

# FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

September 2020

## I was a stranger and you made me welcome ... or did you?

### Archbishop joins Pope in call for refugee aid



**Glasgow, Scotland and the UK need to be much more attentive to the plight of asylum seekers**

**ARCHBISHOP Tartaglia has echoed Pope Francis in calling for a new attention to the plight of refugees.**

Speaking out after the death in Glasgow of asylum seeker Mercy Baguma, discovered lying next to her starving baby, the Archbishop described her death as “beyond shocking”.

The Archbishop added: “While details are lacking, the very least that can be said is that Glasgow, Scotland and the UK needs to be much more attentive to the plight of asylum seekers and make sure that they have a home, sufficient benefits and access to employment.”

Under current UK Government rules asylum seekers

are not allowed to work – a policy which has been widely condemned as leading to destitution, homelessness, isolation and negative health outcomes.

Archbishop Tartaglia said: “We need to take care of them better and give them some hope for the future.”

His words echo those of Pope Francis who has written



**All too often we stop at statistics. But it is not about statistics, it is about real people!**

ten a letter to the whole Church on the issue which is carried in this month's edition of *Flourish* (see centre pages).

In it the Holy Father says: “When we talk about migrants and displaced persons, all too often we stop at statistics. But it is not about statistics, it is about real people! If we encounter

them, we will get to know more about them. And knowing their stories, we will be able to understand them. We will be able to understand, for example, that the precariousness that we have come to experience as a result of this pandemic is a constant in the lives of displaced people.”

As a sign of the priority

the Church places on outreach to refugees and asylum seekers, the last Sunday of this month has been designated by the Pope as World Day of Prayer for Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

■ **You can read more about the Glasgow project giving new hope to asylum seekers on the centre page spread.**



## JOE WALSH TOURS

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# Deacon James ordained

**T**HE masks his family and friends wore could not hide their joy as NHS frontline worker James Ward was ordained a deacon in a moving ceremony held under strict social distancing rules.

James Ward, 45, an orthopaedics charge nurse at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, had his candidacy for the permanent diaconate accepted at his home parish of St Augustine's, Milton during a Mass in mid-March celebrated by Archbishop Tartaglia.

It was one of the last times that the Archbishop was able to take part in a public Mass before churches were closed.

With no indication when churches would re-open it was an anxious time for James, whose wife Angie is also a frontline NHS worker, as a pharmacy technician in Primary Care at Stobhill Hospital.

But his prayers were answered with the recent resumption of public Mass allowing the ceremony to take place.

Once again Archbishop Tartaglia returned to St Augustine's Church, on its patronal feast day of August

28, as chief celebrant and was joined by the new deacon's Parish Priest Father Paul McAlinden.

Although 50 people were allowed into the church many others were able to participate thanks to a live feed to the church hall.

And as he joined his friends and family, again maintaining social distancing guidelines, our newest deacon declared: "With God's grace I will be the deacon He has called me to be."

He added: "My journey to the diaconate has been a long and winding road in answering God's call. At times I tried to ignore and avoid Him. Despite, at times, feeling unworthy of this call I was often reminded that God knows us better than we know ourselves and He works with and guides our faith and talents."

"I have been very privileged to have been blessed with three vocations, a call to nursing, to married life and now to the diaconate, all of which have brought me such happiness."

"I look forward to the future as a deacon, being able to share and teach my faith to those whom I encounter on my journey, to those who I am called to serve, to minister to and to share with them the love of God, even when they feel distant from Him, reminding them that He is never far from us."

Paying tribute to his wife, calling her his 'rock', James said: "Angie is a true example to me in charity and love; she also puts up with me



Picture by Paul McSherry

being away from home on residential weekends, summer schools and makes sure I rest and eat during periods of study and essay writing, I cannot thank God enough for having her in my life."

Archbishop Tartaglia picked up on James' medical experience in his homily. He said: "Deacons are called to be ministers of God's love in all that they do. You, James, are by profession a nurse, which is a caring profession. We have all seen during this Covid-19 pandemic how much good and dedicated nurses are needed, respected and appreciated. James, you are well placed to bring a loving and caring disposition to the Church's ministry, and, at the same time, the grace of ordina-

tion will strengthen and deepen that caring with the love of God...

"As a deacon, you will have the authority to preach, to baptise, to marry and to carry out other acts of worship and prayer. You will be entrusted by your parish priest with catechesis and with other functions of teaching, instruction and administration. You will be an ordained minister of the church with the standing that such a ministry confers. At times, you may dress as a cleric. Be careful not to lord it over the people you serve. You need to remember that you are their servant as Christ was the servant of all. As a deacon, you are called to follow the example of the Lord."

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## Hotel development



**S**t Andrew's Cathedral is set to welcome new neighbours with the opening later this year of a new 17-storey hotel riverfront hotel.

Situated just a few hundred yards along the Broomielaw from the Cathedral and the adjoining Curial offices, the 290-room hotel at 236-246 Clyde Street will be the first to be opened in the UK by the Australian brand Tribe which operates hotels worldwide.

BY BRIAN SWANSON

Behind the Cathedral and also nearing completion is a 249-room Premier Inn in St Enoch's Square which could also open by the end of the year although both projects have been delayed by restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic.

Nearby, and with a planned opening for spring of 2022, is the 300-room Clayton Hotel built behind

the preserved façade of the A-listed Customs House.

A spokesman for the Archdiocese of Glasgow said: "St Andrew's Cathedral has always welcomed visitors from all over the world to worship with us or simply to admire our wonderful building. With the opening of these new hotels the Cathedral will become ever more a focal point for visitors and we look forward to welcoming many more over the years."

# Canon Paul is keeping us safe

**THE priest responsible for making sure that our churches are safe for worship during the current pandemic has warmly praised the vital role of volunteers for making it possible.**

Canon Paul Gargaro, of St Patrick's Anderston, who combines his new role of with that of Vice-Chancellor of the Archdiocese and Judicial Vicar of the Scottish Catholic Inter-diocesan Tribunal said: "It's no exaggeration to say that our churches would still be closed if it wasn't for the volunteers' hard work."

His appointment as Diocesan Coordinator came after the Bishops' Conference of Scotland appointed an advisory body chaired by Professor Sir Harry Burns, former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, to give them expert advice on the medical and scientific aspects of the challenge of reopening safely.

Canon Gargaro said: "At the same time they realised that there would be many administrative tasks to undertake to achieve this, and each bishop was asked to nominate a Diocesan Coordinator and it then became my task to coordinate matters in the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

BY BRIAN SWANSON

"There were two immediate challenges here as in every diocese – explaining to parishes exactly what they were going to have to do, and making sure they had the supplies.

"I'm extremely grateful to the husband and wife team of Kevin and Annette Moran, colleagues from the Curial office, for swapping their usual roles to organise supplies and for DE Products for providing them."

Initially that meant ordering 981 litres of hand sanitiser, 1189 litres of antibacterial cleaner, 4921 rolls of blue cleaning tissue, 4100 face masks and 164 boxes of latex gloves.

Canon Paul said: "Every parish was asked to nominate a parish coordinator and to recruit a team of volunteers to welcome, to steward, and to clean, and there continues to be a sterling response to this call.

"Every time a church opens for Mass there is a team of people that make it possible – and I'm sure that every parishioner will continue to be grateful to their local volunteers for their hard work."

"As well as drawing up guidance and encouraging parishes, a large part of

my role has been answering emails and phone calls about the specifics of what we are doing, letting people be sure about what is required, and helping them to be confident about what is expected of them.

"I also have to be aware that many rules are subject to change – the wearing of masks is now a legal requirement, for example – and it's my responsibility to be aware of these changes and advise parishes of the implications."

The importance of this work and that of the volunteers was brought home to Canon Paul during a recent brief break away from the Archdiocese. He said: "I passed a church of another denomination and they had a sign on the door saying that although they could legally reopen, it was all too much hassle to do so. Thankfully neither the bishops nor our parish priests and volunteers thought it was too much hassle, and instead they have been consistently determined to get us safely back to church, despite all the difficulties and hard work involved in enabling us to be back home in God's house.

"It's been a true privilege for me to play a role in supporting that."



## AGAP is back: digital return for arts project is planned

**THE word "virtual" has never been heard so often as it has this year.**

Virtual events and live streams are now a part of everyday existence with everybody and their granny (literally!) accessing the internet for a whole host of things, including Mass.

In order to do so, people have had to develop new skills also to keep in touch with loved ones over the past five months.

Until we're able to gather together for events and activities as we have always done, AGAP – Archdiocese of Glasgow Arts Project is making every effort to ensure that we are part of this virtual world.

With two of our most popular theatre productions, "The Martyrdom of Saint John Ogilvie" and "Sign of Contradiction: The Passion Story" already available online via our YouTube chan-

BY STEPHEN CALLAGHAN

nel, we have begun the process of reaching out through cyberspace.

It's not the same, but it's a start – and more productions are set to follow.

Also available online are video presentations of the visual arts events that AGAP has offered. These include a virtual tour of the Lentfest 2020 Art Exhibition on "The Sea", a journey through the memorable 2012 exhibition on the Stations of the Cross and Resurrection and a prayerful, meditative journey through John Cairney's series of paintings, "A Glasgow Calvary".

What does all this mean for AGAP in our ministry to evangelise through the arts? Well, for a start, there have been times in the past that we have held live events that deserved a bigger audience and wondered if a

live broadcast or recording might have received a bigger response from the public.

Now is the time to put that theory to the test.

AGAP, which moved to its new base at St Robert Bellarmine Church Pollok in January, will be uploading events and developing more online resources until such time as we are able to come gather. We will also continue to develop new workshop materials for schools.

We hope to be able to deliver some of these in person, but others will be made available online. And soon enough, we will be able to gather for live events as we have always done.

Until then, we can draw inspiration and hope from the intercession of AGAP's patron saint, Pope John Paul II.

He had only been at University for one year when the Nazi forces invaded Poland

and the promising young playwright/actor of the student theatre scene was unable to perform as he had once done.

With the occupying forces prohibiting live theatre and large social gatherings, he and his friends found ways to keep their culture alive by performing clandestinely in people's homes before tiny audiences.

Like Saint John Paul we must adapt to the times we live in and in our case – we don't encourage clandestine gatherings in people's homes! – but rather use the new technology at our fingertips to reach out to new audiences and turn the dark clouds of Covid into silver linings of hope.

■ **Stephen Callaghan is Creative Director of AGAP. To find out more search AGAP in your browser.**



Stephen Callaghan (right) in a recent AGAP production

# Seminarian Aiden's lockdown learning curve

**“NO one could have predicted the terrible toll that Covid-19 would bring when my fellow students and I were first told to return from the Scots College to our home parishes. Looking back it seems strange that many of us thought that it would be nothing more than an extended Easter holiday.**

“But when I arrived home to be placed with Father Byrne, in my home parish and with the news of many countries closing borders and, worst of all, the suspension of public mass, it became clear that this was something a lot more serious.

“In common with many other countries, public Mass in Scotland was suspended, the doors of the church where I had worshipped all my life closed and the streets around it became barren and quiet and stripped of all normality.

“Talking with my fellow seminarians and the staff of the College, you can garner a limited understanding of what it is like to be on parish placement but this had no resemblance to what I had been expecting. Not only were the doors of the church closed but no one knocked on the chapel house door and the phone hardly rang – very unusual to say the least.

“I could see in Father Byrne that this was hard on him as I'm sure it is for every priest who could not be amongst their flock and carry out the duties they were ordained to do.

“However, being the man that he is, he did not sit back but immediately set up a plan to keep the Church alive and help those in need.

“Father Byrne knew of people struggling to acquire the essentials and when he started receiving calls for aid from the local area, he decided to help by creating a foodbank, utilising the committee room as base of operations.

“With help of my parents the four of us went, to what felt like every shop in the area, buying the supplies needed for food parcels.

“At first we was hindered in a big way with the restriction of goods available but, slowly at first, and then with the help of some amazingly generous people, our food-

Not all experiences arising from the Covid pandemic have been negative, as first year seminarian **Aiden Wilson**, 26, discovered after being sent home from the Scots College in Rome with his fellow students back in March.

And now, as life slowly returns to normal, the former Holyrood Secondary pupil reflects on how his lockdown experience of working alongside Father Gerry Byrne in his home parish of St Brigid's, Toryglen, strengthened his faith and revealed the true value of community

bank supplies grew very quickly.

“When lockdown began you could hear a pin drop in the chapel house, the church itself and the streets nearby but suddenly, as word of our needs spread the church seemed alive again. The community had answered the call and rallied to their neighbours' aid. Having to answer the door multiple times a day to receive donations, never became tiring.

“Seeing people and engaging allowed me to feel that although separated, the bond that holds us together was stronger than ever. From parishioners to non-parishioners; from within the community to as far afield as Canada, people donated what they could, and in doing so helped those that they may never meet.

“It was truly inspiring and humbling experience and I felt privileged to witness it.

“During my regular Sunday walks round the parish with Father Byrne I also learned of the many acts of community among the parishioners during lockdown.

“I'll never forget meeting an elderly couple were unable to celebrate online Mass because they did have access to the internet and being so pleased for them when they told me later that the family in the flat above them had given up one of their phones so that they could watch Mass from home. It was a small act of kindness I'll never forget ...

“Being placed with Father Byrne in my home parish has truly been a blessing for me. He encouraged me to keep reading the office and we would both take part in communal prayer with one another.

“And because I was able to celebrate Mass with him at a time when so many went

without, I feel truly blessed.

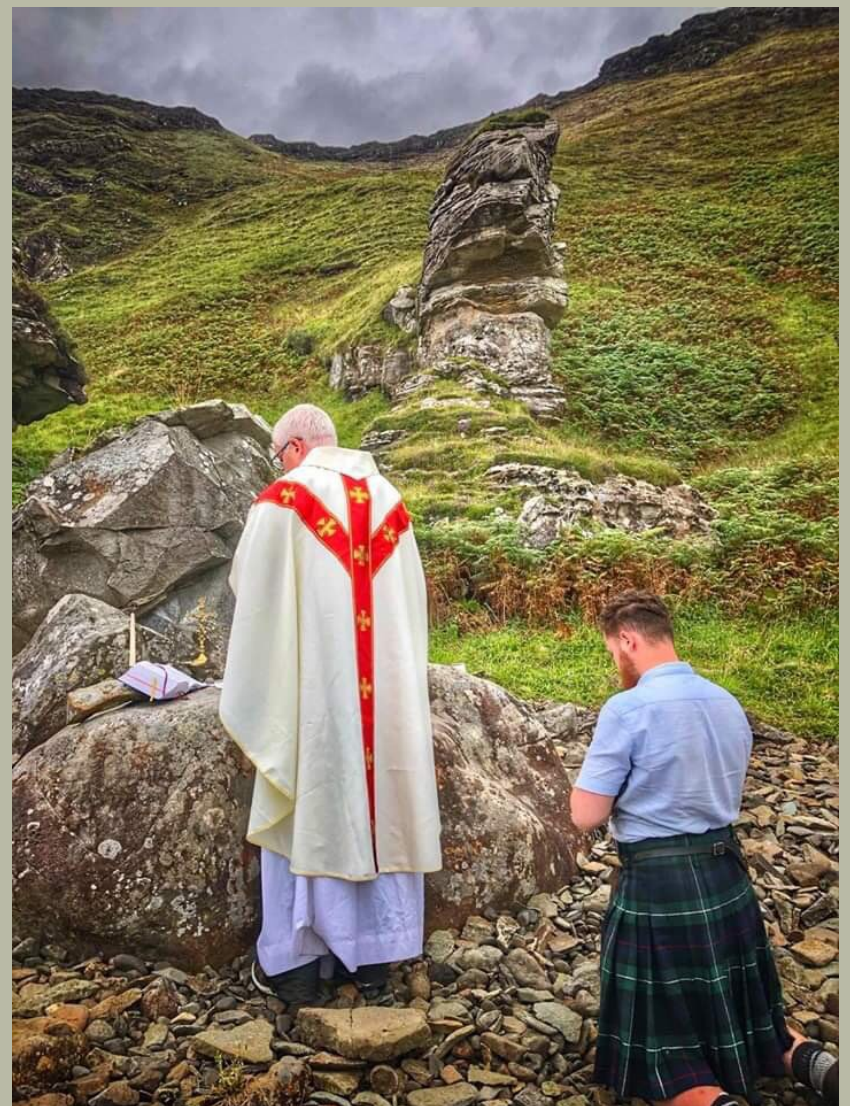
“I feel that my spiritual life has only grown in this time of pandemic and my faith in the strength of the Church as community has never been stronger.

“A lot of people say that my first year of seminary, was a baptism of fire and this could be true but we have a choice: to succumb to the flame or to be forged by it”.

■ **As told to Brian Swanson**



## Picture of the month



Pic of the month this month shows Fr Ross Campbell, Chaplain at Glasgow University, offering Mass outdoors last month. Fr Ross said: “It was quite something to celebrate Mass just outside Nun's cave, on the Isle of Mull. During the Reformation sisters from Iona fled to this place to continue their apostolate of prayer and service to the poor.”



**M**ORE than a decade ago, I coined the phrase “Marian cool” to characterise Pope Benedict XVI’s attitude toward Mary. While the German pontiff developed a stronger attachment to Mary later in life than he had as a young theologian, when he feared Marian devotion was a distraction from the centrality of Christ, he’s remained distinctly cool to speculation about miracles, apparitions and revelations, always insisting they’re not the heart of the matter.

One of Benedict’s favourite theological tropes is that “simple believers” are often a better guide to the faith than the flights of fancy of academic theologians, and he appreciates that if that’s the measure, then Mary enjoys an unquestionable pride of place.

With Pope Francis, “cool” is hardly the right word, since he has a classically Latin American passion for the Madonna and for popular devotions to her that express the souls of so many cultures on his home continent. He knows that throughout Latin American history, hope in the maternal compassion of Mary has sustained individual people as well as whole peoples through their darkest moments.

As is well known, Francis has made the trek across Rome to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, the largest church in the world dedicated to Mary, to dedicate all of his foreign trips to her, and the first time we saw the pontiff tear up in public was when he visited the shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida in Brazil on his 2013 visit for World Youth Day. On March 11 of this year, Francis entrusted the entire world to the protection of the Virgin Mary amid the coronavirus pandemic, composing a special prayer under her traditional title as “health of the sick.”

Yet Francis too is suspicious of some of the more spectacular claims sometimes made by fervent Marian devotees. Famously, in November 2013 the pontiff declared that Mary “is not a postmistress, delivering messages every day,” in the context of answering a question about Medjugorje.

Perhaps for Francis, his Marian devotion too is rooted in the experience of “simple believers,” and his scepticism arises not so much from theological convictions like Benedict, but rather a more pastoral concern not to see those simple believers hoodwinked by people he believes are manipulating Mar-

## Papal reservations on Medjugorje



BY **JOHN L ALLEN JR**  
EDITOR OF CRUX

ian faith for their own ends.

Rather than “cool,” then, maybe the best term for Francis’ style of devotion is “Marian Classic,” meaning a deep and abiding Marian faith that tends towards the classic expressions of that devotion – Our Lady of Lujan in Argentina, Our Lady of the Rosary in Guatemala, Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, Our Lady of Coromoto in Venezuela, and so on, rather than newer-fangled phenomena which he may feel haven’t stood the test of time.

Even within newer Marian devotions, Francis appears to prefer the original expressions of those experiences rather than later derivations, and to trust their pastoral and personal fruits more than the alleged supernatural extravaganzas.

All of which brings us to a message Pope Francis issued last month to young people gathered at Medjugorje, the celebrated and

also controversial site of reported Marian apparitions still officially under review by the Vatican.

The event is called “Mladifest,” using the Croatian word for “youth,” and is the second largest regular Catholic gathering of young people after World Youth Day. It’s held every year from July 31 to August 6, and usually draws around 50,000 youth and some 500 priests from around the world, though turnout this year obviously has been impacted by travel restrictions due to the coronavirus.

“The great model of a Church with a young heart, ready to follow Christ with freshness and docility, always remains the Virgin Mary,” the Pope said.

“The force of her ‘yes,’ and of that ‘let it happen to me’ that she spoke to the angel, strikes us for ever. Her ‘yes’ means committing herself and taking risks, without any other guarantee of her certainty of being the carrier of a promise,” Francis said.

“Her ‘behold the handmaid of the Lord’ is

the most beautiful example, which shows us what happens when the human person, in freedom, abandons himself or herself in the hands of God,” the Pope added.

“May this example always fascinate us and guide us!”

Nowhere in the brief, 750-word message did Francis refer to any of the alleged supernatural phenomena associated with Medjugorje, nor did he cite any of the messages that devotees believe Mary has delivered.

In a 2017 press conference, Pope Francis referred to the original apparitions at Medjugorje, which occurred when the reported visionaries were children, noting that they were studied by a commission headed by Italian Cardinal Camillo Ruini, the Vicar of Rome from 1991 to 2008, and that body was largely positive but recommended further study. As far as alleged apparitions still occurring today, he said, the report “had its doubts”. He then added that personally he’s “more negative” and that these “presumed apparitions don’t have much value.”

Francis emphasised that he doesn’t dismiss the positive impact of Medjugorje on many of those who experience it.

“There are people who go there and convert, people that find God whose lives change,” he said. “This isn’t due to a magic wand, [but] this is a spiritual and pastoral fact that can’t be denied.”

That, perhaps, is the heart of “Marian Classic”: A passionate devotion to the Madonna, with a preference for time-honoured expressions of that devotion, scepticism about thaumaturgical touches, and concern more for changed lives than spectacular revelations.

■ **Follow John Allen on Twitter:**  
**@JohnLAllenJr**

*This article also appears on the Crux homepage [www.cruxnow.com](http://www.cruxnow.com)*

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# Visa rules threaten bonds of faith and friendship

**THE** past years have seen priests, both diocesan and religious, many of whom are staff of seminaries or houses of formation, and some others who hold various posts of responsibility in their dioceses, selflessly giving themselves to the success of the apostolate in other lands.

When the seminaries are closed between closed July and September it allows such lecturers and others to come to the United Kingdom and other parts of the world, to take a holiday from their actual assignment/mission in Africa.

Summer Clergy supply thus becomes a type of exchange whereby such African priests lend a helping hand to priests in Europe, who may also need to take a holiday, without depriving their parishioners of pastoral care and the continuation of spiritual programs in the parish.



However, summer 2019 saw the non-arrival of these summer supply priests because of the changes in the immigration policy of the UK. It prevented them coming as the familiar process of coming into the UK with the Tier 5 short stay religious worker visa was nullified.

The new policy demanded that supply priests must have a new "Tier 2" visa whose process includes taking an International English Language Testing exam, the submission of more documents, the payment of more visa processing fees, and the acquiring of and presentation of a certificate of sponsorship from the diocese inviting the priest.

The situation was further complicated by the UK's move towards Brexit which has now been done and is moving towards its full implementation with the enforcement of a break from

the European Union. To be eligible to make application for the visa now required, one needs to have a certificate of sponsorship, prove one's knowledge of English, usually by taking the IELTS exam pass an approved English language test in reading, writing, speaking and listening or having an academic qualification taught in English recognised by the UK Government as being equivalent to a UK Bachelors' degree, Master's degree or PhD.

Other requirements for eligibility are having a personal savings account so the applicant can support himself on arrival in the UK; presenting evidence to show one can travel and one's travel history over the last 5 years and making available the officially-approved certificate testifying the result of a tuberculosis test!

In addition, a visiting priest is also required to pay a healthcare surcharge of £1200 and obtain a three year visa at a cost of £1220 as well as find £160 for the language exam.

However, it is worth stating that each opportunity to come to do summer supply in Glasgow has been a great blessing, a delightful time, and an opportunity to learn from and share with great people.

It becomes even more special when, at the end of the supply, one hears cheerful and appreciative people saying 'Haste ye back!'

You begin to dream then of your next visit and are energised to return to work in Africa having had a great experience. The summer thus becomes one of mutual benefit for both the priests on summer supply and the Church in Scotland, all done for the greater glory of God.

We African priests look forward therefore, to a new opportunity to once again be able to share more of this fabulous and electrifying experiences with you all in Glasgow.

We hope the visa process will be made less cumbersome, though without leaving room for any form of security risk.

Long live Glasgow! Long live Africa! Long live the Holy Catholic Church!

**■ Father Raphael Igbaoyinbo is a priest of the Missionary Society of St Paul of Nigeria based in the Archdiocese of Abuja which has a Catholic population of around half a million and is the country's capital. He has a PhD in Liturgy and is a Professor of liturgy for the Missionary Society which has 300 priests worldwide. During his frequent visits to Glasgow he has served as a supply priest in a number of parishes including St Gabriel's Merrylee and St Patrick's Dumbarton.**



Pictures by Paul McSherry



## BBC to resume religious broadcasts

**I**n response to high levels of audience appreciation and as part of its ongoing response to COVID-19 restrictions, BBC Scotland has commissioned a second series of its religious programme, *The Service*.

Beginning on Sunday 30th August on the BBC Scotland channel, the second series continued with a plan to broadcast different religious services each week, starting with a service from Glasgow Cathedral with prayers, sermon, readings and hymns from Reverend Mark Johnstone.

The series will feature in upcoming weeks a Holy Mass from Archbishop Cusley, and a service from the Glasgow Central Mosque led by Imam Maulana Abdul Ghafoor. Future broadcasts will be confirmed in due course.

Gareth Hydes, commissioning editor for BBC Scotland, said: "We know our audiences appreciated

this series during the early months of lockdown and we hope they will continue to do so as restrictions start to ease.

"We are committed to representing all faiths as part of our public service offer and connecting those who cannot visit their place of worship during these challenging times."

The Service is produced by Multiplatform Productions for BBC Scotland.



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# Netta's golden thread of sacred art

**THIS magnificent embroidered pulpit fall, rich in religious imagery and inspired by Christ's Ascension into Heaven, has been created in lockdown by one of the country's foremost designers for the Glasgow church where she has worshipped for many years.**

Parishioners will now be able to admire it for themselves following the re-opening of churches which have been closed for public worship since the middle of March due to the Covid pandemic.

Netta Ewing, founder of the Glasgow-based Sacred Threads Embroidery Guild whose impressive body of work adorns churches and other religious buildings throughout Scotland, presented her unique creation to Monsignor Gerry Fitzpatrick, parish priest of St Leo the Great, Dumbreck where she has been a parishioner for almost 20 years.

And during his live streamed lockdown Masses from the church house at St Leo's Monsignor Fitzpatrick could be seen on occasions wearing the richly decorated detached orphrey over his chasuble which is one of scores made by Netta and her dedicated team over the years and worn by priests throughout the diocese and beyond.

Working most days since lockdown began in mid March, Netta took a full three months to painstakingly complete the 52inch long embroidery whose subject matter was first inspired during a retreat last year at Craig Lodge, Dalmally in Argyll.

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

Netta said "The elongated Christ figure was inspired by ancient cave paintings in the Utah desert. I made lots of sketches last year during a few days quiet at Craig Lodge and returned to them again when I decided to use my time during lock down to make the pulpit fall – like most creative people I hate being idle.

"Usually I design the embroidery and pass it on to the members of the guild to complete but for obvious reasons this time I did both design and embroidery myself.

"The colours of the pulpit fall are divided between earth and sky and the earth colours represent us. Though dark, yet we are capable of creating rainbows.

"Christ rises, carrying our sins - our darkness. He has his back to us, facing the light of Heaven.

"I have added an inscription in the bottom left which can only be seen in close up. It is written in 2nd century Aramaic – the language Jesus spoke – and it reads: 'Jesus Christ. He is Risen' and then quotes his promise: 'I will not leave you orphans, I will send the Comforter...'



## Colouring the Archdiocese

**THE huge volume of work created and designed by Netta Ewing can be found throughout Scotland, from the magnificent circular mosaic at the entrance to St Andrew's Cathedral – she also designed its new colour scheme during the 2011 restoration – to a massive tapestry of breathtaking beauty which hangs in Pluscarden Abbey near Elgin.**

Entitled *The Four Seasons* the 9ft by 8ft creation, which is displayed in the transepts of the restored medieval building, took her a year to design.

Nine highly skilled members of the Sacred Threads Embroidery Guild which Netta founded, then took a further seven years to complete it.

Impressive as that sounds it is not the largest commission undertaken by the guild.

Thirty women took 10 years to complete a series of canvas embroidery panels on the theme of light for St Stephen's Church, Dalmuir. Taken together the panels take up more space than the Bayeux Tapestry.

Netta's early commissions were much more personal, beginning with a request by the late Cardinal Tom Winning to create a mitre for the visit of Pope John Paul II to Scotland in 1982.

She also designed 85 vestments for priests to wear during the same visit.

Although designed by her they were embroidered by Catholic schools throughout Scotland highlighting the stories of their individual communities.

Netta and her colleagues are keen to point out that the

guild is an ecumenical organisation which has created tapestries for several religious organisations.

They include pulpit falls for Renfield St Stephen's Church of Scotland in Bath Street which were commissioned by two sisters to commemorate the restoration of the church after its steeple cashed through the roof in a violent thunderstorm in 1998.

■ For more information about the work of the guild visit: [www.sacredthreads.org](http://www.sacredthreads.org)



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# I was a stranger and you made me welcome

## Letter of Pope Francis for World Day of Migrants and Refugees

**I HAVE decided to devote this Message to the drama of internally displaced persons, an often unseen tragedy that the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated.**

In fact, due to its virulence, severity and geographical extent, this crisis has impacted on many other humanitarian emergencies that affect millions of people, which has relegated to the bottom of national political agendas those urgent international efforts essential to saving lives.

But this is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people.

In the light of the tragic events that have marked 2020, I would like this Message, although concerned with internally displaced persons, to embrace all those who are experiencing situations of precariousness, abandonment, marginalisation and rejection as a result of COVID-19.

During the flight into Egypt, the child Jesus experienced with his parents the tragic fate of the displaced and refugees, which is marked by fear, uncertainty and unease.

Unfortunately, in our own times, millions of families can identify with this sad reality. Almost every day the television and papers carry news of refugees fleeing from hunger, war and other grave dangers, in search of security and a dignified life for themselves and for their families.

In each of these people, forced to flee to safety, Jesus is present as he was at the time of Herod. In the faces of the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, strangers and prisoners, we are called to see the face of Christ who pleads with us to help.

If we can recognise him in those faces, we will be the ones to thank him for having been able to meet, love and serve him in them.

Displaced people offer us



**The Holy Father Francis has written a beautiful, simple but powerful letter to the Catholics of the world this month. It is full of good advice and practical suggestions about how we can better engage with those facing the anguish of being refugees far from home and those isolated by the Covid emergency. This abridged version of the Holy Father's letter is offered to Flourish readers for study and reflection ... and maybe also a little bit of action!**

this opportunity to meet the Lord, even though our eyes find it hard to recognise him: his clothing in tatters, his feet dirty, his face disfigured, his body wounded, his tongue unable to speak our language. We are called to respond to this pastoral challenge with the four verbs I indicated in my Message for this Day in 2018: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. To these words, I would now like to add another six pairs of verbs that deal with very practical actions and are linked together in a relationship of cause and effect.

You have to know in order to understand. Knowledge is a necessary step towards understanding others. ...

When we talk about mi-

grants and displaced persons, all too often we stop at statistics. But it is not about statistics, it is about real people! If we encounter them, we will get to know more about them. And knowing their stories, we will be able to understand them. We will be able to understand, for example, that the precariousness that we have come to experience as a result of this pandemic is a constant in the lives of displaced people.

It is necessary to be close in order to serve. It may seem obvious, yet often it is the contrary... Fears and prejudices – all too many prejudices – keep us distant from others and often prevent us from “becoming neighbours” to them and serving them with love.

Drawing close to others often means being willing to take risks, as so many doctors and nurses have taught us in recent months. This readiness to draw near and serve goes beyond a mere sense of duty. Jesus gave us the greatest example of this when he washed the feet of his disciples: he took off his cloak, knelt down and dirtied his hands.

In order to be reconciled, we need to listen ... In today's world, messages multiply but the practice of listening is being lost. Yet it is only through humble and attentive listening that we can truly be reconciled.

In 2020, silence has reigned for weeks in our streets. A dramatic and troubling silence, but one that has given us the opportunity to listen to the plea of the vulnerable, the displaced and our seriously ill planet. Listening gives us an opportunity to be reconciled with our neighbour, with all those who have been “discarded”, with ourselves and with God, who never tires of offering us his mercy.

In order to grow, it is necessary to share ... God did not want the resources of our planet to benefit only a

few. This was not the Lord's will! We have to learn to share in order to grow together, leaving no one behind.

The pandemic has reminded us how we are all in the same boat. Realizing that we have the same concerns and fears has shown us once more that no one can be saved alone. To grow truly, we must grow together, sharing what we have, like the boy who offered Jesus five barley loaves and two fish... yet they proved enough for five thousand people!

We need to be involved in order to promote ... Sometimes the impulse to serve others prevents us from seeing their real riches. If we really want to promote those whom we assist, we must involve them and make them agents in their own redemption. The pandemic has reminded us of how essential co-responsibility is, and that only with the contribution of everyone – even of those groups so often underestimated – can we face this crisis...

It is necessary to cooperate in order to build... Building the Kingdom of God is a duty common to all Christians, and for this rea-

son it is necessary that we learn to cooperate, without yielding to the temptation to jealousy, discord and division. To preserve our common home and make it conform more and more to God's original plan, we must commit ourselves to ensuring international co-operation, global solidarity and local commitment, leaving no one excluded.

I would like to conclude with a prayer suggested by the example of Saint Joseph at the time he was forced to flee to Egypt to save the child Jesus.

Father, you entrusted to Saint Joseph what you held most precious: the child Jesus and his Mother, in order to protect them from the dangers and threats of the wicked.

Grant that we may experience his protection and help. May he, who shared in the sufferings of those who flee from the hatred of the powerful, console and protect all our brothers and sisters driven by war, poverty and necessity to leave their homes and their lands to set out as refugees for safer places.

Help them, through the intercession of Saint Joseph, to find the strength to persevere, give them comfort in sorrows and courage amid their trials.

Grant to those who welcome them some of the tender love of this just and wise father, who loved Jesus as a true son and sustained Mary at every step of the way.

May he, who earned his bread by the work of his hands, watch over those who have seen everything in life taken away and obtain for them the dignity of a job and the serenity of a home.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, whom Saint Joseph saved by fleeing to Egypt, and trusting in the intercession of the Virgin Mary, whom he loved as a faithful husband in accordance with your will. Amen.

FRANCISCUS

## Glasgow project offers hope and assistance to city asylum seekers

**THE recent tragic events in Glasgow, when a Sudanese asylum seeker stabbed six people, including a police officer before being shot dead coupled with harrowing images of desperate refugees crossing the Channel, briefly brought the plight of migrants back into the public domain this summer.**

BY BRIAN SWANSON

families for migrants and asylum seekers.

But after several meetings with Glasgow City Council it was decided that a better long-term project would be offering classes in English.

For Kevin, who was brought up in Garnethill and whose family were all parishioners of St Aloysius, the timing was perfect.

A former London-based senior civil servant and qualified English language teacher, he took early retirement, and went on to teach at schools in Cambridge, Angola and Edinburgh.

But when he heard about the new ESOL project he immediately volunteered.

Indicating a large pile of documents on his desk Kevin said: “That’s 450 files there on students from all over – Sudan, Eritrea, Syria, Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Kurdistan, Egypt, Colombia, and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

“Now that’s a lot of languages – and a big challenge.” Kevin said.

“Many students come to us with no English whatsoever – so it’s a tribute to our 38 volunteers, many of them retired teachers for rising to that challenge.

“However over the years we have evolved to become much more than just an ESOL class and as time went on we identified many other needs among our refugee community.

“For example none of the students had any form of transport so when someone donated a couple of bikes that was a light bulb moment.

“As well as putting out an appeal for unwanted bikes we approached a couple of charities who specialise in refurbishing bikes and they were able to supply us with bikes, safety helmets, security locks and so on.

“To date, we have been

able to fund over 80 reconditioned bicycles for our students.

“Of course, demand always outstrips supply it still gives me a kick to see how happy students are when we present them with their very own bike.”

Thanks to the willingness of the volunteers, refugees were regularly put in touch with experts who could help with the everyday tasks most of us take for granted including medical appointments, school enrolment, housing inquiries and college and university applications.

Students were taken on city bus tours, museum, art gallery and panto visits while a small group created a photographic exhibition of Garnethill in collaboration with the Glasgow School of Art.

All these activities were designed to give them a



Picture by Paul McSherry

greater sense of the city they now called home.

Then Covid happened and the ESOL classes became a lifeline for its students.

Kevin said: “Almost overnight we became a food bank referral source. We soon found ourselves delivering emergency food funded by a grants from the Scottish Refugee Council among others.

“We topped up more than 100 phones so that people could keep in contact with

family and friends.

“We have started classes via Zoom, even though only a fraction of our students can join because of their lack of resources. We are only scratching the surface as many of our students do not have access to laptops, tablets, Smartphones or Wi-Fi.”

“Every other day a student will ask when classes will resume and the honest answer is that we don’t know but what I can say

that there is no sign of a fall in demand; in fact, demand is growing.

“Students look on us as a springboard for their future as New Scots – not just as a centre for English learning but as a place where they can relax, learn, make friends, and simply be themselves.”

**■ To volunteer, make a donation or find out more, email [esol.stalloysius@gmail.com](mailto:esol.stalloysius@gmail.com) or phone 07716 759769**

## Tragedy of Mercy

**FULL of hope for her future in Scotland, Ugandan-born asylum seeker Mercy Baguma smiles confidently at the camera.**

Life was good.

She was the proud mother of a year-old son, living in a flat with good neighbours, friends and a job she loved.

Weeks after this picture was taken she died a lonely and wretched death in her Govan flat lying next next to her malnourished son. His anguished cries alerted neighbours who called the police.

As a Home Office inquiry continues into the tragedy, which police say is unexplained but not suspicious, campaigners are in no doubt as to what led to her death.

Robina Qureshi, director of the refugee charity Positive Action in Housing said that Mercy lived in ‘extreme poverty’ after losing her job after when her right to work in the UK expired.

Ms Qureshi said: “Why are mothers and babies being left to go hun-



gry in this city, and why is it being left to charities and volunteers to pick up the pieces?”

She added: “Would this mother be alive if she was not forced out of her job by this cruel system that stops you from working and paying your way because a piece of paper says your leave to remain has expired?”

Ms Baguma’s death was the latest tragedy to hit Glasgow’s refugee community in less than four months.

At the start of May, a 30-year-old Syrian refugee, Adnan Walid Elbi, was found dead in rented accommodation in the city.

Glasgow City Council’s convenor for equalities and human rights, Jen Layden, said: “The tragic death of a young mum is devastating and my heart goes out to Mercy’s family and friends – including her young son – at this sad time.”

## POEM OF THE MONTH

This is an excerpt from his poem "St Matthew" by Rev. John Keble. Keble was an English churchman and poet, one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement although he did not follow Newman into the Catholic Church. Keble College, Oxford, was named after him.

How sweet to them, in such brief rest  
As thronging cares afford,  
In thought to wander, fancy-blest,  
To where their gracious Lord,  
In vain, to win proud Pharisees,  
Spake, and was heard by fell disease -  
But not in vain, beside yon breezy lake,  
Bade the meek Publican his gainful seat  
forsake:

At once he rose, and left his gold;  
His treasure and his heart  
Transferred, where he shall safe behold  
Earth and her idols part;  
While he beside his endless store  
Shall sit, and floods unceasing pour  
Of Christ's true riches o'er all time and  
space,  
First angel of His Church, first steward of  
His Grace.

Nor can ye not delight to think  
Where He vouchsafed to eat,  
How the Most Holy did not shrink  
From touch of sinner's meat;  
What worldly hearts and hearts impure  
Went with Him through the rich man's  
door,  
That we might learn of Him lost souls to  
love,  
And view His least and worst with hope to  
meet above.

## PRAYER OF THE MONTH

God, our Father, may our contemplation of sacred art bring us to adoration, to prayer and to love You, our Creator and Saviour, our Holy One and our Sanctifier. 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.



Art of the month

# Call in the darkness

**I**n the 1960's there was a young seminarian who often looked at the Tabernacle and asked the Lord, "Who me?" He looked around and understood why others. There was a student who was extremely clever and gracious. Another who seemed so gentle and pious. Across the pew, a fellow who was artistic and musical...

This seminarian wasn't particularly outstanding at anything....and yet.... here I am half a century on and, because of God's goodness, still ministering to the flock!

In his painting, *The Call of Matthew*, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio who lived as the 16th century turned into the 17th, has the future Apostle and Evangelist, pointing to himself as if to say, "Who me?"

On the 21st September we celebrate

BY MGR TOM  
MONAGHAN

the Feast Day of Saint Matthew who was a tax collector for the Romans before he was called by Christ.

The painting along with *The Inspiration of St Matthew* and *The Martyrdom of St Matthew* can be seen in the church of St Louis of the French in Rome, not far from the famous Piazza Navona. A feast of art, indeed.

The titles of the church are so beautiful and sonorous. In Italian, San Luigi dei Francesi. In French, Saint Louis des Français and in Latin, S. Ludovici Francorum de Urbe.

At first glance one might wonder if the scene is indoors or outdoors as we notice the gloom of the canvassed windows which give a shady, slightly sinister appearance.

The cross in the window in counter-

point to the rich coins on the table.

The beam of light highlights Matthew pointing to himself while the pointing finger of Christ reminds us, perhaps of the finger of Adam in the Sistine Chapel by that other famous Michelangelo.

Notice the bare feet and ancient robes of Christ and of St Peter, which contrast with the foppish 16th century clothes of the crooked accountants. The vastly different modes of dress point to two worlds with the miraculous interrupting the daily drudge.

The Divine is about to enter Matthew's everyday life and bring about a spiritual awakening. Look carefully at the painting and be inspired. Contemplation of Matthew's Call can bring you to God and that, surely, is the point of sacred art.

# Painting Popes fills artist Jim's retirement

**A**N 89-year-old amateur artist has used lockdown to paint a portrait of Pope Francis – and he would dearly love to gift it to the Holy Father.

And Jim Lafferty, whose remarkably life-like portrait portraits of Saint John Paul II and Saint John XXIII hang together in St Dominic's Bishopbriggs, reckons that two details he has added to his latest portrait would

BY BRIAN SWANSON

have special appeal to the Pontiff.

Jim, who is a parishioner at St Dominic's, where he is known as 'the man who paints Popes in his living room', has had a lifelong passion for art.

He said: "I'm sure the Pope gets all sorts of portraits sent to him but mine is dif-

ferent because I've included a couple dancing the tango and a San Lorenzo football shirt – his favourite team – which both acknowledge his Argentinian roots."

The former St Mungo's pupil and retired chartered accountant went to night classes at Bishopbriggs Academy for many years and later studied portrait painting part-time at Glasgow School of Art.

The grandfather of 21-year-old twins counts Cezanne and Michelangelo as his main influences along with Fife-born artist Jack Vettriano.

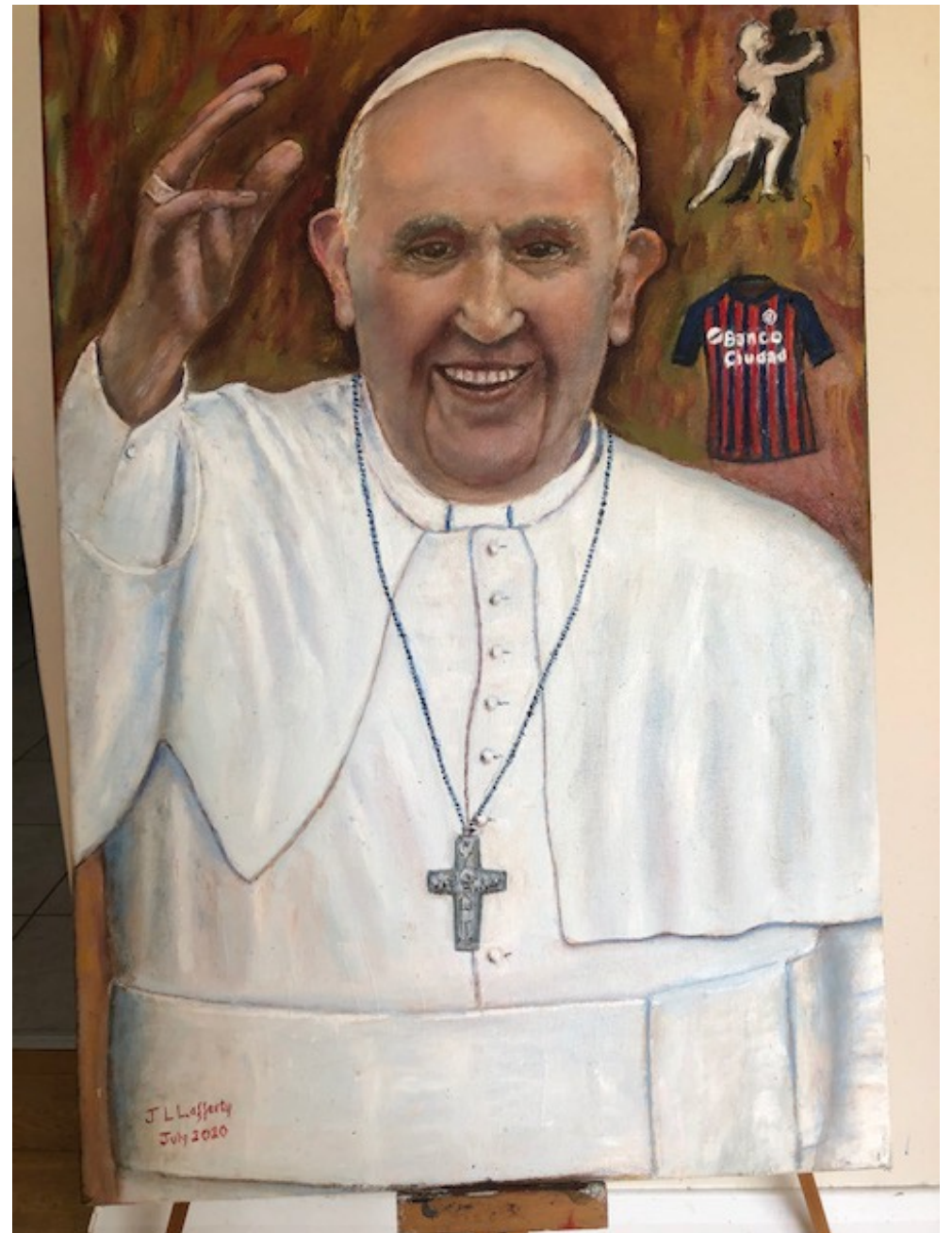
His other passion is his beloved Celtic and until a couple years ago, when the stairs at Parkhead became too much for him, he was a long time season ticket holder.

He spent his working life as a chartered accountant employed by some of the best-known companies in Glasgow and later held senior roles at Edinburgh University's finance department.

He and his late wife May moved to Bishopbriggs in the early sixties where they brought up their family of three, and in what spare time he had Jim developed his love of painting.

Jim's youngest daughter Diane, principal teacher of modern languages at St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch said: "Dad's faith is certainly one of the most important things in his life – along with family and Celtic. He began painting in the 70s and his work was often admired on house visits by the parish priest at the time, Fr Michael O'Keeffe."

Jim said: "I've been very lucky during this whole



Jim Lafferty at work  
Pictures by Paul McSherry



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pandemic – I wasn't shielded and had plenty of time to get on with my painting. I may be in my 90th year but I want to continue doing what I love for as long as God lets me.

"I plan writing to the Holy Father to tell him about my painting and although I know he gets literally thousands of letters every day I hope that he may read about my efforts."

And he joked: "If he ever wants to fly over here in his private jet I'd be delighted to present my painting to him personally!"

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# Matthew's Gospel strengthens faith in times of trial and trouble



Canon Robert Hill

**I**T'S not exactly necessary to know how a Gospel has been put together, nor the structure the writer has used to shape it, but it can be very helpful to our understanding of an evangelist's purpose if we consider how he has arranged his material.

This is particularly useful for studying Matthew's Gospel, which was written to boost the confidence of followers of Jesus who had been raised as Jews. At first, these were happy continuing to go synagogue and also to worship Jesus.

In AD 70 however, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, the Jewish leadership was plunged into confusion because, with no Temple, there were no more sacrifices, and therefore no more Temple priests. Pharisees then filled the power gap and claimed they were the true teachers of Moses' law.

All would have been well had not synagogue-attending Christians claimed that Jesus was the ultimate interpreter of God's law. They were expelled from the synagogue, driven out by their families, and sometimes even killed for suggesting this.

Matthew's gospel was written to strengthen the faith of these persecuted Christians. To do this, he depicts Jesus as the ultimate teacher of God's law.

Jewish tradition had held that Moses had personally written the first five books of what we call the Old Testament. So Matthew writes the main body of his Gospel – Jesus' ministry – in five sections, or 'books' if you like, showing that Jesus fulfils Moses' Law; he does not replace it.

Chapter 18 of Matthew is one of those teaching blocks of Jesus, and within it, disciples are instructed as to how they are to live in community.

**6 SEP** Sunday 23 Year A.  
**Matthew 18:15-20**

There is something very practical and human about Jesus' teaching in this Sermon on community living. Like all of Jesus' teaching, it aspires to very high standards, but Jesus is very aware of the limitations that arise among disciples.

A human solution to human weakness is needed. So, says Jesus, if there is a disagreement between disciples, the best possible solution will be if the disa-

Domenico Ghirlandaio,  
*Calling of the Apostles*, 1481



greeing parties can solve the issue themselves.

If the wrongdoer can be persuaded to see the error of his or her ways, so much the better. If this is not going to work, then witnesses to the wrong doing are to be summoned – two at least, but preferably three, who are in agreement and who can settle the issue.

Sadly, there are some who will deny wrongdoing even in the face of strong evidence. If this is the case and the wrongdoer will still not listen, exclusion from the community may be necessary. This is a sad outcome of course, but on the other hand, and much more positively, Jesus says that when two or three gather in his name, then he too is with them.

**13 SEP** Sunday 24 Year A.  
**Matthew 18:21-35**

The issue here is the same as in last week's gospel – community living and forgiveness. It also gives the evangelist a chance to highlight the complexities of Peter, that famous apostolic figure, full of strengths but also weaknesses!

Peter asks how far should he have to go in forgiving someone who offends him? As often as seven times? Seven was the great number symbolising totality in the biblical world, so surely to

forgive seven times was to do something on a biblical scale? Peter must have felt crushed when Jesus says, "No: forgive 77 times if necessary".

There must be no limit to the times forgiveness must be offered. Jesus illustrates this with what must be the most outrageously exaggerated parable in all four gospels.

A man owes his master, the king, 10,000 talents. It's difficult to be certain how much money this would amount to, but it would not be unreasonable to state its value as about 100 million days' wages. The man in debt pleads for time to pay it all back. How long does he think it will take? The king cancels his debt and lets him go.

On the way out, the man meets someone who owes him 100 denarii – say three months' wages – not insignificant, but paltry compared with the debt this man has just had cancelled.

The man who has just been released from his huge debt refuses to give time for repayment to the one in debt to him.

He gets what he deserves as a consequence. It's not difficult to see the moral of the story.

Take the parable a stage further and consider the debt we are in to God for

God's forgiveness of our sins.

How then can we possibly refuse to forgive our brothers and sisters?

**20 SEP** Sunday 25 Year A.  
**Matthew 20:1-16**

The gospels for today and next Sunday are set in Jerusalem and its Temple. By now, Jesus has entered Jerusalem: the story we read on Palm Sunday. Today's passage has at its centre a parable about a vineyard – a well-known symbol in biblical times for the kingdom of God.

Another well-known image is included: the denarius as the basic wage of the working man. A worker and his family could live on a denarius for a day. Without that denarius, he and his family faced starvation. The parable is about the hiring of people to work in the vineyard. Workers are engaged at various times throughout the day. The last to come had only worked for one hour. When the wages are paid out, starting with the last arrivals, each of whom was paid one denarius.

Those who worked all day thought they were on to a good thing, but they too were paid only a denarius, and they were not pleased! Why were they, who had worked all day and in the

heat of the sun, paid the same as those who had only put in an hour's work?

Many are outraged even today when they hear this parable, but this is not really a parable about workers' rights: it is about the right of people to live.

A denarius was necessary for a person to stay alive for a day. Give that person less than a denarius and you deprive him of life itself!

This parable then is about the gift of life that God has given to each of us – not because we deserve it, because we don't, but because God gives us the gift of life.

The parable prompts us to value the gift of life God has given to us, and to value the lives of others as well, because each of us is made in the image and likeness of God.

**27 SEP** Sunday 26 Year A.  
**Matthew 21:28-32**

The gospels for the Sundays of this month end with a parable with a sting in its tail! Jesus poses a challenge to the chief priests and the elders of the people by setting them a parable – we are now among the big hitters of the ancient Jewish religious system!

The parable is about a man with two sons, both of whom he asked to work in the vineyard.

The first refused to go, but later thought the better of it. The second said he would go to work in the vineyard, but did not turn up for work.

Jesus asks the chief priests and elders of the people which of the two sons obeyed their father. The answer is clear, of course: the one who eventually did go to work, which is what the chief priests and elders say is the case.

Jesus turns on them by pointing out that they were the very ones who were chosen to work in God's vineyard, to lead God's people. Despite their protestations of being faithful servants of God, they have not been faithful and have neglected God's people.

To add insult to injury, Jesus warns them that all those whom they despise as sinners are now listening to Jesus and changing their lives and therefore will enter the kingdom of God before their leaders.

Jesus harks back to the period of John the Baptist when the most notorious groups of sinners – tax collectors and prostitutes – paid heed to John and reformed their lives.

Even then, the chief priests and elders refused to amend their lives.

It is not difficult to feel the threat these leaders pose to Jesus.

**L**AST Saturday I celebrated my first wedding since lockdown began.

Other weddings had been postponed until next year, especially with hotel and reception venues cancelling, but this couple were determined that the wedding would go ahead, if at all possible.

The most important thing, after all, was the marriage, not the reception.

Over the weeks and months since the pandemic took hold, the couple and myself were watching for the First Minister's announcements each Thursday, listening for a hopeful word that weddings could go ahead, even with restrictions and limitations.

Eventually that word came and we knew, barring a second spike, that the wedding could proceed, albeit with a maximum of 20 people, and a raft of protocols to comply with.

The paperwork proved a challenge as well. Two dioceses were involved and chancery staff in both were working from home. The registry office was on lockdown too but re-opened just in time to allow the necessary civil requirements to

# Wedding bells and virtual friends mark summer at St Mungo's



## Fr Frank's log

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

be attended to.

The night before the wedding there was torrential rain with thunder and lightning, but on the day itself the sun was shining, albeit with a bit of a breeze. All went well, with only 10 people in all present, including the bride and groom – well, 11 if you include myself!

There was a BBQ afterwards in the family garden, after which the couple managed a few days away, glad of some peace and quiet after the tension and anxiety of the previous months, and no doubt, whenever it

becomes possible, they will gather a larger group of family and friends to celebrate belatedly what was a very lovely and happy occasion.

We have reduced our streaming service a little bit from St Mungo's, as Father Antony and myself were finding things a bit stretched since public Masses resumed in the church. So, on the two weekdays, Tuesday and Thursday, when we have Mass in the church, we don't have Mass streamed from the community house in Bishopbriggs,

but that still leaves five days when we do have streamed Mass.

We know that the main purpose of these streamed Masses is to provide a service for people who are still in isolation, for one reason or another, and who therefore cannot come out to Mass as they would like.

However, we have also made a lovely digital connection with people in Ireland, North and South, and in a number of other countries as well, who seem to have formed a small, virtual community, of prayerful communion with each other, and we don't want to let go of that too easily.

When life gets back to some kind of normal, we will have to think carefully, and consult, on how this virtual family of faith might continue, in some fruitful way, going forward.

There is a sense in which the Church will have changed as a result of this pandemic, and as a consequence of how we have had to adapt and respond to the challenges that were posed. Not everything will be exactly as before, and if there are positive opportunities to emerge, we will do our best to take hold of them.

We have also added an extra day to our availability for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which takes place during the times that the church is open for personal prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. This is now on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2–4 pm, and on Saturdays from 3–5pm. It is heartening to see how people have responded to this, and while, as I mentioned before, there were some tears shed in the first weekend when we returned to public Masses, there have also been tears shed by people who have felt bereft in not having this Sacrament of Healing available to them, and who can now return.

If only more people could come to an appreciation of the blessings this Sacrament can bring.

At a more mundane level, the football season has resumed, and I had to rely on a parishioner to inform me that my older brother, Hugh, the doyen of Scottish sports journalists, has made a return to the written word with a certain Sunday newspaper.

When I checked this out online, the vitriol was already outpouring from some of the sad and mad

people who think social media is a vehicle for their own particular bile.

Big brother is a brave man for making himself vulnerable to that yet again – as if Super Scoreboard wasn't enough.

But he is a good writer, who uses intelligent thoughts and words, with real punctuation, almost a

lost art, and I will look forward to reading his articles.

On another sporting note I was amused by John Higgins' comment that coming out at the World Snooker Championships to no audience was a bit like going to Mass!

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

[www.franciscanvocations.org.uk](http://www.franciscanvocations.org.uk)

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Or email: [nunraw.abbot@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nunraw.abbot@yahoo.co.uk)  
Scottish Charity No SC022611



Smiling happily for the camera Helen and Scott Malone celebrate the start of their married life together... and the first wedding Mass in St Mungo's since the start of lockdown. Helen, 26, a chemical and processing engineer, and Scott, 29, a police officer stationed in East Kilbride, first met as volunteers on an agricultural project in Malawi. Helen's family have long connections with St Mungo's where she attended Mass regularly while studying at nearby Strathclyde University. She said: "It was a wonderful day and so good to be celebrating Mass in Mungo's again!" Picture: Mark Wild Photography

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**HELP US MAKE  
WILL AID A WINNER!**

A Will is arguably one of the most important documents you will ever sign. This November, Holmes Mackillop will write basic wills without charging our normal fee, and instead ask you to make a donation to the Will Aid charities.



# Will making is an act of charity

**WHERE there's a will there's a way ... that ancient piece of advice referred to the virtue of determination – a "will" to succeed.**

But it can also be applied to the other kind of "will" – the document which lays out your wishes for what should happen to your property, assets and personal effects after you die.

Every lawyer can testify that life for surviving relatives is rendered so much simpler – and often cheaper – when a will has been drawn up.

Indeed preparing such a document (which can be done very simply and often free) could be described as an act of charity towards those who will be left when you enter eternity.

### Eternity

Despite the importance of Wills, more than 50% of people still don't have them.

A will can provide the following benefits among others:

- Provides financial security for loved ones;
- Avoids inheritance disputes
- Appoints guardians where appropriate for your children

It is probably true that the main obstacles to carrying out this act of charity (and justice) for your relatives are superstition (it's somehow unlucky), procrastination (putting off until tomorrow what can be done today) and misunderstanding (not realising the complications and costs of dying without a will).

### Benefits

The truth is that a will can be drawn up simply and cheaply by your local solicitor – it won't take long, and if you don't have a vast wealth to divide among branches of the family tree, at least you will have the satisfaction of knowing that treasured items will reach the people you want them to reach, that children will be cared for and that awkward family arguments will be avoided in advance.

Wills can be amended so don't worry that what you say can never be changed. If circumstances change just let your local solicitor know and the will can be updated.

Remember ... where there's a will there's a way ... a safer way!

*With a gift in your Will...  
... we will grow*

Did you know gifts in Wills are a vital source of income to St Andrew's Hospice?

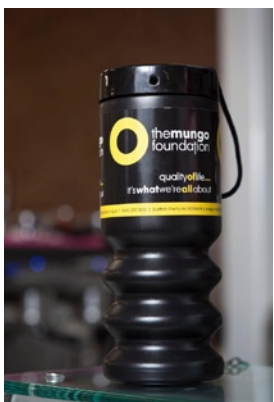
Every gift, large or small, makes a difference to our patients and their families and will allow us to continue to do so in the future.

You can help us by leaving just 1% in your Will so that those closest to you receive 99%.

Call Lorna McCafferty on 01236 772087 for further information.



St Andrew's Hospice (Lanarkshire) is a charity registered in Scotland, NO.SC010159



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Registered Charity No: SC035078

## PH PATERSON HOLMS



## Help us make Will Aid a Winner this November

During November, Paterson Holms will write basic Wills, without charging our normal fee. To raise as much money as possible for Will Aid, we hope that clients will make a donation to the Will Aid charities. The suggested donation level is £95 for a single Will, £135 for a pair of Wills or £40 for a codicil to an existing Will.

Make or update your Will with Will Aid and you will gain peace of mind from knowing that you have protected your own family and loved ones for the future as well as giving money to help thousands of people in need to gain the skills, tools and support they need to improve their lives.

It is extremely important to seek qualified and professional expertise when making a Will. So, don't put it off any longer. Phone us and make an appointment today.

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# SPRED's digital spread continues

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*To raise as much money as possible for Will Aid this November, we are offering readers the opportunity to have a simple Will professionally drawn up and we will not be earning a penny.*

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E-mail mail@blaneycarnan.com

**T**HE time of pandemic has been an unprecedented challenge for SPRED as for the wider Church and every group within it.

By mid-March it was clear we could no longer meet safely together and with sadness we announced a temporary closure of our groups.

Not for a moment did we expect that September would come and we would still be unable to gather together.

SPRED's ministry involves meeting face to face with our brothers and sisters who are differently abled – we call them friends, as Jesus calls us. There are hugs

BY LISBETH RAESIDE  
DIRECTOR, SPRED GLASGOW

and handshakes on arrival and departure. We offer an arm to help a friend who is unsteady on their feet and a gentle touch on the shoulder for someone who is anxious.

The leader takes each person by the hand as they receive Jesus' message. We hold hands as we sing our psalms. We sit close together around a table as we share food and friendship.

None of this is now possible, nor will it be possible for some time.

Does this mean that SPRED must cease to function? Not at all. Our friends need SPRED as much as ever as a support in these strange and difficult times.

They have had to cope with changes in their routine. Familiar faces have disappeared from their lives.

Social lives, work, centre or individual activities have changed.

Like everyone else, our friends have the right to a spiritual life. Our spiritual lives did not stop with lockdown. Neither did theirs; so SPRED's work goes on, albeit differently.

At first we focussed on keeping in touch. Despite their own anxieties catechists did not forget their friends and news of how each was faring was shared



among groups.

From the SPRED Centre, we sent cards and a special newsletter and wrote to all our families. We supported groups to stay

together by publishing regular newsletters, sharing news and offering material for reflection. We gathered virtually for prayer each day, remembering especially those who were sick or in any difficulty.

As we move into a new session all of this will continue. Our faithfulness to our friends reflects the faithfulness of God who has promised never to abandon us.

Far from losing heart, SPRED groups say that they

have grown closer than ever during this time.

From this month our efforts to stay in touch will be coupled with a renewed focus on the spiritual and catechetical work, which is the purpose of SPRED. We will offer new ways of sharing faith with our friends until we can meet together again.

We will hold our Commissioning Mass as usual with some catechists participating in person and others joining via a livestream. At this we will ask God's blessing on our ministry and make our annual commitment to be faithful to our service in SPRED.

As we emerge from the restrictions of lockdown we are determined to expand our ministry and touch more lives and recruit more volunteers to help with our work.

If you'd like to find out more about this rewarding and enriching work, please email lisbeth.spred@btconnect.com or call the SPRED Centre on 0141 770 5055.

**The Notre Dame Centre** (Est 1931)

Providing support for children, young people and their families



The Notre Dame Centre is a registered charity which operates as a Company Limited by Guarantee with a Board of Directors.

Originally founded in 1931 in response to the demands of parents, educators and other professionals to address the complex needs of children and young people (pre-school to adolescent) experiencing emotional and psychological distress. We are based in the North of Glasgow and provide services to education, social work and NHS boards across Scotland.

Can I ask that you please consider The Notre Dame Centre when you are making a will or leaving a legacy

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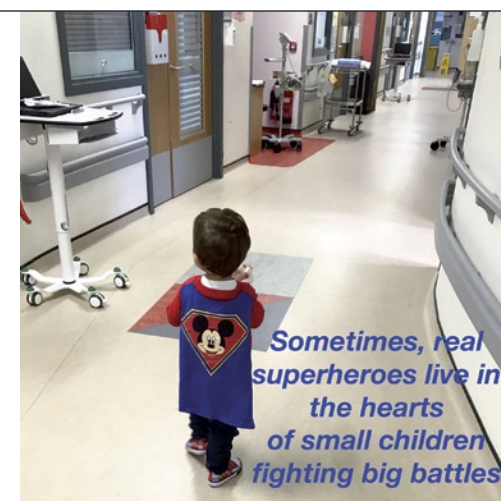
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Whether you are writing your will, or amending your existing one, consider leaving a legacy to **SPUC SCOTLAND**.

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# SCIAF appeal will help victims of Beirut horror

**I WAS on holiday when all the breaking news stories from Beirut started arriving on my phone.**

It was horrific to see the clips of the explosions and the buildings being destroyed, and even more so as I recognised many of the places they were showing.

Only 18 months ago I was there for the Caritas regional assembly and that was just the last of many visits I've made there, through which I've come to know many friends and colleagues in the city. Quickly messages from them arrived, driving home the human catastrophe that was unravelling in the news.

The initial explosion was bad enough but in the days that followed the news got worse and worse. Medical services were overrun, the government collapsed, and starvation and the coronavirus spread rapidly.

Even before this catastrophe, Lebanon was a country in crisis. Having survived



## Alistair Dutton

Chief Executive, SCIAF

decades of conflict, they then faced the fallout from the Syrian war, welcoming 1.5 million refugees who are now 30% of the population. This dramatic increase in population has stretched schools, medical services and social care programmes to breaking point.

The Lebanese economy is in freefall and the destruction of Beirut's shipping port is disastrous as the country imports 85% of its food. There are already major food shortages, and the UN has warned Lebanon will run out of bread in weeks.

All this at the time the coronavirus is spreading through the country.

But as ever, as I saw the catastrophe unfold, I knew that Caritas Lebanon would be straight out there serving their people. And they were. Caritas Lebanon, the Church's humanitarian arm and SCIAF's sister agency, is very strong and is highly respected by the Lebanese Government, UN

agencies and the international community there, and very quickly they were providing first aid, medical care, hot meals, and food and sanitary parcels.

Rita Rhayem, Director of Caritas Lebanon left no doubt about the scale of the challenge they face.

"It is a terrible and disastrous situation and today

we live in total confusion. The wounded are received in our primary care centres which are overwhelmed, the hospitals are incredibly crowded. They lack everything, including food to support the affected population."

In the face of such horror and heroism, I'm so proud to be part of this wonderful Caritas family which genuinely surrounds the earth and am always humbled by the speed, dedication, professionalism, compassion and love of the local Church as it cares for its people even as the crisis is still unfolding.

Given the level of need, the immediate response of Caritas on the ground, the sustained level of intense media coverage, and our commitment to working in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, SCIAF decided to launch an appeal. This will concentrate on the poorest of the poor, both Lebanese nationals and the refugees



they have welcomed.

We know this appeal comes soon after our Summer appeal about the poverty pandemic unleashed by the Coronavirus and our annual WEE BOX appeal for victims of sexual violence in the DRC. But the need in Lebanon is so great, that we could not forsake the people there. Even in

this difficult year when so many of us face uncertainty in our own lives, the legendary generosity of our sup-

porters has shown through for which, once again, we are incredibly grateful.

Your donations will allow Caritas Lebanon to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and provide medical care for the sick and injured. It will make all the difference to those who need it most.

**■ To support SCIAF's Lebanon appeal visit [www.sciaf.org.uk](http://www.sciaf.org.uk)**

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with Fr. Jim McManus C.Ss.R.

Cost: £246.00 (includes deposit of £65.00)

12th-16th October 2020

**Spirituality of True Self-Esteem**

with Fr. Jim McManus C.Ss.R. and Miss Marie Hogg

Cost: £246.00 (includes deposit of £65.00)

Deposit required: £65

11th-13th December 2020

**Silent Advent Weekend Retreat**

with Fr. Charles Corrigan C.Ss.R.

Cost: £123.00 (includes deposit of £65.00)

To celebrate our reopening, all prices above include a 25% discount, available until Christmas 2020.

All social distancing and health guidelines will be followed within the Monastery.

Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

We look forward to welcoming you!

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**[info@kinnoullmonastery.co.uk](mailto:info@kinnoullmonastery.co.uk)**

## Archbishop Mario honoured by his beloved Tuscany



**ARCHBISHOP Conti has been awarded one of the most prestigious prizes of his family's native Italian region of Tuscany.**

He has been given the Gold Medal of the "Lucchesi nel Mondo" and was due to be presented with the award at a special ceremony in Lucca later this month. However the ongoing pandemic has meant the scaling back of the award ceremonies.

The award was founded half a century ago and is the highest honour which the Lucchesi nel Mondo can grant and is traditionally made around the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy

Cross (September 14).

The people of Lucca have a special devotion to the Cross and the city's greatest treasure is the Volto Santo, or Holy Face, an eight-foot-tall, ancient wooden carving of Christ crucified. Medieval legends state that it was sculpted by Nicodemus who assisted St. Joseph of Arimathea in placing Christ in his tomb after the crucifixion.

Archbishop Conti said: "I was surprised but delighted to be named as one of the recipients of the gold medal of the city. My family's roots are in Tuscany and I have relatives in Barga which is

in the Province of Lucca.

"It's a pity that I won't be able to go in person to receive the award and to take part in the festivities around the Feast Day of the Holy Cross, but it wouldn't be advisable to travel and the authorities in Italy have recognised that."

The honour is not the first Glasgow's former Archbishop has received from Italy. Shortly after being named Archbishop he was granted the title Grande Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana by the President of the country for his distinguished service.