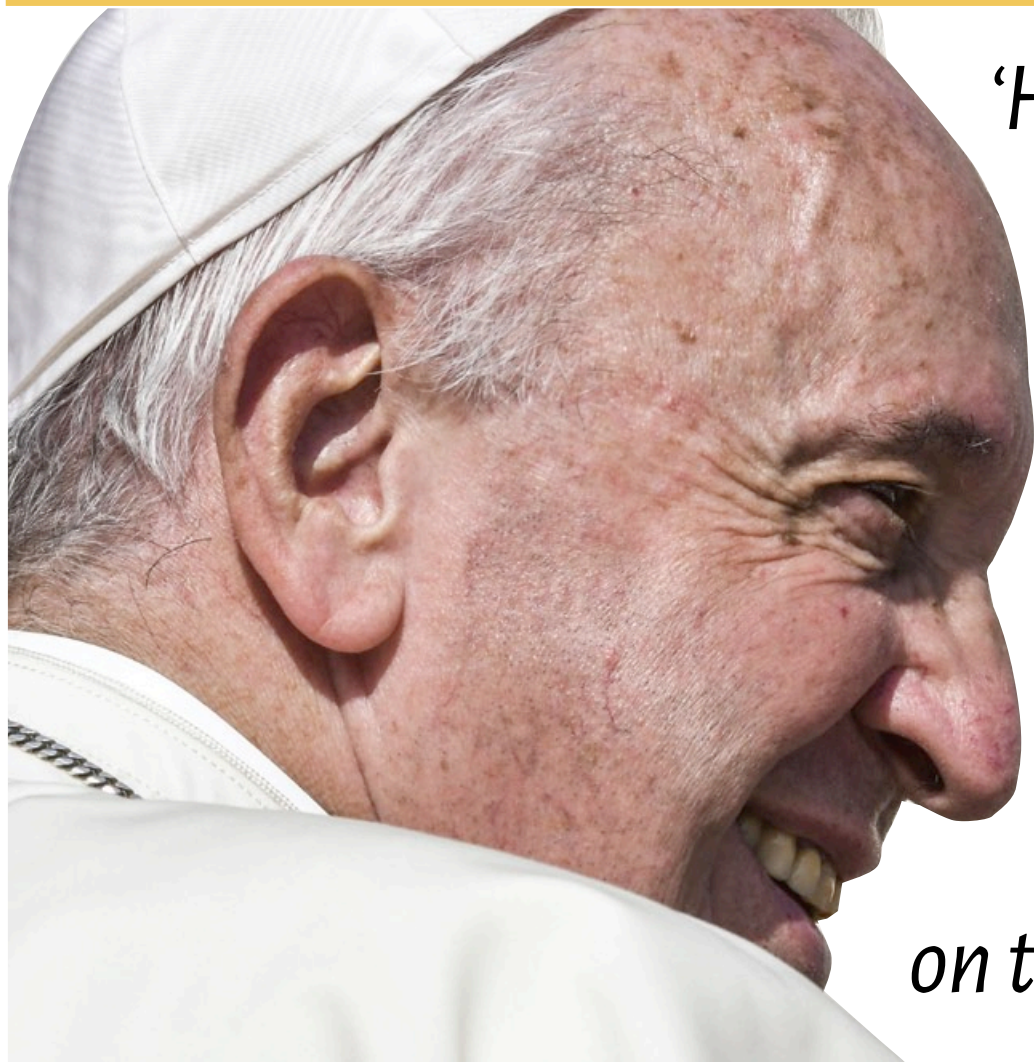


FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

July/August 2023



‘Here is the first thing to say to people: God is not distant, he is a Father, he knows you and loves you. He wants to take you by the hand.

‘Even when you travel on steep and rugged paths. Even when you fall and struggle to get up again and get back on track. He is there with you...’

Pope offers simple words of advice on how to evangelise

“HERE is the first thing to say to people: God is not distant, he is a Father, he knows you and he loves you; he wants to take you by the hand, even when you travel on steep and rugged paths, even when you fall and struggle to get up again and get back on track. He is there with you.

BY RONNIE CONVERY

people closer to God.

He said he was inviting each person to see him or herself as a child holding their father’s hand.

Pope Francis said: “Everything seems different. The world, large and mysterious, becomes familiar and secure, because the child knows he is protected. He is not afraid, and learns how to open up: he meets other people, finds new friends, learns with joy things that he did not know, and then returns home and tells everyone what he has seen, while within him there grows the desire to become grown up and to do the things he has seen his daddy do...”

“If we want to be good apostles, we must be like children: we must sit ‘on God’s lap’ and, from there, look at the world with trust

and love...”

“But how can we do this? Jesus recommends not saying many words, but performing many deeds of love and hope in the name of the Lord. Not saying many words, performing deeds!”

“At this point, let us ask a few questions: we, who believe in God who is close: do we confide in him? Do we know how to look forward trustfully, like a child who knows he is held in his father’s arms? Do we know how to sit in the Father’s lap with prayer, by listening to the Word, partaking of the Sacraments? And finally, close to him, do we know how to instill courage in others, to make ourselves close to those who suffer and are alone, to those who are distant and even those who are hostile? This is the substance of faith. This is what counts.”

SCHOOL AWARDS

Meet our Caritas champions

PAGES 10-16



JUSTICE AND PEACE

Archbishop’s plea for migrants

PAGE 2



People's priorities will be discussed at Church's historic Rome Synod

PRIORITIES highlighted by parishes across the Archdiocese in last year's Synod consultations are to be discussed in Rome in October at the worldwide synod gathering with Pope Francis.

BY RONNIE CONVERY



Parishioners from across the Archdiocese produced a report on priority issues after discernment sessions in parishes and deaneries and the issues highlighted have largely made it into the working document for the General Assembly.

When bishops and lay delegates gather in the Vatican in October for the Synod of Bishops, they will discuss many questions raised in the worldwide consultation, including the possibility of women deacons, the question of access to the priesthood for married men, outreach towards gay Catholics, and new models of authority with the aim of making the Church more welcoming to all humanity.

In a much-anticipated

document released last month, the Vatican's synod office said the October gathering would respond with "missionary urgency" to the challenges of church life in the modern world.

Known in Latin as the *instrumentum laboris*, the 60-page document will guide the month-long Vatican summit.

Among the issues and considerations in the document are how a synodal church recognises and values the central role of the poor; the experience of migrants; victims of sexual abuse, violence and other injustices; the disabled; divorced and remarried Catholics; the need for greater commitment to ecumenism and learning from other faith traditions; and the role of women in the church today.

The document states boldly: "The radical call is to build together, synodally, an attractive and concrete church: an outgoing church, in which all feel welcome."

The concept of 'synodality' is a key theme of Pope Francis' pontificate and he sees it as a way of implementing the reforms of the Second Vatican Council and instilling them into the practices and structures of the church today.

Earlier this year, Francis dramatically expanded participation in the synod to include lay men and women, for the first time granting them a right to be appointed as full voting members of the Church's primary consultative body.



In addition to the issue-specific questions, the document calls for a consideration for the ways in which the church's preparation for ministry, particularly in seminaries, might need to change to become more synodal, as well as for a consideration of how the church's canon law may need to be revised.

Cardinal Mario Grech who

is the head of the Vatican's synod office, told reporters that over the past two years, he has encountered many bishops sceptical of synodality, who, once involved in the process, found it to be a "priceless treasure."

He said: "People should not view the document through a progressive or conservative lens. We can do without this distinction. We

are the holy people of God."

One notable change in the upcoming synod, is that unlike past synods, which have taken place in the Vatican's synod hall – an auditorium with stadium style seating – the October meeting will take place in the Vatican's Pope Paul VI audience hall to allow participants to sit at round tables, more conducive for discussion.

Migrants need our support, says Archbishop

A POWERFUL plea to offer a welcome rather than a hostile environment to migrants was made by Archbishop Nolan during a solidarity protest at the detention centre in Dungavel, writes Ronnie Convery.

Braving the rain, the Archbishop and supporters from Justice and Peace Scotland gathered outside the barbed wire fences behind which those seeking asylum are held.

The Archbishop was forthright in his views. He said: "Many of these people come from countries where war has been raging for years – wars using weapons we in this country have sold to the opposing factions. Others come from lands where climate change has made life impossible. That climate change has been caused by



Archbishop Nolan with Moderator Sally Foster Fulton
Pictures by Paul McSherry

us in the northern hemisphere who are creating the pollution which is causing devastation in their homelands.

"We have a responsibility for the plight they find themselves in and we have

to recognise that.

"The earth is our common home. God has given the earth to *all* of humanity and we should recognise the dignity of our fellow human beings when they are in need and stretch out a welcome



ing hand to help them, not build barriers and hostile environments and threaten them with deportation to Rwanda."

And he went on to criticise UK Government policy which makes it all but impossible for people to claim asylum.

He said: "We are the ones who have decided that the people behind this barbed wire are 'illegal' migrants

or 'illegal' asylum seekers. There is nothing wrong with wanting to move elsewhere to take your family out of poverty to take your family to a safe haven, to a place where you can work and support them and where they can grow without the threat of starvation or violence."

Earlier in a weekend of action the Archbishop had joined the new Kirk Mod-

erator Sally Foster Fulton, in a protest outside the nuclear weapons base at Faslane.

The two Church leaders used their visit to criticise the doctrine of deterrence and call for a removal of nuclear weapons from Scottish soil, recalling the plea of the Scottish bishops decades ago that 'if it is wrong to use nuclear weapons it is also wrong to threaten their use'.

Archbishop will lead young pilgrims to Lisbon event

THE avenues and parks of Lisbon will be echoing with Scottish accents at the end of the month as a large contingent of young people from the Archdiocese arrive in the Portuguese capital for World Youth Day.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Archbishop, they will be accompanied by three priests, two seminarians, two staff members and two volunteer helpers.

Archbishop Nolan will lead the Glasgow delegation – the largest for many years – and join them throughout their pilgrimage for moments of prayer, encounter and celebration.

In all 64 young pilgrims from 30 parishes will attend the event in a group organized by the Archdiocesan Youth Office. Besides the

The World Youth Day in Portugal is the first for many years which a large group from Glasgow has been able to attend, after previous events in faraway venues such as Rio in Brazil and Panama in Central America. They will fly out on 30th July and take part in all the activities, including the much-anticipated sessions



took part in a heroic bungee jump to help finance the trip! – has high hopes for what will be achieved.

She said: “I guess our biggest hope is that the young people encounter Jesus in a new and deeper way.

“I know too that they will experience the vibrancy and beauty of the universal Church and know that it’s their Church, their home! They will make new friends with other pilgrims, and I hope will have a fun, deep and exciting experience of pilgrimage.

“The ideal is that they return with joyful hearts ready to take the next step on their journey with the Lord and that the fruits of this pilgrimage bless not only the young people themselves but their families and local community.”

with Pope Francis – before returning on 8th August.

The Glasgow pilgrims will gather with the other Scottish for a time of prayer and a ceilidh, giving a tartan feel to the early part of the trip.

Mairi-Claire McGeady, of the Archdiocesan Youth Office, who has been co-ordinating the World Youth Day experience for the Glasgow group – and who herself



Pope's schedule

Wednesday, 2 August

Welcome Ceremony; Courtesy Visit to the President of the Republic

Thursday, 3 August

Meeting with University Students

Friday, 4 August

Hearing young people's confessions; Stations of the Cross with Young People

Saturday, 5 August

Rosary with Sick Young People at Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima; Night Vigil with Young People in Lisbon

Sunday, 6 August

Holy Mass for World Youth Day, Lisbon.



Picnic time for Archbishop at previous WYD
Picture by Paul McSherry



St Mungo's kids are word perfect

READ all about it... there's a new library at St Mungo's Primary School, Townhead and it's all thanks to the children who found the old one boring!

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

that the old space was boring and not fit for purpose.

“With huge thanks to the Library Improvement Fund, we have been able to make the children's visions of what our library should look like a reality.

“We have been able to buy reading books in a range of languages and include many texts in the genres that learners have asked for, including comics and graphic novels, non-fiction reading for enjoyment and books about celebrating diversity”.

Local writers Sam Copeland and Jenny Pearson, authors of the children's books series Tuchus & Topps In-



vestigate, joined the children to officially launch the revamped reading space.

Jenny said: “We absolutely loved meeting the students of St Mungo's and hearing about their passion for books.”

Sam added: “Reading is a passport to success in life, so it's inspiring to see educators actively promoting the power of reading – especially in a time when children are besieged at all angles by digital technology.”

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All smiles for St Anthony's big day

ARCHBISHOP Nolan told today's parishioners of St Anthony's Govan that they are united in faith with their ancestors who founded the parish 162 years ago.

BY **BRIAN SWANSON** Delivering the homily at a Mass of thanksgiving on the Feast of Corpus Christi to celebrate the foundation of their parish he went on: "Looking back on the foundations of the parish, it was a different time, a different people, but we share our faith with them, and with every generation since – and that faith sustained them and sustains us.

"Your community here in Govan, like every Christian community must be an image of Christ, be inspired by Christ, and it must not be judged by its numbers but by its heart and by its soul. "The challenge for all com-



Picture by Paul McSherry

munities is to ask, is ours a caring one? Do we care for others, not just for ourselves but for others? Are we outward looking? Are we ready to face the challenges of today?"

The celebration of 162 years is explained by the fact that the 160th anniversary festivities had to be delayed because of Covid regulations.

After the Mass the Archbishop joined parishioners and former and current parish priests to mark the event with pictures and a shared buffet at the Pearce Institute.

Pope's plea to young people: 'Get to know your grandparents'



Photo: Imago Mundi

WITH a call for young people to get to know an old person and vice versa, Pope Francis has issued a Message for the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly which will be marked later this month on 23 July.

The Pope, who is himself 86, instituted the day in 2021, to be held on the fourth Sunday in July, close to the feast of Jesus' grandparents, Saints Joachim and Anne.

This year the Holy Father

is frank in his appeal for the elderly: "Let us honour them, neither depriving ourselves of their company nor depriving them of ours. May we never allow the elderly to be cast aside!"

Pope Francis chose as this year's theme "His mercy is from age to age" which recalls the Visitation – the joyful meeting between the young Mary and her elderly relative Elizabeth.

That same Spirit, says Pope Francis, "blesses and accompanies every fruitful encounter between different generations: between grandparents and grandchildren, between young and old."

The Pope expressed the delight that young people can offer older generations: "God wants young people to bring joy to the hearts of the elderly, as Mary did to Elizabeth, and gain wisdom from their experiences. Yet, above all, the Lord wants us not to

abandon the elderly..."

The Pope lamented how often old people are pushed aside.

This year, the World Day, the Pope recalled, takes place close to World Youth Day, stressing how maintaining quality connections with the older generations has priceless value for the young.

Priceless

Friendship with an older person, he said, can help the young "to see life not only in terms of the present and realise that not everything depends on them and their abilities." For the elderly, on the other hand, he noted, the presence of a young person in their lives "can give them hope that their experience will not be lost and that their dreams can find fulfilment."

"From the elderly we received the gift of belonging to God's holy people. The Church, as well as society, needs them, for they entrust to the present the past that is needed to build the future.

The World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, the Holy Father said, is meant "to be a small but precious sign of hope for them and for the whole Church."

News and views for

FLOURISH

Editor-Flourish@rcag.org.uk

Be a good neighbour when online

Vatican documents pleas for new culture of respect on social media

BY RONNIE CONVERVY

THE Vatican has published a useful new document offering advice on the Christian use of social media ... using the Good Samaritan as a model.

The document is a powerful reminder that Catholics should use the same charity and kindness online that they would use in everyday life.

Indeed, it calls for all Christians to behave online like the Good Samaritan – the kind man who was “moved with pity” at the sight of a man left for dead by bandits by the roadside.

On the digital highways of Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and Instagram, the challenge of reaching out to one’s neighbour remains the same.

The text is addressed to all Internet users. Every Christian is a micro-influencer, it says.

Here are six key messages from the Vatican document.

1 Ask yourself who your neighbour is on social media

Just as the parable of the Good Samaritan invites us to answer the question, “Who is my neighbour?”, the text urges us to ask ourselves who our neighbour is online? “Along the ‘digital highways, many people are hurt by division and hatred. We cannot ignore it. We cannot be just silent passers-by,” says the document.

“To be neighbourly on social media,” the document insists, “means being

present to the stories of others, especially those who are suffering.”

2 Avoid echo chambers

Social media algorithms connect users according to their particular characteristics, tastes, interests ... The downside is that they create echo chambers, reinforcing pre-existent ideas and preventing people from encountering those with different outlooks and views.

The risk is that such groupings can lead to indifference to others. There is an urgent need to imagine a different way of using social media, by going “beyond one’s silos, exiting the group of one’s ‘sames’ in order to meet others.”

3 Set aside time to disconnect

The document insists on the need to take time out for silence, away from the phone, to prioritise relationships with loved ones and develop an inner life. “Without silence and the space to think slowly, deeply, and purposefully, we risk losing not only cognitive capacities but also the depth of our interactions, both human and divine.”

“Silence in this case can be compared to a ‘digital detox,’ which is not simply a withdrawal but rather a way to engage more deeply with God and with others.”

4 Beware fake news

The Vatican invites us to exercise caution on social media and to take the time to discern fake news. “To communicate truth, we must first make



sure that we are conveying truthful information; not only in creating content, but also in sharing it. We must make sure that we are a trusted source.”

5 Don't inflame division

The new document warns against publishing content “that can cause misunderstanding, exacerbate division, incite conflict, and deepen prejudices.” In addition to being duly cautious before publishing content, we should also adopt a Christian style on social media. “The Christian style should be reflective, not reactive, on social media.”

“We Christians should be known for our availability to listen, to discern before acting, to treat all people with respect, to respond with a question rather than a judgment,

to remain silent rather than trigger a controversy and to be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger ...

6 Evangelise intelligently

“We are not present in social media to sell a product. We are not advertising, but communicating life, the life that was given to us in Christ.” Consequently, every Christian is called to bear witness also online.

Telling others about the reason for our hope and doing it with gentleness and respect is a sign of gratitude... This shared joy may provoke curiosity or questioning in others. That’s all the Lord asks of us.

“Following the logic of the Gospel, all we have to do is to provoke a question to awaken the search. The rest is the hidden work of God.”



Archdiocese tops the table for social media

THE Archdiocese of Glasgow has the most developed social media presence of any diocese in the UK.

Most recent statistics show the Archdiocese of Glasgow has almost 17,000 followers on Facebook, 7000 more even than the Archdiocese of Westminster, which is the UK’s largest diocese covering most of London and 10,000 more than Dublin Archdiocese, Ireland’s largest Catholic community.

New followers are signing up to the RCAG Facebook page at an average of 400 per month.

The social media feed is most popular among women aged 35–44 and 65 plus. And while two thirds of followers are from the UK, there are regular followers from Italy, the USA and Nigeria.

Glasgow also has 11,000 signed up followers on Twitter and over 1000 on Instagram.

With a monthly reach of almost 100,000 and post engagement averaging 30,000 a month, the social media outreach is now the Archdiocese’s main means of communicating its work and message.

Communications Director Ronnie Convery said: “When I first suggested to the late Archbishop Conti that the Church should have a presence on social media as a way of reaching out to people, he replied that although he had no idea what Facebook was he was happy to give permission!”

“We were the first diocese in Scotland to set up social media feeds and the initiative was considered so unusual – daring even! – that the Glasgow Herald ran it as a news item!”

“Now social media plays a vital role in our engagement with people and is an essential tool in our efforts at evangelisation.”

Notre Dame will rise from the ashes

FOLLOWING the catastrophic fire which almost destroyed France’s most famous church, details have been announced of its reopening.

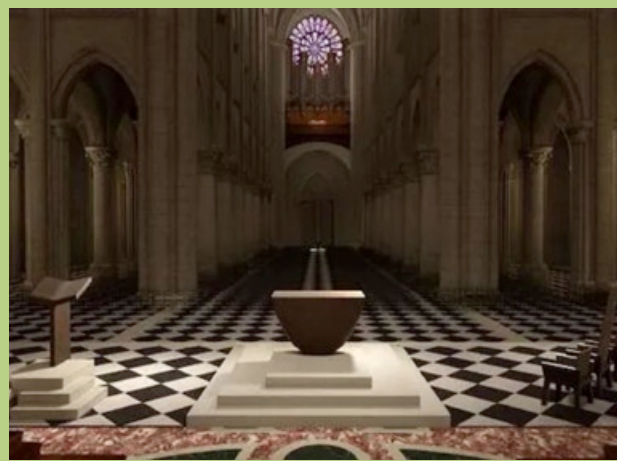
Archbishop Laurent Ulrich of Paris has chosen Guillaume Bardet, a well-known French designer, to create the liturgical furnishings for the new-look Notre-Dame, the famous gothic cathedral that is now in the final phase of restoration following the 2019 fire.

When Paris Archdiocese opened up bids for the commission last October it involved creating a new altar, ambo, cathedra, tabernacle, baptistery, and liturgical furnishings (right).

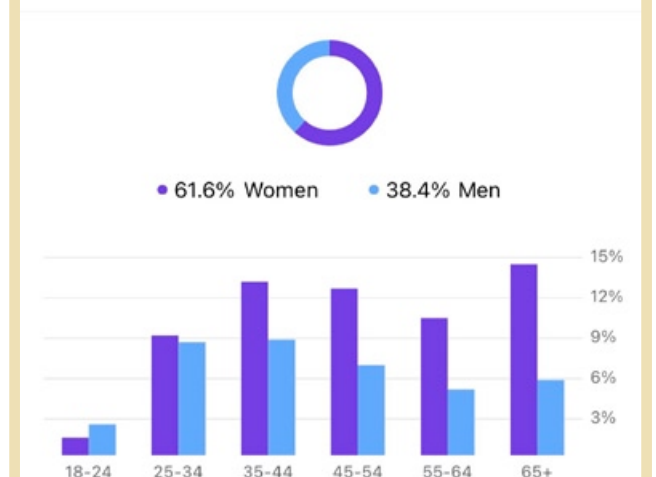
The designer of the new interior was chosen by the artistic committee.

The reopening of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris is announced for the 8th December 2024.

A Te Deum is planned for 15 April 2024, exactly five years after the fire.



Audience





FOR a Pope, one good way to be remembered is to do more of something than anyone else in history.

To this day, Vatican-watchers love to cite the factoid that John Paul II traveled more than all previous Popes combined, covering three and a half times the distance between the earth and the moon.

The previous record for papal trips outside Italy was held by Paul VI, who took nine. John Paul II made 104 such journeys, visiting 129 countries in all – meaning it's literally easier to list the nations he didn't visit, since the UN recognizes a total of 193 sovereign states.

By the measure of sheer quantity, one thing for which Pope Francis is certain to be remembered is his interviews.

Oddly enough, unlike papal trips, no one in the Vatican appears to have kept an accurate count of the full number of media interviews Francis has given since his election in March 2013. One commonly cited tally is “more than 200,” but that's just a way of saying, “It's a lot, but we don't really know.”

L'Osservatore Romano, the official Vatican newspaper, has reprinted 72 of these interviews to date, but that's only a subset of the total.

Interview

The thought comes to mind in light of the fact that recently, Pope Francis drove across town to the headquarters of the Italian national broadcaster RAI to record an interview the TV program *A Sua Immagine* (“In His Image”), which goes on air every Sunday morning just before his noontime Angelus address.

It was the first time a pontiff has visited RAI's mother ship in the Roman neighborhood of Saxa Rubra, and another reminder of just how ubiquitous papal interviews have become in the Francis era. The experience of most reporters is that they barely have time to unpack the most recent papal Q&A before the next one drops.

One common term linking John Paul II's trips and Francis's interviews is that both are ways of making the modern papacy visible and relevant, using the tools modernity itself provides.

Famously, John Paul II once said that



When the Pope opens his mouth...

he considered himself the successor not only of Peter but, in a certain sense, Paul too, exploiting the highways and byways of his era in order to bring the Gospel to the world. Social mobility and the ease of travel in the late 20th century made that possible in a new way.

Every time the Pope travelled, the world's media moved with him, and for a few days, he had the capacity to shine a spotlight on some particular corner of the world that he believed needed attention. The massive crowds John Paul drew also reinforced the social capital of the papacy, providing an indirect response to the famous derisive question posed by Stalin of how many legions the Pope has.

In a similar fashion, Pope Francis is exploiting the ubiquity of media in the 21st century to make the Pope a regular point of reference in the digital sphere.

BY JOHN L ALLEN JR
EDITOR OF CRUX

Knowing that a vast swath of the population today draws its impressions of reality almost exclusively from television and online media, the pontiff has injected himself thoroughly into that milieu.

Once again, these interviews attest to the magnetic force of the papacy.

Another point linking John Paul's travels with Francis's interviews is that both drew withering criticism from the Pope's in-house opposition.

In the John Paul era, critics charged that his trips amounted to expensive exercises in agitprop, putting the Pope in front of adoring multitudes to insulate him from challenges to his leadership.

Similarly today, critics of Pope Francis often complain that not only is his language in many of his interviews doctri-

nally imprecise and misleading, but that he hand-picks friendly reporters and media outlets that won't ask any challenging questions.

The idea, according to these detractors, is to make the Pope look beloved and admired without exposing him to any real danger of being embarrassed.

Of course, such criticism can be read as a back-handed tribute. It's unlikely people would invest so much energy objecting to something if they perceived it to be a failure.

One wonders if there will be another commonality between John Paul's physical travels and Francis's virtual journeys in the media, i.e., that both may become institutional features of the papacy.

Striking

It's striking that when Benedict XVI and Francis were elected, both initially said they did not plan to travel as much as John Paul, suggesting that his outings represented a personal charism they didn't necessarily share.

Yet in the end, both averaged more or less the same number of foreign trips a year as John Paul, having found that the demand for the Pope's physical presence simply required it.

It's possible future Popes may have the same experience vis-à-vis interviews. They may come into office vowing not to follow Francis's lead, only to discover that in a media-saturated age, the demand for a Pope to make himself available, and the advantages of doing so, mean it's no longer a matter of personal preference but part of the job description.

Come to think of it, maybe that's a question Francis himself could be asked in a future interview... because, God knows, there probably will be more.

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Taking the Catholic Pulse

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CRUXNOW.COM

Elvis will be our newest deacon

THE people of Cumbernauld are getting ready to celebrate the Archdiocese's only ordination this summer.

Elvis Arrey-Etta is being ordained a Permanent Deacon on Saturday 29 July at 11am in Saint Lucy's parish in the town.

The Archdiocese has two other men in training for the diaconate and they are due to be ordained next summer.

During the summer months the Archbishop is planning a series of events to offer his encouragement to the Deacons who serve in our parishes.

He met the Deacons of the Archdiocese in late June and with them celebrated Evening Prayer in the Cathedral followed by a light supper in the Eyre hall. Almost 20 deacons and deacons-in-training were invited. Later in the summer he will meet the Deacons and their wives.

Meanwhile the training programme for deacons is changing. From September 2023 students from the eight Catholic dioceses of Scotland will join others from across England and Wales studying for the permanent diaconate at St Mary's University, Twickenham, London.

Since 2008 St Mary's has been linked to a number of Catholic dioceses in southern England and Wales in their formation programme

BY **RONNIE CONVERY** for the permanent diaconate. From September this will be expanded to include students from Scotland.

Bishop John Keenan, who is the bishop responsible for the formation of deacons in Scotland, said: "Scotland has benefitted from the ministry of permanent deacons in parishes across the country for the past generation. We now welcome this next step in the formation of deacons for the years ahead through partnership with Saint Mary's and are looking forward to building closer relationships with the Church in England and Wales in the building up of our ministries and dioceses."

Formation

The Vice Chancellor of St Mary's, Anthony McClaran, explained: "For their first two years of formation students complete our Foundation degree in Pastoral Ministry, which gives a thorough grounding in the study of theology and the practice of pastoral ministry. After this they study at least part of the unique Master's programme in Catholic Social Teaching, as deacons in the Catholic Church are expected to have a specialist knowledge of this branch of moral theology."

Looking back to 2009...



Ordination of Glasgow's first permanent deacons

History was made in 2009 when Archbishop Conti ordained Glasgow's first permanent deacons

Vatican announces new hymn for Jubilee year 2025

"PILGRIMS of Hope" is the title of the official hymn for the next Jubilee year which will be celebrated throughout the Catholic world in 2025.

The lyrics of the new hymn were written by Monsignor Pierangelo Sequeri and the music was composed by Maestro Francesco Meneghello, who won an international competition to compose the Jubilee hymn.

The competition which saw entries from composers all over the world closed on 25 March 2023.

By the closing date entries had been submitted by 270 musicians from 38 different countries, among them Brazil, the Philippines, Germany, Madagascar, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Ivory Coast.

The Pontifical Sistine Chapel Choir has recorded the first performance of the Jubilee 2025 hymn, which is downloadable on this site.



Musical scores will soon be made available too.

You can listen to the hymn here: <https://youtu.be/c-WiseDyVXQ>

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Someone's playing my music!

Glasgow priest Fr John Carroll got a shock recently when he tuned into a Mass at Westminster Cathedral to mark the 100th anniversary of Dr Michael Strode the founder of HCPT, the charity which taken children with special needs to Lourdes.

As the 'Holy Holy' was sung, Fr John, parish priest at St Mary's Pollokshaws and Holy Name, realised it sounded rather familiar...

He told *Flourish*: "I couldn't believe it – they had used a 'Holy Holy' I wrote decades ago for the centenary Mass. It's one we have often used at HCPT Masses because it is easy to sing and easy to pick up.

"It's also popular with the local schoolchildren who come here for First Fridays – they like the fact they can clap along!"

Piano

Fr John recalled: "I can remember very precisely writing the music. It was May 25, 1995, and I was sitting at home with some friends. I sat down at the piano and the melody came to me, es-

BY RONNIE CONVERY

pecially the 'hosanna' ...

"I was supposed to be at Westminster Cathedral for the anniversary Mass but I couldn't manage. I have to say it was lovely to hear my melody played on the majestic pipe organ of Westminster Cathedral. The organist slowed it down a bit but he made my melody sound good!"

Potential

HCPT founder Dr Michael Strode first visited Lourdes in 1951 and saw the potential to organise a pilgrimage for disabled children at the school where he was working. HCPT itself was founded in 1956. It revolutionised the way that disabled people enjoyed a trip to the famous shrine.

Dr Michael was not content with letting the children stay in hospitals in the town as was the usual practice at the time. He insisted that they stayed in hotels as honoured guests along with the rest of the people they travelled with. This idea, which promotes a truly shared pil-



grimage experience, continues today – both at Easter and for Summer pilgrimages at Hosanna House.

HCPT helps 1,000 disabled and disadvantaged children and young people visit every Easter, and hundreds of disabled and disadvantaged people of all ages to enjoy a week at Hosanna House near the town each summer.

Highs and lows as Vatican reveals new Church statistics

THERE are more than 1.3 billion Catholics in the world, almost 18 per cent of the global population, according to the latest edition of an annual Vatican report... but the number of baptisms is going down year on year.

The latest *Annuario Pontificio*, published by the Vatican's Central Office of Church Statistics, says there were more than 13.7 million baptisms in 2021. More than 80 per cent of these were baptisms of children under seven.

That represents a drop of almost five million baptisms from 1991, when the Church baptised 18.1 million people worldwide.

The Vatican's Statistical

Yearbook attributed the decline, at least in part, to the "downward trend in the birthrate in most countries."

Africa

The annual snapshot of the Church's activities in statistics showed mixed results in evangelisation efforts. In Africa, the percentage of youth or adult baptisms grew from 33% in 2016 to 36% in 2021. The rate held steady in Europe, at 4.5%, while in North America it fell off slightly, from 8.7% to 8.6.

There were 1.8 million church weddings around



the world in 2021, a dramatic drop of more than 50 per cent over the last 10 years – though Covid restrictions are likely to have impacted this figure.

That decline was matched in Scotland where 510 couples were married in 2011 falling to just 243 in 2021.

Weddings

In the latest statistics, 9.2% of weddings involved a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic. Oceania had the highest percentage of nuptials between Catholics and non-Catholics, at 28.3%, and Central America the lowest – 1.7%.

In 2021, there were 8.5 million first communicants – an average of 6.2 first Communions for every 1,000 Catholics. The ratio was highest in Asia, with 9.1.

The yearbook also reported 7.3 million people being confirmed in 2021.

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Archbishop's special gift for children

Pictures by Paul McSherry



Families' joy at annual Cathedral Mass

THIS was the touching moment when Archbishop Nolan gifted pupils with additional support needs with their very own pectoral crosses – as worn by the Holy Father and all bishops.

Standing close to the altar of St Andrew's Cathedral and a portrait of Pope Francis, the youngsters listened intently as the Archbishop told them: "You can see the Pope is wearing a very special cross – and I wear one too."

Shepherd

"If you look closely you will see a man carrying a sheep on his shoulders and that reminds us that the God is our Shepherd and looks after all of us."

"I hope this cross I'm giving you will always remind each of you of that."

Earlier, in his homily during the annual Mass for children with additional support needs, Archbishop Nolan reminded par-

ents, carers and teachers of the importance of laying the foundations of faith in young people.

He said: "Look at this beautiful Cathedral, especially lovely on a summer night such as this."

"People come in and admire what they see and rightly so – But no one ever says 'I wonder what the foundations are like?'"

"Yet the foundations are the most important part of any building. What you are doing for the children in your care is laying the foundations."

"And like building site work behind the scenes, it can be messy, thankless work and you often get no credit for what you do."

"But your greatest satisfaction is knowing that you are bringing up a beautiful person and, with strong foundations, allowing the faith of that person and your own faith, to flourish."

Bearsden book launch for Fr Joe



FR Joe Dillon, a Divine Word Missionary priest, celebrated the launch of his memoir *People I Met on the Way – 50 Years a Priest in Brazil at St Andrew's Bearsden* last month where he did presentations, readings and book-signings.

More than £900 of books were sold, profits of which will go towards Fr Joe's health projects in São Paulo where he continues to work today.

Bearsden author, Maura McRobbie, who edited and published his memoir said: *People I Met on The Way* is not simply about people and their daily activities, it is about Brazil, the largest country in Lat-

in America and the rich layer upon layer of civilisations that have lived on this land since records began.

"It is about the lives and cultures of the indigenous people who were enslaved by the Portuguese and Spanish, and then evangelised by Christian missionaries. It is about multiracial 20th century Brazil with a history of receiving immigrants to work in the plantations once slavery was abolished, leaving too their footprints on the landscape.

"It is about the 21st century Brazil, with a new president, and a new hope for the planet and the people of Brazil".



ACN

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After more than a decade of war, persecution, a crippling financial crisis and the recent earthquake – displaced Christians in Syria are destitute and in urgent need. At least 90% of the population are living below the poverty line.

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The Knights of St Columba wish to congratulate the 2023 recipients of the Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award. Your hard work and dedication to your schools, parishes, and faith communities is truly inspiring. Well done!

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PUPILS at a Catholic secondary school on the southside will have a whole new experience to look forward to when they go back to school after the holidays after the First Minister dropped by to open a new extension.

The new Bellarmine extension at St Paul's High School was officially opened by Humza Yousaf and City Convener for Education and Early Years, Councillor Christina Cannon.

The multi-million pound extension – comparable in size to a new primary school – will help to address the capacity challenges in the Greater Pollok area which has one of the highest number of pupils in any

BY **RONNIE
CONVERY**

Glasgow ward. The First Minister said: "It is a pleasure to be joining staff and pupils at St Paul's RC High School for the official opening of their brand new extension. The development and delivery of this project has been exemplary, despite circumstantial challenges, and the results look fantastic.

"Over my years as the local MSP I have loved having the opportunity to meet and get to know St Paul's pupils. At their annual high school elections they give us 'real' politicians a run for our money, with a palpable pride in their school and a passion to improve the wider com-

munities they live in.

"I am delighted that this will allow the school to continue to expand their roll and support more pupils through their secondary education journey."

Lisa Pierotti, Headteacher of St Paul's High School, said: "I couldn't be more delighted with our new extension. This is exactly what our young people and our school community deserve.

"With a rising roll, our original building was jam-packed and there was not enough space. This state-of-the-art extension will offer more accommodation and make sure that our aim for excellent learning and teaching for all our young people is maintained."



ST AIDAN'S

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

Congratulations to all 2022/23 Caritas Award Winners!

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



ST LUKE'S HIGH SCHOOL



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"Our life gives light when it is given in service. The secret of joy is living to serve."
Pope Francis

Congratulations to all Caritas Award winners of 2023 from everyone at Notre Dame High School



160 Observatory Road, Glasgow G12 9LN – 0141 582 0190
www.notredamehigh.glasgow



Our Lady and St Patrick's High School



Congratulations to all the 2023 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
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"At our school everyone will be helped towards their fullest spiritual, educational, social, vocational and physical development."

CARITAS AWARDS 2023

Young people are up for the challenge to be 'saints for the 21st century'



'Caritas breaks down barriers between the young and old'



THE faith shown by young people who take part in the Caritas programme provides a real sense of reassurance that they can trusted to make the world a better place in the years to come.

That was the uplifting message from Archbishop Nolan in his speech of welcome at the start of this year's Caritas awards ceremony.

Addressing the young people directly he went on: "As I look around, I often see that our society is a bit fragmented and that the old don't often feel they have much contact with the young.

"Caritas helps to break down barriers and the elderly – myself among them! – appreciate the good work that we see the young people are doing.

"And more than that there is a sense of reassurance that as the older generation passes away there is a younger generation coming up to which we can entrust the world to become a better place."

Archbishop Nolan added: "This a great occasion and a tribute to all the

young people here and all the good works you have done over the past year as part of the Caritas programme.

"We are paying tribute to the person you have become because I hope that Caritas has helped you to grow in faith and love all in love.

"This event is also a tribute to our schools and all the work that they do. It's also a great event for our parishes. One of the wonderful things for our pupils taking part in Caritas is that helps them to get involved in parish and community life.

"So today you will get your Caritas medals and that's for what you have done in the past year but what's more important is the future and what lies ahead.

"So it gives me such great pleasure to realise that there so many fine young people with whom we can entrust the world in the years ahead.

"May each and every one of you here present today continue to grow in faith and love."



THE question posed to no-one in particular by the passing workman in the hard hat was understandable.

"Who's playing in there today?" he said. "What's this all about then?"

He had just seen busloads of pupils, immaculate in their uniforms, swarm into the Clyde Auditorium, mobile phones at the ready, clearly buzzing with noisy excitement.

Had the curious workman stayed around we could have answered his question with two words: Faith and Love.

After an absence of three years, brought on by Covid restrictions, the Caritas Awards were back where the first ceremony took place in 2012. And on a day when sunshine filled the sky and faith filled the auditorium, the class of 2023 were determined to make it one to remember.

Somehow the roof of the Armadillo – who calls it the Clyde Auditorium nowadays? – managed to remain intact as they cheered, whistled and applauded as the traditional parade of school

WORDS BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

banners took place.

The invitations by presenters David and Maura Currie to 'make as much noise as you can seemed superfluous.

Before the ceremony began we heard many unique ways, often reflecting the way the world has changed since 2012, that young people have undertaken tasks to help strengthen their faith and that of others.

A number of pupils raised money for schools in countries facing appalling poverty caused by war, famine and disease, others wrote letters of welcome to refugees.

One school group organised what they called a 'porridge pledge' which meant depriving themselves of luxuries to remind each other of the global poverty suffered by millions as part of

a fundraising project for Mary's Meals.

Other students ran eco projects, fundraised for foodbanks, helped out in homeless shelters, visited the sick and housebound, assisted with the children's liturgy, or volunteered as readers at Mass.

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

Saints

The awards were introduced following a challenge to our young people by the late Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to Scotland in 2010 when he famously urged them to become 'Saints for the 21st century'.

The Scottish Catholic Education Service took on that challenge immediately and with great enthusiasm and ever since then these young saints have been marching on in impressively growing numbers.

In the first year 450 youngsters received awards for work they did with parishes, churches, school communities and individuals.

This year 1500 sixth year pupils from Dumfries to Dalkeith received their Caritas medals meaning that since the beginning of the programme an estimated 14,000 have gained a Caritas award.

The final word on the inspiration behind these challenges came from Caritas medalist Katy Nelson, a former pupil of St Andrew's and St Bride's Secondary School East Kilbride, now studying to become a primary school teacher.

Summing up her Caritas year she said: "When we all worked together as a school community to raise money for people who didn't have very much it was like we were living what we were learning.

"We were not just helping them but helping Jesus – it was a feeling of great joy for me and now eighteen months later I still have the same joy and I will have it all my life."

'Caritas award is a treasure to show the way I live and love'



A RINGING endorsement of the value of achieving a Caritas award came in a powerful vote of thanks delivered by Anton Colella, chairman of the Executive Board of the Scottish Catholic Education Service.

A former RE teacher at Holyrood Secondary, the Shettleston-born Anton is now Chief Executive of Moore Global, one of the world's leading accountancy firms.

After warmly thanking all those who had worked tirelessly to make the event a success he said, "I want to spend a few minutes addressing the young people.

"Here's the deal – you just didn't just get a medal today – you got a treasure and if I were in your shoes today I would be showing everybody that treasure not just as a medal but as a way to show the way I live and the way I love.

"In my line of work I hire people all

over the world and do you know what I look for? Good people.

"We want to hire people who love, people who are compassionate and kind, with a desire to serve... people like you who have won your Caritas award.

"For the next 20 years you should put that award on every job application. When employers look through your applications they get the qualifications, they know what you have studied and the wonderful things you have achieved but tell them about Caritas – it's different.

"Wear your Caritas award as a badge of honour and a differentiation in the world of today that is looking for loving, serving, and kind people

"By achieving this Caritas awards the effect will ripple through the rest of your life by the grace of God who has a plan, a good plan, for each and every one of you."



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECIPIENTS OF THE POPE BENEDICT XVI

CARITAS AWARD

CARDINAL NEWMAN HIGH SCHOOL
2022-2023





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CARITAS AWARD WINNERS OF 2023. 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






Head Teacher:
Mr. Stephen Stone
40 Royston Road,
Glasgow, G21 2NF
TEL: 0141 582 0270

The staff, pupils and partners of St Roch's Secondary congratulate all of our young people who gained the Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award 2022-2023, by exemplifying our school motto, *Alios Adiuvā*, Help Others and our school values of




FAITH, INCLUSION, RESPECT, ENDEAVOUR and COMPASSION.



All Saints R.C. Secondary

LEARNING · MOTIVATION · SUCCESS

The staff and pupils of All Saints would like to congratulate our Caritas Award winners 2023.

The staff and pupils of All Saints would like to congratulate our Caritas Award winners 2023. Special thanks to our parents, carers, parishes and our Chaplain Fr Anthony Gallagher, for their spiritual and practical support throughout this year.

All Saints Secondary School
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Turnbull High School
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a community of faith engaged in learning



Congratulations to all young people who have achieved the Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award and who have contributed to their school and parish communities.

*"Grow in holiness: become saints of the 21st century."
Pope Benedict XVI*



The staff and pupils of Trinity High school would like to congratulate all of our Caritas Award winners. Their efforts have helped to build God's kingdom of love, justice and peace.



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Head Teacher: Paul Marshall
Glebe Street, Renfrew PA4 8TP
Telephone: 0300-300-1444
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*We are your soldiers
but are servants of the
true God*
ST MAURICE

Head Teacher:
Kevin O'Connor
Westfield
Cumbernauld G68 9AG
Tel: 01236 794845
Fax: 01236 728660

ST MAURICE'S RC HIGH SCHOOL



Congratulations to all of our young people from St Maurice's who have achieved the Caritas Award and for your contributions to the school and community. You have embraced 'The Spirit of St Maurice's' in your endeavours, demonstrating success, perseverance, integrity, respect, inclusion and trust!



Saint Margaret's RC High School








Saint Margaret's RC High School, Airdrie are proud to announce the success of our senior students in achieving the 2023 Caritas Award.

"To love another person is to see the face of God."

Waverley Drive, Airdrie ML6 6EU · Tel: 01236 794888



St Margaret Mary's Secondary School 2023



St Margaret Mary's Secondary School would like to send warmest wishes and pray for God's blessing on Kieran Coyle, Francis Anemeje, Anthony Kerr, Chloe Pillans, Melissa MacFadyen, Lisa Marie Anderson and Sarah McCallion recipients of Caritas Awards, 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 AMBROSE HIGH SCHOOL

'LEARNING TOGETHER IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE'



Congratulations to our Caritas class of 2023 from all within the St Ambrose High School community.



St Ambrose High School
Head Teacher: James McParland
65 Townhead Road, Coatbridge ML5 2HT
Tel: 01236 794899 · Twitter: @stambrosehigh

St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch



150th Anniversary
1874-2024
150 years of Catholic Education

"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



150th Anniversary
1874-2024
150 years of Catholic Education



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

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.



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Hands off Africa! Pope's new book has a great title...

A VERY wise Comboni missionary once told me not to think, "my heart is in Africa", but "Africa is in my heart".

And paying my first visit to Zambia since the start of the pandemic, I find that Africa is still taking up a very large proportion of my heart.

To explain – many years ago I set up a charity, Zam-ScotEd, that supports education in Zambia, making sure that disadvantaged youngsters have a future.

I travelled to Zambia wearing my ZamScotEd hat – but found that what Pope Francis calls 'economic colonialism' is now threatening peace of mind, if not peace itself, in this most peaceful of African countries. With today's Zambians being increasingly exploited and marginalised, my Pax Christi Scotland hat had to



Marian Pallister

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

take precedence.

The British, of course, were the first political colonisers of Zambia and neighbouring Zimbabwe. North and South Rhodesia were exploited for the benefit of the British Empire – or those who became rich on the backs of it.

What is now Zimbabwe was the breadbasket of Africa, run by white farmers. Zambia had copper and Zambians were put to work in mines that made others rich.

Zambia initially did well after independence. No one was talking in terms of climate change in the 1970s, but it was a succession of droughts that put President Kenneth Kaunda on the back foot. I interviewed him some years ago and he told me that going to the International Monetary Fund for a second time, "They treated me like the black boy."

Kaunda died in 2021 and his obituaries all mention that he was an emotional man. He was – and he cried

that day in his Lusaka garden as he told me of that humiliating experience with the IMF.

His words came back to me when I saw that Pope Francis has a new book out, called "Hands Off Africa!"

Destiny

The book is a collection of the Pope's speeches during his visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan earlier this year. And if Africa is in your heart, as it is in mine, you may remember that his opening words in DR Congo were, "Hands off Africa! Stop choking Africa: it is not a mine to be exploited, or a land to be plundered. May Africa be the protagonist of its own destiny!"

Powerful words, as was his statement that 'political colonialism' in Africa has given way to 'economic



colonialism', which Pope Francis called 'equally enslaving'.

Today, it's the Chinese who are exploiting the mines in Zambia. In neighbouring states, the French are destroying forests and agricultural lands for oil.

When your land is destroyed and you have nowhere to go, you either flee or you enter into conflict. You become a migrant or

a fighter. Either way, your peace is destroyed.

Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has written a preface to Hands Off Africa, in which she says, "Africa matters because Africans matter".

Every one of our brothers and sisters matters – and until we in the Global North understand that, world peace will become increasingly fragile.

Remember my uncle Walfrid was a migrant!

IMMIGRANTS have many faces.

This boy left home as an unaccompanied minor when he was 15 to escape the aftermath of a famine. He crossed the water to a foreign land with thousands of his fellow citizens. They were not universally welcome and some people blamed them for spreading disease and causing crime.

When they looked at this 15-year-old, could they have imagined that statues and memorials would be erected in his honour one day? Could they have thought that he would grow up to help thousands of needy families? They certainly could never have dreamt that he would be the founder of Glasgow Celtic.

Andrew Kerins, who would later become a Marist Brother known as Brother Walfrid, was my great-grand uncle. He came from humble beginnings, born on a small farm near Ballymote, Co Sligo. He was just five years old when the Famine started and was lucky to survive. But with his older brother taking over the family farm, there was nothing for him in a place that had been ravaged by the Famine.

I can't imagine what the 15-year-old faced when he left Ireland for Scotland with his meagre belongings in 1855. He travelled with his schoolfriend Bart McGettrick, which must have provided a crumb of comfort to both of them. They sold a calf to pay their fare from Sligo harbour to Glasgow. Sligo would have felt like a metropolis to him, so Glasgow



BY ALISON HEALY

must have been a real assault on his senses. According to Dr Michael Connolly's biography, *Walfrid, a Life of Faith, Community and Football*, he arrived to "abject urban poverty" where conditions were brutal and the dictum that "No Catholics or Irish need apply" was common currency well into the 20th century.

Young Andrew Kerins was a devout Catholic who worked in a railway yard and attended night classes. This is where we think he first encountered the Marist Brothers and found his vocation. Like him, the religious order was a new arrival in Glasgow. The first Brothers arrived in 1858 at the request of Bishop John Murdoch who needed help providing a Catholic education to the burgeoning Catholic population. Irish immigrants would play a key role in providing this education.

In 1864 Andrew Kerins travelled to the Marist base at Beauchamps in France as a postulant and returned

as Brother Walfrid. Of the 18 postulants who had gone to France by then, 13 were Irish-born. He became a teacher and later, headmaster, working in impoverished areas of Glasgow, where some parents had to choose between paying the small school fee or putting food on the table.

This was the impetus for running a penny dinner scheme at his school, and at the school of his colleague, Brother Dorotheus. The two men ran charity soccer matches to raise funds for the hot meals scheme.

And then they decided on a permanent solution – the setting up of a Glasgow soccer club that would provide a regular source of funds for the hot meal scheme. The rest is history. Today Glasgow Celtic has more than nine million supporters in over 30 countries and its charitable foundation has raised more than £30 million for worthwhile causes.

How much poorer would Glasgow be today if young Andrew Kerins had been de-

ported with his fellow countrymen, as some people had wished? And how much untapped potential lies in the children who arrive on our shores today, clutching their belongings?

Let's celebrate these hopeful stories. That's why I wrote *The Boy Who Started Celtic*, a children's book about the life of Brother Walfrid. It's a reminder to young readers that anyone can change people's lives, no matter where they come from, or where they go to.

Andrew Kerins was once an unwelcome immigrant. Today his statue at Celtic Park looks down to the city that became his home.

■ Alison Healy is a journalist and children's book author. A version of this article first appeared in the *Irish Times*. *The Boy Who Started Celtic* has just been published by Argyll Publishing, available from thirstybooks.com, branches of Celtic Superstore, Amazon, trade from Gardners.

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Pope's top tips on evangelisation

POPE Francis has outlined the key requirements for modern man and woman to evangelise their surroundings, by pointing to the example of Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci.

Ricci died in the year 1610, and was a great evangeliser in China.

The Pope highlighted five key aspects which can be applied to modern life... knowledge of surrounding culture and a willingness to be part of it; openness to dialogue; good professional competence which inspires respect, credibility between words and actions and prayer.

Ricci and one of his confrères prepared themselves very well, carefully studying the Chinese language and customs, and in the end, they managed to settle in the south of the country. It took 18 years, with four stages through four different cities, to arrive in Peking

The Pope asked what was

Matteo Ricci's secret: "He always followed the way of dialogue and friendship with all the people he encountered, and this opened many doors to him for the proclamation of the Christian faith. His first work in Chinese was indeed a treatise 'On friendship', which had great resonance."

The Holy Father remembered the practical steps he took: Ricci began to dress like the Chinese and studied the classical texts of his host country.

"He thus was able to present Christianity in positive dialogue with their Confucian wisdom and the customs of Chinese society... This missionary was able to 'inculturate' the Christian faith, as the ancient fathers had done in dialogue with Greek culture," he said.

Ricci shared his "excellent scientific knowledge" and introduced the Chinese to maps that showed them the

world was more extensive than they thought.

The credibility obtained through scientific dialogue gave him the authority to propose the truth of Christian faith and morality, of which he spoke in depth.

And his teaching was supported by his testimony, particularly the Pope said, his life of virtue and prayer: "These missionaries prayed!" said Pope Francis.

"They went to preach, they were active, they made political moves, all of that; but they prayed. It is what nourished the missionary life, a life of charity; they helped others, humbly, with total disinterest in honours and riches, which led many of his disciples and friends to embrace the Catholic faith".

The Pope urged Catholics of today to follow these steps.

He said: "We can recite the Creed by heart, we can



Statue of Matteo Ricci

say all the things we believe, but if our life is not consistent with this, it is of no use. What attracts people is the witness of consistency: We Christians must live as we say, and not pretend to live

as Christians but to live in a worldly way.

"Brothers and sisters, today we, each one of us, let us ask ourselves inwardly, 'Am I consistent, or am I a bit 'so-so'?"

I may be addicted – to novenas!

Mary's musings

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



LAST month I was all about pilgrimages. This month it's novenas.

Since our first grandchild was on the way eight years ago I've been on a rolling programme with St Gerard Majella.

With the seventh baby due in late June I was ready to start a new novena on the feast of the Sacred Heart. I should have known our daughter-in-law, recognised in the family as a paragon of efficiency, would waste no time.

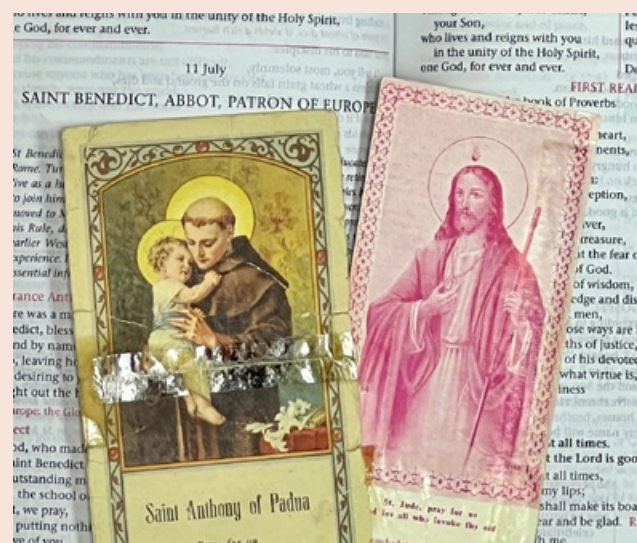
There I was, on a wee night out in Eusebi's with the Catholic mummies, when I got word it looked like 'things might be happening'. One of my pals whipped out her Catholic diary and ran through the feast days of the coming week. We all agreed top biller was the next day – the

feast of the Sacred Heart, closely followed by the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the following day.

And so, eight days early, weighing a healthy 7lb 13oz Martin Anthony arrived to the great joy of both families. First time parents, first time grandparents on the maternal side and two grandas, proud as punch the wee man was called after them.

For the same couple I have been invoking St Joseph, he of house-move-help, for their impending house move. My novena is underway so I have no doubt all will be well.

When we were about to move house I read that a statue of St Joseph should be buried upside down in the garden of the house which was being sold. Not a



chance, not on my watch. A bit of respect please!

I'll admit, though, one of my little grandsons and I buried a statue, but the right way up and carefully wrapped in tissue and sealed in a Ziplock bag, purchased specially for the exercise!

The new baby will add fervour to novenas to St Martin de Porres, already a big favourite in our house, and to St Anthony. I'm sad the first novena of my married life – the Tuesday

evening St Anthony novena at St Simon's in Partick – is no more.

I can still hear the timbre of Fr Tierney's voice – gruff yet melodious – as he intoned "The sea obeys, and fetters break, and lifeless limbs thou doth restore; While treasures lost are found again, when young or old thine aid implore."

While I mostly pray novenas on my own there is something special about shared prayer in the parish or coming together for

a particular occasion. A novena at the time of the relics of the Little Flower coming to Scotland remains a treasured memory for me.

Now that I think of it, not only is our new boy called after his grandfather, his name is the surname of St Therese, my confirmation saint and all-time favourite.

The novena to Therese in St Columbkille's in Rutherglen was a fair old shlep for me on a Monday evening for the nine weeks. But a big favour was granted and like Fr Tierney's St Anthony novena it has stayed with me, especially the Litany of the Little Flower.

St Therese, angel of innocence; child of Mary; who found perfection in little things; who promised after her death, a shower of roses. How beautiful is that!!

As for novenas to Our Lady, there are any number. In times of trouble, for me, it has to be Mary, Undoer of Knots. And of course I'm sure all of us at one time or another has had recourse to St Jude. He's got this hopeless case out of a pickle more than a few times!

OASIS

Nourish your soul with our monthly spirituality supplement

Living out and spreading the Gospel in hospital



ONCE, when I was in a ward in Glasgow's Royal Hospital for Children I saw a child, her family and nurses gathering round a bell. Then the girl recited a verse:

*"Ring this bell three times well
its toll to clearly say
my treatment's done, this
course is run
and I am on my way!"*

There was a loud ringing of the bell followed by an enthusiastic round of applause from family and staff. On realising what was happening I too applauded. Everyone's smile said it all: "This treatment is over".

The bell and the words mean different things to different people. For some it is the end of treatment; for others it is the positive end of a stage in their treatment.

The ringing of the bell follows a tradition which began in a Cancer Medical Centre in 1996 in Texas. US Navy Admiral Irve LeMoyné brought into his oncology ward a brass bell from his old ship which was rung when something significant had been done.

When his own cancer treatment ended, he proclaimed the words he himself had written and rang it. Soon the idea then spread to other adult cancer centres throughout America.

In 2014 a young girl from England who had gone to America for treatment was asked by her nurse if she wished to ring a bell to mark the end of her treatment. Beside her parents and nurses, she did so.

The girl's parents were so moved they set up a charity End of Treatment Bells to get



BY **DEACON MICHAEL O'DONNELL**

bells to every children's cancer unit in Britain. This was soon supported by another charity as adult wards too wanted a bell as it marked positive stages on the way of treatment.

It's clear the bells are in a positive way significant to people.

However, it must be noted that the ringing of the bell can be difficult for some patients whose cancer is not responding to treatment. It can negatively affect their own hopes when they know others are being discharged whilst they remain a patient.

That's why many wards have the bell in a place where only patient, family and staff can hear it.

In relation to evangelisation and pastoral care Pope Francis said: "Illness is part of our human condition. Yet, if illness is experienced in isolation and abandonment, unaccompanied by care and compassion, it can become inhumane".

In its ministry to those who are sick, to their families and to staff, the Archdiocese has priests and a deacon who go to the children's

hospital when asked to.

In the adult hospitals, if a patient wishes to receive the Sacrament of the Sick, please say to a nurse, or someone on your behalf can, who will contact the on-call priest.

If urgent, he will attend, as soon as possible. If it is not urgent, he will speak to the nurse to arrange a time which is suitable to visit.

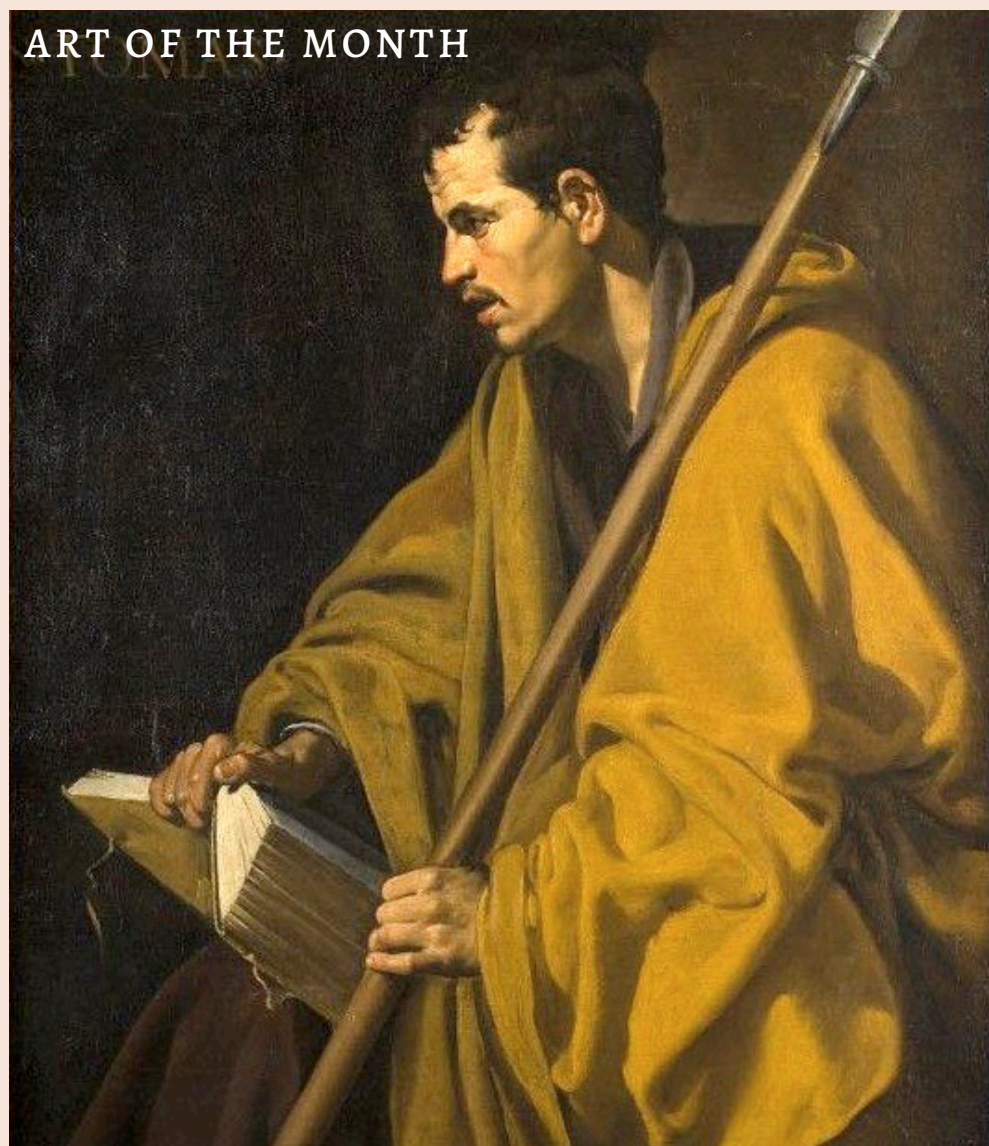
Volunteers, who have all gone through the Safeguarding process, go in a few times a week to the adult hospitals. If a patient wishes to receive a visit, with prayer and Communion, they should tell a nurse who will make a referral to the Hospital NHS Chaplaincy Office.

As I am in the hospitals they will inform me, and I will ensure that one of the Extraordinary Ministers stops by for a visit.

In relation to evangelisation, Archbishop Nolan has highlighted that all of us have been commissioned to go out and spread the Good News. Evangelisation in hospitals is putting this into action.

■ Deacon **Michael** can be contacted at **Michael.O'Donnell@rcag.org.uk**

ART OF THE MONTH



Learning from the faith and doubts of Thomas

EARLY in July, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Thomas who is often portrayed as the incredulous Apostle putting his fingers into the wounds of the Risen Christ.

Not so for Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez. In his work "The Apostle St. Thomas", he portrays the apostle as a man of faith, doubt and humanity.

The painting captures the human spirit and the air of reality gives it almost the appearance of a sepia photograph, which is quite remarkable given that it was painted around 1619!

Velázquez portrays Thomas as a mature man, with a slightly wrinkled face and a gaze that conveys a mix of doubt, curiosity, and spir-

BY **MGR TOM MONAGHAN**

itual searching. The artist accomplishes this by illuminating the face while the

shadows suggest the weight of his inner turmoil.

He appears immersed in deep thought as he grapples with profound questions of faith. Notice the meticulous attention to detail as is seen in the rendering of textures, such as the intricate folds of Saint Thomas' robe and the roughness of his skin.

Attention

He is placed slightly off-centre but still commands the viewer's attention. Velázquez portrays the Apostle's spiritual journey as he searches for enlight-

enment. Such is the complexity of faith that Thomas moved from unbelief to belief.

Later, Saint Anselm of Canterbury would write about faith seeking understanding. "For I do not seek to understand in order to believe but I believe in order to understand. For I believe this: unless I believe, I shall not understand."

This statement encapsulates the idea that faith precedes and informs the search for deeper understanding.

We may face moments of doubt and introspection but we should be consoled by the fact that questioning and seeking understanding are integral to the human condition.

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

St Thomas, apostle of courage and doubt,
Guide us in seeking the truths we are without,
Grant us the strength to question and explore,
To find solace in faith, forevermore.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

How to rediscover the sense of wonder God has given us...

Scribblings of the spirit

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



In a poem entitled, *Is/Not*, Margaret Atwood suggests that when a love grows numb, this is where we find ourselves:

*We're stuck here
on this side of the border
in this country of thumbed
streets and stale buildings
where there is nothing spec-
tacular to see
and the weather is ordinary
where love occurs in its pure
form only
on the cheaper of the souvenirs*

Love can grow numb between two people, just as it can within a whole culture. And that has happened in our culture, at least to a large part.

The excitement that once guided our eyes has given way to a certain numbness and resignation. We no longer stand before life with much freshness.

We have seen what it has to offer and have succumbed to a certain resignation: That's all there is, and it's not that great!

All we can try for now is more of the same, with the misguided hope that if we keep increasing the dosage the payoff will be better.

They talk of old souls, but old souls are actually young at heart. We're the opposite, young souls no longer young at heart. Wonder has left the building.

Boredom

What's at the root of this? What has deprived us of wonder? Familiarity and its children: sophistication, intellectual pride, disappointment, boredom, and contempt.

Familiarity does breed contempt, and contempt is the antithesis of the two things needed to stand before the world in wonder: reverence and respect.

G.K. Chesterton once suggested that familiarity is the greatest of all illusions. Elizabeth Barrett Browning gives poetic expression to this: Earth's crammed with heaven. And every common bush afire with God. But only he

who sees, takes off his shoes. The rest sit round and pluck blackberries and daub their natural faces unaware.

That aptly describes the illusion of familiarity, plucking berries while carelessly stroking our faces, unaware that we are in the presence of the holy. Familiarity renders all things common.

What's the answer? How do we recover our sense of wonder? How do we begin again to see divine fire inside ordinary life?

Chesterton suggests that the secret to recovering wonder and seeing divine fire in the ordinary is to learn to look at things familiar until they look unfamiliar again.

Biblically, that's what God asks of Moses when Moses sees a burning bush in the desert and approaches its fire out of curiosity. God says to him, take off your shoes, the ground you are standing on is holy ground.

Spectacular

That single line, that singular invitation, is the deep secret to recover our sense of wonder whenever we find ourselves, as Atwood describes, stuck on this side of the border, in thumbed streets and stale buildings, with nothing spectacular to see, ordinary weather, and love seemingly cheapened everywhere.

One of my professors in graduate school occasionally offered us this little counsel: If you ask a naïve child, do you believe in Santa and the Easter Bunny, he will say yes.

If you ask a bright child the same question, he will say no. But if you ask yet still a brighter child that question, he will smile and say yes.

Our sense of wonder is predicated initially on the naivete of being a child, of not yet being unhealthily familiar with the world. Our eyes then are still open to marvel at the newness of things.

That changes of course as we grow, experience things, and learn. Soon enough we learn the truth about Santa and the Easter Bunny and with that, all too easily, comes



the death of wonder and the familiarity that breeds contempt.

This is a disillusionment which, while a normal transitional phase in life, is not meant to be a place in which we stay. The task of adulthood is to regain our sense of wonder and begin again, for very different reasons, to believe in the reality of Santa and the Easter Bunny. We need to bring wonder back into the building.

I once heard a wise man share this vignette: Imagine a two-year-old child who asks you, "where does the sun go at night?"

Explain

For a child that young, don't pull out a globe or a book and try to explain how the solar system works. Just tell the child the sun is tired and is taking a sleep behind the barn. However, when the child is six or seven years old, don't try that anymore.

Then, it's time to pull out books and explain the solar system. After that, when the child is in high school or college, it's time to pull out Steven Hawking, Brian Swimme, and astrophysicists, and talk about the origins and make-up of the universe.

Finally, when the person is 80 years old, it's enough again to say, "the sun is tired and is taking a sleep behind the barn."

We have grown too familiar with sunsets! Wonder can make the familiar unfamiliar again.

Is there a Judas in all of us?



RELECT on the story of Judas Iscariot more than any other.

BY KIRSTEN ANDERSON

My heart breaks for him and I often imagine a scenario where he had the faith and courage to wait and live with his shame, like Peter did, where they sit together, as brothers.

But Judas must have lost all hope of being accepted, or forgiven, like so many who die by suicide to this day.

One of the earliest surviving depictions of the crucifixion of Christ is The Maskell Passion Ivories (420–30CE) It is the only one I have been able

to find that juxtaposes the deaths of Jesus and Judas, who are indicated to have died on the same day, according to Matthew's Gospel.

In the ivory panel, Jesus is on the cross, upright and smiling. He has his mother with him, and his beloved disciple, and a Roman soldier is spearing his side.

To the left of the panel (but to the right of Jesus) we see a solitary Judas hanging from a tree, with no company but for the 30 pieces of silver on the

ground. And yet, Jesus' right arm is stretching out to touch Judas.

We all have an inclination to scapegoat others; to point the finger of blame "over there" in order to assuage our own guilt.

I believe we do that to Judas. Perhaps we don't want to see that there is a Judas in us all? Perhaps looking up close at the wounds of Judas is too painful for some? I don't know.

All I know is that Jesus' love is greater than any betrayal. That message is huge for me.

RECENTLY, under the supervision of Father Justinian, I went through our kitchen worktop, fridge and cupboards, rooting out things that were way past their dates for safe consumption.

At the end of it I had created a substantial pile of stuff and today, as I write, Father Justinian will be engaged in the task of disposing of it in a responsible way, making sure the right bins are used for each item of food and each container.

It will be a tedious task, and a challenging one, but I think, even at 92, that he is relishing the challenge and, with his background in the hospitality and catering trade, before he joined the Passionists, a task that I think he will do wisely and well, and at his own pace.

It's truly extraordinary how much stuff can accumulate, but we look forward to beginning again, with the best of intentions, not to let it happen again. Those may be famous last words, but we will draw inspiration from *Laudato Si*, keeping care for the environment, for our common home, and also our own health, ever in mind.

Last Saturday, I also had to acknowledge that my favourite shoes had gone past

The sadness and hopefulness of change



Fr Frank's log

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

their safe-to-wear date. I bought these shoes about six years ago, and they are probably the most comfortable shoes I have ever worn. Recently, however, I had noticed that, on a rainy day, I was in danger of slipping and falling on the wet pavements, and this was because the tread on the sole of the shoes had almost completely worn away, and so there was no grip. Reluctantly, I headed out to buy a new pair.

Buying shoes is never an easy matter for me, as I have very small feet for a man. Years back, I had a contact in a shoe factory, and I discovered that the shoes that fitted me best were the bigger sizes in a children's shoe, and he would help me to source them.

Since then, I have settled

on a size 6 (EU39) in adult sizes, but most shoe shops don't keep a size 6 in stock, and I have to order. I headed to the same shop I bought the last pair in. I picked out something similar from the rack, and then asked the assistant if it was available in my size.

He asked me to pick out an alternative, so that if he didn't find the first choice in the stockroom, he could search for the second choice while down there. About 10 minutes later he returned, not having found the first choice, but with the second choice in hand.

I asked for a long shoe horn, as a bit of a bad back makes it difficult for me to bend down. I tried the shoes on and walked about the store for a while. They



seemed just right, and so I purchased them, then and there, and I can only hope that they will serve me as well as the previous pair which, of course, I have not discarded, and will continue to wear on occasion.

On arriving to St Mungo's this morning, I was suddenly aware of so many items here too, in the church and sacristy, and in the old retreat house, that are well past their use by date.

We have many liturgical books, some in English, some in Latin, that we will be unlikely ever to use again. We have books on Theology, Philosophy, classic literature, poetry, art, and so much more, that will hopefully find a good home in some library or archive in our Province, but will probably never be read again, except perhaps by some enthusiast from a future generation.

We have vestments in the sacristy presses belonging to another liturgical era that will never be worn again. I could go on and talk about old paintings, old items of furniture, old crockery, old typewriters and computer screens, old printers, all now defunct.

And now, in the restructuring of our diocese, as also in many other dioceses throughout the world, we are looking at old presbyteries and old churches that may have reached the end of their time as well. All of this under the umbrella of Evangelisation and under the title of – looking to the future, being faithful to the past.

There is, I suppose, an inevitability about it all, but a sadness just the same, and yet, a hopefulness too. As ever, we trust in the Holy Spirit to blow where she will, and lead us in the way we are to go. Thankfully, Father Justinian is still well within his use by date, and I trust he is successfully getting on with the task in hand.

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

Stella Maris comes home to Glasgow



An early Stella Maris exhibition in Glasgow in 1936

SUPPORTERS of Stella Maris, the Catholic charity which cares for seafarers in ports throughout the world, returned to the Glasgow church where it all began as part of a round Britain sailing pilgrimage to mark over 100 years of service to sailors and seafarers.

Volunteers on board the sailboat *Mintaka*, which docked at the Transport Museum, attended Mass at

BY BRIAN SWANSON St Aloysius Garnethill where the foundations of what is now a global Catholic charity were first laid thanks to the initiative of a Jesuit priest and an Irish lay brother who were both serving in the parish at the time.

To mark the founding of the organisation 102 years ago and raise awareness of the its work, *Mintaka* and its crew of volunteers began a 2,400 mile journey from

Southampton on April 29, calling at places in the UK of special significance to Stella Maris, before arriving in Glasgow on June 11, the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Stella Maris Port Chaplain Deacon Joe O'Donnell, said: "It was a proud day for us here in Glasgow to celebrate and give thanks to God for the those early pioneers who founded Stella Maris more than a century ago – here's to the next hundred years!"

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The summer Gospels remind us of Jesus' advice that it's good to rest and reflect

THINGS tend to quieten down in July in parishes, as we make the most of the summer break, maybe heading off on holiday or simply breaking from the routines of work and school.

In our Sunday liturgy too this month, we are given an invitation to rest and a few things to ponder. We don't find Jesus engaged in too many busy activities over these weeks either.

Rather, July's Gospel passages are mostly teaching texts, with some famous images of the Kingdom of God to reflect on.

14th Sunday of the Year, A

For the last few Sundays, we have heard Jesus teaching about the mission his disciples are to undertake. After learning about its challenges and stresses, however, this week we hear a welcome invitation to rest.

The burdens of our life and our Christian mission can sometimes seem too much for us, can sometimes overwhelm us, but Jesus invites us to come to him, and to take up his gentle yoke.

A "yoke" is a farming tool by which cattle pull a plough through a field. But it is a shared tool: the cattle are paired together, each going at the other's pace, each carrying the other's load, both sharing the workload side-by-side.

Jesus, the humble king who brings peace and joy to his people (First Read-



Fr Tom Kilbride

ing), walks and works with us. Indeed, in his prayer he rejoices in how simple this is. There is no complicated thought process to follow or difficult concepts to grasp: just come to him and find rest, peace, and the strength his presence brings us.

15th Sunday of the Year, A

Over the next few Sundays, we will hear from the central chapter of Matthew's Gospel (it is literally in the middle of it, but it is also "central" to Matthew's presentation of Jesus' teaching).

It is the chapter where he gathers together seven parables of Jesus about the Kingdom of God. Today, we hear the first of those, the famous Parable of the Sower.

The long version gives the interpretation of the parable, but it also gives us a glimpse into Jesus's method. If he had simply told us about the Kingdom directly, we might have heard but not really listened, thinking we had grasped it even when we hadn't. By speaking in parables, by using images, Jesus forces us to stop and

think about it, to ponder the questions it raises and to see where we might "fit in" to the different kinds of response described.

These memorable images make his words "stick" and make us take them seriously. His word will achieve its goal (First Reading) but how will we receive it (Gospel)?

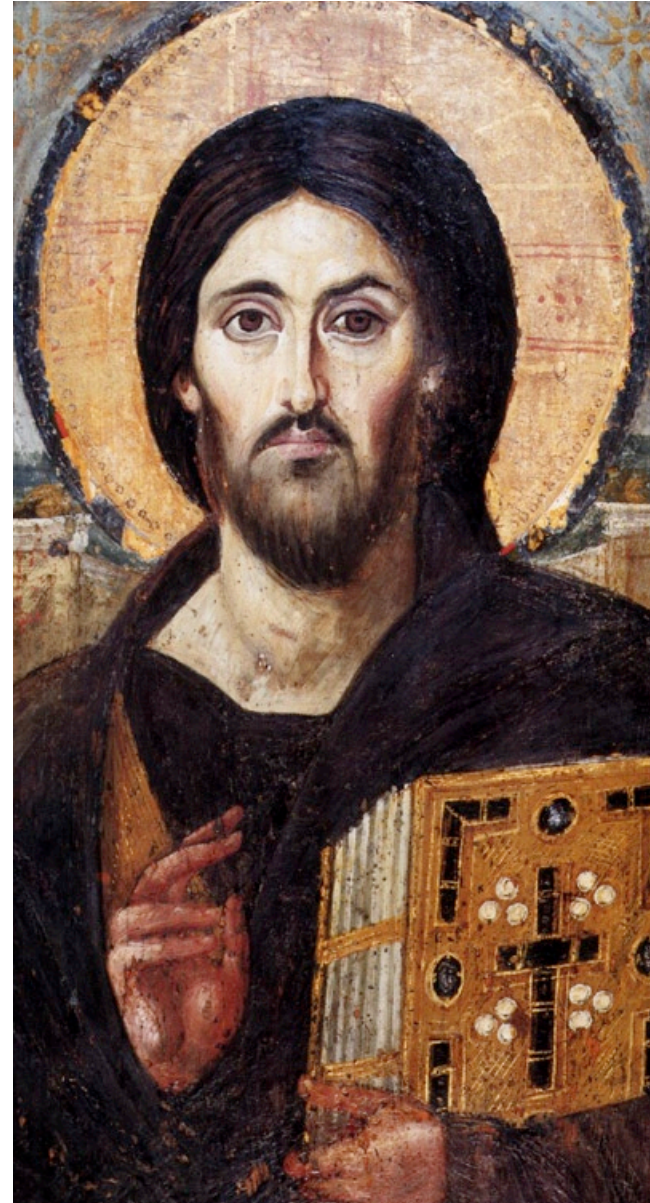
16th Sunday of the Year, A

The second Parable of the Kingdom adds a new idea to the first one. Even when the good seed is sown in what seems like good soil, the message is not always received.

Other kinds of "seed" can be sown, other messages get a foothold. For a community preparing for mission, Jesus seems to suggest that their voice will be only one among many: there may even be hostile voices opposed to theirs.

The answer proposed is simply to be patient, not to lose heart in sowing the seed, but to leave it to God to sort it out. The most important thing is to sow the good seed of the Kingdom regardless.

The smaller parables help fill this out: the Kingdom always starts out small, but its effects go way beyond what we might expect, like mustard seed or yeast. The results are the work neither of the man nor the woman in



Icon of Christ, Pantocrator, 6th century, artist unknown

We are the pearls of great price which Jesus treasures so highly!

18th Sunday of the Year, A

We ended the chapter of the parables of the Kingdom last Sunday. This week, Jesus resumes his activity. In fact, today's Gospel passage really reminds us (in deeds) of what we heard Jesus say a few weeks ago: he brings strength and support to the weary and the overburdened.

Indeed, the invitation we hear in today's First Reading ("come to me... your soul will live") is very like the one we heard Jesus make back then. However, it is seen now in action: he gives rest to the weary (they are to sit) and he feeds the hungry (with much to spare).

Matthew presents this feeding miracle, as he so often does, as flowing from Jesus' compassion for the crowds, and he calls his disciples to share it with him: they distribute the loaves and the fish.

When Jesus prepared his disciples to share in his mission, Matthew said he "felt sorry for the crowds", as here. The feeding of the hungry, the refreshment of the weary, the healing of the sick, the very mission of the Church itself, flows from God's compassion for his world – and all of us are called to let that compassion flow, to share in that mission.

As we take some "time off" to rest this summer – and Jesus invites us to come to him and do that! – maybe we should extend his invitation to others, bringing rest and renewal to those around us who are weary or struggling, those for whom the Lord feels compassion today.

17th Sunday of the Year, A

The first little pair of parables we hear today speak of the Kingdom of God as something so precious that rejecting it would make no sense. It is a treasure of such immense value that everything else seems dispensable!

Think back to the flawed reactions to the seed sown. Why would we let other things choke off or steal away this treasure? If our hearts are fields, then an incredible treasure is placed there when the Kingdom of God is sown in them. Listening more closely, however, the second parable likens the Kingdom to the merchant, rather than to the pearl.

It is the Kingdom (that is, God himself) which is in search of fine pearls and gives everything to claim that single, precious one. In other words, God in Jesus has come in search of you and I, and he has given everything in order to call us to himself (Paul suggests so in the Second Reading).

the parables: their job is just to place it there. It is God who will make it grow.

St Paul reminds us that in our weakness, when we feel inadequate to the task, it is the Holy Spirit who is at work in us far more deeply and far more powerfully than we can know (Second Reading).

JERICHO

The Compassion of Jesus

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MURRAY

In loving memory
of our dear mother
Teresa Bernadette (nee Grace)
who died July 6 1980
and our much loved sister
Marie Veronica
who died July 20 2004.
Loved and remembered always.
Leo, Paul and Angela

+ Requiescant in pace +

Fr Sean's was a life well lived

Archbishop recalls a hard-working and popular pastor

ONE of Glasgow's retired and much-loved priests has died. Fr Sean FitzGerald died on Pentecost Sunday, the birthday of the Church he had served all his life. He was 83.

Born on Glasgow's southside, he was educated at Holy Cross, Crosshill, 1944 – 1947, St. Aloysius' Garnethill, 1947 – 1951, St Mary's College Blairs 1951 – 1957 and studied for the priesthood at St Peter's College, Cardross, 1957 – 1963.

He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese by Archbishop Campbell at St Andrew's Cathedral on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul 1963 and was close to

marking his 60th anniversary of priesthood when he died.

His early priesthood saw him posted to a large number of parishes of different types. His first role as a curate was in the newly established parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Dennistoun.

After six happy years there he was sent across the river, close to his roots, to serve as assistant priest at St Mary's, Pollokshaws

In 1973 he was named to the West End parish of St Charles Borromeo for a year before crossing the river again to serve as curate in another newly opened parish, Our Lady of Consolation, where he also

ministered for six years.

In 1980 he was named assistant priest at St Robert's in Househillwood and in 1985 was asked to take on the same role in St. Pius X in Drumchapel.

While there, Cardinal Winning saw his ability to offer support and friendship to his fellow clergy and in 1987 made him Director of the Ministry to Priests Programme.

Parishes

Fr Sean served as Parish Priest in only two parishes ... from 1990–1995 at St Brendan's Yoker and from 1995 to 2010 at St Kessog's Balloch, a parish which was close to his heart and where he made many last-



ing friendships.

He retired in 2010 and took up residence at St Mary's Pollokshaws.

He died fortified by the rites of Holy Church at St

Joseph's Home, in the care of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Archbishop Nolan led the Requiem Mass for Fr Sean, and in a moving homily paid tribute to his life of fidelity.

He said: "Sean was so active as a priest, involved in high school chaplaincy and marriage encounter and ministry to his fellow priests.

"When he was a parish priest he wasn't just concerned for his own church and its liturgy, he encouraged his parishioners to have a wider outlook and so they raised funds for emergencies in other parts of the world, there is even a road in Uganda called Sean

Fitzgerald Avenue!

"He was a real pastor who worked hard to build up the Christian community wherever he was sent.

"The gospel reminds us of calling. We are all called, but Sean felt a special call and responded to it at the early age of 12 when he went to Blairs College then later to Cardross and finally to ordination. His years of priesthood were spent following Christ by ministering in parishes but even when he retired to responded to the call of Christ in his illness. The final call was to die with Christ in order to rise again and Sean has now answered that call too. May he rest in peace."

Remembering Bishop Maurice Taylor

Tributes paid to a Bishop who lived out his motto to 'walk in God's presence'

BISHOP Maurice Taylor, the retired bishop of Galloway and the oldest Catholic bishop in Great Britain has died at the age of 97.

Bishop Taylor, who grew up in Lanarkshire and served in the Royal Army Medical Corps at the end of the Second World War, was ordained in 1950 in Rome, shortly after his friend and mentor – a certain Thomas Winning – with whom he was to share life as a bishop 30 years later.

He was the Rector of the Scots College in Valladolid, Spain from 1965 to 1974.

His time in Spain marked him. As *Flourish* columnist Fr Tom Kilbride put it in an appreciative post on Facebook: "He had a great love for Spain and for Spanish culture, maintaining contact over the years with many friends he had made during his years in Valladolid.

"He was both loyal support and wise counsellor to his successors as rectors over the years, even to most recent times, and was a mentor and friend to many former students, making great efforts every year to join in the annual meetings of the Ambrosian Society, in which group he was held in great esteem

and much affection.

"He was present for and addressed their last meeting, in October 2022, and spoke with great fondness, nostalgia and warmth of the College and of the privilege he had always felt of being associated with it (even though he had not been a student there himself).

"He always encouraged *los Escoceses* to be proud of their part in the greater story of Scotland's church history and of the part Spain and the Spanish College played in it. He literally "wrote the book" on the College and its story.

Hero

"His own personal 'hero' was Bp John Geddes, the rector who rescued the College from possible dissolution in 1770 and brought it safely to its new home in Valladolid, the city in which Maurice Taylor would serve as rector 200 years later."

On becoming bishop of Galloway in 1981, he took as his episcopal motto words borrowed from that of John Geddes: "*Ambula coram Deo et esto perfectus*" ("Walk in the presence of God and be perfect(ed)").

He served on the Episcopal Board of the In-



Picture by Paul McSherry

ternational Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) and was its chairman from 1997-2002 – a role which gave him international responsibility for the use of English in the liturgy throughout the Catholic world.

In his final years in the role he was involved in a respectful but forthright clash with the then Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship in Rome, Cardinal Medina Estevez, over the right of local bishops' conferences to approve translations and to regulate the liturgy. He was backed by Cardinal Winning and

many Presidents of English speaking bishops' conferences around the world.

Years later, Pope Francis, definitively granted to local bishops' conferences the right to oversee translations of liturgical texts, as Bishop Taylor had argued for 25 years earlier.

At his funeral Mass Archbishop Nolan recalled his predecessor's sense of humour. How he would say to people in the south of Galloway Diocese: "It's great to be here on the Costa del Sol... Way!"

He was a well-known friend and supporter of the charismatic renewal

movement during his time as Bishop in Galloway and took a keen interest in issues of justice and peace, travelling himself to see the conditions and struggles of people in Latin America.

He retired in May 2004. He was latterly resident in the Dundonald House Nursing Home in Kilmarnock, where he died on the evening of Wednesday 14 June.

Archbishop Nolan – himself also a former bishop of Galloway – said: "As a young priest in East Kilbride, Bishop Maurice Taylor led a very active and vibrant parish, inspired

by Vatican II. As a Bishop he had an energy that few could keep up with and as a retired Bishop he was very active in the diocese until recent years supplying for Clergy.

"He managed to find time to write four books, which displayed his sharp mind and keen sense of humour.

"At the end of his last book he expressed his thanks to everyone for their kindness and support and their forgiveness. I can find no better way to recall him than by using his own words ... 'My faith assures me that God has always been aware of me wherever I have been and wherever I have been going. For that presence, for that constant, loving and unflinching protection and wise guidance I am truly grateful.' And so, Maurice, so are we. We are truly grateful to God for that."

At his funeral the Archbishop recalled their last meeting. He said: "As I left, I said 'I'll see you again... in heaven'. That might sound a bit presumptuous, but we will see each other again not because of our own merits but because of the grace of God."

Rest in peace, don Mauricio. *Que en paz descanses.*

Make no mistake: how you respond to this article is a question of life and death

In February of this year, as some of you will know, I visited Ethiopia with SCIAF.

I found a country that, in addition to suffering from two years of brutal conflict, is now experiencing its worst drought in recent history. Rivers are dry, crops have failed and people's animals are dead.

I travelled through an area where more than 336,000 people are in need of emergency aid. There are severe food and water shortages. The amount of available food has reduced dramatically so that adults, especially mothers, will choose to go without food so that their children can eat. Around 90% of the livestock have died, while those remaining are producing little milk.

It was clear that families have nowhere left to turn. They've lost everything.

BY BISHOP BRIAN MCGEE

In one village I saw children bringing goats and cattle to a once flowing river, now dry because of the drought. They were digging in the sand to try and get to any water trapped below the ground. The river had completely dried up.

To make matters worse, while we were there, the government announced that there would only be enough underground water for two weeks.

These children were walking for miles and miles to a dry riverbed to dig in the sand in the hope of finding water and then being told that, even in those conditions, soon there would be no water at all.

Communities are entirely dependent on food and wa-



ter aid, or they have nothing. If charities like SCIAF don't come in to help, there will be no water, no food. There is no back up plan. They will die.

The people of Ethiopia desperately need our help, right now.

One person that SCIAF works with, Ayoyo, farmed for food and ran a small business. However, because of the drought, this is now impossible. Everything around her has died.

She said: "The drought has destroyed all our crops

and left us very hungry – we have nothing to eat. Before he died my husband supported me, but now I don't have any support.

"I used to have 10 goats and five cows, but the drought has killed all my livestock. There is nothing

left. Without SCIAF my children might have died."

With her livelihood destroyed, Ayoyo is only able to support her family through vital emergency relief. Severe and desperate hunger across Ethiopia continues to worsen – the country is on the brink of famine, with 20 million people urgently in need of food.

We are all sisters and brothers – we are all family. As you would not let your brother or sister starve, neither should we ignore the desperate needs of our family around the world.

By reaching out in loving kindness, you can save lives. When you donate to SCIAF you are not simply giving to charity but partnering with fellow human beings across the world.

Please act now and give what you can. Please be the hope they need.

+ EMERGENCY

“We have nothing to eat. My children might die.”

Ayoyo, Ethiopia

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*Texts cost donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting in to hear more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text SCIAFNINFO to make your donation. **Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund.** SCIAF is the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family. 7 West Nile Street, Glasgow G1 2PR. Tel: 0141 354 5555. Scottish Charity No: SC012302. Company No: SC197327. Photo by Zacharias Abubeker.

