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Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

July 2025

Jubilee Year message of hope will be proclaimed at the Fringe

THE message of Pope Leo for this Holy Year – that ‘Hope does not disappoint’ – is to be proclaimed loud and clear at this summer’s Edinburgh Festival thanks to a new AGAP play.

The Archdiocese of Glasgow Arts Project will be back at the world’s premiere Arts Festival this summer with a new production focusing on the need for hope in the modern world.

The play, entitled ‘Pilgrim of Hope’ has been encouraged by the Vatican’s Culture Office and last month also won the enthusiastic backing of the Papal Nuncio during his visit to Glasgow.


In the drama, the main character

BY **RONNIE CONVERY** (played by Artistic Director Stephen Callaghan) begins a quest that will take him through an array of quirky situations as he attempts to answer the question: where does one find hope today?

It has been described as ‘a funny, poignant fable about life, death, air-fryers and one man’s search for hope’.

This will be the third Edinburgh Festival run for AGAP in its role of evangelising culture by taking the Christian message to worlds unfamiliar with the vision of the Church.

■ Tickets at: <https://res.cthearts.com/event/34:5017/>



AGAP Theatre presents

PILGRIM OF HOPE

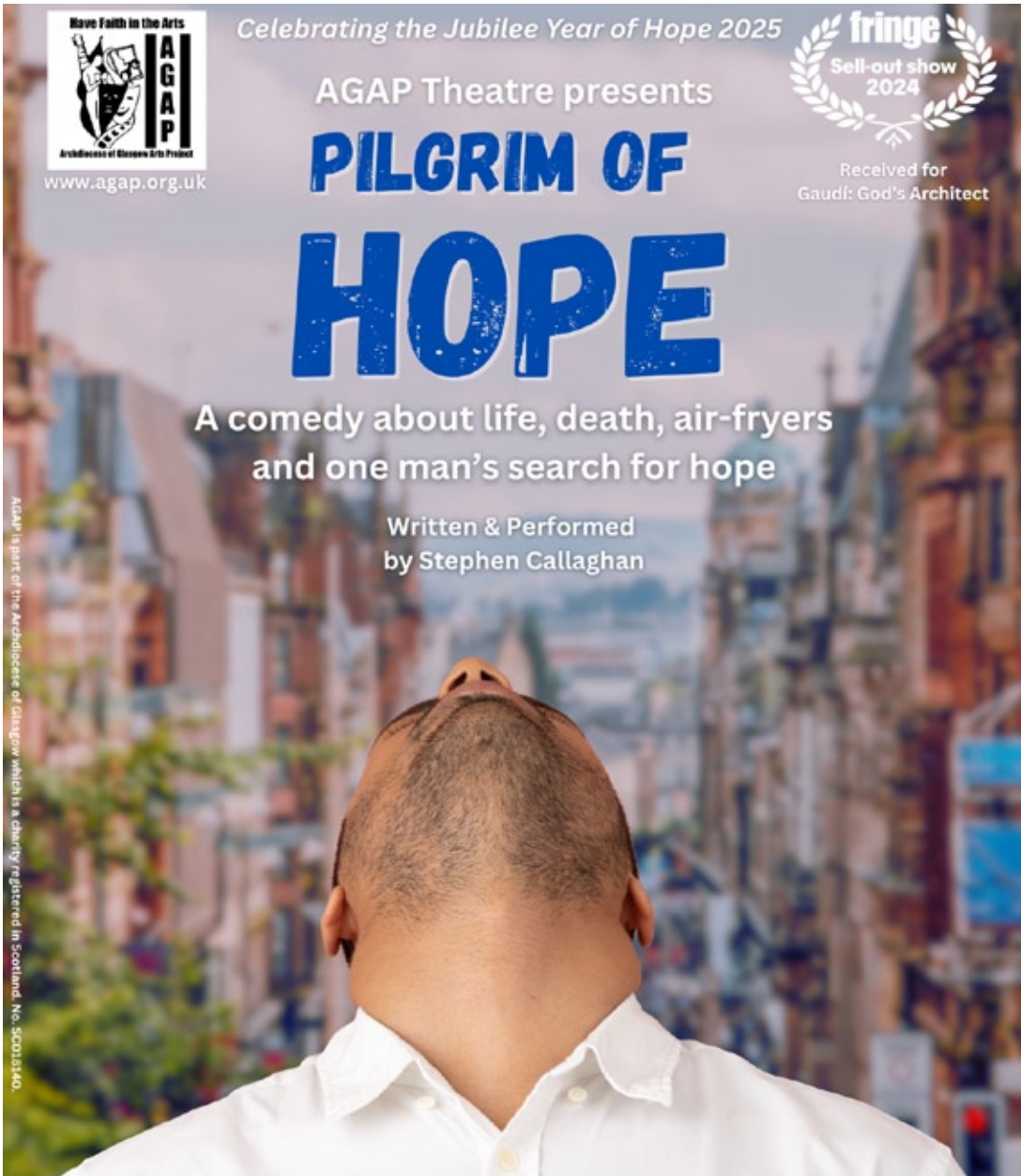
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A very special Mass for very special people

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

THE light of God's love was at the heart of this year's Mass for children with additional support needs – a message that was underlined by Archbishop Nolan as he welcomed them, their parents, carers, and extended families to St Andrew's Cathedral.

Taking inspiration from the entrance hymn, 'Christ be our light', and holding a lit candle, the Archbishop said: "Jesus wants us all to be the light of the world."

Later the Archbishop blessed Jubilee Year Medals before presenting one to each child along with a miniature bottle of holy water and a prayer card containing the words: "May the Grace of this Jubilee year help us remember we are all pilgrims who hope one day to see the treasures of Heaven."

"May we spread the Joy and Peace of Jesus in our homes and families, in our schools and with everyone we meet."

Children from Saint Oswald Secondary School Castlemilk, Cardinal Winning Secondary School Tollcross, and Saint Joseph's Rainbow



Unit Faifley, were among the schools represented.

And it was clear that the event, which has been running for the past 16 years was once again welcomed by all those attending.

One parent summed it up as she left saying: "Nights like this remind us that we are not alone."



Let music flourish



It was St Augustine who said that those who sing in church pray twice over ... and that's certainly the experience of the members of St Andrew's Cathedral choir.

And this summer they are putting out a special invitation for YOU to join them.

The choir sings at 12.00 noon Mass on Sundays and rehearses on Thursday evenings at 7pm.

Musical Director Des McLean said: "We are looking to expand membership and would welcome men and woman from age 12 upwards. No previous experience

is necessary nor is the ability to read music essential!

"We are also looking to expand the cantor system to provide more voices to lead the singing at the Saturday Vigil and 10.00am Mass on Sundays, so if those times suit you get in touch."

The choir sings a variety of forms of sacred music, from Gregorian chant to newly composed psalms, from traditional motets to parish favourite hymns.

■ For more information, call Des McLean on 07712 605235



Primary pupils' Holy Year walk of witness

THIS is our faith and we are proud to profess it – that was the message delivered by this group of pupil pilgrims who enthusiastically took part in a Walk of Witness for the Jubilee Year.

The 60-strong group, from St Monica's, Milton, St Philomena's, Provanmill, St

Catherine's Primary, Barmulloch, and St Martha's Primary, walked a route that took them past their respective primaries.

The primary six and seven pupils stopped for a brief rest at St Catherine Labouré parish in Balornock where parishioners mounted a guard of honour for them,

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

and then it was on to Immaculate Heart of Mary and a blessing from Parish Priest Father Mark Morris.

The Walk of Witness ended with Mass at St Augustine's

Milton, celebrated by Father Paul McAlinden assisted by Deacon James Ward.

Stacy Dodwell, St Monica's RE co-ordinator and acting principal teacher said: "Just before Christmas all the RE coordinators from our primaries got together to plan some thing special for the Jubilee year and we decided

a pilgrimage walk would be a good way of doing that because this was traditionally way of living your faith and showing the world what you believed in.

"Ours wasn't exactly the Santiago Camino but the children got it right away and as one primary seven pupil said to me 'Are we do-

ing this to remind us how Jesus suffered for us?'"

She added: "The Mass was very special because we don't often worship together as a community and that was something that we felt was important to do and the children were still enthusiastic at the end of a tiring morning for them."

The indignity of Dungavel

Archbishop joins detention centre protest for refugees



THE plight of desperate asylum seekers being held in a former castle in the remote countryside of Lanarkshire was highlighted last month.

Archbishop Nolan joined supporters of Justice and Peace Scotland on Fathers' Day to protest at the un-

limited detention to which more than 100 men and women inside the unit are subjected.

Deportation

The so-called 'Removal Centre' at Dungavel House

is intended to hold asylum seekers awaiting deportation.

But in recent years more than half of those being held have successfully appealed their sentence and won the right to remain.



The Archbishop said: "These people are being held inside for the simple reason that they are foreigners who have come to this country. They may have come to escape violence or poverty in their homelands."

"Today is Fathers Day and

inside, behind the barbed wire, are young fathers separated from their families who are not allowed to see their children. They are locked up and they don't know how long they will be locked up for. They are detained and there is no limit

to that detention. That is not treating people with dignity."

The protesters prayed outside the detention centre and left notes and small gifts to show solidarity with those held against their will inside.

Football, faith, and funds



FOOTBALL. Faith. Fundraising ... that's the trio of ideas being launched this summer by SCIAF as they invite parish groups to put their faith (and their ball skills) into action and take part in the first ever SCIAF Shield.

That's the name of the inaugural knock-out tournament that will use football to raise money for the world's poorest people.

The SCIAF Shield is a new 5-a-side tournament that will bring together 16 qualifying teams for an exciting afternoon of community and sport – all in support of SCIAF's life-changing work overseas.

With four groups of

four teams, the tournament kicks off with a group stage, followed by a thrilling knockout round to crown the winners of the SCIAF Shield. Why not send a team to represent your parish? Everyone, and all abilities, welcome at Glasgow Goals South on August 30 at 12 noon.

What's included for the £100 entry fee?

Entry into the SCIAF Shield tournament; guaranteed 1 hour+ of football for up to eight players; welcome pack for every player; light lunch provided; family-friendly atmosphere with music, bouncy castle, face-painting and more!

Register today at www.sciaf.org.uk

New award for Catholic students

THE Bishops' Conference of Scotland is to fund a new award – the Turnbull Scholarship – which will provide tuition fee funding for part-time doctoral research in the field of Catholic Education.

The newly announced scholarship, named in honour of Bishop William Turnbull, who played a key role in the founding of Glasgow University through a papal bull in 1451, will be administered by the St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Education at the University of Glasgow.



Applicants must be currently employed in a Catholic school in Scotland and must have already been accepted for doctoral study at Glasgow University before applying.

A statement will be required from applicants detailing how their planned research will contribute to Catholic education in Scotland and abroad. Applications close on August 30.

■ For further information email: education-st-andrews-foundation@ac.uk

The St. Nicholas Care Fund offers grant support to schools, churches and community groups working with vulnerable or disadvantaged groups and individuals in the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

We are accepting applications every quarter – the next deadline for applications is 4th August 2025.

Application forms and guidance is available at www.rcag.org.uk

Or contact us at:

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New chapter in the history of the Archdiocese's most ancient church

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

THE past and the future intertwined last month when Archbishop Nolan celebrated Mass at St Mahew's, Cardross, the oldest church in the Archdiocese, on the 70th anniversary of the opening of the restored chapel, in May 1955.

Among those joining the celebration were Cardross parishioners who were present at that Mass, 70 years ago.

The pre-Reformation building dates back to 1467 when it belonged to the Na-

pier family and was used as a chapel-of-ease by the people of the area.

The chapel became derelict in the early 17th century, was revived as a parochial school around 1640, and then abandoned 200 years later.

In his homily the Archbishop said: "The ancient site on which this church stands has links to the early Christian missionaries, like St Mahew. In our own day too the call to spread the Gospel and revive the faith resonates intensely.

"But while honouring the good work of those who restored the chapel and those who have maintained it, we must focus also on mission today, especially where people no longer keep in touch with Christ."

Father Vincent Toal, parish priest of both St Michael's, Dumbarton, and St Mahew's said: "The Archbishop's eagerly awaited visit was a reassurance for

St Mahew's fact file

ST Mahew was one of the Celtic missionary monks who, in the 6th century, preached the gospel to the people of the western shores of Scotland. He was a disciple of St Patrick.

The chapel of St Mahew, built in 1467 and restored in 1955, stands on one of the earliest Christian missionary sites in Scotland (6th Century).

The chapel is one of only four mediaeval churches which have been restored to their former use.

The others are: Greyfriars at Elgin, the Chapel Royal at Falkland and the Priory at Pluscarden.

The Parish of St Mahew's, Cardross, was formed in 1978 with a priest resident in the village. Today, it is served from the neighbouring parish of St Michael's, Dumbarton.

St Mahew's is set to merge with St Michael's to form a single parish – with St Mahew's reverting to its historic designation as a 'chapel of ease'.

those who cherish the opportunity to have Mass offered in such an historic setting.

"Although the parish of St Mahew, which was established in 1978, is set to merge with St Michael's, Mass continues to be celebrated each week in the little chapel on Darleith Road – at 4.30pm on Thursday

afternoons and of course visitors from elsewhere are more than welcome.

"Any priest who may wish to visit and offer Mass with a parish group should email St Michael's at stmichael.dumbarton@rcag.org.uk"

The fascinating history of St Mahew's can be found at: <https://www.stmahew.rcglasgow.org.uk>

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Top award for St Patrick's



A GLASGOW head teacher says she is "so proud" of her school after it received a top award.

Mary Moore, head of St Patrick's Primary on Perth Street, was overjoyed to find out her school had earned a gold level UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award.

The school was also praised for its "inclusivity and diversity" and it was found that children "felt lis-

BY BRIAN SWANSON

tened to".

According to UNICEF's website, the award "recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school and beyond."

To mark the achievement,

staff and pupils at the school had a celebration event to mark the occasion.

Mrs Moore said: "I am so proud of our entire school community – achieving this award has been a wholly collaborative effort between staff, pupils, and parents/carers.

"We empower our children to know their rights and not be afraid to use their voices."



Special welcome to Glasgow's first Vietnamese priest

DOMINICAN priest Father Quoc Vinh OP, 34, has arrived in Glasgow at the invitation of Archbishop Nolan to provide pastoral support for the large and growing Vietnamese population in the Archdiocese.

Currently resident in St Andrew's Cathedral, Father Vinh, who was ordained last August in his native Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, has begun to help out at Cathedral Masses on Sundays at 12 noon and 5:15pm which attract significant numbers from the Vietnamese community.

Until he receives the legally required safeguarding certificates Father Vinh cannot celebrate Mass on his own but until then he is using his time to get to know the Vietnamese community.

The long-term plan is to find a parish for him in the Archdiocese but for now he will be continue to be based in St Andrew's Cathedral.

He said: "I would estimate that there are between two and three thousand Vietnamese people in Scotland and most of them are here in Glasgow so you can see it is quite a large number."

"Vietnamese people tend to be very devout, very faithful because they are taught



BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

PICTURE BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

about the Catholic faith by their parents as very young children so their faith is very important to them.

"When they leave Vietnam to come to other places like Scotland they take their faith with them but for those whose English is poor they find it difficult to properly participate in the Mass so it will be good for them to hear God's Word in their own language and so it is a blessing for me to be able to

celebrate with them.

"I have already met some of them and have made me very welcome – they even bring me traditional Vietnamese food – I haven't got used to Western food yet!"

He added: "I would like to sincerely thank Archbishop Nolan and Monsignor Bradley the Vicar General for their kindness in inviting me here and Canon David Wallace, the Cathedral administrator for his help in so many ways."

Canon Wallace said: "Over the years the Vietnamese community attending Mass

has grown so much that we have provided them with bulletins in their own language and we will continue to do that – I'm sure Father Vinh will point out our mistakes! It will be wonderful for the community to hear their own language spoken.

"It's a big job he has taken on – most of the community are young married couples so there will be lots of baptisms, first communions and so on in the future, but as I get to know him I have every confidence that his ministry here will be a fruitful one."

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Life changing grants are announced

PEOPLE ranging from refugees to families with vulnerable children needing respite care were among those to receive the latest grants from the St Nicholas Care Fund.

Between March and June just over £22,000 was awarded to several charities who successfully applied to the fund which was founded in 1992 by Cardinal Winning.

Since then, hundreds of charities have benefited from the fund which itself is funded entirely by donations from generous parishioners following a collection on Caring Sunday, the third week of Advent, which this year falls on December 14.

Among the recent successful applicants were St Aidan's High School, Wishaw who used their £3000 grant to help fund a Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Rome for 20 pupils which took place last month, while a £3920 grant to SAMS Club, based at St Michael's, Parkhead, went towards providing respite caravan holidays in Lochgoilhead



for vulnerable children and their families.

Sunny Cycles, based at Glasgow Green used their £1599 grant to help pay for cycling jackets, waterproof trousers, and winter gloves for refugees.

Sheena Kenny, co-ordinator of the Archdiocese Pastoral Care fund which administers the St Nicholas Care fund said: "The closing date for the next round of applications is August 5 and I would encourage charities to apply as soon as possible."

"We do everything we can to help applicants through what is a fairly straight forward process so people should not hesitate to get in touch."

■ **Formore information email: sheena.kenny@rcag.org.uk**

From Glasgow with love...

SENDING love from Glasgow to the rest of the world by postcard... that's the task of these excited pupils from St Monica's Primary Milton as they prepare to write to youngsters across the globe telling them about life in the Dear Green Place.

The initiative, part of the Glasgow 850 anniversary celebrations, was launched at the school with a visit from Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren who has invited schools to register to receive postcards to send to schools in our twin cities.

Schools who already have international partner links in cities not twinned with Glasgow can also register to send Glasgow 850 postcards and in all cases postage costs will be covered.

St Monica's already has links with a school in Turin in Italy while other twin cities whose schools are in line to receive the postcards include Pittsburgh, Marseilles, Nuremberg,



BY **RONNIE CONVERY** Mykolaiv, Barga and Valencia.

Lord Provost McLaren said: "The pupils at St Monica's were so enthusiastic about the idea of sending postcards – most of them probably have never sent a

post card before but they got the idea right away.

"I'm sure every other school will be just as enthusiastic to tell the world about life in Glasgow so I would encourage them to register as soon as possible."

■ **Schools who wish to take part in the postcard exchange should send a contact name and email address with the number of postcards needed – up to a maximum of 66 – to Shelagh.reid@glasgow.gov.uk**

Glasgow priest's special joy at canonisation of new saint for youth

Pier Giorgio Frassati



FATHER John McGinley has more reason than most to rejoice at the news of the upcoming canonisation of a new saint for youth.

For the parish priest of St Mary's Duntocher has strong personal devotion to Pier Giorgio Frassati and over the years has got to know the family of the saint-to-be.

He said: "The life of Pier Giorgio, Carlo Acutis, Margaret Sinclair, and indeed others, including our parents, brothers, sisters, and friends who have taught us how to pray, leave a legacy of love and union of prayer."

"One of the prayers of blessings for the saints says 'Father you have given us many friends in heaven and from their place they guide us still...' What a wonderful thought that they are with us still!"

Fr John told *Flourish* of his personal links to the new saint.

He said: "I was privileged to celebrate Mass in the room where he died in the family summer house in

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Pollone in the north of Italy surrounded by his niece Giovanna and other family members. It was a lovely moment to meet his great-nephew and his family who stay in the USA.

"I am sure his family will be overjoyed to join friends of Blessed Pier Giorgio from around the world at his canonisation – a fitting tribute to a young man of prayer who unites many people. From his place in heaven may he help us still."

Uncorrupted

Fr John added: "I remember Giovanna telling me of their great joy and wonder at the opening of his tomb in the family plot at Pollone in 1981, after St John Paul had declared him Blessed, calling him 'the man of the beatitudes'. She saw her un-

Fr John McGinley



cle's body uncorrupted... the same young handsome man who had died at 24 years of age.

"His body was later transferred to Turin after 1990 and keeps good company there with St John Bosco, St Dominic Savio and of course the Turin shroud."

Fr John added: "Pier Giorgio had a deep love of the Eucharist. He called it his 'daily appointment with the

Carlo Acutis



Lord'. I am sure that the family's devotion and desire to see their uncle canonised has been a firm aspect of their faith and all their activities in promoting his cause."

■ Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis will be canonised together by Pope Leo XIV on Sunday 7 September in Rome.

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Walking in the footsteps of Brother Walfrid

WOULD you be interested in walking in the footsteps of Brother Walfrid, and learning the full story of this legendary Marist brother? If so then read on!

The life of Celtic Football Club's founder will be the subject of a walking tour which takes place in Glasgow on Sunday September 7 which will be free to attend.

This will be the second year that the Brother Walfrid Walk has been held. The 2024 event marked the 160th anniversary of Walfrid's 'clothing' when he became a Marist Brother.

The plan is that this will become an annual event, allowing more people to learn

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

about Walfrid's experiences and better keep alive his memory.

The walk will begin at the Broomielaw in Glasgow city centre, where the young Andrew Kerins first landed in 1855 after leaving Sligo to escape the effects of hunger and extreme poverty. Kerins lived in the city for many years before going to France to train as a Marist Brother.

Other key locations include his homes as well as St Mary's Church in the Calton and Sacred Heart School in Bridgeton. Both of these were central to Walfrid's calling of educating young people, as well as ensuring they were fed too.

As might be expected in a tour about Brother Walfrid's life, many sites connected to Celtic Football Club also feature, including the original ground, before the walk finishes at Celtic Park.

The 2025 Brother Walfrid Walk on Sunday September 7 begins at 12 noon in Glasgow city centre and takes around three hours. It is a mainly flat walk on pavements – around four miles in total – so people will need a basic level of fitness to take part.

■ To attend, visit the Celtic Walking Tours website at: <https://celticwalkingtours.wordpress.com>

Pope's ambassador visits Archdiocese of Glasgow

THE Pope's representative to Great Britain was given a traditional Glasgow welcome as he paid his first visit to the Archdiocese since being appointed.

Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía saw a broad spectrum of the life of the Archdiocese during his visit, including leading the annual Corpus Christi procession through the streets of Croy.

BY RONNIE CONVERY

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

It was a proud moment for the former mining village to have Pope Leo's ambassador lead the celebrations which saw a special flotilla carrying the Blessed Sacrament following a long procession of parishioners and first communicants (right).

The Nuncio also visited Barlinnie Prison to see the chaplaincy work being done there and spent time with the Carmelite Sisters, visited the University, and Glasgow Cathedral (below).

Arts

In a meeting with groups working in the field of evangelisation he signaled out for special praise the Arts

Project, AGAP. He said: "I have never come across this kind of activity in other dioceses. It is so important to evangelise the world of culture and I was very impressed by what I heard and saw."

The Nuncio was in Glasgow just a week after meeting the new Holy Father who had called the world's nuncios to Rome. He outlined the key qualities of the Pope which, he said, offered as insight into the Holy Father's approach.

"He is a man of God. A calm person who listens before making decisions. He is a man of the people who has had direct pastoral experience of people's lives as a missionary and a bishop in Peru.

"He is a man with experi-



ence of governing with charity after leading the Augustinian Order for many years. He is a man of his time with pastoral insight who is keenly aware of the digital challenge and the issues of Artificial Intelligence.

"He is neither a progressive nor a liberal – these labels have no meaning in the Church.

"Rather he is a man of God whose agenda is to bring people to encounter Jesus Christ."



St Helen's welcomes Archbishop for anniversary

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

THESE excited pupils of St Helen's Primary School, Condorrat, show their delight at meeting Archbishop Nolan during a Mass of Thanksgiving to mark the school's 50th anniversary.

And they couldn't wait take to take part in an impromptu question and answer session with their special guest.

Earlier, staff and pupils past and present, along with families, friends, members of the clergy and senior representatives from North Lanarkshire education department gathered in Our Lady and St Helen's Church to celebrate the milestone anniversary.



CARITAS AWARDS 2025

Pope's first message to young people

Last month Pope Leo addressed his first ever video message to young people and in it showed an extraordinary understanding of the challenges they face while offering beautiful words of encouragement. Here they are ...

I'd invite each one of you to look into your own hearts, to recognise that God is present.

God is reaching out to you, calling you, inviting you to know his Son Jesus Christ, through the Scriptures, perhaps through a friend or a relative, a grandparent, who might be a person of faith.

How important it is for each one of us to pay attention to the presence of God in our own hearts, to that longing for love in our lives... searching the ways that we may be able to do something with our own lives to serve others.

So many people who suffer from different experi-



ences of depression or sadness – they can discover that the love of God is truly healing, that it brings hope. And

coming together as friends, as brothers and sisters, in community, in a parish, in an experience of living our faith together, we can find the love of God can truly heal us...

Saint Augustine says to us that if we want the world to be a better place, we have to begin with ourselves, we have to begin with our own lives, our own hearts.

We all live with many questions in our hearts. Saint Augustine speaks so often of our "restless" hearts and says: "our hearts are restless until they rest in you, O God".

That restlessness is not a bad thing, and we shouldn't look for ways to put out the fire, to eliminate or even numb ourselves to the tensions that we feel, the difficulties that we experience. We should rather get in touch with our own hearts and recognise that God can work in our lives, through our lives, and through us reach out to other people.

And so I'd like to conclude this brief message with an invitation to be, indeed, that light of hope. "Hope does not disappoint", Saint Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans.

When I see each and every one of you, when I see how people gather together to celebrate their faith, I discover myself how much hope there is in the world.



ST AMBROSE HIGH SCHOOL "LEARNING TOGETHER IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE"



Congratulations to our Caritas class of 2025 from all within the St Ambrose High School community.

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Filling the NET with joyful faith

EACH year we present the Gospel to thousands of high school students in Catholic schools and parishes.

This year our team reached 9,183 young people with the Gospel and they have left us with very positive comments.

Since I became director in 2017, I have seen students being introduced to the simple but life-giving message of the Gospel through retreats.

Our ministry is based

The first of the National Evangelisation Teams from America arrived in Scotland in the spring of 2015 and since then NET Scotland has communicated a message of hope to tens of thousands of young Catholics across Scotland. John Jackson, the organisation's director in Scotland, assesses its impact.

on missionaries engaging with the students, getting to know their name and sitting with them at lunch, and hearing their stories.

We have found that young people are very good at evan-

gelising other young people with a level of understanding and empathy that the young missionaries have for our youth, and through that they communicate the true love of Jesus Christ.

Many schools invite in a NET team year after year and give credit to the lasting impact of the ministry on the lives of the students.

One such school is St Ninian's Kirkintilloch where Steve Rance, Principal Teacher of RE has welcomed us for the past seven years and can bear witness to that impact.

He said: "I think we can safely say that we were very blessed this year with the team, whose own charism of NET made a deep impression on the young people at St Ninian's and have, indeed, done so over the many years we have been delighted to welcome them to the school. They are always assured a warm welcome in St Ninian's."

Since Canon Jim Dugan from Paisley Diocese brought NET to Scotland in 2015, we have sent out 150 young missionaries who have mainly come from North America and returned home at the end of their missionary year.

I am delighted to share that this year Aine Gavin, a



former pupil of St Andrew's Academy, Paisley, will fulfil her dream of travelling to Minnesota later this summer for five weeks training with NET before spending the next eight months running retreats for high school students across America

Missionary

Ever since she attended a retreat at her school five years ago she has been determined that when she reached the age of 18 that she would become a NET missionary. She will be the first female lay missionary from Scotland and we pray for more in the future.

It is also worth noting that four missionaries who have served with NET Scotland have gone on to become priests with a further three young men in seminary and

we pray for them also.

In May this year I had the privilege of attending the priestly ordination mass of Fr Allen-Michael Muench at the parish of St Elizabeth Ann Seton, Plano, Texas which was attended by over 1000 people.

Father Allen-Michael, from Dallas, was NET Scotland's Team Supervisor from September 2017 to June 2018.

A mission year with NET is open to any confirmed Catholic between the ages of 18-28. This 9 month adventure provides an accelerated discipleship programme that forms young people as missionary disciples.

■ If you are interested in finding more about the work of NET contact info@netscotland.org

THE impact on young Catholics taking part in the NET programme is revealed in the latest statistics for 2024-25.

Missionaries reached out to almost 10,000 pupils, held 76 day retreats, and organised 28 weeks of chaplaincy support.

Some 48 percent of pupils said NET positively changed the way they felt about themselves, 52 percent that NET changed the way they felt about others and 41 percent that NET changed the way they felt about their school.

In addition 46 percent of those who initially said they didn't believe God, 'moved to belief' while 69 percent who did not pray did so after their retreat experience.

St Ninian's High School Giffnock



Congratulations to our Caritas Award Recipients of 2025

YOU have contributed so much to our school

and parish communities
We are so proud of you all!

Head Teacher Mr Gerry O'Neil

Eastwood Park Rouken Glen Road Giffnock G46 6UG Ph. 0141 577 2000

'Let Youth Flourish'



Our Lady and St Patrick's High School



Congratulations to all the 2025 Caritas Awards winners from the staff, pupils and community of Our Lady and St Patrick's High School, Dumbarton

Our Lady and St Patrick's High School
Howatshaws Road, Dumbarton G82 3DR
Tel: 01389 773920
SchoolOffice.OLSPSecondarySchool@west-dumbarton.gov.uk
www.olsp.org.uk

"At our school everyone will be helped towards their fullest spiritual, educational, social, vocational and physical development."



St Andrew's R.C. Secondary School

Putting Young People First



Congratulations to all our Caritas Award winners of the Class of 2025

Our whole school community is very proud that you have pursued all that is noble and worthwhile.



Head Teacher: John McGhee
www.st-andrews-sec.glasgow.sch.uk
@StAndrewsRCsec

CARITAS AWARDS 2025

The young heroes who are not afraid to put their faith into action

WORDS BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

It's just before one o'clock on a sunlit afternoon on the banks of the Clyde and apart from a smattering of stewards lining up outside the Armadillo it seems a day like any other. Nothing to see here...

Then the hiss of air brakes heralds the arrival of the first bus load of Caritas Award winners as the class of 2025, immaculate in their blazers, tumble out of their hired coaches, mobile phones at the ready, clearly buzzing with noisy excitement.

An excitement, it must be said, that was not confined to pupils. Class teachers, school chaplains, education officials, parents and grandparents, mingled with more than a few bishops in a faith filled atmosphere of shared pride.

The Caritas Awards Ceremony was back to where it began 11 years ago. In that first year medals were awarded to 450 young people, regarded as a modest but deeply encouraging figure with potential for future growth.

And so it proved.

This year, medals were presented to no fewer than 2100 youngsters from 60 centres – a term used because some areas of Scotland do not have Catholic Secondary schools.

The awards were instigated after Pope Benedict XVI famously urged young people to become 'saints of the 21st century' during his visit 14 years ago.

That challenge was immediately and enthusiastically taken up by the Bishops' Conference and the Scottish Catholic Education Service and since then, these young saints have been marching on, in impressively growing numbers, receiving awards for work they did with parishes, church organisations, school communities and as individuals.

Once again the eagerly-awaited event was hosted by husband and wife broadcasters David and Maura Currie, both parishioners of St Charles Borromeo in Paisley, who have loyally given



Pupils from Holyrood Secondary

their time since the very first ceremony and who changed their holiday plans this year to watch their son Andrew, a pupil at St Andrew's Secondary in Paisley, receive his Caritas medal.

But before that it was time for the traditional march of the school banners with David and Maura encouraging the pupils to 'raise the roof' with their cheers – a request that, given the upbeat mood in a hall filled with faith, seemed almost superfluous.

Changed

Then it was time to hear of the many unique ways, often reflecting the way the world has changed, that young people have undertaken to help strengthen their faith and that of others.

When the Caritas programme began there were no foodbanks, no energy crisis, no Covid epidemic, but each generation of Caritas pupils has responded to the world as they found it, and, in the words of scripture, clothed themselves in compassion.

This included works of charity including volunteering at food banks, raising money for schools in countries facing appalling poverty caused by war, famine and disease, writing letters of welcome to refugees, sending birthday cards to residents in care homes, and 'adopting' parishes.

Some raised money with sponsored climbs, cycle rides, and litter picking. Others worked with the Way-

side Club, in Glasgow, or held the hands of those in hospices. Yet more worked in community cafes, and collected money in a variety of novel ways so that children with additional needs could enjoy pilgrimages to Lourdes.

Some ran eco-projects, helped out in homeless shelters, visited the sick and housebound, assisted with the children's liturgy, read at Mass in parishes and schools or helped younger pupils with literacy and numeracy.

Other groups recycled prom dresses and cleaned and repaired school uniforms to help those facing hardship because of rising energy and food prices.

But, as speaker after speaker pointed out, the award ceremony was not the end of a journey but a beginning.

And as one observer noted as the crowds drifted away it was about time we took pride in the collective faith of our young people upon whose future the Church relies.

And if ever there was a time and a place to show that collective pride it was inside that cavernous hall on the banks of the Clyde more used to hosting rock concerts, pantomimes, and conferences.

The annual Caritas awards ceremony, let there be no doubt, remains a joyful and eagerly anticipated fixture in the calendar of our Catholic schools. And long may it continue!

Archbishop: 'Caritas will lead to future lives of service'



In his opening remarks Archbishop Nollan, Scotland's Bishop President for Education, praised the award winners saying: "You are a great tribute to your schools your parishes and your families because in achieving the Caritas Award you have shown commitment, you have shown compassion, you have shown 'Caritas' – love in action."

"As you all look towards the stage at the start of today's ceremony, I can't help but think I have a much better view because I am looking out to see all of you and the countless number, it seems to me, of young people who have achieved the Caritas Award this year."

"As your time in Catholic schools comes to an end I don't know how well you have progressed academically or what skills and talents you have developed but I do know that these awards show that in your heart there is a love that shows itself

in action and that you are going to use the skills and knowledge that you have gained not just for yourselves but also for others.

"In a few moments time you will have the opportunity to stand on the stage and receive your Caritas medals."

"These medals are not just a token of what you have done these past few months working for Caritas, but are a kind of pledge for the future – of what you can and will do in your lives and I wish God's blessing on every one of you for that."



St Margaret Mary's, Glasgow



Government minister's words of praise for Catholic schools



Guest speaker Jenny Gilruth, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (above), hailed the award winners as having a set of values which are at the very core of Catholic education.

The former teacher at St Columba's High School, Dunfermline added: "You have shown both courage and care through your service to others, your thoughtful reflection, and your willingness to live out your faith and values. I find that deeply inspiring."

"By giving your time, whether in your parish, your school, your local community or further afield, you are showing us all what it means to live responsibly, generously, and with a deep sense of purpose. You're putting values into action and that's what makes the Caritas Award so special."

"It's important to say that religious education and observance continue to have a valued place in our schools."

"During my time as Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, and prior to that teaching in a Catholic school myself for a time, I have been privileged to see firsthand the important contribution religious education makes to the personal and social development of children and young people."

"When I worked as a teacher, I saw how young people could transform a whole school community, not by being the loudest, but by being the kindest. Sometimes, it was the quiet moments of leadership that stood out the most. Many of you will have had that impact on others without even realising it."

"I hope this award is not the end of your journey, but the beginning of something even bigger. Whether you continue to serve through your faith, your studies, your career, or your community, know that you carry with you the ability to influence others, to lift people up, to listen, and to lead with integrity."

"You've made a difference. You've lived your values. You've done Scotland proud."



St Paul's High, Glasgow



St Mungo's Academy, Glasgow



Congratulations to our Caritas Award Winners of 2025.
We are so proud of you all.

You have been fantastic ambassadors who have embraced our school values – Respect; Learning; Community & Success.
Good luck in the future.

Head Teacher: Lisa Pierotti
Email: headteacher@st-paulshigh.glasgow.sch.uk
Address: 36 Damshot Rd, Glasgow G53 5HW
Tel: 0141 582 0040



FLOURISH
congratulates all Caritas Award winners

St Margaret Mary's Secondary School 2025

St Margaret Mary's Secondary School would like to send warmest wishes and pray for God's blessing on recipients of Caritas Awards:
Lilianna Banicka, Tyler Boyes, Kacper Ciarkowski, Amy Gibb, David Griffin, Ryan Hunt, Daniel MacBeth, Melissa Norman, Chukwuka Ofokansi, Mateusz Spitziar, Dylan Traynor, Keenan Burns, their family, teachers and friends.

St Margaret Mary's Secondary School
 9 Birgidale Rd, Glasgow G45 9NJ
 Tel: 0141 582 0250 Fax: 0141 582 0251
 Web: www.st-margaretmarys-sec.glasgow.sch.uk

ST ALOYSIUS' COLLEGE

“ The Caritas Awards offer our pupils a meaningful opportunity to live out the Jesuit values at the heart of St Aloysius' College. Through service to others, they deepen their faith, grow in compassion, and actively contribute to building a more just and loving community. It is a powerful way for our young people to become men and women for others. ”

Congratulations to all 2025 award winners

Tony McBride, St Aloysius' College's Director of Christian Formation

St Aloysius' College is a Jesuit school dedicated to the formation of young people through a Catholic education.

staloysius.org

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"Courageous souls are needed for the service of the good God"
 - St Julie Billiart

**Congratulations to all Caritas Award winners of 2025
 from everyone at Notre Dame High School**

160 Observatory Road, Glasgow, G12 9LN

St Andrew's and St Bride's High School

DEUS SOLEM SUFFICET



Lord Jesus,
 Thank you for all the gifts you give us.
 Help us to care for the world we live in
 and see the goodness in it.
 Give us the strength to help others.
 Guide us in everything we do.
 Lord Jesus, thank you.
 St Andrew and St Bride, pray for us.



Platthorn Drive · East Kilbride G74 1NL · 01355 529417



St Aidan's High, Wishaw



ST LUKE'S HIGH SCHOOL

In St Luke's Cluster we nurture every child's unique God-given talents to enable them to flourish in a climate of high expectations, innovation and creativity.



Head Teacher: Mrs Christine Downie
0141 577 2400
schoolmail@St-Lukes.e-renfrew.sch.uk
Springfield Rd · Barrhead G78 2SG



St Roch's Secondary
40 Royston Rd
G21 2NF
0141 582 0270
Head Teacher: Mr K. Herron

As a Catholic school with a strong commitment to service, we commend our pupils for their dedication to putting their faith into action. Their witness throughout the Caritas Award reflects the true spirit of our school motto, Alios Adiuva — Help Others.

St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch



"The Catholic values of the school are key drivers for change and improvement. All the school community work together to demonstrate a commitment to the conviction 'we all have more to give'."
St Ninian's High School HMIE report, March 2018



The community of St Ninian's would like to congratulate our Caritas award winners and acknowledge the outstanding contribution they made to the spiritual development of our school community.

School Prayer
Heavenly Father,
We thank you for the graces you bestow upon us. We ask you to ignite our school with your Holy Spirit.
Guide us with your love
And aid us in our everyday learning,
for all knowledge leads to you,
Through Christ, our Lord
Amen.
Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom: Pray for us
St Ninian: Pray for us



Bellfield Road, Kirkintilloch, G66 1DT
www.st-ninians.e-dunbarton.sch.uk



Congratulations from the parents, pupils, parishes, chaplain and staff of John Paul Academy



2 Arrochar Street
Glasgow G23 5LY
Tel: 0141 582 0140
Head Teacher:
David Owen

Thanks for shining the light of your goodness and love.



ST AIDAN'S

"Seeking the best as we grow together in faith and learning"

Congratulations to all 2024/25 Caritas Award Winners!

We are proud of the service you have given to our community through faith witness.





We believe in **giving back** to our communities

Congratulations to all of
the Caritas Award winners.



Scan to find
out more!

Arnold Clark

Proud to support

FLOURISH



Archbishop will lead teachers to Eternal City

ARCHBISHOP Nolan will lead a group of early career teachers to Rome this month as part of the Jubilee celebrations.

The new teachers will join colleagues from England and Wales and Ireland for

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

the trip which will include visits to the tomb of Blessed Carlo Acutis in Assisi, and a visit to Montecassino Abbey.

But the highlight is sure

to be a private audience with Pope Leo XIV scheduled for their first weekend in the Eternal City.

Barbara Coupar, Director of SCES, who has helped organise the trip said: "We are delighted that the Arch-

bishop will be with us as the bishop with responsibility for Catholic education in Scotland.

The group will consist of about 50 people and the idea is to give the new teachers a sense of the uni-

versality of the Church and a sense of solidarity in their vocation.

"We will have 13 early career teachers from Scotland, representing each diocese. Each day will have a session devoted to work

and prayer, and we are delighted too that the new teachers will also have a chance to take part in a question and answer session with people working in the various dicasteries of the Roman Curia."

Abstentions on matters of life and death are not acceptable



Mary's musings

Flourish columnist
Mary McGinty's monthly musings on faith and family

WAKE up and smell the coffee... that's my message to the fence-sitters in the assisted suicide debate.

To the 39 abstainers at the Commons vote last month as well as those who profess to object to a change in the law yet have never signed a petition or made their concerns heard, and to the generally apathetic and uninterested public.

If 24 of the abstainers had voted against the Bill the result would have been so different. Here in Scotland a vote in May on the general principles was carried 70 to 56 with one abstention. So my message is to abstainers and supporters alike.

I've had enough of the high profile proponents whose prominence allows them an abundance of air-time and who form a valu-

able cohort for the campaigning organisations.

When the debate was announced last year Keir Starmer spoke of being pleased he could make good on his 'promise to Dame Esther' for a debate and a free vote on the issue.

Dame Esther claimed all she wanted for herself and fellow sufferers was "the dignity of choice".

Vulnerable

But what will that choice look like for the vulnerable, the mentally ill, the elderly and the terminally ill who do not have the ear of the Prime Minister?

She appeared via phone link on Loose Women following the vote talking with pride and gratitude about how she had long outlived her initial expectations because of her tar-

geted drug regimen. She spoke of joyously spending her birthday in her garden surrounded by her children and grandchildren.

That is exactly what we would all want for the terminally ill, and for ourselves in a similar situation. It is precisely that investment in cancer relieving treatments which has allowed her to enjoy the privilege of time which will be denied future generations of dying patients.

Ironically, one of the so-called safeguards of the Bill is that it is only permissible if the person has a life expectancy of less than 6 months.

Yet how many people will take up the option believing the end will soon be upon them, not realising that, like Dame Esther, could have gone on to enjoy



life for much longer?

Health Secretary Wes Streeting, who opposes the legislation, has said there is no budget for assisted suicide. So where will the money come from? From the already limited palliative care budget is the highly probable answer.

The argument that improved and more widely available palliative care and assisted suicide are not

mutually exclusive simply does not hold water.

In other jurisdictions budgets allocated or promised to palliative care on the passing of assisted suicide legislation have been drastically reduced. Assisted suicide become viewed as part of palliative care and there is competition for the allocation of resources.

Hospice UK, which represents the community of

more than 200 hospices across the UK, state their role is to "neither support nor oppose a change in the law." Likewise, the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care maintains a neutral approach.

It's a different view at the bedside where hospice staff so lovingly and compassionately accompany the dying in their last days. A study last year found 82% of palliative care doctors opposed the introduction of assisted suicide.

As the prominent and widely respected voice of palliative care, Dr Gillian Wright said of Scotland's Bill: "The palliative care and hospice sectors are already in crisis, massively underfunded and understaffed. Yet this Bill will compound the problem by failing to give hospices who do not support killing their patients an opt-out."

To all the abstainers and proponents, north and south of the border, those in whose care the frail and vulnerable are cherished until their last God-given breath, please stand up and be counted.



S I S A O

Nourish
your soul
with our
monthly
spirituality
supplement

Question: Are you really a Christian?

ONCE heard a challenging homily where the priest asked: "If you were put on trial and accused of being a Christian, would they find enough evidence to convict you?"

An interesting question, without a simple answer.

How exactly would we be judged? What might constitute hard evidence that we are Christians?

I grew up in a Roman Catholic culture that had certain agreed-upon criteria for what made you "a practising Catholic", namely: Do you go to church regularly? Are you keeping the Sixth Commandment? Is your married life in order? More recently, both Roman Catholics and other denominations have become fond of judging your Christian standing by your stance on certain moral issues like abortion or gay marriage.

What about Jesus, what did he teach in terms of what makes for a practising Christian?

There is no simple answer. Jesus, the Gospels, and the rest of the New Testament are complex. For example, when teaching how we will ultimately be judged, Jesus doesn't mention attending church, keeping the sixth commandment, or how we stand on abortion or



Scribblings of the spirit

Flourish's regular columnist, Fr Ronald Rolheiser offers practical insights each month into improving our spiritual lives

gay marriage. He has only these criteria: Did you feed the hungry? Give drink to the thirsty? Welcome the refugee? Visit the sick? Visit prisoners?

What would the verdict be if these were the criteria by which a jury judges us?

Criteria

Then there is the Sermon on the Mount. Counselling us as to what it means to be his disciple, Jesus asks: Do you love those who hate you? Bless those who curse you? Do good to those who harm you? Forgive those who have hurt you? Forgive the one who kills you? Do you love beyond your innate instincts? Have you ever really turned the other cheek? Do you radiate God's compassion which goes out equally to everyone, good and bad alike?

Again, how would our discipleship of Jesus stand up

to judgment vis-à-vis these criteria?

Finally, there is another critical criterion. The earthly Jesus left us only one ritual, the Eucharist. On the night before he died, he instituted the Eucharist and told us to continue to celebrate it until he returns.

For 2000 years we have been faithful to that invitation, we have kept the Eucharist going. According to the theologian Ronald Knox, this constitutes "our one great act of fidelity", in that we haven't always been faithful in other ways.

Sometimes we haven't turned the other cheek, haven't loved our enemies, haven't fed the hungry, and haven't welcomed the refugee, but we have been faithful to Jesus in one critically important way: we have kept celebrating the Eucharist. We have been practising Christians in at least one



important way.

So, facing a jury set to judge whether we are a Christians or not, could the most telling evidence of all be that we regularly participate in the Eucharist? Could this single action convict us as being a practising Christian?

Perhaps the more fruitful path toward an answer is not to weigh these criteria against each other. Perhaps it is more fruitful to focus on the verb "practising".

Practising

To practise something doesn't imply that you have mastered it, that you are proficient at it, not alone that you are perfect at it.

It only means that you are working at it, trying to master the skill.

Given human nature, all of us have certain shortcomings in terms of measuring up to the demands of Christian discipleship. Like someone struggling to master a musical instrument or an athletic skill, we are all still practising.

Thus, to the extent that we are trying to get better at feeding the hungry, at welcoming the stranger, at loving our enemy, at radiating God's wide compassion, at sharing our existence in community, and at being habitually at the table of the Eucharist, we are in fact practising Christians.

Horrific words: 'Every child in Gaza is the enemy'

SOMETIMES, even when you have experience of war, of the rhetoric of war, words are spoken that shock you to the core.

For me, those words were spoken by the far-right Israeli politician Moshe Feiglin, who said on Israeli TV recently, "The enemy is not Hamas, nor is it the military wing of Hamas... Every child in Gaza is the enemy. We need to occupy Gaza and settle it, and not a single Gazan child will be left there. There is no other victory."

Those of you who are on social media will be having the same difficulty as me in expunging images of dead and dying Palestinian children from your minds. Those who haven't seen them – believe me, you never want to.

We plead with world leaders to stop the many slaughters being experienced around the world. But even if they manage to establish some form of peace, the surviving chil-



dren will carry into the next generations deep emotional scars along with perhaps horrific physical evidence of their ordeals.

During the war, my Dad's health was poor, so he was enlisted in one of those home guard movements subsequently the subject of successful comedy series. That didn't mean he wasn't exposed to the horrors of conflict.

I didn't arrive on the scene until well after the end of World War II, but a story I must have over-

heard (they would never have mentioned it in front of a child) was that he and his colleagues had to "pull the bodies down from the lampposts".

They laughed when they remembered my big brother swinging on the gate as sirens sounded, shouting "Put your tin hat on, Daddy". But they knew the horror that Daddy might be exposed to in the hours ahead. The memories stuck for father and son. How much more so for fathers and sons in Gaza?



Marian Pallister

The chair of Pax Christi Scotland focuses on the issues of the day

I was recently asked to host a webinar involving Palestinian film director Musheir El Farra and a fisherman in Gaza (if you haven't seen Musheir's film *Shanshula* about Gaza's fishing community, find it on YouTube). I was to ask the questions, Musheir would translate.

Zakaria, sheltering in the darkness of a shop in Gaza that held no goods on its shelves, told us that he had lost six members of his family the day before, another three that day. During the conversation, a drone went overhead. We told Zakaria to seek safety, but the conversation was cathartic for him, and he stayed.

The drone missed the shop but must have wrought

death and destruction a few yards further on.

At best, children would have cowered in fear at the noise – a wee boy I follow on Facebook who has a "farm" at the side of his tent flinches at the noise of nearby explosions while recording messages about his tomatoes and his cat. At worst, children would have died, and surviving members of their families would scarcely recognise their precious remains.

Every child an enemy?

No – every child a victim, today and, for those who survive, into the future.

Moshe Feiglin, you clearly have your own demons to deal with. We pray for you, for the children of Gaza, for peace.

Faith inspires Glasgow's 850th birthday year

THIS year, 2025, is a big year for Glasgow as we celebrate the city's 850th birthday. It's a milestone for everyone who calls Glasgow home.

Throughout the year there will be a city-wide, programme of events and activities that reflect on how the city has transformed, particularly over the last 50 years and how we can inspire change, for a better, sustainable, future, over the next 50.

This year the city of Glasgow celebrates the 850th anniversary of being established as a burgh in 1175.

This was a very important point in the development and growth of the medieval city. The city already boasted a cathedral, built on the site of a previous church which could be traced back to the 6th century.

King William the Lion granted Jocelin, the Bishop of Glasgow and his successors the privilege of having a burgh at Glasgow (This allowed a market on a Thursday and all of the freedoms and customs of the king's burghs).

The protection of the King prohibited anyone troubling, molesting, injuring or inflicting damage on those who belonged to the burgh of Glasgow. Violations of this protection were severely punished!

A few years later, between 1189 and 1198, the King granted to Bishop Jocelin and his successors the right to have an annual 'fair' for eight days beginning on the 6th of July. Later royal protection was extended to those attending or travelling to and from the fair.

The fair was essentially a large market in the boundaries of the cathedral and attracted many people to buy and sell their goods.

After Jocelin, subsequent Bishops encouraged traders to settle in Glasgow along the sides of the High Street descending to the Clyde. From there the city began to

BY STEPHEN J MCKINNEY, JULIE ROBINSON AND PAULINE COONEY

grow. This medieval fair is the origin of the much-loved modern Glasgow Fair, and it would later become a time for entertainment and holiday rather than trade.

The dates would change to the last two weeks in July. From the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, large crowds headed 'doon the watter' on the river Clyde to popular destinations such as Rothesay and Dunoon for a summer break.

Bishop Jocelin was born around 1134 and was a highly influential figure in the medieval Scottish Church. He was originally a Cistercian monk and abbot at Melrose before he became the Bishop of Glasgow, probably in early 1175.

One of his greatest achievements, aside from obtaining burgh status, was to successfully argue – with Papal support – that the Scottish Church was not subject to the English King.

He had a vision for the Church in Glasgow. He had commenced rebuilding the cathedral after a serious fire and intended the new cathedral to be a much grander building, though the rebuilding stalled after his death.

He also commissioned some important written works, including the life of St Kentigern written by Jocelin of Furness. This was part of Bishop Jocelin's attempt to obtain canonisation for St Kentigern, which would come later. Bishop Jocelin died in Melrose in 1199 and was buried there.

■ **Stephen J McKinney, Julie Robinson and Pauline Cooney lecture in the School of Education, University of Glasgow.**

GLASGOW
850

Church and civic leaders mark Glasgow's 850 celebrations



ART OF THE MONTH

Vatican statue is a useful aid to prayer

JULY is the month we honour the Precious Blood of Jesus. This devotion encourages us to focus on the reality of the presence of the blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

When the Centurion Longinus pierced the side of Christ both blood and water came from the wound. The mixing of blood and water symbolises the sacraments of the Eucharist and Baptism, two important components of the Catholic faith.

The sculptor, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, captures the precise moment of Longinus' conversion: arms outstretched, eyes lifted heavenward, the discarded lance lying beside him. The instrument of cruelty becomes the occasion of

grace.

It is a stark reminder that no one – not even someone complicit in Christ's Passion – is beyond the reach of His mercy. Even the one who wounded the side of God, it seems, can become a saint.

The soldier who pierced the side of Christ came away not blood-stained but soul-cleansed. The lance now becomes, not an emblem of death, but of revelation.

Longinus, named so by tradition, appears in the Gospels only as "the centurion" who, having seen the manner of Christ's death,

exclaims, "Truly, this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39). And this, from a Roman soldier who, only moments before, had been the accomplice to the most dreadful of all miscarriages of justice. He becomes the first to proclaim the divinity of Christ.

Bernini captures Longinus standing awestruck, his body twisting as though startled by an unseen light. His arms flung wide—not in triumph but in surrender. The sword has dropped from his hand because he witnessed something greater than conquest. He has stumbled into sanctity.

The soldier has become a saint. That which once wounded now heals. The worst, by God's grace, becomes the best.

Summer Gospels can be an inspiration for us all to do better in good times... and in bad



Fr Tom Kilbride

Parish Priest of Christ the King, Glasgow

MANY people will be travelling for holidays over these weeks. We make preparations, plan ahead, hope the roads or airports won't be too busy, and hope the weather will be kind to us!

As we resume our Sundays with the Gospel of Luke, we join Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem and the Cross. What preparations do we need to make? What obstacles might we meet along the way? We hope the conditions will be fair, but am I ready for "bad weather"? These will be some of the questions we might ask as we set off with the Lord.

15th Sunday of the Year, C

The First Reading reminds us that what we hear in the Gospel is not entirely new to us! The word is "very near". God's commands are "not too hard for you". The lawyer in the Gospel indeed knows he should love God and his neighbour, but that seems too easy. So, Jesus takes him further: it's not just about defining who my neighbour is (and maybe also who is not), but about whether I act as a neighbour to others myself.

The Samaritan in his compassion shows what that looks like. He "proved to be

a neighbour" by crossing boundaries, stepping aside from his own concerns, giving of his time and resources to help a person he saw in need. Loving God and our neighbour indeed sounds familiar, but Jesus's call to "go and do likewise" maybe turns out harder at times.

Still, it is what Jesus himself does. He is the "image of the invisible God" (Second Reading) and shows us, therefore, what God is like, inviting us to reflect in our own lives what we see there.

16th Sunday of the Year, C

Both Abraham and Martha offer hospitality to travellers who pass their way. Abraham hurries to bring his visitors food and refreshment, while Martha, "distracted with much serving," looks after Jesus, her house guest, on his journey to Jerusalem.

It looks as though her sister, Mary, is ignoring the rules of hospitality, but there is another lesson. Mary has chosen to be with her visitor, to "listen to his teaching". She is not ignoring Martha or relaxing while the other runs about working. Rather, her attitude is one of faith.

Notice how Luke deliber-

ately refers to Jesus as "the Lord" here. This is the "mystery hidden" of which Paul has become a minister (Second Reading). The person of Christ and his word comes first. While there may be lots to do, we have to make sure we stop, listen to him, and get to know him. This is what is truly important, Mary's "better part". Abraham only hears the promise after he has finished running about. He might have missed it otherwise!

17th Sunday of the Year, C

Abraham again features in our First Reading, "haggling" with God to save Sodom from destruction. The story of Abraham's interceding before God is doubtless chosen to illustrate Jesus's words in the Gospel about persistent and faith-filled prayer. We hear him teaching his disciples the Our Father (Luke's version is slightly shorter than the familiar one we pray, which comes from Matthew's Gospel). Jesus has been praying, we are told, and his disciples want him to teach them to pray too. So, Jesus teaches them to pray to God as he does: calling God "Father", praising him and asking for our needs.

He reminds us that our prayer should always be humble, trusting that God, our Father, will hear us and give what is good. The story of Abraham and the parable of the persistent friend remind us that we should not think of prayer as some kind of quick fix or automatic dispenser. It should be constant, honest and hopeful.

We shouldn't be petulant in how we pray because



Carl H. Bloch, *Woman at the Well*, c. 1860

God's will is for our good, as St Paul reminds us today. What we need for the journey, he will provide. Persistence in prayer is more of a reminder to ourselves that God always cares and provides for us.

18th Sunday of the Year, C

All of the readings today remind us that, however important the things we need in life might seem to be, they are as nothing compared to the riches we have in Christ. Paul writes that what is real and of value is our life with Christ, hidden though it is.

nal, and it is there that we should be building up our treasure, growing each day in holiness, grace and virtue.

19th Sunday of the Year, C

The teaching Jesus gives in the Gospel today echoes what he has been saying as his journey unfolds, especially about serving God and others rather than measuring ourselves according to the passing things of this world.

Wisdom (First Reading) speaks of good done in secret, which as a prelude to the Passover from Egypt, was a sign of the faith and hope the people had before God had even acted for them.

Abraham and Sarah (Second Reading) are then also held up as examples of faith in God's promises even before they had seen them fulfilled. They acted on faith, filled with hope, as they journeyed into the future.

In this Holy Year, as we reflect on our journey together as "Pilgrims of Hope", we are given these examples. We may not always see what God is doing for us, but we journey on in faith and hope together, confident that he will act for our good.

For our part, we have to overcome the temptation to do it all for ourselves!

Let our treasure be in his hands, rather than our own, and he will see us to the destination safely, even if there are challenges to face along the way.

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Old age comes to both buildings and builders alike

WE say that old age doesn't come on its own, and that can be true, not just of people, but also of buildings.

As you know, the Passionists haven't lived in St Mungo's Retreat at 52 Parson Street for 10 years now, after it being home to the Congregation for 123 years.

Prior to that, the community lived in the old house of the Deaf and Dumb Institution in Parson Street, but it was a house very unsuited to the needs of a religious community which I suppose could be said about our community house in Bishopbriggs, albeit for very different reasons.

Plans for the old retreat were drawn up, fundraising was put in place, and the foundation stone was laid on the 25th of May 1891, by Archbishop Eyre, a well-known name to us because of Eyre Hall at the Archdiocesan Offices in Clyde Street being named after him.

Some of the Passionist community were decanted to the old presbytery into which we had first moved in 1865, situated in Stanhope Street, while others found lodgings in a house in Taylor Street.

Exactly 16 months later, on the 25th of September 1892, a solemn opening and blessing took place of



Fr Frank's log

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

the new Retreat with, once again, Archbishop Eyre presiding at High Mass for the occasion.

So, as you can imagine, it was a very sad day when the community moved out in 2015 when the house became uninhabitable, and far too expensive to bring up to a reasonable living standard for what was then just a small community of four aging Passionists, three of whom have since died.

Subsequent interest in the Retreat, of which there has been quite a lot, and which we hoped would provide us with an opportunity to move in once again, have so far proved fruitless, again because of the cost that would be involved.

You will remember that we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the opening and solemn dedication of the present St Mungo's church on the 12th of September 2019, during the annual Novena to Our Lady of

Sorrows at a Mass presided over by our Provincial, Father Jim Sweeney.

On that occasion we had put in, amongst other things, the new floor displaying the Passionist sign at the front and at the back of the church, enhancing the work that was done on the roof and the windows almost 20 years before. Anyone coming into the church usually remarks on how beautiful it looks.

Beauty

But old age is catching up there too, and recent gas and electricity inspections have highlighted the need for a new boiler and some rewiring to be done to attain the required certificates, so that is now a financial challenge before us but, such is the beauty and significance of this church, that we will, and must, find a way forward.

The same inspections highlighted similar issues with regard to the halls,



which of course date from much later and don't have the same significance, but we will look for a solution there too, so as to ensure a

suitable pastoral space for the different activities that take place which help to form bonds and build community in the parish and

beyond.

But, as I mentioned earlier, old age catches up on people too, and doesn't come on its own. While I don't consider myself in any way old, with my 74th birthday I have, for the time being at least, found myself afflicted with what is often referred to as an old man's condition.

I won't go into gory detail, and I'm sure most of you will know only too well what I mean. For the time being it's a bit debilitating, a bit sore, and a bit uncomfortable, but I am hoping that two appointments with a urologist will serve to reverse the situation, and I'll be back to my best.

In the meantime, I will just do what has to be done as instructed by the health care professionals, and get on with practical things one day at a time. I am very grateful for all the concern that has been shown to me, which of course I'm lapping up.

With our Passionist Chapter coming up, which I ask you to pray for, there will be no opportunity for a log, and so, I will just let this log be the last one from now until the autumn.

As ever, protect yourself, your loved ones and others, and protect Christ in your lives.

Remembering Sister Jerome's century of service

SISTER Jerome O'Brien, who worked closely with Cardinal Winning for more than two decades pioneering social care in the Archdiocese of Glasgow has died a few days short of her 100th birthday.

That brief sentence however does not, could not, do justice to the power of that working relationship, what it achieved, and above all Cardinal Winning's unerring ability as a talent spotter.

Born Theresa O'Brien to a deeply religious family in County Cork she joined the order of Saint Joseph of Annecy at the age of 22 taking the name of Sister Jerome after the great religious figure who famously translated the Bible into Latin.

She moved to the Motherwell diocese and while she trained as a social worker and continued with her ministry, by 1970 a certain Father Winning was a

BY BRIAN SWANSON

parish priest in Motherwell.

The future Cardinal recognised her unique talents as someone who firmly believed in the importance of social care in a Catholic context.

And so three years after he was appointed Archbishop of Glasgow in 1974, he announced that he was setting up a social care department – and he knew just who to send for.

Cardinal Winning was known for his persuasive ways when asking someone to 'volunteer' for a particular role and over the years numerous people found themselves agreeing to his suggestions and still holding the 'voluntary' position until they retired.

But no such persuasion was needed in the case of Sister Jerome. Along with Father Des Macguire she formed the nucleus of a social care department that



existed for two decades before morphing into the Mungo Foundation – now an independent organisation – and the Pastoral Care Trust we know today as the St Nicholas Care Fund.

A colleague from the ear-

ly days said: "Right from the start Sister Jerome and the Cardinal shared the same ideas because they both had the same passion for developing social work in the diocese."

"Like the Cardinal himself she was extremely fo-

cused and refused to take no for an answer no matter who she dealt with – but she did it with a twinkle in her eye."

Such was the strength of their relationship that Cardinal Winning, whose cheeky sense of humour was his trademark, referred to her as Sister Geronimo – a name she not only answered to but delighted in.

A Sister who worked closely with her at the Order's House, in Newport, in the Diocese of Cardiff: "She didn't mind it at all – we called her 'Geronimo the dynamo' because that's what she was. Your Cardinal was lucky to have her, for she was a force of nature in many ways and we are all deeply saddened by her death."

When the order left Scotland in 2007 Sister Jerome continued her ministry, working for many years in the Catholic Children's So-

ciety in Cardiff.

When she retired she returned to her native Ireland and worked in St Joseph's Nursing Home, Killorglin, County Kerry which was operated at that time by her order and where her younger sister Marie Therese was also a St Joseph of Annecy Sister.

As the years passed Sister Jerome rediscovered her love of painting. She delighted in meeting people from all walks of life at her regular art classes and sharing her stories with them.

Eventually her health declined and she spent the last few years of her life being cared for at St Joseph's which is now owned by Nazareth Care.

She died on June 7 with her funeral Mass taking place June 10 at St James Church, Killorglin, followed by burial in Dromavalla Cemetery Killorglin.

Requiescat in pace.

When the greatest gift of all is hope

EVERY person, made in the image of God, deserves a life of peace and fullness. Yet, in the places SCIAF works, poverty makes that almost impossible.

Hunger, dirty water, and extreme weather make life relentlessly tough. And for people living with disabilities, these issues make life tougher still.

With your support, SCIAF offers long-term solutions and hope for people who need it the most. People like Malia and Baison.

When Malia was first born, her head began to swell due to hydrocephalus – a life-threatening condition – but with no treatment available, she was sent home. After her diagnosis, Malia's father abandoned the family. Living in extreme poverty in South Sudan, Malia faced hunger, isolation, and a daily fight for survival.

Thanks to SCIAF's local partner SEM, however, everything has since

changed. Your support helped fund life-changing surgery across the border in Uganda, giving Malia a second chance.

"If it hadn't been for SCIAF and SEM I would have died a long time ago. I am alive now thanks to them."

With continued medical care and support to attend school, Malia's confidence is growing.

Courageous

"I feel happy going to school and reading my books because I know I will have a bright future, despite my disability. I want to become a doctor! The SCIAF project has helped me become courageous. SEM staff are so loving, and even see me as their own daughter."

Just like Malia, Baison has faced unimaginable challenges. He's one of almost 140,000 people in Malawi living with albinism – a condition that affects his vision and puts his

BY LORRAINE CURRIE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SCIAF

skin – and his life – at risk.

Albinism is more prevalent in countries like Malawi. In Scotland it affects 1 in 17,000 people; in Malawi it's 1 in 130. The weather is the biggest danger, causing skin cancer for many – 98% don't live past 40.

Baison said: "Direct sunlight causes our skin to turn red. These sores can then become open wounds which can, in turn, develop into cancer."

In Malawi, people with albinism also face harmful superstitions, extreme discrimination, isolation, and violence – and often extreme poverty.

With your support, and our partner CCJP in Malawi, we're providing skills training and grants to people like Baison, to help them develop businesses. This then enables people with albinism to earn a living and lift themselves out



of poverty.

With your support, we're also helping change attitudes in communities, working with people like Baison, police, teachers, and leaders to fight stigma, prevent violence, and bring perpetrators to justice. And we're lobbying local governments to provide free sunscreen – a lifeline for people with albinism.

"People who once called us names now accept us as people, and sunscreen has become available in our hospitals and health centres."

Malia received life-saving surgery. Baison found acceptance in his community. These incredible transformations were only possible because of people like you!

Unfortunately, however, there are many more people who are in desperate need of support. That's why, in all of our projects around the world, we tackle exclusion, inequality, stigma, and discrimination head on.

But we need your help for this transformative work to continue.

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