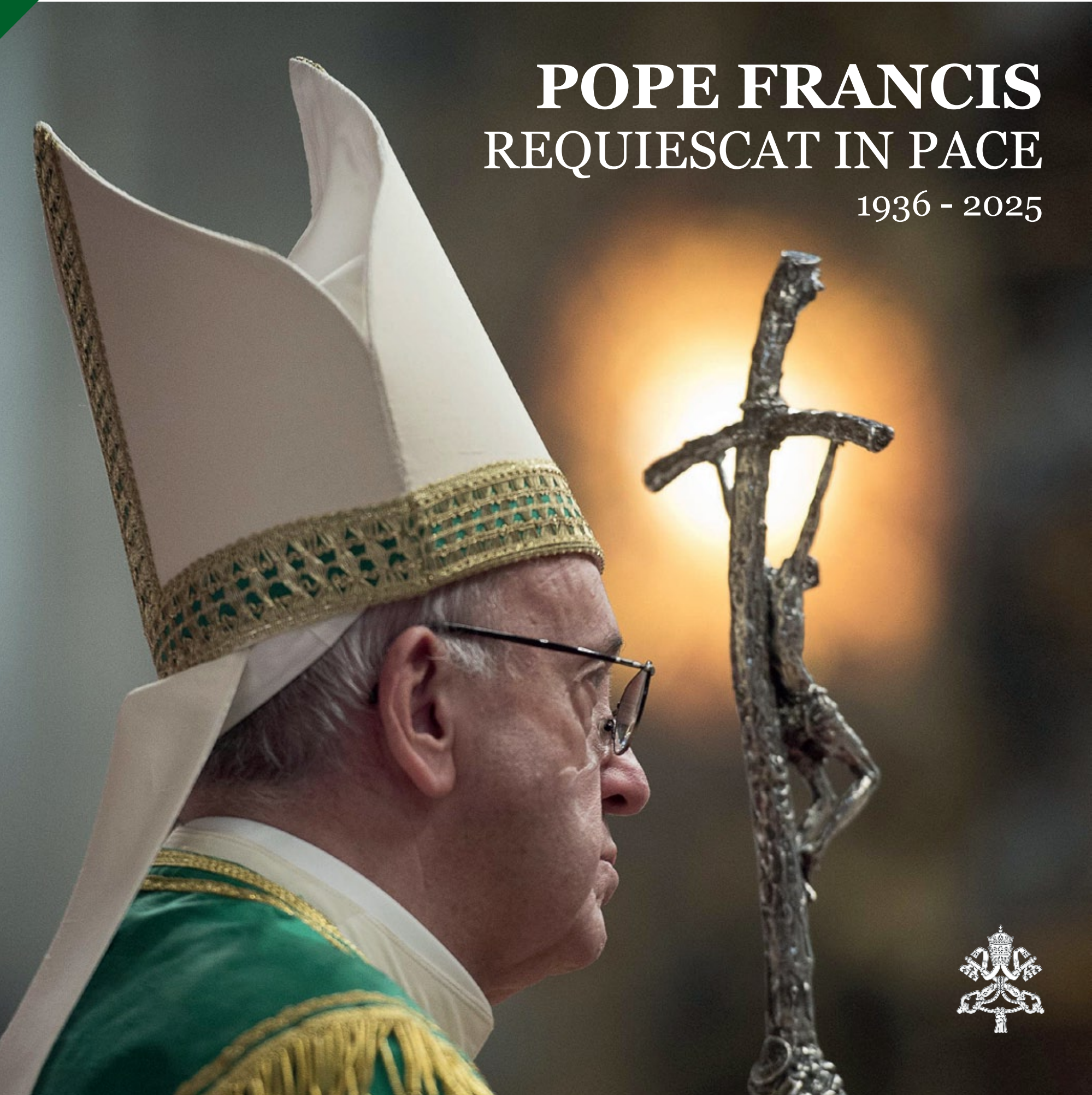


News • Spirituality • Quality • Culture • Education • Life

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

May 2025



POPE FRANCIS
REQUIESCAT IN PACE
1936 - 2025



Heartfelt tributes to the Pope of peace

As flags flew at half-mast on the City Chambers, Glasgow's Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren spoke for the city when she said: "Pope Francis gave a voice to the voiceless and will always be known as a champion of the poor – that will be his legacy."

The following day Archbishop Nolan joined Glasgow's civic leader to open a condolence book at the City Chambers which gave many people the chance to add their reflections on the late Holy Father.

The Pope's death has sparked countless tributes.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev Shaw Paterson, said: "May the blessed memory of Francis continue to serve as an example to the faithful

BY BRIAN SWANSON

people of God in our shared pilgrimage and in our common task of caring for God's creation".

Dr Sayed Ali Abbas Razaw, Chief Imam of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society, representing the Shia Muslim Community in Scotland said "Pope Francis' embrace of dialogue, his outreach to the margins, and his spiritual leadership leave behind a legacy that will continue to illuminate the path of all who seek truth and reconciliation."

SCIAF chief executive Lorraine Currie said: "He was a passionate advocate for the poor and for the planet and a source of tremendous inspiration for SCIAF and our partners across the world. We will miss him dearly, but

he will live on in our hearts and in our work."

First Minister John Sweeney attended the Pope's Funeral Mass in Rome and highlighted the Holy Father's focus on reconciliation and peace adding: "He was a man who was always on the side of the poor and those who faced injustice."

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar, who attended Mass in St Andrew's Cathedral on the day of the Holy Father's passing, praised Pope Francis for dedicating his life to "serving the poor and dispossessed" and said he was "deeply saddened".

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, whose father was a Church of Scotland Minister, said: "Pope Francis recognised and championed the virtue of compassion and advocated for the poor and marginalised across the world. I share the sorrow of the Catholic community in Scotland and world wide in mourning the loss of His Holiness."

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, the Scot who founded Mary's Meals and met the Pope at the Children's Rights Summit in the Vatican in February, said: "His words and actions have been a source of great encouragement to all of us working to eradicate hunger – and we need to let them inspire us to action now more than ever."

"As we thank the Lord for the gift of Pope Francis' papacy, I pray for him to help us from Heaven to fulfil our mission at Mary's Meals."



New Prioress at Carmel in Dumbarton



THE election of a new Prioress at the Carmelite Monastery in Dumbarton gave Archbishop Nolan the opportunity to visit and thank the sisters for their prayerful service to the Church.

Sister Teresa, (second from left in the picture) was elected by the community and will serve a three year term as Prioress at the Monastery of the Holy Ghost which was founded more than 90

years ago. It is her second term in the leadership role, having been elected previously.

She succeeds Sister Alaine who served as Prioress for the last three years.

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Cathedral baby loss service planned

A HEARTFELT invitation has gone out to families and individuals who have suffered the loss of a baby at any stage of pregnancy, at birth or in infancy to find solace and support at a special service taking place this month in Glasgow Cathedral.

Similar 'Saying Goodbye Services', as they are known, have been taking place in Cathedrals and places of worship throughout the UK for the last 13 years and now Glasgow has been chosen to host one of the services which will take place in the Cathedral in High Street beginning at 11am on Friday May 10.

Surge in numbers of people joining Church at Easter

EASTER weekend saw a historic flow of baptisms and confirmations both locally and across the world as record numbers of people were welcomed into the Church.

Across the Archdiocese over 100 or so 'new Catholics' entered the Church, including a record 14 at Immaculate Conception Maryhill, with large numbers also at Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald and at the Cathedral.

Archbishop Nolan celebrated the Easter Vigil at the Cathedral which saw six new people being baptised or received into the Church.

Catholic dioceses across the world reported huge numbers of adults entering the Church last month.

A record 17,800 people were received into the Church or baptised at this

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

year's Easter Vigil in France, including more than 7,400 young people aged 11 to 17.

The number of adult baptisms in Belgium rose to 536 this year, an almost 50% increase from 2024.

In Canada more than 600 adults were baptised in the Archdiocese of Vancouver alone. In the USA estimates suggest more than 30,000 joined the Church.

Archbishop Nolan said: "There certainly seems to be a growing number of young people expressing interest in the Church. I would encourage every parish in the Archdiocese to prepare and publicise RCIA programmes locally to give the opportunity to more people who may wish to be baptised or become Catholics to do so."



Pictures by Paul McSherry

Scotland's bishops visit Westminster

SCOTLAND'S bishops have visited the Westminster Parliament for a series of engagements.

The aim was to enter dialogue and strengthen relationships with MPs and Peers from all parties, and to make representations on issues of concern for the Catholic Church in Scotland.

The bishops discussed cuts to Official Development Assistance, immigration, sectarianism, poverty and welfare cuts, among other issues during the visit, which included a meeting with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Kirsty McNeill MP, and an open meeting with MPs and Peers, hosted by Frank McNally MP.

The bishops were able to celebrate Mass in the Chapel of St Mary-Undercroft and met with members of the Catholic Union to learn more about their work pursuing the common good across the UK.

Archbishop Nolan said: "One issue which we were very keen to bring to the Government's attention was the impact recent changes to immigration were having on our parishes. We are



BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

not no longer able to bring in priests on short term visas to provide summer support in our parishes, and the process for allowing foreign clergy to come and serve in our dioceses is becoming ever more difficult.

"We also had a 90 minute drop in session when MPs and members of the House

of Lords came to see us and hear our concerns which was very positive... I took the opportunity to raise our concerns about the two-child benefit cap and the recent cuts to overseas aid."

Parliamentary Officer, Anthony Horan, said "It is important for the bishops to be present in and around the Scottish and UK Parliaments, not simply to discuss issues of concern, which is

essential, but also to offer pastoral care and support to parliamentarians as they navigate an increasingly challenging political landscape.

"I was struck by the depth of gratitude expressed by MPs and Peers towards the bishops during their various engagements. It is clear that the presence of the bishops in parliament is not only welcome but vital."

The Louise Project
Positive Futures, A Community Vision

the space

Recruitment of Trustees

Location: Govanhill, Glasgow

The Louise Project is a Christian antipoverty project operating in Govanhill to enable families living with hardship to live flourishing lives and to enable communities to thrive. We welcome people of all faiths and none.

Govanhill is the most ethnically diverse area of Scotland, and home to some of the poorest 5-10% of people living in Scotland. The most recent migrant population to arrive are the European Roma from Romania and Slovakia and they are the dominant group support by the project.

The project offers families access to our Model for Enablement, a pathway of 5 well researched programmes of support, designed to break the cycle of generational poverty:

- Community Drop-in: Focuses on building relationships, home visits, providing a 'space to be' and access to essentials & a project shop that is run by beneficiaries.
- Community Advocacy: Support to manage issues such as immigration status, housing, debt, utilities, welfare benefits.
- Building Better Futures: Supports personal growth to enhance wellbeing and the development of transferable skills, i.e., literacy & digital skills, budgeting, college entry level classes and supported employment.
- Building Community: There are over 60 languages spoken in Govanhill, racial tension can be palpable. Building social trust across ethnic groups reduces anxiety and discrimination.
- Hopeful Futures: develops a sense of self, life skills and a knowledge and understanding of systems and the causes and consequences of poverty.

The project was started in 2013 by the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent De Paul and became a legally independent charity in 2017. It is also part of a group of charities under the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent De Paul Services (DCSVP).

We would like to recruit some new trustees to strengthen our board and, in particular, we would be pleased to hear from those with a legal or a finance background.

If you wish to speak to someone informally about the roles and the charity, please email our Chief Executive, Margo Uprichard at margo@spaceglasgow.org.uk.

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Cathedral indulgence for Jubilee Year pilgrimages

PLANS have been announced to run pilgrimages from across the Archdiocese to St Andrew's Cathedral to mark the Jubilee Year.

A week will be allocated to each deanery for pilgrimages when people from a local area will be welcomed to the mother church of the Archdiocese and be able to obtain the Holy Year indulgence.

On the Monday of designated each week, the Archbishop will preside at Solemn Vespers with Benediction in the Cathedral for the parishes of that Deanery.

Special musical resources that parishes can use in preparation for the visit are being prepared, including the singing of the Holy Year hymn 'Pilgrims of Hope'.

Following the Jubilee Year liturgy those taking part will be invited to gather in the Eyre Hall in the Archdioc-



Picture by Paul McSherry

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

esan offices for refreshments and the chance to catch up.

In addition, children from schools across the Archdiocese will make their own pilgrimages to the Cathedral, ideally during the week set aside for their local area.

The dates for Solemn Vespers for each deanery are as

follows: 28th April East and North, 2nd June West, 9th June South, 16th June Dunbartonshire West and 15th September Dunbartonshire East.

The idea of a Holy Year pilgrimage is suggested by the Holy Father in the Bull launching the Jubilee where he writes: "Pilgrimage is a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting

out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life.

"In the coming year, pilgrims of hope will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full."

And the Vatican decree establishing the Holy Year Plenary Indulgence states: "The faithful can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if, individually or in a group, they devoutly visit any Jubilee site and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to Mary, the Mother of God, so that in this Holy Year everyone 'will come to know the closeness of Mary, the most affectionate of mothers, who never abandons her children'".

New Holy Cross for Holy Cross



THIS moving depiction of our Lord's Crucifixion, installed on Good Friday, takes pride of place in Holy Cross Church, Croy, after being created as a Lenten challenge by artist and parishioner Daniel Campbell.

Daniel, who is also an actor, said: "I guess I always wanted to paint Christ because he is my biggest idol, so I decided to give myself a challenge to dedicate this Lent to paint the crucifix-

ion and have it completed in time for Good Friday. It took me 30 attempts to get what I wanted but I am very happy with it."

Parish Priest Canon Tom White said: "This commission came about by accident or perhaps it was part of God's plan."

"A few months ago after arriving in Croy, young Daniel came to see me and he reminded that I had been his school chaplain back in the day when he was a pupil

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

at our Lady's High School Cumbernauld, and he was part of a group who enjoyed a wonderful pilgrimage to Rome.

"He told me that during Covid he had started taking up painting and showed me pictures on his phone that he was working on including the painting we see now."

"Although it is different

from what people might be used to the reaction has been very positive.

"And it seemed to me appropriate that in this church, dedicated to the Holy Cross, that the work of one of our young parishioners should take centre stage on Good Friday and throughout the Easter season."

Daniel now hopes that the painting can be displayed in other churches once it leaves Holy Cross.



Archbishops launch new Rosary book

A BRIDGE between social justice activism and traditional Catholic piety... that was how Archbishop John Wilson (above) summed up St Oscar Romero during his visit to Glasgow.

Archbishop Wilson, the Archbishop of Southwark, was welcomed to Glasgow by Archbishop Nolan for the presentation of his new book – The Romero Rosary.

In the book Archbishop Wilson takes what he describes as the 'bold' step of offering not only meditations on the traditional mysteries of the Rosary based on Romero's writings but composes 15 new mysteries – which he calls the 'Romero Mysteries of the Rosary' – with five 'Mysteries of Charity', five 'Mysteries of Compassion and Mercy' and five 'Mysteries of Justice and Peace'.

These new 'mysteries' are based around well-known Gospel scenes which the Archbishop proposes for meditation during the 10 Hail Marys of each decade – scenes such as Jesus meeting the rich young man and Jesus with the woman caught in adultery.

Pupils from St Benedict's High in Linwood heard Archbishop Wilson talk about his personal devotion to St Oscar Romero which began when he was just 17 and picked up a book of the slain prelate's sayings.

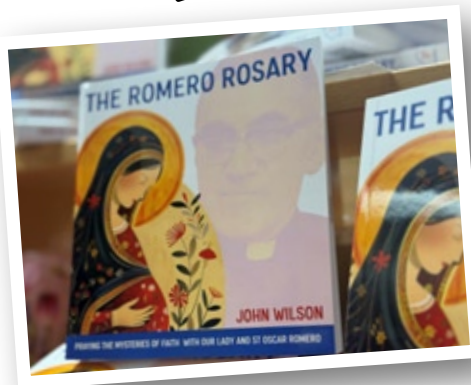
Archbishop Wilson said: "St Oscar Romero invites us to an ever-deepening relationship with Christ through

the Church. He calls us to the sacraments and the life of faith. He forbids us to seek benefit or profit at the expense of anyone else.

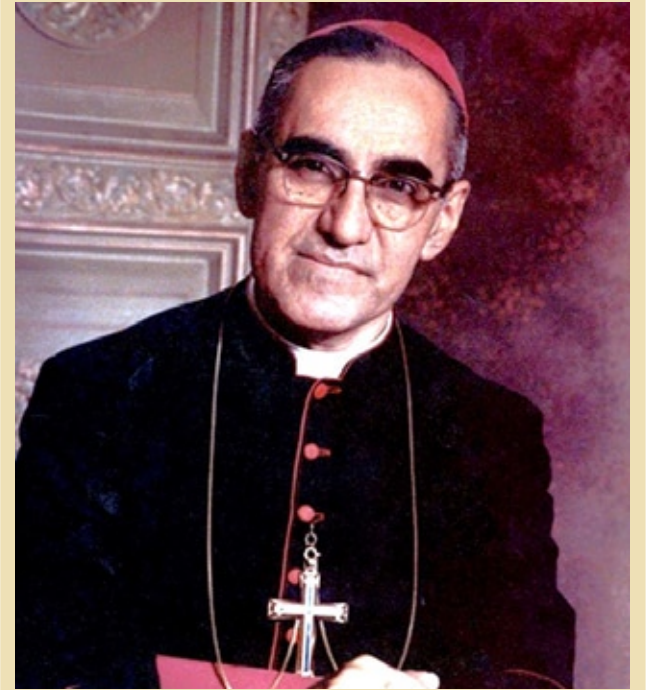
"He asks us to walk forward in virtuous harmony with as many people as possible, especially those on the margins. He urges us to give what we can, to do what we can, and to say what we can, to make a difference to those most in need

"His legacy is a summons to witness that selfishness – whether personal, or societal, national or international – only ever brings division, even destruction and death. Self-giving, however, always yields life, even when that self-gift is a sacrificial grain of wheat which dies in the soil to produce a rich harvest."

■ **The Romero Rosary is available from Pauline Media, 36 St Enoch Square. You can find out more about St Oscar Romero at www.romerotrust.org.uk**



Who was St Oscar Romero?



OSCAR Romero was Archbishop of San Salvador.

He was assassinated on Monday March 24th 1980 as he was celebrating Mass in the chapel of the Divine Providence cancer hospital where he lived.

Thirty five years later, he was declared a martyr of the Church, killed out of hatred of the faith, and was beatified on May 23rd

2015.

On Sunday, 14 October 2018 he was officially canonised as St Oscar Romero. His feast day is March 24.

"Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all." – St Oscar Romero

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Scalán Annual Mass

Sunday 8th June 2025, 4pm

Scalán
Braes of Glenlivet
AB37 9JS

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If you have any questions, please contact scalanassociation@gmail.com



Photographs © Geraldine McClure

Holy Year Mass at Scotland's historic 'secret seminary'

THE Jubilee Year is to be marked with a special Mass at Scalán in the Braes of Glenlivet – Scotland's 'secret' seminary.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

The date chosen is Sunday June 8 – the Feast of Pentecost – at 4pm, and organisers are hoping for a large gathering at the site which played a pivotal role in the survival of Catholicism in Scotland.

The Scottish Parliament had met in Edinburgh in 1560 and passed laws which forbade the celebration of Mass in Scotland; priests were prohibited from being in Scotland at all. Further laws of a similar nature were enacted over the next 150 years. So, Mass could only be celebrated in secret.

In 1714 the first seminary in post-reformation Scotland was founded on Eilean Bàn, an island on Loch Morar in the Western Highlands.

Unfortunately, it was dis-

covered and destroyed by Government troops, the "redcoats", in 1716, as they laid waste much of the Highlands in punishment for the Jacobite Uprising of 1715.

Its successor was Scalán. It was situated in the Braes of Glenlivet, eight miles from Tomintoul, in the lands of the Catholic Duke of Gordon who, along with its remote location, provided it with some security.

Between 1716 and 1799 it prepared about 64 priests for Scotland at a crucial time. It did not escape entirely the attentions of the authorities and was completely destroyed after Bonnie Prince Charlie's failed 1745 Jacobite Uprising.

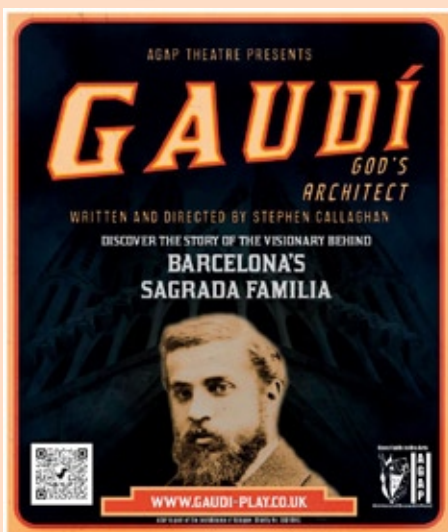
Catholics were presumed to be Jacobites. As Bishop John Geddes wrote: "The Scottish Catholics were generally desirous of the resto-

ration of the family of the Stuarts to the throne of Britain – it was natural for them to hope for an event that was likely to relieve them and put them again in possession of the privileges of free-born citizens."

■ Scalán can be reached by leaving Tomintoul on the B9008. Just beyond Auchnarrow, about five miles later, Scalán is signposted on the right on an unclassified but fairly good road.

For those on satellite systems AB37 9JS is a useful though approximate postcode. It should get you to Chapelton of Glenlivet. There you will see the local Catholic Church on your right, the distillery and the water bottling plant. Shortly after that is the point where buses must disembark their passengers. Scalán is about one mile from this point, along a country track.

AGAP joy as Gaudí is on path to sainthood



extraordinary Sagrada Familia church in Barcelona – which is well known to Scots who visit the Catalan capital in their hundreds of thousands every year.

But his recognised holiness, rather than his artistic genius, is what is being recognised by the Church.

He lived a deeply spiritual life, was a strong supporter of workers' rights, practiced penance on a regular basis and was deeply aware of the presence of God in his life.

As those who saw the AGAP play 'Gaudí, God's Architect' will know, he died after having been knocked down by a tram in his native city. The play, written by Stephen Callaghan, was a sell-out success at the Edinburgh Fringe last year with seven performances at C Venues Aurora Studio.

Stephen Callaghan told *Flourish*: "What exciting news for artists and creatives, to have one of our own elevated to Venerable!"

"It was my privilege to bring his story alive through theatre with AGAP so that others might be inspired by it and see that even Saints are not perfect this side of the grave, giving us all something to aspire to."

"Perhaps in 2026, we might be able to revisit the production to mark the 100th anniversary of his death. Until then, we can continue to seek his intercession, in particular for those involved in the arts."

THE architect of one of Europe's most magnificent churches – and the subject of a recent AGAP play – is officially on the path to sainthood.

The Vatican announced last month that Antonio Gaudí is henceforth granted the title 'Venerable' in the light of his 'heroic virtues'.

The next step will be beatification and ultimately canonisation, though these require proven miracles.

Gaudí is best known for his design of the



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fcjcentresthuhs@gmail.com

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Archbishop thanks priests for their constant 'ministry of presence'

ARCHBISHOP Nolan has publicly thanked priests across the Archdiocese for their commitment and service... especially for what he called their 'ministry of presence'.

At a moving Mass of Chrism in the Cathedral which saw the priests renew their promises, the Archbishop stressed the important role of priest in being present and accompanying people in the great moments of joy and sorrow in their lives.

He recalled his visit earlier this year to the Palestinian village of Aboud in the West Bank with a group of bishops.

He said: "The people there live under great difficulties. They knew that we could do very little in practical terms to help them. But they were just so grateful for the fact that we had come just to be with them."

"I see that too as I travel round parishes. People are glad that the Archbishop has come to be with them – not

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

that Bill Nolan has come to them, but that the Archbishop has come to them. They feel the presence of the Church as a Mother very strongly.

"So it is for priests too. People value enormously the presence of their priest among them. Other profes-

sionals come into communities to work but then go home. The priest remains. The priest is a constant presence with people in their own communities in happy and sorrowful times."

The Archbishop said this role of the priest echoed that of Christ who came as 'God with us'. Jesus does not solve all our problems by being with us but his presence with us helps us face those problems, he said.

And he reminded priests of the need to always treat people as Christ would treat them.

He said: "Priests can feel tired, or overworked, but people always expect their priest to welcome them and care for them as Christ himself would, and they can feel let down or disappointed if we don't treat them in that way."

"Priesthood is both a privilege and a challenge. But our 'ministry of presence' is a great blessing for us, for our people and for the Church."



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WHEN Archbishop Nolan wanted to find out about school life at St Thomas Primary School in Riddrie as he prepared to celebrate a Thanksgiving Mass to mark its centenary, he turned to the experts – the children.

Addressing a large congregation of pupils and staff, past and present, councillors, education department officials and clergy the Archbishop said: "I spoke to the children a little time ago and even in casual conversation with them it is clear that they are well looked after, that they appreciate the care, attention and friendship of the teachers and it is certainly a school that lives up to its Christian values as it has done for 100 years."

"Today has been a wonderful celebration, the choir were lovely and everybody joined in the singing and you could sense the enthusiasm and the joy of the children and it's obvious that they love to be in Saint Thomas's primary and they love coming here."

Earlier last month the centenary celebrations at the school got off to a flying start thanks to an anonymous donation from a former pupil of almost £12,000 which paid for a fun day featuring a host of exciting activities.

It also paid for each of the school's 400 pupils and staff to be given commemorative



St Thomas Primary marks a century of faith and community

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY



green hoodies, as a permanent reminder of the anniversary.

Each one has the school badge with its Latin motto 'Dominus meus et Deus meus' (My Lord and My God) – the famous phrase spoken to Jesus by St Thomas, the school's patron.

Founded by Notre Dame sisters, the school's former pupils include the late Archbishop Tartaglia and

Monsignor Hugh Boyle, the former Chancellor of the Archdiocese and administrator of St Andrew's Cathedral.

Lord Gill, former Lord President of the Court of Session and Father Aidan Martin, the current par-

ish priest of St Stephen's Church Dalmuir were also former pupils.

Head teacher Celine McGuire said: "St Thomas's always has been very much a community school where the values of the Gospel remain at the heart of everything we do. Many of the parents and grandparents of today's boys and girls were themselves pupils here and many people still remember the names of the nuns who taught in the school so long ago, so we really do have a long and proud history."

Cathedral sensory Mass



"In the Church there is room for everyone, for everyone."

"In the Church no one is surplus, no one is surplus, there is room for everyone. Just as we are. All of us." (Pope Francis)

Organisers aim to put Pope Francis' words into action with the first monthly sensory Mass to be held in St. Andrew's Cathedral, on Sunday 11 May at 2.30. This Mass is especially for those who may find a parish Mass

difficult because they are neuro diverse.

Come as you are. There is room for all of us.

■ **For more information or to join our mailing list, contact lisbeth.spred@btconnect.com**

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Remembering Pope Francis



Picture: L'Osservatore Romano

ARCHBISHOP NOLAN'S TRIBUTE

SHARE the sense of loss of millions of people around the globe at the passing of Pope Francis.

Sadness is our first and most natural reaction at a time like this.

The whole Church, and indeed the wider world should be very grateful to God for the gift of this Pope. Although his pontificate has been controversial at times

it has been a blessing for the Church and for wider society.

He will be remembered for many things ... but his emphasis on the great love and mercy of God and his reminder to the Church that it should always bring God's mercy and love to all was perhaps his most repeated call.

He did not see the Church

as a tribunal sitting in judgement of the world, but rather what he called a 'field hospital' tending to the wounds and hurts of human beings.

When he visited the Basilica of St Mary Major in Rome shortly after his election, he called out to the priests in the confessionals, 'Mercy. Forgive everyone. Always mercy ...' and that

was his trademark message.

He used his ability to speak to people in a language they understood to great effect. That partly explains his huge popularity. He had no pomposity or sense of superiority about him, indeed he was forever asking people to pray for him.

His constant call to gov-

ernments and individuals to care for the earth, our common home, was a key strand of his message. Another was the ever-timely call to welcome the refugee and asylum seeker, and to recognise the human dignity of the poor and less fortunate.

I remember his powerful exhortation to us ... when we give alms to someone who

is begging on the streets, not to casually toss a coin in their direction, but to get down to their level, to look them in the eye, to touch their hand and to express care and fraternal love.

He was the Pope of mercy, the Pope of welcome and the Pope of the environment. He lived his life with faith in God. May God now welcome him into eternal life.

Remembering Pope Francis

The Pope of the people



‘He was always so welcoming to us’

THE late Pope’s informality was one of the memorable characteristics highlighted by Archbishop Nolan in a whirlwind round of TV and radio interviews following the Pontiff’s death.

The Archbishop recalled the meeting of the Bishops with the Holy Father in 2018.

He said: “The Pope invited us to sit in a circle with him and then encouraged us to talk to him about anything we liked.

“He was so welcoming and informal, and even said to us that we were free to criticise him and his decisions if we wanted to but asked that we do it face to face rather than to the outside world.

“At a certain point Archbishop Tartaglia (who was the President of the Bishops’ Conference at the time) felt the need to draw the meeting to a close as he was keenly

aware of the Pope’s daunting schedule, but the Holy Father reassured him that there was no rush and he spent another half hour with us talking about areas of interest.

“We left that meeting buoyed up by the Pope’s friendship and encouragement.”

That friendliness was experienced by other Scots travelling to Rome too.

Mgr Aldo Angelosanto, a Dunkeld Priest, was Scotland’s representative in Rome last year 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!



Picture: Imago Mundi



Picture: Imago Mundi

The election of a new Pope... a moment of history in the making

THE conclave to elect Pope Francis’ successor will begin on Tuesday May 7. While no-one knows how long it will last, recent conclaves have usually been completed in two or three days.

Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin will preside over the conclave inside the Sistine Chapel, and it will be he who asks the newly elected cardinal if he accepts the election and which name he will choose to be known as.

This Sunday the ‘novemdiales’, the nine days of mourning for Pope Francis come to an end. For the past week the Cardinals have offered Masses for the deceased Pope and listened to sermons on the future needs of the Church.

“Extra omnes” (Everyone out), is the phrase

BY RONNIE CONVERY

that marks the beginning of the Conclave. All except the 135 or so cardinal electors vacate the beautiful Sistine Chapel and the period of conclave begins.

The cardinal electors, who must be under 80, are prohibited from using any device or making contact with the outside world. The voting rules follow the norms promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1996 later modified by Benedict XVI in 2007.

According to the new provisions, if no-one has been elected after the 33rd or 34th vote, a runoff will take place between the two cardi-

nals who received the most votes in the last ballot, but a two-thirds majority is still required.

Every day of the conclave there will be two smoke signals from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel – one at the end of the morning session (around 11am UK time) and the other at around 6pm UK time.

At the end of each vote, the ballots are burned with the addition of a dye: black, in the event of no election; white, if the new Holy Father has been chosen. This is to avoid the confusion of some conclaves of the 20th century when the smoke was decidedly grey!

Once the election has taken place, white smoke will emerge and the six bells of St. Peter’s will ring in celebration.

In the sacristy of the Sistine Chapel, a room is prepared with clothes for the new Pontiff. Once elected, the new Pope goes into this “room of tears”, so called because it is the place where the chosen man often breaks down given the emotion of the moment, and changes into the white soutane.

The news of election will be given using the traditional formula (“Habemus Papam”) by Cardinal Mamberti, a French cardinal (unless he has been elected!). Then the new Pope will appear on the central loggia above St Peter’s to greet the crowds and give his blessing ‘Urbi et Orbi’ – to the city and the world.

And a new era in the life of the Church will begin.



Pope Francis’ tomb

Pope Francis’ final testament

As I sense the approaching twilight of my earthly life, and with firm hope in eternal life, I wish to set out my final wishes solely regarding the place of my burial.

Throughout my life, and during my ministry as a priest and bishop, I have always entrusted myself to the Mother of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary. For this reason, I ask that my mortal remains rest – awaiting the day of the Resurrection – in the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major.

I wish my final earthly journey to end precisely in this ancient Marian sanctuary, where I would always stop to pray at the beginning and end of every Apostolic Journey, confidently entrusting my intentions to the Immaculate Mother, and giving thanks for her gentle and maternal care.

I ask that my tomb be prepared in the burial niche in the side aisle between the Pauline Chapel (Chapel of the Salus Populi Romani) and the Sforza Chapel of the Basilica, as shown in the attached plan.

The tomb should be in the ground; simple, without particular ornamentation, bearing only the inscription: Franciscus.

The cost of preparing the burial will be covered by a sum provided by a benefactor, which I have arranged to be transferred to the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major. I have given the necessary instructions regarding this to Cardinal Rolandas Makrickas, Extraordinary Commissioner of the Liberian Basilica.

May the Lord grant a fitting reward to all those who have loved me and who continue to pray for me. The suffering that has marked the final part of my life, I offer to the Lord, for peace in the world and for fraternity among peoples.

Santa Marta, 29 June 2022
FRANCISCUS

Buried near shrine of Our Lady

He chose his burial place with care ... but for those who knew him there was no surprise to learn that Pope Francis wanted to be laid to rest under the watchful gaze of Our Lady.

His tomb is just metres from the icon of Our Lady where he went to pray before and after every trip and on his last return from hospital just a few weeks before he died.

But what is the story behind the icon?

The icon Salus Populi Romani (Salvation of the Roman People) is one of the most beloved Marian images in Catholic tradition, revered for both its spiritual significance and historical legacy.

Housed in the Basilica of St Mary Major, this ancient icon of the Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child is believed to date back to the 5th century, possibly commissioned during the time of Pope Sixtus III after the Council of Ephesus, which affirmed Mary as the Mother of God.

The icon is deeply associated with miraculous events. Pope Gregory the Great processed through Rome with it during a plague in the 6th century, an act credited with helping end the epidemic. Since then, it has symbolised protection, healing, and divine mercy.

Pope Francis showed particular devotion to Our Lady under this title, visiting the icon before and after every apostolic



journey. He also prayed before it during times of global crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforcing its role as a spiritual refuge for the faithful.

For many, the icon is not just a historic treasure—it is a powerful sign of Mary’s ongoing intercession and maternal care.

Remembering Pope Francis

The Pope of surprises



Pictures: Imago Mundi

ALTHOUGH he never made it to Glasgow, Pope Francis had planned to come to the city for the COP 26 conference on climate change in 2021.

It can now be revealed that Vatican officials visited the city to look at logistics.

The team from the Papal household went to the SEC to visit the hall where the Pope would speak, but the decision was taken that the Holy Father would not be able to manage the distances and uneven surfaces involved.

Shortly after that he began to use a wheelchair.

But even if the Glasgow trip was never made, his desire to travel led him to visit the ends of the earth during the years of his Pontificate.

From Rome to Rio, circumnavigating the globe dozens of times, Pope Francis' 47 Apostolic Visits abroad took him and his message of closeness to every continent and almost every corner of the earth.

It is also symbolic that

Holy Father wanted to come to Glasgow for COP26 but plans had to be shelved

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Pope Francis' first major trip was not a foreign visit at all, but to Lampedusa, an island in southern Italy, the port of entry to Europe for hundreds of thousands of men, women and children fleeing violence, climate change and poverty.

In choosing Lampedusa as his first visit, the Pope immediately highlighted the priority he would give to the poor and especially to migrants seeking survival, safety, a future.

He set the tone immediately when he was photographed upon his departure

to Brazil in 2013, carrying his little black bag as he climbed the steps of the aircraft.

Then, during the flight, he walked up and down the aisles, personally greeting and chatting to the journalists on board, connecting with them and building down-to-earth relationships that stood the test of time.

Once landed, he refused to use an armoured vehicle, preferring to be driven in a simple car or in an open-air jeep that would enable him – again – to connect with the people, share their lives and their feelings.

From a wider perspective, it was also a symbolic em-



brace of the peripheries, a cornerstone of his magisterium, an unfaltering call to heed the cry of the poor, the marginalised, the weak.

Pope Francis' travels – averaging about four jour-

neys a year – took him to 68 different countries, each of them offering him the opportunity to call for justice, peace, inclusion and love for the entire human family.

One visit which never hap-

pened was a return to Argentina, Pope Francis' home country, to which he never went back after travelling to Rome for that conclave which elected him Pope in March 2013.

Remembering Pope Francis

“He brought the spirit of St Francis into the Vatican”

WHEN I woke up on the 21st of April, I reached across to my bedside cabinet to pick up my phone which had started to buzz incessantly.

I knew something was wrong – many people had contacted me with the sad news that the Holy Father had passed away.

A feeling of deep sadness passed over me, but this was quickly followed by great joy knowing that he had lived for one last Easter celebration – by all accounts we could have lost him some weeks ago when he was admitted to hospital with double pneumonia.

I have no doubt with Easter in focus he found the strength, through prayer, to spend one last farewell moment with the faithful in St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday.

Millions of Catholics around the world, including me, watched as he drove through the crowds, in what we now know was an emotional “final” farewell.

I remember the day it was announced that Cardinal Bergoglio, the newly elected Pope had chosen the name Francis.

I was overjoyed, I was born and raised as a Franciscan in the Parish of St Francis in the Gorbals and from that day on, all Franciscans felt closer to the Holy Father than ever before. This drew me even closer to the church.

When the conclave chose Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as our new Pope, he was overcome with emotion, but the humility of the great man allowed him to quickly compose himself. We should have known what was to come, when his first sentence to the assembled Cardinals at dinner was the humorous response: “May God forgive you for what you've done”.



BY LORD WILLIE HAUGHEY

History will show that Pope Francis was a modernising Pope, he demonstrated his deep passion for the poorest in society and worked tirelessly in supporting initiatives to alleviate poverty.

He was a champion of the oppressed and he never saw war as a solution to anything.

He was deeply saddened by the troubles in Ukraine and in Gaza, and worked behind the scenes to bring stability and peace to both regions.

He was admired by world leaders from across the globe for his stance on Climate Change. It would have been wonderful if he had managed to attend COP26 in Glasgow but unfortunately, for health reasons, this was not possible. His impact on this issue will hopefully help us get to net zero sooner than later.

The reason he was so passionate on this subject was because he believed that the impact of Climate Change would affect the poorest in society disproportionately more than anyone else.

When you read his final instructions as to how his funeral and burial ceremony should take place it tells you everything you need to know about the man... no

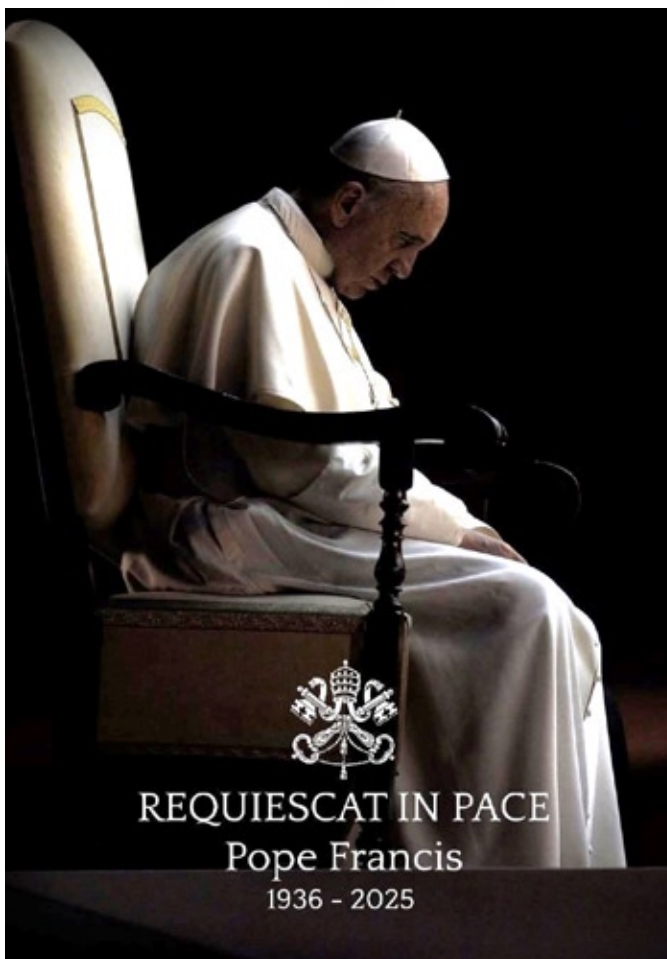
fuss, no bling and no big deal.

Fortunately for the 1.4 billion Catholics it was a big deal, to get the opportunity to say farewell to a wonderful man of God, who left his flock in a much better place than we were in 12 years ago.

I am sure there will be no need for God to forgive the 115 wise men who elected him in the Sistine Chapel 12 years ago and gave us the gift of Pope Francis.

Rest in Peace Holy Father.

■ Lord Willie Haughey was awarded the Papal Knighthood of St Gregory the Great in 2023 in recognition of his and his wife, Lady Susan's charitable work.



“He quipped to me: ‘Those are not Presbyterian socks!’”

AFEW hours before he died Pope Francis was on the balcony at the Vatican wishing everyone a Happy Easter.

Wheelchair-bound and visibly frail, Francis managed to speak the words that gave him, and many others, something of the joy and reassurance that faith can bring.

Tributes to him have come from many quarters.

Memories of the man who carried his own luggage; paid his own hotel bill after his election as Pope; washing the feet of women, prisoners, and Muslims as a sign of his humility and their inclusion; visiting war zones and slums; concentrating on the reality of environmental catastrophe; speaking truth to power.



BY VERY REV DEREK BROWNING

Memories of the man who spoke about his love of Mozart and his personal view that Mozart's Mass in C Minor, and its ‘Et incarnatus est’, “lifts you to God!” Set alongside, unsurprisingly as an Argentinian, his passion for Astor Piazzola's tangos.

During Pope Francis' pontificate the steadily improving relations between the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland continued.

In 2022 the St Margaret Declaration was signed by both Churches to make clear that the things the two Churches have in common are far greater than the things that divide them.

I had the privilege of spending time in Rome with Pope Francis in 2017. Going into his official apartments, I asked how much time we would have together. An official said, “It'll either be five minutes and you'll talk about the weather in Scotland... or it will be longer.”

An hour and a half later the official had to come in to advise we had desperately overrun the timetable, and we were keeping another ecumenical visitor waiting. It turned out to be the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We talked about the role

of women in the Church and Pope Francis was interested in the (slightly different) role of Deacon in the Church of Scotland...

We talked about national and international affairs, the ongoing crises in Myanmar and Israel-Palestine, and what mediating roles Christians might play...

I remember sharing with him our mutual commitment to work together in the face of national and international anxiety over sectarianism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and saying, “If we are in a position of privilege, it is better to build a longer table than a higher fence.”

One last memory. We exchanged gifts.

He was rather taken with the food hamper I'd brought, particularly the shortbread and the malt whisky, “The Holy Water”, he said. He was touched by the book about St Columba, and one of the prayers of Columba translated into Spanish.

After our informal discussion we moved to the formal part of events, taking up seats at the far end of the room. As we sat down, I noticed him looking at my feet, and then pointing at my yellow socks with red polka dots. Twinkling, he laughed and said, “These are not the socks of a Presbyterian!”

A few days later on my return to Edinburgh I received a package from Gammarelli, the papal outfitters. It was a pair of knee-length red silk cardinal's stockings.

Pope Francis: a man of courage, a man of humour, a man of God, whose last public words were to wish the world a Happy Easter.

■ Very Rev Dr Derek Browning was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2017–2018.

Remembering Pope Francis

Pope's death puts the canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis on hold

THE death of Pope Francis has saddened the world, but it had a particular impact on one group of Glasgow pilgrims who were travelling to Rome for the canonisation of Carlo Acutis.

The eagerly awaited ceremony had to be cancelled at short notice because only a Pope can canonise a new saint.

By then 130,000 people from round the globe had booked travel and accommodation in the eternal city for the event, which was to be held to coincide with the Jubilee of Adolescents.

BY BRIAN SWANSON

The organisers of the Jubilee apologised to pilgrims, and it is expected that the canonisation will go ahead in the coming months when a new Pope is elected.

But there was not a shred of regret at the postponement from a group of pilgrims from parishes in Glasgow and Motherwell who have worked tirelessly over the years to promote the cause of Blessed Carlo Acutis.

Maria Calvina, a parish-

ioner of St Vincent's, East Kilbride and team leader of Life In The Eucharist (LITE) said: "We came to Rome to see history being made and now we are seeing a different kind of history as we wait to witness the funeral of Pope Francis.

"It is a blessing for us to be here and we accept that it is God's will. As we learn from the readings over Easter that his ways are not our ways.

"We know that Carlo's family feel the same way and all of us here feel that both the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Carlo is with us."



He left all he had to Rome's prisoners



POPE Francis' last act of love can now be revealed: he gave the 200,000 euros which had accumulated in his personal account due to gifts over the years to prisoners just days before he died.

The gesture was revealed by Bishop Benoni Ambarus, known to all as "Don Ben", the auxiliary bishop of Rome who accompanied the Pope to the opening of the Holy Door in the Roman prison of Rebibbia at the start of the Holy Year (above).

"A few days ago, the Holy Father dragged his body to Regina Coeli prison, to cry out to the world, with all his strength, the need to pay attention to prisoners. He donated his last possessions to them, 200,000 euros from his personal account," said Bishop Am-

barus to the *Repubblica* newspaper.

Francis was in Regina Coeli on Holy Thursday, a few days before he died.

The Bishop added: "When I asked for a contribution for the prisoners from the Holy Father, he told me that the finances had run out. Then he added: 'Don't worry, I have something in my account'."

"He sent 200,000 euros from his own pocket. Now, I learn that he will be buried thanks to a benefactor because he gave everything he had to the least."

In his years of apostolate, Pope Francis has visited prisons all over the world, always keen to remind wider society of the dignity of those living behind bars.

Last writings: 'death is just a beginning'



POPE Francis' final written words were an almost poetic foretelling of his own death.

The day after he died the Vatican Publishing House released the preface written by the late Pope Francis for a new book by Cardinal Angelo Scola, the former Archbishop Milan, entitled "Awaiting a New Beginning: Reflections on Old Age."

In the preface, the late Pope reflects on the opening of life to eternity in death.

"Death is not the end of

everything, but the beginning of something," he writes.

"It is a new beginning... because eternal life – which those who love already begin to experience on earth within the daily tasks of life – is beginning something that will never end.

"And it is precisely for this reason that it is a 'new' beginning, because we will live something we have never fully lived before: eternity."

A final 'grazie' after Easter blessing



"THANK you for bringing me back to the Square..." this expression of gratitude whispered to his nurse were the last recorded words of Pope Francis.

They were addressed to Massimiliano Strappetti, the nurse who, according to the Pope himself, once saved his life by pushing him to have colon surgery when he was seriously ill.

Hospital

By his side throughout the 38 days of his hospitalisation at Rome's Gemelli Hospital and round-the-clock during his recovery at home, Strappetti was with the Pope on Easter Sunday, during the Urbi et Orbi blessing (above).

The day before, they had gone together into St. Peter's Basilica to review

the "route" he would take the following day when he was to appear on the Central Loggia for the Urbi et Orbi blessing.

On Easter Sunday the Pope decided he wanted to make one last trip after the Urbi et Orbi blessing by heading into St. Peter's Square to greet the crowds from the popemobile.

But he hesitated, "Do you think I can manage it?" he asked Strappetti, who reassured him.

Thus began his first ride since being discharged from Gemelli, and the last of his life.

Afterwards the Pope thanked his personal healthcare assistant, saying, "Thank you for bringing me back to the Square."



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Arnold Clark



How a dad's dying devotion to Our Lady inspired his son's life of faith

As the Easter season continues, a Glasgow student, currently studying in Rome, reflects on the role of his late father's devotion to Our Lady in bringing his faith to life.

WHAT is faith? This thought-provoking question has sparked centuries' worth of ink being spilled.

Philosophers, theologians and scholars alike have written essays, books, and treatises attempting to find an answer to this age-old question.

However, my personal view of faith does not come from immersing myself in theological textbooks or studying different theologians but instead comes from a deeply personal experience.

In my later teen years, my father, Diarmid (above right) was gravely ill. He had battled non-smoking lung cancer for four years. When my siblings and I were told of the fateful news, an emotional whirlwind of anguish, fear, disbelief and denial ensued.

However, amidst this chaos, I heard the distinct rustle of rosary beads. My father said calmly "come, let us say a decade of the rosary together." Henceforth, every evening, we would pray a rosary with him, and amidst these four years of uncertainty, of close calls, and emotional highs and lows, there was one constant, one theme, one ever-present essence. Faith.

Calmness

My father embodied this faith with his calmness, his fortitude, his unwavering hope in a miracle, and in the love that he showed us. Despite him being the one who was unwell, he was nevertheless, the calmest of all of us. Order amidst the chaos.

He would always emphasise to us that the cancer was "his cross" which he had been given, and that we will also be given crosses in life. He would deliver this message with a calm demeanour, not sugar coating anything, preparing us for the spiritual battles that we would encounter. My father never complained, never said "why me", never took any emotional downturns. He was exceptionally strong.

On the day my father died, his calm demeanour never left him, even in his final moments. Fittingly, his patron was St. Joseph, the pa-

tron of a happy death.

From this personal experience, my father embodied for me what faith should look like in this life.

It is surely defined by the words which Christ spoke: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Mt 16:24-26). My father echoed this spiritual fortitude throughout the entire four years of his cancer battle.

Calvary

Faith in this life is the order amidst the chaos, one in which we climb Calvary alongside Jesus, avoiding the temptations to drop our



BY CORMACO O'HARA

cross, give up our battles and abandon faith, say "I can't do it", or "why me?"

In order to have faith, we must be moved by love, to accompany Christ with our crosses. For faith is also about endurance. When a great evil occurs, many blessings can flow from it. In the passion, Christ endured pain, and suffering,



before dying, nailed to the wood of the cross. Likewise, my father had to endure suffering and very painful treatments as a result of his illness, but alongside that came many blessings, which are remembered more than the treatment or painful moments themselves.

Every time the anniversary of his death passes, there is sadness, but like with Jesus, we know that through this surface level tragedy,

we find graces which aid our growth in faith.

What is faith? It is the order amidst the chaos. It is an arduous journey, to embrace firsthand an acceptance of the crosses we are given, to carry them alongside Christ.

Faith helps negate the chaos that comes with challenges all throughout life. God at times may ask that we sacrifice those things we hold most dear, our possessions, our families, and even our lives. But these great periods of pain, are but a grain of sand on the beach of eternity.

Ultimately, witnessing firsthand the most remarkable and steadfast embodiment of faith I have ever seen, has done so much more than any textbook, theologian or catechism class will ever do to help contribute to my understanding of faith.

The online myth of the perfect mum

MOTHERS come in all shapes and sizes.

There are the Helicopter Mums who hover solicitously over their little darlings in perpetual fear they might choke on their organic guacamole.

Then there are the Tiger Mums whose only desire is for their proteges to achieve world domination...

At the opposite extreme are the earth mothers who swear by free range childhood. Mud-clad kids in scratchy woollen jumpers, nibbling half-heartedly on Tofu snacks is where they're at.

Who I'm really gunning for are the 'momfluencers'. Those yummy mummies who catalogue their perfect lives in their pristine homes to share with their legions of Instagram followers. They're glamazons in heels, hair extensions and satin dresses that are mere sequins away from being ball gowns.

"It's 6.30am. Come with me as I start the day with my six-month old quadruplets and their toddler sister," they gush in impossibly bouncy tones.

Honest to God. If you're not on social media you probably won't believe me. It's true, though. I should know as I've become quite

addicted to watching them.

Apparently, though, they are having us on with their immaculate houses where they ply their trade as domestic goddesses-cum-Mary Poppins reincarnated. They have an army of industrial cleaners scouring the place between breakfast-time and the time they film themselves having 'breakfast.'

And then there's me, flying by the seat of my pants. Always have, always will. It's been a wild ride. Highs and lows and, by the grace of God, some days in between when there were no dramas.

I remember one particular day when all four of

Mary's musings

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



mine ate all their vegetables and the golden boy did his homework without his maw howling to the moon.

Young mothers have always had it tough. Today, they are expected to work like they have no children and raise their children like it's all that matters in life. Overworked and underpaid, perhaps enduring workplace bullying or facing redundancy, they have

sky high cortisol levels.

These little social media vignettes are pure fiction. They are carefully curated Kodak moments that bear no resemblance to the gritty reality of family life.

They lure us in with illusions of effortlessly attainable perfection. But family life is neither effortless nor perfect. The early days are prime breeding grounds for feelings of overwhelm and loss of self-esteem.

Momfluencers undoubtedly have their value. Their platforms provide welcome distraction from the often tedious activities of the daily routine, as well as being valuable sources of parenting tips.

But age and experience teaches us that our lack of perfection, our seismic fails have made us the women we are.

Employed or at home raising your children; single, married, widowed, separated or divorced; frazzled women in the midst of blended families. We see you and salute you!



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ART OF THE MONTH

Remembering Pope Francis through art

THE late Pope Francis on a number of occasions mentioned that he was particularly fond of the great masterpieces of Caravaggio, his favourite being the Call of Saint Matthew.

Indeed his motto “mis-erando atque eligendo” is taken from a homily by Saint Bede, about the Gospel account of the call of Saint Matthew. It roughly translates to “having mercy, he called him.”

Most of us, through the medium of television, witnessed the Deposition of His Holiness in the magnificent Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, a church he had so dearly loved, before the eyes of a world still unsettled and sorely needing his prayers.

I have chosen to share with you, the great artist's 17th century work depicting the Deposition of Christ.

It is the only painting by Caravaggio in the Vatican collection and Pope Francis recently approved its loan to the Expo which is happening at Osaka in Japan and where the painting was temporarily put on display last month.

Our Lord is in the presence of the holy women

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

being laid by Nicodemus and John on the stone with which the sepulchre will be sealed.

Around the body of Christ are his Holy Mother, Mary Magdalene and Mary of Cleophas, who raises her arms and eyes to heaven, perhaps in certainty that death is but the threshold of life.

The wounds of Christ are real, His muscles slack, His face turned toward the grave and yet there is a strange atmosphere of hope.

It is the same hope that the Church guards still, that the funeral of the Pope is anchored in divine mercy and promise.

And so, standing before The Deposition or kneeling before the Pope's tomb, we do well to whisper the prayer, “Come to his aid, Saints of God; come to meet him, Angels of the Lord.”

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Deposition*, 1603



PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Lord Jesus Christ, You who were laid in the tomb by loving hands, heavy with sorrow, yet radiant with hope, receive the soul of Your servant, Pope Francis.

As he bore Your Cross in life, may he now share in Your Resurrection.

Grant that his labours of mercy and his humble witness to the Gospel, may find their fulfilment in the eternal light of Your Face.

Console Your Church, especially in troubled parts of the world, and raise us all, in Your time, into the glory You have prepared.

Amen.

Peace campaigns are not just about eliminating nuclear weapons. We can never forget the menace of landmines

WHEN it comes to a choice between land mines and crocodiles, I would choose a croc every time.

Crocodiles can't turn corners and if you zigzag away from them, you might just survive...

Mines, on the other hand, are designed by fiendish minds to kill or maim – and if you are close enough to know you have encountered one, you won't be choosing an escape route.

I mention the crocodiles because they were my closest encounter with land mines. They had been planted in Kosovo, but the UN person I hitched a lift with knew their location. In Mozambique it was a different kettle of crocs altogether.

Terrible floods devastated the southern African country in 2000. It made headlines as much because a woman gave birth in the



'safety' of a tree as flood waters swept beneath her as for the 800 people who died, and the cattle and crops lost in Mozambique's worst flood for 50 years.

As a journalist, I travelled to the flood area with a photographer. A UK-based charity taking aid to people affected by the disaster

suggested we accompany them to a remote village where supplies had not yet reached.

With a local guide, we set off on the 17-kilometre journey to the village. We trekked along a narrow path just above the receding flood waters and the guide told us that he had

lost much more than his fellow farmers, explaining that he farmed so much closer to the river. Why didn't others do the same? “Because of the crocodiles,” he explained.

The photographer and I instinctively moved to higher ground!

That's when the aid worker called back along the track, “You have done your mine training...” We hadn't, but we bluffed it. “Remind us what to look for in this area,” we said.

“If the person ahead steps on a mine, don't go to help them. Tell them to come to you.”

That seemed like crazy advice – but these were mines designed to maim and were probably planted in clusters.

The injured person, probably with at least a leg blown apart, would now be the lure to ensure that as many “personnel” (soldiers



Marian Pallister

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

or civilians, farmers or children) would be put out of action as possible.

The mines dated back to a civil war that lasted from 1977 to 1992. With backing from the then-Soviet Union, factions were able to use the most sophisticated weapons available. Anti-personnel mines came into that category. Left behind, they remained – remain – a danger to those attempting to get on with their lives despite continuing insurrections and climate disasters.

A 1997 Treaty banned these obscene weapons, but the innocent continue to lose limbs and lives. So I was horrified to learn

that Finland is just one of the countries withdrawing from the Ottawa Convention that created that treaty (the Ministers of Defence of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have also recommended withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention).

Pax Christi Scotland campaigns to bring an end to nuclear weapons, but in seeking a nonviolent world, we must also work to ensure that the manufacture and use of land mines and cluster bombs is halted.

The human mind can invent such atrocities. Humankind can stop their use. Join us in trying.



Marco Cardisco, *Cristo con gli Apostoli*, ca. 1533

May scriptures will accompany us on our wait for a new Pope

I STARTED writing this reflection in the days following our Easter Triduum celebrations, filled with all the depth and prayerfulness we could have hoped for, leading into an Easter Sunday of joy and light.

Then, on Monday, came the news of the death of the Holy Father, Pope Francis.

Our Easter faith and hope is undimmed in the face of the sadness we might feel. Indeed, perhaps our Easter liturgy and readings take on a new meaning over these weeks, offering us food for reflection in the uncertain days and weeks ahead.

Third Sunday of Easter,
Year C

There is something in today's readings which stresses the shared nature of faith. In the First, the Apostles are tried and punished as a group.

Rather than being silenced, however, their witness continues. Indeed, their "dishonour" is seen to be a blessing, a share in the suffering Jesus underwent at the hands of the same high priest and council.

The Second Reading displays the whole of heaven and "every creature" giving "honour" and worship to God and the Lamb. The chorus is cosmic and universal!

Then, in the Gospel, seven of the Apostles go fishing and, at Jesus' words, land a huge haul of fish. They were to be "fishers of men", and their fishing expedition and the huge catch probably point to their future mission. They will go out to draw people from everywhere.

These are readings which remind us that our faith is always a shared thing, something Pope Francis constantly recalled. He often referred to us not just



Fr Tom
Kilbride

Parish Priest of Christ
the King, Glasgow

as disciples but "missionary disciples". In addition, Peter comes to the fore in two of the readings: in one, speaking for the others and, in the Gospel, taking the lead and then affirming his love for Jesus. Jesus entrusts to him the love and care of his flock as a consequence of his love for his Lord, something which will cost him.

As we pray for Pope Francis, Peter's successor as shepherd of Christ's flock, we give thanks for his witness, his sense of mission to the world and his call to us all to bring our faith to others.

Fourth Sunday of Easter,
Year C

This is often called "Good Shepherd Sunday", although this year's Gospel passage doesn't refer to Jesus by that title. However, it does refer to his followers as "my sheep", which at least implies that he is our shepherd!

The image takes us to the Father, the one who gave the flock to Christ, and the one who ultimately cares for us. Paul and Barnabas (First Reading) speak God's word "boldly" but face opposition and rejection. That will not stop them, however. The word must be preached, so they head elsewhere, bringing the joy of the gospel to new hearers. The result is the disciples are filled with "joy and the Holy Spirit", renewed in faith and hope.

By the time we hear these readings, there may well be a new "shepherd" elected to succeed Pope Francis. May we too be filled with joy and the Holy Spirit, led by one who will renew our desire to hear the Good Shepherd's voice, to follow him more closely and to bring his word to others.

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year
C

We may be well into Eastertide now, but we return to Holy Thursday and the Last Supper for the Gospel passages over the next few weeks. This week, Jesus teaches his disciples the commandment to love as he loved us. This comes just as Judas has left to begin the process which will lead to Jesus' death.

Yet, it is not all darkness and loss. In fact, Jesus says it is the moment of glory, as it is the moment in which God's redeeming love will be revealed on the Cross. Paul and Barnabas recognise the difficulties we might face in living our faith but also see growth and new life in the Church.

The vision of John in the Second Reading gives a glimpse into the glory God will share with his people, where there will be no suffering or sorrow, since God will be with us. The love Jesus speaks of is fulfilled when God makes all things new. Our Easter faith, renewed, draws us deeper into that love and calls it from us in new ways too.



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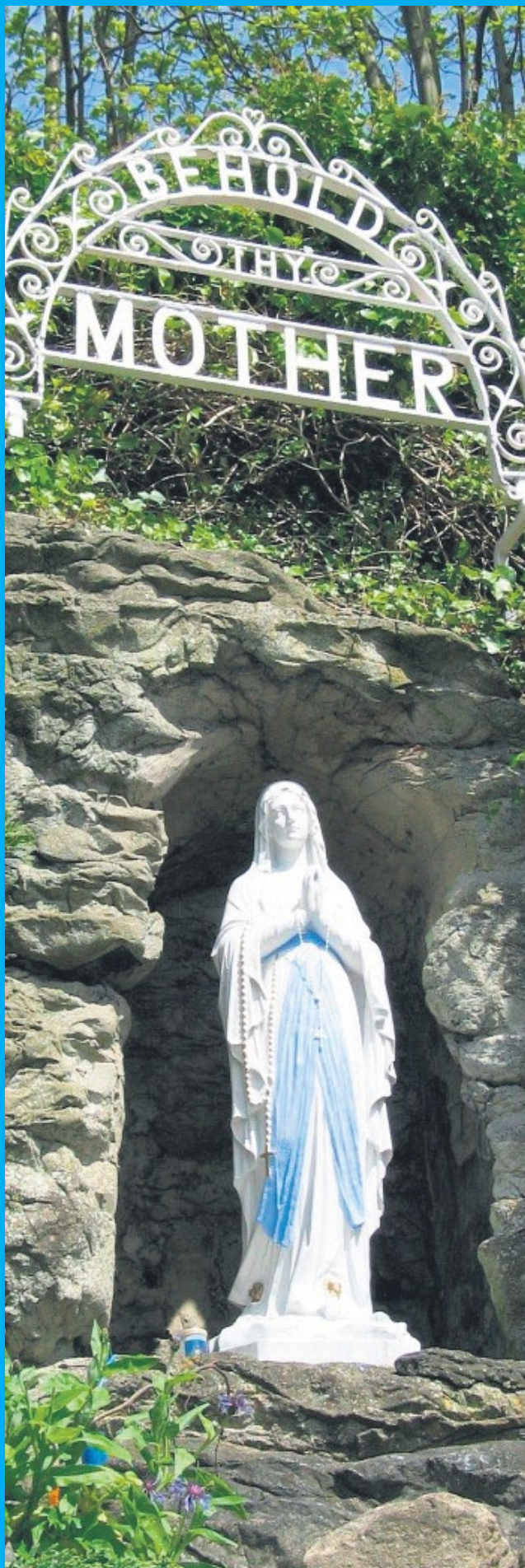
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CARFIN

PILGRIMAGE SEASON 2025



Last Thursday of every month Pro-life Rosary 7.00pm, Mass 7.30pm
13th of every month May–October Legion of Mary Pilgrimage and Mass

MAY

Holy Rosary recited every evening in May 8.00pm

4th	Mass invoking the Holy Spirit for the Papal Conclave 3.00pm
13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass
17th	Centenary of the Canonisation of St Therese, Solemn Mass at 12.00 noon
24th	Scottish Walsingham pilgrimage Mass at 12.00 noon
25th	Scottish National Legion of Mary Pilgrimage, Mass at 3:00 pm

JUNE

1st	Jubilee of Families 12.30 – 5.00pm (Mass at 3.00pm) Aid to the Church in need all night campout (5.00pm–9.00am)
13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass
15th	Ukrainian Pilgrimage 12.00noon Glass chapel
21st	Catholic Military Pilgrimage
22nd	Corpus Christi Procession and Mass
27th	Feast of the Sacred Heart, Mass for Sanctification of Priests 1.00pm 7.30pm Annual Pioneer's Mass
28th	Syro Malabar Pilgrimage

JULY

13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass
27th	Grandparents' day. Mass at 3.00pm

AUGUST

3rd	Jubilee of Youth Mass at 3.00pm
13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass
9th	Archconfraternity of St Philomena
31st	Polish pilgrimage

SEPTEMBER

4th	Motherwell Diocese, Schools Mass.
7th	Scottish National Pilgrimage, Mass at 3.00pm
13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass
27th	Vincentian Family Day

OCTOBER

Holy Rosary recited every evening in October 8.00pm

5th	Rosary Sunday Torchlight Procession
13th	Legion of Mary Monthly Pilgrimage, 7:30 pm Procession, 8.00pm Mass

NOVEMBER

23rd	Jubilee of Choirs
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CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR CHANGES WWW.CARFINGROTTO.ORG

For more information please contact: The Parish Priest
 St Francis Xavier's Church House, Taylor Avenue, Carfin, Motherwell ML1 5AJ
 Tel 01698 263308

Our pledge to carry forward Pope Francis' commitment to the poor

“WE need to develop the awareness that nowadays we are either all saved together or no one is saved.”

In these few words written in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis captured the essence of his papacy — a call to radical solidarity and a deep sense of shared humanity.

For SCIAF and the global Caritas family, Pope Francis was a profound inspiration. His clarity of message, moral courage, and unwavering commitment to justice and compassion shaped how we think, feel, pray and act in the world.

Among the many powerful insights he left us, this line from *Fratelli Tutti* continues to resonate deeply. It reminds us that our lives are intimately connected — that salvation is not an individual pursuit, but a

communal journey. As with so much of his writing, Fratelli Tutti speaks directly to the heart of Catholic social teaching and to the mission of SCIAF.

Pope Francis had an extraordinary gift: he could draw the line from the personal to the political with simplicity and strength.

He exposed the ways our modern world prioritises the self over the common good, challenging us to think beyond our borders and to live lives of compassion, humility, and action.

He reminded us that we are not isolated individuals, but brothers and sisters, co-inhabitants of what he called “our common home.”

This message was echoed powerfully by Archbishop Nolan in his homily at SCIAF’s volunteer Mass last December. “Some people



BY **BEN WILSON**
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT, SCIAF

say charity starts at home,” he said. “Yes it does – our common home, the planet Earth.”

It was a reminder that our concern for others does not stop at our national borders — and neither does our responsibility.

Pope Francis constantly pushed back against the culture of individualism

and what he termed the “throwaway culture,” in which people and the planet are treated as disposable.

This insight lies at the heart of SCIAF’s mission. We serve the poor, not out of pity, but out of deep compassion and solidarity. We believe that serving the global family, especially the poorest, is at the heart of practising our faith; we exist to help people in Scotland reach out to their sisters and brothers across

the world.

But more than that, SCIAF also exists to challenge the structures that keep people poor – something that Pope Francis himself championed so powerfully.

Like Pope Francis in his advocacy on the climate crisis and challenge of the global economic system which creates so much poverty, SCIAF too feels it so important that we don’t just feed the hungry but ask why the poor have no food.

We do not just give a fish to feed someone for a day; we teach people to fish, empower communities, and work to dismantle the systems that keep them poor. Pope Francis helped give voice to this approach. He reminded the world that a better world is possible, and that it is our Christian duty to build it.

On the day Pope Francis died, I heard a journalist on the radio call it “the end of an era.” I don’t believe that. Pope Francis may have gone home to the Father, but his spirit is very much still alive amongst his people.

His legacy burns in the fire he lit in organisations like SCIAF, and in all those who work for justice, peace, and human dignity.

Pope Francis showed us how Catholic social teaching is not abstract theory — it is the Gospel in action. His life and leadership gave us hope, inspired us to act, and reminded us that love and solidarity must be at the centre of everything we do. He may no longer be with us in body, but his spirit is very much alive — in our prayers, in our work, and in our shared dream of a just and compassionate world.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO DONATE

sciaf.org.uk/donate



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