

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

November 2025

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Evangelisation:



Now is the hour ... that was the message delivered to priests and lay people from across the Archdiocese by one of the UK's leading experts in evangelisation.

Monsignor John Armitage (above), who is based in London, spoke at events for clergy and parishioners last month and urged them to seize this 'favourable hour' to spread the faith.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

He pointed to a series of signs which show people are more open to the Catholic faith than at any period in our lifetimes.

- The large growth in adult baptisms over the last year
- A new surge of interest in Catholicism especially among young men
- Huge media interest in the Church following the election of the new Pope

He said: "Evangelisation is not about our efforts so much as giving people what we have. It's natural to feel inadequate. None of us has an answer to every question that a person inquiring about the faith might have.

"But we don't need to have all the answers. We just need to be prepared to reach out, be available, avoid getting stuck in our 'safe routines' of piety when people around us are asking for help."

Trends

And he urged parishioners to 'read the signs of the times' by keeping abreast of what's happening in wider society, in the news, and in current trends.

He said: "Society has slowly rid itself of what we might call 'Christendom' – the symbols and language of Christianity – so we are now in a new 'apostolic age' where the people we meet have no knowledge of the faith and are hungry to learn more.

"We need to be aware too that we are living not just in an era of change, but a change of era."

"The digital revolution has changed the way people engage with each other and with institutions. Skills of life which served us in the past no longer serve us.

"We need to read again the signs of the times and show that the Church has something to offer to the men and women of our time which is more than they can achieve in this life."

■ Full report – page 2

the time is right

Archbishop urges: Pray for priests

Special Cathedral Mass marks Jubilarians' 400 years of ministry



Canon Gerard Tartaglia, Fr Joseph Boyle, Fr John McGinley, Fr David Brown, Archbishop Nolan, Fr Edward Kelly, Canon George Bradburn, Fr Brendan Murtagh

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

ARCHBISHOP Nolan used the analogy of hillwalking to describe the life of priests as he celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving for Jubilarians who between them have given more than 400 years of service to God and his people in the Archdiocese.

Delivering his homily in St Andrew's Cathedral the Archbishop said: "The challenge priests face, especially when they are newly-ordained is like setting off with great enthusiasm to climb a mountain – you don't know at first how high that mountain is and the summit is often not visible.

"But you are compelled to climb that mountain and one day when you look back you can't believe how far you have come and what you have achieved.

"All of our priests with us today have climbed their

own individual mountains and have achieved many wonderful things in their years of ministry with God's help and the prayers of the faithful. Please continue to pray for them."

Of the nine celebrating their anniversaries this year the longest serving is Fr Edward Kelly who was ordained 70 years ago.

Celebrating his Diamond Jubilee was Canon George Bradburn who entered the priesthood 60 years ago.

Marking their Golden Anniversaries were Fr Joseph Boyle and Fr David Brown who were both ordained 50 years ago.

Ordained 40 years ago were Fr Leonard Purcell, Canon Gerard Tartaglia, Fr Brendan Murtagh and Fr John McGinley.

Fr Nicholas Monaghan, formerly of St Dominic's Bishopbriggs is marking his 25th anniversary but was unable to join the group as he is serving as Vice-Rector of the Pontifical College Josephinum, in Columbus, Ohio.

Evangelisation is your responsibility

E VANGELISATION is not about learning new tricks or techniques... it's about ordinary people sharing their beliefs naturally with friends, colleagues and family.

That was the core message of a two day evangelisation course led by Monsignor John Armitage.

The London priest who was ordained 46 years ago spoke movingly of his experience of people coming to his parish without clear ideas but searching for a spiritual guide.

And he urged priests and lay people to be open to a new springtime of interest in the faith as evidenced by record numbers of adult conversions and a new interest in Catholicism among the young.

He said: "Remember the scene of the feeding of the 5000. When the disciples asked Jesus for bread he replied, 'you feed them!' Those disciples must have felt very inadequate with their meagre supplies to go round so many people but they gave what they had, and God did the rest.

"So it is with evange-



Clergy attending the evangelisation day

lisation... we might have great resources, great programmes, great plans, but what matters really is giving generously of what we have to those around us who are hungry for meaning in their lives."

Devotion

He urged a renewed focus on prayer and Eucharistic devotion. He said: "Everything comes from the Eucharist – Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament. Programmes and plans are OK, we need them at times. But the

BY RONNIE CONVERY Eucharist is the source and summit of all we should be doing in evangelisation.

"The truth of the Gospel is both ancient and new but the new is built on the ancient. New techniques and schemes are like 'fingers' pointing to the sky, to what matters, to God.

"I understand that many people feel weary ... and in many ways the current parish model can lead to a focus on survival rather than evangelising zeal.

"But a new inner life of

the spirit can be born out of a sense of weariness. If we prioritise the things of the spirit, everything else becomes doable. Hardness of heart evaporates when we start to spend more time with God.

"Evangelisation happens when the life of one person raises a question in the mind of another person... 'Why is he/she like that?' When people see unconditional love, simplicity of lifestyle, and genuineness of belief, they are inspired to find out more..."

Pope: We will meet our loved ones after death



P OPE Leo has spoken movingly of his conviction that we will meet again with our loved ones after death.

At a Mass for the start of November, he said: "Although they left us on the day when they died, we continue to carry them with us in our hearts, and their memory remains always alive within us amid our daily lives.

"Often, something brings them to mind, and we recall experiences we once shared with them. Many places, even the fragrance of our homes, speak to us of those we have loved and who have gone before us."

He went on, "Our Christian faith ... helps us

to experience our memories as more than just a recollection of the past but also, and above all, as hope for the future.

"This is not an illusion for soothing the pain of our separation from loved ones, nor is it mere human optimism. It is the hope founded on the Resurrection of Jesus who has conquered death..."

"Love conquers death. In love, God will gather us together with our loved ones. And, if we journey together in charity, our very lives become a prayer rising up to God, uniting us with the departed, drawing us closer to them as we await to meet them again in the joy of eternal life."

Joy and emotion as Michelle sings new SCIAF hymn for the Pope



Picture: Vatican Media

EXCLUSIVE

BY RONNIE CONVERY

GLASGOW singer Michelle McManus has had a few high points in her career... winning *Pop Idol*, topping the UK charts with a debut single among them.

But last month saw the best moment of all as the Baillieston girl sang solo for the Pope.

As revealed in last month's *Flourish*, Michelle has recorded a new hymn for SCIAF's 60th anniversary recalling the words of Pope Francis in his encyclical about care for creation, *Laudato Si*.

And now she has had the amazing honour of singing the hymn for Pope Leo at a special conference in Castelgandolfo.

Michelle told *Flourish*: "I hadn't slept for a month ahead of the event. I was so worried about all the organisation and whether we would make it in the end."

"So when I got the confirmation that I was to sing for the Holy Father I was tearful."

"It was the experience of a lifetime. My first time in Rome, my first visit to St Peter's Basilica and then the honour of singing for the

Holy Father... just amazing."

And the good news is that the story of the SCIAF hymn and Michelle, from composition to first recording in St Andrew's Cathedral, to sharing a stage with the Pope, has been captured by a BBC film crew for a special documentary which will be aired across the UK next Easter.

Documentary

Produced by Glasgow-based Solus Productions, the documentary will contain behind the scenes footage of the 'pilgrimage of

hope' along with Michelle's performance for the Holy Father.

Producer/Director Tony Kearney said: "It's been a joy working with Michelle on this remarkable BBC documentary."

"Watching her combine faith, humour and that incredible voice as she takes SCIAF's new hymn from its Scottish roots all the way to Rome has been truly special."

"Seeing her perform it for Pope Leo was the perfect uplifting finale to this extraordinary journey."

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Anniversary tributes to Mother Teresa's Sisters

Missionaries of Charity mark 75th anniversary

THE heroic charity work of the Missionaries of Charity was commemorated worldwide last month as the congregation marked the 75th anniversary of its foundation by Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

And in Glasgow there was a sense of gratitude for the presence of Mother Teresa's Sisters who have been working in Pollok for 40 years.

Fr Martin Kane, who serves the parishes in Pollok where the Sisters are based, said: "The Sisters in Glasgow have served in several ways over the past 40 years: primarily, by being a hidden, humble presence witnessing to God's love as they walk the streets praying, visiting the elderly, visiting families,



teaching catechism and organising different activities in the local parish so as to help others to keep and grow in their faith and some to return to the Church."

Mother Teresa, initially a Loreto Sister, worked in In-

dia since the late 1920s but felt called to serve the poorest of the poor. After receiving permission to found a new mission she replaced her Loreto nun's habit with a simple, blue-bordered sari when she began working among the poor, and the sari has since become the trademark habit of the congregation.

The Vatican formally recognised the congregation on October 7, 1950, the date now celebrated as its official foundation day.

Sister Mary Joseph, Superior General of the Missionaries of Charity said: "No matter what the challenges, we will carry forward with our work."

Currently the Mother

Teresa Sisters work all over the world with some serving in conflict zones, including Gaza and Ukraine. "We know they are living in great difficulties, yet they have chosen to stay to care for mentally challenged patients under their care," said the Superior General.

According to the congregation, the Missionaries of Charity operate 754 homes in 139 countries, with more than 5,000 nuns.

Born in North Macedonia, Mother Teresa arrived in India in 1929, later becoming an Indian citizen. She died at the Mother House in Kolkata (Calcutta) on Sept. 5, 1997, at the age of 87. Pope Francis canonised her on September 4, 2016.

Retirement

A day on Retirement will be held at the Franciscan Sisters Hall, 90 Saracen Street, Possilpark (road opposite Screwfix) on Saturday 15th November, 10.30am to 4.00pm. This day will be led by Philip McParland.

Suggested donation £25 (Philip's new book included). Bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee will be provided. For enquiries and bookings contact Caroline Brown on 07736 672003 or email carolinebrown268@gmail.com

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Gaza parishioners dare to hope that peace has finally dawned

THE Christians of Gaza have welcomed with relief the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas... but beg the outside world to keep praying that the peace might last.

That was the message of the most senior Catholic in the Holy Land, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa (right), the Patriarch of Jerusalem, following the deal announced last month.

He spoke of the parish of Fr Gabriele Romanelli who visited Glasgow last year to tell the world of the agonies of his people. The cardinal said: "We are in daily contact with them. They keep writing that they still cannot believe they were able to sleep through the night without hearing the sound of bombs. There are still drones, but they have been used to that for years."

"The situation remains very fluid. As is known, there have been clashes among various factions, but all this was predictable because of the suspension of the war — we still do not know if it has truly ended — and the following stages are still quite uncertain, unclear, and ambiguous."

"Everything needs to be rebuilt, to be organized, and it was — and still is — predictable that there would be ups and downs. There is still much to do. The situation remains dramatic because everything is destroyed."



BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

"People are returning, but they are returning to the ruins."

Hospitals are not functioning; schools do not exist. There is still the matter of the bodies of the deceased Israeli hostages that must be recovered. This is not simple, since in the chaos that has taken place, the locations of these bodies have often been lost.

"The mistrust between the parties remains high. However, despite all this, there is a new atmosphere — still fragile, but we hope it will become more stable."

And the Patriarch revealed

Pope Leo has taken a close interest in the Catholic parish of Gaza.

Pope

"We have felt the closeness of Pope Leo. We had already felt the closeness of Pope Francis before, and then also of Pope Leo. They have different personalities, but both expressed their closeness in very concrete ways — through phone

calls, through frequent contact with the parish priest of Gaza — even though these things do not make the news.

"This closeness has also been expressed in very tangible ways, through concrete aid. The latest gesture we received, just a couple of days ago, was the Pope's wish to send thousands of antibiotics into the Gaza Strip."



Italians get national holiday for St Francis

ITALY'S Parliament has given overwhelming support to a bill creating a public holiday on October 4th — the feast of Italy's patron saint, Saint Francis of Assisi.

The proposal was backed by a large majority in both houses of parliament, with the Senate voting it through with 247 votes in favour and just two against.

A spokesman for the Italian government said the holiday represented the recognition of "a need for peace", adding: "On October 4th each year, Italy will remember that it is a land of traditions that

honours its saints and its history."

The public holiday was first suggested by Davide Rondoni, a poet heading the committee organising events in 2026 to mark the 800th anniversary of St Francis's death.

Well known for a love of nature and advocacy for peace and simplicity, Francis of Assisi is one of Italy's two primary patron saints along with Catherine of Siena. He is also credited as the first writer of the Italian language.

The date officially becomes a public holiday from 2026.

Pope's schedule shows no let up in his November activities

POPE Leo XIV has a full schedule of liturgical celebrations scheduled for the coming months, with the Vatican looking ahead to the first Christmas with the new Pope.

The Holy Father proclaimed St John Henry Newman as a Doctor of the Church during a Mass for All Saints Day, celebrated in Saint Peter's Square during the Jubilee of the World of Education.

On Monday November 3, Pope Leo offered a Requiem Mass for the repose of the souls of Pope Francis and all Cardinals and Bishops who have died in the course of the past year.

On November 9, the Pope will travel across Rome to his cathedral for the Solemnity of the Dedication of the Basilica of St John Lateran's.

The Jubilee of the Poor, which takes place one week later on November 16, will be observed with a Mass celebrated by Pope Leo in St Peter's Basilica.

Pope Leo will mark the Feast of Christ the King with a Mass in St Peter's Square, coinciding with the conclusion of the Jubilee of Choirs.

Tradition

Early in December, Pope Leo will continue the tradition of celebrating the Immaculate Conception.

On December 8, in Rome's Piazza di Spagna, he will lead the faithful in an Act of Veneration of Our Lady (traditionally involving handing a crown of roses to a fireman who ascends on a turntable ladder to place the flowers in the arms of Mary high above the Piazza below).



Salt, Leaven and Light

New season of evangelisation programme launched

“WE are called to serve and to evangelise but are often unsure of the steps we need to take – this course has equipped me to start the journey.”

That is how one participant summed up their experience of the Salt, Leaven and Light Evangelisation Programme which ran for the first time this year in Glasgow.

This programme was designed and delivered by a team at FireCloud, based in Clydebank, and saw 17 lay people representing 14 parishes across Glasgow and Paisley undertake the call to launch a practical evangelisation initiative in their own community.

The Archdiocese of Glasgow Evangelisation Fund generously supported the costs for parishes, with Paisley Diocese doing the same for their participants.

Director, Dr Suzanne Bunniss, said, “We saw the need for a programme to equip lay people with what they need to carry out evangelisation projects within their own parishes, to grow in confidence and learning to build new outreach ideas



Jesus, they learned about what evangelisation means, practical aspects of leading projects, and listened and shared ideas.

Ultimately, they planned and took steps to put into action what they discerned was needed in their own parish.

Projects

In all, participants undertook to deliver 15 different projects ranging from a parish synod to bereavement support, from establishing youth groups to inviting people to come together to pray

with the scriptures through Lectio Divina. Many of the evangelisation initiatives have launched or are starting soon across Glasgow.

FireCloud recognises the value participants got from the programme and will be running the course again from November to May 2026.

If lay people are interested in joining the new course they can visit www.fire-cloud.org or email hello@fire-cloud.org for more information.

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News and views for **FLOURISH**
 Editor-Flourish@rcag.org.uk

Talbot anniversary Mass in Cathedral



Picture by Paul McSherry

ARCHBISHOP Nolan has hailed a Dublin docker who battled alcoholism for much of his life and is now on the way to sainthood as ‘an inspiration’ at a special Mass in Glasgow.

The occasion was the 100th anniversary of the death of Venerable Matt Talbot.

The Archbishop welcomed in a special way the Talbot Association which was founded in the spirit of the Irishman whose profound spirituality and devotion to the Eucharist aided his recovery from alcoholism.

The Archbishop said: “It is inspiring to think that even

today people suffering from addictions of all kinds go to pray at the tomb of Matt Talbot in Dublin and that here in our own city a group of volunteers has been working in his name to assist those suffering from homelessness and addiction issues for decades.”

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City's gift to Archdiocese marks 850th anniversary as the 'Bishop's Burgh'



Picture by Paul McSherry

THE mutual esteem which exists between Glasgow's religious and civic authorities was much on display last month as the City Council presented the Archdiocese with a gift to mark the city's 850th anniversary.

At a Mass in the Cathedral, Bailie Margaret Morgan (left), representing the Lord Provost, presented Archbishop Nolan with a specially designed plate commemorating the 850th Anniversary of Glasgow becoming a bishop's burgh.

The plate was commissioned by the Lord Provost to mark Glasgow's special year.

The design draws on Glasgow's rich ceramic history and heritage. It echoes a plate made in Bell's pottery factory in the late 1880s and is layered with meaning, symbols and images representing Glasgow's past and present. Design elements include:

- The Mackintosh Rose, representing the values and virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity.



- The Thistle, representing the values and virtues of Citizenship, Courage, Kindness, Justice

- St Mungo's symbols of the Tree, Fish, Bird, and Bell

Also depicted in the plate are city buildings such as the MacLennan Arch, University Tower, Finnieston Crane, Armadillo; Billy Connolly's banana boots; the Duke of Wellington's traffic cone and Glasgow's city crest.



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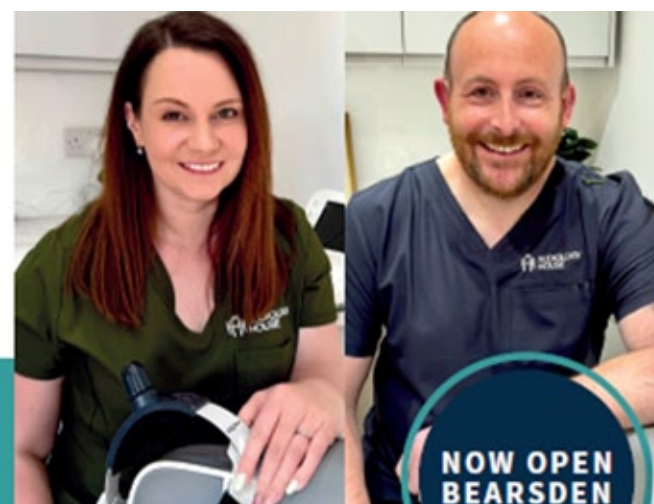
They offer comprehensive hearing tests, expert hearing aid fittings, and specialised ear wax removal. The clinic provides a wide range of hearing aids, including advanced AI models, and allows clients to trial them before committing.

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Brendan's artwork will help build his parish's future

A RETIRED art teacher is selling a collection of his paintings to raise funds for the church where he and his family have worshipped for generations.

Brendan Kelly, 80, former head of the art department at St Ninian's Giffnock, has been a parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald, for more than 50 years and when Parish Priest Father

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

PICTURE BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

Joe Mackle made a plea for donations to the building fund, he immediately offered to put 120 of his paintings up for sale.

They will go on show at a special exhibition next month in the church hall.

Brendan, who married his wife Patricia, 78, in the church on June 28th 1974, said: "I have been blessed with a gift and if it helps to raise funds for the parish that I have been part of for over 50 years – and my in laws for fifty years before me – then it's the least I can do."

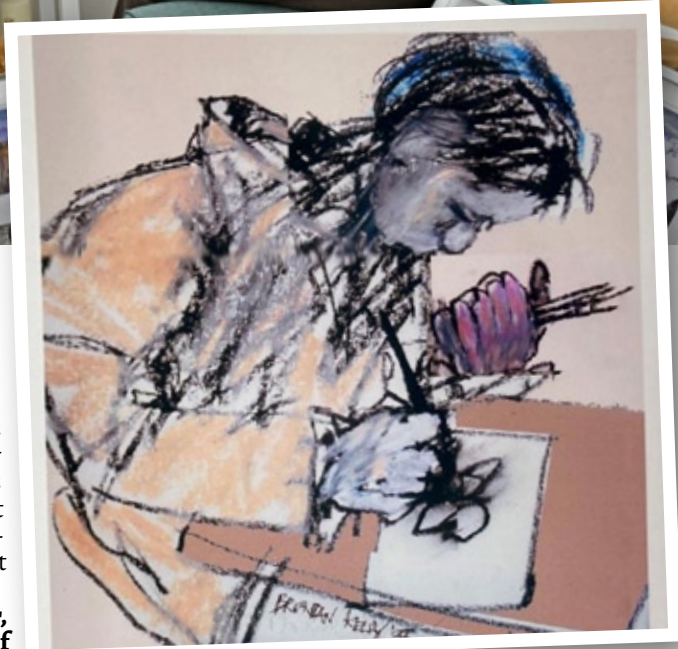
His daughter Kathleen who is closely involved with the project said: "It's great to see dad with a focus and to see him painting after so many years.

"He's spent the past few months producing a collection of new works as well as ones we are familiar with – every wall in the house seemed to be covered in paintings when we were growing up!

"The idea for the exhibition came when dad learned of the parish's need for funds, and he wanted to contribute in a way that was close to his heart.

"A lot of people are interested in my dad's work, and now he has a reason to put his skills and talents into practice. The whole family are so proud of him and his dedication to make this a successful event for the parish."

Father Mackle said: "A massive thank you to Brendan for his incredible generosity in organising and preparing for his art exhibition in December. His talent is truly



remarkable, and it was a joy to see such an amazing collection of his art when I visited his home recently.

"By donating all proceeds to the parish's maintenance and repairs fund he shows his deep parish community spirit and love for Lourdes Parish. His timing couldn't be better either – the artwork will make for perfect Christmas gifts!"

■ **Saturday 13th December, 12.30-4pm, Our Lady of Lourdes hall, Cardonald**

Prayerbook returns home after 500 years

MORE than 500 years after it was removed, an exquisitely illuminated medieval prayerbook, commissioned by Robert Blackadder, Glasgow's first archbishop, returned to its original home in Glasgow Cathedral for one day last month, giving the public a unique opportunity to see one of Scotland's most significant Catholic treasures.

As well as locals, coachloads of overseas visitors were privileged to see the precious artefact on display close to the tomb of the city's patron St Mungo.

Leather bound and crafted at great expense by highly skilled calligrapher monks in France, it was the personal prayerbook of Bishop (and from 1492 Archbishop) Blackadder, who served from 1483 until his death on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1508.

As well as numerous references to familiar Scottish saints, Archbishop Blackadder himself is depicted in the psalter as a humble cleric kneeling in front of Christ on the Cross (above).

A prayer on another page



BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

written in Latin translates as "Lord, deliver me, your servant Robert, from all evil past, present, and future."

The prayerbook or psalter is about the size of modern paperback and is normally kept in controlled conditions in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh.

To mark its 100th anniversary NLS gave rare permission to Mediaeval Glasgow Trust, as part of this year's St Mungo Festival, to display the psalter in Glasgow Cathedral marking the 850th anniversary of the city being granted Royal Burgh status.

Cathie McMaster, chair of the Mediaeval Glasgow Trust, said: "This wee book is unique – it's a Glasgow treasure and it's a Scottish treasure. Just reading Archbishop Blackadder's name reminds us of the link between the past and present in Glasgow which will never be broken.

"It has taken us months of discussions to have it on display even for a few hours, but we are very grateful to all the people who worked behind the scenes to bring the psalter here.

"I am looking forward to my 90th birthday soon so this a great gift for me and for the people of Glasgow."

After Blackadder's death the psalter left Glasgow Cathedral and passed through several hands over the centuries before being acquired by the NLS in 1974 where it has remained ever since.

Chris Cassells, head of archives and collections at the National Library of Scotland said: "We hope by displaying the psalter in Glasgow that people will now be encouraged to travel to come to see it in Edinburgh."

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Sacred Heart restored as parishioners rally round



THE parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish, Bridgeton, have 'returned home' to their beloved church after a six-week closure to allow for major repairs and a volunteer-led restoration.

In that time specialists repainted the sanctuary, the church and the presbytery was rewired, interior and exterior lighting replaced, and a state-of-the-art sound system installed.

For a week before the homecoming Mass was celebrated last month parish volunteers made sure that every corner of the 150-year-old church sparkled like new.

Both Sacred Heart and nearby St Michael's in Parkhead are in the care of the Societas Sanctissimi Sacramenti (The Blessed Sacrament Fathers)

Community

Parish priest, Fr Peter Dowling SSS, who is responsible for both, said: "We have a great community here... maybe small in numbers but big in heart and they have achieved so much because this church, this parish means so much to them."

"I don't know who is the

BY BRIAN SWANSON more pleased to see it restored – myself or the parishioners!"

Fr Dowling added: "I came here just over a year ago and I could see that things needed doing – there was a leak in the ceiling of one of the side chapels for example and after 150 years it was clear essential repairs were needed."

"While the work was carried out we were warmly welcomed to St Michael's and we thank them for that."

Although the updating of Sacred Heart has paused for now the fund raising goes on beginning with a Christmas Candlelight Concert to be held on December 5 given by musicians from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

It will be led by award winning Armenian pianist Marianna Abrahamyan and violinist Gina McCormack. Tickets are £5 with the money raised earmarked to restore the church organ.

Sacred Heart parishioners were delighted to see how well their church looked when they celebrated the homecoming Mass.

Mary Foy told *Flourish*: "I



can't express how delighted I was to return to Sacred Heart last Sunday! Despite the rain, the church looked beautiful after the repairs and repainting had been completed.

"A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this possible not least Fr Peter

who has been a true blessing since he arrived as our parish priest."

And John McLaren said: "I was so full of joy in my heart as I returned home to Sacred Heart. We are truly blessed to have such a lovely parish filled with loving hearts and a church that feels like home."



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Artwork commemorates SCIAF's big anniversary

SCIAF's Rutherglen roots and 60 years of worldwide humanitarian work has been immortalised by one of its local supporters – artist Mark Armstrong.

Mark (54), who has lived in Rutherglen since he was a child, decided to mark the charity's anniversary by creating and donating a painting which summed up its history and meaning.

Mark said: "I was at a SCIAF film launch back in January where I met up with Claire Cook, an old school friend who now works for the charity. We got chatting and I came up with the idea of creating a special piece of art to mark this milestone."

"Since then I've met with SCIAF's community team to get some ideas flowing. I also joined Mark Booker on a visit to my old school St Mark's as well as Fernhill school, to tell the children more about SCIAF's work."

"A few weeks later we went back, and I asked the children to help me come up with ideas for the painting. They were so keen to help."

Mark who runs a social



scenes, through his brand GlasGogh.

SCIAF's Claire Cook said: "I was always envious of Mark at school as he was good at art and I was really rubbish! I've followed his progress over the years, and his work is incredible. When he offered to paint something for our 60th anniversary I jumped at the chance."

Ideas

"SCIAF does so much great work in schools, teaching kids about our work across the world and the importance of caring for those affected by conflict and poverty. So, it was a lovely part of this story to include them and their ideas."

"Mark's amazing creation was unveiled at our 60th anniversary mass a few weeks back and we were all over the moon. 'Journey' really sums up what we are all about, caring for our common home, nurturing communities and reaching out in love when people need it most. A huge thanks to Mark for creating this very special piece of SCIAF history."

enterprise company helping budding artists in the east End has always enjoyed art, but it was only three years ago when he joined Dens# Art Classes in Denniston to hone his oil painting skills. Since then, Mark's gone from strength to strength and now creates Van Gogh-inspired pieces with a difference – famous Glasgow

Pope Leo's first encyclical prioritises care for the poor

I SHARE THE DESIRE of my beloved predecessor that all Christians come to appreciate the close connection between Christ's love and his summons to care for the poor.

I too consider it essential to insist on this path to holiness ... Contact with those who are lowly and powerless is a fundamental way of encountering the Lord of history. In the poor, he continues to speak to us.

I am convinced that the preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society, if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry.

There are many forms of poverty: the poverty of those who lack material means of subsistence, the poverty of those who are socially marginalized and lack the means to give voice to their dignity and abilities, moral and spiritual poverty, cultural poverty, the poverty of those who find themselves in a condition of personal or social weakness or fragility, poverty of those who have no rights, no space, no freedom.

The illusion of happiness derived from a comfortable life pushes many people towards a vision of life centered on the accumulation of wealth and social success at all costs, even at the expense of others and by taking advantage of unjust social ideals and political-economic systems that favor the strongest. Thus, in a world where the poor are increasingly numerous, we paradoxically see the growth of a wealthy elite, living in a bubble of comfort and luxury, almost in another world compared to ordinary people.

A culture still persists – sometimes well disguised – that discards others without even realizing it and tolerates with indifference that millions of people die of hunger or survive in conditions unfit for human

Pope Leo has placed the poor at the heart of his first solemn teaching document since his election. Entitled *Dilexi te* (I have loved you) it picks up many themes of Pope Francis on the theme of poverty and injustice in our world and offers new insights and encouragements. Here are some powerful extracts from the new Papal document for your reflection



“I often wonder, even though the teaching of Sacred Scripture is so clear, why many people think they can safely disregard the poor”

beings. A few years ago, the photo of a lifeless child lying on a Mediterranean beach caused an uproar; unfortunately, apart from some momentary outcry, similar events are becoming increasingly irrelevant and seen as marginal news items.

The poor are not there by chance or by blind and cruel fate. Nor, for most of them, is poverty a choice. Yet, there are those who still presume to make this claim, thus revealing their own blindness and cruelty.

The Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are

walking. Where the world sees threats, she sees children; where walls are built, she builds bridges. She knows that her proclamation of the Gospel is credible only when it is translated into gestures of closeness and welcome. And she knows that in every rejected migrant, it is Christ himself who knocks at the door of the community.

We must continue, then, to denounce the “dictatorship of an economy that kills,” and to recognize that “while the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the

prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. This imbalance is the result of ideologies that defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation.

No Christian can regard the poor simply as a societal problem; they are part of our “family.” They are “one of us.”

If I encounter a person sleeping outdoors on a cold night, I can view him or her as an annoyance, an idler, an obstacle in my path, a troubling sight, a problem for politicians to sort out, or even a piece of refuse cluttering a public space. Or I can respond with faith and charity, and see in this person a human being with a dignity identical to my own, a creature infinitely loved by the Father, an image of God, a brother.

The worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care... Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care.

The most important way to help the disadvantaged is to assist them in finding a good job, so that they can lead a more dignified life by developing their abilities and contributing their fair share.

We Christians must not abandon almsgiving. It can be done in different ways, and surely more effectively, but it must continue to be done. It is always better at least to do something rather than nothing. Whatever form it may take, almsgiving will touch and soften our hardened hearts. It will not solve the problem of world poverty, yet it must still be carried out, with intelligence, diligence and social responsibility.

Almsgiving offers us a chance to halt before the poor, to look into their eyes, to touch them and to share something of ourselves with them. In any event, almsgiving, however modest, brings a touch of pietas into a society otherwise marked by the frenetic pursuit of personal gain.

Rediscovering Glasgow's 'forgotten' migration

A new exhibition at Glasgow's Mitchell Library tells the story of the migration from Ireland – especially County Donegal – to Glasgow from the 1940s to the 1980s. It's a fascinating insight into the lives of countless Irish families who decided life would be better 'working over by'. A story of faith, family and fidelity to their traditions which enriched the Catholic Church in Scotland immensely

Fond memories of growing up in 'Little Ireland'

If you grew up, like me, in Glasgow and the West of Scotland in the 1950s and 60s, then you did so in a little Ireland, more, specifically a wee Donegal.

Every Sunday, on our way to Holy Cross in Crosshill, we waited for the tram outside Langside Depot, and, although they officially didn't take up service on the number 12 until Mount Florida, the crew gave us a 'free hurl' up Prospecthill Road to the terminus. They were from Donegal, and the 'clippie', as conductresses were known, would chat away to my Dad in Irish, guaranteeing Family Dougherty's free trip to Mass every week!

Irishman Father O'Keefe would celebrate Mass in a packed Holy Cross, with plenty of Donegal accents all around. There's no doubt that that the high Mass attendance rates of the early 1950s were closely allied to the comfort of an Irish priest gathering his flock in a safe space, in what could, then, be a less-than-welcoming outside world for Donegal folk.

The Irish presence was everywhere. If we went into St Andrew's Cathedral on a Sunday,



BY HUGH DOUGHERTY

we'd see young men, fresh off the Derry boat, suitcases in hand, seeking out the familiarity of Mass in a strange city. Meanwhile, Jimmy the coalman, who humped bags of the black stuff one floor up into our flat's kitchen bunker, was from Rathmullan, and always up for a chat about life 'over by'.

On St Patrick's Day, we proudly wore the shamrock, sent over from Ireland, and school, where nearly every boy and girl had an Irish name, was closed for a half-day holiday. On one memorable 17th of March, when I was about 11, I made a 'thurible' out of an old pear tin and some string, so we could incense the house with smoke from a piece of turf we'd brought back from the summer holiday in Donegal.

That incurred the wrath of our upstairs Protestant neighbours,

who purposely called the fire brigade, claiming that we, untrustworthy Irish Catholics that we were, were hell-bent on setting our house on fire. But all we got from the fireman, himself of Donegal descent, who attended, was a great big smile and his best wishes for a happy St Patrick's Day!

Both my parents were teachers and, they, like so many of their generation who taught me, saw their job as helping the Irish community move forward, helping the young people into trades and professions and, above all, passing on the faith of their fathers to them.

If you went into the homes of Gorbals and Govanhill, you'd find self-supporting, Irish communities, with streets and closes mirroring the townlands people had left behind. There was culture aplenty, with Irish dancing schools, Irish language classes, and many homes speaking Irish, while the pioneers of the Gaelic Athletic Association were laying the foundations of today's vibrant, local, GAA scene.

Growing up, then, was to be part of Little Ireland. The foundations laid, have stood the test of time, and the ties that bind Glasgow and the West of Scotland to Donegal remain stronger than ever, while the legacy of Irish culture, heritage and faith, endures to this day.



St Francis' in Cumberland St. Photo from 1955. This Franciscan parish was the centre of religious and social life for many Irish families in the post-war period. Image: Glasgow City Archives

VISITORS are flocking to a travelling photographic exhibition from Donegal which gives an intimate insight into the lives of Irish families who left their homes in the post war period to settle in Glasgow.

And the event is a powerful testimony to the Catholic faith of the city's Irish community.

Entitled 'Working Over By' it is a treasure trove of nostalgia told in the words of those who took a step into the unknown and whose influence still shapes the cultural landscape of Glasgow and the West of Scotland to this day.



BY BRIAN SWANSON

Illustrated with precious family photographs it is the story of young men and women, the grandparents of today's generation, who swapped a familiar rural life in Ireland in the 1940s, 50s and 60s for an uncertain urban one on the banks of the Clyde.

Their arrival in Glasgow boosted the so-called 'Catholic revival' in the city which had been sustained by the early Irish migrants fleeing hunger 100 years earlier.

The Irish migrants featured in the new exhibition made that journey on the fondly remembered 'Scotch Boat' (below left), often better known as the Cattle Boat where many teenage romances first flourished many leading to marriage in the years to come.

Men took seasonal jobs as tattie howlers while young women, little more than teenagers, gutted herring – both back-breaking and poorly paid jobs which showed scant regard for health and safety.

Meanwhile they sought solace, company and support in the city's Catholic

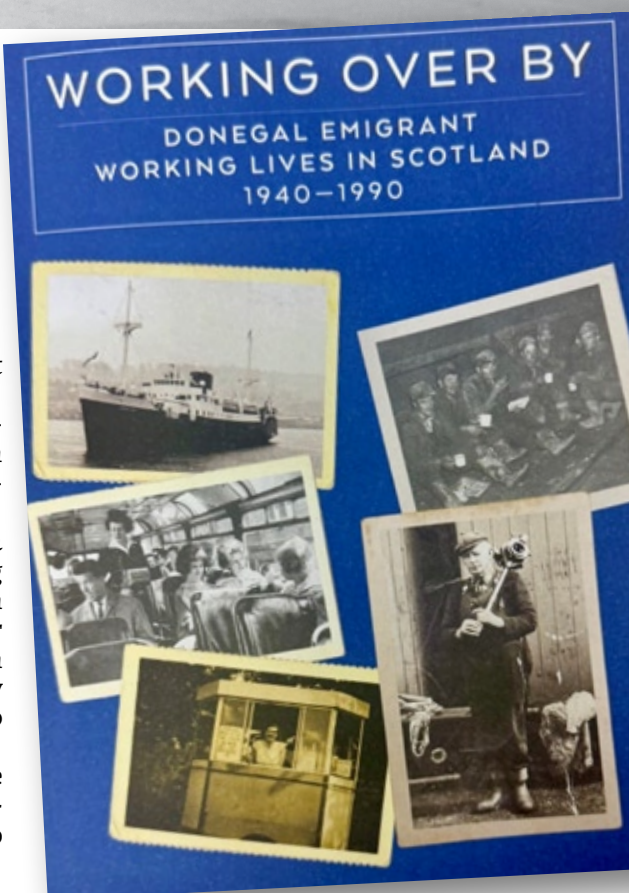
parishes including St Andrew's Cathedral, St Mary's Calton, St Francis in the Gorbals, St Michael's Parkhead and St Patrick's in Anderston.

Elsewhere women found permanent jobs as factory workers, nurses, domestic servants, and 'clippies' on the trams. Outside of working hours their social lives revolved around the parish with its steady rhythms of devotions and dances, May processions and St Patrick's night celebrations.

Speaking at the launch of the Exhibition in the Mitchell Library, Dr Joseph Gallagher, County Donegal Heritage Officer said:

"In the 20th century, Scotland was a familiar destination for people leaving County Donegal in search of work. In recent years, the stories of some of their experiences and successes have been documented but, for a long time, they have been overlooked or considered too ordinary to be recorded."

■ The free exhibition will be at the Mitchell Library until the end of January, with plans underway to take it to other centres in Scotland next year.



The priests who preserved the 'Faith of our Fathers'



The extraordinary McGlynn family, originally from Donegal. All seven children entered religious life as monks or nuns: left to right, Noreen, Mary, Nivard, Donald, Josephine, Patricia, Christina and dad Daniel. Donald McGlynn went on to become Abbot of Nunraw 1969–2003

THE faith of their fathers was central to the lives of those who chose to uproot from the familiar to the unknown.

Not surprisingly, as a major segment of the new Glasgow exhibition explains, the influence of the Catholic Church, and the priests that the people turned to as they navigated their new lives, cannot be underestimated.

This was particularly true of the Gorbals, where Catholic schools and social activities closely associated with the church meant that people were in almost daily contact with their priests, many of whom will be familiar to *Flourish* readers.

Attendance at Mass in those days was impressive at both the Franciscan church of St Francis in Cumberland Street – now a thriving community centre – and St John the Evangelist in Portugal Street, which was closed in 1982 and subsequently demolished.

The Irish language in Glasgow had traditionally been supported by Donegal priests through membership of the Gaelic League and in the 1970s Masses were celebrated in Irish to large congregations with the support of Donegal priests, with Irish bishops travelling to Glas-

BY BRIAN SWANSON

gow for the occasion.

Gorbals priest Father James Meehan, from Ballybofey, County Donegal, served in St John's from 1933–1950, during which time he set up a hostel for seafarers at 2 Portland Place during the Second World War, and later the Stella Maris Club in Carlton Place. Fellow Donegal priest Fr Brian Logue was the joint founder of the Rosses Association to cater for Donegal migrants which later became the Glasgow Irish Centre.

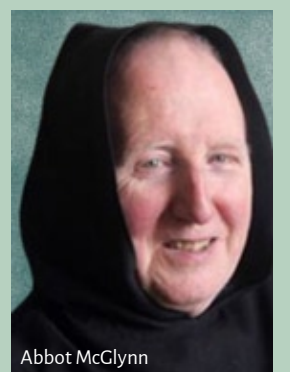
Influence

The influence of Donegal priests was not confined to Glasgow.

In 1956, Fr John Gillen founded a parish in Newarthill, and ten years later Father John F. Byrne founded the St Andrew's parish in Livingston, West Lothian.

Daughters of Donegal emigrants who became nuns in Glasgow also played a significant role in Scottish life with some going on to hold senior positions in their orders.

Among them was Sister Mary Rosario, Superior of the Franciscan



Abbot McGlynn

convent in Newlands who was named Scots-woman of the Year in 1972 for her pioneering work with the homeless.

The call to serve God was particularly strong in one Glasgow household.

The McGlynns, originally from the small Donegal town of Stranorlar, ran a newsagent shop in Cathcart and all of their seven children followed religious vocations (see photo above).

The five girls became nuns and joined the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, with Noreen the eldest becoming the Mother Provincial of the Order in Britain, Ireland and Malta. The two brothers became Cistercian monks, one in Scotland and the other in Cameroon.

■ If you have any information to share about anyone mentioned in this article please email Brian.swanson@rcag.org.uk

■ Hugh Dougherty is author of *Glasgow Corporation & The Donegal Connection*, published by Donegal County Council Heritage Office as part of the Working Over By Exhibition project. Copies are available from www.donegalcoco.ie/heritage

New arts lab at uni will be a resource for all

LEARN more about the history, culture and literature of Catholic Scotland at no charge, without leaving the comfort of your own home...

That's the exciting new opportunity being launched later this month by Glasgow University through the creation of a new online learning course and the creation of a new 'Scottish Catholic Studies Arts Lab'.

The initiative was launched at the University's prestigious Senate Room last month and was widely welcomed by representatives from many Church institutions.

The new offering will be in the form of a Scottish Catholic Studies MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) which will be free to follow and will lead to certification.

At the launch previews were given into three initial component parts of the new course including:

- A section on Scottish Catholic Education with a focus on Archbishop Eyre, the first post-reformation Archbishop of Glasgow and the Notre Dame



Sisters

- A section on Scottish Catholic philosophy with a special focus on Duns Scotus, the Franciscan theologian from the Borders

- A section on Scottish Catholic literature including a focus on the works of Muriel Spark.

Course Director Leonard Franchi said: "We are hopeful that this new model will prove attractive to people who want to learn more about the interface between

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Church and society in Scotland. It is open to people of any background, no previous qualifications are needed, and the course can be followed in your own time."

To find out more about the Scottish Catholic Arts Lab go to <https://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/arts/research/artslab/ourlabs/scal/>

To join the mailing list, simply send an email to arts-scal@glasgow.ac.uk stating that you'd like to join.



Church voice heard as Parliament debates RE

CATHOLIC schools in Scotland help young people "prepare for a pluralistic world where there are people who believe many different things", the Scottish Parliament has heard.

Barbara Coupar, Director of the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES), was giving evidence to a parliamentary committee on withdrawal of children from religious education, alongside representatives of the Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, Free Church of Scotland, and the Jewish Council of Scotland.

Under the current regulations parents can withdraw a child from religious education (RE) and religious observance (RO) in school.

The new Bill would require schools to inform a child if their parent asks for them to be withdrawn. It also gives the child the chance to express their own views. Where the child's views are different from the parent's views, the school would have to follow the child's wishes.

Withdrawal

Witnesses told the committee that the number of pupils being withdrawn from RE was very small, with Barbara Coupar adding that withdrawal tends to be by pupils from other faiths rather than those of no faith.

She told the committee that Catholic schools already have experience of dealing

with the small number of challenging situations that arise in relation to RE/RO withdrawal, saying that, if a disagreement does arise in a Catholic school, the situation is dealt with "professionally, sensitively on a one-to-one basis, to ensure that the child's views are heard and understood."

In written evidence, SCES told the committee that RE and RO in Catholic schools are "always planned and delivered inclusively, with respect for pupils of all faiths and none".

The committee will also take evidence from the National Secular Society and Humanist Society of Scotland before the Bill is debated and voted on by all MSPs.

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The Holy Year pilgrim returns...

Jubilees have changed a bit in 50 years!

1975**2025**

MY first pilgrimage to Rome was in the Holy Year of 1975 when I was just 16 years old.

It was with the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles Youth pilgrimage thanks to my best friend being a relative of Fr Colin McInnes from South Uist.

St Ninian's Knightwood, was our mustering point. Our journey as pilgrims began after 9am Mass when we set off in two red West Coast Motors coaches which would take us all the way to Rome and back! It was the trip of a lifetime.

It also was my first experience of ecumenism as we were young pilgrims from different denominations due to the high schools in Argyll and the Isles being non-denominational. Respect and friendship are what I recall with fondest memories.

We 'Stripped the Willow' in campsites across Europe under the stars, as no matter how tired we were, there was always energy for a ceilidh!

BY **PATRICIA MCCARTNEY**
NATIONAL PRESIDENT, SSVF

Fun aside, the pilgrimage aspect was undoubtedly an integral part of our journey as every day we would gather together to celebrate Mass. This would often be in a church but sometimes in the field where we camped.

Although I have been back to Rome in the intervening years, 2025 is the first time I have returned as a pilgrim. So how have things changed?

Thankfully, the Glasgow Archdiocesan Pilgrimage went by plane! Early starts and long days however remained a common feature. In my diary of 1975, I wrote we were allowed out to 1am one night as we got a late pass. In 2025 I think I would have passed out if I had stayed up to 1am!

But what about ecclesiastical Rome and what it felt like returning as a pilgrim?

St Peter's and the other basilicas seemed so much

busier, plus the use of technology was ever present. In 1975 there were no mobile phones, no large TV screens in St Peter's Square, no such thing as a 'Popemobile' and no electronic security checks. In fact no obvious security apart from monitoring your dress code.

Men are now allowed to enter the churches in shorts. I am not sure how fixed the rule is enforced for females as I never attempted to test that out as 50 years on shorts are not part of my city dress attire!

However one constant that remains is the faith and fervour of being in Rome in a Jubilee Year and walking through the Holy Doors and celebrating Mass with other pilgrims in St Peter's or other churches or basilicas. It was a joy to experience the same respect and friendship that I recalled from 50 years ago.

I went as a pilgrim of hope and a pilgrim of hope I remain as my faith journey continues.



Pilgrims from Immaculate Conception, Maryhill visit Rome for Holy Year



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with our
monthly
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supplement

There is much nourishment in good old-fashioned Catholic piety

GROWING up in a Roman Catholic home, devotions were always a vital part of our religious diet. While our family saw the Eucharist as more important than devotions, we nourished our spiritual lives a lot on devotions, as did many Roman Catholics back then.

Among other things, we prayed the rosary every day, prayed the Angelus daily, prayed special litanies (St Joseph in March, Mary in May and October, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June), prayed the Stations of the Cross each Friday in Lent, were anxious to attend Eucharist on First Fridays and First Saturdays to obtain special promises from God, and said special prayers to obtain indulgences.

As well, there were pilgrimages to Marian shrines for those who could afford them and most everyone wore medals from Lourdes or Fatima and had a special devotion to those shrines (with a special devotion in my own family and parish to Our Lady of the Cape, at Cap De Madeleine, Quebec). Devotions were a big part of our spiritual lives.

What's to be said about devotions from a theological



Scribblings of the spirit

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

view and from the view of a culture that mostly distrusts them?

We might begin with the reaction of Martin Luther and the great Protestant reformers. They were fearful of two things in devotions. First, at that time, some devotions were too unbridled and were simply bad theology (famously, selling indulgences).

Healthy

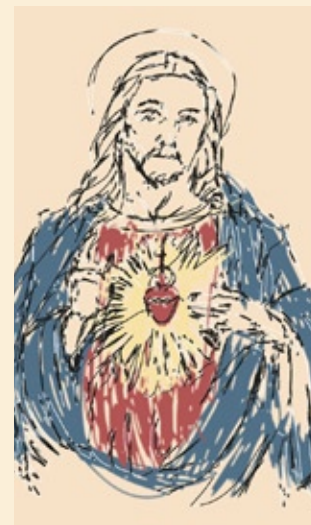
Second, they saw devotions, not as necessarily bad in themselves, but as often displacing Jesus and God's Word as our center and main focus. And so, they distanced themselves from basically all Roman Catholic devotions, the unbridled as well as the healthy.

For the most part that Protestant and Evangelical distrust of Roman Catholic

devotions has come down right to our own day. While that distrust is breaking down today in some non-Roman churches today, it is still the prevalent attitude inside most Protestant and Evangelical circles. In brief, they distrust most devotions because they are seen not just as deflecting our focus from the centrality of Jesus and the Word, but also as potentially unhealthy contaminants, as junk food in our spiritual diet.

What's to be said about that?

It's a fair and needed warning to Roman Catholics (and others) who nourish their spiritual lives with devotions. Bottom line, devotions can easily ground themselves on shaky theology and can be a junk food contaminating our spiritual diet: where devotions re-



place scripture, Mary replaces Jesus as center, and certain ritual practices make God seem like a puppet on a string.

However, that being admitted, as Goethe once said, the dangers of life are many and safety is one of those dangers. Yes, devotions can be a danger, but they can also be a rich healthy supplement in our essential diet of Word and Eucharist.

The protestant reformers were so afraid of contamination by Roman Catholic devotions, that they put us on a diet of antiseptics. When you're on a diet of antisep-

tics, you won't suffer from food poisoning, but you can suffer from malnutrition.

That's an equal challenge to both those who practice devotions and those who fear them. The theology undergirding certain devotions admittedly can be sloppy (for example, Mary is not a co-redeemer with Jesus). However, inside many devotions (to Mary, to the saints, to Eucharist adoration, to the Sacred Heart) there can be a rich nutrition which helps nourish the center, namely, God's Word and the Eucharist.

The late Wendy Wright in her book *Sacred Heart: Gateway to God* says that Catholic devotional practices are a tradition of the heart. While Jesus remains central and his resurrection remains the real anchor for our faith, devotions can give us something beyond just this raw essential.

The dangers of life are many and safety is one of those dangers. Devotions can deflect us from what's more central and can take their root in some questionable theology, but they can also, in Wendy Wright's words, be a blessed passage-way for the heart between heaven and earth.

Don't forget women who are at risk of coercion

HIMSELF and I roll along just fine. Sure, we've each got our foibles.

He's turned replacing the kitchen bin liner into an art form. He's as attentive as if it was the Sistine Chapel he was painting. Timewise, it could be roughly the same. I've learned just to be grateful he does it so willingly.

I charge through life at 100 miles an hour whereas he's more the considered sort. Generally, we meet somewhere around the middle.

He's a man for a double espresso while I opt for the biggest latte on offer. We respect our differences.

In between grandparent activities and work commitments we have time to ourselves that we haven't had to since the Mexico World Cup of 1986.

When you've hit the Ruby Wedding you've weathered some storms and are forever moored to the same anchor of family and faith.

Maybe that's partly why a recent story about an eld-



Mary's musings

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

erly Holocaust survivor in London who, according to some news coverage, was coerced into assisted suicide alongside her husband unsettled me so much.

Ruth Posner (96), a former actress, and her husband Michael (97) died in September at a Swiss clinic, leaving behind a letter which stated they had made the decision jointly and without any outside pressure.

One of their friends expressed concern over Mr Posner's 'emotionally controlling' nature, convinced that Ruth, who was known to be totally reliant on her husband, was coerced into ending her life.

Whatever the truth of

this story coercion is a major concern in the assisted suicide debate. And not just for those who are opposed.

Earlier this year an open letter from women of different faith traditions – not all of them opposed to assisted suicide – highlighted the insufficiency of the safeguards in the UK Bill. The same applies to the Scottish Bill.

Not only were they concerned about lack of protection but also that the "proposed legislation could create a new tool to harm vulnerable women."

They wrote that that in Parliament and beyond, the proponents of assisted suicide rely heavily on the importance of personal

choice "without consideration of those who struggle to be heard in the public square. It is the voices of the unheard, ignored, and marginalised that we are compelled by our faith traditions and scriptures to listen and draw attention to, in the pursuit of good law-making for the common good – legislation that considers and protects the most vulnerable, not just those who speak loudest."

In Westminster Diane Abbott MP spoke of silence being the most powerful coercion. "If police cannot spot coercion in domestic violence, how can they be expected to spot coercion in assisted dying?" she argued.

Women's Aid has been vocal in highlighting the lack of effective safeguarding of domestic abuse survivors who are at risk of coercion into ending their lives by their controlling and manipulative partners.

Ultimately no amount of safeguards can protect women who are already subject to domestic abuse and coercive control. Years of emotional manipulation have taken their toll and their abuser's behaviour has become normalised.

As much as women are at risk of coercive control so too are the elderly, disabled and the already vulnerable. They can be especially at risk as their coercer will likely be their care-giver.

Old age brings with it a loss of independence and autonomy. With that comes the feeling of being a burden.

Enshrining assisted suicide in law is both incomprehensible and reprehensible.

ART OF THE MONTH

Grieving our loved ones is a sign of love

DURING this month when we pray especially for the Holy Souls in Purgatory — our painting turns our minds toward the mystery of death, judgment, heaven, and the mercy of God.

William-Adolphe Bouguereau, in his painting "Le jour des morts" (The Day of the Dead) depicts two women, possibly a mother and her daughter, dressed in black and mourning in sorrow.

The elder woman's face is solemn but peaceful, as though her grief has found expression in love rather than despair. She leans gently towards a stone cross holding onto a wreath which symbolises her prayer for eternal life for a loved one who has passed.

The younger woman, burying her face, seeks solace in the embrace, suggesting a deep emotional connection and shared grief.

In the background, autumnal trees and fading flowers reinforce the themes of mortality and

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

the passing of time. The soft, diffused light and muted colour palette create a tranquil atmosphere, allowing the viewer to contemplate the deeper meanings of life, death, and human emotion.

The work carries both sorrow and hope, reminding us of the loving duty of prayer for the faithful departed. The painting fills us with hope in Christ's victory and in the power of prayer for our beloved dead.

Grief is not something the Christian must suppress. Our Lord Himself, at the tomb of Lazarus, wept. He who knew that in a few moments He would call His friend forth alive, never-

theless allowed His tears to flow.

To mourn our dead is not a failure of faith, but rather an act of love. How easy it is, in a world so preoccupied with the present, to forget our dead! But in the Church, there is no forgetting. Every Mass, every Rosary, every prayer for the faithful departed is a declaration of love that does not die.

What name, what face of your own beloved dead arises in your heart? Whisper that name silently before the Lord, trusting in that great moment when Christ shall call His faithful from their tombs. For the Christian, there is no sorrow without hope, but a sorrow that already tastes of joy.

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Archbishop's Mass for COP climate summit



MASS FOR THE COP30 CLIMATE SUMMIT

Celebrated by Archbishop Nolan

MONDAY 10TH NOVEMBER 1PM

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL, GLASGOW

Join the Care of Creation Office, Justice & Peace Scotland, SCIAF and SCES to pray for the success of COP30. Followed by refreshments in Eyre Hall and a presentation from SCIAF's Ben Wilson who will join us live online from COP30 in Brazil.

COP30 AMAZONIA

AN invitation has gone out to come together to pray for all those taking part in COP30 and for the care of our common home.

On Monday 10th November the Archbishop will offer a Mass for Creation at 1pm in the Cathedral.

Hosted by the Bishops' Conference of

Scotland's Care of Creation Office and supported by Justice & Peace Scotland, SCIAF, and SCES. This Mass will be offered for the success of the COP30 climate summit in Brazil. After Mass, all are welcome to gather for refreshments in Eyre Hall and a take part in a live video update from SCIAF's Ben Wilson, reporting from COP30.

Your chance to write hymn for world's youth



WYD Seoul 2027 Theme Song Contest

We are looking for the official World Youth Day Seoul 2027 Theme Song! Compose a song that will inspire millions of young people around the world.

How would you like your musical composition to be sung by thousands of youngsters gathered with the Pope? If you would then it's time to submit your entry for the official Theme Song of World Youth Day 2027!

For WYD Seoul 2027, the chosen theme is "Take courage! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

The Local Organizing Committee of WYD Seoul 2027, together with the Vatican's Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life,

is inviting musicians and composers worldwide to create the official song that will accompany millions of young people at the next World Youth Day celebration.

It is not simply background music, but a melody that echoes throughout the gathering, helping young people connect with one another and with the heart of the event.

■ You can find out more and submit your song at www.wydseoul.org



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- **Joy to our Young**, as they assist as Young Adults and "Mini Vinnies" in the work of the SSVP
- **And countless other good works**

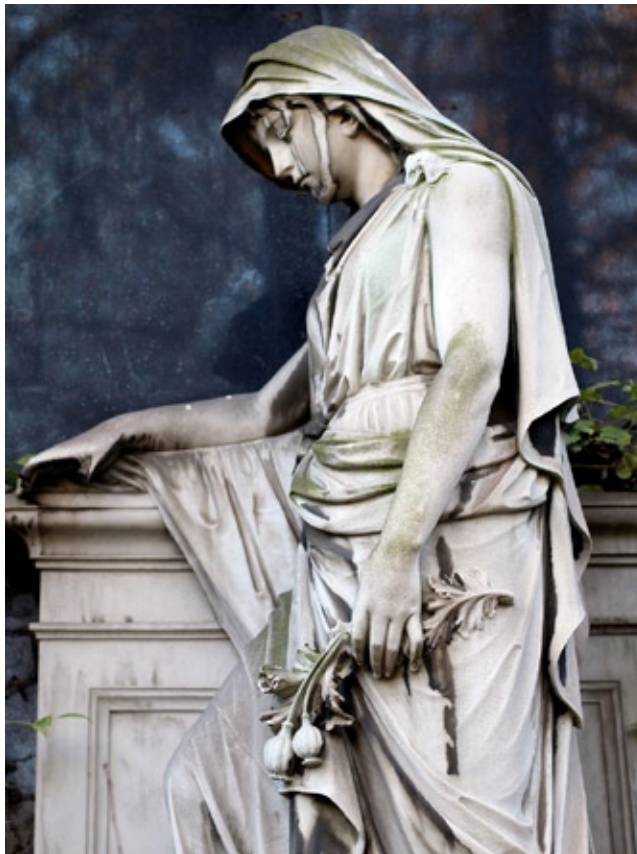
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Please consider The Pastoral Care Trust – St Nicholas Care Fund when you are making a will or leaving a legacy.

The Pastoral Care Trust – St Nicholas Care Fund aims to help in Christ's name those in need in our communities.



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ONE of the most practical and loving acts we can do for our families is to prepare a will.

Though it may be uncomfortable to think about our own mortality, making a will is an act of stewardship and care that reflects our love for those we will one day leave behind.

A will ensures that our possessions — the fruits of our labour — are distributed according to our wishes and values. Without one, loved ones may face unnecessary legal burdens, confusion, or even conflict during a time of grief.

By setting our affairs in order, we offer them peace of mind and the freedom to focus on remembrance and healing.

For Catholics, a will can also be a way to express gratitude to God by including charitable bequests, perhaps to the parish, Catholic organisations or charities that have shaped our faith.

This becomes a final testimony of generosity and service, extending our Christian witness beyond death.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Making a will is not merely a legal task; it is a spiritual one.

It acknowledges that all we have is a gift from God and that we are called to use it wisely — even in planning for the end of our earthly lives. In doing so, we leave behind not confusion, but love and order.

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Year ends with finale of feasts as Advent nears

MOST of the time, our Sunday Liturgy follows a straightforward sequence from week to week. But not this month!

This year, November begins with a Sunday celebration of All Saints, has two more feasts to mark and ends with the start of Advent and a new liturgical cycle. Quite a roller-coaster of Sunday readings and things to reflect upon!

However, the "theme" is always the same: Jesus saves us and invites us to enter into his life. The saints have entered that fully: we look forward to it with them, and each Sunday will remind us of that goal, the call to be saints!

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

Having celebrated all the saints in glory – those we know by name and those known only to God – our second November Sunday brings us back to earth, to celebrate the dedication of the Pope's cathedral in Rome.

It is a feast which recalls our unity as a Church, gathered around our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, as the Bishop of Rome.

The readings for the feast focus us on the Temple. Ezekiel speaks of the renewed Temple as a place from which healing flows: water bursts into the desert to bring life and healing after a time of exile and isolation for God's people. In the Gospel, however, John speaks of the Temple in whole new light: Jesus purifies the earthly one as a sign



Fr Tom Kilbride

Parish Priest of Christ the King, Glasgow

of the Temple which is his own body.

If the Temple is the place where God dwells among his people, that will now mean Jesus, the Word-made-flesh, that unique place where God comes into the world to live among us. And on the Cross, from his side, water and blood will flow out to bring life and healing, the life of God poured into us through the sacraments.

Paul (Second Reading) reminds us that as baptised people we too have become the Temple of God, each of us a place where God lives in the world. Do we show that? Do we let the gift of God's life flow from us? As we celebrate the building in Rome, we celebrate our call to be living stones in the Temple built by the Holy Spirit, founded on Christ.

Thirty-Third Sunday C

We return to our regular Sundays with St Luke. At this point, we have reached Jerusalem, the place we have been heading over the past few months. On the road, we learned what being disciples means. Now Jesus speaks of what comes next.

The road ahead, he says, has its challenges, both in the world around us and even in our own families.

Yet despite the dramatic language Jesus uses, the message is actually one of hope: "not a hair of your head will perish".

In this Jubilee Year when we are called to be "Pilgrims of Hope", even the challenging things we experience cannot dilute that hope if we keep close to Christ. Malachi (First Reading) speaks of fire and judgment, but ends with a sunrise and "healing". Perhaps that is the message Luke wants us to hear: even if things seem dark, the light is dawning. Fear and suffering are transformed by faith with hope and joy for those who trust in God.

Christ the King C

The message of hope from last Sunday is given a face this week in the person of a repentant criminal. In his guilt, he is given a hope of Paradise.

As we honour Christ as King, we hear how David was chosen and anointed as king over the tribes of Israel (First Reading). The rulers and soldiers use those very words, 'Christ' (Anointed) and 'King', to mock Jesus on the Cross. And yet his kingship, his anointing, is not for worldly power but for healing, hope and salvation, and this is what we see at work.

In what could almost be a prayer, the criminal asks Jesus to remember him in his



kingdom and in return he is promised Paradise, a share in that kingdom. One who was lost is found, one who is dead in sin is promised life. This is the King we celebrate today: one who seeks out and saves us.

Paul reminds us that we too, having our sins forgiven, are "qualified" to share in the glory of the saints, since the Cross has reconciled us with God.

Our liturgical year ends with a promise of Paradise, a promise which extends to us all if we keep close to Christ our crucified King.

First Sunday of Advent, Year A

As November ends, we begin Advent and a new liturgical year, guided by the Gospel of Matthew. As always, the First Sunday of Advent points us forward not to the birth of Jesus at Christmas but to his return in glory as judge. In a sense, it invites us to begin by putting our house in order.

In the Gospel, Jesus uses Noah as a model: Noah was ready when the time came because he lived a just and holy life. Others were so caught up in worldly distractions that they missed the signs of what God was doing. And so can we if we are not careful.

Paul reminds us that this

is not something to put off: "the hour has come". As Noah was called to action, to prepare for what God would do in the Flood, so we too are being called to recognise what God doing for us now, no matter what is going on around us, and to prepare for what is yet to come.

Over these November weeks, our attention is pulled in various directions as we mark the different

feasts and changes of seasons, but the message is the same. God is calling us to lives of justice, holiness and faith.

If we stay close to him, we have hope even in the most difficult things we face, and can come to share the joy of Paradise, promised to a repentant thief as the liturgical year ends, in the company of the Saints with whose feast day the month opens.

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11th Anniversary

Please pray for Esther (Murray) a cherished wife to the late David, Mum and Gran & adored Great-Gran, who sadly died November 7, 2014.

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Happy memories of my early days of vocation

LAST month, on 4th October, it was 50 years to the day from when I first entered the Passionists.

On that day I arrived at the Graan in Enniskillen to begin my postulancy year.

I was accompanied by another lad from Glasgow who was entering at the same time, and we would be joined there by four other lads, two from Belfast, one from County Clare, and one from Nigeria.

My own personal journey into the Passionists was circuitous. I had gone to St Mungo's Academy where our chaplains were Passionists, and there would regularly be school retreats and missions conducted by the Passionists.

But it was really after I left school, when I got involved with the Passionists at their retreat house at Coodham in Ayrshire, that the seeds of a vocation were planted. Having attended a number of retreats I was then invited to join the team for both the youth and young adult retreats. This was around 1969.

At the same time, I had started work and was studying accountancy at day release and night classes. After being made redundant from the Singer Sew-



Fr Frank's log

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

ing Machine Company in Clydebank in 1970, I went to work for Olivetti in the Queenslie Estate.

When the idea of a Passionist vocation grew stronger, I decided that I would finish my studies before making a move, and so it was, in 1975, that I finally entered, just to try it out, fully expecting I would be home again within a few months.

However, despite many, many ups and downs, that didn't happen.

A few days before I arrived at the Graan, I was collected at home in Drumchapel, then, following a tearful farewell with the family, I was driven down to Coodham along with my colleague.

We should have gone straight to the Graan the following day, but the rector of Coodham, who knew us both well, decided we

should stay and help out at the annual dinner dance, which was scheduled to take place that night.

Eventually, the day after the dance, loading our things into the rector's car, we headed for Ardrossan for the ferry crossing to Belfast. I remember the ferry was called The Lion. We then drove to Enniskillen. I remember passing through places called Augher, Clogher and Fivemiletown, which sounded like a nursery rhyme.

Colditz

We stopped for a bit of lunch in a remote country pub, and arrived at the Graan mid-afternoon. Our first sighting of the Graan sent chills down our spine. It was very different from Coodham, and had the imposing look of Colditz about it.

Our first sighting of our

Postulancy director was even more chilling. Fully attired in habit and mantle, Dracula-style, he wasn't a bit pleased that we had arrived a few days late, which of course hadn't been our choice, and we were afraid that we would be sent home before we had hardly arrived.

He was a very strict man, but in time I came to admire him as a very good, holy and fair man.

Our classmates' first sighting of us was even more chilling again – for them. My Glasgow colleague and I were both in our mid-twenties. We were quite stocky, to put it mildly, and we both sported big bushy beards.

We were also wearing identical green quilted jackets. We looked like something straight out of Braveheart, ready to do battle to preserve our freedom.

Our classmates were all in their teens, and they looked at us with terror in their eyes. What in God's name was this that had descended upon them?

Looking back, I don't blame them. I'm a bit frightened myself when I look at photos from that time. However, we soon got used to each other and settled

down together to encourage each other in a semi-monastic life.

The following Saturday I was nearly sent home again. We had the afternoon off to wander into Enniskillen, about three miles away. Before heading back out again, I thought it would be a good idea to go into a local pub and get the football scores.

By the time I arrived back out for the evening meal, the landlord had phoned the Graan to tell the director that one of his postulants had been in the pub, which I didn't know yet was out of bounds. Thankfully, he relented again, but I got the distinct impression that it would be third strike and out, but here I still am.



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Reading is the key to understanding

I HAVE been privileged to visit many countries around the globe, dispatched as a journalist to cover events both trivial and world shattering.

On every assignment, I learned much that was new to me – and not just in relation to whatever issue I was there to cover.

But a major lesson was that it's impossible to get a proper take on a culture in the short time you are in a country, just as we can't 'know' a country just because we've been there a couple of times on holiday.

We surface surf – and no doubt get a lot wrong.

That's why I read books by writers from those countries – and areas of the world which continue to be in the headlines – rather than by those who are looking in from the outside, however learned they may be. Whether fact or fiction, I can get further under the skin of a country under the guidance of one of its citizens.

The fiction of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*



Marian Pallister

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

gives an insight into Afghanistan's long-running troubles. *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie puts Nigeria's fragile society into perspective.

Currently, I'm reading *A Stranger in Your Own City* by Ghaith Abdul-Ahad. It's a factual exploration by this highly respected Iraqi journalist of what he describes as two decades of frustration and fury in Iraq.

Why is that my bedtime reading in 2025?

Because I'm old enough to remember the American-led invasion of Iraq, backed by then UK prime minister Tony Blair on questionable evidence; an invasion which Scottish MP Robin Cook opposed (his gravestone is engraved with the words 'I may not have suc-

ceeded in halting the war, but I did secure the right of Parliament to decide on war'), and which led to decades of chaos in the Middle Eastern country.

It has been argued from the outside looking in that Iraq was a country of deep Shia-Sunni sectarian divisions.

Invasion

But from the inside, *A Stranger in Your Own City* explains that sectarianism was imposed after the invasion and removal of dictator Saddam Hussein. New rulers were able to return to Iraq after years in exile and these men needed a system based on sectarianism to assist them build constituencies in a place where they had become outsiders.

Divide and rule – dic-

tionary explanation: 'maintaining control over one's subordinates or opponents by encouraging dissent between them, thereby preventing them from uniting in opposition.'

This post-war situation that Ghaith Abdul-Ahad explains was, I believe, the responsibility of George W. Bush and Tony Blair, whose cavalier actions exacerbated a difficult situation.

And now, Tony Blair's name again rises in a Middle East context, this time in collaboration with another US president, Donald Trump.

We all seek peace in the Holy Land. We all want to stop the destruction, the killing, the inevitable generational trauma that will in any case haunt this region for decades to come.

And yet, names associated with disastrous conflicts in the region are names we are asked to trust with establishing peace and justice. Pax Christi Scotland prays that real peacemakers will sup with a long spoon.



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November's message: where there's a Will there's a way to help SCIAF

NOVEMBER is the month of the Holy Souls and a time of reflection for us as Catholics, when we especially remember our loved ones who are no longer with us.

It's also Will Aid month, when many solicitors waive their fees to allow people to complete their wills in exchange for a donation to their chosen participating charity.

SCIAF is one of those participating charities.

Remembering SCIAF in your final wishes is a wonderful gesture of love and a way to honour your lifelong values and solidarity with those who are in need beyond your lifetime.

For over 60 years you have helped give people a hand up out of poverty. If you leave a gift to SCIAF in your will, you can help continue that work for many genera-

tions into the future.

At SCIAF £1 in every £4 donated to us is sent as a gift in Wills. This means for families who are hungry, farmers can learn techniques to help them deal with the effects of climate change and grow more

food. It means communities facing drought can build wells and access safe, clean water.

And for those caught up in emergency situations – like right now in Gaza – you can be at their side with essentials like food, clean wa-

ter, health care and shelter.

From our humble beginnings in a classroom in Rutherglen, SCIAF now makes a positive change to the lives of around one million people around the world every year.

We exist to tackle global wrongs and to make sure that everyone, everywhere has the basic right to a decent life.

Leaving a gift in your will and making financial arrangements for after your passing is very simple to do.

After you've taken care of your loved ones, your legal advisor can talk you through the options of leaving a set amount (a pecuniary gift) or a percentage of your estate (a residual gift) to SCIAF. You could even leave a specific item to SCIAF if you wish.

You will need a note of



our registered address, 196 Clyde Street, Glasgow and our charity number, SC012302, to take along to a solicitor.

When the time is right for you to remember a charity in your Will, please choose SCIAF so your faith in a fairer world can live on.

For more information

please contact our Legacy Coordinator, Lucy on 0141 354 5555 or email legacy@sciaf.org.uk.

■ Visit the Will Aid website to find a list of participating solicitors in your area and book an appointment for November. www.willaid.org.uk

“The world exists for each and every one of us, yet in this world of plenty there are so many with so little. Please remember SCIAF in your will today and help change the lives of millions tomorrow. Thank you.”

—BISHOP BRIAN MCGEE

“The world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us”

– Pope Francis

Leave a gift in your Will to SCIAF and let your faith in a better world live on

Visit sciaf.org.uk/wills or contact 0141 354 5555 to find out more

DID YOU KNOW?

...some solicitors waive their fee in November for Will Aid month. Please get in touch for more info.

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