

# FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

January 2021

## Doors closed for now but vaccine offers hope

BY RONNIE CONVERY

**POPE Francis has urged Catholics to take the vaccine against COVID-19, calling it an “ethical act”.**

The Pontiff’s words will be welcomed by parishioners across Scotland as the roll-out of the vaccination steps up a gear this month and will set their mind at ease after some critics had questioned the new therapy’s ethical legitimacy.

Pope Francis made his comments in a highly personal interview with Italian TV station Canale 5 in which he revealed that he has signed up to receive the vaccine himself as soon as it becomes available to residents of Vatican City.

### Ethical

He said: “I believe that, ethically, everyone has to get the vaccine. It is an ethical option because it concerns not only your life but also that of others.”

Recalling the introduction of the polio vaccine and other common childhood immunisations, he said, “I don’t understand why some say this could be a dangerous vaccine. If doctors present it to you as something that can be fine and has no special dangers, why not take it?”

The mass vaccination programme is seen as the only way out of the current crisis which has led to church closures across Scotland once more.

The Scottish Government’s decision to close all places of worship – except for weddings and funerals – in the context of a stay-

## New lockdown brings dismay but Pope urges Catholics to make ‘ethical choice’ and be vaccinated



at-home order designed to minimise interpersonal contact has drawn strong reactions.

### Perplexed

Scotland’s bishops have asked for re-opening of churches at the next revision of lockdown measures. In a statement they said they were perplexed by the decision and noted that to many it will seem “arbitrary and unfair”.

The Bishops wrote: “We are very aware of the disappointment these closures will cause not only to our own Catholic community, but to many of our fellow-Christians and those of other faiths in Scotland. We wish to emphasise again the spiritual, social and psychological benefits provided by continuing public worship, and we ask for these to be taken into full account in future decisions...”

“While we unequivocally share the common goal of protecting public health, we urge the Scottish Government, when the present measures are reviewed later in January, to reconsider these restrictions in the light of the above concerns.”

Catholics have been split over the new wave of church closures. Some have taken to social media to demand the immediate reopening of places of worship, while others have urged caution.

### Poll

An online poll run by the St Andrew’s Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education showed a two to one majority in support of the temporary restriction.

Archbishop Tartaglia urged families to remain faithful to their best traditions despite the imposed hardships caused by the pandemic.

### Faith

He said: “I encourage you, nonetheless, and indeed even more earnestly at this time, to build your family life upon your faith in God. Pass on your faith to your children. Teach them to pray. When you can do so again safely, bring them to Mass and to the Sacraments.”

“Show them the meaning of marriage by your own loving union with your spouse. Teach them the meaning of family life by the way you live the life of the family. May Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Holy Family of Nazareth, inspire and intercede for all our families and for the family of the Church.”



**Froscote Roofing** 

UPVC Fascias, Soffits & Gutters *The Felt Roofing Specialists*

All types of Felt Roofing: Domestic & Commercial

- New Build
- Strip & Renewal Repairs
- 10 & 20 Year Warranties

Free Estimates & Quotations *Our Guarantee is quality*

Tel: 0141 552 5125 / 07710 233 395 *Recommended in Which magazine*

## Clergy changes for city parishes

**I**T'S all change at two Glasgow parishes after new clerical appointments which will allow hospital chaplains to access the country's largest hospital quicker than before.

The clergy of St Anthony's, Govan have swapped with the priests at St Columba's, Woodside who serve as hospital chaplains at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Campus. The move to Govan will allow the Spiritans – or Holy Ghost Fathers – to respond to sick calls in minutes.

Fr Thomas will move to St Anthony's to be joined by Fr Kingsley. Fr Ambrose, the current parish priest of St Columba's, will not make the move as he has been called to a parish in London.

Fr Ambrose said: "It will make it easier especially for the night calls. It has been a joy to be here in Glasgow and I

BY MARY MCGINTY

will miss the Scots whom I love so much."

For Fr Peter Dowling, whose order – the Blessed Sacrament Fathers – has served in Glasgow since his arrival in 1990, the exchange comes after 15 happy years in Govan.

Fr Peter said: "You get so involved in the lives of the people through the sacraments. In my time in Govan we celebrated the ordination of Fr Darren which was a great blessing for the parish. The collaboration between us and the Church of Scotland and the Salvation Army was always a great ecumenical team effort."

With commitment to spread devotion to the Eucharist at the heart of the order's mission, Fr Dowling will establish daily Eucharistic devotion in his new parish as soon as the current situation permits.

## Brendan's lockdown legacy

**A** GLASGOW artist whose striking portraits of St Andrew and St Mungo have greeted visitors to St Andrew's Cathedral since its refurbishment, is using his talents to support the global seafarers' charity Stella Maris in its centenary year.

Former principal art teacher Brendan Berry, whose work can also be seen in a number of Catholic churches, is donating print sales from one of his paintings for an exhibition which had to be cancelled because of Covid.

Entitled 'The Spring', it was painted for the annual Lentfest art exhibition organised by the Archdiocese of Glasgow Arts Project (AGAP) whose theme for 2020 was 'The Sea' to mark the hundred years since Stella Maris was founded in Glasgow.

Brendan, a parishioner of St Gabriel's, Merrylee, who also previously taught at the former St Leonard's Secondary, Easterhouse and Holyrood Secondary, in Glasgow's south side, said: "I've been involved with the AGAP exhibitions since the first one ten years ago and helped organise some of the early ones."

"Each year I always entered one of my own paintings but this year the exhibition was cancelled so I decided to do my bit for Stella Maris by offering prints for sale with every penny going to the charity."

"I painted 'The Spring' as a visual metaphor of what Stella Maris means to seafarers. The scene depicts a pool with a spring of fresh

Picture by Paul McSherry



BY BRIAN SWANSON

water. A person is reaching into the pool to slake their thirst and scooping out fresh water using a scallop shell. For centuries it has been used as a symbol for pilgrims. The horsetail plants growing up through the water represent the difficulties which many encounter in their travels. Beside the pool there is rest and shade, coolness from the heat of the day.

"The water lilies represent the beauty of life, refreshment and access to the sacraments, which often is missed in the need to get to a destination. Stella Maris is The Spring – providing shelter, food, friendship and spiritual rejuvenation. We are all pilgrims on our own journeys through life. We remember them in our prayers."

Brendan, whose brother is Canon Des Berry, parish priest of St Joseph's, Wemyss Bay, also created Stations of the Cross in beaten brass for St Peter's, Bellsmyre, Dumbarton.

Euan McArthur, Scotland Development Officer for Stella Maris, said: "We are extremely grateful to Brendan for his generosity."

The Spring is a reminder of the challenges seafarers face on a daily basis.

"For Brendan to think about Stella Maris in their centenary year is a truly wonderful gesture."

■ **Prints of the painting can be ordered from [Brendanart16@gmail.com](mailto:Brendanart16@gmail.com) A4 size £20, A3 £35, A2 £45. Prices include postage.**

**blaneycarnan**  
SOLICITORS

BUSINESS AND PROPERTY LAWYERS

Standard Buildings, 94 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6PH

Telephone +44 (0) 141 248 8111 Fax +44 (0) 141 221 8420

E-mail [mail@blaneycarnan.com](mailto:mail@blaneycarnan.com)

## Bishops urge UK Government to sign up to nuclear weapons ban

**S**COTLAND'S bishops have joined up with their colleagues in England and Wales to call on the UK Government to change its stance on nuclear weapons.

The bishops made their appeal to mark the coming into force of a new international agreement which the UK Government has refused to sign.

The Bishops wrote: "On Friday 22 January 2021 the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons comes into force. This is a historic milestone on the path to nuclear disarmament and an opportunity to refocus

on genuine peacebuilding rooted in dialogue, justice, respect for human dignity, and care for our planet.

### Elimination

"In setting out the 'moral and humanitarian imperative' for complete elimination of nuclear weapons, Pope Francis reminded us that 'international peace and stability cannot be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation.'"

"We urge support for the Treaty and repeat our call for the UK to forsake its nuclear arsenal. The resources spent on manufacturing, main-



taining and upgrading these weapons of mass destruction, should be reinvested to alleviate the suffering of the poorest and most vulner-

able members of our society, for the Common Good of all peoples.

"At the same time, we implore the government to

strengthen its arms control regulations, tackling the manufacture and sale of other weaponry, which continues to destroy so many lives throughout the world.

### Dignity

"Above all we pray: 'Lord, Father of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity; pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit. Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.'"

The letter was signed for Scotland's bishops by Bishop William Nolan, Bishop of

Galloway.

The UK Government's position is diametrically opposed to the treaty. In a statement issued at the conclusion of the UN negotiations, the Westminster administration stated: "The UK has not taken part in the negotiation of this treaty, and does not intend to sign, ratify or become party to it. The treaty will therefore not be binding on the UK. Furthermore, the UK would not accept any argument that this treaty can constitute a development of customary international law binding on the UK or on other non-parties."



# Saint Mungo Festival goes online

**THE annual festival honouring Glasgow's patron, Saint Mungo, has gone online for the first time in its twelve-year history.**

But the dedicated volunteers who have spent months planning behind the scenes have pledged that the same high standard of events will remain, even although there are fewer of them this year.

"We're calling it our pocket-sized version," said Cathie McMaster, chair of the Mediaeval Glasgow Trust which organises MungoFest, "because for obvious reasons there are fewer live events this year.

"Like everywhere else Glasgow has been affected by the ongoing stresses and challenges of the pandemic. But we have worked hard to ensure that the St Mungo Festival would go ahead this year, although mostly on Zoom as so many other

BY **BRIAN SWANSON** organisations have had to do since the pandemic began.

"But despite that, we aim to retain the essence of why the festival was founded in the first place – to celebrate St Mungo, Glasgow, the city's history and its people."

A number of online events have already taken place but the good news is that if you have missed them, many of the events will be uploaded to the festival's YouTube page so you can watch them at your leisure.

Events which have already taken place include a lecture on Mediaeval Glasgow in Scottish Literature by the highly respected Catholic academic, Professor Gerry Carruthers of Glasgow University; a talk on the legends behind Glasgow's coat of arms hosted by Rev Mark Johnson, Minister of Glasgow Cathedral, Dr Gordon

Wyllie, Trustee of the Glasgow Medieval Trust and Canon Joseph Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms, and the annual ecumenical service from Glasgow Cathedral.

Following a successful tour in 2018, *Mungo: Legends of a Scottish Saint*, a play by Stephen Callaghan with music and songs by Vincent Mellon will also feature online in the festival this year.

For those with an interest in the early days of Scottish Christianity, a lecture by Catherine Mooney and her husband Professor Thomas Joshua Cooper, a renowned international photographer, is a must.

For the past seven years the couple, who live in Glasgow, have been visiting sites associated with the early Celtic saints gathering material. More than 1000 locations have been visited and around 250 pictures taken.

Catherine will present some of her research and a selection of photographs by her husband who is Senior Researcher in Fine Art, at Glasgow School of Art.

■ **For more information go to [https://mediaevalglasgow.org/websiteorgotothefestival's Facebook page](https://mediaevalglasgow.org/websiteorgotothefestival'sFacebookpage) (facebook.com/stmungofestival)**



Picture by Paul Trafford



## Patron's legacy lives on in Glasgow today

**EARLY medieval Glasgow was called 'Cathures' (a derivation, probably, of 'fortress on the Clyde'). Its literature in the 12th century was related to the fact that the city was an important ecclesiastical centre, especially revolving around its foundational sixth-century saint Mungo or Kentigern, whose feast day falls on 13th January.**

By the 1180s the city was known as Glasgow (perhaps 'green hollow' becoming 'dear green place') when its Bishop, Jocelyn, commissioned a Life of Kentigern from another Jocelyn (the Cistercian writer) and this work promoted not only the holiness of Mungo but the life of his mother, Taneu or Enoch and his following in the footsteps of St Ninian and his relationship to his contemporary St Columba.

The saintly power of Scotland's great western metropolis was boosted also at the end of the 12th century by poems such as 'Song on the Death of Somerled' written by William, a clerk (or priest) at the Cathedral. This Latin poem documents Glasgow being saved from

**The opening lecture of the St Mungo Festival 2021, which was delivered online for the first time, was given by noted Catholic academic Professor Gerard Carruthers, holder of the Francis Hutcheson Chair of Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow. An extract of his thought-provoking talk is reproduced here**

the marauding brigand, Somerled, after prayers to St Mungo facilitate Somerled's head being hacked off by a priest and presented to the Bishop.

### Mediaeval

Glasgow's real-life muscle in current affairs is very much boosted by the power of prayer and it becomes an archbishopric from the 1480s. In the medieval period cities such as Edinburgh and Stirling fuelled their claims to power via association with the monarchy, including with a more prominent secular poetry, largely absent in the west (although it is likely that some such literature associated with Glasgow was lost in the period of Reformation).

The Protestant Reformation marked, obviously enough, a theological break

with Medieval Catholicism, but the Glaswegian physical and even intellectual structures of the latter remained essentially intact: the University, founded by papal bull in 1451 (making it the fourth oldest seat of higher learning in the English-speaking world) and the cathedral itself. A 19th century painting by David Roberts 'Defence of the Cathedral by the Trades' House in 1579 during the Reformation' features a perhaps apocryphal story, but nonetheless reflects a spirit in the city loath to see the stone of its great church recycled to other uses.

The university in 1870 moved to the west end, away from the High St and its proximity to the cathedral. In one sense a break from its medieval life, but in another its new neo-gothic grandeur spoke



of a revival of things pre-Reformation, including the leadership here of the third Marquess of Bute, a Catholic convert, whose funds endowed the magnificent Bute

Hall at the university.

On a lesser scale we find the politically radical poet, Alexander Rodger (1784–1846) celebrating St Mungo in his poetry and the great novelist

John Galt (1779–1839) writing even-handedly of both sides in the Reformation, including events around Glasgow, in his novel *Ringan Gilhaize* (1823). The proud revivifying of St Mungo's Cathedral through the 19th and into the 20th century by the Church of Scotland offers further proof that medieval Glasgow had never really left the city's heart, both physically and metaphorically.

In even more recent times, we have Edwin Morgan's collection of poetry about the city, *Cathures* (2002) or the entertaining Gil Cunningham mystery novels by Pat McIntosh set around the cathedral precincts. These include, very suitably in the central conceit of its title, *St Mungo's Robin* (2008). With its own fictional medieval detective, Glasgow is a city, clearly, whose pre-Reformation identity is still powerfully deployed in its citizens' imaginations.

In these thankfully ecumenical times, today's Glaswegians can grasp a common historical heritage which both survives and traverses confessional bounds.



# Not even a pandemic can stop the faithful outreach of the Wayside Club

**PAINTMYHOME**  
by bell

Reliable & quality decorating services for your home.

Local family run business since 1988.

sales@paintmyhome.co.uk  
Call Ian on 07876 593186  
www.PaintMyHome.co.uk



**Bernard Corrigan Ltd**  
WHOLESALE FISHMONGER • POULTERER & GAME DEALER

184-200 HOWARD STREET  
GLASGOW G1 4HW  
Telephone: 0141 552 4368 • Fax: 0141-552 4731



**St Nicholas Care Fund**  
A charity of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

The St. Nicholas Care Fund continues to offer grant assistance to charitable organisations and local groups supporting those in need particularly at this time of uncertainty. Applications will be being dealt with as soon as they are received. Information and guidance is available at [pct@rcag.org.uk](mailto:pct@rcag.org.uk)

[pct@rcag.org.uk](mailto:pct@rcag.org.uk) • 0141 226 5898 • Scottish Charity SC029832

**THE small group of volunteers begin the evening, as always, with a prayer to Our Lady of the Wayside.**

Outside their city centre base in Midland Street, on a dreich Glasgow night, another group waits patiently knowing that soon their prayers too will be answered.

This is not a fanciful notion. The Legion of Mary has never failed, literally, to deliver.

For almost 90 years generations of its volunteers in Glasgow have faithfully provided food and friendship to the marginalised, the lost, the lonely, the displaced ... They do this every single

**As the Legion of Mary prepares to celebrate 100 years of global caring for the needy, Brian Swanson joins local volunteers feeding the homeless in Glasgow during the pandemic where the demands on its services, and the need for more volunteers, are greater than ever**

night of the year as well as every Saturday afternoon. It is an astonishing commitment.

In the days before Covid – remember them? – meals, showers, social activities, and the celebration of Mass took place for those who wished to attend, took place every night inside the three-storey former warehouse

WORDS **BRIAN SWANSON**  
PICTURES **PAUL MCSHERRY**

which the organisation bought for £17,500 in 1979 and now serves as its permanent home.

Covid, you may be sure, was not going to bring that mission to an end.

"We were ahead of the

curve," said Legionary Lawrence McGarry, a parishioner of St Ninian's and Holy Family, Kirkintilloch, who has been involved with the charity for 30 years, "because even before the lockdown was announced back in March we took the decision to close and provide a takeaway service instead."

"Given the older type of building we have and the profile of our patrons, it was the right thing to do."

"Numbers didn't fall away – quite the opposite in fact – because other places that offer a similar service closed, so initially we were overwhelmed by the demand."

"And because some of



our volunteers were shielding we went from 18 active members to six, but we still managed to cover eight shifts a week."

As he spoke, volunteers Marion, Liz and Tommy, with strict adherence to the all too familiar Covid restrictions, finish preparing soup and sandwiches to add to food donated by, among others, the local Sikh community and St Andrew's Parish in Bearsden.

As the numbers in the lane outside grow – mostly men but a few women as well – the team begin filling carrier bags with food and lining them up on a table immediately behind the locked side door. Goody bags containing basic donated clothing – hats, gloves, underwear

– and toiletries are available for those who need them.

There's the inevitable banter as the door opens but there's a dignity here – no one barges to the front of the queue, no one steps out of line.

## 'Salt of the earth'

Lawrence hands the bags over one at a time in an operation that is slick and well-rehearsed but by no means lacking in warmth.

It's something that Sid, an 81-year-old ex-rigger, a teetotal non-smoker who ran marathons for fun back in the day, appreciates.

He lives in Cowcaddens and drives to Midland Street most nights in his converted van which in summer gives him the freedom to travel.

Sid, you will have gathered, is hardly the stereotype of a down-and-out.

He comes for the food, he says, because he doesn't cook, and hasn't done so for years but he soon admits it's also the companionship that keeps bringing him back for the past 15 years.

He said: "I'd be lost without this place – there's the truth. Its great work these people are doing, no danger..."

I meet George, 'just George mate ok?' who says: "I've got somewhere to stay but I depend on places like this – what else can I do? See these people mate? Salt of the earth they are... As long as they're here I'll never go hungry that's for sure..."

It's worth noting that

while very few of those who benefit from the work of the Legion of Mary are, strictly speaking, homeless, it does not diminish their needs.

Lawrence said: "Many of our service users have their own tenancy while others are staying in temporary accommodation, sofa surfing at friends' houses, being accommodated at this time in hotels within the city and a few chose to sleep rough."

"We are seeing a growing number of migrants and as with all our patrons you get to hear some of their stories – others clam up but that's ok because we are here to provide a service not to judge anyone."

"As long as people come to our door we'll be here for them."

## The Legion of Mary

**THE object of the Legion of Mary is the glory of God through the holiness of its members developed by prayer and active co-operation in Mary's and the Church's work.**

The unit of the Legion of Mary is called a praesidium, which holds a weekly meeting, where prayer is intermingled with reports and discussion.

The Legion sees as its priority the spiritual and social welfare of each individual. The members participate in the life of the parish through visitation of fami-

lies, the sick, both in their homes and in hospitals and through collaboration in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by the parish.

Every legionary is required to carry out a weekly apostolic work in the spirit of faith and in union with Mary.

The Legion of Mary operates in about 170 countries.



The first meeting of the Legion of Mary took place in Myra House, Francis Street, Dublin, Ireland, on 7 September, 1921 and this centenary year events are planned all round the world to mark the foundation

With the approval and support of the Popes and a great many Bishops, Priests and Religious, as well as the prayers

and efforts of legionaries, the Legion, by the grace of God, has grown into a worldwide organisation with several million members.

The Cause for Beatification has been introduced for three legionaries: The Servant of God, Frank Duff (1889–1980), Founder of the Legion, who attended the Second Vatican Council as a Lay Observer; Venerable Edel Quinn (1907–1944), Legion Envoy to East Africa; and the Servant of God, Alfie Lambe (1932–1959), Legion Envoy to South America.

## Alex Black FUNERAL CARE

Golden Charter Funeral Plans

- 24 hour caring & professional service
- Funeral planning, advice and information
- Service room available with private restrooms

7 PEELGLEN ROAD DRUMCHAPEL G15 7XN	288 – 290 DYKE ROAD KNIGHTSWOOD G13 4QU	1927 MARYHILL ROAD MARYHILL G20 0BX
TELEPHONE <b>949 1234</b>	TELEPHONE <b>959 1234</b>	TELEPHONE <b>946 1234</b>



GLASGOW'S OLDEST TRADITIONAL MANUFACTURING SILVERSMITH

**VISIONS IN SILVER**  
MORRISON-IGNATIEFF SILVERSMITHS

Specialist in quality repairs and restoration of all silverware

Call into our workshop at **34 Argyll Arcade, 3rd Floor, Glasgow G2 8BD**  
Telephone **0141 204 1083** or **07957 834265**  
[www.visionsinsilver.co.uk](http://www.visionsinsilver.co.uk)

**T. McGowan & Sons**  
Monumental Sculptors

FAMILY FIRM ESTABLISHED 1947

**St. Kentigern's Cemetery**  
109 Trestra Road, Glasgow G23 5AA  
Telephone: 0141 946 2429

**Linn Cemetery**  
602 Lainshaw Drive, Glasgow G45 9SP  
Telephone: 0141 634 8515

**Dalbeth Cemetery**  
1920 London Road, Glasgow G32  
Telephone: 0141 778 4916

**Philipshill Cemetery**  
Westfield Road, East Kilbride G76  
Telephone: 0141 644 4535

NEW MEMORIALS • ADDITIONAL LETTERING • CLEANING  
All work completed in any cemetery. Brochure available on request

[www.tmcgowan.co.uk](http://www.tmcgowan.co.uk)

**B MAIN SCULPTORS**

OPEN 6 DAYS

PHONE FOR A FREE BROCHURE

We have 100 different styles of headstone to choose from at our showyard

**2'6" POLISHED GRANITE HEADSTONES FROM £450**

**0141 641 0088**

WHY PAY MORE THAN YOU HAVE TO!

**282 Main Street, Cambuslang, Glasgow (at Railway Station)**  
[www.mainheadstones.co.uk](http://www.mainheadstones.co.uk)

## LEGION'S APPEAL



**FOUNDED in Dublin in 1921 by Frank Duff, a Catholic layman who dedicated his life to caring for the poor, the Legion of Mary now has a presence in almost 200 countries worldwide.**

Then, as now, it is made up of volunteers like the dedicated helpers in Midland Street.

But more volunteers are needed to join the Legion of Mary which involves a few hours commitment each week as part of what is known as a praesidium, effectively the management committee, which works behind the scenes to ensure the smooth day to day running of the operation

Lawrence McGarry, whose day job is a plant and transport manager, explained how he first became involved 30 years ago.

He said: "Initially to help out I offered to make some sandwiches one Christmas, and have the opportunity to live out my faith. I then discovered the club was run by The Legion of Mary and soon became a member, and as they say the rest is history."

"I'd tell anyone considering joining that if we want to become good at something, music, sport, whatever, we have to practise it every week. "So if we want to get 'good at holiness', we must practise it every

week as well, and volunteering at the Wayside gives everyone the opportunity to live out the Gospel. It is a unique privilege and great blessing to be of service to those in need and who look to the club for support."

ScotRail regional manager George Allan, a parishioner at St Andrew's Bearsden, who joined nine years ago, said: "It's the Gospel in action, that's what it is. Some nights in here can be really hectic and hard work but when one of the patrons says 'God Bless' it's a feeling like no other and I go home with a spring in my step."

Volunteers include a Glasgow eye surgeon, an Iranian woman seeking asylum and a man who travels from Falkirk every Saturday to make soup to his own special recipe and has been doing so for years.

Rosie Fee, a recently retired office manager and parishioner of St Peter's Partick, is one of the newest recruits having joined as a Saturday volunteer a year ago.

She said: "I work with great people, it give me a focus, especially in lockdown and it's good to give something back. I absolutely love volunteering at the Wayside and I'd recommend it to anyone."

[www.franciscanvocations.org.uk](http://www.franciscanvocations.org.uk)

FOR WOMEN  
EXPLORING  
FRANCISCAN  
VOCAATION



# We must never forget the Golgotha of the modern world

January 27 marks the 76th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Between 1940 and 1945, the Nazi regime murdered more than a million people in Auschwitz, many killed in the gas chambers immediately upon arrival at the camp. Overall, six million Jews died in the Holocaust.

Pope Francis has constantly encouraged Catholics to mark the day as a moment of prayer, of atonement and of understanding. “In the face of this huge tragedy, this atrocity, indifference is not admissible and memory is a must,” he said last year on the anniversary. The Holy Father also invited each person to spend a moment on the anniversary in prayer and recollection with “each person saying in his own heart: ‘never again, never again!’”

*Flourish* Editor **Ronnie Convery** visited Auschwitz last year. He shares his reflections and impressions in this powerful article to mark the anniversary.

**U**NTIL last year, I had never visited Auschwitz.

The compulsion (desire is too frivolous a word) to visit the ultimate ‘anti-shrine’ was born early.

My mother was a girl during World War II. And in old age she recalled her shock when, during an interval at a film in the local cinema, the newsreel showed the liberation of the death camps.

For those of us who have grown up with such newsreels playing in the background of our daily consciousness, it is still a shock each time we see the black and white images of skeletal sacks of humanity, of children and elderly folk being hurried along to the chambers of death, of the mechanical diggers piling limp naked corpses, one on another, in a grotesque pyramid of tortured flesh.

One can only imagine the sheer shock, disbelief, horror and revulsion which must have gripped those who saw the evidence for the first time.

She would speak about it in old age, still moved – literally – to tears. Maybe that was where the compulsion to visit the place for myself

was born.

When I crossed through the *Arbeit Macht Frei* gateway birds were singing. It was a warm late summer day. The surrounding countryside was beautiful ... tame, gentle, full of life, its soft verdant folds welcoming. The irony lay heavy in the still air.

Inside I joined the obligatory ‘tour’ to see all the horrors which risk being somehow ‘tamed’ by repeated showings on TV documentaries ... the mountains of spectacles, the piles of human hair, the double barbed wire and electric fences and the small – painfully banal in their dimensions – furnaces where the Nazis cursed and spat fury at the slowness of the process of burning human flesh and dispersing human bone in the early days of the ‘final solution’.

But it was the minutiae which struck me. The barbarous detail of Auschwitz and its nearby industrial killing plant of Birkenau. What follows is an attempt to go below the big numbers and big adjectives, to try to imagine the daily detail which must have corroded so many minds and spirits

just as viciously and mercilessly as the beatings, starvation and torture corroded the flesh.

Anxiety ...

The mental torture of not knowing if one’s loved ones were alive or dead, well or sick, frightened or calm ... can you imagine such torture when applied to your son and daughter, spouse, mother, father, brother, fiancé, best friend, neighbour? The multiplication of anxiety must have been unbearable for the few who lived beyond the instant selection for gassing.

Smell ...

At most prisoners were allowed a bath twice a year. They lived in huts, often cursed and spat fury at the slowness of the process of burning human flesh and dispersing human bone in the early days of the ‘final solution’.

Those chosen to ‘live’ were forced to sleep three, four or five to a shelf (to call the sleeping spaces ‘beds’ would be an injustice) just to avoid the rats scurrying about the floors and the icy moisture seeping through the earth and through their



Main gate of Auschwitz

Piles of crockery taken from prisoners after arrival at the death camps



skin. Think for a minute of the small torture of smelling one’s own sweat after a sports event or the stench of a shirt after it has been stained by one’s own vomit... and multiply that experience 1000 times.

## Humiliation ...

The Nazis were expert at humiliating their victims. The pyjama suits, the number to replace a name, the ritual beatings which were required viewing even for those not personally subjected to the bruising thrashing cane.

I put my head round the door of a small room – perhaps three metres by four. This was the room in which women who had been sentenced to death at trials held at a cheap wooden table next door (trials which averaged two minutes in length) were sent to strip before execution. They were shouted at. “Leave your clothes in a neat pile ...” and then they were dragged, naked, by the hair, to the death wall, where bored Nazi ghouls fired bullets into the back of their head until they were reasonably sure they were

dead, between draws on a cigarette. Even in dying, humiliation was rigorously imposed.

## Desperation ...

I noticed a small fence with the word “Alt” painted black on white wood. Utterly unremarkable until the guide explained that this sign was being manned by camp guards to prevent prisoners throwing themselves against the electrified railings to commit suicide rather than carry on living in the hell of the camp.

I turned away and my eye caught sight of a high metallic structure rather like a clothes rail ... in fact it was the mass gallows, sited in full view of the roll-call square where prisoners would be forced to stand for hour after boring, freezing, terrifying hour if someone went missing. *Pour décourager les autres* men and women would be selected to be hanged in full view of the petrified masses while they waited.

## Efficiency ...

I winced at the extraordinary professionalisation

of torture and death by the staff and commanders of the camp. Birkenau was built because although it was easy enough to kill at Auschwitz, it took too long to burn the bodies. The new facility was planned with efficiency in mind. But once more it is the detail which clings to me like a ghastly odour ... Guards would shoo unsuspecting victims to the gas chambers, assuring them they were shower units. The cruel farce was rigorously maintained by making a fuss that the unsuspecting victims should leave their suitcases in neat piles and that they should leave names on all items of clothing for later collection.

Then the naked, embarrassed, often shivering crowd would be divided. Small children in first ... “That’s it ... go ahead, right up to the back wall.” Now the grandparents ... “yes, keep going, tight up against the children ...” Older adults filled the next section of the death room, and then the teenagers and 20-some-things were ordered to squeeze in and squeeze up, to push the others further in

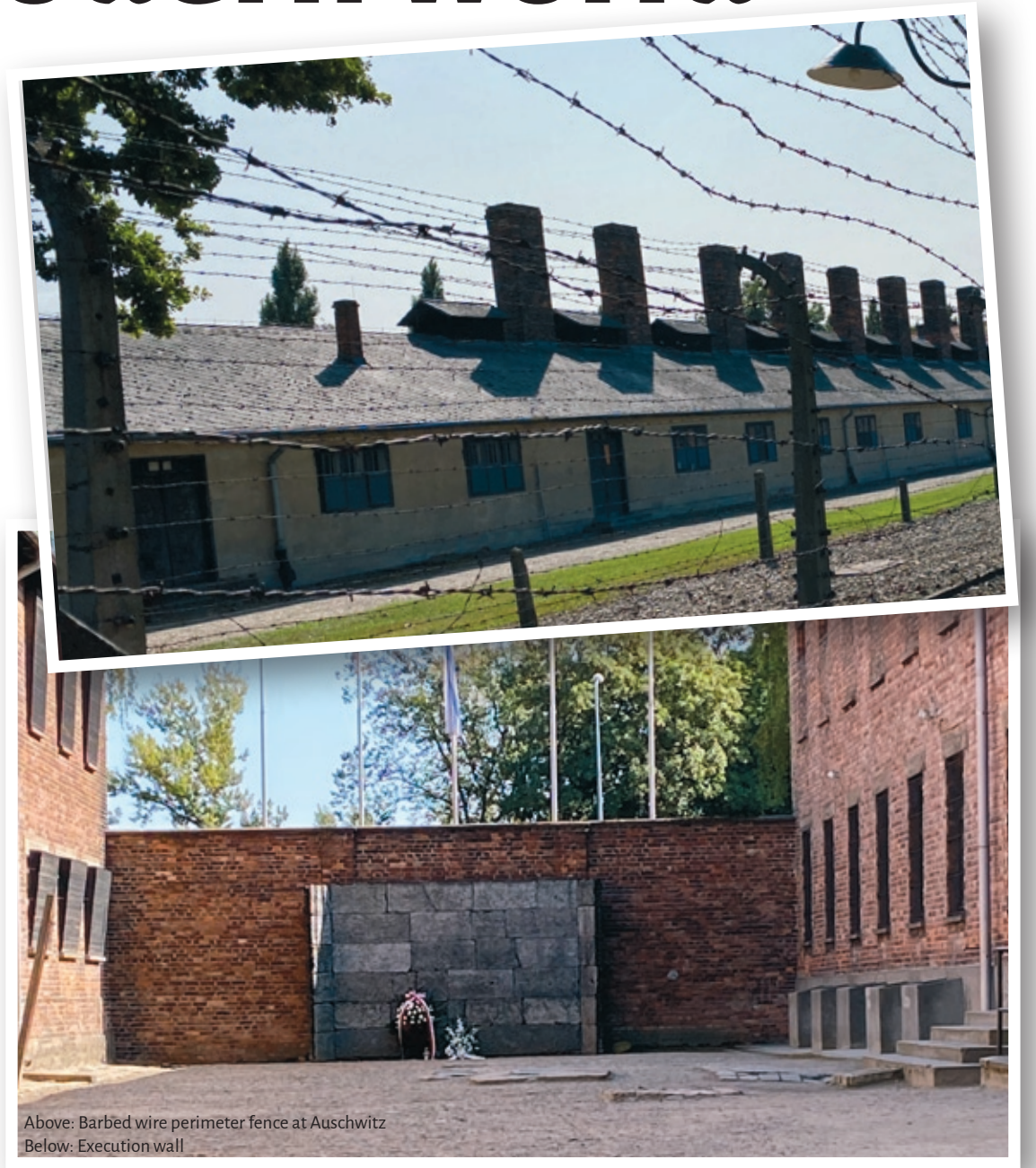
because space was so tight. Death must be efficient.

The aim was quite simply to maximise the number of deaths each session, the result was that people were crammed so close they could barely breathe even before the poison gas capsules were dropped in through the roof, killing those close to the spot where they landed within two minutes, but taking 20 to reach those in the corners, choking and desperate in the pitch dark as they realised what was happening to their kin just yards away.

I could go on listing the

litany of agonies which form the subsoil of the holocaust. But enough is enough ... a visit to Auschwitz is not an excuse for the fetishisation of what Robert Burns called more than 200 years ago “man’s inhumanity to man”.

Auschwitz is a cemetery. Auschwitz is a factory. Auschwitz is a monument. But most of all Auschwitz is a living book which the visitor reads in his or her own language. The words on each page are the same, written in different script and style, but always the same ... “Dare not forget. What happened once could happen again.”



Above: Barbed wire perimeter fence at Auschwitz  
Below: Execution wall

## Auschwitz testimony of St John Paul

**St John Paul was the first Pope to visit Auschwitz. His visit in 1979 made history, and his words, spoken from the heart, echo today with a relevance that is just as great as the day on which they were spoken:**

I am here today as a pilgrim. It is well known that I have been here many times. So many times! And many times I have gone down to Maximilian Kolbe’s death cell and knelt in front of the execution wall and passed among the ruins of the cremation furnaces of Birkenau. It was impossible for me not to come here as Pope...

I come with the aim together with you, independent of what your faith is, once again to take care of the human being...

Christ wishes that I who have become the Succes-

sor of Peter should give witness before the world to what constitutes the greatness and the misery of contemporary man, to what is his defeat and his victory.

I have come and I kneel on this Golgotha of the modern world, on these tombs, largely nameless like the great tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I kneel before all the inscriptions that come one after another bearing the memory of the victims of Birkenau in languages: Polish, English, Bulgarian, Roman, Czech, Danish, French, Greek, Hebrew, Yiddish, Spanish, Flemish, Serbo-Croat, German, Norwegian, Russian, Romanian, Hungarian, and Italian.

In particular I pause with you, dear participants in this encounter, before the inscription in Hebrew.



John Paul II visits Auschwitz in 1979. Photo: Imago Mundi

This inscription awakens the memory of the People whose sons and daughters were intended for total extermination... The very people that received from God the commandment “Thou shalt not kill”, itself

experienced in a special measure what is meant by killing.

It is not permissible for anyone to pass by this inscription with indifference...

Civilians rounded up in the Warsaw Ghetto  
Photo: Wiener Library





**Dignified funerals**  
At the lowest price locally. **Guaranteed**  
Funerals from £1,350 | Direct Cremation from £750



During the Coronavirus pandemic, we can help and support you to arrange an intimate funeral now and a celebration of life at a later date.

Inverclyde | Greenock | PA16 9AA | 01475 888 188  
Inverclyde | Port Glasgow | PA14 5HF | 01475 745 678  
John Kane | Dumbarton | G82 1BA | 01389 733 333  
Jonathan Harvey | Kilbowie Road | G81 6QS | 01389 878 888  
P. B. Wright & Sons | Greenock | PA15 1YD | 01475 724 248  
T & R O'Brien & Son | Glasgow | G20 7QS | 0141 332 1708

[dignityfunerals.co.uk/fdfinder](http://dignityfunerals.co.uk/fdfinder)

**Our Price Promise.** We regularly check our competitors prices and are confident we are unbeaten locally. To give you further peace of mind, we also promise to match any local prices you may find after arranging your funeral with us. We guarantee to match any funeral quote from another funeral director that is within 5 miles of our location. Terms & conditions apply.



## Pope proclaims Family Year

**POPE Francis has proclaimed a special year to celebrate love and family life to begin in March.**

The special year to put into practice the teachings of the Holy Father's landmark document on love – *Amoris Laetitia* – will see the Vatican offer spiritual, pastoral and cultural initiatives to accompany families in the face of contemporary challenges.

On 19 March 2021, the fifth anniversary of the Pope's letter on the joy and beauty of familial love, the Holy Father will inaugurate the Year of *Amoris Laetitia* which will conclude on 26 June 2022 on the occasion of the World Meeting of Families in Rome. The Holy Father will be present for the concluding Meeting.

A spokesman for the Vatican said: "The pandemic experience has highlighted the central role of the family as the domestic Church, and has shown the importance of community ties between families."

"Through the spiritual, pastoral, and cultural initiatives planned in the Year 'Amoris Laetitia Family,' Pope Francis intends to address all ecclesial communities throughout the world, exhorting each person to be a witness of family love."

The Holy See will share resources on "family spirituality, formation and pastoral activity for marriage preparation, affective education



Picture: Imago Mundi

for young people, and on the holiness of married couples and families who live out the grace of the sacrament in their daily life."

In addition, international events will be organised, "to examine in-depth the contents and implications of the Apostolic Exhortation in relation to highly topical issues that affect families around the world."

Ahead of the formal opening of the Year in March, the Vatican has prepared an informational brochure explaining the objectives and initiatives of the Year "Amoris Laetitia Family," and offering concrete suggestions for dioceses and parishes.

The first is to share the content of the Pope's document more widely, in order to help people "experience the Gospel of the family as a joy that fills hearts and lives."

A second objective is to announce the precious value of the sacrament of marriage, which has "in itself a transforming power of human love."

Further objectives include enabling "families to become active agents of the family apostolate," and making "young people aware of the importance of formation in the truth of love and in the gift of self."

Lastly, there is an invitation to broaden the vision and action of pastoral care for the family during the special year of celebration year, so that it can include all family members including the elderly, and those in difficult family situations.

The Holy See also offers concrete suggestions for initiatives that can be implemented in dioceses and parishes throughout the year, including strengthening marriage preparation programmes and accompanying newlyweds in their first years of marriages, and organising meetings for parents on how to raise their children.

The elderly, too, should be the object of pastoral attention, which "seeks to overcome the 'throw-away culture' and societal indifference". The brochure also recommends special attention to young children during the Year.

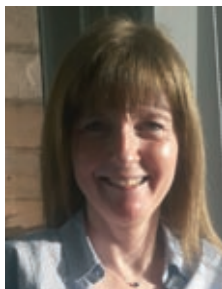
A particular aspect that emerges in the context of the Year "Amoris Laetitia Family" is the desire for greater involvement of married couples in diocesan and parish structures to set up family pastoral care and a deepening of the formation of pastoral workers, seminarians and priests so that, working with families, they are up to the challenges of today's world.

A further suggestion is to "promote a missionary vocation in families by creating times for formation in evangelisation and missionary initiatives (e.g., on the occasion of children's reception of the sacraments, during marriage preparation, anniversaries or important liturgical moments)."



## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS in the now

2020 was a challenging, difficult and unpredictable year in which we experienced certainty and uncertainty and calmness to anxiousness. Entering 2021, there has never been a time more than now to pause, pull back and take time for self. It is important we now look inward at ourselves and be open and honest about how we are truly



feeling. Psychiatrist Carl Jung said that when we look outwards we dream, but when we go inwards we awaken.

My name is Sharon McGinley and I run my own private Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy practice, Mental Health Matters in the now, both at The Wellbeing Rooms in Bearsden and premises in Knightswood. I will support, listen and assist you to explore your difficulties, identify what is creating your barriers and take small steps towards change and a more connected and contented life.

*"Hope and fear cannot occupy the same space at the same time. Invite one to stay" – Maya Angelou*

If you are struggling with your mental health, please contact me by phone or email. I provide a free 30-minute telephone consultation. This allows you to assess if CBT would be the best therapy for you.



T: 07979 952920  
E Mail: [mhminthenow@gmail.com](mailto:mhminthenow@gmail.com)  
f/b: [mhminthenow](https://www.facebook.com/mhminthenow)  
w: [www.mentalhealthmattersglasgow.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthmattersglasgow.co.uk) (under construction)

### Advertising feature

## Be kind to yourself

**Welcome to 2021 and the beginning of a new year.**

As we close the shutters to 2020, let's take the time to pause and reflect on the journey we have been on: the loved ones we have lost in 2020 not only to COVID-19 but to other illnesses and we have endured such a challenging year.

I send my thoughts and prayers to those who have experienced loss and may you find strength in knowing others' care.

This is the time now more than ever, to look after self through kind words and actions. If you are struggling, have the courage to ask for help, it is not a sign of weakness, instead it is a sign of strength and bravery.

This situation won't last for ever and life will go on. It is important to try and

keep your thoughts in the present, being aware of when you are predicting the future and the linkage to how this makes you feel. This being the Threat System, one of the regulatory elements of compassion, the others being the Driven and Soothe Systems. What can you do to help engage the Soothe System? Be mindful, fully in the present.

What can you see around you? What can you hear around you? Turn inwards and breathe slowly and connect to self. What one thing each day are you grateful for? Through being fully engaged in the present you are not allowing your thoughts to race into the future.

"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly" – author unknown.



## POEM OF THE MONTH

The 5th century hymn “Te lucis” was written by an unknown author whom some scholars identify as St Ambrose. It reminds us that as the darkness of the night approaches, the Lord God cares for us in both body and soul.

Before the fading of light, we pray you,  
O Creator of the universe, with your  
accustomed mercy to be our protector and  
guardian.

May our hearts dream of you, may  
they perceive you in sleep. And, with  
the approach of light, may they always  
celebrate your glory.

Grant us a wholesome life, restore our  
ardour. May your brilliance light up the  
over-powering darkness of the night.

## PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Let us Pray:

Lord our God, You make all things new.

You keep hope alive in our hearts and cause  
our Spirits to be born again. Thank you  
for this new year and for all the potential  
it holds. Come and kindle in us a mighty  
flame so that in our dreams we will see the  
wonders of God. We ask this through our  
Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and  
reigns with You in the unity of the Holy  
Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Jean Restout le  
Jeune, *Seated  
Carthusian  
Holding an Open  
Book*, 1711.

Art of the month

# Exploring the art of dreams

**Fertility Care Scotland** 



Virtual Clinics are available to learn the  
Billings Ovulation Method® of Natural  
Fertility Regulation to successfully achieve  
or postpone pregnancy.

**Use our Distanced Learning to train to  
teach in our clinics. To find out more:**

Contact **Fertility Care Scotland**  
**info@fertilitycare.org.uk**  
**www.fertilitycare.org.uk**

**When making a will, have you thought of  
leaving a legacy to Fertility Care Scotland?  
All donations gratefully received**

Registered Scottish Charity No. SC022875

**I WAS still a teenager when I first saw  
the Robbins/Wise film *West Side  
Story*, which was based on Shake-  
speare's *Romeo and Juliet*.**

It tells the story of teenagers Tony  
and Maria, who, despite having affilia-  
tions with rival street gangs, the Amer-  
ican Jets and Puerto Rican Sharks, fall  
in love in 1950s New York City.

A new version of their doomed love,  
directed this time by Steven Spielberg,  
will be released this December, mark-  
ing the 60th anniversary of the 1961  
film. The wondrous music is amazing  
and still has such a freshness about it.

After their meeting, Tony rushes to  
Maria's house and they sing “Tonight,  
tonight” with its concluding line,  
“When you dream – dream of me, to-  
night.” There is nothing new under the  
sun and sacred authors got there first!

In the Book of Joel (2:28) we read,  
“Your old men shall dream dreams,  
and your young men shall see visions.”  
There is a beautiful hymn in the Office

BY **MGR TOM  
MONAGHAN**

of Compline entitled  
“Te lucis ante ter-  
minum” (Before the  
fading of the light)  
The second verse be-  
gins, “Te corda nos-  
tra somnient” which translates as “May  
our hearts dream of you (Lord God).”

In our painting we see the silence of  
a Carthusian monk. Like Saint Joseph,  
these men spend most of their life in  
silence. Read the Bible. Not once will  
you find a word spoken by Joseph. He  
is silent and strong.

The monks may be silent but their  
love of Christ and the Church protects  
and provides for us as we rush through  
our busy and noisy lives. Their silence  
is their eloquence. Their hiddenness is  
a powerhouse of prayer.

This painting is entitled, “Seated  
Carthusian Holding an Open Book”  
and was painted by the Frenchman and  
member of the Académie Royale de  
Peinture et de Sculpture, Jean Restout

le Jeune. That was in 1711 ... 309 years  
ago! But here's the thing.

If it had been painted 937 years ago  
when St Bruno founded the order, or  
indeed yesterday, it would have looked  
exactly the same. It is said that the  
Carthusians never had to reform be-  
cause they had never ever deformed.  
The habit that St Bruno wore is the ex-  
act habit the present-day Carthusian  
wears, whether he is the Prior or the  
newly professed Brother.

They have no sign of high office or  
dignity other than the simple habit.

The painting looks like a sepia photo-  
graph. You see only the habit, the book  
and the hands. The personality and  
character are given to God who uses  
the hands of the monk to study, to pray,  
to work and to use his isolation for the  
greater glory of God.

As he reads and prays the Scriptures,  
I wonder what his dreams are? I won-  
der what our dreams will be for the  
coming year?



# When we meet Jesus we cannot keep it to ourselves – this month's scripture message



Fr Tom Kilbride

**WHEN do you stop wishing people “Happy New Year” when you meet them: a few days into January? A week? Or can you still say it to someone you bump into for the first time even if it's weeks into the new year?**

However that works, our liturgical “new year” – Year B for the Sundays – has been underway for weeks, but it's only at this point that it really begins to feel like “the Year of Mark's Gospel” that it's meant to be.

Over these weeks of “ordinary” time – after the highs of Advent and Christmas, and before Lent begins in mid-February – we settle in to hear the beginning of the story of Jesus' ministry, and what his message and his activity mean, as Mark's Gospel shares it with us.

The first thing to strike us is that we start with a reading from John's Gospel, rather than Mark's (2nd Sunday). It is the famous encounter between two disciples of John the Baptist, including Andrew, the brother of Simon (Peter), who ask Jesus “Where do you live?” and are invited to “Come and see”. It is an invitation extended to all of us at the start of these weeks through the year.

From the “tenth hour” (old money for 4 o'clock in the afternoon), Andrew and his friend spend time with Jesus, hearing from him, perhaps asking him questions and getting to know him. Andrew, of course, then goes off to tell his brother excitedly, “We have found the Messiah”. As Pope Francis often says, when we meet Jesus, we cannot keep it to ourselves!

From the 3rd Sunday onwards, we hear from the Gospel of Mark as we expect to, and we hear Jesus beginning his public ministry, preaching, healing and calling those who will follow him (Peter and Andrew again and also James and John).

Although Mark's is the shortest Gospel, and pretty simple and direct in its style, don't be fooled: it packs a lot into a small space! Even in these first weeks, there are some important messages and themes that Mark wants us to be aware of. Here are a few to listen out for.

## The Cross

Jesus starts his preaching, we are told, “after John had been arrested” (3rd Sunday). In just five words,



Marco Basaiti, *Vocazione dei figli di Zebedeo*, 1510

Mark tells us that Jesus' ministry will be under a shadow, the shadow of the Cross. The message will face opposition and at times be rejected. But the Cross – by which Jesus will suffer with the suffering and enter into the depth of our brokenness – will be a moment out of which glory and life will emerge. The way to the Cross will be Jesus's way to glory. John points to that, and Jesus will walk that way too. For a persecuted, suffering people – the community for which this Gospel was probably first written, but for many others over the centuries – this is a powerful message inspiring hope and perseverance.

## Now is the Time

Jesus' first message is a stark one: “The time has come.” There is no time to lose. A feature of Mark's Gospel we sometimes lose in translation is just how

breathless it can feel: each event seems to tumble into the next one, and everything seems to happen “at once” or “immediately”. Times, tides and the Kingdom of God wait for no one! This is the moment of grace; we have to “get on board” right away! Jesus himself shows this as he marches on in the early morning to other towns and further encounters (5th Sunday).

## The Kingdom of God

And what is that Kingdom? It is what we hear Jesus doing over these weeks: it is healing of pain, hope for the suffering, overcoming whatever is opposed to our good and the will of God for us. It is about the power of God revealed to renew a world gone awry. These things are represented by the exorcisms (4th and 5th Sundays), by the healing of the sick (5th and 6th Sundays) and by his teaching

“with authority” (4th Sunday). His words are powerful, his message radical, and his interactions with people utterly transformative.

Notice, for example, how he seems to swap places with the healed leper: the leper who has lived in drastic “self-isolation” is restored to his community, while Jesus now has to go into the places where nobody lived (6th Sunday). He preaches the Kingdom of God both in word and in action.

## Being Disciples

But the Gospels are not only about what Jesus does. There are also hints of what our response should be, and Mark's Gospel has a lot to say about what being a disciple of Jesus means.

First, we have to turn our

## Fr Tom will be our new guide to the scriptures

Fr Tom Kilbride, Rector of the Royal Scots College, will be Flourish's newest writer with a monthly column on the scriptures. Fr Tom is a native of St Matthew's, Bishopbriggs, where he was ordained in 1996, after seminary formation at Chesters College and Glasgow University and then the Pontifical Scots College in Rome. After a year at St Roch's in Royston, he returned to Rome to complete his studies in Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. He was then an assistant priest in St Andrew's Cathedral and Our Lady of Lourdes in Cardonald, before becoming Parish Priest of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Dennistoun in 2008. Having served also as Director of the Archdiocese's Religious Education Department, he has been Rector of the Royal Scots College in Salamanca since 2014, running the “propaedeutic course” or first stage of formation for priesthood.

hearts and minds to God, an idea expressed by the word “repent”, although the original word (“metanoia”) has so much more in it: a total turning and transformation of our hearts and minds to God. The fishermen who follow Jesus “at once” (3rd Sunday) will become “fishers of men”. Their response to him will bring them a share in his mission (we'll hear that again later). Even Simon's mother-in-law, who is healed of a fever (5th Sunday) “began to wait on them”.

While that can sound as though she was healed in order to get their tea made, the truth is Mark wants to show her as one who gives the correct response: whoever lets the Kingdom into their lives must serve others (as Jesus came “to serve and not to be served”). We are to be like him in mission, service and action.

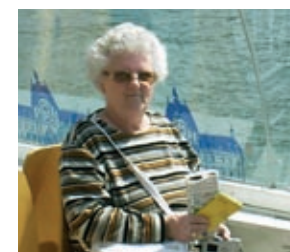
All of this makes for a

great start to a new year for us, a fresh start to our commitment to being disciples of Jesus, guided by the Sunday readings.

Like Andrew, we ask Jesus to show us where he lives, and he invites us to “come and see”. If we spend time with him and hear his message – of repentance, of healing, of renewal and of hope – we can make our own the words of Samuel from the 2nd Sunday: “Speak Lord, your servant is listening.” And, if we listen, we can, like Andrew, bring others to know “We have found the Messiah!”

In this way, like Jesus in these Sunday Gospels, we can share in his mission “at once”, right now – no putting it off! – and touch others' lives with the power of the Kingdom he announces and makes visible in his mission and ministry.

Come and See.... We have found the Messiah!



*In loving memory*

of our Mother,

**Helen Friar**

we are saddened to announce her passing at St Margaret of Scotland Hospice on Tuesday December 15th. Helen, beloved wife of Bert and much loved mother of Helen, Bert and Gary and their families.

We would like to thank Sr Rita and all the staff at St Margaret of Scotland Hospice for such wonderful love and care.



**IT'S strange how, sometimes, when you are very busy, that you find yourself turning to tasks that you could easily have done at a time when you were less busy.**

I think it may have something to do with the flow of adrenalin. Ask a busy man, as the saying goes...

Anyway, last Saturday, in the midst of a hectic schedule, I decided to renew my passport. It was due to expire at the end of next March, and I had thought about doing this a number of times recently. With Brexit changes I had pondered at one stage whether I should apply for an Irish passport, as Father Lawrence had done, God rest his soul.

The process, however, of proving my Irish ancestry, faltered with the lack of being able to trace records from remote parts of Conemara and the Sligo-Donnegal border, and so I never proceeded down this road.

My last two passports, European Union of course, had been issued at the British Embassy in Dublin, where I was residing on each occasion. I Googled how best I might renew it this time, and settled on a service offered by the Post Office called Check and Send.

So it was that, with the rain bucketing down, I headed into West Nile Street Post Office. Busy as they were, so near to Christmas, the staff member who dealt with me could not have been more helpful, more courteous, or more efficient.

## Fr Frank's Brexit blues



### Fr Frank's log

Fr Frank Keevins CP is Parish Priest of St Mungo's Townhead

I had debated with myself what glasses to wear for my photograph. I recently acquired new glasses but they are for distance sight only and I felt that, if I was going to be required to read and sign anything, I might be better wearing my old varifocals. In the end, I wore my varifocals, but had my other glasses in my bag so that I could change them for the photo.

Standing in the photo booth next to the post office counter, I provided all the necessary information and handed over my old passport. When it came time for my photo to be taken, I was advised to take my glasses off as they weren't allowed now for digital photos, so all my discernment about which glasses to wear was pointless. I'm not sure if this is simply to avoid glare or if it's because, when you pass through the e-gates at airports, glasses have to be removed before facing the camera.

I had read, and had also been advised at the counter, not to use this Check and Send method of renewal if I was hoping to travel within the next four to six weeks. I didn't expect that this would be a problem for me. I don't expect to be going anywhere any time soon. I also paid a small fee to get my old passport sent back to me by registered post, just in case.

I was surprised then that, no sooner had I stepped out into West Nile Street, I received a text and email to say my application was in process; on Monday I received another text and email to say they had received my old passport and then another to say it was being returned as promised; on Tuesday I received another text and email to say my renewal application had been approved, and on Wednesday I received another text and email to say that my new passport was in the post. Then today (Thursday) I had another text and

email to tell me to sign the new passport with a black ballpoint pen before I use it. How efficient is that?

So, I await my new, blue, UK passport – but I am still a bit saddened and annoyed by Brexit.

Father Justinian had his cataract removed last month, thus bringing to an end his period of self-isolation. Everything went very smoothly, but he wasn't offered the Covid-19 vaccine as we thought might happen. Still, I'm sure he will get it before too long, and before any of the rest of us get it.

Father Gareth is keeping a careful eye on how bad things seem to getting in Wales with Covid-19, but, to his great relief, his mum received good test results recently.

My thanks to all of you who read the log over the last year. I wish you all every blessing for the coming year, which please God will be different from this year. As always, and especially at this time, protect yourselves, protect others, and protect Christ in your lives.

## JERICHO †

### The Compassion of Jesus

Drug & Alcohol Rehabs., Refuge for Victims of Domestic Violence, Supported Accommodation for the Destitute, the Distressed, and all being 'passed by on the other side.'

### A COMMUNITY OF MEN OF PRAYER FOR OUR TIMES (founded 1970)

Vocation info. from Bro. Patrick Mullen,  
The Jericho Society, Mater Salvatoris,  
Harelaw Farm, Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire. PA10 2PY  
Scottish Charity SC016909 Tel: 01505 614669  
Email: [theJerichosociety@gmail.com](mailto:theJerichosociety@gmail.com)

## Is God calling you?

to a life of silence and solitude within a community of fellow seekers?  
The Cistercian monks at Nunraw Abbey offer such an opportunity.

With them you can praise God through the psalms and liturgy at set times during the day. You will have time to study the ways of God and to meet God in your *lectio divina*. And, you will find work that will keep body and soul together.

If you have good reason to believe God may be calling you to be a monk, write to:

Vocation Director, Nunraw Abbey  
HADDINGTON, EH41 4LW, Scotland  
Or email: [nunraw.abbot@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nunraw.abbot@yahoo.co.uk)  
Scottish Charity No SC022611

## Peace vigil invitation

**PEACE organisation Pax Christi Scotland is to hold an online vigil to mark one of the most significant dates in the history of nuclear weapons, when the Treaty on the Prohibition comes into force on January 22.**

On that date, nuclear weapons will become illegal and countries that ratify the treaty must 'never under any circumstance develop, test, produce, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices'.

The Treaty, adopted at a UN conference in 2017, represents the first multilateral legally-binding instrument for nuclear disarmament in two decades.

But while celebrations are planned around the world to welcome this significant milestone, Pax Christi Scotland's vigil will reflect Scotland's position as a country that hosts nuclear weapons against the formal will of its

government and of the Scottish Bishops' Conference.

Pax Christi Scotland chair, Marian Pallister, said: "The nine 'nuclear nations' which include the UK, US, Pakistan and Russia, have not signed up to the treaty, leaving 'nuclear host' countries such as Scotland feeling disempowered."

She added: "The UK government has not only refused to sign the treaty but plans to renew the Trident nuclear facility that has its home just 25 miles as the crow flies from Scotland's most populous area."

"The Pax Christi Scotland online event to mark this huge step forward in nuclear disarmament on January 22 will therefore be one of prayer and reflection."

Speakers at the Zoom event will be Bishop William Nolan, Bishop President of Justice and Peace Scotland, Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Epis-

copal Church, and Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Damer, a member of the House of Lords cross-party anti-nuclear group.

Marian Pallister told Flourish: "In his World Day of Peace message on January 1, Pope Francis, who has made clear his views on the immorality of possession and use of nuclear weapons, reminded us of that resources spent on nuclear weapons could be used instead to promote peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care."

"Pax Christi Scotland hopes the UK government and the other nuclear nations will be moved to join 21st century thinking and sign the treaty. In the meantime, we will campaign for divestment from nuclear arms."

■ **\*To register for the vigil go to <https://uso2web.zoom.us/join/register/tZwsdu2trzkjE9JUq6AB2Hut3NJuzrml1Nb>**



### Teaching in Catholic Schools

Would you like to be a Catholic teacher in the Catholic sector? At the School of Education at the University of Glasgow you can take the Catholic Teacher's Certificate as part of our teacher education degrees, Masters in Education (MEduc) or Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). Your school placements will focus on the Catholic sector and you will benefit from the expertise of our professional and academic colleagues. You can enjoy being part of the wider University community, particularly its lively Catholic chaplaincy.

Check out our website at: [www.glasgow.ac.uk/education](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/education)



# What we've lost, but what we've also gained

**As I reflect on last year and look forward to 2021 three words come to mind, gratitude, growth and hope.**

The coronavirus crisis disrupted so much of our lives it would be easy to concentrate what we lost or were not able to do.

At the same time, many other things have been given to us or shown to us in ways that we would never have anticipated. As we step into 2021, let's look back with gratitude for those unexpected things we've received.

For me, this has meant a far greater stillness than I have known for many years. It has given me a far greater sense of connectedness to the natural world, the movement of the seasons, and the flora and fauna of my garden.

For SCIAF, I want to give thanks for our incredible partners who are our eyes, ears, mouths, hands and feet in the communities they serve, and for the wonderful, life-changing difference that they make



**Alistair Dutton**  
Chief Executive, SCIAF

for their people with our support.

I want to give thanks for our amazing supporters and all those who pray for, work with and give so generously to SCIAF and our work. They have rallied behind us this past year and gone to extraordinary lengths to make sure that we got the money we needed and our work could continue because they know how important it is for the poorest people who suffer poverty and injustice.

And I want to give thanks for, and thank, all our staff for all their energy, effort and commitment to SCIAF.

Secondly, thinking about growth, what have we learnt from this year? It would be easy to label 2020 as a nightmare year, put it

behind us, and focus on the future. But what has it been teaching us? What was the purpose of the year? What has God been trying to show us? In what ways has God been encouraging us to grow or change?

The most obvious thing for me is how much we can achieve even when we can't be together. At SCIAF, we have pulled together, adapted and innovated and that's true of the Church across Scotland and the world. Year 2020 has also reminded us of the importance of emotional intelligence and actively being sensitive to one another as we've weathered the highs and lows of the emotional rollercoaster the pandemic has brought.

Thirdly, I start the year



Some children in Rwanda SCIAF have been supporting. Photo by Simon Murphy.

with great hope. Hope: that health systems will prevail; that vaccinations will bring the pandemic under control; that deaths will be averted; that people will be able to go about their lives freely again.

Hope that building up to the COP26 UN Climate Conference in Glasgow, nations of the world will make the necessary commitments, backed by decisive policies and action, to achieve climate justice and avoid the ecological collapse that threatens people and the planet.

Despite the terrible prospect of the climate

emergency, we should be hopeful, that we can and will come together as one human family to do what needs to be done.

All over the world, we are seeing countries commit to changing their policies and behaviour to protect the planet in ways that would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

China has committed to carbon neutrality by 2060, India is on track to reduce its emissions by 35% this decade, Pakistan just announced it will no longer build coal power stations and in the US President-elect Biden has said the en-

vironment will be one of his top priorities.

The UK and Scottish governments have been leaders on this, and have announced their own very ambitious plans to reduce their carbon emissions by 68% and 75% from 1990 levels in this decade respectively.

Of course, these words must be followed with actions, but this November in Glasgow we will, God willing, have a chance to come together to push the leaders of the world to take the radical action needed to save our planet.

I hope that many more people will see the importance of the Church and SCIAF's mission to care for the poorest and join us with energy, urgency and generosity.

And most importantly of all, I hope that together we will build our own community of love that reaches out to others around Scotland and the world, and truly values each and every person as unique, equal, precious and dignified.



## Pension Investment Management Services

**We are a family run firm of Independent Financial Advisers (IFA) with a focus on retirement planning and investment advice. Whether you are approaching retirement and need help with your options or have capital to invest we can help.**

**We also assist small businesses with the setting up of:**

- Employee benefits package; death in service, private medical insurance
- Workplace pensions



PIMS owner Philip Church

200 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4HG  
Tel 0141 332 8066  
Mobile 07971 863 050  
Email [pchurch@pensionsandinvestments.co.uk](mailto:pchurch@pensionsandinvestments.co.uk)  
[www.pensionsandinvestments.co.uk](http://www.pensionsandinvestments.co.uk)

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority · FRN 161531