

FLOURISH

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October 2020

Picture: Imago Mundi



Pope's call for new way of living

POPE Francis travelled to Assisi in recent days, to the tomb of the saint whose name he bears, to sign his new encyclical letter to the world, *Fratelli Tutti*.

The document – the highest form of Papal letter – is a blueprint for a better world

post-COVID and contains something for everyone, inside and outside the Church.

It offers practical tips on lifestyle changes and good habits we can each develop to improve the quality of life of our communities – learn

to say please and thank you! And it offers a critical assessment of the grave issues facing society – a warning against populist politics and fake news.

It contains advice – avoid digital culture wars. And it asks profound questions

–who do we identify with in the parable of the Good Samaritan?

It is written in a readable style to make it accessible to all. It poses awkward questions and makes points designed to shake us out of our apathy ... “Let us admit

that ... we are still illiterate when it comes to caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. Those who claim to be unbelievers can sometimes put God's will into practice better than believers.”

Inside this special edition of *Flourish* you can find extracts, links and analysis of this important moment in the life of the Church.

■ **More coverage: pages 12 and 13**

Stella Maris win Vatican stamp of approval

BY BRIAN SWANSON

A GLOBAL Catholic Acharity for seafarers founded in Glasgow has been honoured with a specially-commissioned set of stamps from the Vatican to celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Originally known as the Apostleship of the Sea but now universally referred to as Stella Maris, the charity was set up as a ministry of the Catholic Church for seafarers, fishermen and their families.

Now a hundred years later, Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world, with centres located in over 300 ports in 55 countries, offering hundreds of seafarers 'a home away from home' every day far from their countries of origin.

The new Vatican stamps show three sailors on a boat

in fear of a sudden storm, as they cry to the Virgin Mary for her help.

The design is completed by the logo of the Stella Maris, consisting of an anchor intertwined with a life preserver with the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the centre.

However anyone wanting to buy a set will have to make a trip to Rome because they are only available from the Vatican Post Office!

■ Archbishop Tartaglia is to bless new memorials at the previously unmarked graves of 16 seafarers in St Conval's Cemetery, Barhead as part of the Stella Maris' Star of the Sea centenary celebrations, writes Euan McArthur.

Some of those who died, including sailors from Glasgow, India and other parts of the world, were only in their twenties and thirties. The causes of their deaths, which occurred from 1944

to 1951, included pulmonary tuberculosis, pneumonia and exhaustion.

Stella Maris helped to pay for some of the burials at the time of the deaths.

Mary Wheeler, a ship-visiting volunteer for the charity, spent time researching their history before contacting Deacon Joe O'Donnell, Stella Maris' Senior Area Port Chaplain for Scotland.

He enlisted the services of Charles Lipton Memorial Headstones who are providing the memorials free of charge.

Deacon Joe, of St Mungo's Glasgow said: "Having spoken to Mary who was looking into some history regarding Stella Maris, the subject came up regarding some unmarked graves.

"After receiving confirmation, I thought it would be a nice gesture to mark these graves as part of our centenary celebrations – at

that time I had been dealing with a monumental sculptor regarding my own father's headstone.

"It will be a special moment for Archbishop Tartaglia to bless these graves – especially at this milestone in the charity's history – and we are very grateful to him. The goodwill shown by the city where the charity was founded has been really quite humbling.

"As soon as I spoke to Charles Lipton, he made it clear he would be keen to help and he couldn't have been more helpful.

"After talking to Charles about the legal side of this matter, he suggested four memorial stones to be laid at the unmarked graves and confirmed that he would do this at no cost.

"Charles is now in the process of making the memorial stones, for which we are extremely grateful."



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Glasgow saint graces cityscape



THIS remarkable modern day depiction of St Enoch, mother of Glasgow's patron St Mungo, has been created during lockdown to honour the city's two major saints.

Artist Mark Worst spent weeks transforming a blank wall in Abercromby Street, in the East End, into a giant-sized portrait of the saint's mother ... surrounded by fish.

This is a reference to the legend which tells how she was saved from drowning by shoals of fish after her father ordered her death when she

became pregnant.

The gable end mural was commissioned by the Thenue Housing Association, whose headquarters are in London Road, to mark its 40th anniversary. St Enoch is also known as St Thenew or St Thenue and the association was named after her.

The mural also commemorates a tragic event in the history of the city by portraying the saint with a shawl featuring 29 motifs in honour of the 29 young women who were buried

under rubble when a wall of the Templeton's carpet factory collapsed in high winds in November 1889.

Mark, from Paisley said: "Much is known about her son St Mungo given his role as Glasgow's patron saint, but Glaswegians know less about this mother whose story focuses on overcoming adversity and finding a new beginning which ultimately led to the founding of a great city like Glasgow."

Charles Turner, Thenue Housing's chief executive said: "This is an important artwork which has trans-

formed a gable wall end wall into a new east end landmark which we are sure will be admired for years to come."

The Abercromby Street art work is the latest in a series of public art tributes to St Enoch and St Mungo.

Two years ago an image of St Enoch, with a robin perched on her wrist and hugging her fair haired son appeared on a gable end in the High Street. Known as Mother Glasgow it is the work of Glasgow based Australian-born street artist Sam Bates who spent weeks using only spray cans to transform a bleak gable end at the junction of George Street and the High Street into an astonishingly realistic work of art.

It is a companion piece to his depiction of St Mungo as an old man feeding a robin, painted two years ago on a similar gable end further along the High Street.

Saint Mungo is also commemorated by a three-metre tall limestone statue which dominates the landscaped park at the City of Glasgow College's City campus, near Glasgow Cathedral, the saint's final resting place. Created by former stonemasonry student, Roddy McDowall, the St Mungo statue, which shows the saint in the robes of a medieval bishop, started out as a seven tonne block of Portland stone and took Roddy, who graduated from the college in 2005, six months to complete.



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To JESUS through MARY!

Golden memories of Papal visit

Last month saw the 10th anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI's historic visit to Glasgow. *Flourish* asked our Archbishop and Archbishop Emeritus to reflect on the visit and its significance

THE great Pope St John Paul II, who, for 27 years, bestrode the globe like a colossus, was succeeded in 2005 by the more reserved Josef Cardinal Ratzinger who took the name of Benedict XVI. By the time he succeeded to the See of Peter, Benedict was already a theologian of great renown in the Catholic Church.

Benedict's mission was to continue the work of Pope John Paul II to put the post-conciliar Catholic Church on a more sure spiritual and doctrinal footing. His most original contribution to that project is to be found in his genial concept of the hermeneutic of continuity, by which he meant that Vatican II had been a reforming Council in continuity with the great Tradition of Faith. According to Benedict, the Catholic Church did not re-invent itself at Vatican II as a new reality, but opened itself to the renewing and reforming impulses of the Holy Spirit in continuity with the Catholic Church from the beginning. In common with Pope St John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI's focus on the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ in determining the nature, message and mission of the Catholic Church was unshakeable. In this, he fulfilled the most fundamental mission of the Successor of Peter: to be in the forefront of the People of God, confessing their faith in Jesus Christ in the words of Peter the Apostle: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

A gentle, courteous, holy and brilliant man, he both

BY ARCHBISHOP PHILIP TARTAGLIA

confounded and infuriated the proponents of the weak and woke philosophical and moral theories of our time, classified them as the dictatorship of relativism, and produced many inspiring homilies, addresses and documents. Despite relentless attacks from the many exponents of the prevailing godless culture, he never wavered in his faithfulness to Christ and to the truth of faith.

His visit to Great Britain in 2010 confounded his critics and, both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, was an ecclesial and personal triumph. I will never forget the moments I spent with him on the tarmac of Glasgow Airport at the end of his visit to Edinburgh and Glasgow on the 16th September 2010, the Feast of St Ninian. I was Bishop of Paisley at the time and, since Glasgow Airport is actually within the territory of the Diocese of Paisley, it fell to me to accompany him to his flight. As he stepped on to his aeroplane, he praised the faithfulness of the Catholic community of Scotland that he had met that day, telling me that he could see that "the Church was alive in Scotland." In fact, his visit to Scotland set the tone for the rest of his British visit, which turned out to be a resounding success.

Pope Benedict XVI appointed me Bishop of Paisley and then Archbishop of Glasgow. For me, this represents an indelible bond of affection and respect between the Successor of Pe-

ter and one of his bishops. If St Paul VI was the Pope of my young adulthood and St John Paul II was the Pope of my priesthood, Pope Benedict XVI was the first Pope of my service as a bishop. He was and still is an inspiration to me.

Paul VI and John Paul II were canonised after their deaths. Benedict XVI is a truly holy man and, in my view, he deserves to be regarded as a contemporary doctor of the Church who would fit easily into the company of great figures like St Irenaeus, St Basil the Great and the Cappadocian Fathers, St Augustine, St Cyril of Alexandria and Pope St Leo the Great.

In an unprecedented development, which I certainly did not expect, Pope Benedict resigned the See of Peter in February 2013.

He was succeeded by Pope Francis, who is the second Pope of my ministry as a bishop. May God bless our Pope.



WHO would have thought that within two generations in Scotland, and two succeeding episcopates in Glasgow two Popes would have visited us, Pope John Paul I in 1982 and Pope Benedict in 2010?

Two Papal Coats of Arms are engraved on the central doors of St. Andrew's Cathedral, next to the two Archbishops who had the immense privilege of welcoming them, Archbishop Thomas Winning and my own.

Just in front of them on the floor of the Cathedral foyer is the heraldry of the Archdiocese picked out in tesserae, small squares of coloured marble, put together in Bethlehem and reassembled in Glasgow at the time of the renovation of the Cathedral. Round them is the message in Latin, "Specialis Filia Romanae Ecclesiae", the Special Daughter of the Roman Church, a title given to Glasgow by a mediaeval Pope, and subsequently extended to the rest of Scotland.

A visitor, knowing his Latin, might have thought that the Coats of Arms were proof positive of this special relationship.

One would have to confess that after a thousand years of Catholic Christianity, a great "disruption", as Pope Benedict described it, occurred in Scotland in the sixteenth century, the "Reformation". It followed a similar ecclesial revolutions throughout Europe.

From around 1560, the date of the Reformation Parliament in Scotland, which banned the Mass and forbade communication with Rome, until the Restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1878, which happened

BY ARCHBISHOP MARIO CONTI

by degrees, the Pope was a "persona non grata" someone not liked, indeed in the minds of many, an enemy of the people.

We have to be aware of this in realising the huge significance of the visits of Popes John Paul and Benedict, their culture changing effect on British Society, and the impetus towards reconciliation and the restoration, again by degrees, of the unity of the Christian Faith.

These are the words of Pope John Paul, at Bellahouston, "Can we not for the future walk hand in hand?" and those expressed by Pope Benedict at Westminster Abbey, when he described the significance of the gathering as "a moment of prayer and friendship confirming us in love for Jesus Christ and common witness in the enduring power of the Gospel".

His address at Westminster Hall to the highest representatives of British society could not have been said, nor previously welcomed, but for a change of mood: "If the moral principles underpinning the democratic process are themselves determined by nothing more solid than social consensus, then the fragility of the process becomes all too evident – herein lies the real challenge for democracy".

These visits have both influenced and confirmed a change of mood. We are right to look back and express our gratitude.

To mark the anniversary last month I wrote to Pope Benedict... I am glad to share that letter with *Flourish* readers:

We are recalling with immense pleasure the tenth

anniversary of your visit to Great Britain which commenced with your arrival in Edinburgh to be greeted by Her Majesty the Queen. I had the immense privilege in the afternoon of welcoming Your Holiness to Glasgow and at the Mass in Bellahouston Park of greeting you on behalf of the Catholic faithful of our three nations.

In following you to London and to Birmingham we joined with our colleagues from England and Wales in attending the other unforgettable events of your visit which concluded with the liturgy of the Beatification of John Henry Cardinal Newman whose influence touched all the Churches of these islands. I have recorded these occasions in the book which accompanies this letter.

The farewell at Oscott College was poignant for it was there that Newman delivered his Sermon on the Second Spring which seeded a hope which Your Holiness's visit watered by your message at every event and outstandingly in the historic Hall of Westminster ...

The Mass you celebrated on St. Ninian's day ended in a golden evening. That memory and the warm affection you expressed for Britain which we and many outside the Catholic Church reciprocate, remain a cause for our lingering gratitude and the surer hope of a season of spiritual fruitfulness.

■ The book mentioned in the letter is still available either from Burns Publications at 0141 270 9775 or e-mail: michaelburns2000@yahoo.co.uk or from Pauline Media, 36 St. Enoch Square at 0141 226 3391.

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Recommended in Which magazine

How the virus changed the Church

Five priests reflect on the extraordinary impact of the coronavirus crisis

History lesson in time of plague

“HISTORY repeats itself” ... Over these months of lockdown, I’ve been struck by many similarities in the chronicles of previous plagues.

Maurice Keen's history of the Black Death recalls how it claimed a third of the population of Europe. A pandemic fuelled by economic unrest, and the consequent movement of peoples caused a rapid spread. Not surprisingly, the death rate was highest among the poorest.

The Crown offered tax relief to ease economic hardship (to some) in a kind of medieval furlough scheme and to help slow the spread, servants and agricultural workers were “bound to their masters” in what we’d recognise as “lockdown”.

Plague never disappeared, re-emerging over the next 300 years. Bubonic plague ravaged Europe. 15,000 died a terrible death in Bordeaux alone as their Mayor, the essayist and philosopher, Michel de Montaigne, rode off into exile, safe from danger.

This is not a history essay, however history teaches us no plague visits unattended nor leaves things the same. Research before the World Health Organisation is already linking our current pandemic to the global ecological crisis, especially the loss of biodiversity. The integral ecological message of Pope Francis’ great encyclical *Laudato Si* powerfully challenges us to think how our lifestyle and priorities may contribute to our current situation.

What have these days of pandemic highlighted in our parishes and our own faith?

In his first year as Pope, Francis set out his vision for a missionary church in *Evangelii Gaudium*. I was thrilled to read that central to that vision is the role of a renewed, reformed parish. (nos 24 – 39) I never quite got what the Pope meant when he said parishes should be capable “of transforming everything,



Fr Jim Lawlor

so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation.” (27) Well, Covid19 has helped clarify that passage!

None of us will ever take for granted again the generous availability of our sacramental life and worship.

But we have had to find creative ways to pray, to keep everyone in touch – social media, mobiles and the new phenomenon of the livestream ... life-lines! Parish communities have been feeding the neediest, keeping an eye out for the lonely or anxious. Our young have been supported, transitioning in complex times but it has been a challenge to reach those shielded by nursing care or hospital.

Above all, us priests have become “ministers of morale”, helping keep alive hope and serenity. And we have truly experienced what we all know; we are church beyond walls, wherever we are.

The image of Montaigne riding away from his dying people helps me clarify what our parishes have learned in these strange days. However and whenever we can, we won't run away – we'll run towards!



Archbishop Tartaglia celebrates an Easter Sunday Mass like no other, in an empty cathedral, during the height of the Covid crisis
Picture: James Chapelard

WHAT did you do in the COVID lockdown father?

When I was about 12 years old, I remember asking my dad what he did during the war. I knew that he had served in the Navy but was not sure of what ships he had been on or where he served. He reluctantly spoke about it. I found out that he was a sailor on the first landing crafts to go into France on D-Day in 1944.

When I was asked to write about my experience as a priest during the Covid Lockdown that instance with my father came to mind. At school we were looking at World War II and we were told that the war was time of history that shaped our future. This global pandemic will I am sure go down in history as a very significant period in world history.

When Mass was suspended and the Church closed, I



Fr Jim Dean

realised how hard this would be for my parishioners and for myself. As a priest who was only ordained a couple of years I felt initially as if my priesthood was being taken away from me. I was not able to contact or celebrate the Sacraments with my people.

Within a day or two I started to examine the concept of streaming Mass.

I would like to see a new normal that is more aware of the needs of others

There was no Wi-Fi in the Church but there was in the house. There is a small Oratory upstairs and with the help of a friend I was able to start streaming Mass each morning via YouTube. It seemed very strange at first – almost like talking to myself but quickly it came as second nature. I even got adventurous to start each morning with an appropriate hymn or piece of music. There then came feedback from parishioners and others who seemed to enjoy and value the Mass each day. This really did help in closing the gap I felt at the start of lockdown.

However, there were difficult times especially not being allowed to visit those

who were dying. Relatives were generally understanding. Where possible I asked them to come and collect a crucifix and some prayers and I would make use of the telephone to recite some of the formula for the Sacrament of the Sick and the Apostolic Pardon.

During lockdown I conducted 42 Funeral Services, both at gravesides and in crematoriums. This again was so difficult for families especially with the limit on the numbers who could attend. I generally tried to offer the Mass on the day of the Funeral as a Requiem, and I would always give the family details of this so that the family and friends could tune in if they wished.

Perhaps the most difficult time was when my friend of over 35 years died following a brain tumour. I had worked with David and we would regularly go on holiday together. He was rushed to hospital and died a day or two later. His daughters asked me to conduct his funeral and that was so hard but also so fulfilling.

One Sunday morning I was not feeling particularly well. I said streamed Mass from the Oratory and then got two phone calls from parishioners, both nurses telling me to get to A&E as I was not looking very well. I was admitted and spent four days in Coronary ward. Dean, Canon

Pandemic taught us to be creative

AMONGST the worry and sadness associated with Covid-19, one of the things I've found encouraging has been the engagement through St Margaret's and Our Holy Redeemer's parishes' website and social media platforms, namely Facebook and YouTube.

Despite knowing its power in theory, and having used these platforms quite effectively to publicise and share the golden jubilee of St Margaret's parish in 2019, I have been genuinely staggered by the length of their reach and the breadth of their influence during lockdown.

I was hesitant about using Facebook to live stream Holy Mass, but was encouraged by a couple of parishioners to do so. I had been somewhat tentative in approach, imagined it would be complicated and beyond my technical ability or understanding. This proved to be false. I was immediately struck by how little equipment that seemed to be required to make this possible.

The camera I used was a pretty basic Huawei mobile

phone and I strapped it, with black insulating tape, to an old hymn board and balanced it all with a brick and a doorstop, and pointed it at the altar. To my amazement it looked okay!

I wanted to be sure I could manage the whole thing myself and didn't want things to be too complicated. Still, I assumed the quality of the output would be something like the pictures we used to get from live broadcasts from the moon during the Apollo programme in the late 1960s and early 70s – all a bit ghostly. And what about the sound? Would anyone be able to make out the words of the Mass? Then there was the method by which I would connect to the internet. The presbytery internet wi-fi didn't reach the church. Could it be done using the mobile data on my phone?

To my amazement, the data was more than enough and the signal strong, the picture was clear – in colour! – the sound acceptable and the audience/congregation only too happy to be connected with the parish and with each other at Mass.

The first live stream had over 250 individuals or families viewing at the one time and had, according to Facebook feedback, over 2400 views (whatever that means.) To say I was somewhat surprised would be an understatement. I don't really know what I expected but I didn't expect that engagement.

At a stroke, all my prejudices about the internet and social media, crumbled.

I had been very negative about Facebook in particular. It has tremendous power to upset and divide. Here, though, too, is a genuine and powerful tool for evangelisation. Following this, along with the parishes Youth Minister, I have broadcast a number of other live streams of devotions and prayers and made short videos of encouragement, throughout the lockdown period which were also uploaded to our parishes'



Canon Gerard Tartaglia

YouTube site. Live streaming will be continuing – even if we ever get back to 'normal.' It is now part of the parishes' pastoral life.

While congratulating myself on this adventure, I remain aware that quite a number of people are not connected through the internet, have no interest in social media and are well within their rights not to want to have anything to do with it.

Funnily enough, imagining that because of the level of engagement on the parishes website and social media platforms everyone in the parishes knew that the churches were reopening, I was tickled by the fact that three of our most faithful parishioners were oblivious to the reopening for Masses and only found out because they happened to be passing the door when we were preparing for the first of those Masses.

Technology still has its limits.

All this goes to show, there is no magic bullet, no single technology or programme when it comes to spreading the Word, and engaging in pastoral ministry. In the end, we can use all the tools in the box and be braver in our attempts to engage by using these newer ones.

How the virus changed the Church

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Fr John Gannon

FIRST of all, the confession of a guilty secret: I have greatly enjoyed large chunks of lockdown! I am embarrassed to admit this, but it is the truth, especially in the early days.

In those first weeks, when everything had shut down, it was like an extended holiday. I have many times wished I could be off without actually having to go away, but this is not possible for a parish priest. If you are in the parish house, you are at work. Suddenly however, all was quiet.

How to pass the time? I read; and read; and read. All those books I had been collecting for my forementioned retirement suddenly

got opened. (page 1300 of Robert Caro's biography of Lyndon Johnson – only 1900 to go.)

So all in all, I was having a lovely time! Then the guilt kicked in.

It was a while before the funerals started, but when they did they accelerated, and the realisation grew that not everyone was having a lovely time. We normally have about 30 funerals a year, now I was occasionally having two a day. Standing with families outside of nursing homes trying to give absolution to dying relatives at the other side of a window; trying to comfort grieving relatives over a phone line; becoming aware of the really desperate financial straits that many people suddenly found themselves in. I think it's fair to say guilt set in.

I must say I have been very impressed with the way that people have adapted. All the new regulations have been accepted, indeed embraced. An army of volunteers, many of them new, have ensured that we were up and running as soon as it was permitted. Streaming mass every morning has been a vital means of maintaining contact with the frailer members of the parish.

In many ways the virus has opened up new opportunities for growth and outreach.

There have however been more negative effects on parish life. We are a lot smaller than we were, and I suspect we will never get back a sizeable proportion of our congregation. Once a link is broken, it is extremely difficult to re-establish it. This of course has implications for the financial health of the parish, as we are all discovering.

Streaming is a double edged sword – we have to guard against the idea that this is a permanent viable alternative to actually attending in person!

In truth, I think many of these things would have come to pass in the fullness of time.

As with so many areas of life Covid has simply accelerated trends which were already in progress.

The challenge for us now is to try and adapt to new realities, and not simply wish things would get back to normal.

Normal will never come back for us, changes have occurred which will never be undone, and the sooner we accept that, the better the chances of us building something new and fruitful.



Canon David Wallace

I WISH that I had kept a diary of events, thoughts and feelings since March of this year! Even although we could see a lockdown coming towards us, it seemed so unreal and unthinkable.

I was attending a meeting and conference of the Joint Liturgical Group of Great Britain in London back in March and rushed back to my hotel room in time for the Prime Minister's first address to the nation after which I started to scramble about making plans for what we'd need to have in place as a parish for what was clearly coming.

A week later, we ceased to celebrate Mass publicly and had to discover a new way to keep our parish community together. I remember the wave of emotion after celebrating Mass that morning at Lourdes Secondary and wondering when we'd be able to do that together again. It (even now) feels like one of those stories children write at Primary School which ends with the alarm ringing and waking up.

The online version of being Church perhaps saw us through lockdown in a less than satisfactory way, but at least we had the technology to be able to do that by offering daily Mass and other devotions to keep people close to the Church. It was certainly strange initially to be celebrating or leading prayer all alone in an empty Church.

I know that I learned how much we can take for granted and I truly hope we all learn from that, appreciating what we have in our lives and what really matters.

So much has been postponed or cancelled and we have a longing for things to return to 'normal', whatever that will look like and whenever that may be. For three months, we couldn't celebrate a funeral Mass with people present. Restrictions, even now, seem so surreal to our experience of what we'd normally do. Weddings have postponed with the hope of gathering family and friends to come together to celebrate joy. First Communion celebrations were put off and even

although they're resuming now, they will look so very different. This list goes on.

What have we learned about being Church?

Perhaps the awareness that we exist for each other; that we need the sustenance that comes from the Sacraments. These are surely central to our Catholic identity.

I mentioned the online version of Church being less than satisfactory. It doesn't engage everyone, since many are without the means to interact with technology. And yet, perhaps for some things, we've learned to use it to our benefit. Online meetings have grown in popularity (I use the term loosely) which meant in my own parish that the Parish Council could meet regularly, the local priests and ministers met online weekly, there were opportunities for Catechesis and prayer which perhaps attracted a greater number of participants than a cold Spring evening in a parish hall.

Opportunities for worship outside of Mass attracted greater numbers than usual, since people could engage and participate from home. There were many benefits that we must now assess taking us into the future.

However, we are a Church that exists for community, making up the body of Christ, and we experienced a loss of that. Social interaction is crucial.

As an example, in June I normally teach a short course in Salamanca for our seminarians. As they had come home in March, the "classes" had to take place online. I was able to deliver the course material alright, but the opportunities for unpacking it, sharing experiences and making connections with other aspects of Church – chatting, answering questions, even praying and relaxing together – were much diminished. It served as a reminder to me that we exist for each other.

What will the future look like 'once this is all over'?

Perhaps a greater awareness of how we reach others, a new way to evangelise. An increased awareness of what evangelization really is. Pope Francis has so often spoken of the Church as a 'field hospital' and maybe now, we see what it is to be first responders!

The years ahead will pose challenges for us, but I believe we have the opportunity to arise from this stronger and more ready to cope with and embrace the renewal that has come our way.

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POEM OF THE MONTH

This is an excerpt from his poem "The Man born blind" by John Nuttall.

As he stands there alone

Jesus comes to find him.

Wonderfully, gloriously, joyfully

He now could see the form

That just before

He only envisaged in his mind's eye

As Jesus before him.

He sensed it was the Healer.

The same peace, the same presence

As He came nearer..

The aura that He carried

The same atmosphere

And then He spoke

The voice that calmed the sea and raised
the dead

The sound of many waters

The still small voice.

Art of the month

A painting which helps us to understand humility

OCTOBER is a month full of tempting feasts to highlight in Art of the Month. The Doctors of the Church, Thérèse of Lisieux, Teresa of Ávila, the Angels and Archangels not to mention the Rosary and Marian Feasts.

But I have chosen none of these. Rather I wanted to share with you a painting completed in 1886 depicting Jesus and the woman caught in adultery entitled *Christ and the sinner woman* by the Russian landscape painter, Vasily Polenov.

He came from a very wealthy and highly educated family. He got a taste of travelling when he went to Italy to order a larger canvas for this work than was available in his native land.

That visit inspired him to travel abroad in order to understand and recreate the sights and colours of different countries. He was thus able to paint in a convincing and realistic style that captured the ambience of the place and of the event.

There are three main groups in our painting this month. There is the furious, accusing mob, pointing and gesticulating with such rage that you can almost hear their angry shouts.

Close by is Jesus, silent and calm with his disciples listening and learning, huddled together, and no doubt perplexed and bemused.

In the background, various on-

BY MGR TOM
MONAGHAN

lookers stand, like the man on the donkey in the foreground, passing by and merely curious.

The colours are fairly muted, probably reflecting the evening tones of the day. But notice how close Jesus is to the rough and scoffing crowd.

He is always there on the edge... on the peripheries... ready to bring comfort, healing, understanding and forgiveness.

"Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" (Lk. 6.41)

Self-scrutiny is a useful habit. It helps us to keep on the straight road. An examination of conscience helps us to realise how much worse we would be if we did not acknowledge our faults and failings.

Even more... it enables us to do something about our tendency to sin. Self-awareness and self-correction help us to be more understanding of human frailty in others. Maybe if we ever become free of faults, then we can criticise others. But then we would have another sin to confess!

Until then... "Remove the wooden beam from your own eye first." When we recognise the worst in ourselves, we might just begin to recognise the good in others.

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

God, our Father,

let me see my encounters with your Son as a very beautiful and private time where Jesus steps out of the clamour of the happenings around, and brings forgiveness and healing so that we may worthily worship and honour you.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Mission Sunday evokes happy memories for Father Pat

WHILE Irish-born priest Fr Pat Hennessy is well known and much loved by the Scottish parishes in which he has served – most notably in his current parish of St Columbkille's in Rutherglen – he is held in similarly high regard some 6000 miles away in South America.

Harbouring a desire from a young age to go on mission, Fr Pat finally got his chance in 1988, after nearly two decades of service in Motherwell Diocese. Having been interviewed and accepted to go on mission by the Missionary Society of St James, he was sent to Peru to live, work and serve in a mountain parish north of Lima – something he did for the next 11 years and recalls with great fondness.

Despite having to live with the lethal threat posed by the paramilitary group Sen-

BY GERARD COUGH

dero Luminoso – who killed two Polish Franciscan priests and one Italian missionary priest now collectively known as Blessed Martyrs of Chimbote – face problems posed by natural disasters and witness poverty in close proximity, Fr Pat thrived and became quite emotional while reminiscing about his time spent on mission there.

"The organisation I was with only dealt with the poorest parishes or places that couldn't sustain a priest, or pay him anything or feed him," he said. "I was up in the mountains with the poorest of people and some of them in the villages hadn't seen a priest since the 1950s. When I was there, the *niño* phenomenon blew away all the bridges and all the roads and people had abso-

lutely nothing. I just felt that that was a great place to be. I just said to myself hey this is great. I used to set out my little bag and all I'd have was the good book, the implements to celebrate Mass and that was it. I was totally dependent on the people and they looked after me.

"Fairly early on in my time there, people would say 'would you come for a bite to eat?' That's what the little girl in the picture said to me she said 'Padre my mum and dad would love for you to come and have your dinner with us,' and I said 'I would love that.' They lived in a tiny little shack of a thing and I went in and sat down and the dinner was a little bit of fried rice and an egg and that was it. And the word got out that the Padre loves to be invited to sit at the table with us and you can say what you like to him because he won't



get upset! I enjoyed being among the people. The people were great. I was broken hearted when I left. I'd say it was the best thing I ever did, easily."

It cannot be overstated just how important the presence of a priest is in the missionary country or territory in which he serves, so when Fr Pat was informed that one of the two projects supported by Missio Scotland in Peru would involve the construction of a parish house in San Sebastian de Llusco in the Sicuani Prelature, he was delighted and also explained his connection with Bishop Pedro Bustamante, the man charged with overseeing both projects.

"Two years ago they were giving medals to these missionaries in Cork and when I went here was this bishop, Pedro Bustamante," Fr Pat recalled. "He said 'Patrio' and I said 'yes?' He said 'you visited our village when I was 14 years of age and you stayed for a couple of days and I've never forgotten you!' 'God,' I said 'that's amazing!'"

"A parish house is important because of presence," he said. "The reason why people built a house for me was because then they knew that I would stay with them. The fact that the priest has a residence will allow him to live among the people and that

makes them feel so good it would break your heart. People might ask why you would build a house, but it's a really good thing, it won't just be a house for the priest, it will become bigger and it will probably have facilities like a hall and a pharmacy and so on and being able to share life with the people is a great thing."

Fr Pat was similarly enthusiastic about Missio Scotland's second project – a feeding programme for disabled children, also in the Sicuani Prelature – and spoke of the need for those of us who are part of the universal Church to continue to support the world's poorest peoples, especially at this time.

"Comedores are a big thing in Peru," he said "They're big kitchens and what the priest usually does is buy flour, cooking oil, soya and a stove and basic instruments and you'd hand it to the people and say look this is a kitchen and you can now set up a comedor and people will eat much better. That makes community and people's conditions improve too."

"With the Covid-19 and the whole situation, unfortunately you have people saying we have to look after ourselves now, cut aid to everything. Governments have also spoken about cutting aid and that we can't get

too involved now, we have to recover first, but we give out of need," he said. "If you go back in history, this church was built in the hungry 30s when people had nothing but they gave to God. As long as you do it to the least of my brothers you do it to me. So would you forget the Lord in his poverty?"

"God loves everyone, but He loves poor people and children especially. That's the Gospel. If you begin to think small then you'll start to forget about the poor, the disabled and those in need. So you have to have a big heart – to be a missionary you have to have a big heart. That's maybe the message that Missio Scotland is trying to convey, that we really can't forget about the poor people on the planet."

"And we might ask, what is the Church? Well the Church is the heart of God and the Church is meant to portray God to the world – a God who loves everyone. The Church is just one big family and what happens in a good family? Everyone is loved, but if anyone is struggling or sick, then the mother and father have a special love for them until they get up and walk with the rest. So we have to help people to get up and walk with the rest of us and participate, I think that's it. You might also ask why am I giving £20 to Missio Scotland? The answer is because you're giving it to God and good people will use it in God's name to help people. That's what God wants. That's what His Church wants."

While Fr Pat returned to Scotland in 1999 and retired in June of this year, his passion for mission – and in particular his former parishioners in Peru – has never diminished and nor should our own.

To learn more about the work of Missio Scotland you can visit: www.missioscotland.com, like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/missioscotland>, and follow us on Twitter: @Missio_Scotland

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Bishops' plea: keep our churches open

In a letter sent to Scotland's 500 Catholic parishes, the nation's Bishops are urging the Catholic community to maintain their "meticulous" infection control and safety measures.

The letter points out that the rate of Covid-19 infections is on the rise across Scotland and public anxiety is increasing, and asks priests and parishioners, to "persevere in our efforts to reduce the risk of transmission and to ensure that our parishes and communities adhere to all infection control measures that have been put in place."

The full text of the Bishops' letter follows:

The Covid-19 Pandemic has presented the Church with unprecedented challenges. It has brought about the temporary closure of Churches and, following the resumption of public worship, the introduction of rigorous health and safety

measures to prevent transmission of the virus.

Since the resumption of public worship our parishes have been meticulous in controlling infection and ensuring the safety of all those who cross the threshold of a Catholic church. The Bishops wish to commend the work and cooperation of priests, parishioners and volunteers whose extraordinary efforts have ensured that Catholic churches are among the safest places for people to attend in the midst of this pandemic.

However, we are now at a fragile point. The rate of Covid-19 infections is on the rise across Scotland and public anxiety is increasing. At this critical moment, we ask that we all persevere in our efforts to reduce the risk of transmission and to ensure that our parishes and communities adhere to all infection control measures that have been put in place.

Our discussions with the Scottish Government assure us that Government

is aware of our extremely careful protocols and trusts us to see to our public worship and parish life with the discretion of responsible citizens. We, for our part, assure Government that we are employing this discretion for the good of public health in accordance with the law.

On that basis, we have every confidence that, if parishes continue these high standards, public worship and parish life can carry on and we will continue to attend to the spiritual welfare of the nation.

From long experience of plagues and disasters, the Church knows how the want of prayer and faith can do great harm to the spiritual wellbeing of nations, and how our public worship – owed to God – can bring His special divine assistance in times of national trouble.

Now, more than ever, our church doors need to be open, and consolidating our hard work to date will ensure this blessing for ourselves and for our country.



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We've come a long way.

Day after day after day
Of sacrifices, hardships, patience.
Scotland, we've done ourselves proud.
And it feels like now the cloud,
May be lifting.
But now is not the time to stop.
This virus is not done.
Let's not undo all that good work.
Progress made, as one.
A brighter future is in sight,
If we do this right.
Let's stick to it with all our might.
Because we are Scotland.

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PROTECT
OTHERS
SAVE LIVES

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Government



A GREAT global crisis has rocked the world, leaving millions afflicted and sowing fear everywhere. The shock polarises societies, radicalises opinion, and reinforces trends to a new kind of politics – loud, angry, premised on demonising others and promising to restore lost national glory.

Unless something dramatic changes, the stage seems set for a long, bloody conflict. In that context, a Pope writes an encyclical letter attempting to offer an alternative before it's too late.

That could easily be a description of Pope Francis and *Fratelli Tutti*, the new encyclical he signed in Assisi and which has now been released by the Vatican. In fact, however, it's the background to *Quadragesimo anno*, the social encyclical published by Pope Pius XI in 1931, now almost a century ago. It was written as the Great Depression was raging, Benito Mussolini was firmly in control in Italy, and Adolf Hitler was moving inexorably towards power in Germany.

In a sense, *Quadragesimo anno* was Pius XI's attempt to defuse the bomb before it went off. (It would become ever more explicit six years later in *Mit Brennender Sorge*, Pius XI's encyclical denouncing National Socialism.) Those efforts failed, and the explosion Pope Pius saw coming turned out to be worse than even he could have imagined.

Time will tell what impact *Fratelli Tutti* may have, but the parallels are striking.

Fratelli Tutti contains myriad points, and no doubt will be subject to a thousand different spin cycles. Some may choose to link certain passages to current events – it's going to be awful tempting for many Americans, for instance, to flash on the recent Trump/Biden fracas in pondering paragraph 15: "In this craven exchange of charges and counter-charges, debate degenerates into a permanent state of disagreement and confrontation."

Perhaps the best overall way to frame the encyclical is as an extended meditation on political and economic life in the early 21st century, including the impact of the coronavirus crisis. Francis sees a contest between two flawed alternatives: neo-liberal individualism, and nationalist populism. His "third way" is a social ethic of human fraternity, rooted for Christians in the Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan.

The Pope's diagnosis of the internal contradictions of neo-liberalism is especially

Pope's letter is wake-up call to the world



BY JOHN L ALLEN JR
EDITOR OF CRUX

late 19th century, though Francis offers a novel twist by linking it to questions of national sovereignty raised by today's immigration debates.

"Seen from the standpoint not only of the legitimacy of private property and the rights of its citizens, but also of the first principle of the common destination of goods, we can then say that each country also belongs to the foreigner, inasmuch as a territory's goods must not be denied to a needy person coming from elsewhere," he says in paragraph 124.

As for today's brand of populism, the critical assessments offered in *Fratelli Tutti* are too numerous to mention. Suffice it to quote paragraph 11's denunciation of "myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalism," which sets the tone for much that follows.

Anyone who follows political discussion these days, anyone who watches the news or who has a Twitter account, certainly can confirm the Pope's diagnosis that such exchanges are increasingly nasty, exhibiting a kind of open rage that tells us something is seriously amiss.

"Things that until a few years ago could not be said by anyone without risking the loss of universal respect can now be said with impunity, and in the crudest of terms, even by some political figures," Francis writes in paragraph 45.

The Pope's proposed remedy, human fraternity, may seem a bit fuzzy, and Francis does not offer a detailed blueprint. However, he does give hints of planks for a platform along the way: Care for the elderly, combatting racism and sexism, compassion for immigrants, debt forgiveness for impoverished nations, a strong role for the U.N. and for regional alliances, and abolitionist positions on both war and capital punishment.

More than anything else, the specific issues treated in *Fratelli Tutti* appear to be in service to illustrating an ethic of fraternity, one which begins with rejecting aggression

as a means of relating to others – and the tendency to aggression, he believes, has been made significantly worse by the coronavirus and the shift to increasingly "virtual" relationships.

He's equally clear that blood in the streets, in the name of whatever cause, isn't the answer: "Violent public demonstrations, on one side or the other, do not help in finding solutions," he writes in paragraph 232.

Make no mistake, Francis isn't terribly optimistic about where things are trending. He praises various points of light, including the emergence of popular social movements that he lyrically refers to as "social poets." Nevertheless, it's telling that even the sections of *Fratelli Tutti* ostensibly devoted to hope quickly digress into various laments.

In a nutshell, Francis sees these two great social "pandemics" – privileged individualist indifference and blind populist rage, apparently mutated into even stronger forms by the literal pandemic of the coronavirus – setting the stage for calamity unless some new force arises to counteract them.

Duke historian James Chappel, author of the 2018 book *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church*, argues persuasively that those same 1920s and 30s-era Popes saved the Church by shifting from condemning modernity from the outside to attempting to leaven it from within.

"The struggle against totalitarianism has concluded, Catholics won, and the contemporary Church was shaped to the core by that battle," Chappel wrote.

Has Pope Francis provided the Church with the resources to navigate another such great global struggle and come out the other side, alive and kicking? Only time will tell, but when that assessment eventually is drawn up, the conversation almost certainly will begin with *Fratelli Tutti*.

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Ten thoughts from *Fratelli Tutti*

Pope Francis' new encyclical is a document of 40,000 words. It merits a calm reading. It contains advice for individual living, for political decisions and for family life. Here are 10 highlights to help *Flourish* readers get a flavour of the riches of the full document which can be accessed at the Archdiocesan website – www.rcag.org.uk

THINGS THAT UNTIL A FEW years ago could not be said by anyone without risking the loss of universal respect can now be said with impunity, and in the crudest of terms, even by some political figures. Nor should we forget that there are huge economic interests operating in the digital world, capable of exercising forms of control as subtle as they are invasive, creating mechanisms for the manipulation of consciences and of the democratic process. The way many platforms work often ends up favouring encounter between persons who think alike, shielding them from debate. These closed circuits facilitate the spread of fake news and false information, fomenting prejudice and hate. (45)

WE SHOULD RECOGNISE THAT DESTRUCTIVE forms of fanaticism are at times found among religious believers, including Christians; they too can be caught up in networks of verbal violence through the internet and the various forums of digital communication. Even in Catholic media, limits can be overstepped, defamation and slander can become commonplace, and all ethical standards and respect for the good name of others can be abandoned. (46)

EACH DAY WE HAVE TO decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders. (69)

THE SPIRITUAL STATURE OF A person's life is measured by love, which in the end remains the criterion for the definitive decision about a human life's worth or lack thereof. Yet some believers think that it consists in the imposition of their own ideologies upon everyone else, or in a violent defence of the truth, or in impressive demonstrations of strength. All of us, as believers, need to recognise that love takes first place: love must never be put at risk, and the greatest danger lies in failing to love. (92)

RACISM IS A VIRUS THAT quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting. (97)

MANY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FEEL that they exist without belonging and without participating. Much still prevents them from being fully enfranchised. Our concern should be not only to care for them but to ensure their "active participation in the civil and ecclesial community. I think, too, of the elderly who, also due to their disability, are sometimes considered a burden. Yet each of them is able to offer a unique contribution to the common good through their remarkable life stories. (98)

Pictures: Imago Mundi



POPE FRANCIS ON THE UN: "There is need to prevent the [United Nations] Organization from being delegitimised, since its problems and shortcomings are capable of being jointly addressed and resolved. (173)

KINDNESS FREES US FROM THE cruelty that at times infects human relationships, from the anxiety that prevents us from thinking of others, from the frantic flurry of activity that forgets that others also have a right to be happy. Often nowadays we find neither the time nor the energy to stop and be kind to others, to say "excuse me", "pardon me", "thank you". Yet every now and then, miraculously, a kind person appears and is willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference. If we make a daily effort to do exactly this, we can create a healthy social atmosphere in which misunderstandings can be overcome and conflict forestalled. Kindness ought to be cultivated; it is no superficial bourgeois virtue. (224)

THE HOLOCAUST MUST NOT BE forgotten. It is the enduring symbol of the depths to which human evil can sink when, spurred by false ideologies, it fails to recognise the fundamental dignity of each person, which merits unconditional respect regardless of ethnic origin or religious belief. As I think of it, I cannot help but repeat this prayer: "Lord, remember us in your mercy. Grant us the grace to be ashamed of what we men have done, to be ashamed of this massive idolatry, of having despised and destroyed our own flesh which you formed from the earth, to which you gave life with your own breath of life. Never again, Lord, never again!" (247)

IT IS WRONG WHEN THE only voices to be heard in public debate are those of the powerful and "experts". Room needs to be made for reflections born of religious traditions that are the repository of centuries of experience and wisdom. For religious classics can prove meaningful in every age; they have an enduring power [to open new horizons, to stimulate thought, to expand the mind and the heart. (275)]

CONCLUDING PRAYER OF FRATELLI TUTTI

O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.
Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.
Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves. Amen.



Remembering Saint Therese

The enduring legacy of the visit of the relics of the Little Flower

A year on from the visit to Scotland of the relics of St Therese of Lisieux, whose feast day was celebrated on October 1st, *Flourish* invited some of those closely involved with the historic event to share their memories.

A YEAR on, a range of emotions still abound with those members of the Knights of St Columba who were so privileged to have been called on to assist with the guardianship of the Relics.

When we meet and are reminiscing adjectives overflow. It was amazing, fantastic, joyful, spiritual, beautiful, faith affirming and perhaps most of all, humbling.

We were humbled to see the great reverence shown by the faithful in their veneration and that give us all such special memories...

The all-night vigils spent in silent veneration broken only with a Rosary on each hour. Then with a return to contemplative silence. Food for the soul.

The number of people who confided in us on many occasions. Telling us why it was that they had such a great devotion to the Little Flower. Some unashamedly weeping.

Beautifully decorated altars wherever the Little Flower went.

The visit to Barlinnie Prison. To witness those men each venerating the Relics with great dignity following Mass. It was lovely to see the Carmelite Sisters



Brian Hendry

Membership Director,
Knights of St Columba

in attendance offering each inmate both a rose and a dip into a box of Roses before going back to their cells. We could almost feel the presence of the Little Flower in such a touching gesture.

On reflection, it was an event that highlighted both the devotion and the importance of the lay faithful in our modern more secular society. Organisations such as ours are always looking for more of the laity to join us in the work that we do.

I am honoured that the Knights of St Columba were given the privilege of the Guardianship of the relics of St Therese during her visit. If I can paraphrase from A Tale of Two Cities. It was the best of times. It was the season of light. It was the Spring of hope.

We were asked since if it was a difficult thing to do? Yes. It was exhausting, draining, involved many a sleepless night, frantic chasing around, lots of last-minute phone calls and perhaps the odd 'sickie' being called in.

Would we do it again? Absolutely. Tomorrow.



PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY



Sr Mary of the Holy Spirit

Carmelite Monastery,
Dumbarton

ONCE upon a time – in fact just a year ago – the Church in Scotland had the wonderful experience of receiving and venerating the relics of St Therese of Lisieux.

These relics were among us for just a few weeks, courtesy of the Carmelite Monastery in Lisieux. But what an exciting few weeks they were. We prepared for her coming – and we prayed; we followed her every step of her journey through one diocese after another – and we prayed; we attended all the organised events as far as we were able – and we prayed; we caught the flame of enthusiasm and experienced the dynamism – and we prayed; we felt so proud to be Scottish Catholics, and rarely was a face seen without a smile – and we prayed; after the last venue in St Andrew's Cathedral in Glasgow, sadly, but with a renewed joy in our hearts, we watched her drive off on her journey back to Lisieux –

and we prayed.

But something rather wonderful was left behind – memories. We reminisced about the shower of roses she had let fall as she promised. God touched each one of us in the way best suited to each one.

Each falling petal was a touch of God – these petals touched us and left us with a treasured memory. [One of my most enduring memories is of a baby boy, barely able to walk alone, bending almost double to pick up a solitary petal which had fallen at his feet.]

Memories are the harnessing of remarkable moments, some experiences, some words, to nourish the present for us and to shape our futures. Do we remember the

awe and pride with which we watched the rose petals fall in Pluscarden Abbey, while the Abbey bell rang out our joy? Those of us who were privileged to share the experience will never forget seeing the prisoners advance row by row, to venerate her relics in the Chapel in Barlinnie. Or perhaps we recall a word from the writings or sayings of St Therese. Maybe we hear her whisper to us, just at the moment when we needed to hear

it – “Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word.

God's merciful love smiles on us no matter how small our lives seem to be. Can we reach out to someone who needs our help when these words slip into our mind, “A word or a smile is often enough to put fresh life into the despondent soul.”

As she passed through each diocese, each venue, a sweet touch of God's loving presence was left in her wake. She left in each receptive heart, an opening into the understanding of what she called her “Little Way”.

Each small detail of life, no matter how insignificant it may appear, becomes suffused with the merciful love of God, and our lives begin to glow as each day we are drawn further and further into God's love.

Since her short time among us, she has sent showers of roses on so many who have prayed for her intercession.

This “shower of roses” bring the touch of God into so many lives and in so many spheres.



Canon Thomas Hendry

Parish Priest, St Teresa's
Possilpark

ICAN honestly say that I was very surprised at the large numbers of people who came to venerate the relics when they arrived in our parish.

I didn't really know what I was expecting but certainly not that number.

It was a bit overwhelming but thanks to all those in the parish who worked so hard to organise things there were no hitches.

I've been to Lourdes almost 20 times and in many ways it reminded me of that – people were pleased to be there, to share their faith but in a dignified not showy way.

People still talk about it especially now around her feast day and I'm sure many in the parish feel they benefited personally from the visit and that can only be a good thing.

THE long months of lockdown make it harder to realise that just a year ago, our parish was buzzing with excitement and anticipation, as we awaited the arrival of the relics of St Therese, and many a long hour we spent worrying if we had done everything right, would people come, what could possibly go wrong?

And if ever worries were groundless, ours were.

In the space of 10 hours, almost 2,000 people, young and old, came to St Teresa's to pray and to venerate the relics of this young saint. Of all religions and none, they brought with them an atmosphere of prayer and reflection that none of us here will ever forget. And since then we have come across a fair few, both young and old, who came back to the Church because of it.

Apart from the masses of roses left around the shrine, what most stands out for us is the vast quantity of prayer requests left behind. We kept them at



Sr Loyola Kelly

Franciscan Convent, St
Teresa's Possilpark, writing
on behalf of all those in the
parish associated with the
visit

the foot of our statue of St Therese for a month and added our own prayers that those heart-rending pleas to our patroness would be answered. We have again set up our own little shrine and as we pray the Novena for her feast, we remember all those who came to St Teresa's that day.

Looking back, I find myself remembering the librarian who brought me a copy of the life of St Therese, remarking that she had read it herself. I asked what had struck her about it. Her answer?

“Well if ever a woman got what she wanted, Therese did.” At first sight, a very off-putting comment, until you ask yourself what Therese did want. She wanted to bring people to God, to take away all fear, help us realise how much God our Father loves each one of us And looking back, I think it can safely be said that in that visit Therese did get what she wanted.

FROM the vantage point of a single year it is not really possible to quantify the long term effects of a spiritual experience on an individual's life.

The visit last year of the relics of St Therese to Barlinnie was undoubtedly a red letter day in the 138-year history of this iconic Glasgow prison.

However for those of us privileged to be present that September afternoon it was above all else a unique encounter with the divine.

In the deeply reverent atmosphere one could almost taste, see and hear the calm flowing of grace upon all who were gathered.

The congregation was an eclectic mixture of an Archbishop, Carmelite Nuns, Clergy, Knights of St Columba, prison staff, members of the me-



Fr John Lyons

Prison Chaplain

dia and prisoners but I had the impression that nobody left unmoved by what they had witnessed.

Only God knows what fruit has already been borne in individual lives and what fruit is still to be harvested.

The visit also consolidated the already good relationship that exists between Catholic Chaplaincy and The Scottish Prison Service

The value the Scottish Prison Service places on spiritual and pastoral care is nowadays somewhat rare in a secular institution.

The visit of the relics of St Therese to Barlinnie could not have happened without the willing and enthusiastic co operation of the prison authorities. The Catholic Church in Scotland and those of us in Catholic Chaplaincy are very grateful for all they did to make it possible.



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Scottish Charity Number SC005623

SPRED's pledge to friends – we will be here for you

THE new SPRED year began in St Philomena's with the annual commissioning Mass for catechists... but it was a launch like no other.

In line with current restrictions the congregation was limited to 50. Many others including friends and supporters joined via live stream.

Although the activities of spiritual and catechetical formation, which are delivered in an atmosphere of friendship in parishes and the SPRED centre, were suspended with lockdown the ministry continues with new ways of keeping in contact are being established.

In her welcome before the beginning of Mass, Lisbeth Raeside, SPRED chief executive, reminded the friends and their families of their place at the heart of SPRED.

Lisbeth said: "I want to reassure you that you have not been forgotten and activities will resume as soon as it is safe. Coming from where we were a few months ago it seems a miracle we can even be gathered in these numbers."

The prayers for Mass were taken from the text for the

BY MARY MCGINTY

Mass for Evangelisation of Peoples which Fr John Gannon said "reminds us of what are about in SPRED, and what every activity of the Church should be about, is the spreading of the Gospel and the Good News of Jesus Christ."

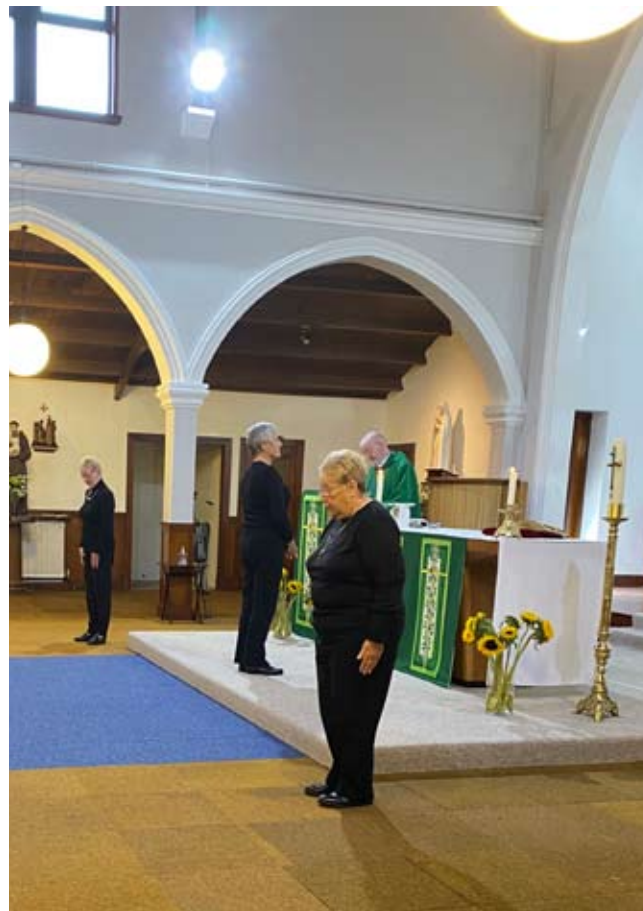
He added: "SPRED is about making sure no one is left out."

During the Gospel three catechists stood at the foot of the altar to interpret in gesture. At the sign of peace the sign language, Makaton, was used.

In joyful acceptance of their ministry to share the faith the congregation and those at home renewed their commitment to SPRED with the response "with God's help we are willing."

With the recent toughening of restrictions it will be some time before groups are able to meet up.

Lisbeth Raeside said: "Despite the present situation SPRED is still active. Our ministry is founded on the friendships between people with and without disabilities in our groups. Friends



do not abandon each other when the going gets tough. I am very grateful for the efforts of our volunteers to

find ways to keep in touch with their friends in SPRED throughout this time."



Papal tartan makes a comeback

AFALKIRK parishioner got a shock last month when his email basket started filling up with requests from across the globe. It was only when he checked the calendar that Mike Lemetti discovered why.

Mike was the man behind the Papal visit tartan and when Pope Benedict wore the specially produced tartan scarf for his memorable trip down Princes Street, demand for Mike's papal tartan went through the roof.

10 years on and the same thing happened again.

Mike told *Flourish*: "It was

only when I realised that the anniversary was last month that I twigged the reason for the upsurge in requests for the papal tartan. I still had some products left and I've had more produced to respond to the demand, including facemasks in the tartan."

With masks at £10, tartan scarves at £15 and lambs-wool scarves at £16 the papal tartan may turn out to be an early Christmas shopping idea.

■ To buy any of the products, contact Mike at sales@clanitalia.com

City Catholic charities face Covid cash challenges

GLASGOW'S Catholic charities are facing a complicated winter as they strive to provide services to the needy amid the renewed Covid wave.

The necessary precautions and restrictions have seen service provision being halted or diminished in some cases, fundraising events curtailed or cancelled, and volunteers having to shield or pull back from their duties.

At the Legion of Mary's Wayside Club, where the homeless and those suffering from addiction and social inclusion are supported, the service has been able to continue albeit with restrictions. The worry is for the future.

Pat Kearns, a member of the Legion's praesidium, said: "We pre-empted Lockdown and made the necessary changes very early.

Our patrons no longer come inside and instead we are set up at the door to give out soup, sandwiches, tea and coffee. We are making preparations for when we can open again whenever that may be. The problem is the lack of manpower so we really need to recruit more volunteers."

He said: "Most of the volunteers and a large percentage of the praesidium are over 70. Their families are understandably concerned, especially for those with underlying conditions, and they have to respect that. Where we would normally have two praesidium members with four to 10 volunteers giving out food and hot drinks we now have just one praesidium member and three volunteers."

In healthcare situations the Covid-effect has been heart-breaking for resi-

dents and families unable to have face-to-face visits. For those with Dementia the inability to understand is an additional sorrow.

In Nazareth House, Cardonald what should have been a springtime of celebration for the 5th anniversary of the new home became a period of caution and restriction for residents, staff and sisters. Today's technology was used to keep the channels of communication open with video calls being made where visits were no longer permitted.

"It was an anxious time for relatives and it was long time for residents not to see their loved ones in person. For residents who were dying we made sure they could have a least one family member with them," said Sr Annamaria.

She added: "Staffing was affected through staff hav-

ing to shield or because of family members having to do so. Where we had to call in agency staff we did our best to ensure it was the same people who were coming in."

The familiar sight of the Sisters of Nazareth out with their collecting cans will not be seen for a while yet, as Sr Annamaria says "it would be insensitive to ask for donations at such an uncertain time when people are suffering the financial effects of Covid."

Despite the trials of the last few months, Sister Annamaria is full of gratitude for the generosity the home has received from individuals and businesses large and small. A display board sitting in reception is testament to this kindness which has ranged from donations of confectionery to PPE for staff.

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Revisiting the parables gives us inspiration for living better lives



Canon
Robert
Hill

A BIT of history before we begin the Gospel reflections this month, to do with the background from which the Gospel of Matthew arose.

This is a story in stages, about people of Jewish background who probably lived in cities like Antioch.

Many of these became followers of Jesus, were baptised and also continued to attend the synagogue. All was fine until Jerusalem and everything in it, including the Temple, were completely destroyed by the Romans between September and October 70 AD.

This changed everything in Judaism, because with no Temple, there was no role for the priests – even the High Priest no longer had a role, which left a huge power vacuum. The Pharisees quickly filled the gap, rebranding themselves as the Rabbis, and claiming to be the only legitimate interpreters of the Law of Moses.

Jewish followers of Jesus however argued that Jesus was the true interpreter of Moses.

A persecution against Jesus' followers broke out and some were disowned even by their own families, or even killed, and many began to wonder had they got it wrong: how could these learned Pharisees be mistaken?

Matthew's Gospel emerged from this crisis, showing Jesus as the ultimate interpreter of Moses' teaching and its fulfilment as well.

4 OCT Sunday 27 Year A.
Matthew 18:33–43

The parable today comes from near the end of Jesus' ministry when Jesus is challenging the Chief Priests and Elders of the people over their hypocrisy. The parable uses a well-known image for the nation Israel – the vineyard. Isaiah had told a parable about a man who had a vineyard which

despite all the care he lavished on it, yielded only sour grapes. The man loses patience with the vine and has it destroyed.

This is an Old Testament parable, predicting exile, but in Jesus' parable about the vineyard, the emphasis is not on the vine. Rather, the focus is on the greedy tenants who will not give the owner the dues from the vineyard which belong to him. He sends messengers, whom they mistreat, and even kill up to and including his only son but they kill the son, and knowing he is the only son, they expect to take over the vineyard since there is no longer an heir.

Jesus stops the story at this point and asks what the owner of the field will do next. In the other gospels, Jesus provides his own answer – the owner will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the field to tenants who will deliver the goods when the season arrives. In Matthew, however, the Pharisees answer using the same words, and of course Jesus points out to them that they have just pronounced their own condemnation.

From their own mouths they have said that the vineyard will be taken from them, and that it will be given to worthy tenants who will deliver its fruit.

11 OCT Sunday 28 Year A.
Matthew 22:1–14

This week's parable is about a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding, but those invited all offered lame excuses for not accepting. Worse still, they killed the king's messengers. This king sends his troops to kill these murderous guests, but the king is not finished. There's a wedding banquet and no guests to enjoy it, so the troops are sent out again to bring in everyone they can find to fill the wedding hall. A right motley crew are gathered, good and bad alike. The parable takes a strange turn however, and we're told of one guest who is not wearing a wedding garment. The king notices this, and asks the man how he managed to gain entry without a wedding garment. The man remains silent. The king has him thrown out.

There has been much agonising over this strange turn of events by readers of the parable over nearly 2000 years! In recent times commentators suggest that

Christ the Saviour (Pantokrator), a 6th-century encaustic icon from Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai



the story of the man with no wedding garment had originally been a separate story, with a different plot altogether.

We don't need to go to such lengths to make sense of this however. To put it in a few words, the man without the wedding garment was invited like all the rest. The fact that he is the only one improperly dressed suggests he is to be regarded as the only person in the entire hall who made no effort to honour the king and his son at his wedding in the customary matter.

Although the chief priests and elders were condemned in every generation – right up to the time of Jesus – for taking the kingdom of

God and their place in it for granted, the problem did not end with them. The kingdom of God is free and open to all – but it must never be taken for granted!

18 OCT Sunday 29 Year A.
Matthew 22:15–21

The Pharisees are getting desperate – so much so that they team up with the Herodians. This is odd, because the Pharisees sought to implement the Law in its intended purity, and the Herodians had devised for themselves a form of Judaism which was mixed with some very non-Jewish practices.

So the idea of the Pharisees and the Herodians finding common ground

scarcely bears thinking about. Their envoys are to trap Jesus with the question, "is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

The idea of course is that this is a question that Jesus cannot answer without incriminating himself. Jesus' solution is to ask for a coin which was used to pay the taxes. Someone produced a denarius. Jesus asks, "Whose image is on this coin?"

"Caesar's", they reply. "Well," says Jesus, "give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God, what belongs to God".

The story ends here, but their answer has serious implications.

The emissaries of the Pharisees have just broken

the first commandment. In showing the denarius, the coin for the payment of the Temple tax, they have produced a coin with a graven image – forbidden in Judaism. People are created in God's image and likeness, therefore there is something akin to depict God in this coin.

It gets worse. The head on this coin is the head of Tiberius, with the words "Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus" inscribed on it. The graven image is also an image of the son of a false God, and therefore as good as a claim to divinity in itself!

25 OCT

Sunday 30 Year A.
Matthew 22:34–40

The greatest minds in the history of Judaism had been trying to find a single commandment which would sum up the whole of the Law, with its 613 commandments. So the Pharisees, experts in the Law, feel sure they have the very question to silence this amateur itinerant preacher once and for all; they try him out on the old chestnut.

Even Jesus did not sum up the whole of the Law in a single statement. He not only chose two commandments, but he declared them to be of equal weight.

Those he chose are not directly taken from the 10 commandments. The first is from Deuteronomy chapter 6, verses 4–7, and is part of a prayer that Jews make every day, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might".

Observant Jews to this day follow Moses' instructions that "these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart..."

That's the first commandment, according to Jesus. The second comes from Leviticus chapter 19; "You must love your neighbour as yourself".

Not only has Jesus astutely identified two commandments as summing up the Law – he has chosen one which puts service of God above all else – summing up the first three of the ten commandments, and the other which sums up commandments 4 – 10, dedicated to putting other people and their needs before ourselves.

No one could sum up the law better than Jesus.



MURRAY

Patrick James

In loving memory of our dear and much loved father who died October 29 1987.

Rest in peace, Dad.

We love and miss you.

Leo, Paul and Angela

Celtic fans back Mary's Meals

BY BRIAN SWANSON

THE world-wide family of Celtic fans is celebrating a magnificent result after raising £100,000 for Mary's Meals.

As part of the 2017 Lions' Legacy fundraising campaign, Celtic FC Foundation undertook a joint venture with Mary's Meals to build 67 kitchens in Africa; 47 in Malawi and 20 in Zambia.

These kitchens are now fully operational, with the number of children enrolled at those schools totalling 44,459.

Celtic FC Chief Executive, Peter Lawwell said: "The Celtic support have, as they always do, got behind this initiative in a tremendous way and their efforts will help ensure that these kitchens will continue to prosper and improve the lives of some of the world's most impoverished children."

"I would like to extend our thanks to everyone who has been involved in making this

project such an enormous success over these past three years."

Celtic FC Foundation Chief Executive, Tony Hamilton added: "Thousands of children are now being fed at school, which is such an integral and crucial element of the Lions' Legacy. We must express our gratitude to Mary's Meals for all of their efforts throughout this wonderful partnership."

Daniel Adams, Executive Director of Mary's Meals, said: "This incredible donation from Celtic FC Foundation and its generous supporters will help us to keep reaching hungry children in Malawi and Zambia, with life-changing meals."

"Receiving this gift, on top of the support we have already had from the Lions' Legacy campaign, has brought us unexpected joy. It is particularly appreciated in a year that has been so difficult for us all, and that has seen hunger reach acute lev-



els in a number of the places where we work."

"The unmatched kindness of Celtic supporters across the globe is a legacy that will transform the lives of children in some of the world's poorest communities for generations to come."

Celtic FC Foundation's current focus is on the ongoing Football for Good Fund, which is providing food and essentials to those most in need within our communities.

Since the launch of the Football for Good Fund and throughout the coming months, the Foundation has ensured and will continue to ensure food parcels, basic necessities, hot meals and other critical interventions are available to the growing number of people affected by the scourge of COVID-19.

■ To find out more about the Football for Good Fund and how you can get involved, please visit www.footballforgoodfund.com

As I write, it's day 4 of our Annual Novena to Our Lady of Sorrows.

Father Antony, Father Gareth and I are taking a day about, and today is one of my days, which means I have celebrated the morning Mass in the church, and tonight I will present a period of prayer and reflection, incorporating our Novena Prayers, which will be streamed from the Oratory in Bishopbriggs.

The day didn't start very well, though. There was an influx of early morning bookings for today's Mass when I checked in on my laptop before breakfast. By the time I responded to those I was running late. In the ensuing rush I left the house without my mobile phone.

On arriving at St. Mungo's, I asked Father Antony to ring Father Gareth and ask him to fetch my phone and bring it in with him, as he was coming in a bit later to celebrate a Funeral Mass after the Novena. This meant revealing my secret hiding place, where I kept the spare key to my room for emergencies, which, to be honest, I have had to use more often than I would like, as I have a habit of forgetting keys, even more than I forget my mobile phone.

I then came up to the parish office and turned on my desktop computer, intending to print out an up-to-date list of bookings to give to the volunteers for the 10 o'clock Mass, so that they could check people in.

The document seemed to be taking a very long time

The hectic life of a busy Parish Priest



Fr Frank's log

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

to open. I decided to close it and try to open it again, but I ended up freezing the computer. I had to turn it off and restart. When I restarted the computer, I was offered all kinds of diagnostic solutions, which I declined, and had to restart it once again.

By the time I got the list printed off half the people were already in the church and we had to conduct some remedial registration. Eventually, we got sorted, and I was able to snatch a few minutes of deep breathing and invocation of the Holy Spirit before Mass, as by this stage I was not at all recollected!

After Mass I managed to mislay an intention request, with a donation inside, which I had read out along with some of the petitions during the Mass. Having searched the altar area, and the sacristy, I then discovered I had brought it up to the office after all, with no memory whatsoever of having done so.

I had a quick mug of tea and then attended to some administrative duties before rushing up to Drumchapel to take my brother for an appointment I had made for him with the optician. I had noticed him peering at the menu on the television, and also struggling to read, which he loves to do.

I discovered it had been 13 years since he last had his eyes tested, so it was long overdue. Before leaving St. Mungo's, I thought I had put the pen I was using in the office into a pen jar that I keep on my desk. I was later informed that I had actually put the pen into my half-drunk mug of tea!

The day took an upturn when, after my brother's eye test, and the choosing of two frames, one for distance glasses, and one for reading glasses, the assistant asked if she should size the frames there and then, so that I could just pick them up when they were ready,

or did I want to bring "my father" back in again!

I looked at him, and he looked at me, and he said to her, "Actually, I'm his younger brother". She looked aghast and apologetic. "I know from your form you are 66", she said to my brother, "so what age are you?", she said to me. "69", says I. "Oh no", says she, "I thought you were only in your forties".

What had begun as a pretty awful day had just ended on a high note. I thanked her profusely and couldn't wait to get back and tell the rest of the community who, no doubt, would not believe me!

The latest news from Bishopbriggs is that, with East Dunbartonshire now on lockdown again, Father Justinian has had to curtail his social life, which far exceeds that of the rest of us; Father Antony returned safely from his classmate's ordination; Father Gareth is getting ready to go to Merthyr Tydfil again, just for a week, to support his mum through some medical appointments; while I get quietly more forgetful and confused, despite being only in my forties.

So, as always, protect yourselves and your loved ones, and protect Christ in your lives.

Hospital chaplains' advice to patients



THE co-ordinator of hospital chaplaincy for Glasgow's largest hospital has urged patients to make their faith known to staff if they are admitted.

Deacon Michael O'Donnell said: "During this time of Covid-19 direct contact between the priest chaplain and the patient who has Covid-19 is at the discretion of medical staff and is subject to the availability of Personal Protective Equipment."

"Measures are in place to enable the priest to pray with the patient by phone or by video-call if the priest

is not able to attend. Each ward also has information on the Papal Indulgence and Prayer resources which the patient can be given."

"This declaration is something the patient can give to nursing staff on admission. However the patient or a family member or friend can also request that the on-call priest be contacted."

■ Deacon Michael O'Donnell co-ordinates the Catholic Chaplaincy Service at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital and at the Gartnavel Hospitals.

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I am a Roman Catholic.

While a patient in hospital, I wish to exercise my Human Right, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 9-1) of practising my religion.

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Reaching out online helps us to serve the world's poor

As the number of Coronavirus cases rises again, the chance of us being able to meet in our Churches as we once did looks sadly remote.

That some of us have been able to go to Mass recently has been a great joy and boost to our morale but it cannot obscure how hard these months have been, or how deep and lasting the effects will be.

Yet the strength and ingenuity I have seen from so many in our Church, here and abroad, are a cause for hope, even as we face a long winter together.

I have heard from many priests that the number of people who attended and continue to attend online masses has stunned them, and show the spiritual hunger that so many feel. We've been working with many priests and parishes through this period and it's not just Masses that are drawing people in.

Another example has been people's engagement with the Season of Crea-



Alistair Dutton

Chief Executive, SCIAF

tion, during which we explored how we can all bring the lessons of Laudato Si into our lives.

Our Development Education team, working with the Scottish Catholic Education Service and Justice and Peace Scotland, created a series of Continuing Professional Development Modules for teachers focused on integrating Laudato Si into their lessons. These sessions have taken place at the end of the school day, scores of teachers have attended and watched recordings and the feedback has been fantastic.

In the past month, we've also run practical workshops and spiritual reflections on Laudato Si with

hundreds of people who registered. We started the Season with a reflection by Fr Jim Lawlor, from Immaculate Conception Maryhill, who showed that gave us a wonderful reflection that underlined how environmentalism care for the environment isn't a new thing for the Church, but a fundamental part of our faith.

We've refreshed "Caring for our Common Home", which is our practical guidance for people who want to play their part in reducing their environmental footprint and worked with Eco-congregations Scotland to provide accessible guidance about how to make your parish an eco-parish.

Finally, we were very



lucky to be joined by Sr Marcella from Caritas Kabwe in Zambia, talking about the effect of climate change on society there.

The reason we in SCIAF care so much about climate change is because our partners in Zambia and elsewhere frequently tell us how much more hostile and unpredictable their cli-

mates are becoming, and what a devastating impact it is having on the world's poorest people. Hearing Sr Marcella was a powerful reminder of that reality.

Many of these events are still available on SCIAF's YouTube channel if you want to watch them. They're well worth it.

Despite the huge chal-

lenges we have all faced this year, being able to gather like this has been a powerful reminder of our connections with each other, and how those connections unite us as one human family.

As we learn to adjust to life with this virus these connections will sustain us.



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