

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow January 2022



‘The most important event in the Catholic Church since Vatican II’

SYNOD SPECIAL – PAGE 3



One year on: Remembering Archbishop Philip **page 5**



St Joseph statue in Croy will honour mining heritage **page 2**

HOSPICE

New portrait of Saint Margaret

FULL REPORT **PAGE 4**



WORDS OF HOPE

Pope writes a letter to families

FULL REPORT **PAGES 6–7**



JOHN PAUL I

‘Smiling Pope’ to be beatified

FULL REPORT **PAGE 12**



Joy in Croy as St Joseph the Worker statue recalls mining heritage

PARISHIONERS of Holy Cross, Croy, united in faith and pride to mark the end of the Year of St Joseph with the blessing of a new statue of the saint which will also serve as the first memorial in the church grounds honouring the community's cherished mining heritage.

For years locals wanted that legacy to be marked and, at the suggestion of parish priest Father Joe Sullivan, a statue to both saint

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

and miners has been combined.

And in the same spirit of their mining forefathers who freely gave their time and donations to build the original church, parish groups immediately began raising funds for the long awaited project which culminated in the blessing of the statue by Archdiocesan Administrator, Monsignor

Hugh Bradley, himself a native of the village.

Father Sullivan said: "This was truly a team effort with so much support from all sorts of groups and individuals making it possible and I pay tribute to them all."

"The early population of the village were Irish immigrants who worked in the mines and that legacy live on and so when I was approached to have a memorial built outside Holy Cross, I suggested that we combine both a statue to St Joseph and a memorial to the miners."

"And when it came to asking someone to bless our new statue, 'Croy Boy' Monsignor Hugh was the obvious choice".

On the day of the blessing in early December, marking the end of the Year of St Joseph initiated by Pope Francis to encourage greater devotion to the saint, a wreath was laid at the foot of the memorial.

Dedication

The inscription reads: "Dedicated to the men woman and children of Croy who worked in the Mines. The year of St Joseph 2021."

Among those who raised money for the project was the Holy Cross Acoustic Group whose regular music nights in the church hall with banjos, guitars and mandolins has raised over £50,000 since the group was formed 11 years ago.

Founder member Michael Clinton, a retired electrical engineer said: "Nearly everyone in this village can trace their families back to the original miners and it's something we are very proud of."

"There are 12 miners' lamps, one for each apostle, inside Holy Cross today – fair play to Father Joe for that – but we always wanted a memorial outside so when he suggested the idea of a memorial on a statue of St Joseph we thought 'right let's go for it!'"

"We pick a different charity every month and when we nominated the memorial people were very generous and we raised enough money to pay for the statue pretty quickly."

"It will be there in perpetuity and I must say it looks brilliant."

Other groups and individuals including local building firms, paid for the area to be landscaped and for benches to be provided.



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Canon Tartaglia's Parliament reflection

CANON Gerry Tartaglia, parish priest of St Margaret's Clydebank, and director of the Youth Office in the Archdiocese urged MSPs to unite to give support to young people when he delivered his reflection to the Scottish Parliament just before Christmas.

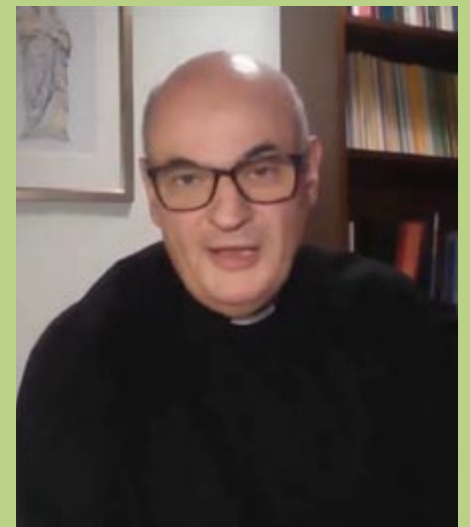
Canon Gerry's reflection was delivered just before the First Minister's address on Covid restrictions and was seen not only by MSPs in the Chamber but by thousands watching at home.

His powerful words caught the moment perfectly: "Reflecting is never a waste of time. So much of our life is lived at top speed, racing around, in demand, and doing what is wanted of us. We badly need to back off a little and confront ourselves, and why we think and live the way that we do."

"All of us were younger once—even the youngest contributor to the life of our beloved Parliament was younger once. I want to take a little time to reflect on the young people of Scotland. From my life in the parish in Clydebank and from our youth groups and young adults, I know the tremendous gifts and qualities that young people have and exhibit. There is a huge compassionate heart in so many of our young people and a deep desire to know why they are here and what their lives might mean."

"That is no surprise. They reflect how they have been made—with the generous heart of a compassionate God. Our job is to guide and encourage those who are younger to be a good example, to be coherent and, in this Parliament in particular, to offer consistent and stable government, so that they can explore themselves, their communities, their society, their faith and the world."

"You may not have considered this before, but Jesus the teacher, rabbi and son



of God, was in his 30s when he began his ministry, but his disciples, followers and students—Peter and Andrew, James and John, Mary Magdalene, Martha and Mary, Lazarus, and all the others—were not the same age, or the old men and women of statues and stories.

"They would have been younger: 17, 21, 25 years of age. They grew to be brave and determined, searching and desiring to discover what their calling and their purpose might be."

"Our young people are in the same boat. They need to be encouraged and supported by those who are older, with a real heart and love for them."

"Lord God, help us to be people who, through genuine self-reflection and by our good example, inspire our young people to greater things, to know themselves better, and to come to a mature understanding of what they are called to be, and to live it to the full with real joy. Amen".

SYNOD 2023

It's time to listen...

Church worldwide prepares for the future

BY RONNIE CONVERY

THE most important thing to happen to the Catholic Church since Vatican II ... that's what is taking place across the world this year and next as a period of listening and discernment is undertaken ahead of the gathering of delegates at the Vatican to chart a way forward for the Church in the 21st century.

The process – known as Synod 2021-23 – sees the whole Church convoked in Synod (which means journeying together) to question itself on how to operate and be effective in the modern world.

The Holy Father Francis is clear that in order to “walk together” and listen to the Holy Spirit we need to pray. There can be no synodal way without personal and community prayer. As the official Vatican Synod website says: “Prayer prepares our hearts to listen carefully to others and helps us to discern the action of the Holy Spirit throughout the world”.

Humanity

The vision of the synod has been summed up in a special logo which has been produced by the Vatican to accompany the process: A large, majestic tree, full of wisdom and light, reaches for the sky. A sign of deep vitality and hope which expresses the cross of Christ. It carries the Eucharist, which shines like the sun. The horizontal branches, opened like hands or wings, suggest, at the same time, the Holy Spirit.

Below, the logo shows the people of God ‘on the move’ as 15 silhouettes sum up humanity in its diversity of life situations of generations and origins. This aspect is reinforced by the multiplicity of bright colours which are themselves signs of joy. The Synod office in Rome is very clear: “There is no hierarchy between these people who are all on the same footing: young, old, men, women, teenagers, children, lay people, religious, parents, couples, singles; the bishop and the nun are not in front of them, but among them”.

Pope Francis has been very clear that the process must not be ‘more of the same’. His aim is for each local parish to reach out be-



yond the ‘usual few’ to listen to the opinions of those on the periphery of church life ... those who have stopped practising the faith, those

who have ‘fallen out’ with the Church, the poor, the marginalised, those who have felt hurt by some of the Church’s pronouncements.

He wants to involve those outside the Church too, in asking the question of how can we be an effective, caring, inclusive Church today.

Glasgow gears up

In preparation for the synod of Bishops in 2023, Pope Francis is calling every Catholic in the world to become involved. He is not asking us simply to prepare for an event but to become a more synodal church.

By that the Pope means to be prepared for a prayerful listening experience that may well disrupt how we do business in our parishes, how we think of ourselves as Catholics, what our priorities are and indeed to be open to the Holy Spirit of surprises.

Your parishes have received a simple outline of a listening service event. It is meant to be used in whatever way your clergy and Parish Pastoral Council would see fit (there are lots of dioceses ahead of ourselves and who have published other materials on line, that you will find useful).

The listening event, conducted over several evenings as some parishes have already done.

BY FR JOHN CAMPBELL

Perhaps conducted as a one off day event with break out groups, or indeed involving targeted groups, such as UCM, PTA, SVdP, Caritas Pupils, parents of children celebrating the Sacraments etc.

The idea is that after a prayerful reading of scripture; prompted by some prepared questions to stimulate our thoughts, we share our responses, share our thoughts, listening deeply to the experiences of others, never arguing or taking sides but listening to others perhaps whose ideas we find challenging or difficult. This deep listening and discernment will reveal God’s will for our parish/diocese at this time.

Before the summer your parish will be asked to prepare your report for the Deanery and then at the diocesan level a report of our finding for Glasgow will be presented.

The Holy Father is keen we reach out beyond the ‘usual suspects’ to those whom we need to listen to, precisely because they no longer find the church useful in their daily lives.

Perhaps the set of questions (sent to parish priests) prepared by Saint Gregory’s would be a useful tool to use on line, or distribute at Mass or through our schools to try to engage those who would never show up at a meeting. The idea is to listen to as many people as possible.

This is only the beginning of the process. It’s a new way of being parish and diocese, it will not end with the Bishops’ meeting in 2023. It is the first step on becoming a more participative, listening, sharing and outward-looking church.

Please give careful consideration to help your parish on this journey. Its time to stop standing still and to gather momentum to become the church fit for the third millennium.

Pope’s vision of what Synod can achieve

POPE Francis outlined his vision of the Synod in a powerful opening speech late last year. In it he insisted it must not be an elitist talking shop, but rather a moment of serious listening and learning.

The pontiff prayed for the Holy Spirit to guide the discussions, thus preventing the Catholic Church “from becoming a ‘museum’, beautiful but mute, with much past and little future.”

The Pope noted that the Synod is neither a parliament nor an opinion poll. “The Synod is an Ecclesial moment, and the protagonist is the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit, there will not be a Synod,” he said, calling for unity, above all among the bishops.

Francis also invited those present to acknowledge the frustration and impatience felt by many parishioners, “members of diocesan and parish consultative bodies and women, who frequently remain on the fringes,” and urged dialogue between priests and laity, saying that he underlined this because sometimes, priests become “elitists” and become “the patrons of the barracks.”

In a speech in which he mentioned both the opportunities and risks this process may entail, Francis listed three of each.

He began by saying this is an opportunity to move structurally towards a church which is ‘an open square where all can feel at home and participate’.

It offers an opportunity for the Church to become ‘a listening’ one, that sets routine aside and offers a break from routine pastoral concerns: “To listen to the Spirit in adoration and prayer, to listen to our brothers and sisters speak of their hopes and of the crises of faith present in different parts of the world, of the need for a renewed pastoral life and of the signals we are receiving from those on the ground.”

The church has an opportunity to become one of ‘closeness’ not only in words but presence in society and the world, immersed in modern-day problems,



‘bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God’.

Pope Francis warned against three risks to the Synod: formalism, intellectualism and complacency.

“If we want to speak of a synodal church, we cannot remain satisfied with appearances alone; we need content, means and structures that can facilitate dialogue and interaction within the People of God, especially between priests and laity,” he said.

Francis also said the Synod must not become a “study group” offering abstract approaches to the problems of the Church and the evils in the world, with people saying the usual things but with no actual insight, reducing the entire process to the usual “unfruitful ideological and partisan divides, far removed from the reality of the holy People of God.”

Finally, the Synod must avoid becoming complacent, relying on the way things have always been done, which he defined as a poisonous attitude, applying old solutions to new problems, when the Synod is called to become a process that involves the local Churches in different phases and from the bottom up.

The Synod of Bishops will meet to consider the next moves in October 2023, but in the meantime, there will be meetings at diocesan levels, at national levels and also continental level.

The Synod, said Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, general relator of the gathering, “is a huge puzzle, where everyone can participate, especially the poorest, the voiceless, those on the periphery.”

The cardinal confessed that he has no idea of what he will be writing in the synod’s final document: “The pages are blank, it is up to you to fill them,” he said.

Brendan's St Margaret will support the hospice



A GLASGOW artist whose striking portraits of St Andrew and St Mungo have greeted visitors to St Andrew's Cathedral since its 2011 refurbishment is using his talents to support one of his favourite charities.

Proceeds of Brendan Berry's prints of his painting 'St Margaret on an Errand of Mercy' sold through the Pauline bookshop in Glasgow will be donated to St Margaret's Hospice, Clydebank, where the original painting is displayed.

The former principal art teacher, whose work can also be seen in a number of Catholic churches throughout the Archdiocese, decided to make his generous gesture because of his admiration both for St Margaret of Scotland (who is also patron saint of refugees) and for the work of the hospice, which has warmly welcomed his support.

Brendan, a parishioner of St Gabriel's, Merrylee, who taught at the former St Leonard's Secondary, Easterhouse and Holyrood Secondary, in Glasgow's south side, said: "St Margaret was Anglo Saxon so I painted her



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

with reddish fair hair.

"Her belt-buckle and cloak-clasp are based on Anglo-Saxon designs. In her hand she carries her personal prayer-book, which still exists in the Bodleian Museum in Oxford.

"It was taken to England by King Edward I as booty, and represents her concern for education.

"Two hungry orphans are running up to her in drab clothes and with bare feet. She is grasping one of their hands, while looking straight ahead to greet the viewer.

"She is recognised as someone who was compassionate and understood the needs of the poor, having herself been a refugee. As Queen, she used her power and faith for the betterment of her subjects and Scotland. I hope the painting enables the viewer to gain a better understanding of St Margaret."

Born in exile in Hungary, Margaret and her family came to England in 1057, but fled to Scotland following the Norman conquest in 1066.

By the end of 1070, Margaret had married King Malcolm III of Scotland, becoming Queen of Scots.

Among her many charitable works she established a ferry across the Firth of Forth for pilgrims travelling to St Andrews in Fife, which gave the towns of South Queensferry and North Queensferry their names. Margaret died at Edinburgh Castle in 1093, just days after receiving the news of her husband's death in battle.

Pope Innocent IV canonised her in 1250 and her remains were reinterred in a shrine in Dunfermline Abbey.

Lady Rita will lead safeguarding agency

RECRUITING will begin later this month for board members to join the newly formed Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA) following the appointment of former High Court judge Lady Rita Rae as its first chair.

The SCSSA will operate as a private company entirely independently of the Catholic Church, with its own staff and non-executive directors who will work in close collaboration with dioceses and religious communities to ensure that they are meeting safeguarding standards.

Integrity

Crucially, it will develop a forum in which those who have experienced abuse can contribute their own perspectives to the development of the Church's safeguarding practice.

Bishop Hugh Gilbert, President of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, said, "When considering a number of possible candidates for this important post, the Bishops were united in their view that the SCSSA Board Chair must be able to act with impartiality, integrity and freedom from interference.

"We immediately recognised that Lady Rae's pres-

BY BRIAN SWANSON

tigious legal career, and her reputation as a recent Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, offered great testimony to the rigour and the independence with which she will approach this role. We are delighted that she has accepted this appointment."

Lady Rita Rae, who is currently rector of Glasgow University, said, "I am honoured to undertake this role as the first Board Chair of the SCSSA. I recognise that, in establishing this independent agency, the Catholic Church in Scotland is taking another bold step to ensure that its safeguarding practice is meeting the highest standards.

"I intend to ensure that the



agency will operate with independence and that it will seek to rebuild confidence and trust, especially among those who have experienced abuse.

"I look forward to recruiting fellow Board members who will bring rigour, independence and expertise to the work of the agency."

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Remembering Archbishop Philip on his first anniversary

A YEAR ago, on the feast of St Mungo, his heavenly predecessor as pastor of the Church in Glasgow, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia died.

His death left the whole archdiocese in shock and sorrow. His gentle, solid, reassuring presence had become a feature of all our lives during the pandemic and his sudden death was, to use the words of Bishop Hugh Gilbert at the Requiem Mass, 'like the felling of a great tree' in our midst.

A year on, Archbishop Philip is remembered with undiminished affection and his death still evokes feeling of deep sorrow among people across the Archdiocese and beyond.

This picture tribute is a reminder of the man and his mission.

He was always a humble man, who was uncomfortable being the centre of attention, preferring to direct people's attention to Jesus Christ to whom he had devoted his life.

On the anniversary of his entry into the presence of the Master he served all his life we join in prayer for our departed Archbishop.

*It was You, O God,
Who made Your servant Philip
a successor of the apostles
by raising him to the episcopal order.
May he also be associated with them forever.
We ask this through our Lord,
Jesus Christ, Your Son.
Amen.*



Pope Francis writes to you and your family



Dear married couples throughout the world!

I AM writing to express my deep affection and closeness to you ... Families have always been in my thoughts and prayers, but especially so during the pandemic, which has severely tested everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us. The present situation has made me want to accompany with humility, affection and openness each individual, married couple and family in all those situations in which you find yourselves.

We are being asked to apply to ourselves the calling that Abraham received from the Lord to set out from his land and his father's home towards a foreign land that God himself would show him (cf. Gen 12:1). We too have experienced uncertainty, loneliness, the loss of loved ones; we too have been forced to leave behind our certainties, our "comfort zones", our familiar ways of doing things and our ambitions, and to work for the welfare of our families and that of society as a whole, which also depends on us and our actions.

Our relationship with God shapes us, accompanies us and sends us forth as individuals and, ultimately, helps us to "set out from our land", albeit in many cases with a certain trepidation and even fear in the face of the unknown...

Like Abraham, all husbands and wives "set out" from their own land at the moment when, in response to the vocation to conjugal love, they decide to give themselves to each other without reserve. Becoming engaged already means setting out from your land, since it calls you to walk together along the road that leads to marriage.

Different situations in life, the passage of time, the arrival of children, work and illness, all challenge couples to embrace anew their commitment to one another, to leave behind settled habits, certainties and security, and to set out towards the land that God promises: to be two in Christ, two in one.

Your lives become a single life; you become a "we" in loving communion with Jesus, alive

and present at every moment of your existence. God is always at your side; he loves you unconditionally. You are not alone!

Dear spouses, know that your children – especially the younger ones – watch you attentively; in you they seek the signs of a strong and reliable love. "How important it is for young people to see with their own eyes the love of Christ alive and present in the love of spouses, who testify by the reality of their lives that love for ever is possible! Children are always a gift; they change the history of every family. They are thirsty for love, gratitude, esteem and trust.

Being parents calls you to pass on to your children the joy of realizing that they are God's children, children of a Father who has always loved them tenderly and who takes them by the hand each new day. As they come to know this, your children will grow in faith and trust in God.

To be sure, raising children is no easy task. But let us not forget that they also "raise" us.

The family remains the primary environment where education takes place, through small gestures that are more eloquent than words. To educate is above all to accompany the growth process, to be present to children in many different ways, to help them realize that they can always count on their parents. ... Children need a sense of security that can enable them to have confidence in you and in the beauty of your life together, and in the certainty that they will never be alone, whatever may come their way.

You have the mission of transforming society by your presence in the workplace and ensuring that the needs of families are taken into due account. Married couples too should take the lead in their parochial and diocesan community through their initiatives and their creativity, as an expression of the complementarity of charisms and vocations in the service

"Think about the advice I give you on the importance of those three little words: Please. Thanks. Sorry."



of ecclesial communion...

Marriage, as a vocation, calls you to steer a tiny boat – wave-tossed yet sturdy, thanks to the reality of the sacrament – across a sometimes stormy sea. How often do you want to say, or better, cry out, like the apostles: "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (Mk 4:38).

Let us never forget, though, that by virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, Jesus is present in that boat; he is concerned for you and he remains at your side amid the tempest. In another Gospel passage, as they rowed with difficulty, the disciples saw Jesus coming to them on the waters and welcomed him into their boat. Whenever you are buffeted by rough winds and storms, do the same thing: welcome Jesus into your boat, for once he "got into the boat with them... the wind ceased" (Mk 6:51). It is important that, together, you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. Only in this way, will you find peace, overcome conflicts and discover solutions to many of your problems. Those problems, of course, will not disappear, but you will be able to see them from a different perspective...

With these biblical passages in mind, I would now like to reflect on some of the difficulties and opportunities that families have experienced during the current pandemic. For instance, the lockdown has meant that there was more time to be together, and this proved a unique opportunity for strengthening communication within families. Naturally, this demands a particular exercise of patience.

It is not easy to be together all day long, when everyone has to work, study, recreate and rest in the same house. Don't let tiredness get the better of you: may the power of love enable you to look more to others – to your spouse, to your children – than to your own needs and concerns.

In this way, the time you spend together, far from being a penance, will become a refuge amid the storms. May every family be a place of acceptance and understanding.

Think about the advice I gave you on the importance of those three little words: "please, thanks, sorry". After every argument, "don't let the day end without making peace". Don't be ashamed to kneel together before Jesus in the Eucharist, in order to find a few moments of peace and to look at each other with tenderness and goodness. Or when one of you is a little angry, take him or her by the hand and force a complicit smile. You might also recite together a brief prayer each evening before going to bed, with Jesus at your side.

For some couples, the enforced living conditions during the quarantine were particularly difficult. Pre-existing problems were aggravated, creating conflicts that in some cases became almost unbearable.



Many even experienced the breakup of a relationship that had to deal with a crisis that they found hard or impossible to manage. I would like them, too, to sense my closeness and my affection.

The breakdown of a marriage causes immense suffering, since many hopes are dashed, and misunderstandings can lead to arguments and hurts not easily healed. Children end up having to suffer the pain of seeing their parents no longer together. Keep seeking help, then, so that you can overcome conflicts and prevent even more hurt for you and your children. The Lord Jesus, in his infinite mercy, will inspire you to carry on amid your many difficulties and sorrows. Keep praying for his help, and seek in him a refuge and a light for the journey. Discover too, in your communities, a house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.

Remember also that forgiveness heals every wound. Mutual forgiveness is the fruit of an interior resolve that comes to maturity in prayer, in our relationship with God...

Here I would like to address a word to young people preparing for marriage. Even before the pandemic, it was not easy for engaged couples to plan their future, due to the difficulty of finding stable employment. Now that the labour market is even more insecure, I urge engaged couples not to feel discouraged, but to have the "creative courage" shown by Saint Joseph, whose memory I wanted to honour in this Year dedicated to him.

In your journey towards marriage, always

trust in God's providence, however limited your means, since at times, difficulties can bring out resources we did not even think we had. Do not hesitate to rely on your families and friends, on the ecclesial community, on your parish, to help you prepare for marriage and family life by learning from those who have already advanced along the path on which you are now setting out.

Before concluding, I would like to greet grandparents, who during the lockdown were unable to see or spend time with their grandchildren, and all those elderly persons who felt isolated and alone during those months. Families greatly need grandparents, for they are humanity's living memory, a memory that can help to build a more humane and welcoming world.

May Saint Joseph inspire in all families a creative courage, so essential for these times of epochal change. May Our Lady help you to foster in your married lives the culture of encounter that we so urgently need in order to face today's problems and troubles. No amount of difficulty can take away the joy of those who know that they are walking with the Lord ever at their side.

Live out your vocation with enthusiasm. Never allow your faces to grow sad or gloomy; your husband or wife needs your smile. Your children need your looks of encouragement. Your priests and other families need your presence and your joy: the joy that comes from the Lord!

I greet all of you with affection, and I encourage you to carry out the mission that Jesus has entrusted to us, persevering in prayer and in the breaking of bread...

And please, do not forget to pray for me, even as I daily pray for you.

Faternally,
Francis

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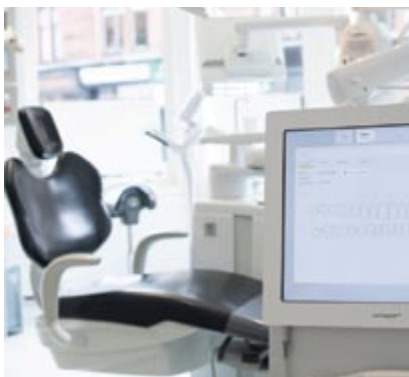
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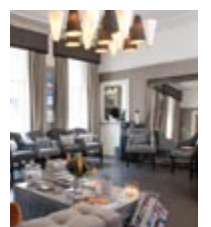
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SCIAF seeks 'army of Wee Box volunteers'

PARISHIONERS across the Archdiocese are being urged to put their faith into action by becoming a Lenten volunteer for the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund SCIAF as part of this year's Wee Box appeal.

Last year supporters raised an incredible £2.8m which will fund life changing projects in some of the poorest countries in the world who struggle to survive due to hunger, poverty, conflict and natural disasters.

With its work more vital than ever SCIAF now hope to beat that figure with the help of an army of volunteers who will promote the Wee Box charity over the coming months.

Full training will be given to those who sign up. Contact SCIAF on 0141 354 5555 for more details.

Full training will be given to those who sign up. Contact SCIAF on 0141 354 5555 for more details.

Facing Christ with El Greco

HE was an admirer of Tintoretto and Bassano and probably a disciple of Titian.

Certainly, admired by Manet and other famous painters and his name was Doménikos Theotokópoulos. Never heard of him? Yes you have!

He became well-known by the nickname, El Greco even though he usually signed his paintings with the Greek letters, Δομήνικος Θεοτοκόπουλος. He would often add Κρής which means Cretan.

His great patron in Rome was Cardinal Farnese and, for a time, he had lodgings at the Palazzo Farnese. For the last 23 years of his life, he lived in Spain. Colour was for him more important than form. So, we find strong colours usually not

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

softened by the addition of gentler tones. This gives his work a sense of drama in the characteristic long faces and slim, elongated figures.

Although born in Greece and trained in Italy, his religious works are shaped by Spanish Mysticism. In our painting Christ is portrayed with a certain otherworldliness. Here is a soul present to mankind and, at the same time, present to God.

Christ the man and still, Christ the Son of God. In this world and yet praying with the Father.

What do you see? Compassion? Awe? Humility? Gentleness? Perhaps all of these virtues and more. The Word, without doubt, was made Flesh.



El Greco, Christ at Prayer, 1596

POEM OF THE MONTH

Let My Prayer Be As Incense · By William Gadsby

A Godliness which feeds on form,	Bid heart and flesh cry out for thee,
And lip devotion, barren cheer,	And thou my joyful portion be!
Will satisfy an earthly worm,	Let incense smoking from my breast,
Who learns to think and call it prayer;	In praise and prayer ascend thy hill;
Contented with the husky part,	And where I rove, or where I rest,
A moving lip and silent heart.	Do thou, O God, surround me still;
O Lord, thy Spirit's aid impart,	My heavenly intercourse increase,
And fill me with devotion's fire;	Till as a river flows my peace.
Create anew my waiting heart,	
And heavenly breathings there inspire;	

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Let us Pray: Dear Lord, as we begin the year 2022 AD, may your light shine upon the world. May we learn to see you as the Prince of Peace, Father of the days that lie ahead, wondrous God. We pray, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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St Nicholas Care Fund

During 2021 the St. Nicholas Care Fund awarded £83,421 to a wide range of projects. Many of these projects addressed the health and care needs of people and communities in the Archdiocese of Glasgow. From the provision of food and care packages offered via community groups, homeless charities, churches and schools to more specialised translation and support services for pregnant mothers, the Care Fund was focussed on supporting our most vulnerable communities and their basic needs.

Projects addressing mental health and wellbeing were also prioritised, with grants awarded to initiatives supporting young people, people with problems associated with addiction or offering friendship to people who are lonely and isolated. With the continued support of our generous donors, the St Nicholas Care Fund will maintain our commitment to supporting health and care throughout the coming year.



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Sunday readings offer us words of guidance in times of uncertainty



Fr Tom Kilbride

It has been a strange Christmas and New Year season for us all once again, as we keep our guard up against the coronavirus and its variants – just as we thought we were through the worst of it!

Still, the liturgies of Christmas have retained their beauty and power for us, perhaps even more so in these strange times.

In the weeks of “ordinary” time this year, we will be guided by St Luke and his understanding of the gospel and its events. He has been our guide already in Advent, and also through Christmas, as it is his Gospel which offers the stories surrounding Jesus’ birth with which we are most familiar – the manger, shepherds and angels, Simeon and Anna, Jesus lost in the Temple – as well as the birth stories about John the Baptist.

In some ways, the ideas he stresses and the atmosphere he creates for us in those moments will remain with us throughout the year ahead. For example, his will

be a Gospel marked with joy and praise for what God does for us – something already evident throughout the Christmas cycle, but also a recurring note across this year’s Sundays.

Second Sunday, Year C

As always, however, we begin with a passage from John’s Gospel, the famous wedding at Cana. This comes as the third of three moments – across three Sundays – in which Jesus is revealed to us. The first is to the pagan Wise Men at the Epiphany, the second as Son of God in his Baptism. Now “his glory” is revealed in the sign of the transformation of water into wine, a sign of the new, transforming and abundant power of God at work in him.

And his mother gives us a clue to what our response must be: “Do whatever he tells you.”

It is Jesus’s first “sign” in John’s Gospel, and the disciples believe in him when they see it. Maybe this Sunday challenges us to think



about how we respond to Jesus. Can we see him with new eyes as we begin a new year, or do we take his message too much for granted?

Third Sunday, Year C

We begin our reading of Luke at the very beginning but skip to chapter 4 in one reading. In fact, we have heard most of Chapters 1 to 3 during Advent and Christmas.

However, we begin with Luke’s opening words, in which he tells us why he has written a gospel at all, and then the opening words of Jesus’s ministry, in which he tells us why he has come.

The first of these (Luke’s reasons for writing) show us his care in researching and writing the story of Jesus, the things “fulfilled among us”.

Luke was not an eye-witness to the Gospel events, so he has been careful to hear from those who were. However, he is not telling us about any old events, but about things which will change us. So, he reminds us that these are “ministers of the word”, and not just spectators. They are preachers of God’s message and their testimony will show us how firm our faith is, a faith which has been “handed on” to us and which is reliable.

Already we can spot a couple of ideas which will be crucial for understanding Luke’s gospel as we hear it this year: it is God’s word, a promise kept, and it is a word to share with others. Word and mission: two ideas we immediately meet in the synagogue of Nazareth.

The word Jesus speaks – and the prophetic word he reads – is being fulfilled, and it is “good news” especially for the poor and downcast. Having heard the stories of Christmas, this should be no surprise to us. Mary, Elizabeth, the shepherds, old Anna, all represent the poor and marginalised and they are the first to hear the

one and that his gospel does not recognise boundaries, but also to warn us that the mission we undertake in sharing it might not always be welcome.

Do not lose heart, he suggests: Jesus’s mission goes on despite attempts to thwart it. The Holy Spirit can’t be silenced so easily!

Fifth Sunday, Year C

Again, our Gospel themes of Word and Mission call out to us. Luke tells us that the crowds are “listening to the word of God”. They are not listening to Scriptures being read, but to the voice of Jesus speaking to them about the kingdom. His preaching is already “word of God”.

Then, we find him calling others to share in his mission: Peter and the fishermen. The miraculous catch

of fish is a powerful image for the mission they will undertake in the future, a mission for which Peter feels totally unworthy. Nonetheless, Jesus calls them into it: they will be the first to share in it at this point, and the first to be filled with the Holy Spirit when the true mission to the world begins at Pentecost. But that’s a story for another day!

Hearing and sharing the word. These two ideas mark these first few Sundays. What it means to live by that word will become evident over the next few weeks, but it will boil down to what Mary has already said: “Do whatever he tells you.”

That’s maybe not a bad thing to consider as we begin a new year, with its opportunities... and uncertainties!

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Fr Gilfedder: remembering a gentle pastor

WE find ourselves speeding towards the end of another Advent, looking forward to Christmas, a time that makes very real our faith and inspires it, as we remember again the birth of our dear Saviour in a stable.

We remember that moment which changed human history for ever and gave us hope of life, life in its fullness, and life for eternity.

We have gathered to celebrate the funeral rites for our brother, Father Chris Gilfedder. Today we offer the Requiem Mass for his eternal rest. As we do so we can be consoled by the words of our dear Lord in the Gospel we just heard: "The hour is coming when the dead will leave their graves at the sound of his voice; those who did good will rise again to life."

The Book of Wisdom assures us that "the souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them...they are in peace." I think all of us here today would agree that Fr Chris was a good man, a just man. These words of the sacred scriptures will reassure us because we recognize, we saw, the truth of them in this good and holy man.

Last month saw the funeral of Father Chris Gilfedder, a much-loved priest whose ministry touched many souls. His Requiem Mass was celebrated by Mgr Hugh Bradley, the Diocesan Administrator, who paid tribute to Fr Chris in his homily

It is traditional, at a priest's funeral, to remember the different ministries and service he offered in his life as a priest of Jesus Christ.

Father Chris was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Donald Campbell in St Andrew's Cathedral on 29 June 1954.

He served as Assistant Priest in St John's, Portugal Street; Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald; and from 1961-1973 he taught at St Mary's College, Blairs.

In 1973 he returned to the Archdiocese and served as Assistant Priest at Our Lady and St George's, Penilee. At this time he was Diocesan Chaplain to the Guides and Brownies and Member of CMAC. Then between 1975-1977 he moved to Franbce where he studied sacred liturgy at the Catholic Institute in Paris. On his return he became Director of the Archdiocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Committee; Assistant Priest



St Andrew's Cathedral; St Joseph's, Milngavie; St Philomena's, Blackhill.

He served as Parish Priest in Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Broomhill,

St Dominic's, Bishopbriggs and St Gabriel's, Merylee. And he completed his formal priestly ministry as Assistant Priest at St Helen's in Langside.

In 2006 he retired to be resident in Nazareth House, where he was happy and content and well cared for.

It's good for us to recognize

the importance of family in the life of a priest. Each of the priests here today would testify to this central truth in the life of every priest. One of the main foundations of our priestly ministry, along with our parishioners and colleagues, is our family. The members of our family support us in so many ways. It was the same for Fr Chris. I asked his family to share some thoughts with us. I thank them for these beautiful memories.

'Uncle Kester' as Father Chris was known, was born into a family of four brothers, Michael, Terry, Brian, Hilary and three sisters, Theresa, Biddy and Gabriel. Three of the brothers were to be ordained to the priesthood. Theirs was a family with three great loves... the Church, studies and music. His parents, Felix and Clare, filled their house with music and song.

As a young boy Kester attended St Thomas Primary and St Mungo's Academy, Glasgow. After third year he set out to join the Salesians at Shrigley Park, Cheshire. After Novitiate he left and served in the RAF from 1947-49, after which, he decided to continue his studies for the priesthood. He applied to the Archdiocese of Glasgow and continued his studies, this time in Saint

Sulpice, Paris, where he discovered a real love of the French language, a language he enjoyed conversing in all his days. In Paris, too, he made lifelong friends.

After ordination Kester started parish work in St. John's, in the Gorbals, but was then asked to teach in Blairs, where he taught French and Mathematics. There he proved to be very popular with the students and enjoyed his teaching and sharing his football skills.

After 15 years, however, he was delighted to get back to his main love, parish work.

In 2006 he retired to Nazareth House, there enjoying the peace and kindness of the Sisters and the staff.

Uncle Kester was a great visitor to all his family (41 in total). He officiated at so many weddings and baptisms and was glad to attend the many parties. In the most caring way, he would give advice and help in the many difficulties associated with family life. At family parties he enjoyed sharing his songs, two being... 'The Rowan Tree' and 'The Road to Dundee'. To his family he was such an example of kindness, gentleness and caring. He was a very prayerful man and taught Christ's love.

Saint Paul reminds us in the letter to the Romans, "When we were baptized in

Christ Jesus we were baptized in his death...so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life... Having died with Christ we shall return to life with him." Father Chris Gilfedder was a faithful disciple and friend of the Lord Jesus. We can be sure that having died with Christ in baptism, he will rise with him to new life.

We could talk for hours about the great impact of Father Chris on so many people: his parish ministry, his time at Blairs, his ministry at Lourdes. I did not know him terribly well, but his reputation precedes him. A man of honour, goodness and humility. One of his nieces said about him: "He truly saw God in everyone". What a beautiful testimony to a priest.

One of the lines I love from the first reading from the Book of Wisdom, referring to the virtuous, the author says: "When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out."

I think of our brother Chris and smile when I hear these words.

He did shine out, he lived in love, and grace and mercy await him now.

Fr Christopher Gilfedder, 14/08/1928 – 26/11/2021



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ARE you an aspiring artist, film-maker, musician, a poet, or dancer who enjoys a challenge?

Then the Archdiocese of Glasgow Arts Project (AGAP) wants to hear from you to be part of its 2022 Lentfest programme.

Despite the ever-evolving Covid situation organisers remain hopeful that a hybrid programme of live and virtual events will go ahead as planned this year. And to underline that commitment this year's theme is Hope.

AGAP Director Stephen Callaghan said: "There is a lot of uncertainty around gatherings, public or private. However, in good faith we hope to offer a programme for Lentfest 2022 that is a hybrid of live and virtual events."

"In that spirit of hope, we have selected the following theme from the first letter of St Peter: 'Always be ready to give an answer for the that is within you.'"

Described as a fusion of faith and arts this year's Lentfest is scheduled to take place between March 2 and April 14.

Stephen added: "We are challenging people to come up with something inspirational and there are various ways in which

individual artists can take part. You might also be an event organiser, a member of a band or group, or another type of organisation.

"Our programme will include 'Images of Hope', an exhibition of visual art to which artists may apply to have their work included; 'Songs and Words of Hope': an invitation to perform for our Online Programme with a 5-minute video; and 'Schools for Hope', an invitation to schools to come up with their own creative challenge."

"We are reaching out to schools as well and while we appreciate the enormous strain that the pandemic has caused we hope that this invitation allows as much flexibility as possible for schools to be part of the festival in their own way without imposing a particular task."

"It could be a performance by the school band or choir, a visual artwork created by a group, a short film, a drama sketch, or a reading from a creative writing exercise. It might involve the whole school or only one class-its entirely up to you."

For full terms and conditions, including deadlines for submissions, please see the individual pages at www.agap.org.uk

'Smiling Pope' to be beatified

POPE Francis will beatify the 'smiling pope' – John Paul I – later this year, on September 4, 2022.

The Pope who reigned for only 33 days in late summer 1978 will be beatified in St. Peter's Basilica.

Bishop Renato Marangoni of Belluno-Feltre, the Italian diocese where the future Pope was born opened the process of investigation and gathering of evidence of his sanctity in 2003, and completed it 2017, with the proclamation of John Paul I's heroic virtues.

Pope Francis recognized a miracle obtained through the intercession of his papal predecessor in October last year.

John Paul I – whose name was Albino Luciani – was elected Pope on August 26, 1978, following the death of St Paul VI. A priority of his short pontificate was carrying forward the work of the Second Vatican Council.

He died unexpectedly on September 28, 1978, at the age of 65, and was succeeded by St John Paul II.

Even before he was elected Pope, Albino Luciani was known for his humility, his emphasis on spiritual poverty, and his dedication to teaching the faith in an understandable manner. His book, *Illustrissimi*, of letters to famous figures from history and literature, is still a bestseller, filled with simple anecdotes and words of wisdom.



John Paul I is one of six (out of nine) 20th-century Popes whose causes of beatification and canonisation have been introduced. Four of them have so far concluded in canonisation: Pius X, John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II.

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin said that "Pope John Paul I was and remains a reference point in the history of the universal Church."

Miracle

The miracle attributed to John Paul I's intercession is the 2011 healing of a girl in the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires, Argentina, from a severe form of encephalopathy, a disease affecting the brain.

Last year, Pope Francis instituted a Vatican foundation to promote the thought and teachings of John Paul I.

Holy Year 2025 plans revealed



POPE Francis has announced a new jubilee year and has given the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization responsibility for coordinating the Holy See's preparations for the Holy Year 2025.

In recent days the President of the Council, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, met with Superiors of the Secretariat of State, the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See (APSA) and the Secretariat for the Economy to discuss the upcoming jubilee.

Archbishop Fisichella is a great friend of Scotland, having ministered in Aber-

deen as a young priest and having visited the country in subsequent years. He visited St Ninian's High School in Giffnock several years ago during a visit.

In the Catholic tradition, a Holy Year, or Jubilee is a great religious event. It traditionally marks a year of forgiveness of sins, a year of reconciliation between adversaries, a time of conversion and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Themes receiving special focus for the 2025 Jubilee include: solidarity, hope, justice, commitment to serve God with joy and in peace with our brothers and sisters.

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