

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow June 2024

Archbishop to lead Glasgow pilgrims to Rome for Holy Year



Full story [page 5](#)

Cathedral's Canon Andrew is appointed new Bishop of Dunkeld



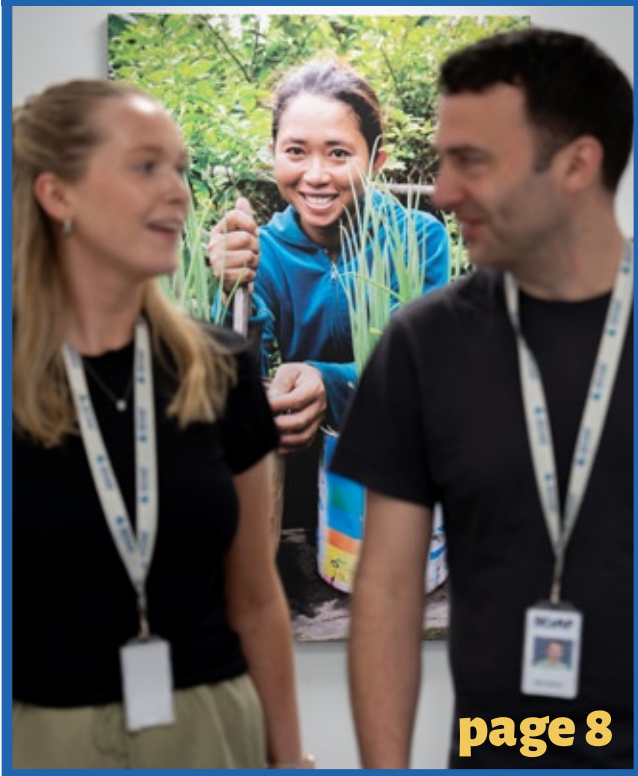
[page 3](#)

Caritas Awards ceremony: special report on 'day of days'



[pages 9–13](#)

'Welcome home' as SCIAF moves in with the Archdiocese



[page 8](#)

St Patrick's closure will mark the end of an era



ONE of Glasgow's oldest and best-known parishes is facing closure as population changes and the shortage of clergy begin to bite.

Parishioners at St Patrick's in Anderston were given the news last month as it became clear that the small Mass-going population faced insurmountable hurdles to keep going with massive repairs and increasing costs.

Parish Priest, Canon Paul Gargaro, said: "Sadly, we are now facing the situation that the future of our church and parish is not good."

"When we compare ourselves with the other parishes in our pastoral area we

are the quietest by attendance at Mass and by numbers of other sacraments.

"When we look around the church during Mass we can see how few people are here, we can see our average age, and we can see the poor condition of the building."

"Our attendance at weekday and seasonal services is very poor. We couldn't fill one day for 40 hours, we had six people at our Advent penitential service, our daily Masses and devotions can sometime be attended by only five or six people."

"The shortage of priests means that the Archdiocese

needs to send priests where places are busier – there are some parishes with more people at weekday Mass than we get over the whole weekend."

Compounding the problems faced by St Patrick's parishioners is the fact that they are facing a medium-term repair bill of almost £2million.

Canon Gargaro said: "We don't have two million, and there is no realistic way of raising it, and even if we could get it, would this be the best way to spend it?"

He added: "We can expect the church to close, although no final decision has yet been made. The Archdi-

ocesan estates department will now be looking at options for the future of the building, including looking for planning permission for possible future uses (such as conversion to flats, a hotel, etc.). The money that is made by selling the property will be divided between the neighbouring parishes."

The church will remain open until arrangements for the future are in place, to avoid the risk of vandalism and neglect.

When the closure finally does take place the parish will be made part of one or more of the neighbouring parishes (St Peter's, the Cathedral, St Aloysius) and the boundaries redrawn.

Any process towards closure is likely to take at least a couple of years – this may be longer if the process of looking at new uses for the church is extended; or it may be shorter if there is a sudden need for expensive repairs.

Mungo memory project

THROUGHOUT the summer the St Mungo Festival will sponsor a project aimed at sharing memories – and Flourish readers are invited to take part with their own contributions.

The project will be run by New York artist Molly Gochman (right). She said: "The work I'll be showing for 2024 will be about how the things we hold onto tell stories about our lives."

"To make it special, I'm asking for scans or photos of things that have meaning for you – maybe an old photo, a lucky charm, a letter from someone special. If you have an item that you'd like to share and incorporate into Memory Collage, please scan (or photograph) the item and email it to me or hello@mollygochman.com"

"Use the subject line 'Memory Collage' and add any information you'd like to share about the item in the email body."

"I would love if people would attend the live memory collage on June 21 and June 22 from 7-10pm at the Adelphi School at 5



Florence Street. They can bring images and memorabilia with them to scan alongside others."

If you have objects or images – maybe an old first communion day holy picture, a wedding invitation, an order of service, a missal that belonged to a relative, a christening gown or whatever – get in touch with the artist and help share memories of faith and life in Glasgow and beyond.

The project follows the success of the recent Molendinar lecture chaired by Archbishop Nolan. The award winning journalist, broadcaster and writer Fatima Manji gave Lecture on Friday June 14 at Glasgow City Chambers on the theme of Glasgow's built heritage and the forgotten histories of its builders.

Archbishop Nolan will lead Lourdes pilgrimage

It is an annual journey of faith that has taken parishioners throughout the Archdiocese from Glasgow to Lourdes for close on 75 years.

Only the pandemic led to its cancellation, but now for the first time since his appointment two years ago, Archbishop Nolan will lead the pilgrimage to the famous French shrine which takes place between 12th and 19th July.

The Archbishop had planned to lead last year's pilgrimage but had to cancel due to illness. Now he is very much looking forward to accompanying the Glasgow delegation to the French shrine this summer.

Shrine

Today's pilgrims can fly to Lourdes in a matter of hours but for the first Archdiocesan pilgrimage in 1948, just three years after the end of Second World War, the journey took at least 36 hours by train and ferry.

No one is left to describe what travelling on the first Archdiocesan pilgrimage was like but in an interview



BY BRIAN SWANSON

just before she died, Paddy Sherry, a Lourdes helper for over 70 years who passed away at the age of 102 two years ago, said: "It was a special train just for Lourdes which left from Central Station for Folkestone and I remember there were always crowds seeing us off and the train itself was always jam packed."

"Some were on mattresses in corridors, others on iron beds and everywhere was cramped with a tiny area to prepare food, but we just got stuck in, you didn't complain, you got on

with it."

More than 200 million people have visited the Grotto since Our Lady appeared 18 times between 11 February and 16 July 1858, to 14 year old Bernadette Soubirous who was canonised in 1933.

Every year the pilgrimage has a theme based on the messages from Our Lady to Bernadette. The theme for this year is: "People should come in procession".

For full details on how to book for this year's pilgrimage visit info@joewalshstours.co.uk

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Cathedral swap for Canon Andrew as he is named a bishop

A GLASGOW priest who has spent much of his ministry serving in the Cathedral will soon have a Cathedral of his own – in Dundee.

For the Holy Father has appointed Canon Andrew McKenzie, Administrator of St Andrew's Cathedral, Glasgow, to be the new Bishop of Dunkeld.

Canon Andrew, who is 59, succeeds Bishop Stephen Robson, who resigned due to ill health in December 2022 and Bishop-elect Martin Chambers, who was named to Dunkeld earlier this year but died before being ordained bishop.

Commenting on the news, Archbishop Nolan said he was delighted, while recognising that Glasgow's loss was Dunkeld's gain.

The Archbishop said: "May I congratulate Fr Andrew McKenzie on his appointment as Bishop and may I

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

also congratulate Dunkeld Diocese who now acquire a fine priest as their leader and guide.

"In his 36 years of priestly service, the Archdiocese of Glasgow and the wider Church in Scotland have benefited from his talent, his commitment, his perseverance, and the high standards he has set in a variety of ministries.

"He has shown care for parishioners and care for his fellow priests, with a devotion also to the worthy celebration of liturgy and the praise and worship of God."

Reacting to his appointment, Canon Andrew said: "I am humbled by the trust that Pope Francis has placed in me by inviting me to be the next Bishop of the Diocese of Dunkeld. With faith in God's guidance, and with some nervousness, I accept-



ed his invitation.

"I look forward to getting to know the priests and people of the diocese and to joining them in the work of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I take courage in the understanding that I will not be working alone, for each of us has a role to play in the work of evangelisation.

"I have good memories of the diocese from a previous role as Director of Priests for

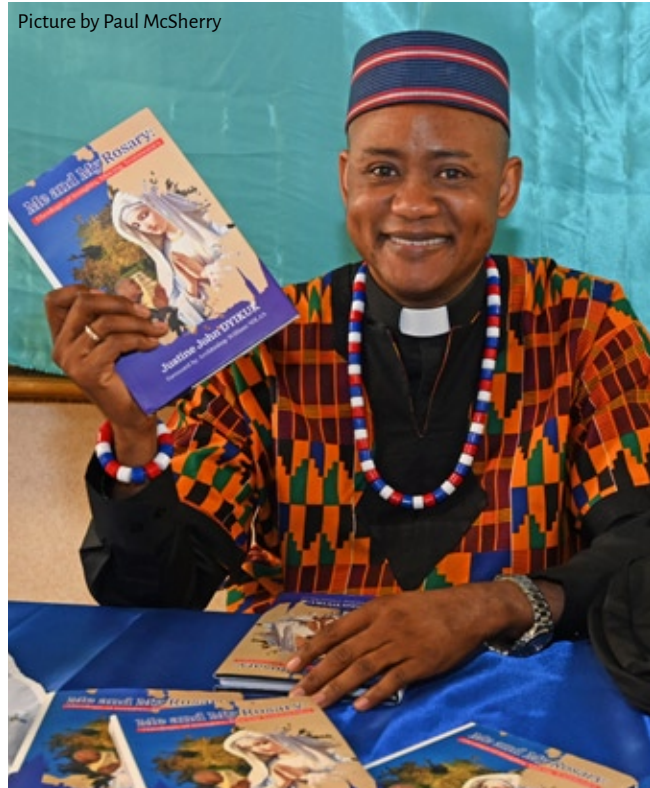
Scotland when I was a regular visitor to Dundee at the invitation of Bishop Vincent Logan. I look forward to re-connecting with people and places.

"I know that this has been a difficult time for the Diocese of Dunkeld with the unexpected death of Bishop-elect Martin Chambers. We remember him and continue to pray for his eternal rest."

The new Bishop holds a degree from St John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. He has worked in seminary formation, as National Director of Priests for Scotland and with the National Liturgy Commission and has wide pastoral experience including time as Parish Priest at St Joseph's Tollcross and St Andrew's Cathedral. He has recently been co-ordinating the programme of discernment of pastoral provision in the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

Fr Justine's new book on power of the Rosary

Picture by Paul McSherry



A NEWLY published book about the Rosary written by a Glasgow-based Nigerian priest has been warmly praised by Archbishop Nolan for its inspirational content.

Father Justine Dyikuk, an assistant priest at St Andrew's Cathedral, has spent the last two years working on the book while also studying for his PhD at Strathclyde University which he will complete next year.

Entitled *Me and My Rosary: Theological Insights, Moving Testimonies*, the nine-chap-

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

ter book gives a comprehensive history of the Rosary while encouraging readers to make it an integral part of their daily lives.

In his foreword Archbishop Nolan writes: "Fr Justine's book delves into the history of the Rosary and unveils the theological truths that the mysteries proclaim.

"Personal testimonies reveal to us the great spiritual effects that this prayer has had, and how lives have been changed.

"With the 'Hail Mary' at its heart, the Rosary inspires devotion to Mary, mother of Jesus and our mother. The months of May and October are especially associated with this prayer.

"May *Me and My Rosary* inspire more people to pick up their Rosary beads and pray. May it also deepen our devotion to Mary and reassure us of the salvation that Christ has won for us.

"As we pray the Rosary in the troubled times we live, may it sustain our faith as it has sustained the faith of previous generations."

Fr Justine, who already has a PhD in journalism and has won numerous awards for his writing, said: "This year I will celebrate 15 years of the priesthood and it seemed the right time to celebrate the Rosary in a book and to reveal what it means to me. And perhaps more importantly reveal how crucial devotion to our Most Holy Mother is to all who reach out to her in prayer."

Fr Justine's book, priced at £10, will be on sale at St Andrew's Cathedral bookshop and the Pauline bookshop in St Enoch Square.

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Fr Gabriel makes it home to Gaza after Glasgow visit

THE Parish Priest of Gaza – whose visit to Glasgow recently won wide acclaim for shining the spotlight on that martyred parish – has finally been able to return to his flock.

And to make the return even more memorable he was joined by his local bishop – His Beatitude, Pierbattista Cardinal Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem who also entered Gaza for the first time since the war started and reached the parish of the Holy Family for a pastoral visit.

Together with the Cardinal and Fr Gabriel came Fra' Alessandro de Franciscis, the Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Order of Malta and a small delegation.

They met the suffering population to encourage them and deliver a message of hope and support. Cardinal Pizzaballa concelebrated with Fr Gabriel at the Mass in the parish church with the local community.

Following his visit the Patriarch said: "It was a great blessing to be with the parishioners of Gaza. I was among my people who are currently enduring much suffering from the war and



BY **RONNIE CONVERY** the destruction it has left. I brought with me the promise of a new life, and I was very surprised that they were the ones who taught me a lesson I will never forget: their steadfast faith, carried with heart-warming smiles, left a mark on me and my life.

"I saw hope and optimism in their eyes. They told me, 'We will stay here. As long

as the church stands with us, we are not afraid.' I was really impressed by their attitude.

"The scale of the destruction is unbelievable, and the poor living conditions, such as the lack of water and electricity and the absence of security, are dire.

"The sound of bombing is frequent and is felt at every moment. Despite this, I saw unity among them, organ-

ising their daily lives in the monastery, and managing their use of electricity, water, and food so that nothing would be lacking.

"What else can I say: I want to send a clear message to decision-makers. Enough killing! The war must end, and avenues for various aid must be opened to avoid an imminent humanitarian crisis. I hope this nightmare ends quickly."

Glasgow joy at news of new saint

A YOUNG layman who has inspired Catholics across the world with his 'ordinary' holiness is expected to be canonised... and the news has been received with particular joy in Glasgow.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati could be declared a saint during the 2025 Jubilee Year, according to the head of the Vatican's office for saints' causes.

Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, said: "I would like to tell you that the canonisation of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati is now clearly on the horizon and is in sight for the coming Jubilee Year."

The news has been welcomed by the Archdiocesan Youth Office.

Mairi-Claire McGeady said: "We are delighted to hear this! Pier Giorgio is a fantastic witness of sanctity for our youth. He was a young man who enjoyed practical jokes, exploring the outdoors and loved Jesus, recognising the need to be close to Him in the Eucharist.

"He was that friend that



Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

you love to spend time with as they make you laugh but also because they encourage you to be better, to grow and become more yourself.

"It is our hope that his example will encourage our young, in particular our young men, to live vibrant lives, enjoying the adventures of this world with their eyes and hearts fixed on Jesus, encouraging their friends to do the same."

Fr John McGinley, Parish priest at St Mary's Duntocher, has a strong personal devotion to Frassati. He said: "It will be a wonderful day in the life of the Church to see Pier Giorgio a declared Saint. Over the years I have visited his tomb in Turin Cathedral and his family in Pollone, the summer villa where he died.

"Wanda and Giovanna, his nieces well on in years, de-

scribed to me the moment his tomb was opened in 1990 when St John Paul declared him Blessed. They saw their uncle's body uncorrupted and they looked on the same handsome man who had died at the age of 25 in 1925.

"For them this will be a pivotal moment in the journey of faith for his family and many friends around the world who invoke his intercession."

Frassati, who died at the age of 24 in 1925, was from Glasgow's twin city of Turin in Italy and was well known for his charitable outreach and also as an avid mountaineer. On a photograph of what would be his last climb, Frassati wrote the phrase "Verso l'Alto", which means "to the heights".

The phrase has become a motto for Catholics inspired by Frassati.

Pier Giorgio's canonisation will also be welcomed by the St Vincent de Paul Society, which he joined in his home city at the age of 17. He dedicated much of his spare time to taking care of the poor, the homeless and the

SSVP marks 50 years on city streets

A MASS of thanksgiving will be held later this month to mark 50 years since the Society of St Vincent de Paul began their special apostolate to those who live on the margins of society in Glasgow City Centre.

It will take place in Our Lady of Good Counsel, Dennistoun, on Monday June 17 at 7:30 when parish priest Father Joseph Lapin will be the celebrant.

It has been organised by members by Our Lady of Wayside Conference who work out of the Fred-eric Ozanam Centre in the Bridgegate.

In the past 50 years, first from their base in the Candleriggs, then Parnie Street and for the past 17 years in their present home, the SSVP members have been caring for the poor, the desperate and the displaced.


They provide essential personal items, clothing, food and companionship in a safe and caring environment following their simple philosophy of wel-




coming the stranger.

No one is turned away. Conference member Bernice Brady, who helped organise the Mass, said: "The pandemic and social disruption still affect those we help but the Conference will always continue to strive to help the poor.

"The Society has a legacy of over 190 years in the Archdiocese and the conference of Our Lady of the Wayside look forward to the challenges of the next 50 years because we never forget that the poor are always with us."



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tion to "get out of bed and accept yourself as a gift".

"Remember that for God, you are not a digital profile, but a child, that you have a Father in heaven and there-

fore you are a child of heaven," the Pope said, adding that young people must let themselves be picked up in a world that often wants to pull them down.

Archbishop will lead Glasgow to Rome for Holy Year pilgrimage

PLANS have been announced for a pilgrimage from the Archdiocese of Glasgow to Rome for the Holy Year.

Next year, 2025, has been designated a Jubilee Year by the Holy Father and an estimated 32 million pilgrims are expected to flock to Rome to visit the basilicas and gain the Jubilee Indulgence.

With accommodation in the eternal city filling up quickly, pilgrims are being advised to book early to ensure they can make the trip.

Archbishop Nolan will lead



the Holy Year pilgrimage – returning to a city he knows well, having studied for the priesthood there during the 1975 Jubilee and later served on the staff of the Scots Col-

lege in the city.

The Glasgow pilgrims will travel to Rome in September, when the most extreme heat of the summer is past but temperatures will still be pleasantly warm.

Also included in the pilgrimage plans will be a day trip to Assisi to the city of St Francis and St Clare and pilgrims will take part in the Holy Father's General audience.

The cost will be £1200 per person. To enquire or book a place call Alba Tours on 01698 262941 or email annemariecairns@yahoo.co.uk

Indulgences revisited for the Jubilee Year



THE often-neglected custom of gaining indulgences will be highlighted once more during the upcoming Holy Year which will begin on Christmas Eve.

Pope Francis has granted a series of indulgences for the 2025 Jubilee. Some will involve a pilgrimage to Rome to pass through the Holy Door, but others can be gained from home.

And in a first in the history of indulgences, a plenary indulgence can even be obtained for abstaining from social media for a day!

The full list of ways to gain the Holy Year indulgence which can be applied to the deceased was published last month by the Vatican's Apostolic Penitentiary.

All the 'truly repentant' faithful, 'moved by a spirit

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

of charity, who, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, will be able to receive the indulgence, with the remission and forgiveness of sins' say the Norms adding that they should also pray according to the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.

Rome

Pilgrims will be able to obtain the Indulgence by undertaking a pilgrimage to any sacred Jubilee site, to at least one of the four Major Papal Basilicas of Rome, to the Holy Land or to other designated ecclesiastical sites, and taking part in a moment of prayer, a liturgical celebration or celebrating the sacrament of recon-

ciliation.

The indulgence can also be obtained by 'devoutly visiting any Jubilee site' and taking part in Eucharistic adoration or meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith, and appropriate invocations to Mary. It is foreseen that each diocesan Cathedral will be designated a Jubilee site where the indulgence can be gained.

The indulgence can also be gained by visiting other places in the world, such as – among others – the two Papal Basilicas in Assisi, or the Pontifical Basilicas of the Madonna di Loreto, the Madonna of Pompeii, in Italy or the Basilica of Saint Anthony of Padua.

In the event of serious impediments, people will

be able to obtain the Jubilee indulgence under the same conditions if they recite in their own home or from wherever they are impeded from travelling, the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form and other prayers compliant with the purposes of the Holy Year, offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives.

Another way to obtain indulgence will be through 'works of mercy and penance', and people may obtain the indulgence by visiting those 'who are in need or difficulty (the sick, prisoners, the lonely elderly, the disabled...)', 'in a sense making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them.'

Penance

The 'penitential spirit', notes the Norms, is 'the soul of the Jubilee' and therefore the indulgence can also be obtained by 'abstaining, in a spirit of penance, at least for one day of the week from futile distractions (real but also virtual distractions), from superfluous consumption as well as by donating a proportionate sum of money to the poor; by supporting works of a religious or social nature, especially in support of the defense and protection of life in all its phases.'

The full text of the Norms can be consulted at the Vatican website.

HOLY YEAR PILGRIMAGE TO ROME

LED BY ARCHBISHOP NOLAN
19th-26th September 2025



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Glasgow's Dali masterpiece takes Rome by storm

Glasgow's iconic image of Christ of St John of the Cross has proved a massive success in Rome as part of the preparations for next year's Holy Year.

"Salvador Dali's Christ has conquered the world. For us it is a joy to be able to think that many tourists, and many Romans will be able to come and contemplate this work because beauty really does allow us to live better."

That was the reaction of the Pro-Prefect of the Dicastero for Evangelisation, Archbishop Rino Fisichella (right), at the inauguration of the exhibition 'Dali's Christ in Rome'.

More than 2300 people attended the opening event of the exhibition in the church of San Marcello al Corso, in Rome, as part of the ongoing 'Jubilee is culture' series of exhibitions, being held in preparation for the Holy Year.

In the Roman church,

from 13 May to 23 June, Glasgow's 'Christ of Saint John of the Cross', is being exhibited for the first time next to the relic-drawing – an ink on paper sketch by Saint John of the Cross, from which Dali took inspiration for his masterpiece.

Archbishop Fisichella said: "The two works are deliberately displayed together, not only to give originality to the event – indeed this makes it unique – but above all to help people understand that beauty finds its deepest expression when it manages to bring a person to the contemplation of God."

"Those who have had a mystical experience, a particular encounter with God, can find themselves a source of inspiration for more beauty. Because where there is beauty, a person lives well, because his or her soul is inspired to go beyond its nor-



mal limits."

The Jubilee, explained the archbishop, "is also a cultural experience. That's why, following the publication of the Bull of Indiction of the Holy Year, entitled *Spes non confundit*, by Pope Francis, we wanted to organise this important event for the city

of Rome.

"The Jubilee experience, in this way, can become a 'door of hope', and we hope that those who come through the entrance door of San Marcello will, by contemplating the crucifix, truly rediscover the Hope that we all need – especially at this time."



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Scots priest has the Pope in stitches

WHAT happens when you put together a Scottish priest and an Argentinian Pope in Rome? Clearly the answer is a lot of laughter!

Mgr Aldo Angelosanto, a Dundee Parish Priest, was Scotland's representative in Rome recently at a meeting of Parish Priests to discuss the next Synod.

And when the Pontiff was introduced to the Scot he immediately quipped "Where is the whisky?"

Mgr Aldo replied that he had indeed brought a bottle of the amber nectar with him to Rome, but that it had already been drunk by the brethren taking part in the meeting!

Mgr Aldo said: "What an honour and privilege it was for me to attend the International Conference of Parish Priests in Rome last month. There were over 200 priests from 99 different countries who attended."

"There were some Parish Priests, like myself, who came alone – others had as many as five or ten other priests with them. In our conferences we were split up into language groups, with simultaneous translators, to help us understand those of another language."

"The atmosphere was one of great fraternity, as we got



to know each other better, sat in our groups and had no seating arrangements and met so many others as we just chose where to sit at each meal.

"Although this was a meeting for Priests, it dealt with topics concerning Bishops, Deacons and most importantly and for the longest time, of the role and gifts of the women and men, that is all the Baptised, in the Church."

"The Pope insists, their voice must be heard; they have their part to play as witnesses to Jesus Christ,

they have the dignity of what the Vatican Council called "the common priesthood of the Baptised". The role of women in the Church was well talked about in serious terms and their role too in decision making.

"Also the point was made that if we truly want to be a Synodal Church in our local Parish, the Parish Priest (or Bishop) cannot be the one and only voice. We need to listen to each other. We need to bare our wounds and hurts. We need the love to trust in the

Holy Spirit and reveal our hearts, in a loving way as to how we experience what it means to be church in today's world.

"Decisions need to be made together, each having a voice as our diverse roles and gifts (Charisms) the Spirit has given us in the Church. We were challenged by a noted theologian to consider the point that some questions were so dignified they did not deserve an answer immediately. And so we must give the Holy Spirit His space."

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He has mourned the loss of his four children... but veteran parliamentarian says assisted dying bill is a huge threat

Politician Dennis warns of dangers in assisted dying plan

A COUPLE of years ago I joined the distinguished club of octogenarians.

Since my retirement, I have survived two life-threatening illnesses but, thanks be to God and the National Health Service, neither turned out to be terminal.

I can think of many people in my age group, some of them very vulnerable, who have experienced or who will experience terminal illness in their family and who may feel pressurised to take the suicide option in this proposed legislation because they do not want to be a burden on their loved ones.

So to those who say that individuals should have a choice, I question whether anyone has the right to choose a course of action which could have devastating consequences for others, especially vulnerable people.

Dignity

The consultation document on the proposed bill includes a so-called safeguard, whereby two doctors have to assess that the patient is making an informed decision without pressure or coercion.

However, doctors may not be aware of the source of potential pressure and the patient may not be willing to admit to such pressure or coercion.

The proposers of the legislation claim that it is necessary to ensure dignity in death. I beg to differ and I would like to share with you a family story.

When I was first elected to the House of Commons, half a century ago, I was the proud father of four children. Now they are all dead and one of my biggest regrets in life is that, because of my work, I did not spend more time with them.

I have probably had more than my fair share of deaths in my family and three of my children died as the result of terminal illness. I had the experience of watching two of them die and I would not wish that on any parent.

However, I must say that, in general, I found the standard of National Health Service treatment which my children received was excellent and the standard of palliative care in our local Strathcarron Hospice was first class.

As a result, my children died in dignity and I beg to differ from those who assert that the option of assisted suicide is necessary to ensure dignity in death.

Lethal

Supporters of assisted suicide seem to have hijacked the word "dignity" in an attempt to justify their case but I fail to see anything dignified about a doctor or a nurse, having spent many years training to save lives, then giving patients a lethal potion to destroy lives.

Whatever happened to the Hippocratic Oath which doctors were once required to swear: I will do no harm or injustice to my patients. Neither will I administer a poison to anybody when asked to do so nor will I suggest such a course?

I accept that there are cases where there is justification in not prolonging life but that is quite different from actively assisting someone to commit suicide.

In the case of one of my sons, he spent his last few days on a life-support machine but, when it became evident that he was not going to recover, the medical professionals consulted family members, who came to the unanimous decision to switch off the machine.

It was a difficult heart rending decision but I have no doubt that it was justified.

There is a world of difference between allowing someone to die a natural death and actively assisting someone to commit suicide.

I would not have the same respect for medical professionals if they were to become involved in helping people to commit suicide.

The proponents of the bill prefer to use the euphemism "assisted dying" rather than



Former MP and MSP Dennis Canavan has more reasons than most to passionately oppose the assisted suicide bill, having seen three of his children die from terminal illness. Earlier this month he was the keynote speaker at a Glasgow conference organised by the Campaign Against Assisted Dying aimed at raising awareness of its implications and urging MSPs to vote against it when it is debated at Holyrood in the autumn.

"assisted suicide" but suicide is a more accurate description, because it would require a health professional to supply the lethal medication to the patient and for the patient to take that lethal medication under the supervision of the health professional.

That is by definition suicide.

People of different faiths and cultures may have differing attitudes to death. Personally I live in the hope that, after I die, I shall be re-united with the children I have lost.

However, I respect those who do not share that belief and I say to my agnostic and atheist friends: "Surely we all believe in human rights."

Care

I do not defend the status quo. I firmly believe that more effort and more investment should go into improving standards of palliative care to make dying a more pain-free experience for terminally ill people.

However, in countries where assisted suicide or euthanasia is permitted, any increased investment in palliative care is less than that in countries where such practices are forbidden.

Previous attempts to introduce similar legislation in the Scottish Parliament have failed but the consultation document on this latest proposal claims that it has a majority of public support.

I am not so sure about that and I wonder whether the implications have been fully explained to the public.

Of course MSPs have a duty to listen to the views of the people they represent. But they also have a duty to try to lead public opinion instead of following slavishly in its wake.

So make your views known to your local MSPs. And I say to my former colleagues in the Scottish Parliament: Stand up and be counted. Scotland has the chance to show a lead to many other countries on this important matter of life and death.



Carntyne teachers get in shape to 'walk the walk'

FIVE adventurous teachers from St Andrew's Secondary School in Carntyne are gearing up for an extraordinary journey along the iconic Camino de Santiago to raise funds for the Wayside Club and Mary's Meals.

On June 28, the day after schools close for the summer holidays, they will set off on a two-week cycling expedition that will take them 700km across the breathtaking landscapes of Spain from Pamplona to the tomb of St James in Santiago.

Joint organiser and deputy head of RE, Kevin Quinn, a parishioner of St Mark's Rutherglen said: "We firmly believe that education extends far beyond the confines of the classroom."

"By embarking on this pilgrimage, we aim to lead by example, showing our young people the importance of serving others."

The other teachers taking part are Maria Davidson, Josh Devine, Eoin Houston and Lee Marshall.

The school has a very successful Servant Leadership programme which encourages both staff and pupils to volunteer every

Wednesday evening at the Legion of Mary-run Wayside Club.

The school has also supported Mary's Meals for over 25 years.

Kevin added: "The five of us come from different teaching disciplines, including mathematics, history, languages, and physical education, but what unites us is a shared spirit of adventure and a commitment to holistic education."

"As well as raising funds for two charities close to the heart of the school we believe this adventure will not only be a personal quest for growth but also an opportunity to forge lasting bonds and strengthen the sense of community in our school and beyond."

The Camino de Santiago is a pilgrimage rooted in mediaeval origins. It leads to the tomb believed to be that of the Apostle Saint James the Greater, in the crypt of Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. The Camino was, and still is, Europe's oldest, busiest, and best-known pilgrim route.

Around 350,000 pilgrims walk the route annually with another 22,000 cyclists also taking part.

■ To donate follow this link: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/StAndrewsSecondaryCamino> You can follow the teachers' adventure on Instagram @standrewsrcsecondary or Twitter @StAndrewsRCSec

SCIAF move 'like coming home'



“It’s like coming home”, that was just one of the comments from SCIAF staff as they settled into their new HQ in Glasgow’s Archdiocesan Offices last month.

The international aid charity made the move from West Nile Street, in a bid to cut costs and move closer to its roots in the Catholic Church, settling on the third floor of the glass building next to the Cathedral.

Thanks to lots of hard work, the SCIAF staff are already feeling very much at home, many commenting on how nice it is to be by the river and commenting on the warm welcome they’ve all received from everyone in the building.

Mark Camburn, Director of Integral Human Development said: “The new office

makes me think a lot about our partner the Diocese of Quibdó, in Colombia. There are some really interesting parallels between the two.

“Our partners in Quibdó work at a Diocesan building on the banks of the mighty river Atrato, right beside the Cathedral. It is so similar to our new set-up, on the banks of the Clyde, and right beside the Cathedral. Maybe it’s because I’m planning a trip to Colombia just now, but I think about this link every time I come into the office!”

SCIAF’s Chief Executive Lorraine Currie said: “To move a charity from one office to another at the busiest time of their year – Lent – is no small undertaking. The reason it was so smooth was down to great collaborative working between us and the

Archdiocese and of course the tremendous hard work and organisational skills of our ‘move’ team. I can’t thank them enough.

Inspirational

“We have downsized and it feels like a strong but leaner home for us. The move has been a chance for us to save some money. SCIAF, like many other charities is having to deal with rising costs in the UK, therefore this move will help us continue to ensure as much as possible of our supporters’ donations to our mission of helping the world’s poorest people.

“All our staff seem to be settling in really well and the views of our beautiful Cathedral, while we work and attend meetings, are nothing short of inspirational.”

Mass recalls Irish famine

INTERNATIONAL Irish Famine Commemoration Day has been marked in Glasgow with a wreath laying ceremony in the grounds of St Mary’s Calton to remember the dead and displaced of the Great Hunger more than 170 years ago.

It is estimated that one million people died and another one million fled starvation in the Great Hunger years from 1845 to 1852 with 100,000 eventually finding a new life in Glasgow.

The ceremony was one of hundreds of global events



held on Irish Famine Commemoration Day, observed annually on the third Sun-

day of May which this year fell on Pentecost Sunday, May 19.

At the end of Mass in St Mary’s parishioners gathered in respectful silence round the An Gorta Mor memorial sculpture which was unveiled in the church grounds three years ago after a six year long campaign by descendants of those it commemorates.

Parish Priest Canon Tom White said: “We remember their legacy, we remember their adversity, and the faith they passed on to us. It is our duty and honour remember them not just today but for all time.”

St Ninian’s High School Giffnock



Congratulations to all our Caritas Award winners of 2024 who have contributed to our school and parish communities.

We are so proud of you all!



‘Let Youth Flourish’

Head Teacher Mr Gerry O’Neil
Eastwood Park · Rouken Glen Road · Giffnock G46 6UG
Phone 0141 577 2000



St Andrew’s R.C. Secondary School

Putting Young People First



Congratulations to our Caritas Award winners class of 2024

Our whole school community is very proud that you have pursued all that is noble and worthwhile through works of charity, the promotion of social justice and opportunities for all.



St Andrew’s RC Secondary School
Torphin Crescent, GLASGOW, G326QE
Head Teacher: John McGhee
www.st-andrews-sec.glasgow.sch.uk
@StAndrewsRCsec



All Saints R.C. Secondary

LOVE · EQUITY · AMBITION · RESPECT · NURTURE

The staff and pupils of All Saints would like to congratulate our Caritas Award winners 2024.



The staff and pupils of All Saints would like to congratulate our Caritas Award winners 2024. Special thanks to our parents, carers, parishes and our Chaplain Fr Anthony Gallagher, for their spiritual and practical support throughout this year.

All Saints Secondary School
299 Ryehill Road · Glasgow G21 3EN
0141 582 0010
Website: www.allsaints-sec.glasgow.sch.uk
Twitter: Follow us @allsaintsrcsec

St Ninian's is up for 'education Oscars'

ST Ninian's High in Kirkintilloch, which recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, has been shortlisted in the prestigious 'education Oscars' for the fifth time.

It is the only Scottish nominee for Secondary School of the Year at the 2024 *Times Educational Supplement* (TES) awards, which recognises the best teachers and schools across the UK.

And if St Ninian's name is inside the winner's envelope at the lavish awards ceremony in the Grosvenor Hotel, Park Lane, on June 21st it will crown an illustrious career for head teacher



Paul McLaughlin who is retiring after being in the post for 20 years.

A few days after the awards ceremony, on June 25, a Mass of thanksgiving will be held to mark his outstanding career in education.

Career

That career included spells at St Stephen's Port Glasgow, St Ninian's, Giffnock, followed by stints at St John Ogilvie, Hamilton, Holyrood Secondary, Glasgow before taking up his current role at St Ninian's Kirkintilloch.

He said: "To be recognised at such prestigious awards in this, the 150th anniversary of our school, is particularly pleasing. This is the fifth time we have reached this stage since 2010 and it would be fitting if we were to be ultimately successful in such an important year for the school."



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



ACHIEVING
EXCELLENCE
TOGETHER

Head Teacher: Paul Marshall
Glebe Street, Renfrew PA4 8TP
Telephone: 0300-300-1444
@Trinityrenfrew

St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch



"The Catholic values of the school are key drivers for change and improvement. All the school community work together to demonstrate a commitment to the conviction 'we all have more to give'."

St Ninian's High School HMIE report, March 2018



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

School Prayer

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



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



Our Lady and St Patrick's High School



Congratulations to all the 2024 Caritas Awards winners from the staff, pupils and community of Our Lady and St Patrick's High School, Dumbarton

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

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



Congratulations to our Caritas Award Winners of 2024. We are so proud of you all in what has been a very challenging year.

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

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



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CARITAS AWARDS 2024

Faith-filled festival of young Catholics' commitment to serve



Our Lady's High, Cumbernauld

Archbishop says we have much to learn from the young



“THE young people taking part in the Caritas programme have shown, with their faith and hard work, that the future is safe in their hands – because they are the future.”

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

And the Archbishop had a confession to make.

He said: “As you get older you tend to look back to the past with rose-tinted spectacles and you start thinking and saying things like, ‘back in my day that would not have happened’ or ‘we would never have done that when we were young...’

“But if you want to be cured of that genetic disease all you have to do is come here to the Caritas awards and be in the presence of young people who have done so much in the past year.”

Addressing the young people directly Archbishop Nolan, who is Head of Education for the Bishops' Conference, went on: “You give us the hope for the future, you give us the joy of the present.

“What really gives us hope is that is that you have voluntarily undertaken to do all the work involved in Caritas to bring some goodness into the world today.

“What you have given over these past few months is something precious because you've given your time and there is nothing more precious than giving your time to be involved in so many different ways in helping others and improving our society.

“That is a wonderful achievement and a great sign of the goodness in your hearts.

“These awards are called the Caritas awards and as you know Caritas means ‘love’ in Latin – it doesn't mean romantic love but rather love in action and that's a hard love.

“It's easy enough to love the world but it's hard to put Caritas in action, to go out there and give your time and your efforts and make a difference for people. That's what we are celebrating today – the goodness in your hearts and the faith that has inspired you.”

“Maybe your faith is strong, maybe your faith is weak, but strong or weak that faith has prompted you to volunteer for the Caritas programme and has encouraged you to persevere and carry out all the good you have done.

“So we all should stop looking into their past and saying ‘in my day it was different and so much better’ and instead look to the future encouraged by the wonderful efforts of all our Caritas winners – who knows what they will achieve for their own communities but for the world.”

WORDS BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

WHEN Pope Benedict XVI famously urged young people to become ‘saints of the 21st century’ during his visit to these shores 14 years ago, few, even the Pontiff himself, could ever have forecast how successful that rallying call would become.

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

Since the first awards ceremony medals have been presented to 15,000 final year secondary pupils – can you imagine the hours of dedication that took?

And here they come again, the class of 2024, spilling out of hired coaches, immaculate in their uniforms, swarming into the Clyde Auditorium (to give The Armadillo its Sunday name) mobile phones at the ready, clearly buzzing with noisy excitement.

An excitement that was not confined to pupils – class teachers, school chap-

lains, education officials, parents and grandparents, mingled in a faith filled atmosphere of shared pride.

The Caritas Awards Ceremony was back to where it all began.

In that first year 450 young people received their medals – a figure that, by 2024 has more than quadrupled.

This year, on a day when sunshine filled the sky and faith filled the auditorium, 1700 youngsters from 60 centres took part – the term is used because some areas do not have Catholic secondary schools – and as ever it was not a quiet affair.

The invitations by hosts broadcasters David and Maura Currie, who have loyally given their time since the very first ceremony to ‘make as much noise as you can’ seemed superfluous!

Somehow the roof of the Armadillo managed to remain intact as they cheered, whistled, and applauded as the by now traditional parade of school banners took place.

Then it was time to hear of the many unique ways, often reflecting the way the world has changed since 2012, that young people have undertaken to help strengthen their faith and that of others.

Fourteen years ago, there were

no foodbanks, no energy crisis, no Covid but each generation of Caritas pupils responded to the world as they found it, and, in the words of scripture, ‘clothed themselves in compassion’.

This included volunteering at food banks, raising money for schools in countries facing appalling poverty cause by war, famine, and disease, writing letters of welcome to refugees, and sending birthday cards to residents in care homes

Some raised money with sponsored climbs of Ben Nevis, some worked with the Wayside Club, some held the hands of those in hospices, while other worked in community cafes, and collected money so that special needs children could enjoy pilgrimages to Lourdes.

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

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

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

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

And if ever there was a time and a place to show that collective pride it was on Monday June 3 inside a cavernous hall more used to hosting rock concerts, pantomimes and conferences than expressions of Catholic faith.

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



All Saints, Glasgow



St Thomas Aquinas, Glasgow



St Ninian's, Eastwood

New patron saint for the internet generation

YOUNG people taking part in the Caritas Awards scheme this month will soon have ‘one of their own’ declared a saint by the Church.

Blessed Carlo Acutis, a young boy born in London in 1991 and who died in Italy in 2016 is to be canonised during the Holy Year – the first saint of the new millennium.

It was during his 2010 visit to Britain that Pope Benedict memorably addressed young people as follows: “There is something I very much want to say to you. I hope that among those of you listening

to me today there are some of the future saints of the twenty-first century.

“What God wants most of all for each one of you is that you should become holy. He loves you much more than you could ever begin to imagine, and he wants the very best for you. And by far the best thing for you is to grow in holiness.”

This speech was the inspiration for the Caritas scheme, and the canonisation of Carlo Acutis makes that prophecy a reality.

From a young age, Carlo had



a special love for God, even though his parents weren't

especially devout. Antonia Salzano, his mum, openly admits that she went to Mass only for her first Communion, her confirmation, and her wedding.

But as a young child, Carlo loved to pray the rosary. After he made his first Communion, he went to Mass as often as possible at the parish across from his elementary school. Carlo's love for the Eucharist also inspired a deep conversion for his mother.

According to the documents gathered to support his cause for sainthood, he “managed to

drag his relatives, his parents to Mass every day. It was not the other way around; it was not his parents bringing the little boy to Mass, but it was he who managed to get himself to Mass and to convince others to receive Communion daily.”

The new saint-to-be's mum said: “He used to say, ‘There are queues in front of a concert, in front of a football match, but I don't see these queues in front of the Blessed Sacrament... So, for him the Eucharist was the centre of his life.’”

Carlo loved computers and playing video games. His mother recalls that he liked Nintendo Game Boy and GameCube as well as PlayStation and Xbox. He had conversations with his gaming buddies about the importance of going to Mass and confession. He also set up a website about Eucharistic miracles.

Carlo died on October 12, 2006, and was buried in Assisi.

His body lies in repose in a glass tomb in Assisi where he can be seen in jeans and a pair of Nike trainers.

Business chief urges young people to treasure the faith



THE lifelong value of receiving a Caritas award was highlighted in a heartfelt speech delivered by Anton Colella, Chair of the Executive Board of the Scottish Catholic Education Service.

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

After warmly thanking all those who had worked tirelessly to make the event a success he encouraged the young people present to recognise the value of the award that they had received after months of volunteering.

He said: “Archbishop Nolan noted at the beginning that Caritas was something precious and for those of you hold-

ing your awards in your hands right now I'm not entirely sure that you know just how precious it is...

“I can tell you that when employers interview you and hear about your Caritas award, you will have created a curiosity and an intrigue in them.

“Today in the world of business and work employers are yearning for young women and men who are kind, who are loving, and who are willing to be of service to others.

“And they will ask what is your biggest achievement in your life? I say the answer to that is your Caritas award.

“The Caritas award is a precious thing. It's a precious thing for the Catholic Church in Scotland, a precious thing for the people of Scotland, but above all a precious thing for each and every one of the award winners today.

“I want to encourage you that when you apply for jobs over the next 25 years to write down on your form that you have achieved a Caritas award and tell them your story.

“When I was in sixth year, brought up in a single-parent family in the East End of Glasgow, it was a time when I felt really lost.

“Then one day, at Mass, when I was your age, I encountered God in a way that affected the rest of my life and I am not embarrassed to say that in front of all of you today.

“I pray regularly and there is one prayer I want to share with you today and it is this: ‘Lord, use me.’

“It's probably the most dangerous prayer you will ever use because God will take you up on it, for the benefit of the rest of the human race, so who knows where that prayer will take you.”



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

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL CARITAS AWARD WINNERS
OF 2024 FROM EVERYONE AT NOTRE DAME HIGH
SCHOOL**

160 Observatory Road, Glasgow, G12 9LN



2 Arrochar Street
Glasgow G23 5LY
Tel: 0141 582 0140
Head Teacher:
John McGhee

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



Thanks for shining the light of your goodness and love.



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schoolmail@St-Lukes.e-renfrew.sch.uk
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ST AMBROSE HIGH SCHOOL
'LEARNING TOGETHER IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE'



Congratulations to our Caritas class of 2024 from all within the St Ambrose High School community.

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



Turnbull High School
EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

a community of faith engaged in learning



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

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

St Margaret Mary's Secondary School 2024

St Margaret Mary's Secondary School would like to send warmest wishes and pray for God's blessing on recipients of Caritas Awards:
Abi Buckley, Molly Burns, Audrey Capraru, Mirin Chadburn, Kensie Diver, Nathan Doyle, Maisie Kay Enright, Callia Georgariou, Valerian Igwegbe, Lauren Welsh, their family, teachers and friends.

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



New leaders for youth pilgrims



WHEN the members of the St Margaret Youth Group of Scotland head to Lourdes next month as devoted helpers to the sick, there will be two new leaders in charge – and a new chaplain.

Father Edward Toner, of Holy Family and St Ninian, Kirkintilloch, who was ordained two years ago, will take on the chaplaincy role while father of two Sean Henderson, 32, is the new president of the organisation which has been taking young people from the Archdiocese to the French shrine for the past 48 years.

He succeeds Michael Canning who, with his wife Mhairi, devoted themselves to the SMSYG for 33 years before retiring last year.

And following their example Sean's wife Hayley, 31, a pharmacist, will also work closely with her husband as unofficial vice president.

The couple who came up through the ranks of the SMSYG have been to Lourdes around a dozen times.

Sean, a principal teacher at St Matthew's Primary School, Bishopbriggs, said: "It is a genuine honour to be taking on this role to help nurture a new generation of the SMSYG to serve the people of Glasgow on a pilgrimage to Lourdes."

"It is a big leap of faith deciding to come to Lourdes for the first time as a young person, a step into the unknown. But I promise you, it is one of the best decisions a young person can take. Give young people the opportunity to act in a certain way and they will."

Hayley said: "Lourdes is a place of miracles. They happen every day, giving people strength and hope, through the friendships that are made and the love, faith and fun that is shared. It is truly unique and special place and I am so privileged to be part of it."

BY BRIAN SWANSON



Important step on the way for East End young people

IT'S always good when younger people commit more of themselves to life in faith, in the Church.

The second (of four) Communities of the Neo-Catechumenal Way, based at St Thomas', Riddrie, received the Breviary (or Divine Office) for praying the Liturgy of the Hours, from Archbishop Nolan, earlier this month.

The psalms and readings are prayed the world

over at similar times, by clergy, Religious, and many Lay people and parish communities.

After the service, there was a celebration meal in the parish hall (known as a Convivence within the Neo-Catechumate tradition).

Congratulations were extended to one and all after their careful preparation and commitment to Prayer.

St Mungo's top marks

SCHOOL inspectors have praised St Mungo's Academy for its "warm, respectful and purposeful learning environment which demonstrates the school's values in all aspects of daily life."

The report adds: "School staff fully support a pupil-led Equalities and Equity Group which promotes cultural diversity through event planning and classroom learning experiences."

"This helps young people to understand and respect the wide range of cultures represented in St Mungo's."

Councillor Christina Cannon, Glasgow City Council's education convener, said: "I recently had the pleasure of spending a day with the St Mungo's young people and I found that they were so engaging and full of ideas on what they were looking for in their school and what part of the learning and teaching was having an impact on their education."

"So, I am delighted that inspectors have praised and made a special mention of the pupil-led equalities and equity group and how passionate teachers and young people are in celebrating the school's achievements."



The staff, pupils & partners of St Roch's Secondary congratulate all of our young people who gained the Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award 2023-24, by exemplifying our school motto, *Alios Adiuva* (Help Others) and our school values of **FAITH & COMPASSION**.

St Roch's Secondary
40 Royston Rd
Glasgow G21 2NF
0141 582 0270

Head Teacher: Mr. K. Herron

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Legion's tribute to a dedicated chaplain of souls

BY **VERONICA MCNEECE**

VICE PRESIDENT, LEGION OF MARY, SCOTLAND

FATHER Des's lifelong devotion to the Legion of Mary began shortly after his ordination in 1952 when he was appointed curate at St Teresa's in Possilpark, with the late Fr John Conway as parish priest.

Among the duties assigned to him was attendance at the weekly meeting of the Legion of Mary on a Monday evening.

Fr Conway had been a curate in St Peter's Parish in Partick when the founder of the Legion of Mary, Frank Duff, visited Scotland from Dublin with the intention of establishing the first group of the Legion outside of Ireland. On 26th April 1928 the first meeting took place in Partick and he saw at firsthand how worthwhile it could be in a parish.

Fr Des was attracted by the atmosphere of the meetings right from the start: the praying of the rosary, the reporting of the work that had been undertaken since the previous meeting and especially the commitment of members.

Picture by Paul McSherry



Fr Des continued to attend the Legion of Mary meetings and he threw himself wholeheartedly into the spirit of the Legion, seeing and serving Christ in others

in union with Mary, as the Legion operates.

He immersed himself in the activities of the Legion within the parish and throughout the diocese, the

junior Legion and the Sancta Maria Hostel.

As the Legion apostolate developed and legionaries became more committed to reaching out in a spirit of faith and friendship to all, Fr Des would join them in visitation to places like the Isle of Skye.

While on a Peregrinatio Pro Christo (travelling for Christ) Fr Des would sacrifice a couple of weeks holiday each year in order to join teams of legionaries on their missionary work in Amsterdam, Haarlem and various parts of Finland.

Devoted

For the whole of his long and devoted priesthood Fr Des would give spiritual direction to legionaries and in 1977 he was appointed by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland as their national spiritual director, an appointment that was to last for 30 years.

It is not easy to put into words all that the Legion of Mary was to Fr Des and all that Fr Des meant to all the legionaries whose lives he touched. His radiant smiling face, the twinkle in his eye, his hearty laugh, his

sense of humour, his love of hearing "your story" and his gentleness are treasured memories.

It's significant that Fr Des went to God on Good Shepherd Sunday as we all saw his likeness to "The Good Shepherd" whom he loved, served and imitated all his long and blessed priestly life.

A man of deep faith and a deep life of prayer, he was totally open to the Holy Spirit and committed to anything that he believed was for the good of all, never giving himself credit for any of the good news stories which were plentiful.

His love of God and His Blessed Mother were part of his DNA. As a spiritual

director Fr Des was full of wisdom and reassurance, thanking God in all circumstances and he never failed to reassure you, making you feel precious to God, gently inviting you to go deeper in faith but always with great humility. He was a humble man and would readily acknowledge whenever he felt he had got things wrong.

It is not possible to write about Fr Des Broderick, without mentioning His blessings. He always gave you a profound personal blessing that made you feel so at peace.

We thank God for the blessing that Fr Des Broderick was to the Legion of Mary in Scotland, may his gentle soul rest in peace.

'Fr Broderick was a real spiritual father to me..'

FR John Desmond Broderick who was fondly addressed by everyone as Fr Des, was a humble, kind and loving priest who dedicated his life to Christ.

BY **HELEN BORDER** when someone was dying or very ill to pray and sit with them.

It was normal for him to stay overnight in someone's room if they were near death. He was such a comfort to their families who were so grateful to him.

Of course, Fr Des helped many residents not only when they were ill or dying but counselled many and helped them to accept their new home.

His Requiem Mass at St Andrews Cathedral was attended by 34 priests, three deacons, a Bishop, an Archbishop and over 1,000 laity which I found very humbling.

Archbishop Nolan gave a wonderful homily which ended so fittingly when he said he would always remember that wonderful smile of Fr. Des that he always gave to everyone he met.

Bishop John Keenan led the service at the cemetery which was so fitting too, as I took Bishop John every month to see Fr Des. They had been friends for many years, and he was also the executor of Fr Des' estate.

If there were three words I could choose to describe Fr Des, they would be: humble, kind and loving. The man with the wonderful smile who worked so hard for the Lord until the day he died.

Rest in peace my dear friend and enjoy being home with the Lord and his Blessed Mother whom you served so well all your life.

Ukrainians inspired by war poet

A YOUNG Ukrainian seminarian and poet, whose verses are widely acknowledged to inspire his fellow citizens to resist the Russian invasion, was the special guest at a Ukrainian Mass in Saint Michael's Parkhead last month.

Welcomed by members of the Scottish Ukrainian community, many in colourful national dress, Bogdan Fesyk who is currently studying in Rome, was on a tour of Scotland sharing his verses with fellow Ukrainians

throughout the country.

Father Andriy Chornenko, Vicar in Scotland of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family, who celebrated the Mass and welcomed his fellow countryman told Flourish:

"Bogdan is a contemporary poet, who has published two poetry collections, mostly about current events in Ukraine, how people experience the war and of course his poetry supports the spirit of resilience and faith in victory.



"In Glasgow and other cities, including Aberdeen, Dundee, and Lockerbie, where we have a chapel, he presented his collections, and recited his poems.

"Many people found it interesting that he drew a parallel between the

great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko and Robert Burns!"

Father Andriy added: "He graduated from seminary in Ukraine, and is now studying for a doctorate in moral theology in Rome at Pontificia Accademia Alfonsiana."

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How to react when you find yourself scandalised by your fellow Christians

WORK and move within church circles and find that most of the people are honest, committed, and for the most part radiate their faith positively.

Most churchgoers aren't hypocrites. What I do find disturbing in church circles though is that many of us can be bitter, mean-spirited, and judgmental in terms of defending the very values that we hold most dear.

It was Henri Nouwen who first highlighted this, commenting with sadness that many of the bitter and ideologically driven people he knew, he had met inside of church circles and places of ministry. Within church circles, it sometimes seems, almost everyone is angry about something.

The algebra works this way: because I am sincerely concerned about an important moral, ecclesial, or justice issue, I can excuse a certain amount of anger, elitism, and negative judgment, because I can rationalise that my cause, dogmatic or moral, is so important that it justifies my mean spirit, that is, I have a right to be cold and harsh because this is such an important truth.

And so we justify a mean spirit by giving it a prophetic cloak, believing that we

are warriors for God, truth, and morals when, in fact, we are struggling with our own insecurities, and fears.

Hence we often look at others, and instead of seeing brothers and sisters struggling, like us, to follow Jesus, we see "people in error", "dangerous relativists", "new age pagans", "religious flakes", and in our more generous moments, "poor misguided souls".

But seldom do we look at what this kind of judgment is saying about us, about our own health of soul and our own following of Jesus.

Don't get me wrong: Truth is not relative, moral issues are important, and need to be defended.

But that doesn't override everything else and give us an excuse to rationalise a mean spirit. We must defend truth, defend those who cannot defend themselves, and be faithful in the traditions of our own churches. However, right truth and right morals don't make us disciples of Jesus. What does?

What makes us genuine disciples of Jesus is living inside his Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and this is not something abstract and vague.

St Paul tells us that we can live according to either the

Scribblings of the spirit

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



spirit of the flesh or of the Holy Spirit.

We live according to the flesh when we live in bitterness, judgment of our neighbour, factionalism, and non-forgiveness. When these things fill our lives, we shouldn't delude ourselves and think that we are living in the Holy Spirit.

Conversely, we live inside of the Holy Spirit when our lives are filled by charity, joy,

peace, patience, goodness, constancy, faith, gentleness, and chastity.

This may be a cruel thing to say, and perhaps more cruel not to say, but I sometimes see more charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, and gentleness among persons who are Unitarian or New Age (people who are often judged by other churches as being wishy-washy and as not standing for anything)

than I see among those of us who do stand so strongly for certain ecclesial and moral issues that we become mean-spirited and non-charitable inside of those convictions.

Given the choice of whom I'd like as a neighbour or the choice of whom I might want to spend eternity with, I am sometimes conflicted. Who is my real faith companion? The mean-spirited zealot at war for Jesus, or the gentler soul who is branded wishy-washy or "new age"? At the end of the day, who is living more in the Holy Spirit?

We need, I believe, to be more self-critical vis-a-vis our anger, harsh judgments, mean-spirit, exclusiveness, and disdain for other ecclesial and moral paths.

As T.S. Eliot once said: The last temptation that's the greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason. We may have truth and right morals on our side, but our anger and harsh judgments towards those who don't share our truth and morals may well have us standing outside the Father's house, like the older brother of the prodigal son, bitter both at God's mercy and at those who are, seemingly without merit, receiving it.

Fond memories of those Sacred Heart pictures

THE Baptismal gown has had its latest outing. The newly minted baby has been passed around family and friends for the general oohing and aahing that newborns deserve. The Christening cake has been scoffed. Roll on the next family celebration.

As a decidedly winter family, from late October to March, the birthday candles are barely snuffed out before they are relit. The long winter months are pleasantly punctuated by the Happy Birthday song.

It makes a change when the warmer weather arrives and we take the party outside.

One such celebration this month will be the first birthday of our youngest grandson. Whatever the weather our spirits won't be dampened. His two baby cousins are too young to get in on the act so the older ones will be there to assist if he can't quite blow out his own candle.



Mary's musings

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

First birthdays are extra special and with his birthday coinciding with Fathers' Day it will be a double celebration.

Our daughter-in-law kindly delivered him last year just in time for Father's Day to the delight of father and grandfathers. That wasn't the only cause for joy. The new wee fella was born on the feast of the Sacred Heart!

Since the feast falls on the Friday after the second Sunday after Trinity Sunday this year's solemnity will be celebrated on June 7. Our boy will next celebrate his birthday on the feast day in 2045 when he'll be a young man of 22.

Gone are the days when a staple of every Catholic home was the image of the Sacred Heart, classically hung above the fireplace. Attitudes and times have changed.

Messenger

My grandparents' Sacred Heart image dominated the chimney breast. On the coffee table there would have been the wee red Messenger magazine.

My parents hung our Sacred Heart enthronement, a slightly smaller version, on an alcove wall.

Perhaps my mum was concerned that the placing looked like a demotion because she had a fairly size-



able statue also on prominent display.

Whenever I see an image of the Sacred Heart it is like being transported back to childhood.

It is synonymous with home. My own spiritual comfort zone.

In an address at a recent symposium in Rome to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the apparitions of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque which took place between 1673 and 1675, Pope Francis spoke movingly of the devotion to

the Sacred Heart.

In a call for increased devotion to the Sacred Heart he spoke of Jesus asking St. Margaret Mary for acts of reparation for the offences caused by the sins of humanity. He noted: "If these acts consoled His heart, this means that reparation can also console the heart of every wounded person."

It was his hope, he said, for a renewal and deepening of the "meaning of this beautiful practice of the reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a practice that today may be somewhat forgotten or wrongly judged obsolete."

Now that I think about it my repertoire for soothing factious babies to sleep is somewhat limited. So this month, even if I won't be remotely tuneful I'll try "Sweet Heart of Jesus, fount of love and mercy, today we come they blessings to implore..."

It may not soothe the baby but it will soothe me!

New translations of scripture recordings will assist our reflection on the Word of God

If you have grown used to the familiar translations of the Bible used at Mass for the last half century, then prepare yourself for new insights ... for a new translation is on its way.

The Lectionary, which is the book that contains the Scripture readings for Mass and the Sacraments, is changing later this year as part of the continuing process of revising liturgical translations.

The process began with the Roman Missal in 2011 and has continued with all the other liturgical texts.

The new Lectionary will use the English Standard Version – Catholic Edition of the Bible and the Abbey Psalter.

The changes are intended to make the biblical translations more faithful to the original languages, and to provide a text for use at Mass that is more proclaimable and, where appropriate, more inclusive.

Among the changes Mass-goers will notice are:

- A complete Proper of Saints with new saints and updated national calendars for England, Scotland and Wales.
- Index: Fully indexed with page numbers and Lectionary numbers for all biblical references, psalms and feasts
- Music: New music settings for Gospel Sequences.



The Catholic Truth Society is now taking orders from churches for the new liturgical books, with special editions for use in solemn Masses, study editions and daily missals.

The new translation of the readings will sound slightly different to Mass-goers who have been using the previous liturgical books for decades, but to aid the process of change people's mis-

sals will also be produced with prices starting at just £9.95 and a new 'Graduale Parvum' will be published with introits for Sundays and Holy Days in English and Latin.

The new liturgical books will come into force on the First Sunday of Advent this year.

■ **More info at**
www.newlectionary.org

Pope's June prayer intention is for migrants and refugees

POPE Francis' monthly prayer intention this June is for "those fleeing their own countries."

The Pope invited the Church to pray for this intention in this month's The Pope Video, which is now viewable online at www.thepopevideo.org

In his video, the Pope reminds Christians that "whoever welcomes a migrant welcomes Christ," and laments how often this is forgotten.

In recent years, the number of people who have been displaced has exceeded that during the Second World War.

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), in 2023, there were 110 million people forcefully displaced throughout the world.

In this context, Pope Francis has repeatedly asked throughout his pontificate that migrants be accompanied, promoted and integrated.

At the beginning of the video, the Pope says, "The feeling of uprootedness or not knowing where they belong often accompanies the trauma experienced by people who are forced to flee their homeland because of war or poverty."

For this reason, he exhorts, "we promote a social and political culture that protects the rights and dignity of migrants, a culture that promotes the possibility that they can achieve their full



Picture: Imago Mundi

potential."

Cardinal Michael Czerny, the Prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, which organises the World Day, said: "The Holy Family had to take refuge in a foreign land because Baby Jesus's life was in danger ... All of us are invited to welcome, protect, promote and integrate any person who has fled their homeland to save their lives or who are searching for a dignified future."

ART OF THE MONTH



Art can help us to connect with suffering humanity

THOMAS Benjamin Kennington was a masterful artist whose portraits, especially of children and orphans, resonate with emotion and social commentary.

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

His painting "Homeless" captures the human condition with both sensitivity and realism. He would be astounded by those who seek to criminalise and jail homeless people and rough sleepers.

In "Homeless," Kennington skilfully depicts the plight of the marginalised and downtrodden members of society. Through his attention to detail and expert use of light and shadow, he brings to life the struggles and hardships faced by those without a place to call home.

The central figure, with bowed head and weary posture, suggests profound despair and resignation, dealing with the harsh reality of homelessness. Nevertheless, there

is a sense of dignity and humanity, even in the face of adversity.

Despite the bleakness of their circumstances, there seems to be a quiet resilience and inner strength. The artist not only highlights the social injustices of his time but also, perhaps, of ours. The painting allows us to recall the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, regardless of their station in life.

Thomas Benjamin Kennington's "Homeless" is a masterpiece of social realism that continues to resonate with us today. Through his compassionate portrayal of the marginalised and disenfranchised, he shines a light on the pressing social issues of his time while also reminding us of the inherent dignity and resilience of the human spirit.

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Heavenly Father, in the cold quiet corners of our bustling cities, weary souls huddle without a place to call home and often remain unseen, with struggles and hardships heavy on their hearts.

Grant them, O Lord, Your comfort and solace. Warm them in Your loving embrace and guide us to extend our hands in compassion.

May we never turn a blind eye to their suffering, but work tirelessly to build a world where all Your children find refuge and belonging.

This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

There's nothing ordinary about 'ordinary' Sundays

AFTER the great seasons of Lent and Easter, and the beautiful feasts of the last few Sundays, we return this month to the so-called "Ordinary" Sundays, that is, the "ordered" or "numbered" weeks until Advent.

We also resume our reading of Mark's Gospel.

We meet Jesus at this point having called his disciples and having begun his preaching of God's Kingdom. So, in the Sunday Gospels over these next few months, we meet him in the thick of his ministry in Galilee, teaching, healing, even calming storms.

But we also find him facing opposition. Not everyone welcomes – or even understands – his message, who he is or what he is about. Maybe that is



Fr Tom Kilbride

Rector of the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain

our guiding reflection over these weeks: we have celebrated the great events of his death and resurrection, but are we prepared to follow him as faithfully in the "ordinary" of life?

Do we really understand who he is, put our faith in him and live as he teaches us? He shows us what God's kingdom is about: do we try to show it in our way too?

Tenth Sunday, Year B

We hear of a serious

charge brought against Jesus by the scribes: that he is an agent of the devil! He is beginning to face the opposition which will eventually take him to trial and the Cross. While he faces down that particular challenge by a parable about a divided house, there is perhaps something more painful in his own relatives thinking he is "out of his mind" (a phrase which might also imply they think he is possessed).

We will hear again in a few weeks about how the people of his home town don't accept him. Those who are closest to him in human terms don't seem able to recognise who he really is. When his mother and relatives arrive, he tells us that those who have faith, those who realise what God is doing in him, are his true family.

If we know him as he truly is and accept what he is revealing to us about God and his plan for us, then we come closer to him than his own blood relatives.

Mary – his mother and ours – bridges the gap between his earthly and spiritual family, however, as the one who most perfectly "does the will of God". She is the one who overcomes by her obedience the struggle with sin brought to the world through Eve and the serpent (First Reading).

Eleventh Sunday, Year B

Today, we hear two short parables about the Kingdom of God: it is like seed secretly growing in a field,

and it is like a tiny mustard seed which grows into a great shrub.

While few of us are farmers, anyone who has tried to grow plants or vegetables from seed can appreciate the message: God is at work even when we don't know how, and even when we don't think we're doing enough to make it happen!

He is quietly, secretly at work in the small things (like the tiny seed), and his presence, though perhaps unseen by us, has an enormous effect for good (like the broad shrub).

In the First Reading the prophet offers a similar parable: a little shoot cut from a cedar tree is planted on a mountain and, when it grows, it becomes a huge tree. God's work brings great growth from even the smallest of things. The Kingdom is God's power at work, and, if we let it, it will do amazing things in us, for us, for others and for our world.

Twelfth Sunday, Year B

If last week spoke of the great effect the Kingdom can have if we allow it, this week we hear of one of those moments in which Jesus reveals God's power in a most dramatic way, by calming a storm at sea.

It threatens to overwhelm the boat and the disciples, but Jesus, quiet in the boat despite it all, simply tells the wind off!

Awake, in the now-calm boat, he quizzes the disciples for their lack of faith. Because he was asleep, did they think he was not present to them? Did they not trust that, with him in their midst, everything would be okay, and they would be safe?

Mark presents fear as the enemy of faith. He is telling his storm-tossed community that Jesus is in control,

even if, at times, he seems too quiet, or even asleep!

He is always with us, calming our fears. God reminds Job (First Reading) that he has tamed the sea, whose waters were understood as a symbol of threat, chaos, anguish and everything opposed to harmony and peace. So, when the disciples ask the crucial question, "Who can this be?" of the one who has calmed the stormy sea they have faced, there can really be only one answer!

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Our Sunday sequence is interrupted by the celebration of the two great Apostles of the early Church (transferred from its normal date of June 29th).

There are two sets of readings (one for the Vigil and one for the Day). In the first, we hear that Peter shares in the healing ministry of Jesus, but also that he will have to share in his Cross. This comes about only when he himself has been healed – of the pain of his denials of Jesus – and responds again to the call to follow the Risen One, with declarations of

love.

We hear also of Paul's call and of his conversion from persecutor to preacher. Both great apostles had to undergo change, brought about by their encounter with the healing, forgiving power of the Risen Jesus.

The 'Day readings' focus instead on the ministry each is given: Paul to preach and Peter to be the rock for the Church. Both, we hear, fulfil their tasks with the power of Jesus working through them. Neither "the lion's mouth" nor the "gates of the underworld" (not even the bars of a physical prison!) will prevent the growth of the Kingdom!

Peter and Paul speak to us about the same things the parables and the story of the storm showed us: of strength and faith in the face of difficulties and anxieties. With Jesus' power in us and beside us, we can face all things.

May the Apostles with whom we end this month pray for us in the things we find hard, for the strength, faith and hope we need as we take up the call to follow him (like Peter) over these "far-from-ordinary" weeks.

Notre Dame sisters' tribute to Sr Teresita

THE Sisters of Notre Dame – whose work in the Archdiocese of Glasgow has shaped the life of countless Catholics – ask you to join them in prayer as they mourn the death and give thanks to God for the life of their previous Congregational Leader, Sr Teresita Weind, who died on April 28th, after a long and painful battle with cancer.

Sr Teresita served as Congregational Leader for 14 years (2008–2022) and, in that capacity, visited the entire Congregation, including in the Archdiocese, which she affectionately called 'Bonnie Scotland,' especially after her visit to Loch Lomond.

She visited us in 2016 and was in regular contact with us throughout her 14 years in office.

It was a pleasure to welcome Sr Teresita to Britain, and to Glasgow in particular.

She learned about our reality by visiting our communities and ministries. She listened to our hopes and desires and inspired us to reflect on these within the contexts of our congregational charism, the calls of our General Chapters, the needs of the Congregation and the world, and as members of the Church.

In so doing, she affirmed our identity and mission, and our identity as women of the Church. In addition,



and to an ageing Province, she affirmed the call to each of us, regardless of age, always to be prophetic witnesses to the Gospel and to our charism, as was St Julie Billiart, our foundress.

Prayer

This, she observed, requires deep prayer. As a leader, she strengthened our roots and encouraged us to act on that strength.

Sr Teresita was a charismatic leader with a quality of presence that earned her universal respect. She was a woman of deep faith and prayer. The depth of her spirituality and the breadth of her vision continue to inspire us in all that we can be as Sisters of Notre Dame.

We thank her for her leadership and pray that she will continue to guide us from her home of eternal rest.

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New census figures are a challenge for us to reflect on an ever-changing Scotland

LAST Sunday I celebrated the 1st Holy Communion Mass in St Mungo's. The previous Saturday I celebrated the 1st Holy Communion Mass in St Roch's.

While there is always a certain amount of chaos around these Masses, both were lovely occasions, and I appreciated the work of those who had helped prepare the children, whether at home, at school, or in church, to ensure that the celebrations would go well.

Also last Sunday, my grand-nephew was celebrating his 1st Holy Communion. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get to that Mass, as I had been able to do for his brother a couple of years previously, but I was able to join the family afterwards for the final hour of the party, and it was good to see them all and have a good catch-up.

There were, apparently, 42 children in my grand-nephew's group in an outlying part of the city. However, between the two sets of Holy Communions that I celebrated, involving three schools – St Roch's, St Mun-



Fr Frank's log

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

go's and St Martin's – there were only 25 children, which has a lot to do with the demographic in this part of the city, and I believe that next year the numbers will be significantly fewer.

I don't usually get into the numbers game, but I have been conscious this week of the results of the 2022 census being released, and the decline in the number of people, including Catholics, who consider themselves as being religious.

For the first time, less than half of Scotland considers itself as having any kind of religion. So, who knows how this is all going to play out in the years ahead. All we can do is keep the faith, live the faith, and spread the faith as best we can, and leave the rest to God.

I have recently, on a few

occasions, spent the night in St Roch's presbytery. It's not nearly ready yet for moving into, and there's a fair bit of a journey to go yet until it becomes the new residence for the Passionists.

The reason for my occupancy was that the house, church and hall were due to get an electrical and gas inspection, and on each occasion the contractors were going to be coming early in the morning. So, rather than having to travel in from Bishopbriggs in the early morning traffic, I brought down a few things, did a bit of basic food shopping, and made up a bed, in what will mostly likely be my own room once the renovations are done, and was well prepared to be on site for the workers' dawn arrival.

It gave me a feel for what



it might be like living there, and it was fine. One noticeable difference, though, was the sound of traffic travelling along the Royston Road.

In Bishopbriggs the only sounds we tend to hear are the twittering of birds in the wooded area out back, and the croaking of a rare breed of frogs that inhabits the pond just beyond my bedroom window.

However, having been raised in Partick and Drum-

chapel, the sound of traffic is something that am well used to, and I find it easy to settle into the rhythm of the cars as being almost like a prayer mantra.

Next weekend I will be heading down to Selly Park in Birmingham to celebrate the Golden Jubilee Mass of a sister who used to be part of the retreat team in Minsteracres when I was novice master there back in the early 1990's. I am looking forward to seeing a few

of the sisters there whom I worked with during that time, having retained a great affection for them, and great memories of what they brought to Minsteracres during that period.

I haven't in fact seen them since 2010, when I was invited over from Dublin to give a retreat to the big, but mostly elderly community. I remember that when the retreat was over, I wasn't able to fly back to Dublin, because a volcano had erupted in Iceland, sending an ash cloud into the air and halting air traffic throughout Europe.

I stayed on a couple of days, indulged in a bit of city sightseeing in Birmingham, took a train up to Glasgow to visit the family, and then made my way back to Dublin by bus, ferry and train. Hopefully, there will be no such dramas next weekend. I didn't fancy the drive, the train was too expensive, and so I am going by bus!

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

Joy and hope amid the devastation... despite the violence and war, peace volunteers plan a mission to Gaza next year

I'M not one for festooning dangle things from my rear-view mirror, but I made one exception.

A member of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) who spent four months in the occupied West Bank in 2018 spoke to our parish back in 2019 and I've had the little felt dove of peace she shared hanging in the car ever since.

In recent months, I have felt the need to reach up and touch that white bird, saying a silent prayer that the tiny green olive branch in its beak might bring peace to the Holy Land.

Many of you will know other brave souls who have worked with EAPPI, the international programme coordinated by the World Council of Churches. People like Philippa Bonella who told my parish about her experiences. They will have worked in a team of human rights monitors in the occupied West Bank providing a protective presence to



communities, documenting human rights abuses and monitoring access to education for Palestinian children.

Their work was difficult and exposed them to the real meaning of the word 'occupied' in relation to the West Bank.

You might think that the current situation in the Holy Land would have brought such a programme to a halt – surely it must be almost impossible to find recruits to spend time in Palestine and Israel after all that has happened in the past six months and all that

may happen in the months ahead? Monitoring human rights abuses and providing a protective presence in Gaza or the occupied West Bank was daunting enough before October 7, 2023.

And yet, EAPPI has been recruiting. Its deadline for applications was in April.



Marian Pallister

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

Once candidates are accepted this month, there will be interviews in June and the plan – the hope – is to train 20 new EAPPIs for 2025.

That word 'hope' is one we are hearing more and more, even though aggression continues.

When Fr Gabriel Romanelli came to Glasgow in April, he spoke of Gaza as 'almost hell' but added 'yet there is always hope'. For me, that hope was the very essence of Fr Gabriel, priest at the only Catholic parish in Gaza who has been in exile since October 7.

And then there's Zoughbi Alzoughbi, founder and director of the Palestine Conflict Transformation Centre, who I was privileged to introduce on a webinar

organised by Pax Christi International. He said: 'The Israeli occupation has created an alarming deterioration of political, economic, environmental structures, but even in the midst of this deterioration, I experience great joy in responding to people's needs.'

Joy, hope – words that are music to the ears of someone involved in a peace organisation but not ones I expected to hear right now in relation to the Holy Land. But then, our Lord walks there, so how can I doubt that joy and hope will return?

And so, I keep repeating 'Joy and hope' every time I reach up to my little dove of peace. A tiny prayer with unbounded meaning.

Taking the SCIAF message from Bogotá to Benbecula

WHEN SCIAF staff go on trips, it's often to projects of ours in places like Zambia or Malawi.

A decision I took when I became chief executive around six months ago was to complement this valuable work within Scotland and 'get out and about' more to meet supporters and share the message of SCIAF's work.

So during Lent, I was fortunate enough to visit our island communities of Skye and Benbecula, where the weather was cool (very) but the welcome was warm as the African sun.

In Skye my host was Father Ronald Campbell of the Our Lady of the Assumption parish in Portree. I met with a small group of around 20 SCIAF supporters who were highly engaged and interested in our work.

It was then south to Benbecula, which is located between North and South Uist. From a religious point of view, the Outer Hebrides are very interesting. The 2011 census found that

BY LORRAINE CURRIE
SCIAF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

unlike the north islands, the people of the southern islands are predominantly Catholic – in fact the two most Catholic civil parishes in Scotland are in the Outer Hebrides. In South Uist 90% identify as Catholic while in Barra, it's 81.5%. Benbecula is more of a mix.

There are only two schools in Benbecula, one primary and one secondary; both are non-denominational. I visited them and gave the children (all the children of the island) a talk about SCIAF's work. It was great to hear from the secondary pupils who were raising funds through our Big Lent Walk.

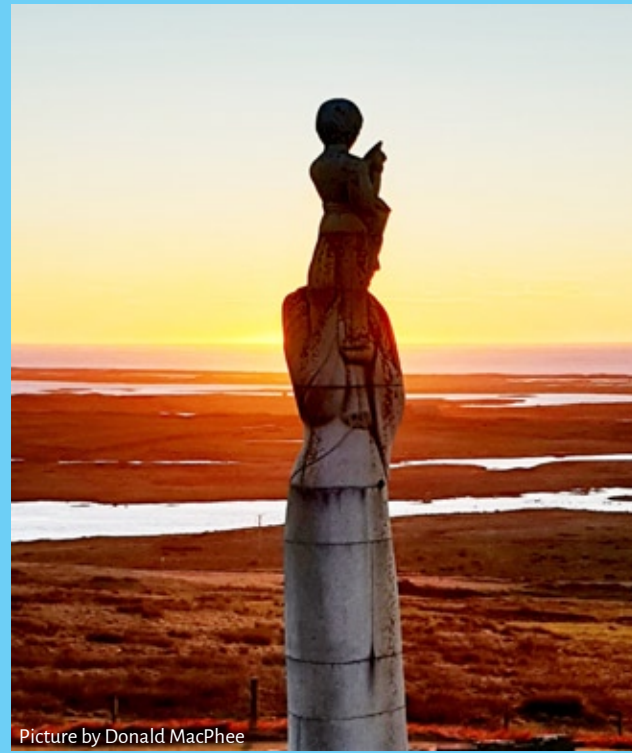
The theme was equally ecumenical when locals from the Catholic Church of St Mary's joined others from the local Church of Scotland for my talk, which by then I knew off by heart! The event was attended by all ages and all faiths who

again were very interested in the work and the feeling of us all coming together was amazing.

The Parish Priest there is Father Michael Hutson, a great supporter of SCIAF's work and one of our Board members. He will join SCIAF on a trip to Colombia this month (he is self-funding!) to see more of the life-changing work we do there.

It was an absolute honour to get such a special insight into island life. Small communities are so significant to the work of SCIAF. Relying on fishing and crofting, they truly understand what it's like to be a community and take community-based approaches to their lives and the common good of the island. The link here to our work overseas is palpable. They really relate to the lives and people we serve.

What also struck me was their warmth, hospitality and generosity. My Lent talks at each Mass must have resonated as the 'plates' were heaving. Thanks to them for their



Picture by Donald MacPhee

Lady of the Isles statue of the Madonna and child – erected in 1957 shortly after the Ministry of Defence proposed a missile testing range be constructed in the area. Understandably, this caused concern that it would destroy much of the island's way of life, culture and language.

Resistance to the proposal was led by Canon John Morrison, the local parish priest and saw the whole community rally together, all faiths as one. Even though it did happen, it was on a much smaller scale than first proposed but united an island to fund the beautiful statue.

People of all faiths supported the project through fundraising and giving of their labour to construct the road and foundations for the 40-tonne statue. It was intended to express the devotion of the community to the Blessed Virgin Mary but was also intended to be a permanent reminder to 'strangers' that they were entering a different world. And that it is.

generosity to SCIAF over the years in prayers, reflections and giving of funds. The communities are so motivated by their deep faith and put into action for the common good of

their communities and the entire Global Family.

The other similarity between island communities and our work is in their sense of justice. While there I learned of the Our



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Photo by Colin Hattersley.



Angel, Zambia