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St Winefride
- pg 23



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World's refugees need compassion and hope

'To advocate on behalf of migrants is not simply kindness, it is a plea for justice for the most vulnerable'

Andy Drozdziak

Catholics have marked Refugee Week by blasting Government policies which "do not include compassion", pleading again for justice for refugees and safe routes to the UK.

Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees at the Bishops' Conference, has led criticism of the Government's controversial Illegal Migration Bill currently going through Westminster – a criticism that has gained momentum after the latest migrant tragedy, when hundreds drowned

off the coast of Greece on 14th June.

"Our concern is not simply the events and decisions which took place immediately before that tragedy but the decisions and the policies which have been in place for many, many years which make such tragedies almost inevitable," he said. "We see again the consequences of policies which do not include compassion, the theme of this year's Refugee Week."

The Illegal Migration Bill would mean that anyone, including children, who arrives in the UK via an irregular route, such as a small boat across the Channel, would never be able to claim asylum here even if they have had to flee their home country due to persecution or conflict.

Bishop McAleenan said: "We oppose immigration systems which threaten to destroy hope."

He also underlined the importance of introducing safe routes for refugees. "To advocate on behalf of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers is not simply kindness, but it is a plea for justice for the most vulnerable. It is to do what the law should do," he said.

Bishop McAleenan was speaking on World Refugee Day at a vigil outside the Home Office. The event was supported by CAFOD director Christine Allen, Eileen Cole from the Jesuit Refugee Service and a Columban team led by director Fr John Boles.

They were joined by the band Ooberfuse, who performed their new song for refugees called *Show Me Love* during the vigil.

Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN) members led a variety of workshops and webinars throughout the week, to highlight refugees

as 'friends', and the contributions they bring to British society.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth Palmer, CEO of SVP England and Wales, has taken part in a video featuring leaders from the Muslim, Christian and Jewish faiths voicing their opposition to the Illegal Migration Bill. Elizabeth joined 13 other contributors to the film in stating: "As people of faith, we strive to welcome the stranger, to offer hospitality, to love, protect, listen, learn, and show compassion. This is who we are."

The video was circulated by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. "We believe in a fair and just asylum system that welcomes those who need protection and respects their dignity. As people of faith, we will stand together with refugees, because it's who we are," the leaders said.

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So long, Papa!

Pope Francis offers a cheery wave of farewell to nursing staff and wellwishers as he leaves Rome's Gemelli Hospital after abdominal surgery. The pope made a swift recovery from the operation, and was back at work in time to celebrate the Angelus in St Peter's Square last Sunday, and to meet former US Secretary of State and climate change envoy, John Kerry, at the Vatican. See pg 14.

World's refugees need compassion and hope

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The Government's Illegal Migration Bill has been heavily criticised by international bodies. The United Nations Council for Refugees said it "would effectively amount to an asylum ban" that would extinguish "the right to seek refugee protection in the United Kingdom for those who arrive irregularly, no matter how compelling their claim may be".

It also includes extensive powers to detain people, including children, with no time limits.

But the capsizing of a trawler in the Mediterranean overloaded with asylum seekers, which is now thought to have led to over 500 deaths, has been used by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak as a reason why the Illegal Migration Bill is necessary. Speaking this week he said: "This tragedy illustrates the gravity of the problem of migration via unauthorised means," adding "we must deter people from using unsafe and illegal routes".

Mr Sunak also discussed the shipwreck with European Commission president Ursula Von Der Leyen, as well as with the Swedish Prime Minister on a state visit to the UK.

A Downing Street spokesman said: "The leaders reflected on the tragic shipwreck in Greece last week and the brutal business model of people-smuggling gangs.

"They reiterated their commitment to continue working closely together to break the criminal enterprises driving illegal migration, including UK co-operation with the EU border agency Frontex."

• **Why Europe is backing Greek 'shield' over compassion: see pg 6**

Greece questions nine suspects linked to Mediterranean tragedy: see pg 17

Church plays host to politicians' show of support for Ukraine

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family in London hosted a number of high-profile international dignitaries to the Church's Ukrainian Welcome Centre in a major show of support for his country's continuing resistance to Russia's invasion.

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs James Cleverly, and State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Oleksandr Bankov were all taken to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family in Exile and shown around the Ukrainian Welcome Centre on 20th June.

The historic visit coincided with World Refugee Day – a day designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe.

The Ukrainian Welcome Centre (UWC) is a partnership initiative between the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of London and the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB).

Designed to help Ukrainian nationals arriving in Great Britain after fleeing the war in Russia, the UWC is a point of contact for arrival, settling and long-term living in the UK, as well as a social hub help-



James Cleverly (left), Anthony Blinken and Oleksandr Bankov light candles during the visit to the Ukrainian Welcome Centre in London, watched by Bishop Nowakowski
Photo: Marcin Mazur

ing Ukrainians stay connected to their culture and heritage.

The Centre is located at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Mayfair. It was officially opened by His Majesty King Charles III and the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, in November 2022.

During the visit, the three foreign affairs politicians met with staff and volunteers at the UWC and some of the recently arrived Ukrainian citizens who are attending English language classes offered by the Centre, among the many other services provided.

The UK is hosting a major conference on Ukraine's recovery this week and Mr Cleverly discussed the situation with his US counterpart Anthony Blinken. Mr Cleverly said that "the UK and the US stand shoulder-to-shoulder in defence of Ukraine."

New poll shows no support for extending abortion limits

A new poll has shown there is very little public support for increasing the abortion time limit beyond the current 24 weeks.

The YouGov poll found that 47 per cent would be in favour of retaining the legal limit of 24 weeks. Of particular interest, however, is that only 10 per cent of people would like to see the abortion time limit increased, with 21 per cent calling for it to be decreased.

The UK's 24-week limit is an outlier in Europe, where most countries have a time limit of 12 weeks.

However, despite the 24-week limit, abortion may be performed up to birth in the UK if a baby has a disability such as cleft palate or club foot, or has Down's Syndrome.

The results of the poll stand in contrast to recent calls by activists and MSPs to decriminalise abor-

tion in Scotland, a move which would allow abortion up to birth for any reason. First Minister Humza Yousaf has also expressed support for decriminalisation.

Scotland's Catholic Bishops, in a submission to the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee earlier this year, called on Parliament and political leaders to "increase efforts to promote alternatives to abortion, to ensure support

is available to women experiencing a crisis pregnancy, and to acknowledge and enforce equality of rights for the child in the womb, the first of which is the right to life."

They added: "The mark of a humane and compassionate society is to work through the difficulties and challenges women face in the case of a crisis pregnancy in a life affirming, not life destroying, manner."

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Malakai pictured during the Britain's Got Talent final
Photo: Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

Joy for Catholic BGT singing star Malakai as he lands record deal

Andy Drozdziak

A 14-year-old chorister from a London Catholic school who wowed Simon Cowell on *Britain's Got Talent* has signed a record deal with Universal Records.

Malakai Bayoh will now share a label with star acts U2, Stevie Wonder, The Rolling Stones and Luciano Pavarotti, as well as legendary performers such as Frank Sinatra.

Malakai, who made it to the final of the famous talent show after outstanding performances of *O Mio Babbino Caro* and *Pie Jesu*, said: "I can't believe my dream has come true. And I'm signed to the record company with the biggest opera stars in the world!"

Malakai's debut album, entitled *Golden'* will be released in July.

Announcing the news, the school Malakai attends, Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School in London, said:

"The news is out that Malakai Bayoh has been signed by Universal."

The record contains performances of the music Malakai sang on *Britain's Got Talent* alongside other tracks, including a new arrangement of Sir Karl Jenkins' *Benedictus* which the composer created especially for Malakai.

The first track, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Pie Jesu*, has been released and received its radio premiere on Alexander Armstrong's morning programme on Classic FM.

Lord Lloyd Webber attended one of Malakai's recording sessions and has been very supportive of his singing after hearing his 'Golden Buzzer' performance of *Pie Jesu*.

Since the video of Malakai's *Britain's Got Talent* initial audition was released in April, it has been viewed more than 55 million times.

Commenting on meeting Malakai,

Andrew Lloyd-Webber tweeted: 'It was a pleasure to meet the wonderfully talented @Malakai_Music.'

The news follows Malakai's performances on *Britain's Got Talent*, which, according to Cardinal Vaughan school, "took the nation's breath away." After singing *Caruso* in the final, the judges stood to applaud Malakai, and Bruno Tonioli was seen drying his eyes. Simon Cowell said it was "beautiful from start to finish."

Cardinal Vaughan was quick to praise Malakai for his achievements. "The Vaughan community are all so very proud of Malakai. He has been such an inspiration to young singers across the world. He is a true talent. Thanks to the guidance and ambition of Vaughan's Director of Music, Mr Price," the school said.

"You have been an inspiration to young singers across the world. You are a true talent."

Another day – and we've found another fan of the Universe!

Catholic MP Sir Edward Leigh is pictured right, proudly holding a recent issue of the *Universe Catholic Weekly*.

Sir Edward caught up with the newspaper at a Catholic Union event this week, during which he praised its role in promoting the Catholic point of view.

The Conservative politician, who is President of the Catholic Union, was speaking at an event held to thank members of the St Thomas More Circle supporters. The *Universe Catholic Weekly* was proud to sponsor the event.



• More on event: see pg 11

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IN BRIEF

Souness in the swim for EB charity

Former footballer and TV pundit Graeme Souness, 70, has completed a 21-mile charity swim across the English Channel, raising more than £1 million for Debra UK, a national charity supporting individuals and families affected by epidermolysis bullosa (EB).

EB is a rare condition that causes painful, blistering skin, and Souness said he was inspired to take on the challenge after spending time with a good friend, Isla Grist, 14, who is living with recessive dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa.

Joined by five friends, including Isla's father Andy, the Scotland former professional footballer completed the challenging swim in 12 hours and 17 minutes on Sunday.

Like the penalties, one not to miss

Dear England, a new play about the England football manager Gareth Southgate, has been hailed as a resounding success by critics after it opened in London.

The play, starring Joseph Fiennes as Southgate, opened on Tuesday evening at the National Theatre, and takes the viewer on a journey from his penalty miss at Euro 96 through to recent successes at major tournaments.

In a five star review, *Telegraph* reviewer Dominic Cavendish wrote: 'What starts as a useful recap of how Southgate has re-engineered the England squad's sense of itself (as well as its personnel) builds not only into a gripping drama but one that valuably glances at the confusions of our wider national story. Fiennes played the Bard in *Shakespeare in Love*, and achieves a mesmeric intellectual intensity.'

Harry fans' boas brighten up Cardiff

Cardiff residents woke up to a 'feather boa massacre' after recent concerts by pop star Harry Styles.

Styles is known for his flamboyant style, including brightly coloured feather boas. Writing on Twitter, one Cardiff resident described the scenes in the city centre on Wednesday morning as a "feather boa massacre" after thousands of fans aped his style by taking their own feathers, many of which then lost most of their fronds.

Ellen, from Bristol, told the BBC: "I think Cardiff can cope with a few feathers. It's definitely the sign of a good night, and brightens up the place a bit."

Cardiff Council said the feathers would be collected as waste to generate energy.

Diocese demands reforms after big rise in child poverty figures

Andy Drozdziak

Bishop of Salford John Arnold has joined Caritas Salford in calling for urgent action to support children experiencing poverty, as latest figures show a 24 per cent rise in child poverty in the Diocese of Salford compared with 2022 figures.

Caritas Salford, which works alongside people across Greater Manchester and Lancashire, is launching its summer appeal and demanding immediate action from Government, as need for its services supporting families experiencing poverty in the area rises.

The new figures, taken from research by Loughborough University on behalf of the End Child Poverty Coalition and published earlier this month, show that a worrying 302,158 children in the Diocese of Salford are living in poverty. This figure is up by 73,303 when compared with the same time last year.

"That so many children are experiencing such poverty, suffering and

hardship in 2023 is absolutely unacceptable," Bishop John Arnold said. "These latest statistics are truly heartbreaking. While Caritas is working hard on the ground to support people in our communities who need help at this extremely

Bishop John: 'These latest statistics on child poverty are truly heartbreaking'.



challenging time in our history, true change will only happen by everyone coming together for the greater good and driving forward immediate change."

Patrick O'Dowd, director of Caritas Salford, called for "immediate" Government intervention.

"We're urging local and national governments and other key decision makers to act immediately to try and reverse this near catastrophic

situation many people are finding themselves in," he said.

"Sadly, we also fear these figures are probably only the tip of a very large iceberg, showing only part of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on communities in the area. The reality, sadly is probably much, much worse."

He pointed out that there were a number of reforms that could be made that would deliver immediate results: "Ending the two-child limit on benefits, increasing the number of children with access to free school meals, and encouraging employers to pay the real living wage, would all be welcomed and have a big impact."

The charity, which has a mission to end poverty, runs a range of services for people experiencing homelessness, disadvantage and isolation in the area, and this latest appeal is asking for support to help them reach even more of the families locally that need their help.

Patrick said: "Tragically, these appalling figures don't come as a surprise as our staff, and volunteers are seeing first-hand every day the impact of poverty on the lives of people we work alongside.

"Please join us in shouting loudly for immediate tangible change and get in touch if you're able to help support our charity as we work alongside families locally too."

The charity has shared a breakdown of the shocking extent of child poverty in each of the local authority areas in Greater Manchester and Lancashire covered in the Diocese of Salford.

You can find out more by clicking HERE.



• Caritas Salford is a member of the End Child Poverty Coalition alongside other charities, child welfare organisations, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others.

CARE questions surgeons after they drop strong opposition to assisted suicide

Christian charity CARE said "there are forces at work" after the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS England) voted to drop its opposition to assisted suicide and to adopt a neutral position.

Last week's announcement came after a survey of its members was conducted, of which only 19 per cent took part.

The independent survey was carried out in February and March of

this year, and led to a debate by the RCS's Council in April and May. The most common reason for supporting a change in stance was that 'patients should not have to suffer/experience poor quality of life.'

The RCS has been opposed to assisted suicide since 2014, but now joins other medical bodies in dropping their opposition, including the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Physicians and the

Royal College of Nursing.

James Mildred, director of communications and engagement at CARE, which campaigns against assisted suicide and euthanasia, commented on what he described as the "disappointing" news.

"It's clear there are forces at work within the college who are prepared to employ dubious tactics in order to achieve their desired, political outcomes," Mr Mildred said.

"It's disappointing to see the Royal College of Surgeons changing its stance on assisted suicide after such an insignificant study of members' views.

"Only 19 per cent of members took part in the survey cited as justification for a new, 'neutral' stance. A staggering 80 per cent of members didn't offer a view on the practice. The survey also only involved surgeons in England, so is not representative of UK medics in this field as a whole."

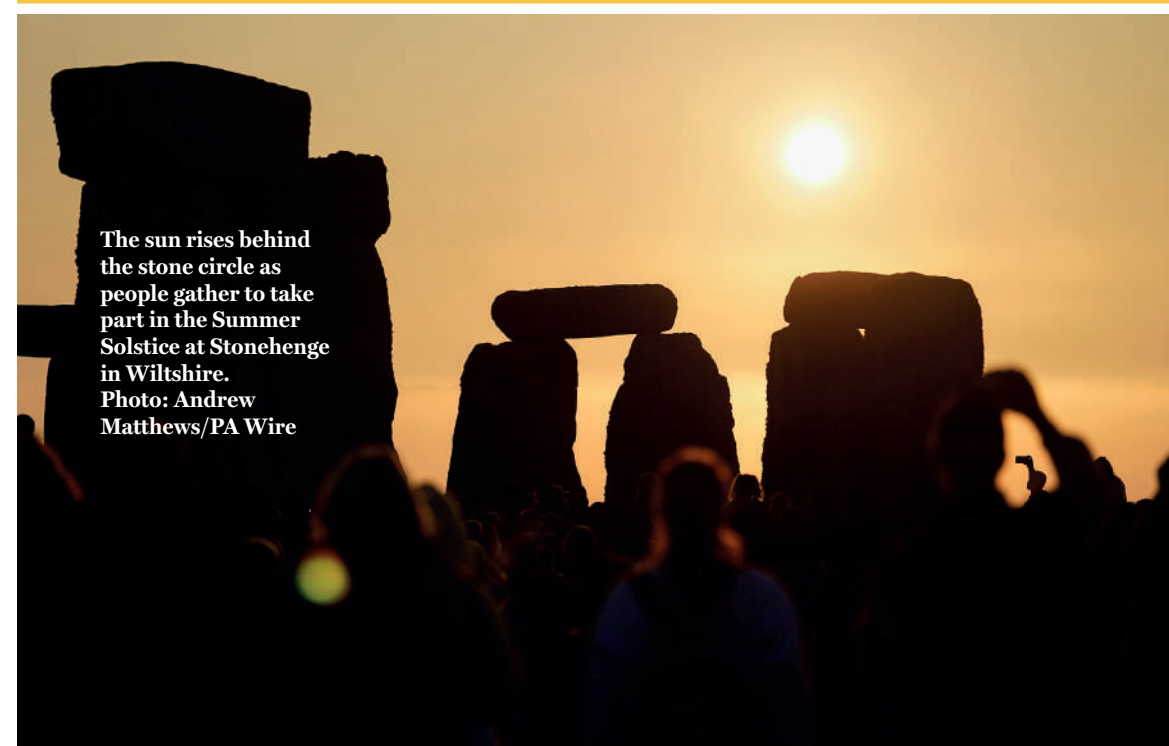
"The fact remains that medics across the UK are strongly opposed to assisted suicide.

"It is particularly notable that palliative doctors, who understand end-of-life issues intimately, are overwhelmingly opposed to a change in the law.

"At the current time, people who have supported 'assisted dying' are also re-assessing their support given troubling reports from countries like Canada, where the law is spiralling out of control.

"Assisted suicide and euthanasia are inherently unsafe, unethical, and unpredictable. We must not gamble with lives by allowing these practices in the UK."

Across the UK, legislation to allow assisted suicide is increasing despite opposition. There are consultations underway in Jersey and the Isle of Man, and in Scotland, a new Assisted Dying Bill from Liam McArthur is progressing.



The sun rises behind the stone circle as people gather to take part in the Summer Solstice at Stonehenge in Wiltshire. Photo: Andrew Matthews/PA Wire

Hear our prayers, they are a wake-up call for the planet, says CAFOD

Andy Drozdziak

The Government has been given a climate wake-up call by CAFOD after a slew of prayers from its supporters were sent to 10 Downing Street.

The 'Prayers for Tomorrow' campaign, written by Catholics across England and Wales, were delivered to 10 Downing Street to call for action to tackle the climate crisis.

The prayers are a direct response to the call by Pope Francis to reflect on humanity's treatment of "our Common Home", and how actions today will impact the lives of people in the world tomorrow.

Sister Karen Marguerite d'Artois, a Dominican Sister of Newcastle, led the hand-in of the book of prayers at No 10 on 16th June.

Sr Karen said: "It's amazing and inspiring to see how many people of all ages have been praying for our common home, and for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers who are suffering from a climate crisis they did not cause.

"We have to take responsibility for our actions and change our ways.

"Prayer is a powerful instrument. Not only do we acknowledge our failure to care for Creation, but we ask God for guidance to bring about change – starting with our own behaviours, small steps. Our prayer brings communities together to create change.

The prayers were submitted online by people of all ages, including children praying for the future, as well as grandparents praying for their families.

A prayer by Jasmine in Saint Martin's Catholic School in Nuneaton states: *'Lord, we ask for your forgiveness... as we make changes to our daily lives to help protect and preserve the earth, for our children, grandchildren and further generations'*.

Some prayers seek a change in human hearts, so that the earth is protected for future generations. Others thank God for giving us the world, and call for future generations to

learn from the mistakes that have been made in dealing with nature.

CAFOD campaigns manager Liam Finn praised CAFOD supporters for their commitment. "Reading the Prayers for Tomorrow people have been sharing with us, it's clear how committed Catholics are to responding to Pope Francis's call to care for our common home," Mr Finn said.

"We want to thank the hundreds of CAFOD supporters who've given the time to share their prayers with us and inspire us to keep calling for action to tackle the climate crisis today for the sake of our global family tomorrow."

CAFOD supported the 'Prayers for Tomorrow' initiative as part of the Great Big Green Week, a community action to tackle the climate crisis and protect nature.

Prayers can still be submitted via the CAFOD website:



Sister Karen Marguerite d'Artois outside Number 10 Downing Street

Photo: Joe Newman

Disgraced MP asks voters to reject by-election plans

Andy Drozdziak

Catholic MP Margaret Ferrier, who breached coronavirus rules in 2020, is asking her constituents not to trigger a by-election after attending Mass with Covid.

The former MP was found to have damaged the reputation of the Commons and put people at risk after taking part in a debate and travelling by train while suffering from Covid-19 in September 2020. She also attended Mass at St Mungo's church, Glasgow, and gave a reading.

Ms Ferrier was suspended from the House of Commons for 30 days



Margaret Ferrier has asked voters not to back a recall and a by-election

earlier this month, beginning the recall petition process.

Voters in Rutherglen and Hamilton West now have the chance to sign a petition to recall their MP from Westminster. If 10 per cent of the electorate choose to do so – some 8,113 people out of 81,124 – then a by-election will be triggered. Voters can sign the petition until 30th July.

Despite pressure to resign from her seat, Ms Ferrier remains the MP,

now sitting as an independent. She urged voters not to sign the petition. "As an independent MP, my constituents are my top priority and always have been," she wrote on her website.

"While parties have already spent months arguing about their candidates for a by-election that has not even been confirmed, they have disregarded the very real issues faced by many in our community.

"That is why so many constituents have expressed to me that they do not want a by-election. Some constituents have told me they feel the instructions provided by the local authority are unclear. If you wish to see me continue as your MP, then do not sign the petition paper."

Any by-election would be closely contested between Labour and the SNP, both of which have chosen prospective candidates for the seat.

Michael Shanks, the Labour candidate, said: "If you talk to people here you can sense the anger."

"We didn't get to see loved ones, they didn't get to visit people in hospital. And that anger is just as strong as it was two years ago."

Mr Shanks said: "This is a chance for a fresh start, that's what we will be putting forward as the Labour Party."

The SNP candidate in the seat will be South Lanarkshire councillor Katy Loudon. She said a by-election was necessary.

COMMENT

Compassion has to be at centre of our response to migrant crisis

Bishops and justice leaders have homed in on the concept of compassion as the Church strives to engage in key contemporary issues.

With the refugee crisis deepening, and the Government seemingly digging its heels in, SVP CEO Elizabeth Palmer joined faith leaders in marking Refugee Week, saying: "As people of faith, we strive to welcome the stranger, to offer hospitality, to love, protect, listen, learn, and show compassion."

Bishop Paul McAleenan, meanwhile, lamented that Government policy currently does not show compassion, and underlined the Church's concern for "migrants, refugees, displaced persons, asylum seekers."

This is a helpful reminder that compassion is a precious commodity these days, in which political scandals have become the norm and many are living in fear due to the cost-of-living crisis and financial crises. It can be easy to dismiss issues which may seem 'far away.'

Yet the refugee crisis, as we know, is right on our doorstep, and how we respond really counts. Compassion is an important value, and can help create a culture of welcome and acceptance.

As the Church strives to be a voice for the voiceless and a help to the helpless, it's worth remembering the words of Pope Francis, to "acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives."



As people of faith, we strive to welcome the stranger, to offer hospitality, to love, protect, listen, learn... and show compassion

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Greek tragedy shows EU's shield is prioritising security over safety of desperate migrants

POLITICS

Gemma Bird

The Mediterranean route between Libya and Italy has been described as the "world's most dangerous maritime crossing" – though Pope Francis labelled it "Europe's graveyard." This was proven once again a fortnight ago when we heard about the tragic shipwreck of a boat full of men, women and children, around 50 miles away from the southern Greek town of Pylos.

The boat was being tracked by the Hellenic coastguard who said that those on board refused their assistance repeatedly, and that people on board said they wanted to continue to Italy. It was for this reason that no active rescue took place, according to the coastguard.

But activist groups, including Alarm Phone, an emergency hotline for refugees in distress in the Mediterranean, have contested this account. In an email to authorities, published by investigative journalists We Are Solomon, Alarm Phone alerted authorities to the vessel's location, and reported that "several people, among them some babies, are very sick. The people on the boat said that they cannot go on".

Mixed reports and timelines have continued to come out, and survivors' stories and experiences are now starting to be reported.

Alarm Phone claimed that Maltese and Italian authorities were also aware of the vessel's situation, and that "European authorities could have sent out adequate rescue resources without delay. They failed to do so because their desire to prevent arrivals was stronger than the need to rescue hundreds of lives".

International lawyers and former members of the Hellenic coastguard have said that authorities should have rescued the boat regardless of whether passengers requested help, not least because of the vessel's unseaworthy nature and overcrowding. As the RNLI has made clear in the UK, it is a duty – both moral and under international maritime law – to save lives at sea.

Pushbacks

This is far from the first time the Hellenic coastguard has faced accusations of endangering asylum seekers' lives at sea. In March



The overcrowded fishing trawler sank with as many as 500 people on board

2020, Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, thanked Greece for acting as the European Union's "shield".

She pledged to work in solidarity with the country to ensure that as a priority "order is maintained" at Greece's external border, also the external border of the EU.

What this means in practice has become clear with accusations and mounting evidence that the Hellenic coastguard is conducting illegal pushbacks, preventing access to the right to claim asylum once a person has entered a state's territory.

Human rights advocates, MEPs and other non-governmental organisations have repeatedly accused both the Hellenic coastguard and Frontex (the European border and coastguard agency) of involvement in pushbacks.

In October 2022, a report by the EU watchdog Olaf published by

German media accused Frontex of covering up or failing to investigate serious allegations of human rights violations.

A video published by the *New York Times* in May 2023 appeared to show coastguard vessels abandoning people at sea that had previously landed in Greece. Again, this would be a violation of their rights under international law to claim asylum, having landed on the island of Lesbos, in Greek territory.

If the Hellenic coastguard's account of the recent shipwreck is true, and that those on board the vessel wanted to continue to Italy and avoid Greek territory, it's important to consider why this would be the case. One reason may very well be the growing awareness of the risk of pushbacks.

These events suggest that Europe's "shield" is not prioritising saving the lives of those seeking safety, but rather, as von der Leyen stated in that same press

conference in 2020, making sure "order is maintained" when "migrants that have been lured through false promises into this desperate situation" find themselves at Europe's door.

Deterrence policies

In 2016, Donald Tusk, then president of the European Council, warned people making the dangerous crossings to the EU. He said: "Do not come to Europe. Do not believe the smugglers. Do not risk your lives and your money. It is all for nothing."

Statements like this wrongly suggest that people make these journeys out of choice, that a far easier alternative exists. But, as Somali British poet Warsan Shire put it poignantly: "You have to understand, no one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land."

Making these journeys less safe will not prevent them from happening. The failure to rescue, the decision to pushback, only puts the lives of people in boats at risk, it does not prevent other people from making those journeys in the future.

Shipwrecks like this are preventable, but only if EU policy moves away from its focus on closing borders and "maintaining order", and towards one of humanitarian action.

This would mean the opening of genuinely safe routes for people seeking safety, that do not rely on them entering the territory of a state on a crowded, dangerous vessel to be able to make an asylum claim.



Ursula von der Leyen thanked Greece for acting as the European Union's 'shield'

Gemma Bird is a Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations, University of Liverpool

Church hosts unique exhibition dedicated to Shroud of Turin

Andy Drozdziak

Catholics in Wolverhampton will have the opportunity to see the brutality of Jesus' crucifixion in an exhibition about the Shroud of Turin.

The Shroud of Turin exhibition opened on Tuesday and runs until Sunday, 2nd July at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Wolverhampton.

The exhibition features a full-sized replica of the Shroud of Turin (the actual Shroud is housed in the Cathedral of Turin) and includes detailed information boards about aspects of the shroud.

Monsignor Mark Crisp, parish priest at SS Peter and St Paul, said that one of the purposes of the exhibition is to show "how brutal crucifixion really was and to tell the story of the crucifixion of Jesus."

He also explained how the exhibition has both a historical and a spiritual dimension. "No-one understands how the image appears on the Shroud," Mgr. Crisp said.

"In December 2011 Italian scientists attempted to identify the phys-



SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church Right, the Shroud of Turin Courtesy Museum of the Bible

ical and chemical processes capable of generating a colour similar to that of the image on the Shroud by using short bursts of ultra violet light, using lasers.

"They managed to recreate a small section of cloth with some of the properties of the Shroud by this method. They concluded that some form of electromagnetic energy (such as a flash of light at short wavelength) created the image on the Shroud of Turin.

"As ultra violet lasers were not available to medieval forgers it opens the possibility that the Shroud is actually Jesus' burial cloth, the image being created at the point of resurrection."

Many Catholics believe that the Shroud of Turin is the actual burial cloth of Jesus – a position supported by recent popes. On a visit to Turin Cathedral in 2021, Pope Francis prayed before the shroud and described it as "an icon of Christ's



great love for humankind", while Pope Benedict XVI said the burial cloth was that which once "wrapped the remains" of Jesus.

In the exhibition, visitors are given a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the great sacrifice Christ made.

To mark the exhibition's opening, the Church hosted sung Evening Prayer led by the Choir of St Peter's Collegiate Church.

Sharks and school pay tribute to Liam

Tributes have been paid after a former Catholic school student and star rugby player was killed after being struck by a car.

Liam O'Connor, 20, died last Saturday morning in Newcastle, where he was a student at university.

He previously attended St Ambrose College, Hale Barns. The school said he was a "talented, kind and gentle young man with a love for sport – especially rugby."

The school said that rugby was his "love and passion", and he had

Liam was a talented and kind young man, said St Ambrose



been a member of the Sale Sharks Academy side after starring for his school and local club, Heaton Moor.

"He enriched our college community beyond measure and was an exceptionally talented, kind and gentle young man. We are immensely proud that Liam was and always will be an Ambrosian."

Sale Sharks said that everyone at the rugby club "is completely heartbroken" on hearing the news.

"Every one of the teams he played for had a true star and warrior in their team," Sale Sharks added.



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Everyday saints

Sir John Battle



The Leeds Civic Trust is responsible for putting up Blue Plaques on buildings around the city as part of the national heritage commemorative trails.

Usually these plaques mark the residences of people who have made a mark in public life and society in leadership in politics, business or the arts and sciences.

Recently Leeds Civic Trust has put up plaques to two people who would usually be overlooked. One was for David Oluwale, a homeless black man who was hounded to his death in the River Aire by police in the late 1960s, the other for June Hancock.

June was honoured with a plaque on the wall of her back-to-back terraced home in Armley. Sadly it was a neighbourhood polluted by a local factory making asbestos sheets. The JW Roberts factory was renowned in the area for blowing asbestos dust onto the streets like 'snow'. Children played with it in the schoolyard.

This lethal dust caused the Armley Asbestos tragedy, killing a recorded 275 local residents later in life with a deadly lung cancer mesothelioma.

June, who was born in the neighbourhood in June 1935, was one of the victims, just like her mother. However, when she was diagnosed in 1994, instead of quietly accepting her fate, she stepped up to campaign for all the victims.

I had been raising the case regularly in Parliament from 1988, when signs of a local cluster of mesothelioma cases first became apparent. Then, with the support of a courageous lawyer, June Hancock became the legal test case to insist on corporate responsibility.

She was a quiet, unassuming person – not a natural campaigner or shouty leader. Yet she was brave and determined and became the face of a very public legal challenge. She fought to the end of her life to get justice for the innocent families, despite being very ill herself.

In October 1995, the company owner was found legally responsible in a landmark national and international victory.

June Hancock died on 19th July 1997, and the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund continues in her memory.

She, like David Oluwale, is an example of those many overlooked but extraordinary ordinary people in our midst who ought most to be remembered, quietly living for others. They are the real advocates for us in that 'cloud of witnesses', the community of saints.

Time to re-set sex education before more damage is done

CATHOLIC COMMENT

Caroline Farrow



The Education Secretary, Gillian Keegan, has ordered an investigation into pupil safety at Rye College in East Sussex after it emerged that the school was supporting a pupil who identifies as a cat.

Footage at the Church of England school, covertly recorded by students, recorded a teacher calling a pupil "despicable", telling her that she needed to find another school, making her stay for detention after class and threatening to report her to the school's senior management team, after she questioned her classmate's feline identity. The pupil committed an additional cardinal sin by stating her belief that there are only two sexes, male and female.

The recording, which has been published by several media outlets and authenticated, is so incredible as to be almost unbelievable. The footage begins with the teacher saying "How dare you? You just really upset someone, saying things like [you] should be in an asylum". The pupil responded with "I didn't say that, I just said that if they want to identify as a cow or something, then they are genuinely unwell, and they're crazy."

It's probably a sentiment that most people would agree with but it enraged the teacher sufficiently to scold the pupil for "questioning their identity" and demanding "where did you get this idea from that there are only two genders?" as if she had uttered some terrible heresy, instead of a widely accepted scientific fact.

Even if the girl had been saying something wholly unacceptable, becoming angry with her and issuing a punishment is certainly not the way to change hearts and minds. I don't know whether to be more troubled by the way in which a school appears to be validating the delusion of a clearly disturbed child, or that they appear to be nurturing an environment whereby it is unsafe for pupils to express and explore different ideas. A school should be a place of learning whereby pupils are exposed to a variety of ideas and taught to critically examine and evaluate differing viewpoints and worldviews. If a pupil expresses an idea that embraces prejudice or discrimination then they should be helped to understand why that



Larry the No. 10 cat leaves a meeting with the Prime Minister after discussions on children self-identifying as 'furries'

point of view is not generally welcomed in society, rather than punished and ostracised. Teachers who dole out punishments to students who express the wrong views are no different to the teachers depicted in Victorian literature who brutally chastised pupils for getting their sums and spellings wrong.

Such attitudes only engender fear and resentment and don't actually help a child to learn.

The incident has sparked an intervention by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who has issued a statement saying that headteachers should intervene in these extreme cases to stop pupils from identifying as cats, horses, unicorns or other neo-genders, and that it is not right for children to be influenced by the views of teachers when it comes to transgender issues. Teachers should not, said Number Ten, be shutting down valid discussions and debates.

As the Family Education Trust attest, last week's incident at Rye College is not simply a one-off anomaly, but something which has been replicated across classrooms in the country. They cite a number of emails from parents expressing concerns over schools who are allowing peers in their children's class to identify as animals with human characteristics, known as 'furries'. In one secondary school in Wales, a pupil is reported as answering questions with a 'miaow', another child insists upon being

addressed as a dinosaur and another is allowed to don a cape and identify as the Moon!

Lessons are being disrupted by the interactions and behaviour of these children and teachers are loath to intervene for fear of being seen as discriminatory.

The situation is ludicrous and it's hardly discriminatory to note the possibility that pupils are likely exploiting a system that allows them to leverage identity politics in order to get away with misbehaviour.

Children who identify as animals ought to be registered as a safeguarding concern, because identifying as a 'furry' has its origins as a niche sexual practice and it's likely that children who identify this way have been exposed to something dodgy online. It also renders them vulnerable to online predators who realise that identifying as a cute furry animal is an easy way to infiltrate chat forums and appeal to children, especially vulnerable autistic children who already feel isolated and don't easily fit in.

Many educationalists and lobby groups are using the situation to highlight calls for guidance on gender identity from the Department of Education. They say that the current lack of clarity has led to teachers using their individual judgement, which will vary according to their personal views.

I think more than that is needed. Gender identity may be the issue

that has drawn the poison to the surface but it is clear that the entire relationships and sex education curriculum in schools needs a reset. On Monday, hours before the story of the child identifying as a cat was released, I appeared on *GB News* discussing the news that had broken over the weekend, that primary school children were being taught niche and dangerous sexual practices such as choking, and set homework involving masturbation, before they have even reached puberty.

Even the person who was set up as my opponent admitted that children vary widely when it comes to emotional maturity and that much of this material was inappropriate for younger children, and that parents should always be involved and consulted.

Rishi Sunak is clearly keen to appeal to popular concerns but our children deserve more than lip service or generic platitudes and alleged guidance from a Department of Education which has allowed this situation to occur despite 13 years of supposedly Conservative governance.

It is now time to lobby our local representatives and make reform of sex education in schools a priority. We need to restore the rights of parents to not only review curriculum materials, but also remove their children from inappropriate classes. This has to be a pressing issue in the next election.

New film could spark a faith revolution, says Hollywood star

Andy Drozdziak

Hollywood actress Anna Grace Barlow believes new film *Jesus Revolution* can help young people find faith and meaning.

Jesus Revolution, which comes out in UK cinemas on 23rd June, is the story of one young hippie's quest in the 1970s for belonging and purpose that leads not only to peace, love, and rock and roll, but that sets into motion a new counterculture crusade called the Jesus Movement.

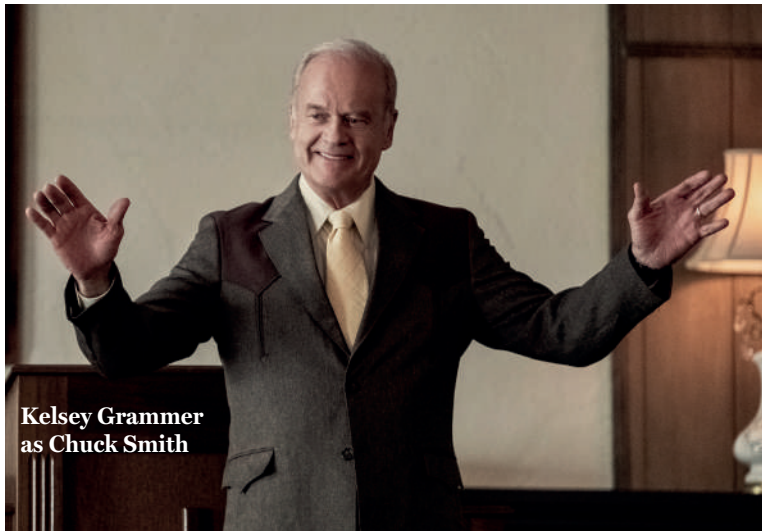
Anna Grace Barlow, better known for her roles in *Supernatural* and *The Goldbergs*, plays Cathe Laurie, a young person who is drawn into a profound experience of faith.

Speaking to the *Universe* about the role, Anna Grace Barlow said: "I just thought it was so real, the grittiness of it - that was what drew me to it."

"I love Cathe's friction with her parents and how far she comes. She's unapologetic in how she feels, and she fights for things. And she's like me. I saw myself in how the character was written, and I really wanted to play her."

Anna Grace Barlow believes young people caught up in toxicity and struggling for meaning can find hope through the film.

"For these young people searching for fun, it is something that every generation goes through.



Kelsey Grammer as Chuck Smith

"Every institution we have seems to be just letting us down, and you don't know who you can believe anymore. You need to believe in something, and God becomes a pretty good option." **Kelsey Grammer**

What we wanted out of the film is for people to know they are loved and there is a plan for them, bigger than they can imagine, and they're

not alone. That message that God loves you no matter what you have done is a really beautiful thing," she said.

"Audiences are going to love *Jesus Revolution* because it has this retro feel. And it's a love story. And it's a story of finding yourself, finding your way, finding faith."

The film, which has been endorsed by Sir Cliff Richard, has already proved a hit in America. It features *Frasier* star Kelsey Grammer as Chuck Smith, an American pastor who founded the Calvary Chapel movement.

Grammer said he believes the



Anna Grace Barlow and Ally Ioannides in *Jesus Revolution*

message of the film is particularly poignant for today's audiences.

"I do think we exist at a time that is kind of screaming out for a little bit of faith, a little bit of something to believe in," he said. "I mean, every institution we have seems to be just letting us down, and you don't know who you can believe anymore. And I think, once you cast aside the idea that you need to believe in something other than God, God becomes a pretty good option."

Anna Grace Barlow says the im-

pact of the film has "blown her mind". She hopes that those who see the film will experience 'a great meeting point for community, and hopefully will leave the film feeling more uplifted and loved. It's so reinvigorating and refreshing - a great reminder of what Christianity can be."

More information about cinema timings by clicking the panel right:



Heidi's a celebrity birthday memorising record breaker!

A woman who set a world record for identifying the most celebrity birthdays in three minutes has said she is "very proud" to be challenging perceptions about what people with Down's syndrome can achieve.

Heidi Crowter, 27, from Coventry, became a Guinness World Record holder after recalling 70 celebrity birth dates in under 180 seconds, ranging from Queen Victoria and Margaret Thatcher to Brad Pitt and Shakira.

"I am very proud for achieving a Guinness World Record," she said. "I love sharing my joy of birthdays with people, and I have been writing a birthday list and practising a lot. Everyone knows that practice makes perfect."

Ms Crowter's achievement was announced by the learning disability charity Mencap ahead of Learning Disability Awareness Week between June 19th-25th. Heidi is a Mencap Myth Buster - people who challenge misconceptions about learning disability and to campaign for change.

Her record - the most celebrity birthdays identified in three minutes (II) - was achieved under Guinness World Records' new impairments initiative, developed alongside Mencap, in the intellec-



Heidi receives her record certificate. Photo: Mencap/PA

tual impairment (II) category. The initiative allows reasonable adjustments to be made for record attempts in order to better include people with a disability.

Mencap's chief executive Edel Harris said that it was "crucial" to give people with a learning disability the chance to break world records.

"It's great there are records that are accessible and achievable for people with a learning disability," she said. "People with a learning disability, just like the wider population, have a range of amazing skills and talents. This shows what they can do."

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IN BRIEF

Guardian axes all gambling ads

The *Guardian* has become the first major UK media outlet to ban gambling advertisements across any of its global platforms.

The new policy applies to all online advertisements on the *Guardian's* website, app, audio, video, and newsletters, as well as print advertisements in the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers in the UK, and the *Guardian Weekly*. It also covers all forms of gambling advertising, including sports betting, online casinos, and scratchcards.

A spokesman for the media company said it was “the right thing to do, considering the impact gambling has on society.”

C of E clergy put in for big pay rise

Church of England clergy are demanding a 9.5 per cent pay increase as they struggle with a higher cost of living.

The Unite union, which represents over 2,000 clergy and lay officers in the Church of England, said it was the first time in the Church's history that a formal pay claim had been submitted for clergy.

A spokesperson for the Church responded by acknowledging the “huge contribution” made by clergy, adding “We are mindful of issues of affordability for dioceses, in the deliberations over the annual recommendations for the minimum and benchmark stipend levels.”

Go get them, girls, prince tells team

The Prince of Wales told the England Women's football team to “Go get them” on Tuesday as he made a surprise visit to their St George's Park training camp ahead of this summer's World Cup campaign in Australia and New Zealand in July.

Prince William, who is president of the FA, enjoyed a game of table football with England stars Millie Bright, Mary Earps and Rachel Daly before he called up shocked head coach Sarina Wiegman to receive her honorary CBE for guiding the team to their European Championship triumph last summer.

William said the “sky is the limit” for the women at the World Cup as he praised them for what they have done to advance girl's sport.

England are one of 32 nations taking part in the Women's World Cup, with their first match against Haiti on 22nd July.

As the world heats up, so more people will vote with their feet

WORLD AFFAIRS

Rita Issa



An increase in global temperatures is being matched by a marked increase in migration

‘It was getting hotter. Frank May got off his mat and padded over to look out the window. Umber stucco walls and tiles, the colour of the local clay... [he] took a deep breath. It reminded him of the air in a sauna. This, the coolest part of the day. In his entire life he had spent less than five minutes in saunas, he didn't like the sensation ...

‘Here there was no escaping it.’

The opening chapter of Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* paints a harrowing scene of a near-future heatwave which triggers millions of excess deaths. The protagonist Frank witnesses the extremes that humans will go to for survival: stealing air conditioning units and wading into the town lake to find any way to cool down.

Frank survives – he is a fit, western aid worker. Others, particularly the young and the old, are not so lucky. The story follows Frank's guilt at having lived and his subsequent actions, alongside global attempts to manage the fallout of such a disaster. While the novel is dubbed climate-fiction, much of what it describes could well come to pass. In parts of the world, it already has.

The decade spanning 2011 and 2020 was the warmest on record. Current national commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions put Earth on track for 2.7°C of warming. Scientists believe this would entail 2 billion people living with average annual temperatures above 29°C as soon as the end of this decade – heat that very few communities are accustomed to.

This will have multiple repercussions, not least for human health. High temperatures compromise the body's ability to regulate its own internal temperature, affecting the heart, lungs, brain and kidneys, as well as the mind and the hormonal system, all of which can contribute to premature death and disability. Temperature extremes (both hot and cold) already result in 5 million excess deaths a year.

There are many ways in which humans adapt to temperature extremes and other climate-related



risks – and one valid response is migration. This includes temporarily migrating in the hottest months, longer-term seasonal migration often for employment reasons, and permanent migration. No study has systematically mapped the connections between heat and migration, so my research team, but I have sought to do just that.

Our findings suggest that heat, in at least some contexts, is and will continue to play a part in peoples' intention to move, while also threatening their health when on the move and settling.

The heat factor in migration

We read scientific studies, non-governmental organisation reports, government policy documents and other sources about heat and migration. We noticed they fit into two categories. The first looked at how heat drives migration. The second studied the impact of heat on migrants while travelling and when living in a new place.

Of the 32 studies that considered how heat affects migration, half showed that consistently rising temperatures would increase the likelihood that a person will migrate, though this wasn't the case across the board. People seem to be less likely to migrate because of rising temperatures in low-income countries compared with high or middle-income countries.

Heat pushes people to migrate through a variety of intersecting factors: physiological discomfort, extreme events such as wildfires, poverty and restricted access to water and food, among others.

There are also other more subtle factors which influence the likelihood of people choosing, or being able to choose, to migrate. This includes whether they live in the countryside or a city, their gender, how old they are and whether they have access to suitable healthcare and a source of income where they reside.

Heat risks health

Meanwhile, for people on the move, heat and heat stress pose risks at all stages of the journey, as described in papers mostly from the US and Mexico. Many studies concerned people migrating to find work, particularly in agriculture and industry, where the risk of heat appears to be less important than the need for economic survival.

Once in a new destination, the impacts of heat seem to be worse for migrants than non-migrants. This can be because of the type of housing and work migrants are more likely to find themselves in. No studies reported a positive impact of heat on health.

This review paper – as with any academic exercise but particularly

“*Our findings suggest that heat will continue to play a part in peoples' intention to move, while also threatening their health when on the move*”

when dealing with complex systems – has several limitations, including differences in how heat is measured and how migration is defined. And our findings are somewhat complex, mirroring the complexity of migration and the climate system.

While there is a trend towards people migrating as a result of increasing temperatures, no absolute threshold is defined above which people will definitely migrate, and migration also does not seem to be a guaranteed outcome of heat. The decision and ability to migrate is never straightforward, and is often a last resort when other measures for adapting to the heat have been exhausted.

The world's average temperature may reach 1.5°C above the pre-industrial norm for the first time later this decade. Opportunities to slow the rate at which Earth is heating must be enacted in a timely manner.

Regardless, the regions experiencing temperature extremes are growing, with consequences for human health and the systems that underpin food, employment, political stability and liveability. Now that we know about these risks, climate-related preparations, planning and intervention must focus on vulnerable populations to lessen the impacts of heat on these people.

Rita Issa is a PhD Fellow, Tyndall Centre for Climate Research, University of East Anglia

Praise for role of Catholic Union at donors' event

Members of the Catholic Union's St Thomas More Circle gathered at St Mary's, Cadogan Street, London on 15th June, for a special Mass and reception attended by Catholic Union President, Sir Edward Leigh MP.

The St Thomas More Circle of donors was launched by the Catholic Union in January 2019 to support and grow the work of Union. Since then, the Catholic Union has been able to expand and develop its work, including the appointment of a Deputy Director last year.

Members of the circle were joined by MPs, priests, and members of the press to celebrate the achievements of the Catholic

Union over the past 12 months and look ahead to next year.

Guests were welcomed by Mgr. Martin Hayes, Vicar General for the Diocese of Westminster and assistant priest at St Mary's.

The event was sponsored by the *Universe Catholic Weekly*, with our news editor, Andy Drozdziak, saying: "It's great to see the Catholic Union go from strength to strength. Its efforts in making the Catholic voice heard loud and clear on key issues in Parliament are hugely appreciated, and the *Universe* was delighted to support their circle of donors event."

Catholic Union Acting Chairman, Richard Collyer-Hamlin, thanked people for their support and encouraged more people to become members of the Circle. "We are seeking 100 supporters, each giving £1,000 per year, to help us with the essential costs of the Union's operation," he said.

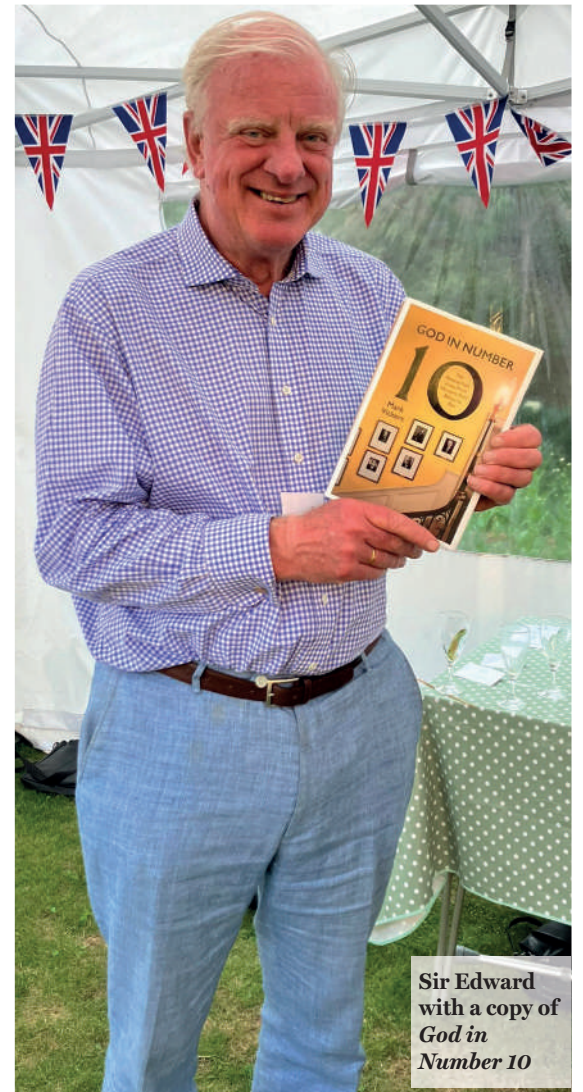
As part of the celebrations, Catholic Union President, Sir Edward Leigh MP, was presented with a copy of *God in Number 10* to mark his 40 years in Parliament, having first been elected to the Commons in June 1983.

Richard Collyer-Hamlin said: "The success of the Catholic Union in recent years is thanks to so many people. We are extremely grateful to Sir Edward for his many years of service as our President, making the Catholic viewpoint known in Parliament in good times and bad.

"But our work would not be possible without the support of our benefactors and supporters. It was a pleasure to thank some of them in person at our reception.

"I look forward to welcoming more members of the St Thomas More Circle over the months ahead."

More information can be found by clicking the panel right.



Sir Edward with a copy of *God in Number 10*

Sir Edward Leigh MP addresses members of the Catholic Union's Thomas More Circle



Anglican says moving to Catholic Church was God's decision

The former Anglican Bishop of Monmouth, the Right Rev. Richard Pain, will be received into the Catholic Church within the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, on Sunday, 2nd July. He will be received by the Rt Rev. Keith Newton, Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, at St Basil and St Gwladys, Newport.



Richard expressed joy at the next step of his Christian journey. "Having retired from episcopal ministry three years ago, I have had time to reflect on the retiree's perennial question - what next? The process of discernment continues throughout life and is constantly shaped by context but more importantly by the whisper of God's voice," he said.

"The Benedictine understanding of obedience - hearing the Lord - has been significant to my personal formation. The call to conversion which follows has led me to becoming a convert to the Catholic Church through the Ordinariate.

"I have much to be grateful for the experience gained over a lifetime as an Anglican. Yet the call to Catholicism seems natural and spiritual at the same time. To start afresh will be a welcome challenge and I come as a learner and a disciple. The Ordinariate, through the vision of Pope Benedict, provides a generous pathway

to walk a pilgrim way and I ask for your prayers."

Monsignor Newton said: "We are delighted that Richard has asked to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

"He will be the first bishop from the Anglican Church in Wales to be received into the Ordinariate since its creation in 2011. Richard has a long and distinguished ministry in the Church in Wales, and has many gifts which he will continue to use to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Wales."

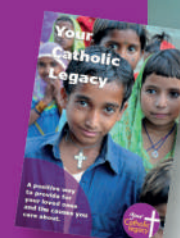
Born in London in 1956, Richard studied English Literature at Bristol University and then Theology at the University of Wales, Cardiff whilst training for the Anglican ministry. He was ordained a priest in the Church in Wales at Newport Cathedral in 1986. He has served all his ministry in the Diocese of Monmouth. He retired as Bishop of Monmouth in 2019.

He has been married to Juliet for over 40 years and has two sons.

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New online course gives Latinists a timely boost

A new online course for learning Latin is proving popular with Catholics and others looking to engage with this most traditional and ancient of languages.

Matthew Spencer, director of Latin for Everyone, whose courses are currently offered through the Latin Mass Society, is trying to “connect budding Latinists” through online learning.

“I think the whole academic community has been reflecting, for a couple of years, on what the internet does best. If a world expert is sitting in Ohio, why should his class catchment area end at the Ohio river? We’ve tried to connect budding Latinists wherever they are with the best teachers for them,” he said.

What this means in practice is that greater geographical flexibility has developed in tandem with a more flexible learning style.

Joseph Shaw, the Latin Mass Society’s Chairman, pointed to online courses being “a handy way” of learning.

“The Online Latin course offers the opportunity for formal study in an informal environment,” Mr Shaw said. “People who attend the Latin Mass often have an interest in learning some Latin, even if it is just the basics, but in-person courses aren’t always an option. Online courses offer a handy way around the practical challenges of attending classes in-person.”

The idea of reading the best Latin authors — the ones Catholics have always valued, from the time of St Augustine and St Jerome — and doing so in the comfort of your living room, in like-minded company, might be new, but it also connects Catholics to their tradition. A sizeable number of students with Latin for Everyone are priests who would like to say the Latin Mass — or, in many cases, are doing so already. And when Pope Francis said he wanted those doing so to have good Latin, it led to a spike in enrolments.

“We even introduced a Latin



Matthew Spencer

competence exam,” Matthew said. “This led to the surprising moment of people queuing up to take it.”

Now things have settled down a bit and people taking this particular set of classes are interested for a variety of reasons. Some are retired, and some have young children, and want to know Latin in order to pass it on to them. A good number are taking Catholic topics on university courses, where the Latin provision is more occasional than the students of all ages would like. Some are finding such provision is either fitful or non-existent in places where they are living or studying.

Matthew Spencer is optimistic about future interest in learning Latin. “It’s clear we live in an exciting time for those who want to be more serious and read their way into their own tradition rather than be distracted by the celebrity gossip on their phone. Learning Latin online is one way of doing that but it is proving popular,” he said.

Details of the Latin Mass Society’s online language courses and summer school (in both Latin and Greek) are on their website: lms.org.uk. Matthew Spencer can be reached at matthew.jaspencer@yahoo.com

Charity’s double joy after awards

Scottish Catholic charity Mary’s Meals has received two awards in the space of a week — one accompanied by a letter of congratulations from the King of Spain.

First, co-founder and CEO Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Strathclyde.

Then it was announced that Mary’s Meals will receive the Princess of Asturias Award for

Concord for its “exemplary dedication to alleviating some of the most pressing problems in today’s world.” This award was accompanied by a letter of congratulations from H.M. King Felipe of Spain.

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow said: “We are deeply honoured to be chosen for this hugely prestigious award, which we accept on behalf of all those working for us around the world.”

Mercy! The rockin’ brothers are back in town to support Ukraine

Priests from two north-west diocese have raised the roof for Ukraine after resurrecting their band in support of Caritas Ukraine.

Clergy rock band The Mercy Brothers is a group of priests from Salford and Shrewsbury dioceses who use their musical talents to share Gospel values and raise vital funds for charity.

Since its humble beginnings in 2016, the band has raised a whopping £10,000 on average each year for various causes and this year, the boys were back in town to raise funds to buy electrical generators for schools and nurseries in Ukraine.

Taking to the stage at St John Fisher’s in Denton on Friday, 9th June were parish priest Fr Joe Gee on guitar, Fr Chris Gorton from St Cuthbert’s in Bolton on keys, and Fr Mark Harold, from St Mary’s in Bamber Bridge, performing as the band’s lead singer.

They were also delighted to welcome Fr Nick Kern from the Diocese of Shrewsbury, and lay member, Tom, as the band’s drummer.

Almost 200 people crowded into the parish hall to hear all their fa-



The Mercy Brothers

avourite classics, such as *I’m a Believer*, *Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door*, and Leonard Cohen’s *Hallelujah*, while enjoying the opportunity to taste some delicious Ukrainian cuisine.

Fr Joe Gee was delighted to host the event following a request from a parishioner.

“I was approached by a member of the parish with links to the Manchester Ukrainian community about the possibility of a parish fundraiser,” he said. “I told him that

I actually had the clergy band lined up for a parish event but we could put the two together.

“A member of the Ukrainian community then came and spoke at all the parish Masses one weekend, and as they had already raised money for electrical generators for schools and nurseries via Caritas Ukraine, we said we’d donate our funds to the cause.”

Combined with other funds from the raffle, the evening raised a total of £2,200.

Irish singing star Daniel O’Donnell goes back to church he helped build

Irish singing sensation Daniel O’Donnell was in Bristol last Sunday to meet fans and sing in a church he helped launch 30 years ago.

Daniel, 61, who is a devout Catholic, first came to Bristol in 1989 to host a benefit day in support of St Patrick’s Church, Redfield. At the time, the church was raising funds

to replace the old building initially designed as a church hall.

St Patrick’s parish is now described as ‘an active and vibrant community of more than 650 adults and children all with the same purpose — helping us to love Jesus and to show His love to others.’

St Patrick’s parish priest Canon

Gregory Grant first met Daniel at a Cliff Richard concert in Usk, South Wales, and asked him to help with the project. Canon Greg said: “To my astonishment, he said ‘yes’ straight away. Since then, fundraising went from strength to strength and today we have a church and hall which has more than 600 parishioners and is used by other denominations, including Buddhists.”

Parishioners from more than 40 countries worship in St Patrick’s church, which is reflected in mosaics, murals and paintings by artists from Romania, Slovakia, the Philippines and Poland as well as the UK.

Daniel, who has just finished a concert tour of Britain, said: “It was a great day, and lovely to meet so many people who came from all over the country, and to have a cup of tea with them.”

The church’s many choirs sang at the multi-cultural concert, including Brazilian, African, Keralan and Polish.

Among the 400-strong audience was 102-year-old parishioner Grace Strong.

Well known for his charity work, Daniel has had an album in the official album chart each year for the last 35 years.



Left, Daniel with Canon Gregory Grant and below, with 102-year-old Grace Strong



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Gänswein asked to leave Vatican with no role to go home to

Pope Francis has directed Archbishop Georg Gänswein, the longtime personal secretary of the late Pope Benedict XVI, to leave the Vatican and return to his home diocese in Germany without a new assignment.

Archbishop Gänswein “concluded his assignment as prefect of the Papal Household” in February, the Vatican said in a rather stark statement. “The Holy Father has directed that from July 1, Archbishop Gänswein return to his home diocese” of Freiburg in southwest Germany, it read.

The pope has met privately with Archbishop Gänswein twice since the death of Pope Benedict on New Year’s Eve, 2022, once in March and again in May. Both times, the archbishop’s title was listed as “Prefect of the Papal Household” on the pope’s daily agenda.

The archbishop had been Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger’s personal secretary since 2003, when the future pope was prefect of the then-Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

He was appointed prefect of the papal household in 2012 and served Pope Francis in that role until 2020 when the pope told him to assist the retired Pope Benedict fulltime, although he retained his title as prefect.

Pope thanks faithful as he’s back to work after hospital

Cindy Wooden

With a slightly quivering voice, before leading the recitation of the Angelus prayer, Pope Francis thanked everyone who prayed for him and cared for him while he was in the hospital.

Greeting an estimated 15,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square last Sunday, two days after he was released from hospital following surgery to repair a hernia, the pope thanked everyone who “showed me affection, care and friendship and assured me of their prayerful support.”

“This human and spiritual closeness has been of great help and comfort to me,” the pope said. “Thank you all, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart!”

As is customary, Pope Francis also commented on the day’s Gospel reading, Matthew 9:36, 10:8, focusing on the line that Jesus sent his apostles out to preach that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

“It is the same proclamation with which Jesus began his preaching,” the pope said, telling everyone that “the kingdom of God, that is, his lordship of love, has come near, it comes in our midst.”

The good news of God’s closeness, the pope said, should fill people with trust because “if the God of Heaven is close, we are not alone on Earth.”

When sharing the Gospel with others, he said, the first thing to let them know is that “God is not far away, but he is a father, he knows you and he loves you; he wants to take you by the hand, even when you travel on steep and rugged paths, even when you fall and struggle to get up again and get back on track.”

In fact, the pope said, “often in the moments when you are at your weakest, you can feel his presence all the more strongly. He knows the path, he is with you, he is your Father!”

The best way to proclaim God’s nearness, he said, is with “gestures of love and hope in the name of the Lord; not saying many words, but making gestures,” as Jesus instructed the apostles: ‘Heal the sick,’ he says, ‘raise the dead, heal the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.’”

After reciting the Angelus, Pope Francis noted that 20th June is the UN-proclaimed World Refugee day and spoke of his “great sadness and deep sorrow” after a fishing boat, packed with migrants – estimates ranged from 500 to 700 men, women and children onboard – sank off the Greek coast as it attempted to travel from Tobruk, Libya, to southern Italy.

Just over 100 people, all men, were rescued 78 bodies had been re-



Pope Francis smiles and waves at visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square

covered, but potentially hundreds more bodies are still in the sunken vessel.

“It seems the sea was calm,” the pope said.

There are conflicting reports from the Greek coast guard, the European border agency and humanitarian organisations about whether the boat was in distress and about what caused it to capsize.

Nevertheless, Pope Francis said, “I renew my prayer for those who lost their lives and I implore that al-

ways everything possible be done to prevent such tragedies.”

The pope also prayed for “the young students, victims of the brutal attack that took place against a school in western Uganda. Officials said members of the Allied Democratic Forces rebel group attacked a secondary school near the Uganda border with Congo, killing 41 people and kidnapping six others.

“This struggle, this war, is everywhere,” the pope said. “Let us pray for peace!”

Kerry asks pope to rally global support for more major reforms at November’s COP climate summit

Pope has ‘remarkable leverage’ on the climate change issue, says envoy Kerry

President Joe Biden’s special envoy for climate issues is counting on Pope Francis’ support to get nations attending the next UN climate summit to adopt bold measures to mitigate climate change.

“The Holy Father has an enormous ability to convene people, to help generate energy” on climate change, John Kerry, the president’s envoy for climate issues, told reporters following a private meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Monday.

“My hope is that he is going to engage and be one of the people focused on this moment, which I think is almost equivalent to Paris,” he said, referring to the landmark 2015 UN climate summit in which 196 parties agreed to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.



The United States withdrew from the agreement in 2017 under President Trump, before rejoining it in 2021.

Kerry said Pope Francis has “remarkable leverage” in drawing at-

tention to climate change and that the pope has “constantly been an outspoken and engaged advocate” on climate issues.

He recalled a meeting of nearly 40 leaders of the world’s major religions

as well as top scientists at the Vatican in 2021 to call on world leaders to take seriously their obligation to curb emissions trends at that year’s UN climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

“I think it might be helpful to try to rekindle some of those embers and start to generate the focus now” before the November summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, said Kerry.

It says a lot about the importance Pope Francis attaches to this issue that his meeting with John Kerry was his first major appointment since he was discharged from hospital.

Meeting the pope on the same day as Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State, met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Kerry said he spoke with the pope about the United States and China’s roles in global emissions production.

The two “took note, together, of the fact that China and the United States represent about 40 per cent of all emissions,” and discussed the responsibilities of both nations to take

steps forward in reducing their carbon footprint, he said.

China, Kerry said, “has an ability to have more of an impact than any other nation in the world” in reducing emissions.

Kerry said he also “chatted” with the pope about the war in Ukraine thought it was not the focus of their conversation and said that the pope articulated “the degree to which (the war) is disturbing the ability to focus on other things at the same time,” such as the climate crisis.

A practising Catholic, Kerry said caring for the environment “goes to the heart of morality, of individual responsibility for your neighbours and for mother Earth.”

He cited the influence of Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical *Laudato si’, On Care for Our Common Home*, in defining life in relationship to God, to neighbor and to the earth.

“Being Catholic involves finding ways to live that out, in my judgment,” Kerry said, calling scepticism before issues of climate change on the part of Catholics “a mistake.”

Synod told: 'we must include everyone'

October's meeting has to bring in the excluded while remembering a hierarchy willed by Christ

In a Church that "bears the signs of serious crises of mistrust and lack of credibility," the Synod of Bishops will be asked to find ways to build community, encourage the contribution of every baptised person and strengthen the church's primary mission of sharing the Gospel, said the working document for the October gathering.

"A synodal Church is founded on the recognition of a common dignity deriving from baptism, which makes all who receive it sons and daughters of God, members of the family of God, and therefore brothers and sisters in Christ, inhabited by the one Spirit and sent to fulfil a common mission," it said.

However, many Catholics around the world report that too many baptised persons – particularly LGBTQ+ Catholics, the divorced and civilly remarried, the poor, women and people with disabilities – are excluded from active participation in the Church and, particularly, from its decision-making structures.

Based on the listening sessions held around the world since October 2021, the working document asks members of the synod to focus their prayer, discussion and dis-

The working document for the Synod of Bishops authors: From left, Helena Jeppesen-Spühler, Sr Nadia Coppa, Cardinal Mario Grech, Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, relator general of the synod; and Jesuit Father Giacomo Costa



cernment on three priorities:

- Communion, asking: "How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?"

- "Co-responsibility in mission: How can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel?"

- "Participation, governance and authority: What processes, structures and institutions are needed in a missionary synodal Church?"

The first synod assembly, scheduled for 4th-29th October, "will have the task of discerning the concrete steps which enable the continued growth of a synodal Church, steps that it will then submit to the Holy Father," the document said.

Some questions, perhaps many of them, will require further discernment and study with the help of theologians and canon lawyers, which is why a second assembly of the synod will be held in October 2024.

Even then, resolving every issue raised in the listening sessions is unlikely, the document said. But "characteristic of a synodal Church is the ability to manage tensions without being crushed by them."

The working document includes worksheets with questions "for discernment" that synod members will be asked to read and pray with before arriving in Rome.

One of them asks, how to enable greater recognition and participa-

tion of women in decision-making processes."

In particular, it asked how women can be included in the diaconate.

As the synod process has taken place, questions have been raised about the relationship between participation in the life of the Church and the call to conversion, the document said, which raises "the question of whether there are limits to our willingness to welcome people and groups, how to engage in dialogue with cultures and religions without compromising our identity, and our determination to be the voice of those on the margins."

Another tension highlighted in the process involves shared respon-

sibility in a Church that believes its hierarchical structure is willed by Christ and is a gift.

The working document reported a "strong awareness that all authority in the Church proceeds from Christ and is guided by the Holy Spirit. A diversity of charisms without authority becomes anarchy, just as the rigor of authority without the richness of charisms, ministries and vocations becomes dictatorship."

But the document asked members to discuss, think and pray about ways that authority can be exercised more as leadership that empowers shared responsibility and creativity. "How can we renew and promote the bishop's ministry from a missionary synodal perspective?" it asked.

"How should the role of the pope and the exercise of his primacy evolve in a synodal Church?" The working document also asked synod members to consider ways more priests, religious and laypeople could be involved in choosing bishops.

Throughout the listening sessions at every level, the document said, people recognised that Catholics cannot share fully in the spiritual discernment needed for true co-responsibility without further education in the Christian faith, Catholic social teaching and in the process of discernment itself and how it differs from simply discussing a problem and voting on possible solutions.

Young can 'take their love to grandparents'

God wants young people to bring joy to the hearts of the elderly and to learn from their experiences, Pope Francis said.

"Yet, above all, the Lord wants us not to abandon the elderly or to push them to the margins of life, as tragically happens all too often in our time," the 86-year-old pope wrote in his message for the Catholic Church's celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.

The message was released at the Vatican in anticipation of the celebration on 23rd July, the Sunday closest to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, Jesus' grandparents, on 26th July.

The theme for 2023 is 'His mercy is from age to age' from the Gospel of St. Luke.

The Holy Spirit 'blesses and accompanies every fruitful encounter between different generations: between grandparents and grandchildren, between young and old,' the pope wrote in his message.

"To better appreciate God's way of acting, let us remember that our life is meant to be lived to the full, and that our greatest hopes and dreams

are not achieved instantly but through a process of growth and maturation, in dialogue and in relationship with others," he wrote.

"Those who focus only on the here and now, on money and possessions, on 'having it all now,' are blind to the way God works," the pope said in his message. "His loving plan spans past, present and future; it embraces and connects the generations."

God calls on everyone each day to look to the future and 'keep pressing forward,' he wrote.

For young people, that means being able to 'break free from the fleeting present in which virtual reality can entrap us, preventing us from doing something productive,' he wrote. "For the elderly, it means not dwelling on the loss of physical strength and thinking with regret about missed opportunities and dwelling on the past."

Pope Francis invited the faithful to 'make a concrete gesture that would include grandparents and the elderly' and to honor them, "neither depriving ourselves of their company nor depriving them of ours. May we never allow the elderly to be cast aside!"

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IN BRIEF

Nations' water supply at risk as glaciers decline

Glaciers in the Hindu Kush and Himalayan mountain ranges could lose up to 80% of their current volume this century without a sharp reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, according to a new report.

The Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development warns that flash floods and avalanches would grow more likely and the availability of fresh water would be affected for nearly two billion people who live downstream of 12 rivers that originate in the mountains.

Ice and snow in the mountain ranges is an important source of water for the rivers, which flow through 16 countries in Asia and provide fresh water to 240 million people in the mountains and another 1.65 billion downstream.

"The people living in these mountains who have contributed next to nothing to global warming are at high risk due to climate change," said Amina Maharjan, a migration specialist and one of the report's authors.

Canadian village in mourning after 15 killed in crash

A pastor has asked that the "compassion of Christ" shines down on the small Canadian community of Dauphin, Manitoba, after 15 villagers died in a bus crash on the Trans-Canada Highway.

Fr Michel Nault, pastor at St. Viator's parish in Dauphin alluded to the Gospel reading (Mt 9:36-10:8) about Jesus showing benevolence to the crowds in his midst before charging the disciples with the power to drive out unclean spirits and cure all manners of disease and illness.

"Jesus showed compassion for the people, and I really think it is important to show compassion on a day like this," said Fr Nault.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is investigating the causes of the crash after a bus carrying 24 older residents and a driver on a day trip from the Dauphin Active Living Center was caught in a collision near Carberry, about 118 miles south of Dauphin.

Prison riot leaves 41 women dead

At least 41 women prisoners have been burned to death after a riot at a prison in Honduras led to a huge fire. Officials say the riot was possibly related to corruption or gang control inside the prison after a crackdown on illegal activities by the prison governor.

Pope leads prayers after 39 pupils die in attack on Ugandan school

The pope has led prayers for the victims of a devastating attack on a Ugandan school in which at least 39 students died.

Local police blamed rebel members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) for the assault on the Lhubirira Secondary School in Mpondwe, near the border with Congo.

The dead children were all aged between 13-18. Some victims were shot, many were hacked with machetes and others burnt to death when the dormitories where they lived were set ablaze, according to Fr Sunday Augustine Masereka, director of the communications office in the Diocese of Kasese.

"There were 62 children in the school," Fr Masereka told Vatican Radio.

Pope Francis, in his first public appearance and Angelus prayer after returning from hospital, prayed for the victims of the attack on June 18: "I pray also for the young students, victims of the brutal attack against a school in the west of Uganda. This battle, this war everywhere, let us pray for peace!"

"On behalf of the Ugandan government, I extend heartfelt condolences to the families, students, staff of Lhubirira Secondary School and the broader community affected by this tragedy," said Uganda's First Lady, Janet Museveni, said.

"We call upon everyone to offer prayers for the affected families and community while also urging vigilance to uphold the safety of our children in schools," she added.

Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, extended "heartfelt condolences" to the fami-



Ugandan security forces stand guard as locals gather at the cordoned scene outside the Lhubirira Secondary School in Mpondwe, western Uganda. Photo: Reuters

lies of the victims and called for the release of those abducted. "Those responsible for this appalling act must be brought to justice," his statement read.

At least six students were abducted in the attack and forced to carry food that the rebels stole from the school's stores.

Guterres called for the immediate release of those abducted and underlined "the importance of collective efforts to tackle cross border insecurity between Congo and Uganda and restore durable peace in the area."

The ADF is a shadowy rebel group linked to the Islamic State. It was established in the 1990s by some Ugandan Muslims who felt that President Museveni had sidelined them in his policies.

The Ugandan military has forced the rebels to move their bases into Eastern Congo, where the absence of state authority has allowed several them to operate and thrive.

In 2021, the Ugandan military deployed troops to Eastern Congo to help the Congolese army re-establish state authority.

Fr Masereka said the attack had retaliatory intent. "Our military went to the Congo to help, and people there welcomed them, but it's a real surprise that the rebels now escape from Congo to attack Uganda," the priest told Vatican Radio.

He said the recent attack on Uganda and the repeated attacks across the border with Congo have created fear among the people.

"This time, they have come to attack children in a boarding school,

and people are very much afraid at both the Uganda and Congolese sides of the borders."

He recalled that in the past, such attacks had tended to target churches, citing the 1996 attack in which a seminary was attacked and seminarians either killed or kidnapped.

The priest said it was critical that the international media and community put a spotlight on what's going on in Congo, because "people are dying silently. The media only talks when there is an attack."

He said there is a need for an inclusive dialogue because "people continue to die, and guns aren't solving anything. It's the ordinary people dying every day. If the belligerents can come together and have peace talks, maybe it can yield something."

Sudan's Christians mourn Bishop Gassis, the man who brought hope to the Nuba people

Christians in South Sudan are in mourning after the death of Bishop Macram Max Gassis was announced. He was 84 and had been ill for some time.

A day after Bishop Gassis' death, a Mass was offered in his memory at the Catholic church in Gidel, in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan, where he had founded a hospital to serve the Nuba people. "A large crowd attended," reported Tom Catena, medical director of Mother of Mercy Hospital, in a sign of people's love and affection for Bishop Gassis.

But in another sign of the times, Bishop Yunan Tombe Trille Kuku Andali of El-Obeid, Bishop Gassis' successor, was unable to attend the Mass, because of the civil war in Sudan. Bishop Andali is sheltering with his flock in El-Obeid amid ongoing clashes. Sadly, the peace for

which Bishop Gassis worked for years has been shattered once more.

Catena, who for many years was the only doctor serving a vast area of the Nuba Mountains, called Bishop Gassis "an outspoken

If there was development in the Nuba Mountains, Bishop Gassis was the catalyst for it



defender of Christians and the marginalised of Sudan."

"And he paid for it by having to leave Sudan in the early '90s and live in exile in Kenya," said Catena.

It was largely through Bishop Gassis' efforts that the Church is what it is today, he said.

"Although St. Daniel Comboni established the Church in Sudan over 140 years ago, it was Bishop

Gassis who brought it to the Nuba Mountains," Catena said. "He set up three parishes during a civil war, built a hospital, several schools and dug boreholes for well water. Any development in this part of Nuba was started by the Church, and Bishop Macram was its catalyst."

The bishop's tireless work had an effect both inside Sudan and internationally. Gabriel Meyer, who went to Sudan with Bishop Gassis several times and wrote the 2001 film *The Hidden Gift: War and Faith in Sudan*, said that the bishop was instrumental in bringing to fruition a no-fly zone over the Nuba Mountains during a decades-long civil war between the North and the South; in compelling ceasefire talks, and in opening the region to relief organisations and journalists.

In addition, he strengthened the

Nuba people's sense of dignity so they could better resist the North's efforts at Islamising the South.

"What (Bishop) Gassis did for the Nuba Mountains was to bring civilization, because that was what he was enabling this war-torn population to have, even in the midst of the war. They had schools parishes and medical clinics, thanks to him," Meyer said.

"I often used to say that (Bishop) Gassis enabled the Nuba people to resist because he, in effect, built stations of civilisation even in the midst of the war, which allowed the people to have something of a semblance of a normal life and really enable that and to deal with some of the issues that they'd been dealing with," he added.

Meyer nominated Bishop Gassis for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012.

Survivors reveal horror of migrant ship's sinking as nine appear in court

Costas Kantouris and Nicholas Paphitis, Associated Press

Nine men suspected of crewing a smuggling ship that sank off Greece, leaving more than 500 migrants missing, presumed drowned, have appeared in court this week for questioning.

Their court appearance came as new accounts emerged on the sinking and the appalling conditions on the trip from Libya towards Italy.

The men – all Egyptians – face charges that include participation in a criminal organisation, manslaughter and causing a shipwreck. The hearing took place in Greece's southern city of Kalamata.

Only 104 men and youths – Egyptians, Pakistanis, Syrians and Palestinians – survived one of the worst migrant shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea early on 14th June.

Eighty-two bodies have been recovered, the last on Tuesday, as a large search continued.

Survivors said women and children were trapped in the hold as the ship capsized and sank within minutes, in one of the deepest spots in the Mediterranean.

New survivor accounts emerged on Tuesday confirming that about 750 people paid thousands of pounds each for a berth on the battered blue fishing trawler, seeking a better life in Europe.

Survivors described shocking conditions on the five-day journey. Most were denied food and water, and those who could not bribe the crew to get out of the hold were beaten if they tried to reach deck level.

The statements also echoed previous accounts that the steel-hulled trawler sank in calm seas during a botched attempt to tow it.

This clashes with the Greek coast-guard's insistence that neither its patrol boat that escorted the trawler in its last hours nor any other vessel attached a tow rope.

"The Greek ship cast a rope and it was tied to our bows," survivor Abdul Rahman Alhaz said in his sworn statement. "Then we moved forward, but not for more than two minutes. We shouted 'stop, stop' because our boat was listing. (It) was in bad shape and overloaded, and shouldn't have been towed."

Alhaz, 24, a Palestinian from Syria, said he paid \$4,000 dollars (£3,000) to board the ship at Tobruk in eastern Libya.

He said the "people in charge" on the trawler were all Egyptians, and recognised seven men from pictures Greek authorities showed him.

"Most of the Pakistanis were in the hold, and were lost with the



boat," he said. "One of the crew had told me there were more than 400 Pakistanis on the boat, and only 11 were saved."

These did not include the wife and two children of Rana Husnain Neseer, 23, who were in the hold. Mr Neseer himself, who said he paid 7,000 euros (£6,000) for the trip, travelled on deck.

"About 750 people were on board," he said. "(The crew) didn't give us food or water, and hit us with a belt to keep us from standing up."

He said just before the sinking, he felt the vessel sharply list. "We all went to the other side to balance it, which made our boat tilt in the other direction and sink," added Mr Neseer, who recognised four of the survivors as crew members.

Greece has been widely criticised for not trying to save the migrants before the sinking in international waters.

Officials in Athens say the passengers refused any help and insisted on proceeding to Italy, adding that it would have been too dangerous to try to evacuate hundreds of unwilling people off an overcrowded ship.

Asked about the incident as World Refugee Day was marked across the globe on Tuesday, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: "It is horrible, what happened, and the more urgent is that we act."

Ms Von der Leyen said the EU should help African countries like Tunisia, where many migrants leave for Europe, to stabilise their economies, as well as finalise a long-awaited reform of the EU's asylum rules.

She did not, however, mention Libya, from where the doomed trawler and many similarly overloaded Europe-bound boats depart across the particularly dangerous Mediterranean migration route.

Appeal to not forget Sudan war as global displaced hits new record

A senior official of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has urged increased support for migrants caught up in Sudan's civil war, saying the conflict risked becoming yet another forgotten crisis.

André Atsu, JRS's regional director for eastern Africa, said unrelenting chaos had kept ordinary people in conflict regions in a "vicious cycle of movement," with the numbers increasing each day. "The current conflict in Sudan is the latest development, in which we have seen a lot of movement especially into the neighboring countries, but also inside Sudan itself," Atsu said.

"Are we going into yet another forgotten crisis?" he asked, while appealing, especially to the more

developed countries, to provide resources.

It is now estimated that the number of people forcibly displaced worldwide has reached a record number of 110 million, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, told journalists. Nikki Gamer, senior public affairs manager at Catholic Relief Services, said the enormity of the global refugee crisis cannot be overstated. "Fleeing one's country often entails a difficult, dangerous journey. Taking only what they can carry, refugees are people who might have led successful careers back home, who become forced to depend on the hospitality of others, and of humanitarian agencies, to meet their needs," Gamer said.

Bishops criticised for backing pipeline

Bishops in Tanzania have been criticised after they endorsed a controversial crude oil pipeline project, amid increasing calls to abandon fossil fuels to tackle climate changes.

The Laudato Si' Movement in Africa raised concerns about the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project, warning that it would contribute to further greenhouse gas emissions and exacerbate the global climate

change crisis, after Tanzanian bishops backed the project, saying a similar venture between Tanzania and Zambia "has been in use for many years and for the benefit of Zambia, and has not drawn any controversies."

Tanzania's Archbishop Ruwa'ichi said. "I hope the Uganda-Tanga pipeline will be constructed with utmost care and consideration of safety and environmental protection, but for the benefit of the people."

It is now feared as many as 750 people were on board the ship when it sank. Only 104 men and youths – Egyptians, Pakistanis, Syrians and Palestinians – survived, and they are now being held in Kalamata, Greece.



Why do we take Holy Communion?

ANSWERING QUESTIONS BY YOUNGSTERS ABOUT CATHOLICISM CAN BE DAUNTING...

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- Why do we go to Confession – and Mass?
- Why do we say Amen?
- What's Communion about?
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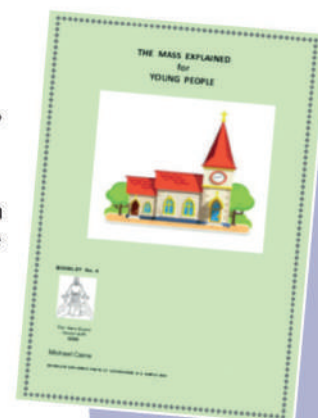
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Ukraine's pain is clear for all to see say Church officials in the heart of crisis

Sister reveals horror of bodies being left on rooftops to keep them out of the water

Priests forced to don body armour after aid workers shot at

Paulina Guzik, Gina Christian
Delivering aid in Ukraine's still flooded Kherson area has become a life-threatening task, aid workers with Caritas and other Church organisations have told news agency OSV News. They cannot go on rescue boats without wearing bulletproof vests and military helmets, as Russian troops have continued to fire on civilian victims and rescuers, despite it being clear they are non-combatants.

In some towns still under Russian occupation, sources say the situation is so dire that people have died on their own rooftops.

It is now three weeks since the catastrophic collapse of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant in Kherson released some 4.3 cubic miles of water from the Kakhovka Reservoir, one of the world's largest capacity reservoirs. Dozens of towns and villages along the Dnipro River have been flooded so far, with tens of thousands at flood risk, according to Ukrainian government officials.

Over 80 settlements were in the path of the surging waters, which have swept away entire houses and structures, killing at least 10 individuals, according to Ukrainska Pravda, an online news outlet, as well as hundreds of animals – including all but a few of the 300 in residence at the Kazkova Dibrova zoo. Casualties may rise since there is little information on the situation of the Russian-occupied side of the river. The US Embassy in Russia said that in Kherson 43 others have been injured and dozens were still missing.

The International Organization for Migration estimates more than 700,000 are now facing water shortages. With the floodwaters sweeping away industrial chemicals, sewage, human and animal corpses, the World Health Organization said the impact of the dam's destruction "cannot be underestimated."

While international media reports have steered clear of identifying a definitive cause or responsible party for the destruction, the nonprofit Institute for the Study of War, based in Washington, reported that absent a "definitive assessment of



The Ukrainian Nature and Conservation Group said in a report that concerns are mounting for the Black Sea marine ecosystem, after millions of tonnes of rubble and gallons of oil were seen in floodwaters created by the collapse of the Kakhovka dam

"It is deliberate," Fr Rosochacki said. "Russians want to achieve the effect of Ukrainians being busy with trying to survive attacks in other places and leaving the region of the damaged dam without help. But we won't let go, we will help them."

Fr Rosochacki added that he is amazed at the solidarity of the people. "We don't work only with the hands of our staff and volunteers. Local people have been accompanying us from day one."

The danger is not only shelling but deadly surprises inside the water. "Those flooded terrains were mined by Russians earlier. So as well as everything else that the floodwaters carry, there can be landmines in there too," he said. "Going into the water for even a second is simply dangerous."

"And on top of that, Russian occupiers stole the farm equipment earlier from the people," he said, "so even in areas close to the flooding there is not a single tractor to pull all those things carried by the waters out to safety."

"Everything is carried by those waters to Odessa, to the Black Sea. I have been that a partially built hotel has been destroyed and the entire structure carried away."

"We are aware this is only the beginning of counting the losses," the Caritas-Spes director added.

The Ukrainian Nature and Conservation Group said in a report that concerns are mounting for the Black Sea marine ecosystem. "The discharge of such a large amount of fresh water may temporarily desalinate certain areas of the Black Sea," the group said, although "this impact is unlikely to have catastrophic consequences."

What threatens the marine ecosystem most is "entry of a significant amount of fuel and lubricants into the water, which are toxic to aquatic organisms and can form a film on the water surface, as well as debris and rubble."

Forestry resources also may suffer, the group said. "The scale of destruction of wildlife, natural ecosystems, and entire national parks is incomparably greater than the consequences for the wilderness of all military operations since the start of the full-scale invasion in February 2022."

Fr Rosochacki appealed to Catholics around the globe not to forget about Ukraine, and not to become indifferent. "The water will go away and in a month, two, others will live their own lives and forget about the dam. But people here will remain without basics like drinking water. Help needs to become long-term, so that those people can live again," he said.

responsibility" the balance of evidence, reasoning, and rhetoric suggests that the Russians deliberately damaged the dam," which Russian forces overtook in February 2022. Photos appear to show a Russian vehicle parked on top of the dam packed with explosives, though its source has not been corroborated.

Fr Piotr Rosochacki, director of Caritas-Spes Ukraine, told journalists that while "the water is slowly, very slowly falling, unfortunately it flows along taking entire houses with it."

"Remember, this area is rural and very poor, and a lot of the houses didn't even have foundations, so they get carried away by the water," said Fr Rosochacki, who joined Caritas in 2015 when his pastoral permit in Russian-occupied Crimea, where he had worked as a pastor in Simferopol since 2007, was not renewed. "We are in great need of rubber gloves, rain boots, water pumps and equipment to dry out the buildings. People are really left with absolutely nothing here. Everything is under water, up to their roofs," he said.



"We are aware that we can have a cholera outbreak here, and we have to take it into consideration when delivering humanitarian aid."

Even more disturbing for the Caritas-Spes team is the constant shelling and artillery fire from the Russian-occupied side of the Dnipro River.

"Those terrains are regularly shelled. It's not that Russia flooded the region and left them alone, no, it's never ending!" Fr Rosochacki lamented. "What really struck me the other day is that one family we evacuated said, after losing their house to the flood, 'better the water than the Russians,' which only gives us the sense of what the occupation meant for them," he said.

Kherson was liberated from Russian occupation in November 2022, but the left bank of Dnipro River is still under Russian control. Delivering humanitarian aid to the Russian side is close to impossible.

In an anonymous message obtained by OSV News, a Polish nun serving in Ukraine begged her Polish superior to pray for people who were "left to die" on the rooftops of houses in flooded areas

under Russian occupation.

"Our Beloved Mother, with this short message I would like to ask you sincerely for prayer," she said with her voice trembling and close to tears. "I got the message from one lady from the region where the Russians blew the dam – from Oleshky – the left bank is occupied and the Russians did not let the people evacuate," she lamented.

"People are sitting on rooftops, elderly, disabled, children, and the lady said in tears that they start to die there, and there is no help. Please pray for mercy," she begged.

"We know pretty much nothing happens in terms of evacuation on the left bank," Fr Rosochacki said. "In the first days of flooding people went up to the roofs. Temperatures were really high, but we couldn't deliver water as we would be shot at, so we delivered water with drones to individuals sheltering there."

"Russian forces are making the evacuation difficult in many ways, we have reports that they would only evacuate those who agreed to have a Russian passport, or give a bribe. Now connecting with the left bank is even difficult as there is no internet connection," the priest said.

Military equipment worn by aid workers has become an everyday outfit. "We can't go out to rescue people from flooded areas without the bulletproof jackets and helmets," Fr Rosochacki said. "At the beginning of the war it seemed strange to me that as a humanitarian organisation I have to wear this equipment, but really without it we risk the lives of our volunteers," he added.

In a recent wave of attacks on Odessa, Kryvyi Rih and Kyiv were targeted with a rain of Russian missiles.

Priests criticise violence against homeless people in Sao Paulo

Crackdown on rough sleepers and drug addicts linked to property developers

The civic authorities in Sao Paulo have been continually failing to find ways to deal with the growing number of homeless people in Brazil's largest city and financial hub, according to priests with decades of experience working on the streets. What's worse, they are also accused of standing by as physical attacks are made on some of the city's most vulnerable people, while others are left without food and water.

A study conducted by the Federal University of Minas Gerais (known by the Portuguese acronym UFMG) showed that the number of people living on Sao Paulo's streets went up from 48,000 at the end of 2022 to 52,000 in February of 2023. But the city offers only 24,000 beds in shelters for people without homes.

"It is noticeable that there are many people that do not receive support from the state. The city government claims that it can give shelter to everybody, but that is not true," Father Julio Lancellotti, the Archdiocese of Sao Paulo's vicar for the homeless, said.

A longtime human rights advocate in the city, Fr Lancellotti has been a strong voice against what he says is the local government's increasing repression against homeless people.

In February, the city government decided that it would remove the thousands of tents scattered over the sidewalks and squares. Fr Lancellotti and other human rights activists filed a lawsuit to impede it, and the measure was temporarily forbidden by a court ruling.

But in April, a higher court suspended that ruling and the city authorities resumed the removal of the tents.

"A norm of the city government impedes it to take personal belongings, medicines, clothes, documents, and tents from the homeless. That recent measure disrespects its own norm," Fr Lancellotti argued.

In his daily work in the central area of Sao Paulo, a historical district where most of the homeless population is concentrated, he has been seeing how they look more and more fragile and disturbed.

"They are not even getting a chance to drink water. When we go there to give them hot meals, we have been taking a 64-gallon tank to give them water. It ends in a minute," he said.

The combination of insufficient relief programmes with increasing



Police have rounded up hundreds of homeless people in an attempt to clean up parts of the city



police violence has been leading to an especially serious situation concerning drug addicts.

Since the 1990s, thousands of crack users have occupied a vast area in the central district of Sao Paulo known as 'Crackland'. Mayors and state governors have always presented plans to extinguish it, but all of them failed to do so.

In 2021, the city authority launched a massive police operation to put an end to Crackland. The continuous presence of hundreds of police officers in the area carrying out frequent raids dismantled it, but now groups of crack users can be seen in different parts of the district – and across the city as a whole.

"What are the effects of such actions? People are now scattered, but the problems continue. It only generated fear and hostility among the local residents and shopkeepers," Fr Lancellotti said.

Those policies have been disorganising the street dynamics

of the homeless people, leading them to wander for new zones and creating a feeling of insecurity, Father Josio Francisco dos Santos, who heads the Franciscan Social Action organization (known as SEFRAS in Portuguese), said.

"We have been seeing a growing demand for meals. New people come to us every day. They are desperate. And the atmosphere is more and more tense, with more people intoxicated approaching us," dos Santos pointed out.

SEFRAS has a team of 60 workers and volunteers who distribute about 3,000 hot meals daily. The rising tension in the relationship with people without housing has led the organisation to build a therapy programme for the staff.

Dos Santos argued it is inevitable that the increasing police repression provokes more violence on the streets. Over the past months, outbursts of vandalism and looting have been reported

every now and then.

"Treating every drug addict as a criminal is not fair. At the same time, it generates more violence," he said. The sudden removal of groups of homeless from their areas during cleaning operations also is unacceptable, dos Santos added.

Fr Lancellotti said that he believes Mayor Ricardo Nunes and state Governor Tarcisio de Freitas have been implementing such policies in order to address the interests of the real estate market.

De Freitas announced a plan to move the government headquarters to the central district months ago. Many of his critics, including Fr Lancellotti, think that the crackdown on drug users in the area is part of the process and that his idea is to prepare that zone for private investment.

"It is an ancient target of the real estate companies. That district is connected to subway and train lines, and has important avenues that host museums and theatres," Fr Lancellotti said.

In his opinion, real solutions for the homeless people and the Crackland require complex actions connecting different areas and branches of the government, with massive investment in rehabilitation programmes that could reach thousands of people.

"The first step is to take the police dimension out of the table. The war on drugs cannot be the basis of the measures that will be taken," he argued.

Catholics, he said, should not support hostilities and violent policies, and should instead be inspired by the pope's repeated message concerning the connection between human dignity and the need for shelter.

"Unfortunately, we are very distant from Pope Francis as a Church," Fr Lancellotti said, pointedly.

"He seems to be more valued by the people and not so much by the institution."

Anti-Catholic group's award is not respect for all, says LA archbishop

Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez called for "respect for the belief of others" at a special Mass held hours before the Los Angeles Dodgers honoured a controversial drag group at its annual Pride Night event with its Community Hero Award 'for their outstanding service to the LGBTQ+ community.'

"When God is insulted, when the beliefs of any of our neighbours are ridiculed, it diminishes all of us," said Archbishop Gomez in his homily. "When we reward such acts, it hurts our unity as one city and one nation, as one family under God."

Nearly 2,000 people attended the Mass as a response to the Dodgers' decision to honour the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a self-described "leading-edge order of queer and trans nuns" that mocks Catholic figures and customs.

Archbishop Gomez called on Catholics to use that love to continue doing works of charity and mercy for all.

Prior to the Dodgers' game, Catholics gathered in the parking lot of Dodger Stadium at 3 pm to protest with prayers, music and special guest speakers.

In a pre-game Pride Night ceremony before their match against the San Francisco Giants, the Dodgers honoured the LA chapter of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

As reported in the *Universe* on 9th June, the decision to reward the group has caused huge upset among Catholics. Many Catholics who also were lifelong Dodger fans said they felt betrayed by the franchise. One, Annie Hagan, fondly remembers going to Dodger Stadium as a child and later taking her own children there. Now she won't go back, she told Angelus, the archdiocesan news outlet.

"It makes me cry. Dodger Stadium was always a family friendly place," said Hagan, a parishioner of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Newport Beach. "Now it's not. They're honouring people who are blasphemous against the Catholic Church at a place that St. Pope John Paul II blessed."

Hagan was referring to when the Polish pontiff celebrated Mass on the field of Dodger Stadium during his visit to Los Angeles in 1988.

Sr Mary Colette Theobald, a Sister of Notre Dame, said she's pained by the images put out by the faux nuns. She said it's "just wrong" to be hateful toward things that are so sacred to Catholics.

"It really hurts a lot," Sister said. "Because these things like the habit are so special to us ... I've seen pictures of this group dressing up in horribly provocative ways."

The Windrush story – and why it’s vital it reaches a wider audience

HISTORY

Les Johnson

The Windrush generation: how a resilient Caribbean community made a lasting contribution to British society

As a young boy in 1962, I remember arriving in England from Jamaica on a BOAC jet plane. It seemed to me like I was going to the Moon – the air hostess who accompanied me was the first white person I had ever seen. My father greeted me eagerly at London’s Paddington station, amid the swirling smoke of steam trains. It had been two years since we last met, but I recognised him immediately.

Fourteen years earlier, the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* at London’s Tilbury docks in 1948 was a pivotal moment in British history, marking the beginning of a significant wave of migration from the Caribbean. This became known as the Windrush generation, and signified a new chapter in the history of the United Kingdom. Since then it has assumed a symbolic status, commemorated annually on Windrush Day, observed on 22nd June.

This turning point reformed Anglo-Caribbean identities as the Windrush generation settled in Britain, leaving their mark on history, society and culture. The arrivals serve as a poignant reminder of the dynamic and fluid nature of migration, identity and societal transformation.

But how did this momentous event come about, and what were the factors that led to the settlement of these British citizens?

These questions are important because Windrush history is not included in the UK school curriculum, resulting in an incomplete view of Britain’s history of cultural diversity. Race equality think tank, the Runnymede Trust, has described the Windrush story as “an integral part of British history”.

While there are now numerous celebratory events and commemorations on or around Windrush Day, once the festivities end, there is little permanence. There are no major collections or permanent Windrush exhibitions. There has been no museum



The Windrush arrives at Tilbury docks on 22 June 1948.

dedicated to its history with the significance of other major British museums. And there is no major institution for children to view the legacies of the Windrush generation and their impact on Britain. These are just some of the reasons I recently founded the National Windrush Museum.

Coming to Britain

The British invitation to Caribbeans to come to Britain after the Second World War can be traced back to the British Nationality Act of 1948. This conferred British citizenship and the right to settle in the UK on all people from the British colonies to help rebuild the country.

The Windrush generation refers to the people who migrated from Caribbean countries to the United

Kingdom between 1948 and 1971. However, Caribbean immigration did not cease after this period, and migrants have settled ever since, influencing Britain’s demographic composition.

Major urban centres like London, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds and Preston became focal points for these communities, where they established vibrant neighbourhoods and thriving cultural institutions, contributing to the overall diversity and multicultural fabric of these cities.

Despite the open invitation, the reception the Windrush pioneers received was often hostile. Caribbean migrants were (and still are) subjected to poor housing conditions, with accommodation in hostels often overcrowded and

lacking basic amenities. In 1948, an underground shelter in Clapham South tube station was used as temporary housing for people from the Caribbean.

The types of employment available to the Windrush generation were often limited to low-paying jobs such as cleaning, factory work and driving. Created the same year in 1948, the National Health Service has been an important source of employment for members of the Windrush community since its inception.

Many Caribbean migrants found work in hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities, playing a crucial role in the development and functioning of the NHS. They contributed their skills, dedication and expertise, helping to shape and improve

healthcare provision in the UK.

Some devised ingenious self-help micro-financing schemes such as the “partners” initiative, where small groups banded together and shared from the combined pot of money weekly. This is how many of the Windrush generation afforded air fares to send for their families – and how my parents were able to send for me.

The institutional racism and poor conditions endured by the Windrush generation led to people starting their own businesses: barbers and hairdressers, fashion and design, restaurants and cook shops, a variety of trades, market stalls, independent black churches and dancehall music. These businesses were important not just in generating a living, but also in developing flourishing communities and creating black British culture.

In addition to their contribution to the workforce, the Windrush generation and their descendants have made a significant social and cultural impact on British society. They brought with them their Caribbean culture, art, sports, traditions, and customs, enriching the cultural landscape of the United Kingdom. From food and music to fashion, literature, language, and even cricket, Caribbean influences became ingrained in British popular culture, fostering a sense of diversity and multiculturalism.

The Windrush pioneers

Sam King MBE was one of the notable figures of the Windrush generation who played a significant role in the establishment of the annual Windrush Day on 22 June.



Queen Camilla speaks with Floella Benjamin during a reception at Buckingham Palace in London to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush



King Charles III speaks with Shadow Foreign Secretary, David Lammy MP, during the reception at Buckingham Palace to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush.

Born in Jamaica in 1926, he served in the British Army during the Second World War before coming to Britain in 1948. King went on to become the first black mayor of Southwark in London, and was involved in a number of community projects and organisations.

Other important Windrush figures include Claudia Jones, a political and pioneering journalist; Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist and political activist; Bill Morris, a trade union leader who became the first black general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union; Diane Abbott, who became the first black woman to be elected to the British parliament; and Bernie Grant, who also served as a MP and was a prominent campaigner for racial equality and social justice.

Hall was a Jamaican-born British cultural theorist who played a significant role in shaping our understanding of race, identity and culture. Hall argued that identity is not fixed, but rather is constructed through social and cultural practices. He also emphasised the role of power and control in shaping culture.

In the context of the Windrush generation, Hall's theories are particularly relevant, as they help us to understand the ways in which Caribbean migrants and in particular the Windrush generation identities were constructed and represented in British culture.

The Windrush scandal

One of the most shameful episodes in this history is the Windrush scandal, which saw people who had lived in the UK for decades – including some who had friends who arrived on the

Windrush – being wrongly deported or denied access to public services like the NHS.

This British Government scandal came to light in 2017, when British citizens of Caribbean descent who had migrated to the UK between 1948 and 1971 were wrongly classified as illegal immigrants. They then faced deportation, detention and some even lost their homes and livelihoods. This gross injustice has affected many lives, highlighting the systemic racism that exists in Britain. Its impact is still being felt today.

The Black Lives Matter movement has been instrumental in bringing attention to these issues, and its importance in highlighting the systemic racism in Britain cannot be overstated. The toppling of statues of figures linked to the slave trade and colonialism, such as Edward Colston in Bristol and Robert Milligan in London, sparked a wider conversation about decolonisation at all levels of society and the need to confront Britain's colonial past.

The National Windrush Museum

According to the Museums Association there are about 2,500 museums in Britain. Yet there is no black culture museum or established school curriculum that focuses on the heritage of the Windrush generation. In 2021 I founded the National Windrush Museum which I chair. The museum plays an important role in collecting, researching, documenting and exhibiting artefacts and stories about the Windrush generation and those who came before and after them.

The museum provides a vital link

to the past and a gateway to the future, enabling us to understand and appreciate the contributions of the Windrush generation to Britain. It will also serve as a valuable resource for schools and universities, providing an opportunity for collaboration in the development of curricula, research and study centres and libraries around the world.

Many stories and hidden narratives of the Windrush generation need to be unearthed, told and preserved. As part of the second wave of Windrush settlers and as an academic researcher who innovated the concept of cultural visualisation, this is important work. Cultural visualisation involves the visual research, portrayal and analysis of various aspects of culture, including music, film, fashion, visual arts, dance,



Queen Camilla speaks with food entrepreneur Levi Roots during the reception at Buckingham Palace



The Royal Mail has published a new series of stamps to mark the Windrush anniversary. Top, 'From Small Island Life to Big Island Dreams'; above, 'Carnival Come Thru!'

literature and more.

My work looks at “doing culture differently” and I wanted this new venture to adopt the idea of “doing museums differently”. The National Windrush Museum provides a life laboratory in which to explore and develop this concept, which I hope will have a significant cultural impact on the heritage sector.

The 75th anniversary of the Windrush generation is a poignant opportunity to shed light on a momentous event in British history so often neglected in our schools. This milestone marks a transformative chapter that

reshaped Britain's fabric and ushered in a vibrant new culture.

The founding of the National Windrush Museum stands as a vital, moving and significant historical moment. By documenting, exhibiting and explaining the enduring legacies of the Windrush generation, the museum becomes a powerful testament to their contributions. Its ethos fills a crucial gap in our understanding of Britain's history, ensuring that these stories are preserved and celebrated as integral parts of our national narrative.

TALKING POINT

JOHN TOUHEY

Chesterton's view? We are living in a fairy tale

Here's an interesting fact: 14th June marked the 31,776th pirouette that our planet has made on its axis since the death of the great G.K. Chesterton.

His obituary in the New York Times labelled Chesterton as 'the most exuberant man in English literature'. During Chesterton's memorial service Fr. Ronald Knox pointed to a fact that he thought was far more important: "The public discovered him in the early years of the (20th) century: it was not till 20 years later that he discovered himself."

When Gilbert Keith Chesterton converted to Catholicism in 1922 the event sent shockwaves through the literary establishment, though it is hard to understand why it came as such a surprise. How could the creator of the wise and compassionate Fr. Brown detective stories not have found a home in the Roman Catholic Church?

Long before his conversion in 1908 Chesterton wrote what is probably his most famous work, *Orthodoxy*. Most people regard it as a classic example of Christian apologetics, but it is also a rip-roaring travel guide to human existence and our cosmos. Chesterton understood that the Gospels don't just contain good news about the world to come; they also share some rather astonishing



truths about our present existence and the strange predicament in which we find ourselves, as he explains in the fourth chapter of the book, *The Ethics of Elfland*:

"We have all read in scientific books, and, indeed, in all romances, the story of the man who has forgotten his name. This man walks about the streets and can see and appreciate everything; only he cannot remember who he is. Well, every man is that man in the story. Every man has forgotten who he is. One may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; but thou

shalt not know thyself."

To become aware that 'we have all forgotten our names,' is to set off on a quest for one's identity. It is also to rediscover the true, magical nature of existence. This sense of wonder is something that Chesterton says he felt even before he embraced Christianity: "The strongest emotion was that life was as precious as it was puzzling. It was an ecstasy because it was an adventure."

"The goodness of the fairy tale was not affected by the fact that there might be more dragons than princesses; it was good to be in a fairy tale."

Reading Chesterton is the perfect remedy when we feel cynical or realize that the world is growing tedious for us. Cynicism and tedium are symptoms of a materialism that long ago emptied all sense of magic from our souls.

Modern life is generally safer, easier and more efficient than it was in the past, but it can also seem more boring. We ignore the everyday marvels around us, seldom bothering to raise our eyes from our cell phone screens. That fluffy white mountains float above our heads or that the strangers we pass on the street contain entire universes in their heads are held to be mundane facts, unworthy of notice. But Chesterton claims that

if we were truly sane, we would put down our devices and gape at the world in awe and wonder, stunned not just by the utter strangeness of things but by the even stranger fact that anything exists at all.

Chesterton's insights, though expressed in an original way, are not really original in the least. In the introduction to *Orthodoxy*, he

“*Gospels don't just contain good news about the world to come; they also share some rather astonishing truths about our present existence*”

confesses that 'with the utmost daring [I have] discovered what has been discovered before.' Chesterton gives us the example of a sailor who went off to explore exotic lands and ended up rediscovering the England he embarked from. 'I am the fool of this story,' he assures us, 'and no rebel shall hurl me from my throne.'

To become a fairytale philosopher is simply to rediscover the Christian view of reality that

was right in front of us all along. It turns out that the fairy tales of our childhood were in some sense a more accurate description of reality than all the complicated theories generated by science and sociology. God became a babe slumbering in a manger and when the child grew up, he informed us that whenever we come upon a prisoner in a cell or a filthy beggar in the street they will really be Him. Chesterton understood that the problem with contemporary Christians is not that we are not serious enough about the Faith, but that we are not frivolous enough to take Jesus at his word – and that is why the view outside our window can sometimes seem so drab.

So try to spend an afternoon with G.K. Chesterton this week. Read a chapter of *Orthodoxy* or *The Man Who Was Thursday*, or one of his Father Brown stories. Then go take a brisk walk around your neighbourhood and perhaps you will realise that you are not really living in Liverpool or Addis Ababa or New York, but wherever you believed you were currently residing.

Instead, you are really living in the Elfland of the old fairy tales and, much to your surprise, it turns out that you are really a pilgrim in an exotic land who has embarked on a great adventure.

TALKING POINT

EFFIE CALDAROLA



'Trashion': How our spiritual emptiness harms the environment

Upon entering a large charity shop, I'm immediately struck by the volume of used clothing. A sea of garments greets you, rack after rack. I'm there to find a cute used flower pot. You know the old saying, 'One woman's trash is another woman's treasure.'

I'm a treasure hunter at heart.

But all those clothes stop me in my tracks as I wonder, "Who is going to buy all this? And what happens to the leftovers?"

If you, like me, have weeded through a closet thinking you'll give away stuff to someone who 'needs' it – and thereby justify buying more stuff – there's an eye-opening documentary worth your time. Called *Trashion: The Stealth Export of Waste Plastic Clothes to Kenya* you can find it on YouTube.

What's 'trashion'? It's an update on fast fashion, or clothing that has become so cheap it almost seems disposable. *Wired Magazine*

reports that fashion brands are producing twice the volume of clothing than they did in 2000. And literally, much of it becomes trash – sometimes in the most environmentally unfriendly ways.

Living simply is a near-universal principle of spiritual practice. When I joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corps decades ago, "simple living" was one of the tenets, and it still is. But we are immersed in a consumer society. Coming to grips with our spending, especially on clothes, is a spiritual challenge.

Kenya, 900 million items of clothing arrive annually, sometimes illegally in the dark of night. Maybe some of it was mine once. The supply vastly outpaces the demand. We're introduced to real people who deal with this as a business. They're unpacking the bales and weeding through them to see what may be marketable.

A woman, wearing a cute T-shirt,

possibly a 'find' among the bales, shows us the waste contained in these bundles. A stained shirt, pants with holes, fabrics stretched or ripping. As she makes a pile of items worth saving, the waste pile quickly outgrows it.

Kenians have no more desire to wear torn, stained clothing than you or I do.

And what are 'plastic clothes'? Many items in our closets fit this category. Amazingly, 342 million barrels of petroleum are used annually to produce plastic-based fibres such as polyester, nylon or

“*We are producing twice the volume of clothes as we did in 2000... much of it becomes trash...*”

acrylic. These fibres are cheap materials, but are not biodegradable and will be around, polluting rivers and oceans with microfibre, for centuries. Fashion is a surprisingly large contributor to our environmental crisis.

A man in the documentary shows us the nearby Nairobi River, clogged with garbage clothing. We see discarded remnants burning as fuel on an open cooking fire, spewing microfibres into the environment.

Some African nations – Zimbabwe, for example – have banned the import of secondhand clothing. But other nations endure the same problems as Kenya. Many of these nations have a poor capacity to manage landfills and process waste.

Here's another statistic that's mind-blowing: yearly, eight billion plastic hangers end up in landfills.

What does this have to do with

Catholicism?

Well, I love clothes as much as the next person and I've been guilty of 'retail therapy,' that idle shopping which often results in the purchase of clothes I don't need and wasted money which could have gone to a better cause. Filling our closets with things we don't need won't fill up any holes in our lives, or our spirits.

For items we do need, there are lovely consignment shops. There are also upscale thrift stores, like the one I shop at frequently that supports a home for unsheltered pregnant moms.

Shopping in a more environmental fashion is an option, but when am I merely filling my own emptiness with more stuff, I need to stop and ask why. And how do I resist the pull of the void that is our consumer culture? How do I honour the environment and my faith by living more simply?

A VIEW FROM THE PEWS

MICHAEL CAINE
ST WINEFRIDE'S PARISH, LYMM, CHESHIRE

How the chaste Winefride became a saint

St Winefride
Patron Saint Of Wales
Patron Of Unwanted Advances
Feast Day Is 3rd November

In the village of Lymm where I live, there are no Catholic schools, but there is a Catholic church called St Winefride's. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, classes in Catholicism were held for children who went to non-Catholic schools. I was privileged to be one of the catechists for over 12 years, the children in my age group being the 8-to-9 year olds.

During a conversation with friends recently I was reminded of a very embarrassing situation, when a young boy asked me who St Winefride was; the saint our parish is named after.

The only thing I did know about her was that she lived long ago in North Wales, and people still visit a shrine to her on the North Wales coast at Holywell.

I had to use the internet to find out about St Winefride. What I did find made me realise how little I knew about saints, especially female ones. The following is what

I learned about St. Winefride. I'll cover others in future articles.

St. Winefride

Our Welsh saint was originally as known as Guenvra; but her name was changed to the English form of Winefride. We know that she was born around 600 and died in 660.

Her father was Thevit, a

Cambrian magnate, and her mother was Wenlo, the sister of a man who became St. Beuno.

St Winefride's family lived in Holywell, and one day Beuno came to visit them and stayed. He began to live there and built a chapel in which he said Mass and preached to the people. Winefride was one of his most attentive listeners.

When around 15 years old, she was a young woman of great personal charm and clever. Under the guidance of St. Beuno, Winefride became a great lover of Christianity and decided to offer her life to God by becoming a nun, all with her parents' consent.

Caradoc, the son of the neighbouring Prince Alan, heard about the Winefride's beauty and talents and visited the house of Thevit to ask for her hand in marriage. She was alone, as her parents were in Beuno's chapel at Mass.

Caradoc knew she had decided to become a nun, but pressed her to change her mind. She refused and ran down the hill to Beuno's chapel where her parents were.

Caradoc chased after her and caught her as she ran down the slope to the chapel. She continued to deny wanting to be his wife, and in anger Caradoc drew his sword and severed her head from her body.

Her head rolled down the slope and where it rested a spring suddenly gushed out of the ground. Beuno heard the commotion and

left the altar and with her parents found the head of Winefride.

He carried the head and took it to the body, covering both with his cloak, carrying them to the chapel where he finished saying Mass. Afterwards, he prayed to God, then ordered the cloak to be removed. Winefride's head was back on her body, with only a slight mark showing around the neck. She stirred as if waking from sleep.

Seeing Caradoc standing there leaning on his sword, Beuno prayed for God to punish Caradoc, who fell to the ground dead.

Winefride grew in holiness, keeping her promise to be a virgin, live in poverty as a recluse. She became a nun and eventually an Abbess at a convent built on her father's land for young maidens.

A chapel was erected over the place where water had started to gush, and St Winefride's Well can be found in the town of Holywell, Flintshire, in Wales.

It claims to be the oldest continually visited pilgrimage site in Great Britain, even the activities of King Henry VIII couldn't stop them.



Margaret Rope's
Winefride window in
Ss Peter and Paul
Church, Newport.
Circa 1916

JOURNEY IN FAITH

CHRIS MCDONNELL



As we age, we realise we don't need to have all the answers

Each passing year brings change. Moving from the early days of infancy to our arrival at a time of old age we are in a culture of altered circumstance, little remains the same.

From the buzz and excitement of our early years, through school attendance and onto the teenage times, the web of our experience grows and we have to constantly adjust our position.

We do so often by testing the patience of those around us, be they parents or teachers or others of comparable age to ourselves, and slowly we have our views shaped and our opinions formed. Often the taunt thrown at us by others, regarding our 'immaturity', fails to realise that it is all part of our

common journey.

We move, step by step, exploring the pathways that are available to us, making decisions on our own account, both small and great.

"Those that have nurtured us have gradually to relax controlling voices, allowing us to make our own mistakes and, hopefully to learn from our fractured days and ways. The experience of middle teenage years adds to the totality of who we are and whom we are becoming."

But parents don't give up and, having withdrawn into the background, they hang around to pick up the pieces, ever attentive to family needs, ever willing to repair what is broken.

And so one generation merges with the next generation, dark hair



of youth turns grey and then white. Once full and upright shoulders stoop now over the tapping of a walking stick, and feet shuffle rather than stride.

Slowness of response sets in and greater time is required for simple actions.

Others who walk with us have

their tolerance tested in these passing years.

Just as we physically change with the passing years, so too does our faith. Simplicity of childhood faith has been tested by the reality of life's experiences. The simple answer YES or NO will no longer satisfy a question simply put, as we

confront the many shadows that hover between sharpened clear cut boundaries.

And yet we are urged to have a childlike faith, even in older age. Maybe that faith in the Lord doesn't mean having all the answers ready to match the myriad of questions that arise.

I have always told my grandchildren they can ask me anything - but not always to expect an off-the-shelf answer. Gradually they have become used to the grey tones.

Paul's letter to the people of Corinth reminds us of that story: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

‘I am the way, the truth and the life...’

John 14:6

The power of personal example is the best form of witness. Jesus witnessed by example, and encouraged his followers to do the same. The early Christians took to heart the words of Jesus proclaiming himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Gospel of John 14:6).

Is it any wonder that they grew from strength to strength in so short a timespan and attracted other followers from all over the known world to join them?

These early Christians made the words of Jesus their own by imitating the Way he lived, by absorbing into their hearts the awesome Truth of his teaching, and by transforming their lives into new people through the new Life of his gospel.

As the Way, Jesus shows us how to live our lives by imitating him. His whole life was an unbroken testimony to the power of God’s Love for all humankind, a Love that embraced every man, woman and child: the lame, the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the back-sliders, the least among us, the good and the bad. His Love was boundless like the reach of the sun which shines on the “just and the unjust” alike.

This is the kind of Love that lights up our Way in this world in our dealings with one another.

Be gentle and humble the Way Jesus treated others. Be patient with everyone, forgiving shortcomings, and choose kindness over anger whenever you are put to the test. There is tremendous power in a simple touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, a well-meant compliment or any act of caring. These practical examples of love can save a life, your life and the lives of others.

As the Truth, the words of Jesus

are words of Wisdom. They flowed from the purest fount of truth which he possessed as the Son of God. Jesus taught by means of parables and conveyed the mysteries of his kingdom in language and images that even a child could grasp. People marvelled at his words and wondered where he derived such wisdom. He taught them about faith, a gift not reserved for “the wise and the clever” but for those who have “the

spirit of the child.” In your life, get acquainted with the words of Jesus in scripture, not by giving lip-service, but by absorbing them into your heart and living according to them.

As the Life, the message of Jesus is always one of new life, of which he is the living embodiment. The Resurrection of Jesus made it possible for us to rise again, not just on the last day, but every day of our lives. Our lives take on new

meaning because of the new life of the Resurrection. We are not condemned to live without hope. We have been given the power to live as children of the Light, fashioned in his image, to be bearers of new life in the world in which we live. In the course of your life, you will be buffeted by temptations, problems and obstacles that tend to rob you of Hope. Do not cave in, but rise up to new life by trusting in Jesus to

renew you because he is the giver of Life.

Even though we are fallible and weak, we are privileged to follow Jesus “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” who will never abandon us even in our darkest hour. This wide-ranging teaching impacts every dimension of our lives. It is a teaching that is both practical and life-changing. May God give us the grace to follow his Son, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.



Jesus offers us a remedy to the spiritual blindness of our days

In Ghana, many members of a local tribe suffered from blindness. The cause of the blindness, it was discovered, was a mosquito that lived along the riverbanks and injected a parasite into the bloodstream of local fishermen. To eliminate the blindness, it was necessary to find a vaccine that would kill the parasite. A vaccine called ivermectin that kills the offspring of the parasites was developed and applied to the affected fishermen. The blindness disappeared.

There is blindness and blindness. Helen Keller was born without sight but she

wasn’t spiritually blind. “There is only one thing worse than being blind,” she said, and that is “having sight but no vision.” Jesus offers the remedy to spiritual blindness which is a greater disease than physical blindness. In fact, he states in St John’s gospel that he “came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind.”

A man who was born blind was cured by Jesus, and by professing his faith, he was cured of spiritual blindness as well. This twice fortunate man who received both the gift of

sight and the gift of faith was a stumbling block to the Pharisees ‘who had eyes but could not see’. The Pharisees were a mean-spirited lot who opposed Jesus’ act of giving sight back to a blind man because he cured him on the Sabbath. They did not realise that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). They protested when Jesus exposed their hypocrisy, saying: “Surely we are not also blind, are we?” Jesus let them know that, although they could see physically, they were indeed blind. He described them as “blind leaders, leading the blind.” (Matthew 15:14).

We need to take a good look at ourselves and ask what is the fly in the ointment of our lives that can blind us, spiritually, to the good news of the gospel? Is it pride? Is it lust? Is it hypocrisy? Is it irresponsible gossip? Is it greed? What is it? The height of human blindness, Jesus said, is to glory in being spiritually blind. To reject the truth when it is staring you right in the face is what Jesus calls the sin against the Holy Spirit.

Many people do not want to see. They prefer to tailor the truth to serve their own selfish purposes. Look at what is going on in the world of politics? Who

can make anything of fake news, alternate facts, and partisan bickering flooding the media? What has become of simple honesty where a ‘yes’ means yes, and a ‘no’ means no? (Matthew 5:27). The blind Pharisees who persecuted a poor blind man, cured by Jesus, manipulated the law of the Sabbath to undermine and reject an act of incredible goodness. They were blinded by their own self-righteousness and, perhaps, by hatred and jealousy. Be careful not to fall into the same trap. Be open and receptive to the Good News, without being blinded by human forms of selfishness.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS



Trials and sufferings of early Christians

Jesus forewarns his disciples to be prepared for trials and suffering

25th June 2023 – 12th Sunday, Jeremiah 20:10-13

Jeremiah is under stress from enemies, yet holds to his confidence in God

For I hear many whispering: "Terror is all around! Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" All my close friends are watching for me to stumble. "Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him." But the Lord is with me like a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonour will never be forgotten. O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind; let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.

Responsorial: Psalm 68:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35

R./: Lord, in your great love, answer me

It is for you that I suffer taunts, that shame covers my face, that I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my own mother's sons.

I burn with zeal for your house and taunts against you fall on me. (R./)

This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour. In your great love, answer me, O God, with your help that never fails: Lord, answer, for your love is kind; in your compassion, turn towards me. (R./)

The poor when they see it will be glad and God-seeking hearts will revive; for the Lord listens to the needs and does not spurn servants in their chains. Let the heavens and the earth give him praise, the sea and all its living creatures. (R./)

Romans 5:12-15

The effects of Adam's sin are cancelled by the death of Christ

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned- sin was indeed in the world



before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many.

Gospel: Matthew 10:26-33
Jesus forewarns his disciples to be prepared for trials and suffering

Jesus said to his disciples, "Have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted.

So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in Heaven."

Christian, but not offensively so

When Professor Mahaffey, a wit and scholar at Trinity College Dublin, was once asked if he was a Christian, he drawled, "Yes, but not offensively so." Clearly he felt that Christianity should not intrude on the society he kept, nor put obstacles in the pursuit of any pleasure that attracted him. This could easily be a description of the Christianity of many of us here and now also. While we are quite prepared to admit that we are Christians, we are, by and large, careful not to take religion too seriously. I think it's fair to say that rarely do we in any practical way so shape our lives according to our religious beliefs, that they offer and reprimand, however silent, to people who live by totally different standards.

A genuine Christian cannot fully escape Christ's call to be different from the world. What he asks us is not to conform to the standards of this world, but rather to transform those standards. St Paul thought of Sin entering this world through one man, Adam, and through sin death, so that death has spread throughout the whole human race, because sin is so universal. The world's greatest sin is unbelief, and the task of the Church is to challenge this unbelief, relying on the help of the Holy Spirit. The last words of Jesus, according to St Matthew, were, "Go and make disciples of people everywhere; baptise them and teach them to observe all that I taught you. And I am with you always, yes to the end of time."

While we live in this world, we are meant to remain aware of the world to come, and live for God by pursuing the standards Jesus set for us. When the apostles worried about the future, Christ encouraged them, "Don't be afraid. I am with you always." The deepest truth about God that Jesus taught is that he is a caring God, compassionate and forgiving, a God who is on our side. Our attitude to life can be that of the psalmist who says, "In God I trust – I shall not fear" (Ps 56:1). The only thing to fear is losing God, loss of trust in God. This lack of trust begins when I look for security through my own efforts, in the works and wealth of my own making. Jesus criticised the feverish efforts, the anxious haste and worry of those worldly people, who refuse to grant God any part in their lives. "In God I trust; I shall not fear."

Jesus himself on the night of his last Passover, was about to suffer more than anyone had ever suffered, or ever will suffer in time to come. Yet, he remained affectionate and caring towards his friends and shared the meal with them, even the one who was plotting his betrayal. Later in Gethsemane when the terror of what lay ahead caused his sweat to fall like great drops of blood, his prayer was still, "Not my will but yours be done." No matter how awful the future may seem, this should be our prayer, too.

A prophetic people

Today's first reading reminds us of the trials of the prophet

Jeremiah, and the Gospel speaks of our duty of witnessing to Christ in the world. In a sense, we are all successors to Jeremiah and to the apostles whose job it was to share Christ's message with the world.

Not all Christians have equal opportunities of being spokespersons for God. Bishops and priests have the official duty of encouraging and teaching the faithful. Their difficult task is to faithfully hand on Christ's teaching, and correct errors that threaten the integrity of the traditional Christian doctrine. Like Jeremiah and other Old Testament prophets, they remind their people of God's revealed will and of the high moral standards God asks of us. And, like the prophets, priests can often expect criticism and opposition, just for doing their job.

Theologians too have an important work to fulfil in the Church, to deeply study the revealed truth, and then blend that traditional teaching with modern knowledge, so as to honestly apply the Christian message to new problems. To help them in this daunting work they have the light of the same Holy Spirit who guided the prophets of old, provided they do their research not as masters but as servants of the word of God. But it is not only priests and theologians who have the prophetic role towards God's people. The Second Vatican Council taught that every Christian should give a living witness to Christ, at least through living a life of faith and charity and by joining in worship and prayer.

This is not such an easy matter. The spirit of today's society, the example of our contemporaries, and the irreligious mood of much of the media do not always foster God-fearing attitudes or encourage sound moral standards. In most countries today, Christians are not persecuted for showing faith in Christ and his Gospel, but when she or he lives according to this teaching they will be swimming against the tide of a materialistic culture and will not find the going easy. Jesus warns that being a Christian will cost sacrifice and suffering. We are bound to face opposition from a world that does not gladly submit to the word of God, that makes so many demands on human nature. But there is real satisfaction, too, in standing up for the truth of things. In the centre of their souls, prophetic people have the happiness of working with the Lord, who is the ultimate truth on whom we all depend.

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■ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS...

FR DOYLE

Christ's cry from the cross wasn't in anger, it was a sign he knew what was to come

Q. When Jesus was dying on the cross, according to the Gospels, he cried out: "My God, why have you abandoned me?" Why was he saying this? Did he really feel that his Father had abandoned him?

A. Half a century ago, when I first began to think about the meaning of scriptural verses, the conventional explanation was this. The passage you quote is only the first verse of Psalm 22, a prayer well-known to Jews of Christ's time. That psalm, which begins as a cry of abandonment, actually ends up to be a prayer of hope and praise, a vote of confidence in God's saving love. Verse 25 of that psalm, for example, reads: 'For (God) has not spurned or disdained the misery of this poor wretch, did not turn away from me, but heard me when I cried out.'

This explanation was meant to assure the questioner that Jesus, the divine Son of God, could never have felt distanced from his Father. For me, to be honest, that explanation never rang true. Jesus did not 'pretend' to be a human being. He really was one of us, subject to all the vulnerabilities that we ourselves experience. How could he not have felt isolated, even abandoned by God? In the midst of his excruciating torture, all but one of his friends had fled in fear, their leader had denied even knowing Jesus, and Judas had betrayed him to his captors.

Fortunately, more than 20 years ago, scripture scholarship caught up with what our instinct was telling us to be true. In the 1990s, Fr Raymond Brown, then the world's most noted Catholic New Testament scholar, argued that Jesus did truly feel abandoned as he hung on the cross. Fr Brown pointed to the fact that, while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before, Jesus had addressed his Father with the Aramaic word 'Abba', a term of filial intimacy best rendered by our own word 'Daddy'. But here on the cross, just moments before his death, Jesus now uses the word 'Eloi', a much more formal term for 'Lord', indicating a greater sense of separation.

Personally, I feel much more attracted to this very real human being—and much more confident that he understands us in our own moments of loneliness.

Q. Growing up, God always came first. Our parents taught us to love and respect the Eucharist, especially when the Blessed



Sacrament was exposed, and we would genuflect and bow. Now I am shocked to see people in our parish during exposition, both young and old, plop themselves down in the pew and whip out their mobile phones. Then they laugh and text – without, it seems, so much as a glance at the altar. Can't people forget their phones and their friends for one hour and reflect on just why they are there and whom they have come to worship? And why does our priest never comment about this?

A. I am grateful for your letter because it stands as a valuable reminder of the need for reverence in what is clearly a sacred space. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal highlights the importance of that reverence: 'Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room and in adjacent areas, so that all may

dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner' (No. 45).

The practice of exposing the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance on the altar has a long history and serves well to promote devotion to Jesus present in the Eucharist.

The size and layout of a church may help in determining whether regular exposition before Sunday Mass is a wise practice. Many newer churches have a generous gathering area (lobby) where parishioners can greet one another upon arriving for Mass.

Doors can be closed to separate that area from the worship space as an indication that all conversation should cease once one enters the church proper, especially if the Eucharist is exposed. In smaller rural churches, however, there is often no gathering area at all and one enters directly into the worship space.

It is a natural instinct, and a good thing, for parishioners to

want to welcome one another warmly and catch up on their lives -- and it is often a sign of a parish's vitality that people genuinely enjoy socialising before and after the Sunday Eucharist.

In such a setting, it might be better not to expose the Blessed Sacrament on the altar before Mass; perhaps, instead, an announcement could be made shortly before Mass that the next few minutes will be spent in silent preparation for the sacred celebration.

And yes, I do think that your congregation needs a reminder from the priest that the use of mobile phones is never proper in church—whether to speak or to text.

Q. I have always been attracted to the verse 'Jesus wept' in John's Gospel (11:35) when Jesus learnt of the death of Lazarus. It shows, I think, how much Christ loved Lazarus and all of humanity. But reflecting further on that passage, I'm wondering just why Jesus wept. Was it because Jesus was actually grieving over the death of his friend? Or do you think that he wept tears of joy, knowing that Lazarus was not suffering from his illness anymore, that Lazarus was perhaps getting a taste of heaven and that Christ was going to use the occasion to show forth the power of God?

A. That short and simple verse from the Gospel reflects a complex truth, a truth that prompts your excellent question and makes the answer difficult. Jesus had two natures: He was truly human and truly divine, and both natures were at work in the matter of Lazarus.

Pope Leo the Great, reflecting on this same passage, is thought to have said: "In his humanity Jesus wept for Lazarus; in his divinity he raised him from the dead." Jesus felt deeply the pain of Lazarus' death. When Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus of the impending crisis, their message had been: "Master, the one you love is ill."

Clearly, Jesus knew in advance what he was going to do, for he told them: "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God." But his awareness of that eventual outcome did not relieve Christ's human sorrow, and this is the mystery of his dual nature. And so, the answer to both of our letter writer's questions is "Yes."

Jesus was truly grieving over Lazarus' passing and the pain it was causing Martha and Mary, but

just as surely he knew that the situation would serve ultimately to glorify God.

The mystery of that duality will only lift fully when we, one day, rest in God's house; but meanwhile it may help to think that, right now, we ourselves struggle to balance those twin feelings.

When someone we love dies, our faith promises the joy of reunion; yet, even so, we feel deeply the sting of loss. We believe in eternal life, but that doesn't stop our tears. We can also see the story as a sign that, with Jesus, there is always hope for us. No situation or desperate circumstance we experience is beyond His saving and healing power—even death itself.

He is 'the resurrection and the life' (Jn.11:25) in every circumstance.

Q. I am wondering what Mary did and where she lived during the three years of Jesus' ministry. Did she travel with the 'women who ministered to him'?

A. In the Gospels, once the public ministry of Jesus has begun, Mary is mentioned in only a few scenes. We can assume that his mother did not accompany him throughout the course of that 2 1/2-year period but continued to reside at Nazareth.

At a general audience in March 1997, Pope John Paul II said: "The beginning of Jesus' mission also meant separation from his mother, who did not always follow her son in his travels on the roads of Palestine. Jesus deliberately chose separation from his mother and from family affection, as can be inferred from the conditions he gave his disciples for following him and for dedicating themselves to proclaiming God's kingdom."

Mary was present, of course, at the wedding feast of Cana (Jn. 2:1-11), where Jesus saved the hosts from embarrassment by providing more wine at his mother's request. Also, on one occasion during the course of Christ's preaching journeys, we learn (Lk. 8:19) that Mary and Jesus' "brothers" came to hear him but could not enter because of the crowd.

It was then that Jesus explained: "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it" (Lk 8:21). Mary was present, of course, at the foot of the cross during Christ's passion, and it was there that Jesus committed his mother (Jn. 19:26-27) to the care of his beloved disciple John.

Unfortunately, this column cannot accept questions from readers

SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY

DAVID TORKINGTON



Speed training and the spiritual life

When I was a boy my athletics coach was Franz Stampfl. When transposed from the sporting life to the spiritual life, his teaching taught me more about how to progress spiritually than any spiritual director I have even known. I make no apology therefore for introducing the principles I learnt from him.

Speed training

A favourite principle that Franz instilled in his pupils was called 'speed training'. The theory is simply common sense. You may be wonderful with the ball at your feet or in your hands, you may have a brilliant backhand and a superlative smash, but if you do not get to the ball in time your skills will be superfluous.

Speed training therefore is of the utmost importance in the spiritual life, too. The difference between saints and ourselves is not that we sin and they do not, but the speed with which they turn back to God to seek forgiveness.

Sometimes it takes days, weeks, months or even years before we have the humility to accept that we have fallen, and then seek the forgiveness we need before beginning again. That is why we waste so much time that could have been saved. If only we had the sort of humility that enabled the saints to begin again without delay the very moment they were conscious of falling.

Long before athletic coaches realised the importance of speed training, it was practised by the saints who knew that it was the only way to sanctity. They found, by their own experience, that it is not easy to begin again without delay after falling back into sin or simply into laziness, without the speed training that they knew could only be learnt in prayer and with continual practice.

The difference between saints and sinners

The saints do not waste precious time pretending they do not sin, or making endless excuses, or blaming others for what they know only too well was their own fault. The moment they felt they sought forgiveness and began again, knowing they had sinned, but trusting in the mercy of God. Herein lies one of the main differences between the saints and sinners like us.

Why we run away from God

Only too often people simply cannot face their guilt so they run away from God and hide, as Adam did in the Garden of Eden. When God called out, 'Adam, Adam, where are you?' (Genesis 3:9), God



knew exactly where Adam was: it was Adam who did not know where he was. He had lost his way trying to hide his sin and the guilt that shamed him. Sometimes we can spend years on the run because pride will not allow us to admit what we have done.

Our inability to eat humble pie means that we can spend half a lifetime suffering from spiritual starvation. What is even worse than the pride that comes before a fall, is the pride that follows the fall, because it stops us from getting up, sometimes permanently.

The triple jump

Every different sport or athletic event has its own techniques that have to be learnt, and Franz Stampfl was an expert in both track and field events. With his technical advice and his secret training method I saw comparatively ordinary athletes become candidates for the next Olympics. I was only an ordinary run-of-the-mill pole vaulter, but with the help of Franz I won the national championships. That was in the era before we went metric, and just one year before fibre glass poles were introduced from the USA.



It is all a matter of balance. Until you get the balance right you will go nowhere ... it is the same in life... Get the balance wrong and everything is wrong.

I also tried to break the county record at the triple jump, then known as the hop, step and jump but failed continually. When, in despair, I turned to Franz, the help I received was immediate and effective. He only needed to watch me once before he saw the problem. I had been so enthusiastic, so intent on breaking the record, that I put too much energy into the hop, leaving little energy for the step, and almost none for the final jump. Once Franz corrected me and taught me how to put equal space between the hop, step and the jump, my performance changed dramatically and I was able to break the record with ease.

"You see", said Franz, "it is all a matter of balance. Until you get the balance right you will go nowhere." Then he added, "It is the same in life too, is it not? Get the balance wrong and everything is wrong."

I do not know about life in general, but it is certainly true of the spiritual life. If first enthusiasm encourages you to do too much too soon at the expense of everything else, then it is only a matter of time before you capitulate and give up. Franz taught me the importance of balance. In other words, if you spend too much time trying to pray and without proper help or direction, then failure will only be a matter of time. Prayer must be part of a balanced spiritual life in which there is also sufficient time for work, recreation, and for others for whom we have responsibility.

Who could be more dedicated to prayer than the Desert Fathers, but every day they also had to give themselves to the traditional seven hours of manual labour. When in later years they were in danger of forgetting this, they had to be reminded in reforms, like the

Cistercian reform that was inspired by St Bernard of Clairvaux. In time their prayer life so inspired their work that their work became their prayer, but it takes very many years for this to happen, most especially outside the monastic life.

That is why Cardinal Basil Hume used to say, "To say your work is your prayer or your life is your prayer is not only meaningless, but quite misleading. It is undoubtedly the ideal, but such an ideal will never be realised, without giving daily time to personal prayer for very many years".

In the meantime, balance, balance, balance in all things, as Franz used to say.

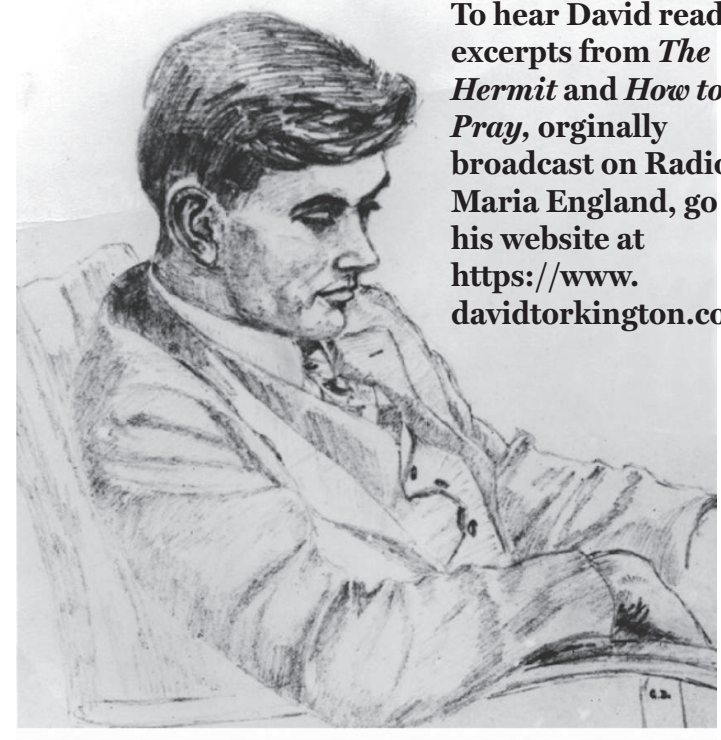
The secret training method

Let me say a few words about what Franz called his secret training method. It was called weight-training, or pumping iron. It was a new method of training imported from the United States in the early 1950s, where it had transformed their athletes. The whole person is not only made stronger and more powerful, but is given powers of endurance far beyond those who do not use this method. Even those who are naturally gifted, or who have a high degree of technical training, soon realise they will end up the losers without weight-training.

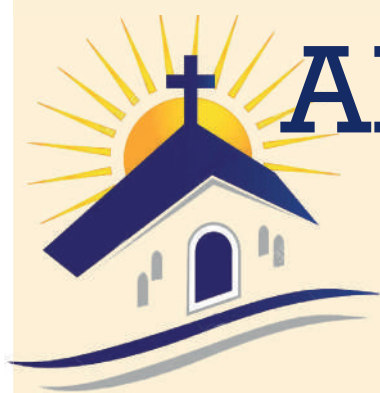
The priest who taught me how to meditate listened to Franz as well as his other students. The next time I went to the meditation group that he ran, he told us that what Franz had said not only applied to sport, but to the spiritual life too – particularly to prayer. What is prayer but the continual raising of the heart and mind to God? It is just like weight-training. Whatever form of prayer you are engaged in, whether it is saying your morning prayers, saying the rosary, trying to meditate or even contemplating, you will always experience distractions, so you will always have to keep raising your heart and mind to God time and time again. The muscles of the heart and mind are continually being exercised, gradually transforming the whole spiritual metabolism.

David Torkington's blogs, books, lectures and podcasts at <https://www.davidtorkington.com>

David Torkington reads from *The Hermit*



To hear David reading excerpts from *The Hermit and How to Pray*, originally broadcast on Radio Maria England, go to his website at <https://www.davidtorkington.com>



AROUND THE PARISHES & EDUCATION

The Universe Catholic Weekly's guide to Catholic life in your neighbourhood



Here's to another glorious century as Rickmansworth gets its cross back



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Fr Andrew Gallagher

The parish of Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Rickmansworth, held its first Marian procession for many years on Sunday, 14th May. This was combined with the blessing of the newly-restored Calvary Cross on the site.

The 12-foot oak Cross was originally raised on the site of the Church in 1914 through the use of ropes and pulleys. After a century of

battling the elements, it had begun to rot and had become dangerous, and so was taken down in December 2021.

But after some very generous donations from parishioners, and the hard work of some talented craftsmen over the past year, the Cross, which has become such a focal point of the area, was re-erected by crane on Friday, 12th May – just in time for the

parish Marian procession.

The sun crept out half an hour before the morning Mass. During the procession, parishioners sang Marian hymns around the grounds of the Church, before crowning Our Lady, praying a decade of the rosary and reconsecrating the parish to her protection and intercession.

This was then followed by the blessing of the newly-restored Calvary Cross, before ending with a

very powerful rendition of 'When I survey the wondrous cross'.

After the procession, the parish celebrated with a parish picnic in the sunshine.

It is hoped by everyone in the parish that the Cross will remain a permanent fixture in Rickmansworth for at least another hundred years, and once again people will use it as a focus of prayer and meditation.

Science brought to life in Space Week

The Perseverance mission to Mars was the theme explored by students from Saint Paul's Catholic High School in Wythenshawe, who took part in a Space Exploration Week.

In 'Mission to Mars', the Year 7 students enjoyed a range of fun activities, all of which were an excellent way of engaging them with science and supporting them in understanding our neighbours in the solar system – as well as worlds much further away.

The objective was to generate interest through learning about the Perseverance mission to Mars. This will review the Year 7 topic, while enhancing writing, comprehension and evaluative skills.

Lead practitioner of science, Charlotte Dewhurst, said: "The objective of Space Exploration



Week was to stimulate awe and wonder through learning about our neighbours in the solar system and the Perseverance mission to Mars.

The week's inspirational sessions aimed to inspire the next generation of scientists with fun activities," she said. "The project not only embeds

the Key Stage 3 Universe topic but also covers the practical component of the Earth's Structure topic, with strong links to geography this year."

Head of science Stephen McMahon added: "We developed a special range of fun and interesting classes to bring space exploration to life for our students. The classes were designed to build on the students' existing knowledge, enhance progression and boost student motivation in science. It was a great opportunity to experience some creative, inspiring and cross-curricular approaches to teaching about space."

"We are always very keen to inspire and engage the students in the wonder and excitement of science, which is so vital to the future of our country."

It's green fingers galore as Seaham pupils visit allotment

Young children with green fingers are usually the sign the paints have come out in a reception class, but for one group of children at St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary School in Seaham, it means they have been out having fun and digging in an allotment, and that's what has given them 'green fingers'.

The excited youngsters were given the chance to water plants, look for worms and learn about growing vegetables at a new community allotment at St Aidan's Catholic Academy in Sunderland.

The venture between the two schools, which are both part of Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust, is part of St Aidan's drive to be more sustainable.

The allotment is thriving with two large polytunnels containing potatoes, peas, spring onions, broccoli, carrots, lettuce, pak choi, tomatoes, chilli, peppers, French beans and rocket. There are also six raised beds outside with onions, garlic and broad beans growing, and 15 flowerbeds.

St Aidan's RE teacher Anna Armstrong explained more about the allotment. "The allotment was set up in March 2022 to work towards the St Aidan's three

sustainable development goals, which are action on climate change, good health and wellbeing, and reduce hunger," she said.

"Additionally, we want to work with the local community to create a safe, post-Covid space for all members of our community to enjoy. We want to build cross-generational relationships by working with local nurseries, primary schools and care homes,



and support those in need by distributing produce grown on site. Special thanks must go to our lovely volunteer, Lynne Reay, who is the grandmother of one of our pupils, whose help has been invaluable."

Now that the allotment is thriving, Mrs Armstrong and the wellbeing team she leads have started hosting community events.

"The afternoon with St Mary Magdalen was brilliant," she said. "Everyone had fun and, most importantly, everyone played their part in making a difference. We have also had visits from a local nursery and the wellbeing group led all the activities.

"The children loved tricking the worms to come out from underground by doing the bird dance."

As part of the recent community visits, 20 reception pupils from St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary School visited St Aidan's Catholic Academy to engage in a range of gardening activities. This included a tour of the polytunnels, where the youngsters learnt about what was growing and had a turn at watering the vegetables; planting flowers; decorating raised beds with



colourful chalk; followed a worm trail searching for fun facts about worms hidden around the garden; and listening to a story, 'Superworm' by Julia Donaldson.

St Mary Magdalen Reception teacher Joanne Robson said: "We had such a lovely afternoon. Congratulations to Anna and the boys for a successful event."

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AROUND THE PARISHES & EDUCATION

The Universe Catholic Weekly's guide
to Catholic life in your neighbourhood



Students in the
eco-prayer garden

Schools marks LiveSimply first for the East Midlands

A Burton Catholic school has achieved a prestigious award in recognition of its efforts to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the world's poorest communities.

Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy has become the first secondary school in the East Midlands to achieve CAFOD's LiveSimply Award.

At the centre of the school's efforts to earn the award is a new 'Eco Prayer Garden', which was funded as part a project run by East Midlands Airport.

The airport asked schools to submit designs for gardens or green spaces that substantially boost biodiversity and lead to improved wellbeing.

Students created the garden design and considered the local wildlife and how they could incorporate the school values of Love, Respect, Hope, Kindness and Resilience, while looking after nature.

Students identified the need for the school community to be recycling, composting, growing their own herbs and vegetables to be used in food and nutrition lessons.

They also considered the

packaging of food in the canteen, which was reviewed to ensure it was more sustainable and able to be recycled.

Locally, regular food bank collections were held, students made ceramic poppies for local care homes and delivered and installed them for Remembrance Day. They have sent Christmas cards and regularly raised money for local charities.

The school has also helped to raise an impressive £15,000 over the years to build 15 freshwater wells in Africa.

Other annual events to support CAFOD are the sharing of simple lunches for family fast days and taking part in the Big Lent Walk.

This latest accolade follows the school being shortlisted in the Secondary School of the Year category at the upcoming TES awards and being judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted earlier this year.

Laura O'Leary, headteacher at Blessed Robert Sutton, said: "We are extremely proud to have received the LiveSimply Award, as it validates the remarkable efforts of our pupils and staff in promoting sustainable living and supporting those in need."

Birmingham archdiocese welcomes three new canons to help lead cathedral life

Three new Canons have been installed and appointed to the Metropolitan Chapter of Canons in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

St Chad's Cathedral held the Capitular Mass of the Venerable Metropolitan Chapter and the Rite of Installation to a Canonry of Very Reverend Canon Michael Dolman, Very Reverend Canon Brian McGinley and Very Reverend Canon Paul McNally.

Canons Michael, Brian and Paul are now part of the Chapter of Canons, who form the governing body of the Cathedral, caring for it and for its liturgical life.

They are also members of the College of Consultors who advise the archbishop about the life and mission of the archdiocese.

The Mass was celebrated by the

Very Reverend Canon Michael Neylon in the presence of His Grace Archbishop Bernard Longley.

Archbishop Bernard welcomed the parish of St George Worcester, and the other Worcester parishes, and the parishes of Holy Trinity in Newcastle Under Lyme and Sacred Heart in Silverdale who came in support of Canon Brian and Canon Paul, as well as Oscott staff and seminarians who came in support of their Rector, Canon Michael.

Mgr Tim Menezes, Cathedral Dean and Secretary of the Chapter, read the nominations for the three Canons who then made the promise of Obedience and the Profession of Faith.

In turn, the new Canons ascended the sanctuary and knelt

before the Archbishop as they were dressed in the *cappa parva* (small hooded cape).

The archbishop presented them with a copy of the Chapter Statutes and formally admitted them.

He said: "I now admit you as a member of the Chapter of our Cathedral Church of St. Chad with the rights and duties of that office in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen"

The Provost, Bishop David Evans, said: "The Lord in his mercy has appointed you to be joined to our Chapter.

"We welcome you and pray for you that you may ever keep true love for your brothers and after this life receive the reward of your labours."



Glowing report as Stonyhurst judged 'excellent in all areas' by inspection team

Jesuit school Stonyhurst and its Prep School, Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall, have been awarded the highest possible rating of 'Excellent in all areas' following an inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).

Stonyhurst underwent a comprehensive inspection of its teaching, pastoral care, facilities

and extra-curricular provision in April 2023 as part of the regular inspection procedures for independent schools.

The key findings of the report acknowledged the excellence of the school in every area under inspection. The dedication of the school in fulfilling its aims and the outstanding achievements of

the pupils in academic studies and attitudes to learning, in addition to personal development were subjects of particular praise.

The report recognised the high standards of academic achievement of the pupils, stating that 'pupils of all ages and abilities display excellent attitudes towards their learning',

and 'possess strong study skills and take an inquiry-based approach to their studies' with their academic and other achievements being 'wide and varied, and highly accomplished'. Pupils were found to be 'highly articulate and speak with eloquence when addressing others'.

There was praise too for pupils' personal development, with excellent levels of self-understanding' and 'show strong levels of perseverance when faced with challenges'.

Pupils were also found by the inspection team to be able to 'demonstrate high levels of self-esteem'.

School art show proves we're stronger together

A fish collage made from plastic bottles and models sculpted from plasticine and clay were among works on display at the Discovery Museum in Newcastle, as young artists from a Catholic education trust exhibited their art.

Children from 29 schools took part in the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust (BBCET) Art Exhibition, which was titled 'Stronger Together', referencing the Trust's mission statement of being 'greater than the sum of our parts'. The Discovery Museum's Great Hall was filled with hundreds of pieces of art, created by children from Nursery age through to Year 6 at the Trust's primary schools.

"Schools could choose how they wanted to respond to the theme 'Stronger Together,'" explained Sarah Shaw, support officer at BBCET. "Some submitted individual art works from their pupils; others worked collaboratively as a class or a whole school."

"Because schools and teachers could decide how they wanted to respond to the theme, they created art which used a wide variety of media," she continued. "We had sculpture and collage, paintings and drawings – a very wide range of art."

"One school used plastic bottles to create an enormous fish collage. We had models made from boxes, and creatures crafted from clay, Plasticine, and even milk bottles. There were paintings, pictures created using oil pastels, pencil and pen, as well as collage which used fabric and photography."



"Schools have been really creative, and it was fantastic to see the range of brilliant work that they produced."

The exhibition was the first of its kind staged by BBCET and marked the Trust's first year with a full complement of 39 member schools.

"Everyone at Bishop Bewick is committed to providing education that develops the whole child and gives them fantastic opportunities to experience wider extra-curricular activities," CEO Anita Bath said.

"A huge amount of work has gone into organising this, so a massive thank you to all the teachers who worked with the children, and a special thank you to Mrs Alice Butler for putting the whole exhibition together."



Pictures of the exhibition by Kate Buckingham

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GARDENING

Bloomin' marvellous – but it's all about water to help hydrangeas

Growing French Hydrangeas takes a bit of organising – but once established they will pay you back in spades.

Walk into a garden with a hydrangea in bloom and your attention will be captured immediately. The big, bold, colourful blooms of *Hydrangea macrophylla* (literally, *Bigleaf hydrangea*) make a statement that cannot be ignored. This is the hydrangea that most of us see in our minds when the name comes up.

It's a favourite pot plant of florists, and we have all probably given or received one at some time in our lives.

But it is in the garden that the French hydrangea truly comes into its own.

Confusing bloom forms

A garden hydrangea is a woody, deciduous shrub measuring 5-6 feet or more tall by about as wide at maturity. Its large leaves, in shades of medium to dark matte green provide the background to the two different bloom forms: Mophead or hortensia blooms, or Lacecap blooms.

Both bloom forms are the same plant, if you will, with 'different hair colour.' This is an area of confusion for many people who are not familiar with lacecap blooms. Yes, they were meant to look that way, and no, the small fertile flowers in the centre will never mature to look like their sister, the hortensia or mophead. Their lacy, more delicate look adds a different dimension to the garden.

You'll find hydrangeas at your garden centre when they begin to come into bloom. This is a good time to see what is available and what you personally like, but planting hydrangeas in late spring or



early summer requires more attention on your part. The newly installed plant does not yet have a root system in place to keep up with the demands of all those big leaves and blooms. You will need to water frequently during dry periods of the first two growing seasons to allow the plant to develop its mature root system (this applies to all newly planted plants, not just hydrangeas).

Where to plant a French hydrangea

French hydrangeas often appear on lists of shade-loving plants. This is not technically correct. French hydrangeas need direct sunlight to bloom well, at least 4-6 hours. What they don't need is direct afternoon sun. Direct sun results in increased 'transpiration,' or water loss from the leaves. Hydrangeas planted in the stressful late afternoon sun will appear wilted and in need of water. If there is sufficient

water in the soil, the plant will recover by itself as soon as the sun sets. Don't water a plant wilted by afternoon sun – too much water can result in root rot problems. A hydrangea that is wilted in the morning before the heat of the day definitely needs water – immediately.

If you have hydrangeas that have not bloomed while planted under trees, you may want to consider "limbing up" the trees to allow more light to hit the hydrangeas – or alternatively, moving them to a sunnier location in the fall just before they start to lose their leaves.

Planting and caring for your new hydrangea

When you bring your hydrangea home, you will need to dig a hole at least twice the size of the pot it is in. Think about this before you choose between the 2-gallon plant and the 5-gallon plant. A smaller plant will quickly grow to the

size of a larger plant and will probably suffer less transplant shock. Be aware that almost all hydrangeas in nursery pots will have pink blooms due to the lack of aluminium in potting soil. Once in the ground their colour can change depending upon the pH of the soil.

Take the soil from the hole and mix it with the following amendments in this proportion:

- 2 parts native soil,
- 1 part compost or composted cow manure,
- 1 part either finely ground pine bark chips or granite sand or another soil aerator such as an expanded slate chip product.

New evidence suggests that the planting hole not be amended with additional materials but rather that the native soil be well broken up. In theory plant roots would penetrate through the amended hole and into the native soil, but in reality they

tend to be lazy and the planting hole acts as a container actually causing a potbound situation. If soil amendments are required it is best to add them to the entire planting area instead."

Remove your plant from its pot and inspect its roots. If the roots have formed a mat or are growing in a circle around the outside of the soil, the plant is "potbound". Be ruthless in loosening and cutting away these matted roots. You may end up reducing the root ball of the plant considerably. Don't worry, the roots will grow back and will now grow out into the surrounding soil. I keep a serrated knife or an old tree saw in my tool basket just for such transplanting situations.

Set the plant in the prepared hole. If you've dug too deeply, you may have to remove the plant and refill the hole with the amended soil to a point that the crown of the plant is at or slightly above the surrounding soil level (remember that adding water will compact the soil below the plant – you may want to plant slightly high to compensate for this). Before placing the plant back in the hole sprinkle in a handful (about ½ cup) of a good balanced (three even numbers) timed-release fertiliser that feed the roots for 3-4 months.

Once your plant is placed, begin to refill the hole with the amended soil. Gently firm the soil as you go until you have the hole well filled.

Finally, finish the planting by watering thoroughly (that means until air bubbles stop coming to the surface from the surrounding soil. This insures that the soil and the roots are in direct contact and avoids losing precious roots to drying out.

Top the soil around the plant with a two-inch layer of a good mulch to help with moisture retention.

Next week: After care of your plants as they develop

HEALTH

The doctor will see you now...

Doctor dog: how our canine companions can help us detect COVID and other diseases. Jacqueline Boyd explains more

While we humans generally experience the world through sight, dogs use scent to learn about the environment around them. What their nose knows is crucial for finding food, mates and safe spaces.

Our furry friends can also use their sniffing power to learn how people are feeling. For example, they can detect the scent of fear in human sweat.

Given this, it's perhaps not surprising that pooches' super-smelling skills can extend to monitoring human health – including, potentially, by detecting infectious diseases such as Covid-19. In a recent study undertaken in Californian schools, dogs were found to detect the virus with 95 per cent sensitivity in a controlled laboratory setting and 83 per cent in schools.

The olfactory capability of dogs far exceeds our own. Estimates suggest that dogs' smelling ability might be up to 10,000 times better than ours, thanks to having more than 100 million scent receptors in their nose (compared to six million in people). Dogs can detect a wide range of different smells at much lower concentrations than humans or even hi-tech laboratory instruments – sometimes as low as at one part per trillion.

Interestingly, dogs use their nostrils separately. They start sniffing with their right nostril, and if the smell is familiar and "safe", they switch to using their left nostril.

Dogs differ in the shape and size of their noses, of course, but all have an impressive ability to detect scent in a range of situations. And not



only are dogs good at sniffing, they love to do it. Allowing dogs to sniff can actually improve their welfare and make them more optimistic.

Pandemic partners

Dogs have shown they can accurately identify a variety of infectious diseases via scent. For example, children infected with malaria parasites were successfully identified by dogs sniffing their foot odour. Dogs can also detect bacterial urinary tract infections, and gastrointestinal infections caused by the bacteria *Clostridium difficile*, which can be life-threatening in vulnerable patients.

Early in the pandemic, it became clear that there was a need for extensive, real-time, accurate detection of infection. Respiratory infections cause the release of a range of substances that each have their own distinct smell.

Given dogs' success in detecting other infectious diseases, the potential role of dogs as "lab partners" during the pandemic was quickly explored.

Initial research revealed that after just one week of training on Covid-specific odour, dogs were able to identify infections in bodily fluids from the respiratory system, correctly identifying positive cases 83 per cent of the time. Once trained on respiratory samples, dogs were also capable of generalising their Covid detection skills to other bodily fluids, such as sweat and urine.

Screening by sniffing

The potential for real-time screening with a high degree of sensitivity offers several advantages over traditional Covid testing methods, such as lateral flow and PCR testing, including cost and efficiency.

In the recent study, two dogs already trained to detect the scent of COVID in the lab were taken into 27 Californian schools and completed 3,897 screenings, mostly among students, by sniffing their ankles and feet. For comparison and to check accuracy of detection, participants also undertook lateral flow tests.

After initial training, the dogs were detecting the virus in the lab with 95 per cent sensitivity (correctly identifying positive cases) and 95 per cent specificity (correctly identifying those who did not have COVID).

Screening people directly saw a slight drop in sensitivity to 83 per cent and specificity to 90 per cent. This is slightly lower than some estimates of the sensitivity and specificity of lateral flow tests, though their reported effectiveness has varied in different studies and between tests.

But even considering that the dogs made a small number of errors, given that screening could be completed within seconds, efficiency was high.

In the same way that dogs routinely screen people for substances such as drugs or explosives as part of safety and security measures, they could offer effective medical screening services too. In high throughput environments such as schools or colleges, fast and effective screening would have distinct advantages.

However, all medical and health technology needs to be thoroughly evaluated for safety, cost and effectiveness, as well as any legal and ethical implications. Widespread health screening using dogs similarly requires ongoing review and careful consideration, while also ensuring the welfare of the dogs.

Doctor dog?

COVID is just one medical condition our canine companions could potentially help detect.

Along with infectious diseases, they have successfully detected certain forms of cancer in biological samples, the onset of epileptic seizures, and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) in diabetes patients.

Dogs and humans have lived together for thousands of years, and dogs have become constant human companions in many parts of the world.

The fact that they love to sniff, and are so good at it, has also made them important working partners in a range of roles.

Using their innate skills to support human health and wellbeing through medical detection might be another way by which the human-dog relationship is deepened.

Jacqueline Boyd is a Senior Lecturer in Animal Science, Nottingham Trent University



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LIFESTYLE

Five expert tips to help you prioritise your pet's health

A healthy pet doesn't happen by accident. Even a dog or cat without pre-existing health conditions needs their owner's help to live their best life and maintain their well-being. Check out these five tips from pet experts at Purina who explain how to prioritise your pet's health to keep your four-legged companion happy and healthy.

1. Provide complete and balanced nutrition

Ensuring your pet is receiving proper nutrition is key. "Many pet foods on the market today are meant to be the only source of nutrition for pets," said Jason Gagné, Veterinary Technical Communications. "That's why it's critical that they're 100 per cent complete and balanced for the intended life stage."

When you see 'complete and balanced' on your pet's food, it means that it provides your pet the right amount of all essential nutrients, in the right proportions that they need.



Investing time in your pet is a wonderful way to care for their physical and mental health.

2. Get plenty of exercise

Nothing strengthens the bond between you and your pet like doing something energetic together. Whether you take your dog for a walk in a place you both love, or play a new game with your cat, spending quality time together is top of the list when it comes to showing your pet you love them and care for their well-being. Not only are pets kept active, but pet owners also reap the health benefits here.

3. Take care of skin and coat

Brushing your pet isn't just

for looks. Taking care of your dog's skin and coat is important for your pup's health. "A dog's skin and coat is their largest organ and protects their bones, muscles and other organs," says Gagné. "It also plays a vital role maintaining body temperature."

Using a supplement like EverRoot Skin & Coat oil is a great option if your dog has sensitive skin, as it includes skin-loving nutrients like MCTs, vitamin E, DHA & EPA.

4. Teach them new skills

Investing time in your pet is a

wonderful way to show them how much you care, and it's another great way to care for their physical and mental health. "Teaching new skills will help keep their minds sharp, is a great form of entertainment and can incorporate physical activity as well," said Dr. Ragen McGowan, an animal behaviour scientist. "Interactive puzzle toys for dogs or food maze bowls for cats and dogs are great ways to keep them mentally fit."

5. Consider using supplements

To make sure you're doing everything you can to keep your pet as healthy as possible, consider using supplements to help address their specific needs.

Purina Pro Plan Veterinary Supplements offers options to help with a variety of circumstances pet parents may encounter.

For example, FortiFlora is a probiotic supplement that

contains a safe and effective strain of beneficial bacteria to promote normal intestinal microflora, which means digestive and immune support for cats and dogs.

"If your dog or cat is displaying anxious behaviours, ask your veterinarian about Calming Care, a probiotic supplement that helps pets maintain calm behaviour and cope with external stressors," said McGowan. And for owners who feel their cat could use help staying hydrated, Hydra Care is a nutrient-enriched water which has been shown to increase total liquid intake when compared to cats consuming only water and dry food.*

To find more products that support pet health, visit ProPlanVetDirect.com and EverRoot.com.

**Cats must consume at least 2 oz per 5 lbs of bodyweight daily for benefit.*

FOOD

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Glorious, luxurious red velvet cake

This is a lovely, tasty treat which goes perfectly with a glass of something cool in the sunshine.

The surprising colour makes people wonder what could be in it, yet it is just the red food colouring that gives this chocolate cake a special quality. The white icing sets it off beautifully.

INGREDIENTS

Cake

250g butter, softened
600g caster sugar
6 eggs
2 tbsps red food colouring
3 tbsps best quality cocoa powder
375g plain flour
250ml buttermilk
1 tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp salt
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
1 tbsp vinegar

Icing

2 tubs of cream cheese (each 200g)
350g white chocolate
250g butter, softened

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 170 C.
2. Grease and flour three x 20cm tins.
3. In a large bowl, cream 250g butter with sugar. Add eggs one at a time,

beating well after each addition. Mix food colouring with cocoa and add to the mixture.

4. Add flour alternately with buttermilk then add the vanilla and salt. Mix bicarbonate of soda with vinegar, and gently stir into mixture.

5. Divide the cake mixture into three prepared tins and bake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes.

6. Allow to cool and then make the icing by melting the white chocolate and leaving to cool. Beat the cream cheese until light and fluffy and gradually beat in the chocolate and softened butter. Use to fill and ice the cake.



FILMS

Elemental offers a fun cartoon look at the immigrant experience

Elemental

Thanks to its rich blend of ethnicities, the United States has long been referred to as a melting pot. In the animated romantic comedy *Elemental* (Disney), director Peter Sohn substitutes for that metaphor a fable featuring embodiments of the four elements, using the dynamics of their imaginary world to explore the immigrant experience.

The film's primary setting, Element City, is the New York of this milieu. Although ostensibly a meeting place for all, the metropolis is nonetheless divided into distinct neighbourhoods in one of which, Firetown, dwells Ember Lumen (voice of Leah Lewis).

The 20-something daughter of migrants from far-off Fireland, Ember is not one to suffer fools gladly or indulge the sometimes annoying customers of her parents' corner shop. In fact, Ember has a literally explosive temper that constantly gets her into trouble.

As a result, her loving dad Bernie (voice of Ronnie del Carmen), who sees Ember as his heir, keeps delaying the day when he'll retire and turn the operation over to her. But Bernie is ailing and Ember knows that continuing to work is not his best option.

Ember's difficulties only increase when she falls for water youth Wade Ripple (voice of Mamoudou Athie). He's not only



Ember Lumen (voice of Leah Lewis) and Wade Ripple (Mamoudou Athie) appear in the animated movie *Elemental*.

an outsider to her world but a government inspector whose negative report on the family store could shut the establishment down – thus ruining Bernie's dream of success.

Add to this personal dilemma a leak in the city's plumbing system that threatens to flood Firetown and things reach a crisis point. As Ember and Wade try to establish a relationship while scrambling to avert disaster, John Hoberg, Kat Likkel and Brenda Hsueh's script explores familiar Hollywood themes of tolerance and individual self-fulfilment.

With gender issues currently

to the fore, it's perhaps no accident that Ember is a thoroughly forceful character while Wade is pliant and anxious to please. In fact, their story is initially unengaging due to the fact that this is taken to extremes so that she registers as petulant while he – although rich in empathy for others – projects a lachrymose, wimpy demeanour.

As the movie progresses, it develops that all H2O types are much given to weeping and this becomes a running joke. The recurring gag is part of the overall spot-on humour that eventually rescues the proceedings and enhances

viewer interest in this kindly intended, mostly family friendly production.

While the screenplay steers clear of anything really off-colour, however, it does include material that could be confusing for impressionable youngsters. Thus Bernie and his clan maintain a sacred blue flame in a large brazier in their home and go to great lengths to prevent it from ever being extinguished.

We're shown that Bernie transported the fire in a lantern while journeying to his new homeland. So teens and their elders may see it as a symbol of the need to preserve one's

cultural heritage rather than as anything specifically religious.

Still, it's a motif requiring a certain level of maturity. Together with a few other moments that might jar on the nerves of those accompanied by small fry, it indicates that *Elemental* is appropriate for a wide but not universal audience.

Director Peter Sohn told *collider.com* of his hopes for the audience to connect with *Elemental* – especially the identity of the characters, and the complex relationships found in families.

"I really hope that they enjoy how these characters go through this world. The thing that we're building so much on is Ember, and then when she meets Wade, and how they journey through this world, the city of elements, and how that affects her identity," he said.

"I hope people can connect to that journey, for sure. It's also about families, and how different families can be. I married someone that isn't Korean, and it was shocking how different our cultures were. We've tried to bring those ingredients. I hope people can connect to it, in that way."

A quick *Flash* and we're losing the plot already

Ah, time travel. It's long been a favourite device for screenwriters who like to pile up the possibilities – and paradoxes – that might flow from an ability to flout the calendar.

Yet, while such speculations are sometimes amusing, they also run the risk of leaving viewers earnestly intent on following the plot befuddled. Where does the era-jumping, DC Comics-based adventure *The Flash* lie on that continuum? Somewhere in the middle.

As for the film's thematic material, it's a mixed bag as well. A fundamental message about accepting both the good and bad that befall us is mixed up with ingredients that make this a doubtful proposition for the teens at whom, along with grown-ups, the movie is presumably aimed.

As he did in 2017's *Justice League*, Ezra Miller plays the titular super-speedy 'metahuman' (as DC likes to call its



superheroes). The Flash's everyday alter ego is nervous forensics investigator Barry Allen.

Socially awkward Barry has been traumatised by a double tragedy: his mother, Nora (Maribel Verdú), was mysteriously murdered and his father, Henry (Ron Livingston), unjustly convicted of the crime. Henry has an appeal pending but the case doesn't seem hopeful.

After more or less accidentally

discovering that he can outrun time, it occurs to Barry to journey into the past and undo his twin misfortunes. Predictably, however, doing so only creates innumerable fresh problems.

To retrieve the situation, Barry teams with a carefree youthful version of himself (also Miller) from the timeline in which mum went unscathed as well as with a previously unknown variant (Michael Keaton) of his pal Bruce Wayne/Batman (Ben Affleck). Eventually, Krypton-born Supergirl (Sasha Calle) also joins the fray. For 71-year-old Keaton, playing Batman again for the first time since 1992's *Batman Returns* was a seminal moment.

Action abounds in director Andy Muschietti's sprawling saga. But the chronological convolutions he charts hover between interesting and confusing. As for Christina Hodson's script, it puts forward a view of suffering

that comports with Christian values. Thus original Barry is equal to the tasks he undertakes as the Flash precisely because of the trials he's undergone. Having evaded such calamities, frivolous, callow kid Barry, by contrast, is less than heroic – at least initially.

While younger moviegoers would obviously benefit from the elder Barry's example, it comes intertwined with elements that make this seem an unusually hard-edged project compared to similar adaptations. These include consistent swearing and an embarrassing lesson for Barry 2.0 about why the Flash requires a specially designed low-friction suit.

Sound at heart but somewhat gritty on the surface, *The Flash* will divert parents. But our advice is probably to leave their adolescents at home, which seems to mean this is another film that intentionally misses its demographic.

VATICAN LETTER

DAVID MILLS

How should we respond, when we find out our faith heroes are made of clay?

The Facebook post from four years ago didn't age well.

I'd written: 'Jean Vanier's gift to social media: Living such a life that when he died not a single person criticised him. Not only no direct attacks, but no 'yes, but' and 'on the other hand' articles. Just appreciation. It's a joy when everyone can combine in respect and admiration for someone.' He died on 7th May, 2019.

Friends said that they'd seen some critical posts, but the posts seem to have all been the predictably dyspeptic stuff from people who look for reasons to put down anyone being praised. No one posted anything about his secret life of sexual abuse, because no one knew about it, except the victims.

Vanier, you may remember, was the universally admired founder and leader of a movement called L'Arche, which creates homes in which people with intellectual or developmental disabilities live with others who don't have them. He began by living with two men with disabilities, which for someone with his advantages – of family, wealth and education – was not a good career move. His peers were out making their way up in the world. He didn't do that.

His example spread and became institutionalised, and he wrote a lot of books readers found very helpful. Eventually, he won a raft of prestigious awards for his life and his thinking. They included the Pacem in Terris Award (previous recipients include Martin Luther King Jr., Dorothy Day, Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama) and the Templeton Prize (accepted as a kind-of religious Nobel Prize, which had been awarded to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Jane Goodall, and again, Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama).

The world loved him and to all appearances, for very good reasons. He was a Catholic in public life of whom Catholics could be proud. As the news kept hammering us with stories of priests abusing children and bishops covering it up, he was a public Catholic of whom we did not worry about feeling ashamed. There, we could say, is a man who represents our faith in practice.

The public man was. The private man wasn't.

It's a haunting reminder of how little we know about public people, and how much someone's public image may be mediated to fit a widely desired narrative – people want heroes or villains, depending.



Jean Vanier spent much of his life championing the rights of the disabled, but his secret life was exposed after his death

It's a reminder of how people can divide themselves, being one kind of person with some people and another kind of person with others.

Vanier's story offers a disturbing warning about how easily our admiration can be misplaced. It reminds us of how easily the first can be the public man and the second a private man known only to a very few, and many of those few victims.

And the human reality that stories like Vanier's reveals is a loss. Admiration for another who deserves it is a human pleasure and it does us good. We should look up to others, recognising their wisdom or kindness or sacrifice, admiring

in them the love for others that reflects God's love for his people, and wanting to be more like them.

I'm a better man because I've admired some people I knew, because they were admirable. Most were Christians, but some weren't. They showed goodness in action – in real life – and by the way they lived and the kind of people they were, they encouraged me to do as they did.

We admire the saints. We should be able to admire those among us who may be saints. But then there are stories like Jean Vanier's. Too many stories like his. And not just the big stories of national or international figures, but stories of

people we know. I don't know how many times I've heard someone say, often with deep distress, a version of 'I'd known him for years and I never would have thought ...'

We should be able to admire possible saints, not least because their example encourages us to be saintlier. Their example strengthens our faith, as evidence of God's work in the world. There's something wrong with a person who can't admire others. But then that person isn't always wrong.

What do we do? I think we need to learn to admire without investing. We can admire what we see but shouldn't rest our faith or our commitment to the Church on the people we admire.

If we make someone like the acclaimed Jean Vanier an argument for Catholicism, we make the exposed Jean Vanier an argument against it. It's very tempting to say, 'Abusive priests? Well, look at Jean Vanier!' but that could backfire, as it did.

The basic instruction God gives us isn't 'admire your neighbour,' but rather 'love your neighbour.' The one way you can love celebrity Catholics is to pray for them, and as it turns out, they may need it more than you know.

VATICAN LETTER

SCOTT RICHERT

Understanding the unvarnished truth of the Eucharist

Reading *My Son Carlo: Carlo Acutis Through the Eyes of His Mother*, (recently released in English translation by OSV), I came across a passage from Carlo's own writings: 'Like creation, the Passion continues. That is, until the end of the world, of this world.'

Sometimes, an insight of a saint is so obviously true that it may seem trite. Yet such obvious truths can also often be fodder for deep meditation. The Passion continues at every Eucharist, from the Last Supper, which prefigured Christ's sacrifice on the cross the next day, down through every Mass and Divine Liturgy celebrated today, tomorrow and until the end of time. That much, any well-catechized Catholic knows.

Yet so much is contained in that introductory phrase, 'Like creation' ... it's not just that many of us Catholics have had our intellects and imaginations so shaped by a reductionist scientific worldview

that we have forgotten that God's act of creation continues 'until the end of the world, of this world.'

God is not the divine clockmaker of Enlightenment deism, who set everything in motion and never quit resting after the seventh day. His creative activity continues – a reality that we recognize when we speak of ourselves as 'co-creators' with God (for instance, in sexual or artistic conception) but otherwise too often banish from our thoughts. Carlo reminds us of that reality, and that is important enough.

But there's more. 'Like creation,' the Passion continues, 'Christ's sacrifice on the cross pays the debt of Adam's sin and makes it possible for those of us who are baptised into Christ to live, once again, a life of grace.'

'In that way, the Passion is a re-creation of a fallen world, as much a continuous creative action as creation itself. And because the effects of original sin, of that fall of

our first parents, continue to distort creation, Christ's act of re-creation must continue 'until the end of the world, of this world.'

After Adam's sin, God did not abandon us but sent his only-begotten Son to restore us to life. And just as we continue to sin because Adam once did, Christ continues to save those who unite themselves to him in baptism and in his sacrifice on the cross, made present always and everywhere that the Eucharist is celebrated.

This is the heart of the sacred mysteries that we celebrate at every Mass. When we participate in Mass or in the Divine Liturgy, we are united to the very act of our redemption, and in fact take part in it.

Earlier in that same passage, Carlo writes, 'Moreover, it is a very good exercise to unite ourselves intimately to the Passion and to the death of the Lord. Paul said that Christ did through him what was lacking in his Passion.'

That passage from St. Paul is one with which many people struggle. Is St. Paul saying that Christ's death was not enough? No; as St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, Christ's death was sufficient, and more than sufficient, to accomplish our redemption. But in uniting ourselves to Christ in his Passion and death through the liturgical mystery of every Mass, which culminates in the Sacrament of the Eucharist that re-presents that Passion and death right here and right now, we play a role in re-creating the world and allowing Christ to re-create the world through us.

The French mystical poet Pierre-Jean Jouve, who converted to Catholicism in 1924, once wrote that 'Mysteries are not truths that lie beyond us; they are truths that comprehend us.' The mystery of the Eucharist is not an intellectual problem to be solved but an experience to be lived. By our baptism into Christ, we have

become a part of that mystery.

Jouve uses the word 'comprehend' here to mean that we are contained within the mystery; we experience the truth of the mystery of the Eucharist, the mystery of our redemption, from the inside out. But the other, more common sense of 'comprehend' – to grasp the nature, significance or meaning of something – is at play here as well. In the Eucharist, we come to understand the nature, significance and the meaning of our lives.

In our participation in the Eucharist, the Passion continues, and through us Christ re-creates the world. The Eucharist is not just a communion among believers that binds us all together (though it is that, too); it is the mystery through which we participate in the death of Christ so that we may rise again in him – not just at the end of time, but right here, right now, in this world that God is creating and Christ re-creates.

Sometimes, in sport and in politics, you have to stand up for what you believe in

FAITH IN SPORT

Dr Colm Hickey

I was in Holywood recently. Not Hollywood USA, but Holywood, Belfast, Ireland. I was there for the funeral of my uncle, Sir Liam McCollum, a former judge, who died peacefully in his sleep aged 90.

Now you might think, in all reasonableness, what has any of this got to do with my regular articles about sport, and the role it can play in helping give people a sense of fitness, joy, entertainment and recreation, on one hand, and helping a sense of community cohesion on the other? If you read on, you will see my point.

My uncle was a keen, but limited golfer. He was no match for the greatest golfer to come out of Holywood, Rory McIlroy, a four-time major winner who came second in the US open at the weekend.

McIlroy is an interesting figure. In many ways his career is a microcosm of the issues of sport on the island of Ireland and the search that many of us have for a sense of our true and authentic identity.

As he was born in Northern Ireland, McIlroy could choose whether to represent the Republic of Ireland or Great Britain and Northern Ireland (effectively the UK). He chose to compete for Ireland in the men's Olympic golf tournament in Tokyo in 2020 because "he has always". Although he has said he "feels more British" than Irish, he had always played under the Irish flag when competing on a national stage as a junior, and felt no need to switch allegiances for the Games in Tokyo.

"I made it more difficult for myself than I needed to," McIlroy explained when announcing the decision. "My feeling towards it was more 'What will other people think?' Once I got that out of my head, and just tried to do what was right for me, then it became easy. It was me wrestling with all those things."

He continued: "As I said, previously, once I left trying not to upset anyone aside, then it was a pretty easy decision. The decision was I'm going to play golf for the country or the nation that I've always played for through my junior and amateur days and now into the professional game. Even though the Olympics has given me this choice, there really wasn't a choice because all I've done throughout my life is play golf for Ireland – so why would that change

"McIlroy had a choice, spoke out about what he believed, compromised, and sought accommodation with rivals and, displaying moral courage, sought the common good..."



Rory McIlroy
Photo: Jeff Haynes, Reuters

just because the tournament has changed. That was my decision."

Whether McIlroy was being pragmatic, political, or patriotic is for others to decide. In many ways, he was in a no-win situation, being criticised by the 'other side' no matter what decision he took. Yet, as we go on in life, we are frequently and increasingly called to make decisions that will never satisfy everyone and put us in a situation where 'the others' criticise.

We live in a world of increasing separation where extremism seems to be the order of the day. You can see the splits everywhere. Look at America and the differences between Democrats and Republicans, or in Sweden, France,

Hungary, India, or Turkey – or even, dare I write it, Britain. We see the rise of populism, the split between left and right and the centrist parties disappearing into a political black hole' as countries are consumed by the politics of envy and hatred.

As in life, so as in sport, where the politics of envy have come to dominate the world of golf with the merger between the PGA Tour, DP World Tour and LIV Golf (a series funded through the Saudi-backed Public Investment Fund, which is joining as a partner). McIlroy, who was an opponent of LIV Golf, refusing to join the rebels, said: "Whether you like it or not, the PIF are going to keep spending money

in golf... at least the PGA Tour now controls how that money is spent."

He continued: "One of the biggest sovereign wealth funds in the world – would you rather have them as a partner or an enemy? At the end of the day, money talks and you'd rather have them as a partner. I think, ultimately, when I try to remove myself from the situation and look at the bigger picture and 10 years down the line, I think this is going to be good for the game of professional golf. It unifies it and it secures its financial future."

He concluded: "At least it means that the litigation goes away, which has been a massive burden for everyone involved with the tour

and playing on the tour. We can start to work towards some sort of way of unifying the game at the elite level."

McIlroy confronted a problem that had split the community he loved. At first, he was against the merger, but for the good of the game, and for the benefit of all, saw in it the beginnings of a new sense of unity, although acknowledging that it might take time. McIlroy had a choice, spoke out about what he believed, compromised, and sought accommodation with rivals and, displaying moral courage, sought the common good.

So where does all this leave the legacy of my uncle? Well, he too was educated in Northern Ireland. He then studied law at University College Dublin, before moving to Belfast becoming, progressively, a solicitor, and barrister and then a judge.

To accept the appointment to the judiciary in the 1970s at the height of 'The Troubles' took courage. I once asked him why he did it. He told me that, if Catholics did not play their part in the administration of justice, there was no hope for anyone, and that the men of violence would win. He had to make security arrangements. He was given two police protection officers. He was hated equally by the paramilitaries: the IRA hated him because they saw him as someone supporting British Imperialism, and loyalist paramilitaries hated him because he was a Catholic. Yet, despite being a devout Catholic, he was no sectarian and none of his eight children attended denominational schools. He displayed political courage, being one of the founders of the Alliance party in the province, and standing (unsuccessfully) for a seat in Stormont.

His loved all sport. He supported the predominantly Catholic football club Derry City, the all-Ireland rugby team and was a member of the largely loyalist Royal Belfast Golf Club, the oldest golf club in Ireland founded in 1614, where the reception to thank the 300 mourners who attended his funeral was held.

It was there, looking out onto Belfast Lough, that I reflected that when he was first appointed as a barrister in the 1950s, the thought that a Catholic could be a member was unthinkable. Yet he gave his life to public service, to fight for law, order, and justice, to love Ireland and its people, Catholic or protestant, to seek and strive for reconciliation.

He was, like Rory McIlroy, a great man of Holywood, of Ulster, and of Ireland.



“

My uncle? He became, progressively, a solicitor, and barrister and then a judge. To accept the appointment to the judiciary in the 1970s at the height of 'The Troubles' took courage. He was hated equally by the paramilitaries: the IRA hated him because they saw him as someone supporting British Imperialism, and loyalist paramilitaries hated him because he was a Catholic.

A pictorial round-up of the past seven days

Camille Pissarro's *Le grand noyer a Eragny, apres-midi* during a preview of Christie's forthcoming 20th and 21st century art sales, at the Christie's auction house in London. The sale includes works by Frank Auerbach, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Lucian Freud.



The sunrises at 4.25am at St Mary's Lighthouse in Whitley Bay, on the North East coast of England, the day before Summer Solstice - the longest day of the year.



Left, people in punts make their way along the River Cam after watching a firework display during the Trinity May Ball at Cambridge University's Trinity College. A celebration of the end of the academic year, the first official May Ball was held in Trinity College's grounds in 1866 with the tradition quickly spreading to the other colleges.

Left, volunteer nest minder Ciaran Walsh holds four owlets after they have been ringed close to the shores of Lough Neagh in Crumlin, Co. Antrim. The newest broods of barn owls have been ringed by conservationists



The Princess of Wales with Sir Paul McCartney (second right) and his wife Nancy Shevell (right) during a visit to re-open the National Portrait Gallery in London, following a three-year refurbishment programme.



Left, artist Sophie Cunningham at the unveiling of her 'Bags of Hope' installation on London's South Bank, commissioned by Migrant Help to mark this year's World Refugee Day.



Left, the Carhenge installation by artist Joe Rush, on the site of Glastonbury Festival at Worthy Farm in Somerset. Made of 24 vintage cars erected in the centre of the festival, the installation emulates the ancient stone structure at Stonehenge.

LITURGICAL CALENDARS

Ordinary Form

Sunday Year A, Weekday Cycle I
Sunday, June 25: 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time Jer. 20:10-13; Ps. 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35 r.14; Rom. 5:12-15; Mt. 10:26-33
Monday, June 26: Gen.12:1-9; Ps. 33:12-13, 18-20, 22; Mt.7:1-5
Tuesday, June 27: Weekday of Ordinary Time or St Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop, Doctor of the Church Gen.13:2, 5-18; Ps. 15:2-5; Mt.7:6, 12-14
Wednesday, June 28: St Irenaeus, Bishop, Martyr Gen. 15: 1-12, 17-18; Ps.105:1-4, 6-9; Mt.7:15-20
Thursday, June 29: St Peter and St Paul Acts 12:1-11; Ps. 34:2-9, r. 5 or 8; 2 Tim. 4:6-8, 17-18; Mt.16:13-19
Friday, June 30: Weekday of Ordinary Time or The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church Gen.17:1, 9-10, 15-22; Ps. 128:1-5; 14; Mt.8:1-4
Saturday, July 1: Weekday of Ordinary Time or St Oliver Plunket, Bishop, Martyr Gen.18:1-15; Lk.1:46-50, 53-55; Mt.8:5-17

Extraordinary Form

According to the Roman Missal of 1962 (Tridentine Rite)
Sunday, June 25: Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Rom. 8:18-23; Lk. 5:1-11
Monday, June 26: SS John and Paul martyrs Ecclus. 44:10-15; Lk. 12:1-8
Tuesday, June 27: Feria
 Readings of Sunday repeated
Wednesday, June 28: Vigil of SS Peter and Paul, apostles Acts 3: 1-10; Jn. 21: 15-19

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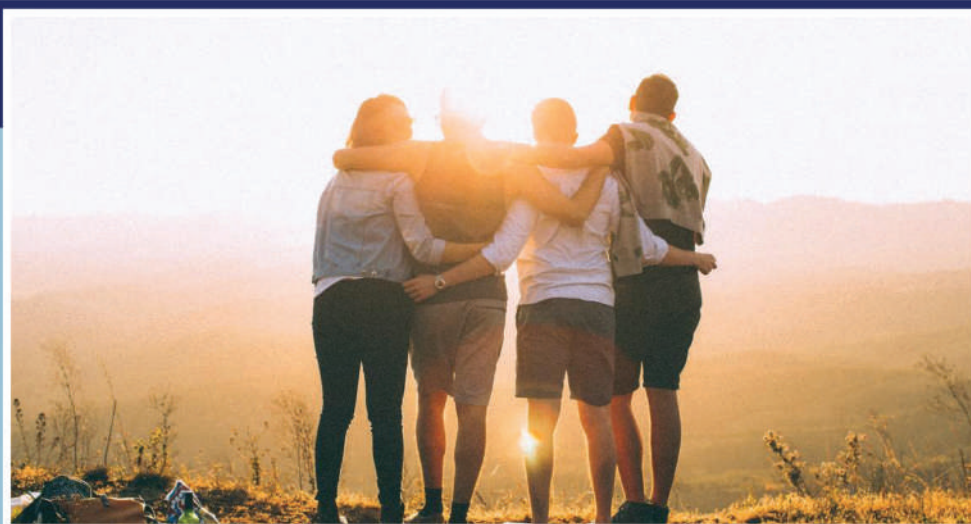
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