

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow July/August 2024

Horror as Gaza Catholic school attacked



Archbishop: 'Pray fervently for an end to this'

THE martyred parish of Holy Family in Gaza, whose priest, Fr Gabriel, visited Glasgow earlier this year to tell of his people's appalling sufferings, has been targeted by a new rocket attack.

The Holy Family School has, since the beginning of the war, been a place of refuge for hundreds of civilians.

Archbishop Nolan condemned the attack and called for a renewed campaign of prayer and political pressure to halt the slaughter.

He said: "There is no safe place in Gaza for the civilian population, not even on Church premises. I would urge everyone to pray fervently for an end to this conflict.

"Only the cessation of hostilities and the release of all hostages will bring respite to the suffering peoples of the Holy Land and restore

BY RONNIE CONVERY

the opportunity to work for a just peace."

A spokesman for the local church said: "The Latin Patriarchate condemns in the strongest terms the targeting of civilians or any belligerent actions that fall short of ensuring that civilians remain outside the combat scene.

"We don't have accurate numbers because our own parish priest and members of the community could not get to the location, because there's intensive fighting around the parish."

"It's too dangerous for anyone to actually leave."

Dangerous

"We continue to pray for the Lord's mercy and hope that the Parties will reach an agreement that would put an immediate end to the horrifying bloodbath and humanitarian catastrophe

in the region."

In Scotland, the Bishops' Justice and Peace Commission, said: "We are horrified to hear that the Israeli army have bombed the Holy Family School in Gaza, resulting in civilian casualties. The school is the property of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and part of the compound area of the Holy Family Parish where Fr Gabriel who visited us in April is the parish priest and has been a place of refuge for civilians since the start of the war.

"We condemn in the strongest possible terms the targeting of civilians and reissue the call for a permanent ceasefire now."

The Holy Family Parish in Gaza was the site of a similar reported conflict late last year when in December it was alleged that an Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) sniper shot and killed two women at the church's compound.



Bishop-elect's fond farewell page 5



AGAP's going to the Fringe page 4



New deacon for Glasgow pages 10-11

Faslane vigil invite

NUCLEAR weapons are incompatible with a Christian vision for a morally just society ... that's the message Church leaders will repeat next month at the gates of a military base which is central to the UK's nuclear weapon policy.

And the call has gone out for parishioners across the country to join the event, which will be led by Archbishop Nolan; Right Rev Shaw Paterson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and Bishop Andrew Swift of the Episcopal Church.

Recently Scotland's bishops set out forcefully their

opposition to the continued presence of nuclear weapons in Scotland. In their pre-election statement they said: "The use of weapons of mass destruction is a serious crime against God and humanity."

"While states are entitled to possess the means required for legitimate defence, this must not become an excuse for an excessive accumulation of weaponry..."

"The UK Government must work actively and seriously towards elimination of the UK's nuclear arsenal, and the promotion of a more peace-oriented manufacturing industry."



The use of nuclear weapons, as well as their mere possession, is immoral. Pope Francis

Justice & Peace Scotland invite you to...

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Speakers will include...



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Archbishop of Glasgow



RIGHT REV SHAW J PATERSON
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland



BISHOP ANDREW SWIFT
Bishop of Brechin

DATE: Saturday 3rd August **TIME:** 10.30am - 12.00pm
LOCATION: HMNB Clyde (Faslane), South Gate, Maidstone Road

Golden jubilee joy for St Timothy's

Picture by Paul McSherry



ARCHBISHOP Nolan celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving with pupils of St Timothy's school in Carntyne to mark its 50th anniversary – and took the opportunity to give advice to those in P7 who will be moving to secondary school after the summer holidays.

He told them: "You have

BY BRIAN SWANSON heard today about the past and how your mums and dads were pupils here just like you are today.

"But of course they moved on and made a future themselves and now it is your turn to take the first steps in your future as you get ready for high school."

"I know that your teachers have been working hard

to prepare you for the challenges and changes ahead but what does not change and will never change is the love that Jesus has for each and every one of you.

Love

"Remember he is there for you and never be afraid to ask for His help not just in your new school but for the rest of your lives."

Earlier the Archbishop was

given a tour of the school before celebrating the Mass which was attended by staff, past and present, families and friends along with local councillors and education officials.

Local clergy, Father Stephen Hannah, Father Joe Mills, Father Alex Strahan and Father Vincent who all have close links to the school joined Archbishop Nolan in the celebration of the Mass.

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Fr Edward to lead youth to Lourdes

THE new chaplain to the St Margaret of Scotland Youth Group has spoken of his delight following his appointment, and before heading off to Lourdes.

Father Edward Toner, assistant priest at Holy Family & St Ninian's and St Flannan's, Kirkintilloch and St John of the Cross, Twechar, said: "I was delighted to be appointed as chaplain to the SMSYG and look forward to travelling to Lourdes with them this month. Our journey there has already begun, in many ways, with all of the fundraising and formation we have been doing since the start of the year."

"It is clear to me that we have a hardworking and dedicated bunch in the SMSYG this year who are open to exploring their faith and encountering the Lord."

"Lourdes is a truly incredible place where Our Lady calls us to encounter her Son through service and through seeing Him in the face of the sick and suffering."



BY BRIAN SWANSON

"It's a beautiful place to visit with stunning scenery and churches, but the real beauty can be seen

in the hard work and loving service carried out by the thousands of men and women who travel to Lourdes each year to assist sick pilgrims."

"Mary always points us to her Son, and in Lourdes we should always seek to discover the way she is inviting us to encounter Jesus; particularly in the sacra-

ments of the Eucharist and Confession, but also in each other."

Father Toner, who will also act as deputy to pilgrimage spiritual director Canon Tom White, added: "I'm sure I speak on behalf of the entire SMSYG when I offer my gratitude for the great generosity of all who have contributed to our fundraising efforts. These pilgrimages don't happen without your support."

"Please pray for us and know that we will remember you to Our Blessed Mother at the Grotto."

Vatican archbishop: 'Dali's masterpiece is the pride of Glasgow'

EXCLUSIVE

BY RONNIE CONVERY

THE Vatican Archbishop in charge of the 2025 Holy Year has sent a powerful vote of thanks to Glasgow, its council and its people ... and offered a piece of spiritual advice to *Flourish* readers.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella spoke exclusively to *Flourish* following the extraordinary success of the 'Dali in Rome' exhibition which saw Kelvingrove Gallery's iconic image of 'Christ of St John of the Cross' draw huge crowds in the eternal city.

Crowds

In total almost 350,000 people visited the image during the 40 day long exhibition which saw Dali's painting placed alongside (for the first time ever) the relic-drawing by St John of the Cross which inspired it.

Archbishop Fisichella told *Flourish*: "I went to see the painting again, myself, on the final day, and they told me that 13,000 people were waiting to see it just on that

Archbishop Rino Fisichella



one day. The queues were long, right out onto Via del Corso...

"What I noticed most was the gratitude of people as they left the exhibition. That was very significant for me. Beauty and art are both forms of evangelisation and this exhibition was a clear moment of evangelisation."

The Vatican chief had warm words too for Glasgow's civic leaders who had agreed to lend the city's

prized possession to Rome for the first time.

He said: "I want to express my personal gratitude, that of my team, and of the Holy See to the Director of Glasgow Museums, to the council and to the people of Glasgow. The 'sacrifice' of Glasgow in going without its most iconic painting for more than a month was much appreciated in Rome.

And Archbishop Fisichella had a message to local people

who may take for granted the presence of such an extraordinary masterpiece on their own doorstep.

He said: "The people of Glasgow should know how much they are envied by the rest of the world... the Dali painting is universally admired. I'm sure the extraordinary success of the exhibition of the painting in Rome will remind people in Scotland of its great value."

And as the summer holi-

days stretch ahead, Archbishop Fisichella suggested a suitable way to spend a day, either alone or with friends or family, in coming weeks:

He said: "Catholics in Scotland – and Christians in general – should think of going to visit the Gallery at Kelvingrove and spending some time in the presence of this great work of art, seeing

it almost as a pilgrimage of faith.

"Going there we deepen our faith and are inspired to communicate our faith. If you can, try to spend some time there, standing before the painting in silence, which is something we all need in our busy lives. Feel yourself moved by what you see, and resolve to share it with others."

Coming home: Dali's painting is prepared for return to Glasgow



Jubilee for priests

NEW prayer guides "With Peter and Paul following the Master" have been produced for priests in preparation for the 2025 Jubilee by the Dicastery for Evangelisation and can now be downloaded free online in six languages.

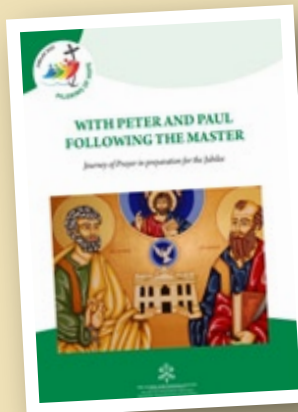
The guide offers a preparation for the celebration of the Jubilee of Priests, which will be held in Rome in June 2025, and is designed to help priests return to the original foundations of their priestly ministry.

The guide is in the form of a series of four celebrations – or stages on the journey – and is focused on following the apostles Peter and Paul. Tracing the footsteps of those extraordinary men who are the "pillars of the Church", the aid retraces four key concepts – vocation, the profession of faith, times of trials, and the life of Testimony.

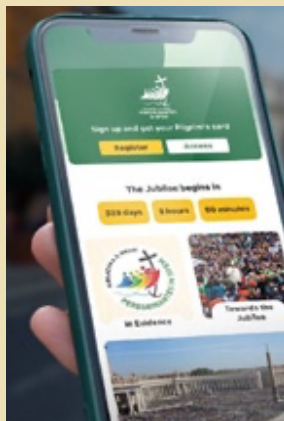
The prayer guide is aimed at diocesan priests, who can meet for community celebrations, tak-

ing advantage of the suggestions contained in the booklet. But it can also be profitably used by individual priests for moments of personal reflection and prayer. Like all aids, it can be adapted, merged, and reworked according to the needs and circumstances of each community.

The material is available here: <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/content/dam/iubilaeum2025/sussidi/sussidio-di-preghiera-in-preparazione-al-giubileo-dei-sacerdoti/EN-Jubilee-of-Priests.pdf>



Jubilee phone app



To participate in next year's Holy Year events you will need to obtain a 'Pilgrim's Card' – a free digital pass bearing the name of the holder, which will be needed to organise a pilgrimage to the Holy Door.

The card can only be obtained by signing up at the website <https://register.iubilaeum2025.va/registration> or via the official Jubilee App for smartphones.

After entering the required details, the pilgrim will receive a unique QR code and a

personalised account on the app.

After signing up for the pilgrim's card you will be able to sign up for a pilgrimage to the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica and all the other main events of the Jubilee.

Planned events include Jubilees for groups such as the elderly, youth, educators, police and military personnel, and deacons.

Apart from the basic Pilgrim's Card (which is free), it is possible to purchase a 'Pilgrim's Services Card'. This provides a package of benefits including discounts on transport, accommodation, and catering. This card will also grant reduced ticket prices for museums, cultural events and city transport in Rome.

Each pilgrim buying the Services Card will be provided with a new QR code which combines the basic Pilgrim's Card and the added services package.

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Glasgow preview for the Fringe play 'God's Architect'

GLASGOW parishioners are to get a sneak preview of AGAP's new play which is running at this year's Edinburgh Festival.

As the Festival Fringe approaches, AGAP Theatre will return to parishes with a bold new production that tells the story of Antoni Gaudí, the internationally renowned visionary architect most famous for Barcelona's Cathedral of the Poor, the Sagrada Familia.

With the 100th anniversary of Gaudí's untimely death approaching in 2026, and his cause for canonisation being scrutinised by the Church, the vibrant new multimedia drama, "Gaudí: God's Architect" written by Stephen Callaghan, explodes with colour and creativity, with visual effects by Technical Director, Zach O'Neill.

The life of the fiery, enigmatic and eccentric archi-

BY **RONNIE CONVERY** tect is delivered through storytelling and characterisation by a cast of three actors, consisting of Callaghan, alongside Russell Wheeler and Jacqueline Glencorse, portraying a total of 19 characters.

Fringe

The production follows the runaway success of last year's Fringe hit "Oggie! Oggie! Oggie!", a solo play in which Stephen Callaghan portrayed an updated version of "The Confessions of Saint Augustine" to over 2000 people in schools and parishes across the country.

Stephen said: "The play does not assume a verdict on Gaudí but simply asks the question, 'Who was Gaudí? A genius? A madman? A saint? Or some combination of the three?'"

He added: "I think this production will have broad appeal as Gaudí is a figure that cuts across the secular and the sacred, due to his relevance as an artist and as a Servant of God."

The play addresses timely themes, such as respect for nature and ecological awareness in the use of materials; the role of art and beauty in the life of the Church; religious observance in a time of political unrest and intolerance; mental and physical health issues and the value of life despite illness or difficulty; defence of the rights of workers; the humanity of the saint as a "sinner who tries"; and his untimely accidental death, which emphasises the need to seize the day and live "life in all its fullness".

Preview performances will take place in Glasgow at 7.30pm at the following:



Tuesday 16th July at Archdiocese of Glasgow Curial Offices (beside St Andrew's Cathedral); Wednesday 17th July at Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald; Thursday 18th July at St Thomas the Apostle, Riddrie; Friday 19th July

at Blessed John Duns Scotus, Gorbals.

Tickets £8 (£6 concession) are available from www.Gaudi-play.co.uk or 0749 534 7884.

Edinburgh Fringe performances will take place

at C Aurora (Venue 6), Lauriston Halls, 28 Lauriston Street, EH3 9DJ, from 19th to 25th August 2024 at 6.40pm and tickets are available from C ARTS box office: www.CtheArts.com or 0131 581 5555.


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All Performances commence at 7.30pm. Run time 50 min. Post show chat & refreshments.

Tickets £8 (£6 concession)
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Historic Mass at Scots Parliament



Principal celebrant Archbishop Leo Cushley with bishops Frank Dougan, John Keenan, Brian McGee and Joseph Toal
Picture by Paul McSherry

Mass has been celebrated at the Scottish Parliament for only the second time in history.

Archbishop Leo Cushley was the principal celebrant for the Mass marking the feast of Saints John Fisher and Thomas More, the patron saint of politicians.

The Archbishop, in whose diocese the parliament sits, was joined by some other members of the Bishops-Conference, while Presiding Officer, Alison Johnstone, delivered the first reading, whilst Mark Griffin MSP read the intercessory prayers.

In his homily, Archbishop Cushley recalled the "messy,

noisy" nature of early democracy in Athens where "winning was all that mattered" and invited MSPs to compare this to contemporary political discourse.

The Archbishop invited politicians to look into their own hearts and minds, as this is where "good governance" starts and assured MSPs of the prayers of the bishops and the Catholic community as they "carry the heavy burden of responsibility" in their roles.

Reflecting on the day's events, Archbishop Cushley said: "The bishops wish to engage positively with the country's lawmakers...

Building these relationships is not only helpful in general, it can lead to conversations about points both of convergence and divergence in our views.

"All parties have elements in their manifesto with which we can agree, and things with which we cannot.

"So, I was very pleased to have this chance to meet some of our lawmakers and I would encourage Catholics likewise to engage with their MSPs and MPs alike, so that their views and concerns can be aired both cordially and candidly, for the sake of the common good."

Bishop-elect Andrew gets ready for the 'road and miles' to Dundee

SCOTLAND'S newest bishop has spoken movingly of the moment he was told he would be leaving St Andrew's Cathedral to become Bishop of Dunkeld.

Canon Andrew McKenzie revealed he had received a Saturday morning phone call from the Apostolic Nunciature in London, asking him to go and see the Nuncio (the Pope's ambassador).

When he arrived in London, the Nuncio, Spanish Archbishop Miguel Mauro Buendia, said to him: "When a priest is called to the Nunciature it is either to be made a bishop or to be excommunicated. You will be glad to know it's the former and not the latter!"

After that Canon Andrew was informed that the Holy Father had named him Bishop of Dunkeld. He was then invited to go into the Nuncio's oratory to spend some time in prayer, and thereafter write a letter there and then to the Pope accepting

the nomination.

"It was a shock," said the Cathedral-based priest. "I never foresaw it and that sense of shock has stayed with me. But I'm also excited at the challenge, if a little daunted too."

Becoming a bishop means a series of practical issues which have had to be dealt with in recent weeks, while still overseeing the life of the Cathedral. Canon Andrew has been on retreat in preparation for the ceremony of Episcopal Ordination scheduled for August 10. The lead consecrator will be Archbishop Cushley of St Andrews and Edinburgh (in whose province the Diocese of Dunkeld lies), assisted by Archbishop Nolan and Bishop Joe Toal of Motherwell.

The Mass will take place on the Feast of St Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr, and Canon Andrew will be surrounded by family and friends. It will be a special moment for his mum and

Popular Cathedral priest tells Flourish editor *Ronnie Convery* of the moment he heard from the Papal Nuncio that his life was about to change

dad, who are in their mid-80s and plan to travel to Dundee for the event. He hopes his brother and sister will sing at the Mass too.

As a Bishop he will be asked to choose a motto and a coat of arms, and work is underway on both fronts. Typically for the man who has served diligently as Master of Ceremonies for three Archbishops, the liturgy will be carefully planned.

"There will be links back to my ordination Mass as a priest on October 31 1988 at Our Lady of Lourdes in Cardonald. The same psalm will be sung – Mgr Gerry Fitzpatrick's version of "Such are the men who seek your face, who seek your face O Lord" – and the concluding hymn will also be the same, 'For all the saints'".

In recent weeks the new Bishop-elect has had to make a flying trip to Rome to get 'kitted out' for the new role. That meant choosing an episcopal ring, a pectoral cross and a mitre while also getting measured up for a bishop's soutane. "It should be in the post and arriving any day now," said Canon Andrew hopefully!

When he takes up office, he will live in Newport on Tay in the parish house of St Fillan's. It was the house chosen for his predecessor Fr Martin Chambers who tragically died between being nominated and being consecrated. Canon Andrew knows the area a little, after having served for years as Director of Priests for Scotland from 2004–2012 during which time he worked closely with the late Bishop Vincent Logan who was then bishop of Dunkeld.

As he prepares to leave Glasgow, Canon Andrew, admits there will be a degree of sadness in his heart. He said: "I will be sorry to leave Glasgow and leave the Cathedral.

Home

"The city is my home and I had expected to live the rest

of my life here. I moved into the Cathedral one year and nine months ago and some of the boxes from that move have still to be unpacked! I had imagined I would be at the Cathedral for a good while longer and there is certainly work still to be done there, but that will be for my successor now."

For the Cardonald boy, the trip 100 miles north will be a big change. But with his shy smile, sense of dedication, and commitment to the Church, one thing is clear – Glasgow's loss will be Dunkeld's gain.



Proud history of Canon Andrew's new diocese

THE Diocese of Dunkeld boasts a rich and varied history that traces back to the early medieval period.

Founded in 844 AD, the diocese saw significant growth in medieval times. In the 12th century, under King David I, Dunkeld Cathedral was constructed, becoming a focal point for worship and administration.

Critical

The cathedral, dedicated to St Columba, was a magnificent structure that symbolised the diocese's importance. It played a critical role in the religious and cultural life of Scotland, housing relics and serving as a centre for pilgrimage.

However, the Reformation in the 16th century brought profound changes. The Catholic Church faced severe persecution, and many of its properties, including Dunkeld Cathedral, were either destroyed or repurposed for Protestant worship.

This period marked a significant decline in the Catholic presence in the region, leading to centuries



of struggle for the Catholic community in Dunkeld.

The Catholic Emancipation in the 19th century paved the way for a revival.

In 1878, Pope Leo XIII restored the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Scotland, and the Diocese of Dunkeld was re-established with its cathedral in Dundee (above).

Since then, the diocese has seen steady growth and development. Today, it encompasses parts of Perthshire, Angus, Dundee, Clackmannanshire, and Fife, serving a diverse and vibrant Catholic population.

The Diocese of Dunkeld now includes 34 parishes and 65,000 Catholics.

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Shine, Jesus, shine!



ARCHBISHOP Nolan took inspiration from the much-loved entrance hymn 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' at this year's Mass for children with additional support needs telling them: "You too must shine your light because that's what Jesus wants you all to do."

And that heartfelt message was underlined later in the Mass when he presented each child with an LED candle and a prayer card containing the inspiring words from St Matthew: "You are the light of the world."

Children from St Oswald's Secondary School, Castle-milk, Cardinal Winning Secondary School, Tollcross, and St Joseph's Rainbow Unit Faifley, were among the schools represented who were joined by parents, carers and extended families.

Music was provided by the Lourdes Music Group and Angela Hodos signed throughout the Mass.

Gerry MacDonald, former

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

head teacher of Cardinal Winning School, who helped to organise the event, said: "These Masses have been celebrated in the Cathedral for more than 15 years and have been very well supported by the Archbishops in that time."

"We always encourage parents and carers to come along on nights like this because it reminds them that they are not alone and that they can learn and support each other."

And the theme of the shining light of faith continued with the inclusion of 'Christ be our light' as the final hymn and the Archbishop's blessing of the children containing the words: "Let your light shine for all the world to see, you are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world!"



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Cathedral priest's plan to use power of social media to defeat terrorists

GLASGOW-BASED Nigerian priest who survived a deadly attack by the Boko Haram terror group has revealed that he is spearheading a campaign against them – using the power of social media.

Father Justine Dyikuk, a member of the clergy team at St Andrew's Cathedral as well as an award-winning journalist, was speaking at the launch of his new book "Me and My Rosary".

He is in Glasgow studying for a PhD at Strathclyde University which he hopes will provide the basis for the Nigerian Government to find ways to defeat the terrorists whose decade-long series of atrocities have claimed the lives of thousands of innocent people including several priests and members of their congregations.

And Father Justine told how he too narrowly escaped with his life when heavily armed gangs surrounded the church of St. Francis Xavier in Azare, a town in his home diocese of Bauchi in northern Nigeria.

He said: "It happened just two years after my ordination, but you never forget something like that."

"I was staying in the church house and around midnight my parish priest came banging on my door and said 'it's Boko Haram

BY BRIAN SWANSON

– we must escape."

"We headed for the bushes and hid there all night. We could hear bullets being fired in all directions and at the same time they launched rockets from a police station they had taken over. I was terrified."

The following day, a Sunday, they discovered the bullet-riddled bodies of six local people who had been slain by the militants.

Despite the horror of the previous few hours Father Justine went ahead with that day's Mass praying for the victims of the slaughter to a congregation of just six people.

He added: "I believe my life was saved for a reason so since then I began writing about the plight of dozens of victims of religiously motivated violence, most of whom are women and children who have been dislodged from their homes."

"As the Nigerian correspondent of *The Pillar*, a US-based Catholic news agency last year, at great risk, I covered the horrendous investigative story of victims of Boko Haram left to their fate in open air camps without food, water, or medical supplies."

His experiences also inspired him to set up a



Picture by Paul McSherry

project called Media Team Network Initiative which he hopes will influence Nigerian government policy in their long-term struggle against militant groups.

"My research here in Glasgow for my PhD focuses on how the government can outsmart Boko Haram in the deployment of media resources as tools for its destruction."

"My book, which I wrote to celebrate 15 years of my ordination, is also part of that process because proceeds of the sale will assist me to complete my studies and fund my project."

■ **Fr Justine's book, priced at £15, is on sale at St Andrew's Cathedral bookshop and the Pauline bookshop in St Enoch Square.**

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Church of many colours



IMMACULATE Conception Maryhill is flagging up the diversity of its parish community by displaying an ever-growing number of national flags in its foyer to greet visitors and parishioners arriving for Mass.

The current total is 25, but Parish Priest Father Jim Lawlor is convinced that more will be added in time to reflect the parish's reputation as one of the most international in the Archdiocese.

He said: "The display was born out of an awareness that the area has changed in our lifetimes with so many people coming from far afield."

"This is in part because of some poor housing in the

parish used to house refugees and asylum seekers.

"But we are also close to the internationally-feted Glasgow University Vet School and halls of residence which draws young students from all over the world, and of course the Beatson cancer research facility is just five minutes away."

He added: "About ten years ago we decided to have an International Mass with traditional food and national dress, and we bought some flags to display for a few weeks around the end of Easter – and it's now an annual fixture in the parish."

"Then a parishioner was visiting family and went to Mass in Portsmouth. Be-

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

PICTURE BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

cause it's a port and lots of people were concerned about the asylum policy of the government, the priest and parish decided to have all the flags displayed permanently as a sign of welcome.

Welcome

"So we pinched the idea and arranged for all the national flags to be in our porch as gesture of welcome. We are one family – we want everyone to be part of us – and to celebrate the diversity they bring."

The countries represented

are: Rwanda, Philippines, Slovakia, Spain, Cameroon, USA, Ukraine, France, DR Congo, Zimbabwe, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Lithuania, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Togo, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Italy, Peru, Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales.

Father Jim said: "We have also just ordered an Argentinian flag to go up because some new cancer research scientists have just moved in from Buenos Aires and we want them to feel welcome when they join us!"

He added: "We reckon that the number of nationalities attending our church regularly could well rise in the years to come – and we may need a bigger porch."

Cardinal Mamberti will announce next Pope

THIS is the man who will tell the world the name of the next Pope ... in a French accent.

Cardinal Dominique Mamberti was last month named Cardinal Proto-deacon, and thus assumes responsibility for announcing the traditional words "Habemus Papam" from the balcony above St Peter's.

Cardinal Mamberti, a former nuncio and now head of the Apostolic Signatura, a sort of Vatican 'Supreme Court', was born to an Italian family in Morocco and is a priest of a diocese in Corsica. He has served as a Papal diplomat all over the world and has been resident in Rome for almost 20 years.

The last conclave also saw a French-speaking cardinal make the an-



nouncement of the new Pope.

On that occasion the task fell to Cardinal Jean Louis Tauran, who had served for years as Vatican foreign minister. His voice and his posture were badly affected by Parkinson's disease when he announced Pope Francis' election. He died in the USA in 2018 at the age of 75.

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Double celebrations for ssvp

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

PICTURE BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

THERE was plenty to celebrate when more than 100 members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul from throughout the Archdiocese joined colleagues from the deaf community for a Mass of thanksgiving at Our Lady of Good Counsel, Dennistoun, to mark two significant anniversaries.

These were the 50th anniversary of the Frederic Ozanam Centre, which ministers to the homeless in Glasgow, and the 21st anniversary of the Rendu Group, which provides sign language interpreters to



communicate the liturgy to the deaf community in Glasgow.

The Mass was concelebrated by Father Joe Lappin.

Parish Priest, Father George Bradburn, Glasgow Archdiocesan Spiritual Director for the ssvp, assisted by Deacons Tommy Morrison

of Our Lady of Good Counsel parish and Joe O'Donnell, Chaplain to Stella Maris for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

News and views for

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End of an era as head teacher Paul retires

Tributes paid to St Ninian's inspiring leader

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

WHEN staff and pupils from St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch return after the summer break a familiar figure will be missing ... that's due to the retirement of head teacher Paul McLaughlin after a career in education spanning 42 years.

Paul has been at the helm of the East Dunbartonshire school for 20 years and on his last day the school community made sure it was a day to remember.

It began with a Mass of Thanksgiving concelebrated by Archbishop Nolan and Bishop John Keenan from Paisley Diocese, a former chaplain at Holyrood when Mr McLaughlin was assistant head there.

Ethos

Bishop John said: "We have all seen Paul put into practice our Catholic school ethos with an unassuming but firm and steady faith that has shaped the lives of countless pupils, teachers and leaders and contributed to the reputation of our Catholic schools in the West of Scotland."

"Paul has built up thriving school communities through initiatives like staff retreats, faith-centred in-service days and strong partnerships with our local parishes."

Among the many other tributes paid to him were two Early Day Motions submitted to the Westminster and Scottish Parliaments praising his achievements.



He was later presented with the Archdiocesan medal by Archbishop Nolan in recognition of a life time of hard work and dedication in an outstanding career in education which included stints at St Stephen's Port Glasgow, St Ninian's, Giffnock, St John Ogilvie, Hamilton, Holyrood Secondary, Glasgow before taking up his final role at St Ninian's.

Proud

He told *Flourish*: "I can't quite believe it's been 42 years since I first stepped into a classroom but I can honestly say that I've enjoyed every minute of it. But it's the right time for me to move on and give someone else a chance."

"I'm really proud of my staff here and one of the things I'm particularly pleased about is that I have

helped with their development over the years. Six former colleagues have gone on to become head teachers in their own right."

"And of course, the children are brilliant. But don't take my word for it because for me one of the highlights of my time here was in 2018 when school inspectors

named St. Ninians as the best school in Scotland and that was a real thrill for everyone concerned."

"We were also nominated five times for the best secondary school in the UK in the Times Educational Supplement awards and that really says something for the whole school community."

Church plea on Orange walks 'falls on deaf ears'

THE distress caused by large numbers of Orange walks through Glasgow this summer has been highlighted by the Archdiocese and by the secular media.

An investigation by the *Sunday National* newspaper found that one in four Catholic churches in Glasgow will have Orange marches pass near them in coming months, and another five churches will have marches go directly past them.

The Archdiocese of Glasgow told the *Sunday National* that it was "highly regrettable" that the Church's repeated requests for marches to avoid Catholic churches were still going unheeded.

A total of 29 marches will pass near churches, and another 10 will pass directly by them in coming weeks.

St Teresa's Possilpark is worst affected, seeing four parades pass it directly and two more travel close by.

St Paul's Shettleston, and St Robert's in Househillwood will see two marches pass by, while St Vincent de Paul and St Anthony's in Govan will each see one. St Alphonsus in Calton

– the site of an attack on Canon Tom White during a march in 2018 and the verbal abuse of Catholics the following year – will also feature on the routes for Orange marchers.

Anxiety

A spokesman for the Archdiocese of Glasgow said: "The Church recognises the right of Orange marchers to parade as is their custom."

"But the cumulative effect of a large number of these marches on local communities is hard to over-estimate, especially when the behaviour of those following them causes anxiety and distress. This is something which the Orange Order needs to address."

"For many years we have asked that in the timing and routing of these parades, care be taken not to pass Catholic churches, especially when services are being conducted, which inevitable leads to worshippers and passers-by being put in a state of fear and alarm."

"It is highly regrettable that these very modest requests appear to have fallen on deaf ears."

Archbishop hosts this year's Molendinar lecture

GLASGOW City Chambers' historic debating chamber hosted a fascinating talk last month which discussed the city's past as a way of better planning for the future.

The Molendinar Lecture, 'Baghdad by Kelvinside', was presented by Channel 4 newsreader Fatima Manji and chaired by Archbishop Nolan.

Councillor Patricia Ferguson represented the Lord Provost, and was joined by former Baillie Cathy McMaster and Andrew McFarlane Lord Dean of Guild.

The talk focused on the under-representation of ethnic minorities in the cityscapes and galleries of modern Britain and how art and architecture have a role in creating communities with better self-understanding.

After the lecture Archbishop Nolan presented Fatima with an image of St Mungo in memory of her visit.



Picture by Paul McSherry

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American Catholicism marked a quiet milestone last month, as Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston turned 80 years old on the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul.

It's apt that his birthday coincides with the annual celebration of the great apostles of Rome, because it's arguable that no other US prelate has ever come quite as close to becoming the Bishop of Rome himself as the now-octogenarian Capuchin.

Having turned 80, O'Malley now is no longer eligible to participate in the conclave that will elect the next Pope, and almost certainly off the board as a contender.

Eleven years ago, however, there was a serious possibility that had the candidacy of the then-Cardinal of Buenos Aires, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, stalled, many electors might have turned to O'Malley.

According to some reconstructions, O'Malley had as many as 10 votes on the first ballot in the 2013 conclave. While his name disappeared as it became two-horse race between Bergoglio and Cardinal Angelo Scola of Milan, several cardinals said after the fact that had neither of those two prevailed, O'Malley was a plausible "Plan B."

O'Malley was certainly a crowd favourite. He was the landslide winner in an online poll sponsored by *Corriere della Sera*, Italy's newspaper of record, in terms of who people wanted as the next Pope – in part because of his profile as a reformer on the church's sexual abuse scandals, but even more because with his bushy beard and brown Capuchin habit, he reminds Italians of Padre Pio, who remains one of the most ardent objects of popular devotion in the country.

Even without holding Catholicism's top job, he has been among the most consequential American churchmen of the last quarter-century.

We got a reminder of the point last month, when O'Malley released a statement in his role as President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors indirectly chiding the Vatican's Dicastery for Communications and its chief, Italian layman Paolo Ruffini, for continuing to display artwork from accused sexual abuser Father Marko Rupnik on the dicastery's web site.

"We must avoid sending a message that the Holy See is oblivious to the psychological distress that so many are suffering," O'Malley wrote in his letter, which was addressed to the heads of the various Vatican departments.



The letter put an exclamation point on O'Malley's reputation as the go-to figure in the Catholic hierarchy on the sexual abuse issue, and the primary advocate for victims and survivors at the seniormost level of the power structure.

Let's be clear, by the way, that no one should be using the past tense quite yet with regard to O'Malley's ecclesiastical career.

Boston

To begin with, he remains fully in charge in Boston despite having hit the usual retirement age for diocesan bishops five years ago. In some ways, O'Malley is becoming the new Cardinal Kazimierz Świątek, who remained in the saddle as the Archbishop of Minsk until the ripe old age of 91 because Pope John Paul II simply didn't want to let him go.

For another, and despite suggestions to the contrary, it could well be that his role as president of the anti-abuse commission will not end automatically with his 80th birthday, but that he will stay on for a while longer at the request of Pope Francis.

Nonetheless, there is at least one aspect of the Sean O'Malley story which is absolutely set in cement, no matter what the future holds: To wit, that few churchmen have ever as fully incarnated the charism of their religious order the way O'Malley does the ethos of the Capuchins.

Cardinal Sean, the world's most famous Capuchin is retiring... but not quite yet!

BY JOHN L ALLEN JR
EDITOR OF CRUX

In many ways, O'Malley is to the Capuchins what the late Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini of Milan was to the Jesuits, i.e., the Prince of the Church who most perfectly reflected his order's personality. Where Martini was a vintage Jesuit – intellectual, aloof, visionary and forever a maverick – O'Malley has always been down-to-earth, accessible, utterly conventional in some ways, and always more comfortable with campesinos than fellow cardinals.

Since the Counter-Reformation, Capuchins have prided themselves on taking the toughest jobs the church has to offer without celebrity or complaint, and that's O'Malley to a tee. After a stint as a bishop in the Virgin Islands – okay, admittedly, not quite hardship duty – he was assigned to three dioceses in a row suffering from the fallout of clerical abuse scandals, culminating in the ecclesiastical Chernobyl that was Boston in 2003.

The fact that O'Malley has insisted on continuing to sport his Capuchin habit whenever possible, despite his exalted status as a Prince of the Church, is a visual way of expressing a much deeper internal reality.

The core of Capuchin identity always has been closeness to the people they serve. The classic Capuchin exemplar is the character

of Fra Cristoforo from Alessandro Manzoni's novel *I Promessi Sposi* ("The Betrothed"), who defends the beleaguered couple of Renzo and Lucia from the malevolent Don Rodrigo, and who ends up dying in a poor quarantine zone for victims of an outbreak of the plague in Milan.

Manzoni famously defined the Capuchins as *frati del popolo*, "brothers of the people."

Reading those words, one can easily hear O'Malley's own deep baritone voice denouncing the mistreatment of the Hispanic and Haitian immigrants he served at the Centro Católico Hispano in Washington in the 1970s.

Riots

O'Malley was living in Washington in 1968 when race riots broke out following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and was part of a group of friars who sheltered roughly 700 people, many elderly and Hispanic, in a local church for a week.

He also took part in the "Poor People's March" organized by Ralph Abernathy, sleeping in one of the tent cities and watching as off-duty police lobbed tear gas at the protestors.

"Poverty does not always lead to love," O'Malley once said. "But love always leads to poverty, to the poor and God's little ones."

Granted, there's legitimate criticism to be made of O'Malley's record both as a diocesan bishop and a Vatican potentate. No one can spend as much time in power as he has over the last 30 years and not leave behind a mixed bag, containing both triumphs and occasionally egregious failures.

What no one can question, however, is that over a lifetime, Sean O'Malley has attempted to live his vocation as fully as possible, not simply as a priest or a bishop but also as a Capuchin Franciscan.

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ORDINATION JOY FOR ARCHDIOCESE

Paul is Glasgow's newest deacon

Dad Paul tells how he sneaked quietly into Mass to recover the faith that had been lost along the way

THE newest permanent deacon in the Archdiocese has been welcomed into his role at a joyful Mass of Ordination celebrated by Archbishop Nolan at Sacred Heart Church Cumbernauld.

Father of two, Paul McNair, 51, becomes the fourth permanent deacon from parishes in Cumbernauld to be ordained in recent times.

The Ordination Mass was held on Friday June 21st and saw seven priests concelebrate with the Archbishop assisted by no less than 12 permanent deacons.

Several students for the diaconate also took time out to be present and offer their good wishes and prayers to Paul and his family.

Service

Archbishop Nolan began by outlining the duties of deacons like Paul – to serve, not to be served, to be effective in action, gentle in ministry and constant in prayer.

The Gospel reading told how Jesus calmed the wind and waves while crossing the sea of Galilee and Archbishop Nolan picked up that theme in his homily.

As he addressed Paul directly he said: "Jesus asked his disciples 'why are you afraid?' and that reminds us that even in the storms of life Jesus doesn't abandon us. He is always with us."

"You too must be calmed by the faith that Jesus has given you and be gentle, calm and understanding in

WORDS BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

all you do for those you will serve throughout your ministry by reassuring those who are in the storms of life that God is with them.

"You will experience the gift of God's Spirit in your heart through the sacrament of ordination, always being there to help you carry out your ministry of service."

"You will bring God's love to believers – and non-believers alike, presiding over public prayer, baptising, assisting at marriages, giving viaticum to the dying and leading the rites of burial."

Later Paul, who speaks Spanish, French and Italian in his role as a customer adviser with an international company, described his journey to the Permanent Diaconate.

With his wife Joanne, daughters Holly, 15, and Darcy, 12, beside him Paul said: "I felt the call back to my faith just over ten years ago."

"I used to tell Joanne I was going to the shops and instead I'd sneak into the back of the Vigil Mass on a Satur-



day night.

"I eventually told her that I was rediscovering my faith and started attending Mass less covertly!"

"Then I made the 'fatal mistake' of answering a request in the bulletin looking for musicians and started playing with the church

music group... then over the next couple of years I found myself helping in the parish – even playing Jesus in our passion play!"

"Then we got our first deacon in Kenny McGeachie. I had never heard of a deacon before and thought he was some kind of new priest. I nearly fell off my seat when he mentioned his wife in the first homily I heard him preach."

"I got to know him and his wife Sandra well after that, and both thought I'd be a good candidate. I resisted at first because I wasn't sure if it was for me."

"But over the years of pastoral and academic formation and searching, I've come to realise that God doesn't call us to 'be' anything, but rather he calls us to 'do' something."

Love

"He calls us to love him and love others as he loves us – it's that simple."

"Now I am looking forward to serving in the Archdiocese and wherever that is it will be where God wants me to be."

Deacon Kenny, Archdiocesan Director for the Permanent Diaconate, said: "Glasgow needs more vocations and the permanent diaconate, especially for married men, is a truly wonderful and fulfilling vocation."

"We are hoping that more men come forward who sense that God may be calling them to becoming deacons themselves."

Finding out more ... could you become a permanent deacon?

DEACON Paul is the 20th Permanent Deacon to be ordained in the Archdiocese of Glasgow since 2009, and in August, Andrzej Brzuchaski will also be ordained in Saint Peter's Partick, making him Glasgow's 21st Deacon.

And there could be another boost to that number in a few years' time, according to Deacon Kenny McGeachie, Archdiocesan Director for the Permanent Diaconate.

He said: "Last year, eight men responded to the 'Come and See' invitation to find out about the Permanent Diaconate in Glasgow. Of these, four are now going forward

into the 'propaedeutic' year at a residential weekend in Kinnoull, Perth, to help them prepare for the next stage in their spiritual journey."

Harvest

"So we would ask for prayers for the men and their wives and families as they discern God's calling for them to become permanent deacons for the Archdiocese."

"Encouraging as this is, we remember the famous passage from Matthew in which Jesus tells his disciples that the harvest is rich but the labourers are few."

"Glasgow needs more vo-

cations and the permanent diaconate, especially for married men, is a truly wonderful and fulfilling vocation."

"We are hoping that more men come forward who sense that God may be calling them to becoming deacons themselves."

■ If you are interested in finding out about the Permanent Diaconate in Glasgow, or feeling that God might be calling you towards becoming a deacon, please contact Deacon Kenny for an informal chat in the first instance by email kenneth.mcgeachie@rcag.org.uk or 07772 392682.



There was a large turn out of Deacons from across Scotland for the ordination of Glasgow's newest cleric. From left to right: Deacon Stuart Dick – Motherwell, Deacon Bill McMillan – Motherwell, Deacon Tom McEvoy – St Andrews & Edinburgh, Deacon Peter Traynor – St Andrews and Edinburgh, Deacon Douglas Robertson – St Andrews and Edinburgh, Deacon Paul McNair – Glasgow, Deacon Elvis Arrey-Etta – Glasgow, Archbishop Nolan, Deacon Tony Murphy – Glasgow, Deacon Joe Gallagher – Motherwell, Deacon Kevin Kirby – Motherwell, Deacon Graham Kelly – Paisley, Deacon Kenny McGeachie – Glasgow, Deacon James Ward – Glasgow

The diaconate: a treasure that was rediscovered

In a historic move aimed at invigorating its ministries and addressing contemporary needs, the Catholic Church restored the permanent diaconate, a role that had been dormant for centuries, more than 50 years ago.

This restoration by Pope Paul VI, part of the sweeping reforms initiated by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), has reintroduced the permanent diaconate as a vital component of the Church's mission.

But it was only during Archbishop Conti's time that the first permanent deacons were ordained for the Archdiocese of Glasgow. He had introduced permanent deacons into his former Diocese of Aberdeen and was convinced they could offer a real boost to the Church's work in Glasgow too.

The permanent diaconate, originally established in the early Christian Church, is essentially a ministry of service and charity, as Pope Paul VI noted when he reintroduced the ministry.

Deacons are ordained to work with bishops and priests in a variety of roles, including service of the poor and the wider community and have certain liturgical functions too: preaching, and administering certain sacraments.

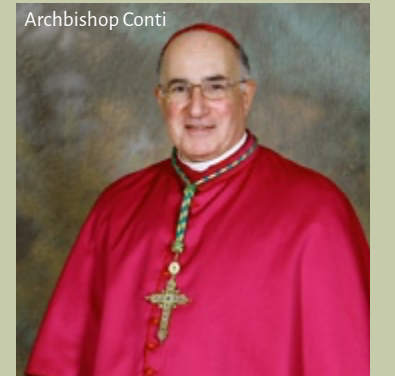
Unlike transitional deacons, who are on the path to priesthood, permanent deacons may be married men and remain in this role for life.

Permanent deacons are now often seen bringing the Church's mission into various secular settings, from hospitals and prisons to homeless shelters and community centres. Their unique position allows them to address issues pertinent to everyday life, providing spiritual support and practical assistance to those in need.

Pope Paul VI, who oversaw the reforms of Vatican II, highlighted the



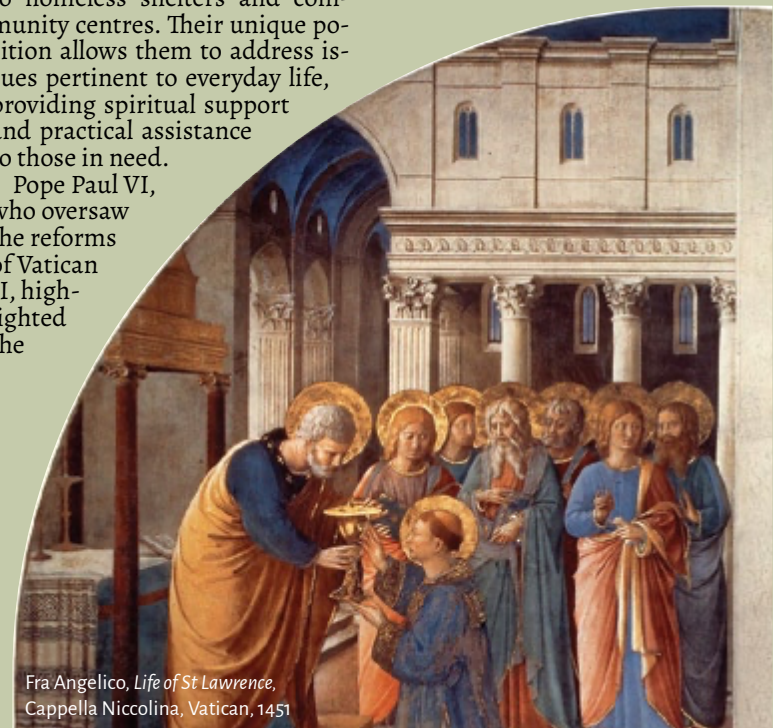
Pope Paul VI



Archbishop Conti

importance of the diaconate in his apostolic letter, *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*. He emphasized that deacons are called to be "ambassadors of Christ," embodying the Church's commitment to service.

Since the restoration, thousands of men have been ordained as permanent deacons worldwide, enriching the Church with their diverse experiences and backgrounds. Their presence has bolstered the Church's pastoral capacity by bringing the light of Christ into the world through acts of compassion and service.



Fra Angelico, Life of St Lawrence, Cappella Niccolina, Vatican, 1451



Polish pilgrimage for Holyrood

A GROUP of pupils from Holyrood Secondary School experienced a whirlwind of emotions during a pilgrimage to Poland, led by their school chaplain, Fr Benneth Onyebuchukwu.

The young pilgrims based themselves in Kraków, the city of St John Paul II and the trip was organised by the Religious Education Department working closely with Fr Benneth. It was partly sponsored by Archbishop Nolan as part of the evangelisation drive in the Archdiocese.

In total 29 students, four teachers, and the chaplain participated in the pilgrimage.

The students had the opportunity to visit some important religious and historical sites in Kraków, which included:

- The Auschwitz and Birkenau Holocaust Memorial/Museum



- The National Basilica/Sanctuary of Divine Mercy Krakow
- The Wieliczka Salt Mines
- St Mary's Basilica Kraków which is also a UNESCO

heritage site

- The Cathedral Museum of St John Paul II and the Wawel Royal Castles

Fr Benneth said: "We had the privilege of celebrating

Mass in the Basilica of Divine Mercy, the Salt Mines and Church of our Lady of Mount Carmel run by the monks of the Carmelite order.



"This pilgrimage was a once in a lifetime educational experience, which was also spiritually uplifting for the pupils who had the opportunity to participate

in it. The students enjoyed it as did their teachers and chaplain."

The next school trip will be in June 2025 to Salamanca in Spain.

Pope plans a summer break



POPE Francis is taking a much needed rest this month and will not be receiving any visitors or hosting the Wednesday general audience during July.

A statement from the Prefecture of the Papal Household said that all "general, particular, and special" audiences will be suspended from July 2 to the end of the month. It also states that the next general audience will be held on Wednesday, August 7.

Pope Francis' first meeting after the summer break is scheduled for July 30, 2024, when he will greet around 50,000 altar serv-

ers from all over the globe in St Peter's Square.

Despite the pause throughout July, the Pontiff will continue to recite the Angelus in St. Peter's Square at noon on Sundays, as usual. He is also expected to continue to receive guests in private visits.

On July 28, 2024 the Church will also be celebrating the Fourth World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly, instituted by Pope Francis in 2021.

Usually a Mass is held on this day, and last year Pope Francis celebrated it, but this year this event was not on Pope Francis' calendar of celebrations.

Overcoming injustice and violence... the struggle goes on



ATIRELESS commitment to justice was on display last month from parishioners and campaigners protesting against the treatment of refugees and the war in Gaza.

Justice and Peace Scotland members and friends were very visible at the National Demonstration for Gaza which consisted of a march for peace from Glasgow Green to Queens Park where speakers included Aamer Anwar (human rights lawyer), Ghassan Abu Sitta (Rector at the University of Glasgow) and Humza Yousaf.

Just 24 hours later Justice and Peace Scotland marked Fathers' Day by holding a dignified silent vigil at

a Lanarkshire detention centre where an unknown number of families are imprisoned.

They were joined by Clare Adamson, MSP for Motherwell. She said: "I stood shoulder to shoulder with Justice and Peace Scotland at their peaceful event at Dungavel Detention Centre, showing solidarity with victims of the UK's inhumane asylum and immigration system.

"The official name of the detention centre is Dungavel House Removal Centre.

"The word 'house' conjures thoughts of warmth and hospitality, but in reality, Dungavel House Removal Centre 'welcomes' you with pots filled with plastic flow-



ers, a Christmas tree still adorned with lights and baubles, a 12-foot high fence wrapped in barbed wire, and high-security gates.

"This is not exactly a

home.

"We need to really reflect on what a home truly means and stand together for the rights and dignity of all those seeking asylum."

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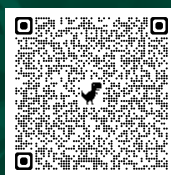


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The St Vincent de Paul Society is asking for your support to continue its work in parishes throughout Glasgow. The Covid pandemic resulted in the closing of parishes for a long time and the revenue we need to help the poorer sections of society has been badly affected. To allow us to continue with this much needed work can we ask you for help in two ways.

Financially can you support your local conference with regular contributions via cash into the collection box, cheque or a standing order/bank transfer made out to: SSVP GL

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Cheque: Payee: SSVP GL

Mail to: Amelia Buckley 29 Kentallen Road Barlanark G33 4QR

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Arnold Clark

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C/O National Office, Society of St Vincent de Paul, 113 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 2RU



St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society is the only Catholic adoption agency in the UK.

We are proud that we successfully fought and won for our right to operate as a faith based agency. We are based in Charing Cross in Glasgow and are always looking for prospective adopters to provide forever homes to children who are waiting for adoption. The children who are waiting have changed significantly over the past few years.

Prospective adopters

- We are particularly keen to recruit prospective adopters for sibling groups; there are sibling groups of 2 and 3 who must be kept together for their future relationships and overall wellbeing; children with additional needs from minor to significant and older children.
- Prospective adopters must understand the importance of adopted children understanding their life story and sustaining their relationships with birth family where it is safe to do so.
- We also want to recruit adopters from minority ethnic groups to ensure that our prospective adopters mirror the ethnicity of the children waiting for adoption. There is a disproportionate number of children from ethnic minority groups waiting for a forever family. It is possible for a family from a different ethnic background to adopt a child from another, but they must understand the importance of the child being brought up with a clear understanding of their identity and sense of belonging to their ethnicity, culture and religious practices.

Fostering and Adoption Panel

St Margaret's has a fostering and adoption panel made up of volunteers from different backgrounds who offer their time generously to provide a service to St Margaret's. The Panel has a very important function meeting with potential adopters, considering the assessment reports completed by the social workers and making a recommendation about approval to adopt a child or children. If you think that your professional background, interest, enthusiasm or personal experience could offer St Margaret's a commitment to be a member of the Panel, then please get in touch. There is training and ongoing support available for all our panel members.



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Volunteers

- We need volunteers to help with some elements of work within the agency
- We need people with adoption experience to help with our preparation groups
- We need ambassadors to help spread the word from St Margaret's

If you are interested, please contact Jacky, Janine or Marilyn at St Margaret's on 0141 332 8371 or email jacky@stmargaretsadoption.org.uk, janine@stmargaretsadoption.org.uk or marilyn@stmargaretsadoption.org.uk



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The difficult art of dying well

ACCORDING to the renowned mystic St John of the Cross, we have three essential struggles in life: to get our lives together, to give our lives away, and to give our deaths away.

What is asked of us in the first two struggles is more obvious. But what does it mean to give our deaths away?

In essence, it means this: How we die leaves behind a legacy, a particular spirit, which either nurtures or haunts those left behind.

If we die in bitterness and anger, not at peace with our loved ones, ourselves, and our God, we will leave behind a spirit which is more toxic than nurturing. Conversely, if we die reconciled and at peace with our loved ones, the world, and with God, then like Jesus, we will leave behind a spirit which nourishes, warms, consoles, and gives our loved ones sacred permission to be at peace.

How we die colours our legacy, and that legacy is either a gift or a burden to those we leave behind.

On November 23rd, 2023, Richard (Rick) Gaillardetz, a renowned theologian (right), died of pancreatic cancer while still in the prime of his life. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather,

gifted lecturer, friend and mentor to many, a sports enthusiast, with a robust sense of humor. He also had a solid Christian faith that would be put to the test during the months of his terminal illness.

When he was diagnosed with cancer more than a year before he died, his doctors told him it was terminal, there was to be no cure; he needed to face the brutal fact he was going to die within the next two years. He did face that. Moreover, in doing so, he tried (not without some agonising struggles) to make his death a conscious gift to his family and to the world.

During the months leading up to his death, he kept a blog which shared what it is like to know you are dying and to accept that in love and faith, even within the agony of having to let go of life and wrestle with the powerful instinctual resistances within us.

Those blogs have been brought together in a book, *While I Breathe I Hope – A Mystagogy of Dying*, edited by Grace Agolia.

Here are some of Rick's feelings and thoughts:

• Unlike many saints in our tradition, I did not choose this ... it has been thrust, unbidden and unwanted upon

Scribblings of the spirit

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



me. But I do see in it an invitation to a graced vulnerability, a call to abandon a misplaced confidence in my own vigour and bodily autonomy.

• One of the demons I confront daily is an overweening ego that endlessly clamours for attention like a whining toddler, drowning out the needs and concerns of others. One of the unexpected graces of diminishment appears as I am drawn kicking and screaming out of my natural egotism to discover within a much-neglected reservoir of compassion for the suffering of others.

• I must confess to an occasional preoccupation with the final dying process. What will it be like? How will I handle it when my bodily organs begin to break down and the real dying begins? Will the peace I now feel sustain me through that quite 'different' time? ...

• What I hold most firmly



in my heart through all this is the conviction that God has so profoundly encompassed me in love over these past several months since my diagnosis that, surely, God will not abandon me in those final days and hours.

• I now belong to the ragged band of the elderly and infirm. These are now my people, my last tribe.

Giving my death away is not just a matter of accepting my inevitable physical

demise; giving my death away bids me to embrace experiences of passive waiting, diminishment, and marginality as a liberation from the slavery of personal achievement and self-importance. If I give these experiences due space, they beckon me beyond my egoistical self and enlarge my soul. They draw me to a greater compassion for the pain and suffering of others and encourage me to pray for others in the midst of their own suffering and impending death. Herein lies the gentle pedagogy of dying and rising.

"My final task is to return to God the life graciously given to me."

In his farewell speech to his disciples, Jesus promised that after he had been taken from us, he would leave behind his spirit, the spirit of peace.

When we go away we all leave behind us an unspoken spirit which affects those we have left behind. If we die at peace with God, others, and ourselves, then like Jesus, our loved ones, while grieving our loss, will in the deeper part of themselves, feel nourished, warmed, and consoled by their every memory of us.

Rick Gaillardetz RIP, you have left us (family, friends, the world) the gift of peace.

We all have our favourite St Anthony stories!

I'M going to take a guess and say if you were asked to list your five favourite saints St Anthony would be in there. He certainly makes it on to mine.

St Anthony is well-known to Catholics the world over as the patron saint of lost things. Haven't we all invoked his help at one time or another? Some more frequently than is reasonable for one person. Enough about me!

His lesser-known claim to fame is his patronage of those looking to find a soulmate. A tradition dating back to the Middle Ages cites St Anthony as a bit of a matchmaker. Although there is no record of any sermons featuring the subject of marriage, biographers of old write of destitute young girls imploring his aid in securing the dowries necessary for them to marry.

Although he is almost universally known as St Anthony of Padua, there is good-natured rivalry between that northern Italian city where he died and



Mary's musings

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

Portugal's capital, Lisbon, where he was born.

Both cities lay claim to the favourite saint of so many who, by a quirk of fate or more accurately veering off course in a storm in the centuries before Satnav, landed up in Sicily instead of Portugal.

I'm on the fence with my loyalty since we got to know and love Padua when our youngest daughter studied there, and we have been visitors over the years to Lisbon.

How Paduans celebrate the saint's feast, I haven't witnessed. According to Friar Mario Conte of the Basilica in Padua a special evening is dedicated to locals in the Basilica during the novena leading up to

the Feast.

Writing in the Messenger, he says the event is surprisingly popular and "highlights the fact that, despite the prevalence of social media, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to find an appropriate companion."

When we were in Lisbon during this year's Festas das Lisboa in amongst the partying and carnival atmosphere, there were inspiring little pockets of deep faith.

In typically European tradition, the main celebration was on the 12th, the eve of the feast day. Along the city's beautiful central boulevard, the Avenida da Liberdade, the main procession took place with local districts putting

on stunning and colourful displays.

It is quite the festival, like Christmas except with sun and instead of turkey, the food du jour is sardines, and very tasty they are too. Too bad if you don't like bones, just think of the calcium hit you're getting.

The street food vendors ply their trade in abundance and many of the locals keep to the old ways of grilling sardines on their doorsteps – a welcome repast for tourists struggling up the steep hills.

Like any festival that has its roots in the faith, many of the customs date back to the saint's life. It is said when in desperation St. Anthony went to the sea to pray he was met with a family of sardines. It is a tenuous connection but a little tradition from the past, nonetheless.

We waited at the parade long enough to see the procession of the Brides of St Anthony pass by, where 16 young couples make their way to the church of St



Anthony of Lisbon for the Blessing of the Couples. It has become such a significant part of the celebration it has moved from the Church of St Anthony to the nearby Cathedral.

For all the revelry of the night before, the feast day itself is calmer with Masses and smaller processions taking place from the Church of St Anthony and in local areas.

From Lisbon to Padua and around the world this saint is greatly revered and a much-loved intercessor for all who invoke his aid.



Pope's plea for the elderly

POPE Francis has called for a concerted attempt to combat loneliness among elderly people in a message for this month's World Day of Prayer for the Elderly and Grandparents.

The special celebration, which the present Holy Father introduced to the Church's calendar four years ago, sees a special focus on the elderly each summer in the Church. In 2024 it will be held on July 28,

In his message, the 87 year old Pope speaks from the heart.

He says: "All too often, loneliness is the bleak companion of our lives as elderly persons and grandparents. Often, when I was Bishop of Buenos Aires, I would visit care homes and realise how rarely those people received visits. Some had not seen their family members for many months.

"There are many reasons for this loneliness: in many places, above all in the poorer countries, the elderly find themselves alone because their children are forced to emigrate. I think too of

the many situations of conflict. How many of the elderly are left alone because men – youths and adults – have been called to battle, and women, above all women with small children, have left the country in order to ensure safety for their children...

"The accusation that the elderly 'rob the young of their future' is nowadays present everywhere. It appears under other guises even in the most advanced and modern societies.

Burden

"For example, there is now a widespread conviction that the elderly are burdening the young with the high cost of the social services that they require, and in this way are diverting resources from the development of the community and thus from the young.

"This is a distorted perception of reality. It assumes that the survival of the elderly puts that of the young at risk, that to favour the young, it is necessary to

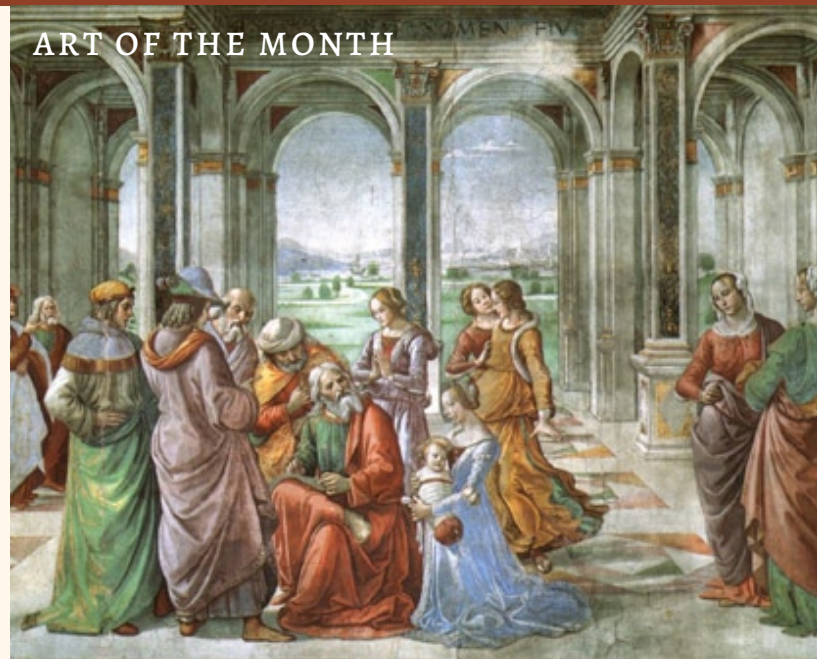
neglect or even suppress the elderly. Intergenerational conflict is a fallacy and the poisoned fruit of a culture of conflict. To set the young against the old is an unacceptable form of manipulation..."

He concludes with a heart-warming message for the elderly.

"Let us show our tender love for the grandparents and the elderly members of our families. Let us spend time with those who are disheartened and no longer hope in the possibility of a different future."

"In place of the self-centred attitude that leads to loneliness and abandonment, let us instead show the open heart and the joyful face of men and women who have the courage to say 'I will not abandon you'.

"To all of you, dear grandparents and elderly persons, and to all those who are close to you I send my blessing, accompanied by my prayers. And I ask you, please, not to forget to pray for me".



Prayer in music and art

THE 'BENEDICTUS' is a song of thanksgiving attributed to Zachariah, a Jewish priest of the line of Aaron, and is recorded in the Gospel of Luke (1:68-79).

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

It received its name from its first words in Latin ("Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel", "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel"). Zachariah uttered this canticle at the naming of his son, John the Baptist whom he prophesies will prepare the way for the coming Redeemer.

Our painting, rich in the use of colour, dates from the late 15th century, and is titled "Zachariah naming his son John" by Domenico Ghirlandaio. It is found in the lovely church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.

Zachariah is seated in the centre, surrounded by men and women, suggesting names for his baby son.

The canticle also inspired Sir Karl Jenkins to compose, "Benedictus". It is a stunning composition that captivates listeners with its beauty and depth. One of the most enchanting aspects of this piece is its serene atmosphere, which is

skilfully crafted through Jenkins' masterful orchestration and arrangement.

The delicate interplay between the instruments creates a sense of tranquillity that envelops the listener from the very beginning. Central to the "Benedictus" is the exquisite performance of the cellist. The cello's rich, warm tones serve as the emotional heart of the piece, drawing listeners into its graceful melody and conveying a profound sense of longing and contemplation.

A gentle repeated theme weaves its way throughout the piece amidst the ebb and flow of the music. Towards the climax of "Benedictus," Jenkins introduces a dramatic shift in dynamics with the sudden entrance of drums and cymbals. This unexpected crescendo adds a thrilling sense of tension and excitement, juxtaposing the piece's earlier serenity with a powerful burst of energy and intensity. It is a breath-taking moment of musical drama.

The 'forgotten' vocation to the brotherhood

ON Tuesday nights in St. Francis' Church in the Gorbals people from all over Glasgow would gather for St Anthony's Novena led by Fr Terence.

My twin and I were taken nearly every week by our mum even if we wanted to continue playing football with our pals!

In relation to the friars in the Gorbals, I remember Brothers Terence, Gratian, Campion, Antony, Damien, Philip, Sylvester, Germain, Austin, Raymond, Isidore, Antoine, George, John, Ted, William, Godfrey, Donal and Joe. I got to know Brothers Noel, Brian, Peter and Patrick well. As you can see, my memory is not too bad!

Most of these friars were priests. I had served Mass regularly and could appreciate what Franciscan priests did. One novena night I remember asking Br Damian "You're not a priest. What do you do?". He smiled, saying "Everything!".

BY DEACON MICHAEL O'DONNELL Later I undertook some research into 'Religious brothers' as their vocation continued to intrigue me. In this, I knew they were able, academically well-qualified and pastorally experienced men who answered the call to service in a way which was personal to them.

The vocation of a brother is 'to brother'. They do this through encouraging, listening, sharing and accompanying one's brothers and sisters in Christ as they journey through life. A brother can be a member of different communities such as his religious community, family, friends, workplace, and within the locality he lives in.

A brother's calling to service can be in areas such as education, social work, nursing, manual work, community work, justice and peace, parish work as well as being a member of their commu-

nity. But first and foremost, he is a brother.

In the 1990s I met with Br Joe who had been a brother for for around twenty years. He told me his vocation was realised when he had been visiting Assisi and was captivated by the vision of St Francis in embracing the lepers, the outcasts, and those on the margins of society. So much so, he joined the Franciscans!

Over a coffee, Br Joe told me in formation he chose not to study for the priesthood, so he trained as a nurse and was based in Franciscan communities in England and Scotland. One was in a deprived area of Gateshead where the community of brothers lived in a house, not a church, and built relationships with the local community in the spirit of St. Francis.

Later, Br Joe went on to be novice-master where he accompanied men who felt called to be brothers

on their journey of formation. He later worked in a hospice in Thailand caring for patients who were dying from AIDS. Lastly, he was based in the formation house in Zimbabwe where in 2009 he tragically died in a road accident.

We often hear bishops and priests asking us to pray that more men answer the call of God to the priesthood, yet rarely do I hear 'Let us pray for more men to answer the call to be Brothers'.

Pope Francis states that 'our common vocation is to give ourselves in love'. People live their baptism in various ways, that is as laity, religious, or ordained as all have a role within, what is called, the 'vocational symphony'. Here, each of us have a contribution to make in living the gospel.

In relation to this, let us hope more men may, like Br Joe, discern the call 'to brother' and give themselves in love.



Br Joe fondly remembered

Take time for rest this month... and come closer to Jesus in prayer during the summer season

THE summer holidays may have come around again – for many, a time for rest, renewal and perhaps some fun too – but our Sunday readings remind us that growing the Kingdom is work that goes on continually.

Jesus goes on working, and he invites us to share in the mission too, even if things don't always go to plan.

As we join him in this, he is there to guide and strengthen us. We've been seeing that over the past few Sundays and we'll see it over July as well.

Fourteenth Sunday, Year B

The people of Nazareth are full of questions (at least four in a row in the reading!) when Jesus comes to them. We had already heard a few weeks ago that his relatives were unsure of him; now his neighbours are amazed. But that amazement is not enough for them to believe in him. They're too "familiar" with him for that. Rather, it makes them sceptical.

Nonetheless, Jesus will still preach the kingdom to them and touch them with its power. The work goes on! Ezekiel is called to a similar thing: preach God's word even if the people reject it. God will be at work among them, whether they accept it, recognise it, or not!

Fifteenth Sunday, Year B

Our seminarians left the College a few weeks ago. There's always a slight sadness in that, but it is mixed too with excitement at the prospect of pastoral experiences ahead over



Fr Tom Kilbride

Rector of the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain

the summer: parish time, youth camps, pilgrimages, retreats. All of them offering ways to share in the Church's work.

That's what Jesus does for the Twelve today, sending them off to share in his mission. Indeed, they go off to do the very things they have seen him doing: preaching, exorcising demons and healing the sick. His work is expanded in the sharing and their first taste of this mission expands their horizons as well.

Our seminarians will get a taste of that this summer, as the ongoing mission is entrusted to them to share in too. Amos reminds us, however, that the work is not our own: even he, a prophet of God, did not choose the mission. Rather, he was called into it, no matter the cost. What does matter is that he responds by getting on with it!

Sixteenth Sunday, Year B

There is something timely about today's Gospel, where Jesus invites his disciples to rest, coming as it does during the summer break. The apostles' first taste of mission has been tiring, and now they return to him to be refreshed and renewed.

On a deeper level, however, the mission must continue, since Jesus himself, the Good Shepherd, doesn't stop in his care for his flock. If it is his work in which we are sharing however (see last week), it is to him we must return as its source and energy. If holidays are opportunities to rest, we are perhaps reminded to take time for prayer too: to find our rest with and in him. He will care for us so that we can care for others.

Seventeenth Sunday, Year B

Last Sunday, the Gospel ended with a comment about Jesus caring for the crowds like a shepherd caring for a flock. This week, we hear Jesus doing that in a very practical way, by feeding them in their hunger. To do that, however, we jump across from Mark's to John's Gospel, from which the readings for next few weeks will be taken.

The simple offering of five loaves and two fish is transformed into an abundant gift for all. None are left hungry. The experience of the great prophet, Elishah (First Reading) is brought to mind: God, it seems, does this often! Indeed, the twelve baskets of leftovers remind us of the twelve tribes of Israel, and of the abundance of God's covenant love for his People throughout the Scriptures (indeed, we are told it is almost Passover, the great celebration of God's saving action for them). But they also bring to mind the

Carl Bloch, *Sermon on the Mount*, 1877



twelve apostles, the very ones to whom Jesus entrusts the crowd (three of them are mentioned by name: Philip, Andrew and Peter). They will be given the mission of extending that saving action to all people, all nations, this time as the saving action of God in Jesus.

We will continue to hear from John's Gospel throughout August, as we hear the teaching of Jesus which flows from this event, about the true Bread, the Bread from Heaven. If his compassion for a crowd brings him to feed them with physical bread, how much deeper

does his love go when we learn that he will feed us with a new and deeper kind of Bread, his own self!

The people are amazed when he works a miracle with a few loaves and fish. How much more amazing is the miracle which takes place before our eyes every time we come to Mass, as a small piece of bread becomes the Bread of Life, Jesus him-

self! This goes beyond mere compassion, to the level of eternal and divine love.

The apostles, who were given a first taste of mission a few Sundays ago, will be entrusted with bringing Jesus to others, a mission which goes on the Church every time we share the sacraments, a gift which is abundant and more powerful than we often realise!

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The day 'Swifties' descended on St Mungo's

JUST as I began to celebrate the 7pm Sunday Mass, I noticed a big group of people come in, make their way across the back of the church, down one of the side aisles, and then take up a few rows in the pews.

Our Sunday evening Mass, like the 9pm Mass in St Aloysius Jesuit Church in Garnethill, can attract a transient congregation as well as a regular congregation, but it was unusual to see such a large group of people coming in together, and from what I could glean, they were all young people.

Afterwards, as Father Gareth, Brother Conor, and myself, greeted people outside, we discovered that they were all from Chicago, where Brother Conor had recently completed his Theology studies, and that they were in fact Swifties.

The Wikipedia definition is that Swifties 'are the fandom of American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift (right). Regarded by journalists as one of the largest, most devoted and influential fan bases, Swifties are known for their high levels of participation, creativity, community and fanaticism'.

For anyone who may have



Fr Frank's log

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

been living on another planet, Taylor Swift was playing the first two nights of the British leg of her European tour at Murrayfield Stadium that weekend.

When I was watching the news coverage, and listening to so many young people from all over the world being interviewed on the streets of Edinburgh, absolutely brimming with anticipation and excitement, the last thing I expected was that a group of Swifties would make their way to Glasgow, and to St Mungo's, to participate in Sunday evening Mass!

Their plan was to see a bit of Glasgow before heading off on a tour of the Highlands. I hope they travelled safely and had a wonderful time, and I found it really heartening that getting to Sunday Mass was part of their itinerary.

I was prompted to re-

member some of my own concert experiences from way back.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when I was a bit of a folkie, I would often go to the City Halls in Candleriggs to see groups like Fairport Convention, when the late Sandy Denny was lead singer, with her most amazing voice, and Pentangle, when Danny Thomson was the double bass player, who made me embarrassed to ever play the double bass again, he was so brilliant.

Performing

I later had the experience of performing on that same stage when the group that I was playing with, the Open Hand Band (there were five of us), reached the final of the Scottish Folk Group Championships, coming second to a great group called the JSD Band.

I remember the Irish



duo, Finbar and Eddie Furey, were the guest artists during the interval while the votes were being counted. It was a close call, but I think the best group won.

The nearest I came to a Swiftie experience was going, twice, to open air concerts at the RDS in Dublin to see my all-time favourites, Simon and Garfunkel. The first time was on 15th June 1982. I was due to sit my fi-

nal Theology exams the next day, so I should have been home studying, but there was no way I was missing that concert.

The second time was on 17th July 2004, when Simon and Garfunkel were doing their farewell tour, with the Everley Brothers as their support act.

I was rector and parish priest of Mount Argus at the time; it was a Saturday

night; and I was on early Mass next morning, but again there was no way I could possibly miss it.

There have been other memorable concerts – Rod Stewart at the Glasgow Apollo, being there with my niece, sometime in the 1970s, with Rod revealing his Scotland strip at one point, and kicking a host of footballs into the audience; the re-united Eagles at Lansdowne Road in Dublin in 2006.

Tickets

I wasn't a massive fan but I was gifted two spare tickets just a couple of hours before the show, and it was too good to miss seeing the legendary Joe Walsh in the flesh.

Also, Carlos Santana at the Latium in Rome when I was studying there in 1983, accompanied by an Australian Passionist who was almost as good a guitarist as Carlos Santana himself. These are just a few of the many.

I would probably find such experiences all too exhausting now, but the good memories live on, and I'm glad of them to look back on.

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

It may be the holiday period but we have to keep up the pressure for peace in a very dangerous world

JULY may be holiday time for most of us in Scotland, but in the world of nuclear weapons and peacemaking, all thoughts are directed towards Geneva.

There the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is scheduled to hold its second session from 22 July to 2 August at the Palais des Nations.

What's that all about?

Well, in 2026 there will be a review of the NPT and a series of three preparatory meetings are intended to bring nations together – and just a little bit nearer to banning nuclear weapons.

When I say, 'a little bit nearer', I'm talking millimetres! The nine 'nuclear nations' may make mouth music about reducing their stocks of weapons, but there is little truth in the lyrics.

They are still hawking the idea that possession of nuclear weapons is a deter-

rent, despite the world having seen through this myth. Mr Putin and Mr Netanyahu have both threatened to unleash their weapons of mass destruction in the past few months and so the US and UK see that as a green light to continue to stockpile their nuclear warheads, spending billions that could instead be used to lift the world out of poverty, provide the best of health care, and create cheaper, greener energy that would help to halt the climate crisis.

Fringe

So as a peace organisation, we aim to have our say. Pax Christi International will hold an online fringe event (yes, the peacemakers are relegated to the fringe – but let's be encouraged by the thought that the Edinburgh Fringe is now the most important part of the Edinburgh Festival!) on July 29 that will challenge the morality of possessing and threatening to use nuclear weapons.

We've invited Archbishop



Nolan to take part in that online event and he has graciously agreed.

The Scottish Bishops' Conference of course, was the first Bishops' Confer-



Marian Pallister

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

ence to make a statement condemning the possession of nuclear weapons back in 1982. A succession of Popes right back to the 1960s have also condemned their possession, and Pope Francis has said their possession is immoral.

Pax Christi Scotland will always have a presence at vigils outside the nuclear submarine base at Faslane.

Sadly, protesting the presence of nuclear weapons on Scottish soil doesn't attract the thousands that marched in the 1960s those 50-odd miles from the Aldermaston base to London – but then, today's younger generations have not been exposed to the threats us oldies experienced as teenagers when Russia and the

US faced off over nuclear weapons positioned on Cuba.

It's not my job to scare people, but even today's 'ordinary' weapons are much more powerful than the atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

And the nuclear submarines that would make the Clyde a target were Russia to take umbrage at the weapons the UK is supplying to Ukraine makes each and every one of us in Scotland very vulnerable.

That's why now is the time to campaign for the UK to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons instead of tiptoeing around in the shallows of the NPT.

'I have seen poverty in Africa before ... but nothing prepared me for the current disaster in Zambia'

THROUGH my work with SCIAF, I have travelled regularly to Zambia over the past five years, but nothing prepared me for my most recent trip.

As I got off the plane, I saw a queue of 200 people at the supermarket. Inside the shop, bags of maize were being limited per person. People were running. Panic was in the air. I knew this was different from before.

The scene could not have been different to 24 hours before, as I shared a good-bye meal with my children in Glasgow. The contrast was heart-breaking.

On the drive to Mongu – normally a spectacular journey through lush, green landscapes during the rainy season – I saw field after field of dried maize. Crisp, yellow ... and dead. No rain on the horizon.

Climate shocks have made farming in Zambia extremely difficult. During

BY AISLING GALLACHER
ZAMBIA PROGRAMME OFFICER,
SCIAF

the last rainy season there were only ten days of rain here. It should have rained every day from November until the end of February.

I met Kashueka, a single mother with four children. I met her near her family's field which was full of dead maize. She told me: "Really, we've had no food over the past year."

In Glasgow, my kids go to school with full bellies. Hers couldn't go to school because they were so hungry.

Kashueka grows all the crops her family eats – that's the norm in rural Zambia. But in 2023, her harvest, like so many of her neighbours', failed due to drought. And there were no jobs nearby to turn to so as to earn extra money.

Kashueka was forced to pick wild fruits and dig for

roots just to put a meal on the table. She received support through a short-term SCIAF project in early 2024: milled maize, cooking oil and soya. This enabled her children to regain enough energy to go to school.

This support was only for three months. The rains didn't come so farmers like Kashueka knew there would be no harvest in May. The crops she had planted were dead. Destroyed by drought.

Rural

Around 400 miles away are rural communities in Kabwe, in Zambia's Central Province. Here, SCIAF's expert partners have been delivering complex farming programmes for several years. These focus on skills training in organic agriculture, alongside the provision of pigs and goats for natural manure.

Here, despite the hunger crisis spreading across the



ways. I can buy things like eggs and meat. The difference in my life is huge, because even money is no longer hard to come by.

"I want to thank the people of Scotland for their generosity. I can only urge them to continue with their good deeds."

This is proof that your donations make a real and lasting difference in the world. It's proof that SCIAF has a real solution to global hunger.

Your generous gifts can provide emergency food relief to mothers like Kashueka, to help her feed her family through these toughest of times.

They can also provide life changing support to mothers like Catherine, helping her build a better life for her family and her community, long into the future.

Please remember Kashueka and Catherine as you sit around your kitchen table tonight...

support.

It's thanks to your support that families like Catherine's are coping with the dire circumstances in Zambia and other parts of Africa right now.

She said: "SCIAF's partners have really helped us. They gifted us goats and I use the manure which guarantees me a good yield.

When I sell the goats, I re-invest the money in other

country, I found communities coping well. People told me they would have enough food for their families despite the drought. They had stores of grain which they could turn to; they had access to water thanks to specially dug bore holes; and they have money saved for emergencies.

Catherine lives here with her grandchildren and has benefited from SCIAF's

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Catherine, Zambia

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