it is Divine. Benedict has given us confidence in that. Over many years he has spoken of the Final Judgement we must all endure. He talked about how it should be approached as an experience of Hope rather than of fear. How can this be so? Because he believed in the Lord as a merciful Judge who longs to share the life of heaven with us. Also, because a life humbly lived can dispose us to receiving mercy. For those who have tried to serve God and remain true to His Teachings, for those who have acknowledged their sins and undertaken penance, for those who have accepted and even endured suffering as an opportunity to repay something of love's debt, the Resurrection of Christ brings new life.

We thank God for Benedict and all that he has left us for guidance on our way. We pray for him and offer Mass for the repose of his soul because this is what he would want of us.

Finally, I pause and reflect on my own life. How generously am I following Christ? As Benedict's life served the Lord, so does his death. May he inspire each of us to live humbly, generously and joyfully trusting in God.

+Paul Swarbrick

Photos: Cathedral pics courtesy of Michael Durnan.

K&M Maintenance

Heating - Electrical - Drainage **Established 25 years**
Telephone: 01772 704530 Fax 01722 798801

Heating, Electrical and Drainage and Plumbing services across the North West of England

Gas
- Emergency Boiler Repairs for all makes
- Boiler Installations & servicing
- Central Heating System repairs/upgrades/leaks
- New fitted Central Heating Systems
- Landlord Gas Safety Certificates (CP12)

Electrical
- New consumer units supplied and fitted
- All emergency breakdowns
- New lighting
- Faulty sockets
- Outdoor lighting/sockets
- Power tripping
- Additional sockets
- Rewiring
- EICR - electrial safey certificates

Drainage and Plumbing
- Blocked drains, internal and external
- Leaks
- Camera surveys
- New taps

Prices
Boiler Service - £49 + VAT plus £10 for every additional appliance.

Tel No: 01772 704530 **Mobile:** 07941 554730
Fax No: 01772 798801
Address: K & M Maintenance Services Ltd,
Unit 8A, Electron Mill, Brook Street, Preston PR1 7NH
More information: www.kmmaintenance.co.uk

Funeral Director with Distinction

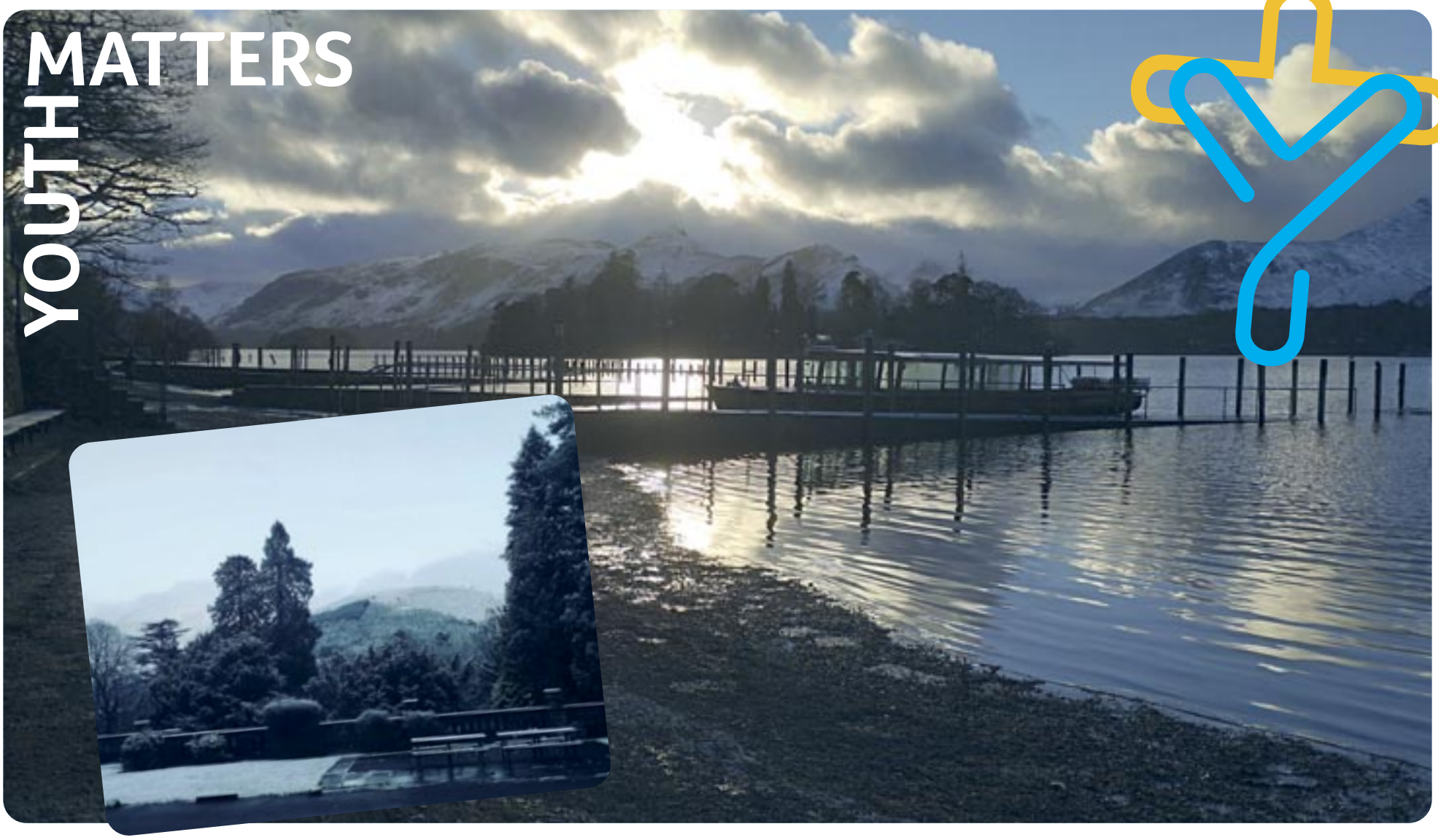
Mark F H Rae Funeral Directors

Dip FD MBIFD
Incorporating Rawcliffe and Rae
Independent Family Firm
A Caring and Personal Service
with over 40 years experience
Funerals conducted by **Mark and Helen Rae**
Consultant Funeral Director **Paddy Keogh**

Tel: 01253 789000/01253 735269
Wood Street, St Annes on Sea,
Lancashrie FY8 1QS
Website: www.markraefunerals.co.uk

Golden Charter

YOUTH MATTERS



General Update

It's cold in Keswick! Hopefully by the time this edition hits the pews it will be a little bit warmer, but right now *(late January)* it's a bit chilly. The road down to Castlerigg was a bit of an ice rink last week but, on the plus side, there were some beautiful views to be had *(see photos)*.

Our team started the New Year with a retreat. Not a retreat at Castlerigg though. This time, our team were the retreatants, going away for four nights at Pluscarden, a Benedictine Abbey in the North of Scotland. The team all agreed that it was a worthwhile experience, albeit with a mammoth journey to get there!

This year has been a strange one. Usually, we start with a team and that's the team that goes through the year, but this year we've had a lot of new people join us as things have gone along. Since we started in September, we've welcomed Amelie, Kylie and now Starr – our latest team member who joins us from Hertfordshire. We've also said goodbye to Rachel in recent weeks too, as she moves on to pastures new.

In recent years, November to February have been quiet months at Castlerigg, but this year things have really picked up. November was packed fairly full and the rest of the winter has also been far from quiet. Recently we're hosted groups from Preston, Carlisle, Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and a few other places besides.

At this point in the year we're very much looking ahead – and I don't just mean to when the weather gets warmer! The next big open event is our Easter Retreat, and after that we'll be gearing up for Lisbon in the summer! *(see below)*. We're also proudly supporting the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage which you can probably read all about elsewhere in these pages.

Altar Servers Retreat

In mid-January we held our second annual retreat for Altar Servers and we got a really good crowd of people from all over the diocese, but mostly from Cumbria. The retreat gave the servers a great chance to reflect on their ministry and have a bit of fun together. Father Daniel Etienne from Carlisle joined us to celebrate Mass – a rather strange but wonderful affair in which the servers in full uniform were the majority of the congregation!

Other than through our schools, Altar Serving is the main way in which the Church has regular contact with young people. There are many times more young people altar serving than there are active in youth groups. It's a ministry that goes back a great many years, and a lot of priests proudly look back on altar serving as their first experience of being on the sanctuary.

Pray for all of our altar servers, and pray for our MCs and other adults who look after them.

Join Our Team

We are currently looking for gap year volunteers to join our 2023-24 team.

Pretty soon, we will be recruiting some paid leadership posts too. Keep an eye on our website and our social media – Facebook @CastleriggManor – the ads will appear soon. In the meantime, if you want to find out anything or just have a chat, Email *director@castleriggmanor.co.uk*, or phone the Manor and ask for Jack.

The ministry team at Castlerigg Manor are the heart of the Youth Service. They all stay together on site *(apart from Jack, who lives with his family close by)* and live as part of a community which is a lot of fun! But they work hard too. They welcome groups to the Manor and occasionally go out to schools and parishes too. They give testimony, lead games, help out on walks and other activities, and they also lead small groups, and spend time with the young people letting them know that they matter. Working at Castlerigg is an experience that hundreds of people have had, going all the way back to 1969. It builds confidence and skills, strengthens faith and, as well as anything else, it's just a heck of a lot of fun!

What's Coming Up?

World Youth Day // We still have spaces which we are offering at a very good price. Head to www.castleriggmanor.com for more details. World Youth Day 2023 is happening from July 31st to August 7th and it's being held in Lisbon, Portugal. Your chance to get together with millions of other young Catholics, oh and the Pope too!

Easter Retreat // April 6-9 2023 // £65 – journey through the Easter Triduum at Castlerigg Manor. Sign up via our website.

LIT // Open Confirmation Retreat // May 26-28 – Our open retreat for young people who have recently been confirmed, or are about to be. A chance to make some friends and reflect on what it means to be sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Follow Our Social Media

Young People – follow @castleriggmanor on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok

Adult Leaders – follow @castleriggmanor on Facebook, and you can also follow @YS_Castlerigg on Twitter and Instagram

Play the Lottery

Did you know that Castlerigg Manor runs a monthly lottery? It's there to raise a bit of money for the Youth Service and it's a bit of fun too. Plenty of people have won so far!

Just to be clear, when we say words like lottery and win, don't imagine you're going to be going round the Caribbean on a yacht. It's not that kind of lottery.

Winnings are more like a few hundred quid but look at it this way – you're probably a hundred thousand times more likely to win than the yacht version.

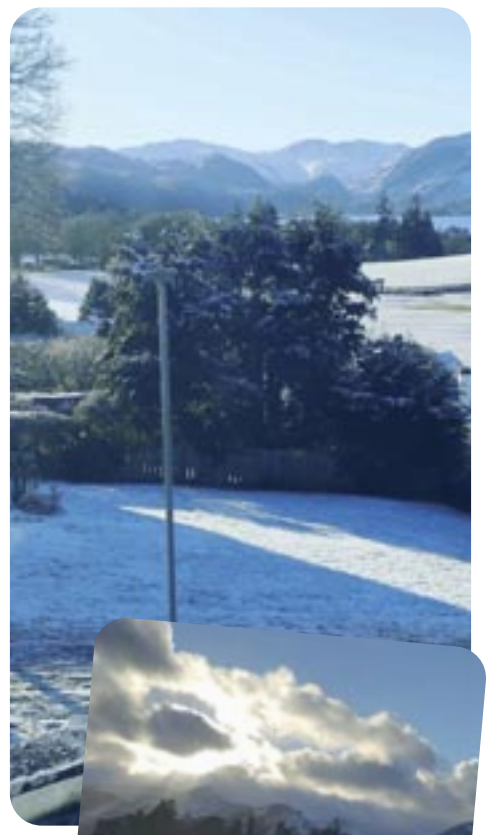
For more details, check out:

www.castleriggmanor.com

The lottery is important to us because it raises some vital funds for Castlerigg and for our work. Why is this important? Well, let's just say that we are expecting to pay fifty grand just on electricity and gas during the next financial year!!

And by the way, if you want to make a donation to Castlerigg Manor without the lottery thing, you can do that too. Again, check out our website.

www.castleriggmanor.co.uk
@castleriggmanor
01768 772711
R.C. Diocese of Lancaster Youth Service
Castlerigg Manor, Manor Brow
Keswick CA12 4AR



David Pope dip FD MBIFD

LYTHAM
FUNERAL SERVICE LTD.

Independent
Catholic Funeral Director

Arranging and
conducting funerals
in the
Catholic Diocese
of Lancaster
since 1986

Lytham Funeral Service Ltd.
42 Clifton Street,
Lytham FY8 5EW
Tel. (01253) 733909
www.lythamfuneralservice.co.uk

To advertise please contact Charlotte on 07932 248225 or email charlotter@cathcom.org

Your Letters

Send us your letters:

Write to: **The Editor, 99, Commonside, Ansdell, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 4DJ.**
Email to: **voiceletters@hotmail.co.uk**

- Please keep your letters concise *(max 300 words)*
- Include your full name and address
- Letters should not include any personal criticism or attacks
- The editor reserves the right to:

– *Amend or shorten letters or to refuse to publish them (no correspondence to discuss decisions taken will be entered into)*
– *Publish a response if deemed appropriate*

CATHOLIC TEACHING ALLIANCE

Train to Teach in your local area

Applications now open

PGCE with QTS courses available:

- **Early Primary (3-7 years)** in Preston or Burnley
- **General Primary (5-11 years)** in Preston or Burnley
- **Secondary (11-16 years)** in Preston or Blackburn
- **Secondary with post 16 (14-19 years)** in Preston

www.catholic-teaching-alliance.org

Tel: 01772 326931 Email: cta@olchs.lancs.sch.uk

Dear Editor,

Synodality – is there anything in it for us?

Following on from the Synod activity in parishes earlier this year, the Bishops of England and Wales issued their *'National Synthesis Document'* from the diocesan Synod reports. At the same time, the bishops issued their own reflection on the outcome *"Seeking Our Heart's Desire"*.

Unfortunately, very little has been heard of either, then or since. Was there a letter to be read in all parishes? There does not appear to have been any communication back to the people.

We must not let the 800 pages of the diocesan reports go without making good use of the time, energy and effort that went into them, even if only an estimated 10% of the Mass-going Catholic population contributed.

Although there is nothing specific concerning climate change, the environment, care of creation, or justice and peace, that is not necessarily to be expected, since that was not the focus of the synodality process, but rather one of listening to each other and the Holy Spirit, discerning our desire for the church in carrying out its mission in the future. There are positives, especially the experience of synodality itself, which *'to many of those taking part was a revelation'.[10]*

One problem is finding out the synodality process itself. Although there was guidance produced by the Vatican, each diocese produced its own method and way of proceeding.

A comprehensive guide, for example, was produced by the Birmingham Archdiocese *'Walking Together: A handbook for the synodal journey'* that is still available at *https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/the-synod-2021-2023 (Scroll down to 'Download Handbook)*;

The Northampton Diocese also have resources at *https://northamptondiocese.org/synod-resources-and-training/*. So do look at your own Diocesan website to see if there is anything there for you.

Returning to the Synthesis document, it does say *(para 86)*:
'A striking feature of the submissions was the widespread desire for mission and outreach. … An ever-deepening synodality will be reflected in greater attentiveness to the peripheries of suffering and need, both locally and globally, such that parishes and schools become ever more outward-facing, evangelising, and mission-oriented.

A synodal Church in which the faithful assemble, listen and discern is more likely to recognise Christ in the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth, and to respond in concrete apostolic actions that make visible God's compassion for all His creatures.'

Therefore, it is in our own interest that the synodal process is continued, so that the Church becomes more mission orientated and outward looking.

'There is a felt desire … that the synodal process now be embedded in dioceses and parishes, and that structures and formation be introduced at every level to enable this', [76] and *'it requires of those in authority a commitment to facilitate and enable it through concrete reforms.' [88]* This is happening in some dioceses, but, if not, it is up to us to approach our priests and bishops and ask what they are doing about it, as well as working with them to bring it about.

The Synod *'asks us to hear and respond without waiting for this or that change or new structure, confident that, in awakening to our co-responsibility, the reforms will follow' …'if embraced'. [89]* Above all, the synod *'is an invitation that must be acted on' [87]*, as it says in the conclusion, and it is up to us to make something of it, to embrace it and to pursue it.

With this in mind, we can be encouraged to approach our clergy with a view to more co-operative working. It is up to us to take the initiative. If we don't, nothing is likely to happen! Let's ask our parish priest what his plans are and how we can work with him to move things forward. Let's get other parishioners interested in joining in. Let's get the ball rolling!

All quotes are from the *'National Synthesis Document' (If you have yet to read it, it is suggested you read it backwards, starting at section VII, then VI, V, etc – it makes much more sense that way!)*

Brian Austin, LS Animators UK Writing Group.

Aid to the Church in Need – Fr Philip's Walk for Ukraine

Fr Philip Newbold, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham has retired in the diocese of Lancaster. He has decided to use his time during Lent to support AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED *(Emergency Aid for Ukraine)*. This provides food, clothing and shelter for those caught up in the war. He aims to walk 10,000 steps every day throughout Lent and hopes to raise money through sponsorship.

You can sponsor him online at the address below or sign the sponsor sheet and Fr. Philip will arrange collection after Easter.

Thank you for your support.

Sponsor Fr Philip online at:
www.justgiving.com/page/fr-philip-newbold-167?

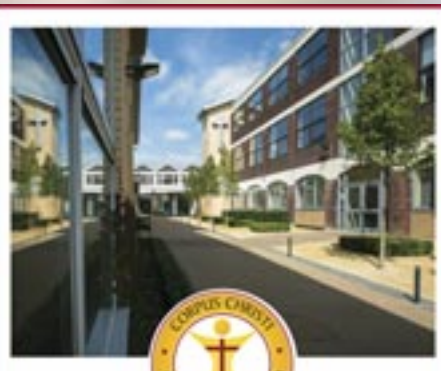
We would like to thank these schools for always supporting the paper

Our Lady and St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Ennerdale Road • Margaret • Cumbria • CA5 8HN
☎ 01900 812582 • head@st-pat-margaret.cumbria.sch.uk
Website: www.st-pat-margaret.cumbria.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs J Hampson
Assistant Head: Mrs H Long

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

AUSTIN FRIARS
Etterby Scaur,
Carlisle CA3 9PB
Headteacher
Mr Matthew Harris
office@austinfriars.co.uk
Tel: 01228 528042



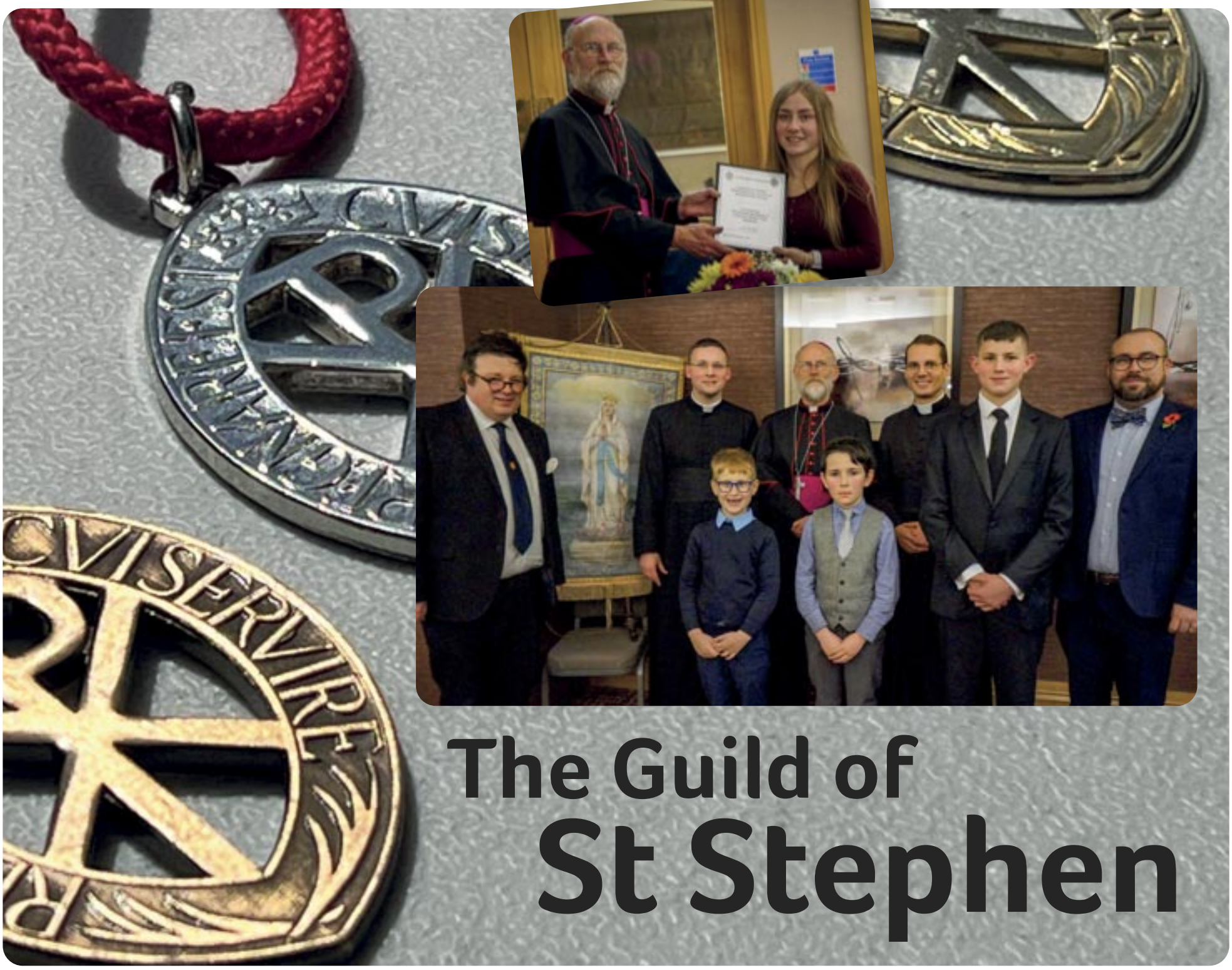
Together in One Body
CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
Headteacher: Mr John Hankin
St Vincent's Road, Preston PR2 8QY
Telephone 01772 716912
Email admin@ccc.lancs.sch.uk
www.ccc.lancs.sch.uk
Ofsted Good Provider

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

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

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
SLT: 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.'



The Guild of St Stephen

It has been a busy few months for the Altar Server's Guild of St Stephen in the diocese *writes Paul Woodhouse of Blackpool.*

In November, we gathered for our annual dinner at the Castle Green Hotel in Kendal, the guest speaker was newly ordained Fr Philip Wrigley and the guest of honour, Bishop Paul Swarbrick.

It is always a lovely evening and it was well attended from all corners of the diocese providing an opportunity to catch up and reflect on the year gone by. Fr Philip reflected on his vocation journey from the day he started serving in his home parish in Carlisle with Canon Dewhurst, to his priestly ordination last year. Bishop Paul concluded the evening echoing the need for vocations to the priesthood and diaconate and that perhaps the seeds of vocation were already planted in some of those in attendance. He also acknowledged the important role our female Servers play and their special closeness to Our Lady and vocations to the religious life.

Special certificates from the Bishop were presented to Keith Earnshaw and John Walsh for over 50 years' service, Chinedu Benward for over 20 years' service and Anna-Marie Hilton, Panashe Madhlambudzi and Ted Case for 10 years' service.

Our diocese is well represented nationally, Paul Briers from Workington is the current Honorary President of the Guild, and Bishop Paul recently appointed Ian Mulholland from Preston as the new Director of the Lancaster branch. Paul Woodhouse in Blackpool acts at Communications Officer for the Guild nationally, and all three serve on the Central Council, which is made up of members from around the country, meeting monthly to *'move the Guild forward'* at a national level.

The ongoing public transport difficulties have made attending recent national events difficult for everyone, nevertheless we managed to travel to the Guild AGM in St Aloysius church in Euston, London *(coincidently the scene of the recent tragic shooting incident)* in November which was led by Canon PJ Smith of Portsmouth Diocese. The Canon is the president of Catholic Youth Movement Federation *(CymFed)* to which the Guild has recently become a member. The Guild will have a presence at the CymFed *'Flame'* youth conference in March at Wembley.

In October, the National Mass was hosted at Westminster, as it is every other year, and was celebrated by Bishop John Sherrington. Again, transport disruptions made attendance difficult, but the diocese was represented by the Guild President and was generally well attended despite the circumstances. Most recently during the Christmas Octave we celebrated the Feast of St Stephen, when many of our parishes will have celebrated the work of our diocesan Altar Servers. We were pleased to attend the awarding of the Guild's Gold Medal to Keith Earnshaw in Fleetwood for over 50 years' dedicated service at the Altar and we take the opportunity to thank all Servers and their families for their continued dedication.

With the blessing of Bishop Paul, and while the presidency of the Guild is held within the diocese, we're excited to announce that it has been decided that the Diocese of Lancaster will host the National Altar Server's Mass for the Guild of St Stephen, in the Diocese's centenary year in 2025.

In the meantime, we look forward to gathering at Ladyewell in the spring for the annual pilgrimage and supporting this year's National Mass.

While many parishes continue to suffer a decline of young people, and a difficulty to retain the ones they have as they grow older, it is an opportunity through the ministry of serving, that we can engage people young and old in our various liturgies, deepening their faith, interest and understanding, and especially for young people, helping to build those important *'soft skills'* for life.

As we begin the season of Lent we look forward to Holy Week and its triumphant conclusion. We remember that Christ came not to be served but to serve as he demonstrated by washing the feet of the disciples in the Upper Room on Maundy Thursday. We follow His example in serving Him at the Altar, at every Mass.

Please remember to follow the Guild on social media, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Keith in a white alb with Canon Alf Hayes, Paul Briers, Honorary National President of the Guild and Ian Mulholland, Diocesan Director of the Guild

And just beginning, James of St Joseph's Ansdell has just completed 12 months as an altar server and is now enrolled in the Guild of St Stephen. Here he is seen receiving his medal and certificate from Fr Peter Clarke.

Red Letter Day in Fleetwood

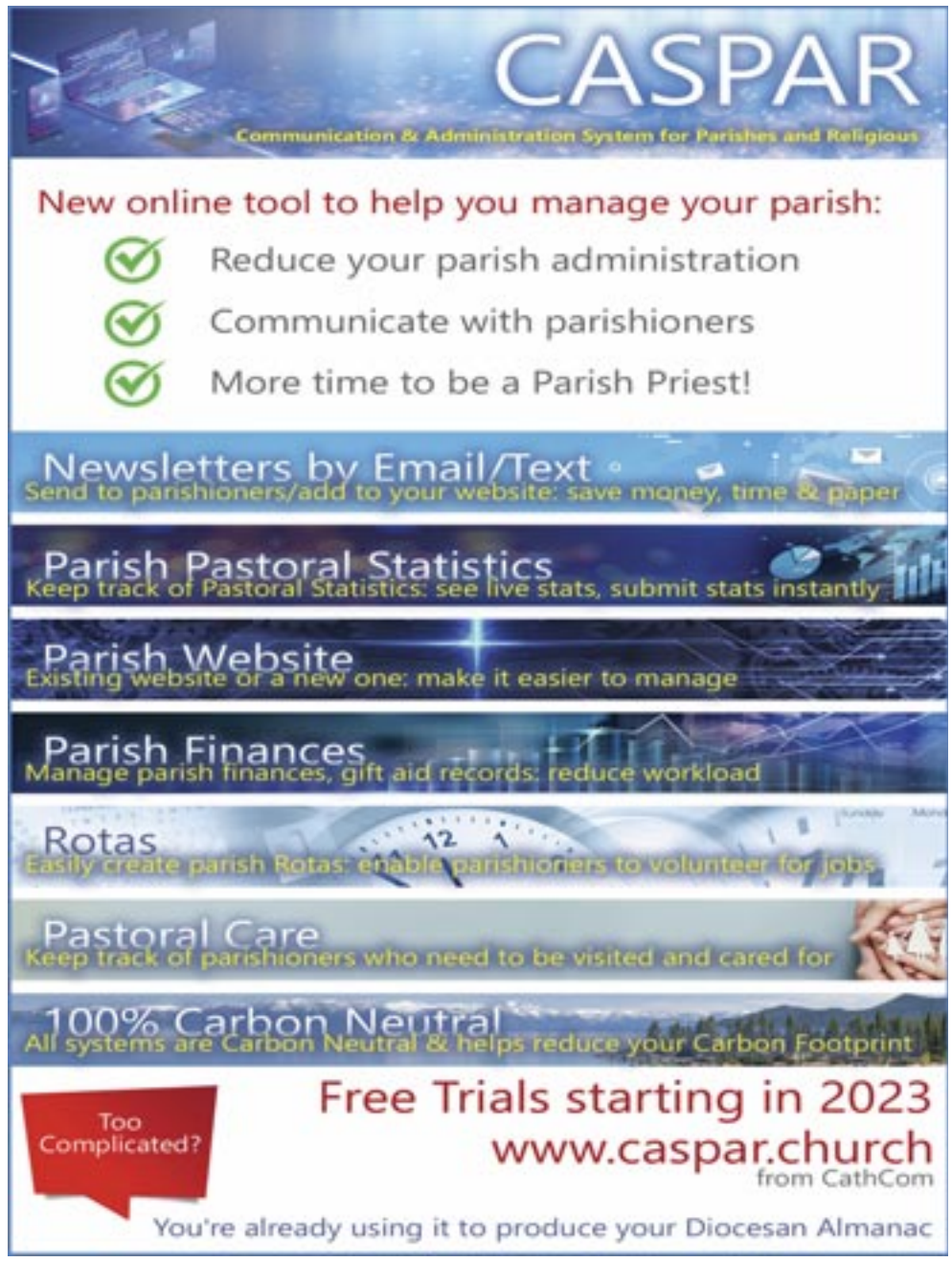
On Sunday 8th January, 2023 Keith Earnshaw of St. Wulstan's Parish Fleetwood was awarded the gold medal for being an enrolled member of the Guild of St. Stephen for 50 years. Keith has actually now been a continuous altar server for 72 years and so this award is richly deserved.

Keith was enrolled as an altar server on 3rd September, 1950 at Holy Family Church Freckleton. In 1956 he moved to Fleetwood and joined the altar servers at St Wulstan's. During the late 1950's early1960's all the senior servers were enrolled into the archconfraternity and Keith was enrolled in 1959.

After the homily the altar servers all gathered in front of the Altar and Canon Hayes explained to the congregation about Keith's long service and dedication and then Blessed the Medal. Ian Mulholland as Diocesan Director of the Guild then made the award to Keith.

A fabulous day for Keith and the Parish and hopefully an inspiration to the excellent serving team at St. Wulstan's. *Ad Multos Annos Keith.*

Ian Mulholland
Diocesan Director of the Guild of St Stephen



SELF STORAGE
Secure Units Available
Sizes To Suit All Needs
Competitive Rates
Open 7 Days

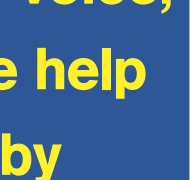
Curly Tail Storage
Park Lane, Forton PR3 0JX
Tel: 01524 791837
E: andrew@curlytailstorage .co.uk
www.curlytailstorage.co.uk

Boarbank Hall
Canonesses of St Augustine of the Mercy of Jesus

"She who accepts the common life possesses God" **St Augustine**

A Warm Welcome to Everyone

Prayer • Community • Hospitality • Care of the poor and sick



Contact: Sr Marian
Boarbank Hall, Grange over Sands, Cumbria, LA11 7NH
Telephone: 015395 32288
Website: www.boarbankhall.org.uk

Our Lady of Fidelity

090699502

The church needs religious sisters URGENTLY to bring Christ to others by a life of prayer and service lived in the community of Ignation spirituality. Daily Mass is the centre of community life. By wearing the religious habit we are witnesses of the consecrated way of life.

If you are willing to risk a little love and would like to find out how, contact Sister Bernadette

Mature vocations considered.

CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF FIDELITY

1 Our Lady's Close, Upper Norwood, London SE19 3FA Telephone 07760 297001

The Leaven Carmelite Secular Institute
CALLING
Single and widowed women Seeking to dedicate their life to God
Through vows in secular society
Contact: **The President, The Leaven, c/o The Friars, Aylesford ME20 7BX**
Email: **theleavensi@gmail.com**
Website: **www.theleaven.org.uk**

Our advertisers are great supporters of the Lancaster Voice, so please help them by supporting their businesses

Sr Margaret Atkins and Steve Burrowes of Wardley Hall Laudato Si' Centre with pupils from Brownedge School.

Boarbank pioneers online retreats on the Care of Creation

"We must respond as Christians to the cry of creation and think hard about how we live our lives so that we are good stewards of our fragile planet and live in solidarity with the world's poorest communities." *The Call of Creation: Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2022*

Sr. Margaret Atkins of Boarbank Hall in Cumbria has started a series of online weekend retreats to help Catholics understand and put into practice the Church's teaching on the Care of Creation. The retreat is called *"Your Planet and Your Parish"* and explores how we can help our communities respond to the *"signs of the times"* and the challenges they present. It consists of about six hours spread over a long weekend so there is time for both reflection and for our normal weekend activities.

Even before the publication of Pope Francis encyclical Laudato Si *"On Care of our Common Home"*, the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales *(CBCEW)* has been active in promoting ecological conversion within the church. As far back as 2002 it published a document *"The Call of Creation"* setting out what we should be doing. This was revised and re-issued in 2022. The Conference also established an Ecological Conversion Group *(ECG)* to provide it with expert advice.

The retreats, which are run in conjunction with the ECG, have a range of top speakers. Recent ones have included Bishop Terry Drainey and Bishop David Oakley, together with John Paul de Quay of the ECG and Sr. Margaret Atkins herself. However, the main sessions have belonged to the participants, sharing their achievements and challenges, discussing possible solutions and naming their hopes and plans for continuing their journey of *"Care for our Common Home"*.

There was imagination and inspiration aplenty from the participants:

- Brownedge School near Preston is dividing its outside areas into five "Ws". Wilderness *(200 trees planted)*, Wildlife, Work *(growing food)* Wellbeing and Worship. The pupils are fully involved in all the plans and the ethos is reflected in every school activity. If only every school could be like this!

- A parishioner from Wales spoke movingly about guidance from Our Lady after a visit to Mejugorje which inspired him to start growing vegetables at the church. It has brought people together, created warm and friendly spaces for the cold, lonely and marginalised and produced food for those in need. Above all, it has given new life and prayerfulness to the parish.

- A parish in Yorkshire is following the CAFOD *'Live Simply'*

The ecological conversion group parish.

Brownedge School Laudato Si' Champions with Bishop John Arnold.

programme with amazing enthusiasm and energy. Their ideas included a *"Tree of Life"* for suggestions, planting pollinators; windflowers; herbs and fruit trees, bird and bat boxes; a bug house and a hedgehog hotel. They have overhauled their energy use and recycling, raised funds for a parish link in Mali and collected food and warm clothes for local charities. They marked the Season of Creation with prayer, activities and discussions; and celebrated receiving the Live Simply award with a parish party, the first sacraments for the children and the Parish Priest's Golden Jubilee. Social justice is anything but boring!

- Young people in Brentwood and Westminster Dioceses, concerned about the environmental cost of flying to Lisbon for the World Youth Conference, decided to go by coach instead. One participant pointed out that the pilgrimage begins when you leave home, not just when you arrive. They are making the most of their journey, visiting Tours, Valladolid and Porto on the way.

- Behind the scenes, many dioceses are reviewing their energy use and most have now transferred their funds from fossil fuel companies into more ethical organisations.

All these stories show that in a world where the problems seem so daunting, it is never too difficult to start doing our own little bit. A common theme of new hope and renewal within the communities illuminates them all. Participants also looked at the challenges, a big one *(not surprisingly!)* being communication, especially with those who seem suspicious of new initiatives. There is also the question of how to widen the circle of participation in the parish both in numbers and diversity, together with the sheer scale of the changes we need to make to our energy provision.

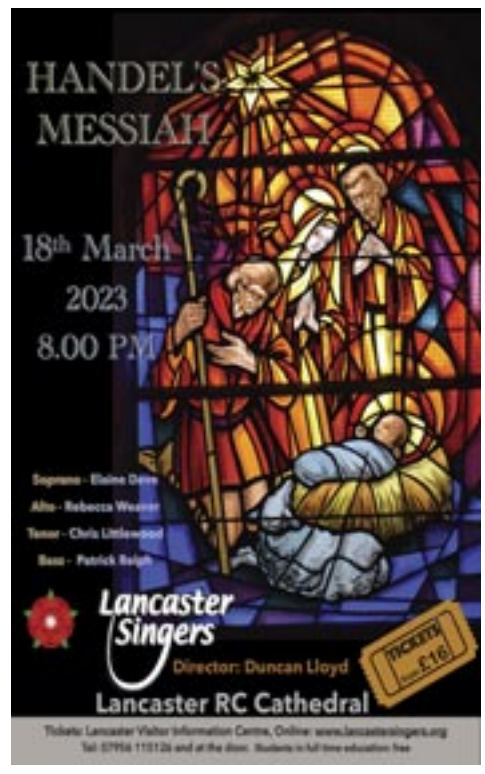
There is, however, much help available. A website *"Journey to 2030"* has a new pack of information for parishes, whilst the Guardians of Creation project in Salford Diocese can provide practical guidance to parishes on energy management. The CAFOD Live Simply programme is easy to follow and is commended to us by our bishops.

We are proud that Boarbank hosts these national retreats from our Diocese and are grateful for the tireless efforts of the organisers. To find out more and book a place on the next one, simply email Sr. Margaret on *margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk*

Lancaster Diocese Faith and Justice Commission

JILL GLENCROSS FUNERAL DIRECTORS
An Independent Multi Award Winning Family Funeral Directors
Female and Male Funeral Directors
Private Chapels of Rest
Nothing Is Ever Too Much Trouble
16 The Square, Dalston, Carlisle CA5 7PY
Tel: 01228 317373
https://www.jillglencrossfuneral-director.co.uk/

Sean Crilley Funeral Directors
• 24 hour Personal Service
• Private Chapels of Rest
• Pre-Paid Funeral Plans
• Memorial Consultants
For personal attention and professional advice, day and night, call Sean
78 Brook Street, Carlisle, CA1 2HX
(01228) 544905



Martin's
The Funeral Directors
188, Tulketh Brow, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston
1, Stonebridge Parade, Preston Road, Longridge
Tel. 01772-733007 or 01772-782121
Proprietor W. Martin Wootton
Dedicated and Blessed Chapels of Rest
Golden Charter Pre-Paid Funeral Plans
The complete funeral service from a private family owned and run firm

To advertise please contact Charlotte on 07932 248225 or email charlotter@cathcom.org

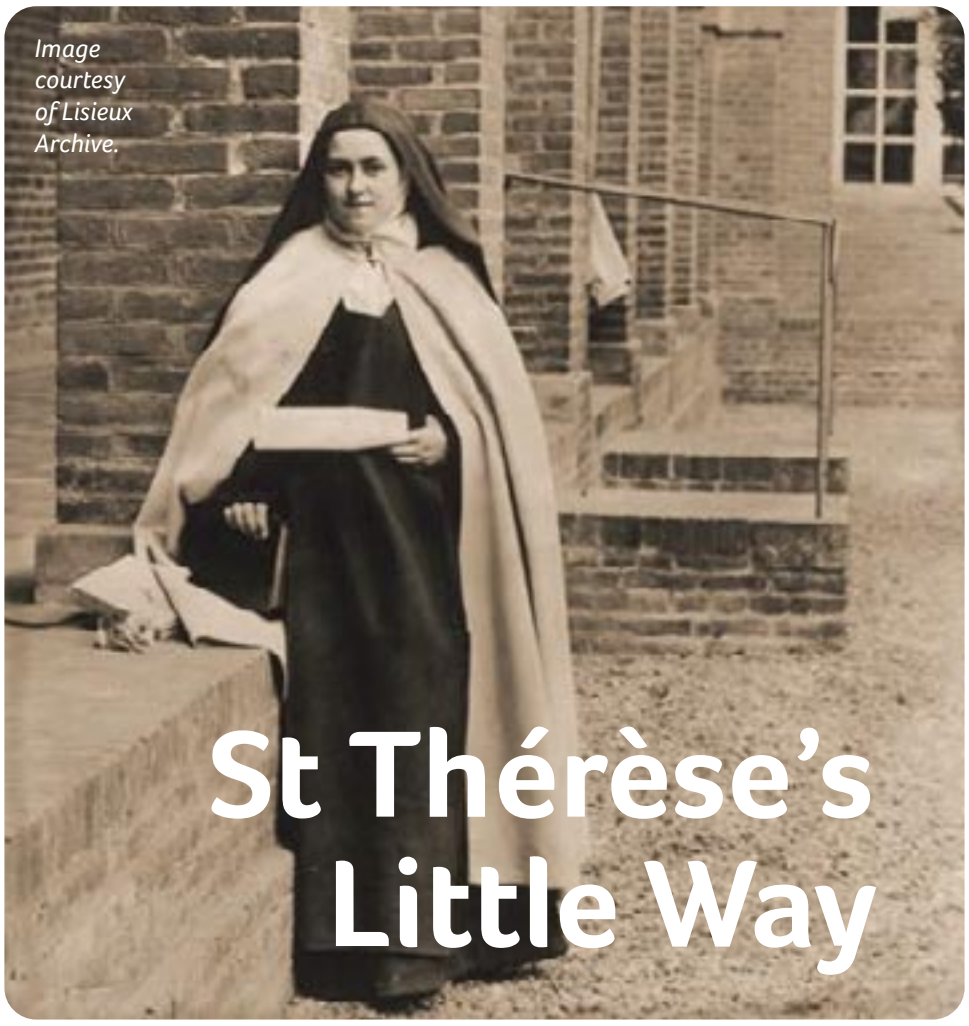
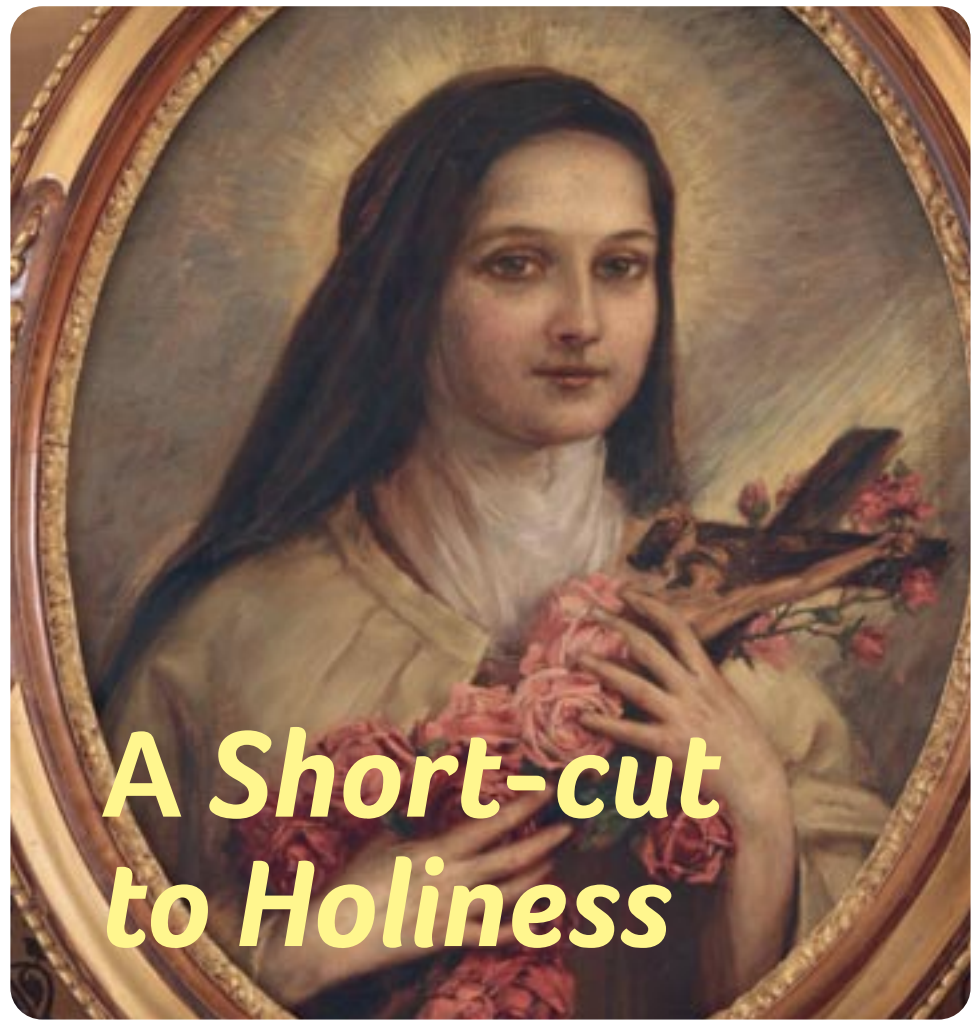


Image courtesy of Lisieux Archive.

St Thérèse's Little Way



A Short-cut to Holiness

On October 19, 1997, Pope John Paul II declared St Therese of Lisieux a Doctor of the Church. That means that this young woman who died at 24 and spent the last ten years of her life in an enclosed Carmel offers a teaching that is perennially helpful and reliable. St Thérèse said she wanted to spend her heaven on earth making others love God as she loved Him and teaching her *'little way of love'* to souls. So, what is this little way?

Thérèse wanted to be a saint, and yet she felt incapable of performing the heroic fasts and penances of the saints of past ages. She reasoned that God would not inspire the impossible. Since the staircase of holiness was too steep, she figured there must be a lift – a short-cut – that would raise her to Jesus. She searched the Scriptures and found these words:

"Whoever is a Little One, let him come to me …

I felt I had found what I was looking for. … The elevator which must raise me to heaven is Your arms, O Jesus! And for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain little and become this more and more".

What does it mean to be little?

Being Poor in Spirit

Little children depend on their parents for everything, and in the same way we have to rely on God. This poverty places all the goods of God at our disposal.

Gratitude

Thérèse was continually thanking God, for she knew that nothing was hers, all was gift. She desired to quench Jesus' thirst for love and gratitude.

"What draws the most blessings upon us is gratitude. I know this by experience. Try it and you'll see. I am pleased with everything God gives me, and I prove it to Him in a thousand ways"

Realising God is your Father

In God, Thérèse saw, above all, a Father, and one who loved her with infinite tenderness. Receiving His divine life at baptism she *(and we)* became His adopted children.

God infinitely surpasses the best of earthly fathers: He is infinitely good, generous, all loving, compassionate, powerful and wise. He desires to do you good. If He allows something bad to happen to you it is only because He can bring good out of it. *'GOD IS LOVE'*. He cares about the smallest details of your life. How can He forget you when He is so close, that He dwells IN you?

Confidence in God

This knowledge gave Thérèse immense confidence. She could trust Him, she didn't need to worry about the future, she could live serenely in the present moment. *'Your heavenly Father knows you need these things'*. She expected everything from His goodness.

'We obtain from the good God quite as much as we hope for'.

Loving your weakness

To be little, for Thérèse, meant never being surprised at her faults *(for everyone expects children to fall)*. She didn't get discouraged, but even rejoiced in her weakness, because she realised it was the guarantee of God's help. In this she was following St Paul who had said *'I will boast gladly of my weakness, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me' (2 Cor 12).*

Trusting in God's Merciful Love

It is weakness that draws God to manifest His love in the form of Mercy. Divine Compassion instinctively reaches out to human misery to raise it up – the more so – the more pitiful the person's state. *'For to him that is little, mercy will be shown.'* If we were not weak, we'd never experience it.

Thérèse ends her Autobiography aspiring to copy the trusting confidence of Mary Magdalene:

'Even if I had on my conscience all the sins that can be committed, I would go, my heart broken with sorrow, and throw myself into Jesus' arms, for I know how much He loves the prodigal child who returns to Him.'

Can confidence in God's mercy apply even to big faults or grave sins? Thérèse is adamant that it can:

'If I had committed all possible crimes, I would always have the same confidence; I feel that this whole multitude of offenses would be like a drop of water thrown into a fiery furnace.'

Surrender

'Jesus showed me the road that leads to this Divine Furnace, and this road is the surrender of the little child who sleeps without fear in its Father's arms.'

Surrender is basically abandoning yourself to God's will. If we can let go control, He will arrange things for us in the best possible way.

Humility

Littleness is essentially humility. Being little means taking the lowest place, going unnoticed, forgotten, overlooked, no one asking your opinion or telling you what is going on. Thérèse describes a break-through moment.

'I understood that it was impossible for me to do anything by myself'.

Not to trust in self is the great starting point in turning to Him for everything:

'Apart from Me you can do nothing'.

Uniting yourself to Jesus

Thérèse's secret was to unite herself to Jesus and allow Him to do everything in her. She discovered this need to unite herself to Christ by meditating on His new commandment: *'love one another: as I have loved you, you also should love one another'*. This love led Jesus to the Cross. *'Greater love has no man than that he lay down his life for his friends'.*

She realised she didn't love her Sisters as God loves them. But she knows God doesn't inspire the impossible, so it must mean that Jesus intends to love her Sisters in and through her.

'When I am charitable, it is Jesus alone who is acting in me, and the more united I am to Him, the more also do I love my Sisters.'

Acts of Love and Sacrifice

Thérèse made up for the lack of extraordinary penances by the heroic quantity of little acts of love and sacrifice, things that came her way in the ordinary course of daily life.

'I have no other means of proving my love

for you other than that of strewing flowers, that is, not allowing one little sacrifice to escape, not one look, one word, profiting by the smallest things and doing them through love; and in this way I shall strew flowers before Your throne. I shall not come upon one without unpetalling it for You'.

These petals she believes will charm Jesus. He will take these petals of sacrifice and pour them out to give the Church graces, to help priests and missionaries, and thereby to save souls.
For example:

- She gave up her free time to help others
- She volunteered to work with a difficult character
- She didn't judge others
- She didn't justify herself when misunderstood
- She let go the satisfaction of being proved right
- She ate things she didn't like
- She suffered for the love of God and kept it hidden

Who should we love?

Thérèse says we must particularly love those we find least appealing. There was a Sister in community towards whom she felt real antipathy, so she treated that Sister as the person she loved the most – praying for her, doing little services, and not answering back. She was so successful that this Sister thought she was Thérèse's favourite.

There was a Sister who sat behind her in meditation, and who fidgeted and scratched her tooth. Thérèse found the noise excruciating and wanted to glare at her to get her to stop. But she realised that that might hurt her feelings, so she tried to bear it peacefully. She couldn't ignore it, so she tried to like the noise, and offered it as a concert to God.

Her leverage was that she was able to see irritations as diamonds, there to be raked up, to save souls. She says that these sacrifices provide real peace of soul.

Simplicity

Thérèse's one aim was to love God and to save souls for Him to make Him loved for all eternity. All her acts have one motive – to please Jesus. Her vocation was – quite simply – love.

Accepting suffering with a smile

To love is to suffer. Thérèse herself was literally unpetalled by suffering – first the loss of her Mother to cancer when she was four, then the loss of her substitute Mothers, her sisters Pauline and Marie when they entered Carmel, a nervous illness, scruples, her Father's mental and physical breakdown, the loss of any tangible faith in heaven, and finally the ravages of TB on her young body. All this she accepted without complaint, indeed she found joy in suffering, because she knew it won souls for God, and united her to Jesus and made her like Him. Smiling, she offers it all to God. She died in 1897, a holocaust consumed by Merciful love. Her last words were *'My God I love You'.*

To sum up the Little Way involves becoming like a child who knows God as Father: poor, grateful, humble, simple, surrendered, trusting in God, seeing your frailty as His opportunity, uniting yourself to Jesus and letting Him act in you, doing little things with love – in a hidden way – just to please Jesus, and accepting suffering without complaining – all to *'weave eternities'* for other people, as she puts it.

Dolgellau Carmel has set this material to images and video clips filmed at Notting Hill, acted by Carmelite Sisters from both Carmels –
www.carmel-dolgellau.uk/gallery

Communion with the Church in Jordan and the wider Holy Land

A group of Catholic Bishops from across Europe were in Jordan for the annual Holy Land Co-ordination – visiting from 14–19 January.
Jesus set out from there and went into the district of Judea and across the Jordan. Again, crowds gathered around him (Mk 10:1)

Jordan is integral to the Holy Land, as the site of the Lord's baptism and early ministry. Our presence was affirmed by Bishop Jamal Daibes, Patriarchal Vicar of Jordan, to have been more than a pilgrimage, indeed to have been a *'visit of communion'* with all those who live out their Christian faith here.

Across the country we have been welcomed into parish communities, many of which we found to be vibrant. As Pope Francis reflected during his own visit to Jordan: *"Christian communities… present in this country since apostolic times [are] contributing to the common good of the society of which they are fully a part."* Christian schools were highlighted as places of human flourishing and encounter between faiths. We witnessed the prophetic care Christians extend towards people with disabilities and their families. We heard of the important role that Christians play in building bridges of hope between communities. And we met many young Christians who, despite facing significant social and economic challenges, remain resolutely committed to enriching both Church and society. We encourage pilgrims from our different countries to come and encounter these Christian communities, as well as visiting Jordan's deeply important holy sites. Praying with and learning from the country's Christians – its *'living stones'* – will serve to expand and strengthen pilgrims' own faith.

As in previous journeys of the Holy Land Coordination to Jordan, we have witnessed the tireless and vital efforts of people inspired by the Gospel to uphold human dignity and defend human rights. Most prominent among these is support for those fleeing violence in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, through the provision of accommodation, skills-training, medical facilities, pastoral care, and advocacy. Jordan today hosts more displaced people than almost any other country.

Those whom we met from Iraq have little desire to return home, due to continued insecurity and lack of opportunity. We encourage the dignified treatment of all those seeking sanctuary here, especially access to healthcare and the right to work. We also recognise the pressure on local communities which have welcomed people yet lack the necessary resources to meet their needs, especially given the economic climate and high levels of unemployment. It is imperative that our own countries play their part in relieving the pressure on the people of Jordan, both by increasing humanitarian assistance on the ground and extending a wider welcome to refugees themselves.

We heard often of the high regard in which the Hashemite Royal Family are held as peacemakers and promoters of interreligious dialogue. We were struck by the respect for human dignity that we have witnessed in Jordan and how many Christians value the safety that the country affords them. This contrasts with the violations against human dignity increasing elsewhere in the Holy Land. We share the profound concerns expressed by the local Catholic ordinaries, in their recent Advent message, of threats to peaceful coexistence in Israel, the upsurge of violence in the West Bank, the sustained growth of settlements which is contrary to international law, and the highest Palestinian death toll in more than twenty years. We echo the Church leaders' call for a genuine peace process rooted in international law, for the Palestinian people to be granted their freedom, and for the equal rights of all communities to be respected.

From Mount Nebo, where Moses first looked upon the Promised Land, we saw a land now sorely divided; and held in our hearts all the people we have encountered who yearn for a better future for themselves, their families, and their homelands. We recalled Pope Benedict XVI's message in that place:

"The memory of Moses invites us to 'lift up our eyes' to embrace with gratitude not only God's mighty works in the past, but also to look with faith and hope to the future which he holds out to us and to our world."

We commit ourselves to continued prayer and advocacy for our sisters and brothers across Jordan, Palestine, Israel, and the wider region, trusting in God's promise for all who dwell in this Land.

Bishops of the Holy Land Co-ordination

Bishop Nicholas Hudson – England & Wales (Chair of the Holy Land Coordination), Bishop Nicolo Anselmi – Italy, Bishop Udo Bentz – Germany, Bishop Peter Bürcher – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, Bishop Christopher Chessun, Church of England, Bishop William Crean – Ireland, Bishop Michel Dubost – France, Bishop Martin Hayes – Ireland, Bishop David Malloy – United States of America, Archbishop William Nolan – Scotland, Bishop Paul Terrio – Canada, Archbishop Joan-Enric Vives Sicilia – Spain, Archbishop Cyril Vasil – Slovakia.

Our Lady's Catholic College, Lancaster

At the start of our academic year, a group of students from Our Lady's prepared for and visited the relics of St Bernadette at Lancaster Cathedral. We designed a school cross and candle to represent our school, which we took to the Pilgrimage Mass. Afterwards we had a very enlightening talk in the cathedral centre to understand the significance of the relics more. Several pupils from my Faith in Action group commented *'It was different as I've never been to a church before and I found it fascinating... I learnt so much about St. Bernadette and her relics...I especially enjoyed the Mass as I've never heard those readings and found it informative and interesting'.*

During Autumn term, a group of students joined together to form a Faith in Action group, led by Mr Eidsforth. We meet twice a week to plan events, design and create religious themed resources and put our faith into action by exploring religious and cultural issues and getting involved in the community, both in school and in the wider area. Here is a flavour of what we have been up to so far:

- Organised and delivered winter packages of food, toiletries, clothes and treats for the homeless, along with over £500 raised in school for LDHAS
- Created Advent wreaths for classrooms
- expressed the importance of reinstating the public nativity crib to the Mayor of Lancaster
- Judged letters and prayers written for a homework competition in response to our learning in the new RECD about caring for God's creation, sent and displayed to raise awareness of *'the cry of the earth'*
- Put together this year's school nativity crib
- planned a series of events throughout the year ahead from charity cake sales and caring for the local environment in light of Pope Francis' Laudato Si, to visits to places of faith
- raised money for the Ukraine through the sale of Christmas Nativities
- holding an Epiphany Crown-making competition

We ended last term by writing individual Christmas cards to each elderly resident at Nazareth House, which we delivered by hand. The students were exemplary and both they, the residents and the sisters alike were all deeply humbled by their carol-singing and conversations, interactions, Christmas card delivering and Christmas tree decorating. It was a rewarding way to put our faith into action and to live out Christ's command to love and serve- especially at Christmas time.

It's been a rewarding academic year so far, full of learning and living out our Catholic faith, fun and faith in action! If any groups, churches, charities, schools and or/organisations in the diocese would like any help with anything, or have any ideas or suggestions about how we could put our faith into action even more during term time, we would love to hear from you and get involved! Please email *l.eidsforth@olcc.lancs.sch.uk*

Luke Eidsforth
RE teacher + Faith in Action group leader

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in Lytham

St Bede's Catholic High School in Lytham have established a new peer support group which they hope will go from strength to strength.

By 10th January 2023, 18 pupils had successfully completed a one-day anti-bullying training session run by The Diana Award at either Fulwood Academy, Preston or at Highfield Leadership Academy, Blackpool. These events involved secondary schools from across the county. Young people, aged 11-16, worked together and acquired vital skills to enable them to identify and change the attitudes and behaviours of bullying in their community by building their skills and confidence to address different situations, both online and in the real world. Our pupils upheld the Jesus' teachings to love thy neighbour and were inspired to reflect His courage and compassion to ensure that no young person is left behind.

The Diana Award's free Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme *(which is available to schools across the UK)*, sees trainers working with students and other young people to change the attitudes surrounding bullying.

The programme has a strong peer-to-peer focus, with trainers giving young people the skills and confidence to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who will play a key role in tackling bullying in their schools.

The Diana Award's anti-bullying work is recognised as world-class thanks to this sustainable approach. Upon completion of the course, pupils received certificates for their training, made an action plan of how to approach bullying issues that may arise in their communities and committed to their roles as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.

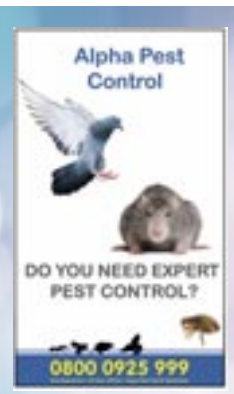
Commenting on the training, Elliott said, *'Although the training was really intense, I couldn't be a Respect Ambassador without it.'* *Paula Burdess, Lay Chaplain*

++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

Editor's note

The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassador programme is run by the charity - The Diana Award. The Diana Award was founded as a legacy to Diana, Princess of Wales' belief that young people have the power to change the world for the better. Its mission is to foster, develop and inspire positive change in the lives of young people.

Church Supplies
– serving Schools, Business and Homes



Our advertisers are great supporters of the Lancaster Voice, so please help them by supporting their businesses

To advertise please contact Charlotte on 07932 248225 or email charlotter@cathcom.org

Subscribe to The CatholicPost

subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk
01440 730399

For ALL of your Parishioners
100 copies: from £12 (12p per copy)
200 copies: from £23.20 (11.6p per copy)
300 copies: from £32.80 (10.9p per copy)

For some of your Parishioners
50 copies: from £9.60 (19.2p per copy)
10 copies: from £7.20 (72p per copy)

Individual Subscriptions
Annual 1 Copy
from £3.20 per month

Online Subscriptions
1 Online Copy
via Email from £2.40 per month

All prices include delivery

www.catholicpost.co.uk