

FLOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

November 2024



Pope urges Sacred Heart revival **page 4**



Jubilee Cross 2025

Holy Year cross unveiled **page 9**

New lectionary will bring scripture readings into sharper focus

- Advent launch for revised readings/psalms
- Biggest change in translations for almost 60 years
- New readings included for recent Feast days

SCOTLAND'S parishes will notice a significant change in a few weeks when the familiar translation of Bible texts used at Mass changes.

From the First Sunday

of Advent the readings and psalms in the liturgy will use an updated translation which is closer in meaning to the original biblical languages.

The psalms sung at Sun-

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

day Masses will also be revised to use more accurate translations.

The changes to the lectionary – the large book of Bible

readings used for Sunday and weekday Masses – will represent the biggest change in the texts of the Liturgy of the Word since the 1960s.

■ **Full story pages 10–11**



Welcome to our new priests **page 2**

Even archbishops have to juggle!



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

ARCHBISHOP Nolan made a heartfelt plea for High School pupils to step back from the constant demands of modern life... then illustrated his point with an impromptu display of juggling.

Delivering his homily ahead of Catholic Education Week later this month, he said: "I don't know about you but I'm not very good at juggling – yet I feel that's what I am often doing because life can be very busy at times. There are so many things to do and you're just trying to keep everything up in the air and keep it going and I'm sure that's probably the same for you because school can be very busy as well."

"I'm sure you feel that if you stop then everything just absolutely collapses and you find you're running just to try and keep still."

"So that's why I appreciate the fact that you have all taken the time to come here this evening because the temptation is that after you get an invitation to come to a Mass after school and you think 'that's just another thing to do'."

"But coming to Mass is an opportunity to leave aside

Welcome to our new priests

TWO young Nigerian priests who have arrived at St Andrew's Cathedral say they have been overwhelmed by the warmth of the welcome... but Fr Sylvester Jalo, 31, and Fr Innocent Onwumere Simon, 41, from the diocese of Bauchi, Northern Nigeria, agree that the cold weather will take much getting used to!

Father Sylvester, who was ordained two years ago and Father Innocent who was ordained in 2013, have been sent by their bishop to the Archdiocese initially on a three-year visa – and they can't wait to begin their mission.

Father Sylvester said: "Every culture is unique and peculiar so first we want to get to know the people here in Glasgow but even although we only arrived at the beginning of October we have been made very welcome everywhere we go."

And as a football fan he is looking forward to finding time to watch Celtic – recalling that his fellow countryman Efe Ambrose was one of the fans' favourites under Neil Lennon.

The new arrivals were full of praise for the help they have received from recently-appointed Cathedral administrator Canon David Wallace.

Father Innocent said: "From the very moment we knew we were coming to Scotland Father David sent us emails offering us every assistance so that we both felt welcome even before we got here."

The African priests will work in Scotland under the Fidei Donum scheme. The expression Fidei Donum is Latin for 'Gift of Faith'.

This is the name of an encyclical of Pope Pius XII written in 1957, which called on



BY BRIAN SWANSON

bishops "to face the challenges of the universal mission of the Church". This involved making priests available to serve on other continents.

Though carrying out their missions abroad, the priests remain attached to their own diocese and are referred to as "Fidei Donum priests".

Father Innocent recalled that in the past Scotland had sent priests to Nigeria on a similar arrangement, and so it seemed particularly appropriate that the dioceses of Nigeria might 'pay back' the Church in Scotland by releasing priests to serve in our dioceses.

the juggling, and just spend a little time in the presence of God.

"We spend so much time doing things – but God didn't make us to be human *doings* he made us human be-

ings.

"This Mass is an opportunity just to be still in the presence of God and allow that healing presence of God to calm us down, so we can renew ourselves and be

refreshed by God's healing touch.

"We can invigorate ourselves again because God calls us to *be*, not just to *do*, and be still in the presence of the Lord."

End of an era as Carmelites leave Kirkintilloch

FITTINGLY it was on the feast day of their foundress, St Teresa of Ávila, that the Carmelite community at Kirkintilloch celebrated their closing Mass in their chapel as they prepare to leave the Archdiocese.

Archbishop Nolan celebrated the Mass with several priests and spoke warmly with the Sisters and members of the congregation afterwards.

The Sisters will relocate their monastery to Bathgate this month, leaving the Archdiocese of Glasgow where they have been a prayerful presence for over 100 years.

Sister Johann, from the Kirkintilloch Carmel, said: "Since 1562 Carmelite nuns have lived a life of contemplative prayer at the heart of the Church in the footsteps of their foundress, St Teresa of Ávila and, more recently, St Thérèse of Lisieux."

"Our contact with the many groups and individuals who work for a better world at home and abroad, and the many requests we



receive for prayers make us keenly aware of the deep need there is for peace and healing in a broken world.

Journey

"Our own inner journey, often painful and dark, made in love, becomes a journey on behalf of all. Called to a life 'hidden with Christ in God', the nuns aim to unite

themselves with Christ in His work of redemption."

The first Carmelite foundation in the Archdiocese was in 1918 in Langside, Glasgow. From this foundation another monastery was founded in Kirkintilloch in 1953 and in 2006 the communities reunited due to falling numbers.

They moved to their new

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

monastery in Kirkintilloch in 2008 where they have continued to live their vocation while offering resources and a prayerful space to those who share their liturgies, scripture group and silent prayer.



The current monastery will eventually be used for charitable purposes having been bought privately by prominent Glasgow businessman Stephen Glancey who, along with his family, have a close connection with the Carmelite community going back several years.

Mr Glancey, 64 (above), is the former chief executive of

C&C Group and also Chairman of the Celtic Foundation, the club's charitable arm, which has raised millions for deserving causes over the years.

The Carmel of Dumbar-ton, founded in 1934 will still grace the Archdiocese of Glasgow with its presence and serve as a powerhouse of prayer.



St Catherine's hosts the start of confirmation season

The start of another long season of confirmations began last month for Archbishop Nolan as he launched his annual tour of the Archdiocese to confer the sacrament. First up this year were these happy young parishioners from St Catherine Labouré Parish in Balornock. The Primary 7 pupils from St Catherine's Primary and St Martha's Primary were on top form as they took an active part in the Confirmation Mass.

New evangelisation course is launched



ENCOURAGING CATHOLICS TO SHARE THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

'Salt, Leaven and Light' will offer advice on faith sharing

A NEW springtime of evangelisation is dawning in Clydebank this November, despite the chilly winter temperatures.

The FireCloud group, based in the town is launching a new course aimed at Catholics who want to spread the faith but don't know exactly how to do it.

Salt, Leaven and Light is for practising Catholics (18+) from the Archdiocese of Glasgow who have a real desire to undertake practical evangelisation and outreach initiatives in their parish community setting.

The course consists of an initial retreat followed by seven monthly workshop sessions (November 2024 – June 2025). Over the duration of the course, participants will be supported to design and begin a practical evangelisation initiative in their parish community to suit their unique gifts and parish needs.

The course will cover such areas as:

- Church teaching on the New Evangelisation including writings from Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis
- Leadership and collaboration; forming teams and engaging the gifts of others in the parish
- Practical evangelisation skills; designing new initiatives, understanding parish life, planning for use of time and resources

BY RONNIE CONVERY

No previous ministry experience is needed.

Participants are asked to commit to all the dates wherever possible so they can complete the full course and deepen their learning in an ongoing way with a steady group. There will be opportunities beyond the course for participants to stay in touch and provide peer support.

FireCloud founder Suzanne Bunniss said: "This course is for anyone in a parish who loves their Catholic faith and wants to see a renewed hope, energy and outreach in parish life. Every person in the pews has unique and wonderful gifts they can offer to their parish community, so this is a great opportunity to create something new with real support and good company from other parishes who are making similar efforts."

"The course will help people plan and try new parish initiatives and learn a lot from and with each other along the way. The church has inspirational teachings on evangelisation and it will be exciting to apply that learning practically in the church in Glasgow.

"We would love to see every parish in Glasgow give it a go – that would be an incredible testament to faith and hope in challenging times."

You can find out more at www.fire-cloud.org

Conference will focus on reach out to youth

How can we reach our young people to engage them in question of faith?

It's a question posed every week by individuals, parish councils and deaneries across the Archdiocese.

Now the Archdiocesan Youth Office has decided to enter the debate and offer some answers at a special conference planned for later this month.

Mairi-Claire O'Donnell of the Youth Office told *Flourish*: "The question can appear daunting as it is clear that when answered action is required and many do not know where to start.

"However, it is a question which we have to face as we so desperately see the necessity of engaging our young people, of introducing them to the Person of Christ, of walking with them as they explore their

faith and grow as disciples.

"We want to help answer this question of how to engage young people, not just in theory but in an actionable way, giving people the opportunity to explore resources and hear from those already reaching out to the young of their parish.

"If readers have ever asked this question, even if just internally, we invite them to join us for our Parish Youth and Young Adult Evangelisation Conference which will take place on Saturday, 16th November, 0930–1600."

Tickets are £25 and include refreshments and lunch. They can be purchased here: <https://rcagyouth.eventbrite.com>

■ If you would like any further information, feel free to email: youth@rcag.org.uk

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Ten years on, Notre Dame is all heart



BIG-HEARTED youngsters from Notre Dame Primary School in the West End raised £1000 to buy a defibrillator for their community... and it has already proved to be in the right place at the right time.

It was accessed, although not used, by a member of the public during the October school holidays.

A staff member explained: "The defibrillator is on the railings outside the school entrance on Dowanhill Street and the Scottish Ambulance Service told us that it during the October break it had been accessed by a member of the public but not ultimately used – so already it's been worthwhile to have it in-

stalled."

Head teacher Tina McDonald said: "Last year to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the new Notre Dame Primary School and Elie Street nursery we took part in a range of fundraising activities over the month of September and received donations from the local community to purchase and install a defibrillator and cabinet to house it.

"We wanted to give something back to our community and we believed that this life saving equipment would be an excellent way to do that."

Pictured in photo from left to right – Philip Dougan P7, Anna Cleghorn and Benedict Gilday from Elie Street Nursery, Benjie Felvus-Ross P4.

Archbishop: Do your best and God will help

STAFF past and present joined former and current pupils of St Marnock's Primary School in Pollok on the feast day of its patron for a Mass of Thanksgiving in Saint Conval's Church to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the school.

Archbishop Nolan took great delight in delving into the pews to engage with the young worshippers. And addressing the children directly he reminded them that their patron was a disciple of Saint Columba, whose example as someone who loved Jesus was one that they should all follow.

And he encouraged them to remember the school motto – 'Together we can be inspired to do our best' add-



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

ing: "Remember always that Jesus loves you and will always be here to guide you, to

help you and encourage you not only today but throughout the rest of your lives."

Giving the vote of thanks, Mrs Mary Rice, head teacher of the 245-pupil school, said:

"St Marnock's is at the heart of the Pollok community and in the hearts of all the children and parents past and present, and will remain so for years to come."

Pope calls for renewed Sacred Heart devotion

POPE Francis has urged a modern-day rediscovery of devotion to the Sacred Heart in a surprise new teaching letter just published.

The Encyclical letter begins with the Latin words 'Dilexit Nos' – (He loved us) and is the fourth encyclical of the Pope Francis pontificate.

The style is highly personal: "At carnival time, when we were children, my grandmother would make a pastry using a very thin batter. When she dropped the strips of batter into the oil, they would expand, but then, when we bit into them, they were empty inside.

"In the dialect we spoke, those cookies were called 'lies'... My grandmother explained why: 'Like lies, they look big, but are empty inside; they are false, unreal'.

Important

"Instead of running after superficial satisfactions and playing a role for the benefit of others, we would do better to think about the really important questions in life..."

"Who am I, really? What am I looking for? What direction do I want to give to my life, my decisions and my actions? Why and for what purpose am I in this world? How do I want to look back on my life once it ends?

BY RONNIE CONVERY

What meaning do I want to give to all my experiences? Who do I want to be for others? Who am I for God? All these questions lead us back to the heart."

He writes in his new encyclical that the way in which Christ loves us is something that He did not want to explain in words, but rather in gestures. "By watching him act, we can discover how he treats each of us..."

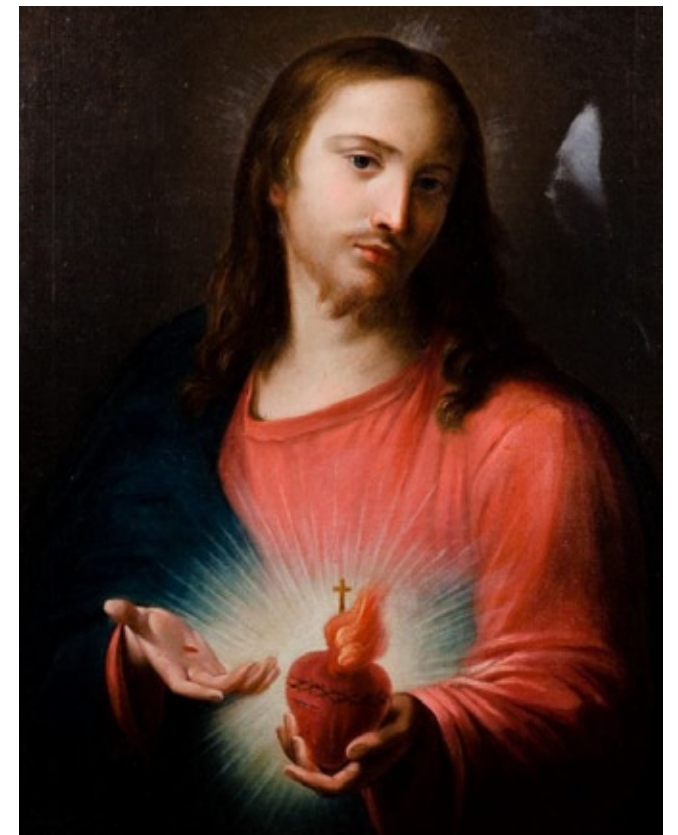
The Pope says that Christianity cannot be reduced to a theory, a philosophy, a set of moral norms, or even a set of emotions. Instead, it is the encounter with a living Person.

Understanding the way Jesus loves us and entering into a relationship with Him cannot therefore be reduced to reasoning, to cultural identity or a set of rules.

Rather, the Pope writes, it has to do with the heart: "it is a story of gestures, looks, and words. It is a story of friendship, a matter of the heart."

"I am my heart," writes the Pope, "because that is what distinguishes me, shapes me in my spiritual identity and puts me in communion with other people."

Encountering the Christian faith means encountering the heart of Christ, a



heart incapable of remaining indifferent, which by embracing us with his infinite mercy invites us to imitate him.

Consumerism

The Pope says this has social consequences, because the world, which is beset by wars, economic crises, consumerism and the anti-human use of technology,

"can change starting from the heart".

He finally urges Catholics not to be afraid to tell others about their devotion to the Sacred Heart: "Christ asks you never to be ashamed to tell others, with all due discretion and respect, about your friendship with him. He asks that you dare to tell others how good and beautiful it is that you found him."

St Brigid's musical thank-you

PARISHIONERS of St Brigid's, Toryglen, have enthusiastically welcomed the installation of a magnificent church organ generously gifted to them by a Church of Scotland congregation.

And Parish Priest Father Gerard Byrne hailed its arrival, saying: "The new organ will be a significant boost to the liturgies that are celebrated in our parish but we also intend to utilise it as part of our community life and evangelisation efforts.

"Concerts and other events offer an opportunity for us to invite others to participate in the life of St Brigid's."

His words were echoed

by organist Fraser Pearce (right) who said: "The new organ opens up opportunities for evangelisation. Our programme of concerts and workshops aims to extend St Brigid's reach as a place of welcome and encounter for those who may otherwise pass the church by.

Treasury

"Our new organ is an emblem of our desire to invite others to find their place in the divine symphony of God's plan of salvation, in time and in eternity through the riches of the treasury of Catholic sacred music."

While Father Byrne and Fraser Pearce began their search for a new organ ear-

BY **BRIAN SWANSON**

PICTURE BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

lier this summer, members of the historic Church of Scotland in Killin, a remote village community on the western edge of Loch Tay, had a different problem... they no longer had need for their 125-year-old organ and were desperate to find a new home for it.

Father Byrne said: "The Church of Scotland keeps a register of churches which have organs which are no longer required for one reason or another – often when the church is being offered for sale, although the one in Killin is still an active

church but they no longer required the organ.

"We got in touch, and they were immediately enthusiastic and more or less said 'you can come and take it away' so it was a win-win situation.

"Fraser visited the church and saw at once that the organ would be ideal for our purposes, so the next step was to have it dismantled and taken to Glasgow."

That task fell to Simshill-based Michael McDonald Organ Builders, Scotland's oldest organ building firm.

Once dismantled Michael and his son Andrew spent nearly six weeks restoring and rebuilding the instrument which was built by the well-respected firm of Ingram of Edinburgh.

Dr Phil Simpson, session clerk of Killin and Ardeonaig Parish Church of Scotland said: "Our church dates back to 1774 and when we took the decision to remove the pews and replace them with chairs to give us a more flexible space it was clear that the organ had to go.

"It had not been played for many years mainly because we couldn't find anyone to play it and since it did not fit with our plans we were des-



Young parishioners get their first look at the new instrument

perate to have it removed.

"We were absolutely delighted when St Brigid's wanted it, because the last thing we wanted was to have it scrapped, which in itself is a very expensive option."

The newly installed organ was blessed at a special Mass

and a series of concerts and recitals are planned for the coming months.

■ **The inaugural free recital, given by Andrew Forbes, director of Music at Glasgow Cathedral, will take place on 9th November at 6:30pm.**

Dreams of peace and the hell of good intentions

THE year was 1947, and the United Nations was putting on paper (in Resolution 181 (II)) the conditions of the partition of Palestine.

It all started with hope and good intentions. There were to be two states, boundaries around villages were to be respected, and women were to be allowed to vote and to be elected to the Constituent Assemblies... (was quite something as French women had only been given the right to vote in 1944!)

They say that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. As history shows, in the 77 years since October 1947 when that Resolution was circulated among the members of the shiny new organisation known as the 'United Nations', that road was a remarkably short one. Hell was reached swiftly.

And so I hope that we can mark positively the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on November 29, which the UN General Assembly brought into force in 1977. I hope we can get all world governments to agree to respect this International Day – this time not just to pay lip service, but to act to bring about the peace this whole region is entitled to.

I fear there will be more vetoes, more abstentions, even though we are every day going deeper into the hell to which that road paved with good intentions is leading us.

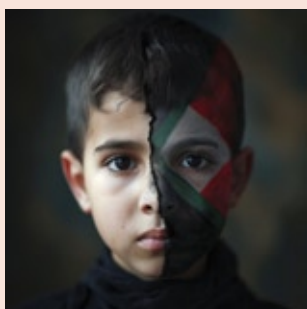
In early October, when



Marian Pallister

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

Iran was first firing missiles at Israel and Israel was putting the first boots on Lebanese soil, I was privileged to spend three days in the company not only of members of Pax Christi International's new



Catholic Institute for Non-violence but with Palestinians living their lives in the hell that their country has become.

Yes, I was online, safe in my own home. The Pax Christi International people were in Rome, where they awarded a Palestinian organisation a peace prize.

The Palestinians were also online, explaining their current dire situations from the front line. It should have been a totally distressing three days. Instead, it was uplifting and hope filled.

Of course we all shared

the anguish of our colleagues in Palestine. But these amazing people can always add a note of hope to their stories of oppression and uncertainty, death and destruction.

Those Palestinians who have generously given of their time this year to write blogs for the Pax Christi Scotland website and articles for our newsletter have all injected a small but amazing element of hope for the future.

I have been searching through my memories of reporting on conflicts around the world, and while I recall the people whose resilience was impressive, whose determination was inspiring, I don't remember those nuggets of pure unadulterated hope that so many Palestinians carry within them.

As a peace activist, I can only ask you to pray for a nonviolent world, for an end to this twisting, cruel road to hell for the innocent. Let's commit to solidarity with the Palestinian people on November 29 – and to solidarity with our Jewish and Lebanese brothers and sisters caught up in the politicking of world leaders.

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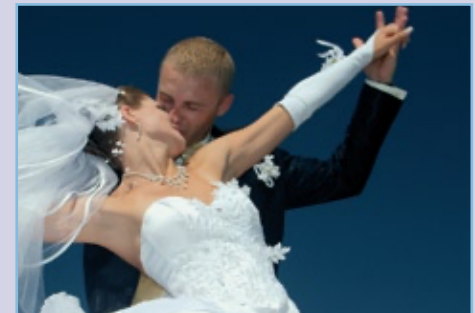


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St Ninian's 40 faith-filled years

South side school marks anniversary with thanksgiving Mass

WITH a school population of almost 2000 pupils, and regularly featuring in the top three best-performing secondaries in Scotland, St Ninian's High School in Giffnock is, by any measure, a success story.

And the school marked its anniversary with a thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Archbishop Nolan and Bishop Keenan of Paisley, recognising the school's 'border' position between the two dioceses.

In his homily Bishop Keenan said: "Like many of our Catholic schools, St Ninian's life of faith is evident in its daily liturgical life, its support of charities as well as annual pilgrimages to Rome and Salamaca and De La Salle missionary experiences in India.

"How many have worked hard to build up St Ninian's as a community of faith with discipleship of the Lord at its heart. We thank for all of them, for their generosity and sacrifices."

He went on to praise the



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

'inspired leadership' of the three head teachers who served at the school the late James McVittie, John Docherty and the present head Gerry O'Neil.

Bishop John added: "We recall the faithful service of the school's chaplains from Fathers Allan Cameron, Tom Kilbride and Frank Hannigan to Canons Jim Duggan and Stephen Baillie, as well as the input of local parish priests down the years. Nor can we forget the exemplary ministry of Monsignor Tom

Monaghan.

"The chaplains underpinned the commitment of the Senior Leadership, the dedicated work of the Religious Education Department and, indeed, the tireless efforts of parents and staff throughout the school who have given gladly of themselves to building up of

this community of faith."

Head teacher Gerry O'Neil said: "Our 40th anniversary Mass was a lovely and very fitting celebration. We were delighted that both Archbishop Nolan and Bishop Keenan were able to lead our celebration as the school serves both Dioceses.

"St Ninian's continues to

work with pupils, parents and the Church to instil Gospel values in our young people and inspire them to make the most of their God given talents.

"We were delighted to be able to celebrate the last 40 years and we look forward to the next chapter in the life of our school."



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‘Paint the Saint’ refurb boost at St Laurence’s

THIS time last year even its most loyal parishioners would be struggling to describe St Laurence’s Church, Drumchapel as anything other than drab.

But just look at it now! As this picture shows, faith, hope and charity, plus £53,000 of donations and a goodly dose of hard work freely given by volunteers has totally transformed the 70-year-old building inside and out.

Under the guidance of Jim Brown, 70, who worked on a similar volunteer-led refurbishment at St Mary’s in Duntocher where he is a parishioner, operation ‘Paint the Saint’ was launched in November last year.

Jim said: “Members of my family – my daughter and her husband and my granddaughter – go to St

BY **BRIAN SWANSON** Laurence’s and when I was there one Sunday last November looking around I thought ‘this is a poor-looking chapel.’

“It was desperately sad looking... something had to be done. Everybody no matter their religion deserves a warm comfortable place of worship.”

Jim approached parish priest Father Gerry Barnes and immediately offered his support, and with the tireless backing of parishioners an army of volunteer trades people was assembled, a JustGiving page set up, fund raising events set in motion and local business approached for donations before eight months of repairs began which required a five week closure.

Operation Paint the Saint was live.

The work carried out was formidable. This is just some of it – electrics rewired, exterior and interior painted for the first time in almost 30 years, gutters and downpipes repaired, 32 roof faults rectified, front stairs repaired and fire doors installed.

Improved

The altar and statues were painted and restored, new flooring was laid and the exterior was improved while outside overgrown trees which kept the church hidden were cut back.

Jim said: “On the day of the reopening Mass, people were actually queuing a good hour before it began – they couldn’t wait to see what had been achieved.



“Over the months I saw them experience a ‘road to Damascus’ moment which I’m convinced will empower this group of motivated parishioners to own and face up to the challenges ahead and surely encourage other

parishes to do the same.” Posting in Facebook after the reopening Mass, Father Barnes said: “It was wonderful to see so many people at Mass this morning. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the transfor-

mation whether that was via donations of money, time, skills or prayer. Without you it would not have been possible. “Here’s to many more flourishing years at Saint Laurence’s.”

Holy Name marks anniversary



THE parishes of Holy Name in Mansewood and St Mary Immaculate in Pollokshaws are holding a social event to celebrate the anniversaries of their churches: 40 years of Holy Name and 175 years of St Mary’s.

The Archbishop has already celebrated Mass for Holy Name’s anniversary (above) and will celebrate St Mary’s anniversary on Monday 9th December.

If you have roots or links to these great communities come along and give thanks

for a combined total of more than 200 years of faith and family life on Glasgow’s south side.

The joint celebration event will take place at Pollokshaws Burgh Hall on November 30 at 7pm. Tickets are available from both parishes.

News and views for
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St Francis’ appeal

ST Francis’ Care Home in Govan has launched its annual appeal for donations of toys and other gifts to bring Christmas joy to deserving children in the area.

Staff have linked up with Govan Health Centre to invite the public to select a tag from one of fifty on a Christmas tree and buy a gift for a child in need.

Stacey McGoldrick, one of the organisers, said: “We understand a gift may be outwith people’s budgets so we are also looking for any donations of items

like nappies, wipes, toiletries for kids and caregivers, if possible, to help us make up care packages the health visitors can give out too.

Clothes

“Ideally, we are looking for age-appropriate toys, warm clothes or other gifts including toiletries and blankets.

“We are asking people not to wrap these gifts because they need to be checked by health visitors for health and safety reasons. The closing date to

return the gifts is the 4th of December.”

Stacey and her colleagues are also putting the finishing touches to organising their Annual Christmas Fete with proceeds going towards residents’ funds.

It will take place on Saturday November 23 in St Saviour’s Studio, Merryland Street, between 1–4pm.

■ **To make a donation either to the Children’s Appeal or the Christmas Fair contact Stacey on 0141 445 1118.**

Synod calls for consultation and reflection to guide Church decisions

ALMOST four years of worldwide consultation, and a listening exercise open to more than a billion Catholics worldwide, came to a conclusion last month as delegates agreed to changes in how the Church functions at the Synod in Rome.

In a surprise move, the Pope announced that the final document would be published without amendment and thus becomes part of ordinary Church teaching.

Future

It should “serve as a guide,” said Pope Francis for future developments. The 51-page document agreed by delegates essentially proposed a reform in church governance, aiming for a more participatory approach.

Among other issues decided on were:

- Expanding Women's Access to Leadership Roles – “There is no reason or impediment that should prevent women from

BY RONNIE CONVERY

carrying out leadership roles in the church: what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped.”

- Instituting rules on financial transparency and abuse prevention to “promote a culture of transparency” within the church. While safeguarding “privacy and confidentiality,” the document called for a clear, fair, more consistent, and ethical management, including annual financial audits.
- The Synod requested the mandatory establishment of functional parish, diocesan, and economic councils. This “was requested at all stages of the synodal process,” the document read, urging that they be allowed to “fully play their role, and not just in a purely formal way.”
- The final document



Bishop McGee and his working group at the Rome Synod

proposed “the establishment of a church-based research centre on disability,” recognising

“the apostolic capacities of people with disabilities who feel called and sent out as active agents of

evangelisation.” Perhaps the biggest achievement of the long process has been the es-

establishment of a new and different way of acting and deciding at all levels of the Church. The so-called ‘synodal’ way involves listening, discerning, and deciding together the way forward, with less emphasis on obedience and more on participation.

Representative

Scotland’s representative at the Vatican month long final meeting was Bishop Brian McGee of Argyll and the Isles.

He said: “I feel deeply graced by the Synod experience, difficult at times but one of joy and growth. I have much to be thankful for, personally as well as for the Church.

“However we proceed as a diocese, nationally and universally, I want us to go forward together in a synodal manner – the People of God communally discerning the Lord’s will as best we can and, with grace, being determined to faithfully walk in that path.”

Pope: Learn from Mother Teresa

IN a message to mark World Day of the Poor which is marked this year in parishes on November 17, Pope Francis has urged Catholics to learn from the example of Mother Teresa.

He writes: “God knows the sufferings of his children because he is an attentive and caring father. As a father, he takes care of those who are most in need: the poor, the marginalised, the suffering and the forgotten. No one is excluded from his heart, for in his eyes, we are all poor and needy.

“We are all beggars because, without God, we would be nothing. We would not even have life if God had not given it to us. Yet how often we live as if we were the masters of life or as if we had to conquer it!

“To the poor who dwell in our cities and are part of our communities, I say: do not lose this certainty! God is attentive to each of you and is close to you. He does not forget you nor could he ever do so.

“It is beautiful to recall the testimony left to us by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a woman who gave her life for the poor. Saint Teresa continually repeated that it was



BY RONNIE CONVERY

from prayer that she drew the strength and faith for her mission of service to the least among us.

Pray

“When she spoke at the General Assembly of the UN on October 26, 1985, showing everyone the rosary she always held in her hand, she said: ‘I am only a poor sister who prays. By praying, Jesus puts his love in my heart, and I go to give it to all the poor I meet along the way. Pray too! Pray, and you will notice the poor who are beside you. Perhaps on the same floor in your apartment building. Perhaps even in your houses, someone is waiting for your love. Pray, and your eyes will

open, and your heart will fill with love’.

“As we journey towards the Holy Year... let us not forget to keep the little details of love - stopping, drawing near, giving a little attention, a smile, a caress, a word of comfort. These gestures are not automatic; they require

a daily commitment and are often hidden and silent but strengthened by prayer.

We are called in every circumstance to be friends of the poor, following in the footsteps of Jesus who always began by showing solidarity when dealing with the least among us.

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2025 Holy Year: Your questions and answers

Can I go to Rome for the Holy Year and pass through the Holy Door even if I'm not on an organised pilgrimage?

Yes! Booking slots are now available for pilgrimages to the Holy Doors of the four Papal Basilicas in Rome for the Jubilee of 2025.

The Holy Doors will be at St Peter's in the Vatican, St John Lateran's, St Mary Major's and St Paul's Outside the Walls. Pilgrims will be able to pass through the Holy Doors throughout the Jubilee year.

Registration for group pilgrimages is also now open on the Jubilee website, from the reserved area, specifying the date and time of the desired pilgrimage.

The first Holy Door to be solemnly opened will be that of St Peter's Basilica, and the opening, on December 24, 2024, will mark the official beginning of the Holy Year.

For more info go to www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/. You will need to register on the website and download a pilgrim card with QR code to access the basilica via the Holy Door.

Where can I plan my trip?

All the information you need to plan your Holy Year trip to Rome is on the Vatican's Jubilee website – www.iubilaeum2024.va

Once you reach the Eternal City the Pilgrims' Center

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

– Info Point is the main reference point for pilgrims and tourists who want to stay updated about the upcoming Jubilee Year 2025.

The office is close to St Peter's at 7 Via della Conciliazione, and is open every day, Monday to Sunday, from 10am until 5pm.

It is also a distribution point for information leaflets and flyers containing basic information about the Jubilee and three new pilgrim routes round Rome: the Seven Churches Pilgrimage, the pilgrim route of the Female Doctors of the Church and the Patrons of Europe and the Churches of Europe itinerary. A team of staff will be always available at the Info Point.

It will also distribute the 'testimonium' for pilgrims (a certificate to prove your participation in the Holy Year).

Given its strategic position on the Via della Conciliazione it will also serve as a reference point for all eventualities for both pilgrims and volunteers.

How do I know what's on? The Jubilee Calendar lists almost 30 major events being planned for the Holy Year which the Pope is expected to attend.

These are usually weekends set aside for particular groups of pilgrims... teachers, journalists, the elderly,

the sick etc.

However you can go to Rome at any time of the year as a private pilgrim and make your pilgrimage through the Holy Doors after having booked a slot in advance – see above.

Is everything happening at the Vatican?

No – during the Holy Year the whole of Rome will become one big sanctuary with special events and exhibitions all across the city.

The Holy See has designated a series of "Jubilee Churches" – these are the churches indicated as gathering points for pilgrims. In these churches various activities will take place, including sessions of catechesis in a variety of languages to help people rediscover the true meaning of the Holy Year.

These churches will also offer pilgrims the chance to receive the sacrament of reconciliation and nurture their faith through prayer. For more info click on this QR code:

■ www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/



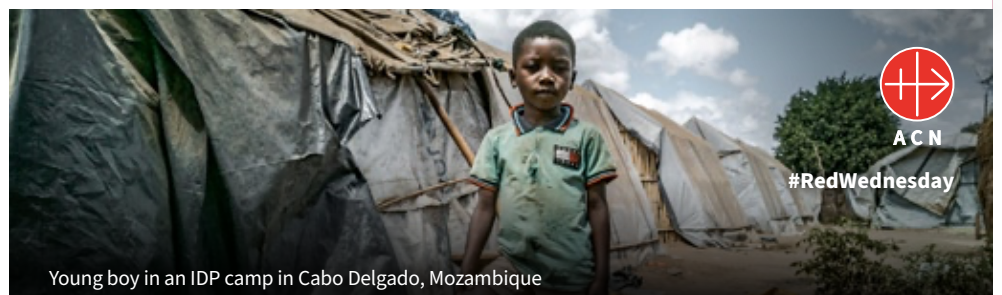
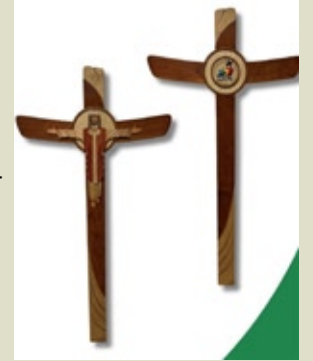
Holy Year Cross unveiled

THE official Cross of the 2025 Jubilee, the central symbol of the Holy Year pilgrimage, has been revealed.

The Cross will be handed to pilgrim group leaders to accompany them as they walk towards and through the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica. The precious cross was created by Italian master carpenter and craftsman Riccardo Izzi.

The cross, which is made of fine wood and carefully hand-crafted, features, on the front, a depiction of the glorious Christ, a sign of Hope for the world, in a time of great global crises, in which men and women cry out. On the other side of the cross is the official logo of the 2025 Jubilee, a symbol of hope for the faithful from all over the world.

Jubilee Cross 2025



Young boy in an IDP camp in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

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Jubilee Door to open in prison

ON December 26, 2024, the feast of St Stephen, Pope Francis will open a Holy Door in the Roman prison of Rebibbia, marking a historic moment in the history of Jubilee years.

It will be the first time that – in addition to the Holy Doors opened in the four Roman Papal Basilicas – one will also be opened in a penal institution too.

The announcement was made by the Pro-prefect of

the Dicastery for Evangelisation, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, who emphasised that Rebibbia should be seen as “a symbol of all the prisons in the world”.

Extraordinary

The extraordinary gesture was something the Holy Father was very keen to make, and underlines the importance and space given to caring for prisoners and their social reintegration in the Bull of Indic-

tion of the Jubilee, *Spes non Confundit*.

“During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind.

“I think of prisoners who, deprived of their freedom, daily feel the harshness of detention and its restrictions, lack of affection and, in more than a few cases, lack of respect for their persons.”

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Revisiting the Word of the Lord



Going to Mass is going to sound a bit different from the start of next month ... as parishes start using a new translation of the Bible for the readings in the liturgy.

The change is the biggest in almost 60 years, since the introduction of Mass readings in English following Vatican II.

Flourish previews what lies in store, and how the changes will improve our appreciation of the treasures of Sacred Scripture.



Cathedral Administrator, Canon David Wallace, examines the new Lectionary

What will change and when?

BY RONNIE CONVERY

From Sunday December 1, the First Sunday of Advent, the familiar words of biblical text will seem a little bit less familiar as parishes across the country use a new set of lectionaries (the book which contains the Sunday and weekday readings).

Why change now?

The texts we currently use are taken from the Jerusalem Bible which was much in vogue in the late 1960s when the first lectionaries were being published. Apart from the fact that the physical volumes are in very poor condition in many parishes, researchers have improved the translations of the bible greatly in the last 60 years.

Advances in translation and academic study, the analysis of fragments of scripture, and new historical insights mean that the texts we have been using until now are not as accurate as they could be. The new readings will reflect the latest insights and offer a truer version of the original texts.

What is different about the translations?

The current Mass readings were translated using a technique known as 'dynamic equivalence' - that means translating the sense of the original text in a way that can be easily understood by the listener. While this technique has its advantages,

it means that the precise wording of the original Hebrew or Greek text can be lost or changed to make it easier for the reader or listener.

This example may help: If an Italian sees something surprising, they are likely to exclaim, "Mamma Mia!". The words 'Mamma mia' literally mean 'My mum'. But the phrase 'my mum' does not convey the sense of surprise. It would be better conveyed (using dynamic equivalence) as "Good heavens!" or "Oh my goodness!".

This is an extreme example of the difference between translating words and translating meanings.

At the other extreme, if we focus too much on understandability, we can lose some important in-

sights of the original text ... for example the current translation of the Beatitudes - "Happy are the poor in spirit ..." has been often criticised for failing to respect the concept of 'spiritual blessedness' and giving rather an impression of 'merriment'.

The new translation avoids both extremes.

What new elements will I notice?

One big change is that over the last half century the Church has many new saints and a lot of new feast days! Feast days such as those of Padre Pio (Saint Pius of Pietrelcina), or Saints John XXIII, John Paul II and Paul VI. In Scotland we have new feasts of Our Lady of Aberdeen and All Scottish Saints... the new lection-

ary will take account of these updates to the liturgical calendar and offer readings to accompany many new feasts of the saints and Our Lady.

What will happen to the psalms we sing at Mass?

The linkage of psalms to the particular Sunday of the Year or Feast Day remains, but the translation will change. We will now use the Revised Grail Psalter, largely the work of the Benedictine monks of Conception Abbey, Missouri, USA. Its aim is to be closer to the Hebrew text and bring us the richness of the original. It is in no way dramatically different.

Which version of the Bible will now be used in the liturgy?

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:1-12

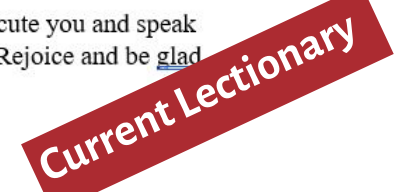
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

- 'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage.
- Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted.
- Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied.
- Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.
- Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God.
- Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God.
- Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Matthew 5:1-12a
'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

+ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time:

- Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



The Bishops have opted for the Catholic Edition of the English Standard Version (ESV - CE) and this has been approved by the Vatican. Its paramount aim is to render the inspired biblical text - "the word of God" - in a faithful way, respecting the unique character of biblical language, avoiding paraphrase. At the same time, it aims to speak a dignified, contemporary and accessible English.

Bishop Hugh Gilbert, who heads the Liturgy Commission in Scotland puts it like this: "It is inclusive where appropriate without making a dis-

tracting 'thing' of inclusive language. It is markedly more inclusive than what we have at present! "No translation is perfect, nor can any translation appeal to everyone, but the ESV - CE succeeds, I believe, in conveying a sense of the divine inspiration of Scripture. We will sense we are listening to the voice of God. It will, generally, 'proclaim' well and chime well with the language of the Liturgy."

Will I need a new Missal?

If you use a Sunday missal with scripture readings then you will be

able to buy a new missal to use at Mass. CTS has produced People's Missals retailing at £19.95 with all the new Sunday texts a devotional section and the Order of Mass in English and Latin. See www.ctsbooks.org/product/sunday-missal/

In what spirit should I listen to the readings in their new form?

Bishop Gilbert addresses the issues we are likely to face in coming months: "It would be a mistake, I think, to become too absorbed in the details of the differences we will hear, or in arguments about the

pros and cons. No change is without jolts and challenges. My own hope, though, is that this new Lectionary - the books, by the way, are beautifully produced - will enhance our celebration of that integral element of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word.

"There the living Christ speaks to us as a community and as individuals. And through and beyond that, that we may 'learn the heart of God in the words of God' and become Christians steeped in and shaped by God's holy Word - as the Church so longs us to be.

You can find out more about the new lectionary by watching this talk by Fr Paul Denney of St James in Coatbridge. Scan the QR code or visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjCcYGDC5Mk



Talking about reading

FROM the first Sunday of Advent 2024, churches in Scotland, England and Wales will begin to use a revised lectionary.

We have been accustomed to the Jerusalem bible for many years and the revised translation uses the English Standard Version (Catholic Edition).

In order to prepare parish readers for this change, information meetings have been arranged across the Archdiocese for prayer and reflection:

- ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL:** Wednesday 13th November, 6pm.
- SACRED HEART, CUMBERNAULD:** Tuesday 19th November, 7pm.
- ST STEPHEN'S, DALMUIR:** Wednesday 20th November, 7pm.
- ST JOSEPH'S, TOLLCROSS:** Thursday 21st November, 7pm

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Pope names new cardinals from the ends of the earth

POPE Francis' determination to open up the College of Cardinals to the 'peripheries of the world' continued this weekend as he creates a new batch of future Papal electors at a ceremony in Rome.

The ceremony will fall before the opening of the 2025 Holy Year and after the conclusion of the recent Synod in the Vatican.

Pope Francis' last consistory to create new Cardinals took place on 30 September 2023.

The Holy Father pointed out that the Cardinal-elects hail from around the world. "Their origins," he said, "expresses the universality of the Church, which continues to proclaim God's merciful love to all people on earth. Their inclusion in the Diocese of Rome also manifests the inseparable bond between the See of Peter and the particular Churches spread throughout the world."

With the upcoming Consistory, according to today's data, the College of Cardinals will enlarge to 254 Cardinals, 140 of whom will be electors at a future conclave.



BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Among the new pick are some interesting characters:

The first named is the oldest man ever to be given the red hat – Angelo Acerbi, the 99 year old Italian who has worked across the globe in Vatican diplomacy.

Among the others there were surprising choices, including English Dominican Timothy Radcliffe who is one of the Pope's favourite theologians and Monsignor George Koovakad, a young Indian priest who organizes Papal visits.

Once more the Pope's list omitted an array of church-

men who would traditionally always have been made Cardinals, including the Archbishops of Milan (the world's largest diocese), Paris, Los Angeles, Venice and Florence.

One man, named by the Pope to receive the red hat, a 62-year-old bishop from Indonesia, refused the cardinalate, "motivated by his desire to grow further in his priestly life, in his service to the Church and to the people of God."

He was replaced by the Archbishop of Naples, Domenico Battaglia – a popular churchman known as "Don Mimmo".

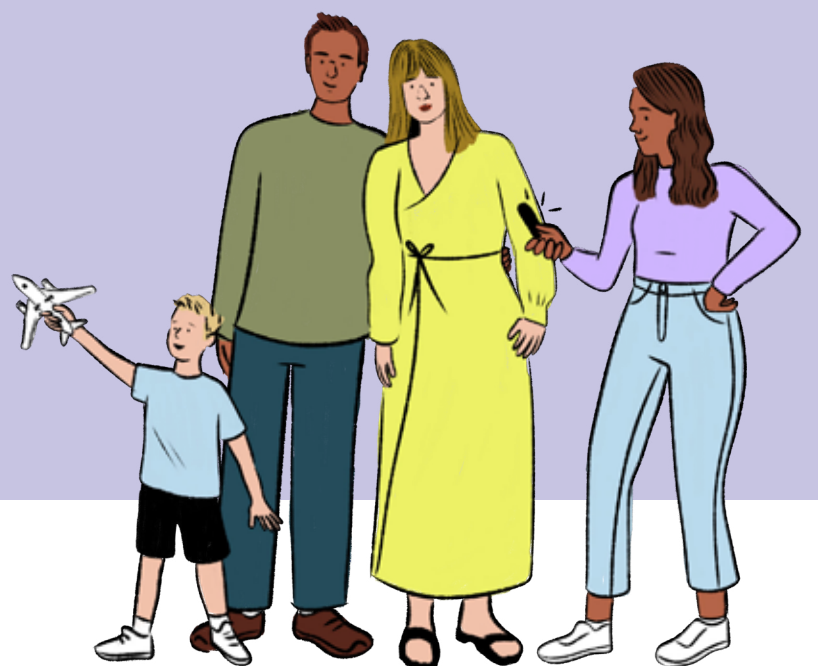
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World Youth Day to be held in parishes

IN 2021, Pope Francis designated the Solemnity of Christ the King as the annual 'Global Celebration of Youth and Young Adults'.

This year, as we gather to celebrate, let us especially pray for our young people. May they encounter Christ in a transformative way through the sacraments, the Word of God, and the love of our parish communities as they journey with hope toward the future.

In July 2023, two million young Catholics came together with Pope Francis in Lisbon for World Youth Day – a powerful reminder of the vibrant faith alive in young Catholics worldwide. Here in Scotland, we're seeing a similar enthusiasm with the

BY MAIRI-CLAIRE O'DONNELL
ARCHDIOCESAN YOUTH OFFICE

growth of youth and young adult groups in our parishes – a true time of hope and renewal!

Pope Francis' theme for this year's celebration is: "Those who hope in the Lord will run and not be weary" (Is 40:31). We're called to embrace this hope, trusting that Christ will renew our strength as we move forward in faith.

To help your parish community and pastoral area celebrate and connect with youth and young adults on this special day, RCAG Youth has put together a Parish Guide for the Solemnity of Christ the King 2024. This

guide is filled with resources to help you plan beautiful liturgies, young people focused events, and community engagement celebrations centred around the theme.

We invite all parishes to share their stories and photos of their celebrations with us. Let's inspire one another!

Tag us on social media (@rcagyouth) or email your stories (youth@rcag.org.uk). Together, let us continue to walk with and build a vibrant community of young disciples across our Archdiocese, working collaboratively in shared responsibility and evangelisation as we celebrate this special day of faith and renewal.

■ The parish pack can be found at tinyurl.com/rcagwyd2024 or by scanning this QR code:



www.franciscanvocations.org.uk

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Tricia is named to top Lourdes role

LOURDES pilgrimage charity HCPT has announced Glasgow's own Tricia Macfarlane as its new Chief Executive.

Tricia joins HCPT from Impact Funding Partners, a Scottish fund management charity, where she was Chief Executive.

She has held leadership roles in Scottish and UK national charities for 16 years and is an experienced trustee of national and grassroots organisations.

In recent years she has worked hard to establish an outreach programme for women who have experienced divorce or separation in the Archdiocese of Glasgow, and which has recently moved to a new base



at Immaculate Conception, Maryhill.

Chair of HCPT, Emma Derby, said "I'm delighted that Tricia is joining HCPT in the run up to our 70th anniversary in 2026. Tricia will build on our successes to date and will develop the organisation further in order to continue to deliver our mission to enable those who

may need help to experience the joy and friendship of pilgrimage".

Tricia, who is a parishioner of St Patrick's Dumbarton, said: "It is the greatest privilege of my career to have been appointed to lead HCPT and further the mission and impact of the organisation.

"Times are tough for all charities and there's a big job ahead, but under the spiritual patronage of Our Blessed Lady and St Bernadette, coupled with partnering with the charity's staff, Board of Trustees, incredible volunteer networks and supporters, we will work together to continue to build an exciting future for HCPT."



Cumbernauld parish hits 60 with a new lease of life

To mark the 60th anniversary of Sacred Heart Church in Cumbernauld a series of celebrations were held. At the anniversary Mass, Fr John Campbell preached the following homily:

I have always been of the opinion that when a church is paid off, we should knock it down and rebuild. My own best experience of being parish is when we were building our church, at home. The aim of getting our own church united everyone in activity, in fundraising, in being inventive and novel to raise enough to raise a building to the honour and glory of God and for the sanctification of God's people.

The object of the exercise, the focus shared by everyone was to build our new church.

It would have been the same here from 1958 when Father Reilly arrived, and in 1960 when Father Jaconelli

arrived, until the church was built in 1964. Those six years would have been a great time in the life of our parish, everyone working towards the goal of having our own new church.

And here we are sixty years later.

Splendid

We have our splendid church – a grade A listed building. Church, hall and house – a place for a priest, a place for socialisation, education and formation and a church for prayer, for celebrations, for the baptism of new Christians, the feeding of our souls in Holy Communion, the joining in marriage of our young people, the burial of our dead, and lots more beside. And we are thankful!

We know the Church is not a building, it's us, the people. But the people need a place to gather, to pray, to unite and cel-

brate.

This building is here because of the investment of former and present parishioners, who gave generously and worked hard to raise up this building so that our minds and hearts may be raised to the glory of God.

We are the guardians of this parish now. It has been handed on to us.

It's up to us now, in our own time, to raise up not a building but a church, a lively parish, that will have as its focus and goal the evangelisation of ourselves and the growing of our parish by attracting others to the faith, through our welcome in here and our district and Christian way of living out there.

Attraction is the most effective instrument in the toolbox of evangelisation. It's our challenge now to use this building to build the Church.

Prisoners' Week

A PLEA has gone out to parishes throughout the country to offer prayers and practical support for prisoners and their families leading up to the launch later this month of Prisoners Week.

BY **BRIAN SWANSON** One of the organisers is Deacon Kenny McGeachie from Sacred Heart, Cumbernauld, a prison chaplain, and National Roman Catholic Chaplaincy Advisor.

He said: "Some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Scotland are found behind prison bars.

"Many have faced poverty, social exclusion, addictions, some are refugees, people who have been bullied or abused, some without functioning families, lacking education, people in housing crisis. The list goes on...

"We are called to remember and pray for people in prison, echoing the way of life Jesus commends when He says, 'I was in prison and you came to visit me'. And we are challenged to 'remember those in prison as if you were together with them' (Hebrews 13:3).

"Praying for people in prison demonstrates our concern for their wellbeing and acknowledges their inherent dignity. And it is good for them to know they are in our thoughts and prayers".

This year the week runs from Sunday 17 November to Saturday 23 November and the theme is 'Hear my Voice'.

A number of events are planned, and details can be found here at: www.prisonersweek.org.uk

■ **There are ways you can become involved in supporting people in prison or on release. Contact Kenneth.mcgeachie@prisons.gov.scot for more information.**

O'HARE



10th Anniversary

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Gertrude and Gift, Zambia 





Hellfire sermons have had their day

WHY don't we preach hellfire anymore? That's a question asked frequently by a lot of sincere religious people who worry that too many churches, priests, and ministers have gone soft on sin and are over-generous in speaking about God's mercy.

The belief here is that more people would come to church and obey the commandments if we preached the raw truth about mortal sin, God's wrath, and the danger of going to hell when we die.

The truth will set you free, these folks assert, and the truth is that there is real sin and there can be real and eternal consequences for sin. The gate to heaven is narrow and the road to hell is wide. So why aren't we preaching more about the dangers of hellfire?

What's valid in this kind of reasoning is that preaching about mortal sin and hellfire can be effective. Threats work. I know. I grew up subjected to this kind of preaching and admit that it affected my behavior.

But that effect was ambivalent: On the one side, it left me scared enough before God and life itself to fear ever straying very far morally or religiously. On the other side, it also left me religiously and emotionally crippled in some deep ways.

Simply stated, it's hard to be intimate friends with a God who frightens you



Scribblings of the spirit

Flourish's regular columnist, Fr Ronald Rolheiser offers practical insights each month into the life of faith



and it's not good religiously or otherwise to be overly timid and afraid before life's sacred energies. Fear of divine punishment and fear of hellfire, admittedly, can be effective as a motivator.

So why not preach fear? Because it's wrong, pure and simple. Brainwashing and physical intimidation are also effective, but they are antithetical to love. You don't enter a love relationship because you feel afraid or threatened. You enter a love relationship because you feel drawn there by love. More importantly, preaching divine threat dishonours the God in whom we believe.

The God who Jesus incar-

nates and reveals is not a God who puts sincere, good-hearted people into hell against their will on the basis of some human or moral lapse which in our religious categories we deem to be a mortal sin. For example, I still hear this threat being preached in our churches: If you miss going to church on Sunday it's a mortal sin and should you die without confessing it, you will go to hell.

What kind of God would underwrite this kind of a belief? What kind of God would not give sincere people a second chance, a third one, and seventy-seven times seven more chances if they remain sincere?

What kind of God would

say to a repentant person in hell: "Sorry, but you knew the rules! You're repentant now, but it's too late. You had your chance!"

A healthy theology of God demands that we stop teaching that hell can be a nasty surprise waiting for an essentially good person. The God we believe in as Christians is infinite understanding, infinite compassion, and infinite forgiveness.

Fear

God's love surpasses our own and if we, in our better moments, can see the goodness of a human heart despite its lapses and weaknesses, how much more so will God see this. We have nothing to fear from God.

Or have we? Doesn't scripture tell us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom? How does that square with not being afraid of God?

There are different kinds of fear, some healthy and some not. When scripture tells us that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, the kind fear it is talking about is not contingent upon feeling threatened or feeling anxious about being

punished. That's the kind of fear we feel before tyrants and bullies.

There is however a healthy fear that's innate within the dynamics of love itself. This kind of fear is essentially proper reverence, that is, when we genuinely love someone we will fear betraying that love, fear being selfish, fear being boorish, and fear being disrespectful in that relationship. We will fear violating the sacred space within which intimacy occurs. Metaphorically we will sense we are standing on holy ground and that we'd best have our shoes off before that sacred fire.

Moreover, scripture tells us that when God appears in our lives, almost always, the first words we will hear are: "Don't be afraid!"

That's because God is not a judgmental tyrant but a loving, creative, joy-filled energy and person. As Leon Bloy reminds us, joy is the most infallible indication of God's presence.

The famous psychiatrist, Fritz Perls, was once asked by a young fundamentalist: "Have you been saved?" His answer: "Saved? I'm still trying to figure out how to be spent!" We honour God not by living in fear lest we offend him, but in reverently spending the wonderful energy that God gives us. God is not a law to be obeyed, but a joyous energy within which to spend ourselves generatively.

OASIS

Nourish your soul with our monthly spirituality supplement

Bouncing back ... the secret of a happy marriage

TAKE a pretty sanguine approach to the passing of the years. It works fine until I look in the mirror.

I can troop out endless cliches. A face without wrinkles is a life without laughter; it beats the alternative; you're only as old as you feel...

Himself sticks with his preferred "age is only a number," quickly followed by "after your name on the charge sheet." I'm assured that's a joke and not a memory from his own personal experience.

Along with the passing of the years are the big markers of the life. The big birthdays and the anniversaries. Last month we notched up 40 years of married life.

It's just as well I don't worry about bad omens. We celebrated our anniversary by retracing our steps from that glorious autumn day. It was a short tour.



Mary's musings

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

The reception hotel was reduced to a burnt-out shell and the hotel where we spent our wedding night had recently been demolished after a series of fires.

St Margaret's, Ayr where I received all my sacraments and from where my parents were buried will always be close to my heart. In the years since our wedding the church has been elevated to a cathedral so on balance that was one definite win!

In even better news, despite three churches now bring served from the parish by just one priest, we were thrilled to find out Mass was being celebrated

on the anniversary day. A wee visit to my mum and dad's resting place and the tour was complete.

As well as a tour of the physical landscape of our wedding day I took some time for a retrospective of the last 40 years. What a wild ride it's been.

A bunch of children; four weddings in five years, two of which were smack bang in the middle of the pandemic. Grandchildren every year bar one since 2016, and in one case, two in one year.

Along with those high-points, inevitably there were lows, and mostly just

the everyday minutiae of family life. Trips to casualty, exam results, driving tests and a washing machine that hardly stopped long enough to be refilled.

Most of the moments that seemed like disaster at the time soon passed into family folklore.

Like the time we arrived home to find burglars making a fast exit with my beloved grandmother's jewellery. While I was sobbing quietly into the brandy Himself had poured me as he gave the details to the police it became apparent that we had a bigger problem to deal with.

The bad boys, as they quickly became known, had made off with the TV and the DVD player. All four children were found staring, shocked and speechless, at an empty corner of the living room.

Then there was the Friday evening when the golden

boy and his pal got set upon by four older teenage boys on the way home from school. It was serious enough to require hours at the police station as statements were taken and a day at the sheriff court.

If our boy was shaken he hid it well. By the time Monday rolled around he couldn't get in to school quickly enough to tell his pals he'd battered the thugs senseless.

So as a long-married woman here's my sage advice to any young couple embarking on the adventure of married life. It comes from a birthday card which now sits on my desk.

"It's not about how high you climb or how far you travel. It's about how well you bounce."

'Bounceability', I'd say that's something I've learned over the last 40 years.

Pope's advice to priests hearing confessions... 'Always forgive!'



“ALWAYS forgive everything, because we are here to forgive ... let the others argue!”

With these words Pope Francis addressed the Franciscan priests who hear confessions in St Peter's Basilica ahead of the expected surge in requests for confession during the 2025 Jubilee Year.

Drawing from the example of St Peter, who learned humility through seeking forgiveness, he invited the Franciscan confessors to view themselves as “penitents” first, always seeking God's mercy.

Pope Francis then highlighted the importance of ‘active and empathetic listening’, especially to the young and vulnerable, warning that a confessor is not a psychologist.

BY RONNIE CONVERY

“The less you talk, the better,” he said. “Just listen, console and forgive.”

The Pope urged the confessors to approach each person's words as a gift from God, which not only helps in guiding others but also aids in their own personal conversion.

“Listening is not just hearing what people say, but first of all receiving their words as a gift from God for one's own conversion, docilely, like clay in the hands of the potter in their own personal conversion.”

Finally, Pope Francis urged the confessors to be merciful, compassionate, and gentle toward the penitent, recognizing that those

seeking confession are already humbled by their sins.

“As dispensers of God's forgiveness, it is important to be ‘men of mercy,’ radiant, generous, ready to understand and console, in words and attitudes,” he stressed, drawing from the words of the Capuchin Saint Leopold Mandic, a contemporary of Padre Pio known for being merciful and generous with his penances.

“The confessor must be close, merciful and compassionate” like God, Pope Francis insisted, citing the example of another Capuchin friar, Luis Pascual Dri, whom he made Cardinal in 2023, and whom he has often pointed to as an icon of what a confessor ought to be.

ART OF THE MONTH



What a classic painting can teach us about this month's Catholic Education Week

OUR painting, chosen to mark Catholic Education Week which occurs this month, is “St Anne Teaching the Virgin to Read” by Juan de Carreño de Miranda, a 17th-century Spanish painter who combines delicate emotion with religious themes.

BY MGR TOM MONAGHAN

This intimate portrayal shows St Anne instructing a young Mary, emphasising the value of education and devotion. The colours are soft and gentle and help to highlight the tenderness in the relationship between mother and daughter.

Reflection

The moment of calm reflection feels timeless and many a parent might recall times spent helping their children with their homework. The nurturing of faith, intellect, and values in the heart of a family should also be the virtues central to Catholic schools, where learning extends beyond academ-

ics to embrace spiritual growth, moral integrity, and service.

Catholic education is unique because it integrates faith into every facet of learning, helping students see the world through the lens of Gospel values.

Like St Anne teaching Mary, Catholic educators guide students in their understanding of God and His creation. Through daily prayer, sacraments, and reflections on Scripture, Catholic schools nurture a deep and personal faith.

The image of St Anne and Mary symbolises the sacred and the intellectual working hand in hand to shape the whole person.

In today's ever-evolving society, Catholic education remains a beacon of light, nurturing future generations in faith, intellect, and love.

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Loving and Faithful Father, as we celebrate Catholic Education Week, we turn to the example of St Anne and her daughter, the Virgin Mary.

As St Anne held the Scriptures with gentle hands and loving heart, helping Mary to know Your Word, may we, too, nurture our young minds with the wisdom of Your teachings.

Bless our schools that they may be places of truth and love, where learning becomes an act of devotion, and each child, a cherished disciple, ready to hear Your call.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, who grew in wisdom and favour under Mary's care and who lives and reigns with You, forever and ever. Amen.

Let the new translation of the Sunday Gospels help us to listen more attentively to God's word

NOVEMBER brings us to the end of our liturgical year and our journey through Mark's Gospel.

He has brought us the bustle of Jesus' healings, the growing threat from the leaders, the enthusiasm – and the misunderstandings – of the Twelve and now we reach the very cusp of the Passion story and the final days of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem.

We have been touched by the determination of people to come close to him and challenged to hear his teaching and live by it.

This year, November also marks the end of an era in our liturgy. By December, we will no longer be using the "Jerusalem Bible" texts we have become so used to over the past 40 years or more and will begin to hear a newer, richer translation of the texts. More on that later. For now, let's look at the readings we have...



Fr Tom Kilbride

Rector of the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain

Thirty-Second Sunday B

This week we are presented with the third of three figures whom Mark presents as examples of what Jesus has been teaching (contrast that with the three times the Twelve seem to fail to understand!).

First Bartimaeus had faith in God's mercy, then last week the scribe had understanding of the command to love and now this week an anonymous widow gives "her whole life" in generosity. She seeks no return

or reward but gives quietly and generously of what little she has.

If anyone in the Gospel can be said to reflect the sacrifice, love and generosity of Jesus, it is this poor, unassuming, devout widow. If we are reading Mark's Gospel as a whole, we will know that this is the last episode in Jesus' ministry before the story of his passion and death begins.

In some ways, she brings his teaching to a kind of climax: this is what following Jesus' way should look like. A widow's two little coins sum up everything he has been teaching: "she has given all she had to live on".

Thirty-Third Sunday B

Today, we hear for the last time from Mark, whose Gospel has been our guide this year. Jesus takes up the tradition of the Old Testament prophets, foretelling the "Day of the Lord". For them, the Day is one of judgement, in which God will destroy the unfaithful and save the just.

Here, however, Jesus both announces the coming Day and says he will be the one to come to "gather his chosen". In fact, there's less judgement and more salvation in his message, less upheaval and more hope.

Throughout the Gospel of Mark, "the Son of Man" is the one who has come to

give his life, who will suffer and die for us, the one who comes "to serve and not to be served". Now we hear that this path does not end in suffering: the end is glory. The Son of Man who will suffer is the same Son of Man who will come in glory to bring salvation for his own.

Christ the King B

Mark never calls Jesus a "king" (even though he preaches the Kingdom of God). John, whom we hear from today, does let Jesus be called a king, but only when we reach the Passion chapters.

Jesus avoided being "made a king" after he fed the crowds, but now it is repeated over and over. His kingdom is "not of this world", however, even though Pilate will fix this title above him on the Cross: "King of the Jews".

It is as though John, like Mark, wants us to know the kind of king Jesus is: a king who rules from the throne of the Cross, a crucified King who gives himself for the world's salvation. Jesus is raised up on the Cross and for ever as King of Love. Jesus spoke of coming in glory (quoting today's First Reading), but first he must suffer and give his life as a ransom for many.

First Sunday of Advent, Year C

The First Sunday of Advent this year marks a change as we begin using a "new" Lectionary. In fact, the readings remain the same as always: what changes is the translation, the English version of the texts, and it might take a little getting used to.

A few things to look out for: firstly, the very first word of the First Reading



goes from "See" to "Behold", a sign that this translation might be a little more formal, a little more "classical" and perhaps a little more "liturgical" than before (think of the change at Mass: "Behold the Lamb of God").

Familiar

Beyond that, though, it will sound reasonably familiar. Second, we will hear a slightly different version of the Psalm – we might need to listen to the response a little more closely! The new wording of the Psalms is an updated version of the "Grail" translation from the 1960s, produced by monks of the same abbey.

Lastly, the text from the Gospel of Luke – with Jesus' prediction of the last days – sounds a little less alarming. There's nothing of "men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world" but, rather, "people fainting with fear" as they await "what is coming on the world".

And what is "coming"? It is Jesus – not a "menace" or a looming threat, but our source of hope and redemption (notice the more formal language at the end too). Maybe it makes it clearer that "fear" here isn't terror at some impending disaster, as in some Hollywood movie, but the fear that we might not be able to stand in judgement before Jesus when he comes. The Gospel is about repentance, faith and right living, after all, and that's where the real drama lies.

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Technology and tales of family, faith and football

As you may have gleaned from previous logs, I am very much an analogue man in a digital age.

I am not comfortable with technology and, whenever I do attain some level of comfort, it all changes. Give me pen and paper any day – or even a quill, an ink-well and parchment.

Last month, however, I had to go to Carfin Grotto for the AGM of the Conference of Religious in Scotland. Having had a number of previous experiences of getting lost on the way to Carfin, using an AA route planner, and never seeming to learn from those experiences, I decided that this



Fr Frank's log

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

time I would try my hand, for the very first time, with Google Maps.

I thought I would have to download it, but then realised it had been on my phone all along. It surprised me how easy it was to access the app, enter my destination, and then get started on

receiving directions.

I had left in good time, with the presumption that I would get lost, and so, off I set from Bishopbriggs to Carfin on a crisp autumnal morning, which would have been beautiful except for the sun blinding me most of the way. I followed the voice on

the app as best I could and, apart from the bamboozling Chapelhall Junction, which seemed to confuse even Google maps, I hardly got lost at all, and ended up at my destination too early.

I wasn't too concerned about arriving early, because I always enjoy a walk around the shrine area; the sheer variety of saints and blessed who are represented; the various shrines to Our Lady and, at that time of the morning, the Blessed Sacrament was also exposed for adoration in the Glass Chapel, so the time passed easily and prayerfully.

The morning session is usually given over to a guest speaker. On this occasion the intended guest speaker had called off because he got sudden word of an appointment for a knee replacement that he had been anticipating for some time, and he didn't, understandably, want to lose his slot.

He was replaced by Fr Tom

Magill from the Diocese of Motherwell who, anticipating the second session of the Synod on Synodality, led a session entitled "Conversation in the Spirit: First Fruits of the Synod".

It was very good and initiated some good table discussions, using the synodal method of listening in the Spirit.

Last Sunday, driving back to Bishopbriggs from my younger brother's house in Drumchapel, I turned on BBC Radio Scotland for *Off the Ball*, a programme I really enjoy, hosted by Tam Cowan and Stuart Cosgrove.

I was surprised to discover that their special guest that day was Hugh Keevins, my older brother, doyen of Scottish sports journalists. As Hugh is more associated with a rival programme on a rival station (Superscoreboard on Radio Clyde) I wondered what was going on.

I knew that Stuart and

Tam had been very supportive of Hugh's fundraising ventures for autism, because of his two autistic grandchildren, and such associations outstrip any rivalries. As it turned out, however, Hugh was guesting because of a book coming out in collaboration with the former Celtic great, Murdo McLeod, called *Murdo! Murdo!* – based on the chant that used to come from the terraces at Parkhead.

Murdo's health hasn't been the best in recent years, and this is his autobiography. I know Hugh felt privileged to be asked to collaborate in the writing of it, based on a very long-standing friendship between the two of them and their families.

With Stuart and Tam, the conversation ranged over many topics, not just football, but music, family, and life in general. It was very enjoyable. I wonder what my chances are of a free, signed, copy of the book?

Mgr Henry was a legend at home and in Rome

ONE of the city of Glasgow's most distinguished priests has died just short of his 94th birthday.

Yet despite being a Glaswegian by birth and by culture, Monsignor Henry Docherty was, for 69 years, a priest of Motherwell Diocese.

His vocation was born at a time of vocational plenty. When he applied for seminary for the Archdiocese of Glasgow, he was sent away by the then-Archbishop and told to 'come back next year' as there were already more than enough seminarians.

He applied to the newly-erected Diocese of Motherwell and was accepted as a seminarian for that Diocese, one of the first, and sent to the Pontifical Scots College in Rome to train. He was ordained in Rome, at the magnificent Basilica of the 12 Apostles on July 10 1955. That link with the Eternal City was never to be broken.

His almost 70 years of priesthood were highly unusual insofar as he never served as a Parish Priest.

After a series of short appointments as a curate in Lanarkshire he was named Chaplain to the old Notre Dame teacher training college in Bearsden in 1970. There he lectured and provided pastoral care to a generation of teachers.

His life took in an unexpected turn when, in 1979, he was sent to Rome, to work in the once-feared Holy Office – the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. His role was as an official in the Doctrine Section and Head of Protocol.

For most of those years his boss was a certain Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, who went



BY **RONNIE CONVERY** on to become Pope Benedict XVI following the death of St John Paul II.

The bond between the men was genuine. Both were rather shy gentlemen, both churchmen to their core, and both devoted to the faith. When Ratzinger became Pope there was no happier soul than Monsignor Henry. In 2010, when Pope Benedict visited Glasgow there was a lovely moment captured on camera when the two met just before the Papal Mass.

Memories

After his Roman travails, Henry returned to Scotland, and, largely at the recommendation of Cardinal Tom Winning, he was named the first General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland. The Cardinal had fond memories of Henry from his time as a student in Rome, and rather improbably, referred to him as 'Scoop'.

The nickname apparently arose from a football match played by Scots College students in Rome around 1950, when the young Henry had missed an open goal by 'scooping' the ball over the bar. When the Cardinal was around, he was never al-

lowed to forget it!

As General Secretary he was hugely efficient, self-effacing, loyal, and accommodating. He took up residence in Airdrie in a presbytery and that house became the HQ of the Bishops' Conference. The arrangement was unique to say the least as Henry would have to squeeze past filing cabinets and boxes of material to move between his kitchen and bedroom!

He was honoured by the Vatican with the highest distinction available to priests who are not bishops when he was named by Benedict XVI as Protonotary Apostolic – a rarely bestowed honour which gave him the unusual distinction of being allowed to wear a mitre (though he very rarely used it).

The mitre to which he was entitled was placed on his coffin along with the Book of the Gospels which he preached so faithfully and the cross which marked his later life when illness meant he was no longer able to do all he would have wished.

In retirement he lived in Cardonald, close to his original roots. He was a well-kept face in the area and was particularly welcome at the local trattoria, Bella Vita, where the owner, Mimmo Rossi, welcomed him daily, fed him, and chatted in Italian to him.

Monsignor Henry continued to help out in parishes and pursued a personal apostolate promoting devotion to Padre Pio – he had served Mass for the stigmatic Capuchin in Pietrelcina while a student in Rome, and died on September 22 – the vigil of Saint Pius of Pietrelcina.

Requiescat in pace.

Fr Billy spread the joy of the Gospel

THE death occurred last month of Fr William (Billy) Donnelly. Fr Billy died on October 17 at St Francis' Nursing Home where he had been resident.

Fr Billy was born in August 1940 and after schooling at Lourdes Primary, Cardonald and St Aloysius College he trained for the priesthood at St Peter's in Cardross. He was ordained a priest by Archbishop Scanlan in 1965.

His priesthood spanned the difficult years of the post-Vatican II tensions within the Church. Ordained to celebrate the Tridentine Mass (in Latin), within a few years Fr Billy was expected to adapt to the new liturgy which was one of the first fruits of the council.

His instinct was always to put the people first and so the prospect of a more accessible form of liturgy sat well with him.

He had a myriad of postings in his priestly life, and his smile, openness to help, and affability were much appreciated by parishioners across the Archdiocese:

1965–1967: Assistant Priest St Gregory's Wyndford; 1967–1971: Assistant Priest St Joseph's Faifley; 1971–1972: Catholic Radio & TV Centre, Hatch End; 1972–1981: Assistant Priest Holy Cross Croy; 1975–1990: Chaplain St Maurice's High School; 1981–



BY **RONNIE CONVERY** 1990: Assistant Priest Our Lady and St Helen's, Condorrat; 1990–1995: Parish Priest Our Lady and St Helen's Condorrat; 1995–2013: Parish Priest St Andrew's Bearsden. In 2013 he retired from parish ministry.

Friendly

It was in these latter roles in Condorrat and Bearsden that he will be best remembered. As Parish Priest he was able to create the kind of friendly, welcoming parish he had always seen as the ideal, and his capacity to share decision-making and responsibility with lay people was ahead of its time.

A sign of the affection in which he was held was the avalanche of tributes which appeared on the Archdiocesan Facebook page from people who had known him over his 59 years of priesthood. They revealed a much-loved

and well-rounded character who left his mark on parishioners. In the first three days alone after his death was announced almost 1000 tributes had been left.

Several spoke of his friendship and support to altar servers, some referred to his devotion to the sick. Some spoke of his willingness to put himself out even to help parishioners of former parishes while others recalled his great faithfulness at visiting schools.

From the USA, former TV news anchor David Kerr wrote: "Lovely man. Faithful priest. A very gentle, cheerful and encouraging presence throughout our youth in Condorrat."

Also from the States his cousins wrote: "Our American family will forever cherish the love, faith, and guidance you shared with us all. As a devoted priest, you dedicated your life to serving others, and your wisdom and compassion left an indelible mark on everyone who knew you. Your absence will be deeply felt, but the light of your faith and the example you set will continue to inspire us."

His funeral was held in his home parish, Our Lady and Saint George's, on Thursday 31st October with burial thereafter at Saint Conval's Cemetery, Barrhead.

Requiescat in pace.

SCIAF Bishop's plea: 'Let's give the simple gift of fresh water to those in such need'

WATER – it's not something we are short of here in Scotland and it allows Glasgow to live up to its name of the 'dear green place'.

We take it for granted. We can reach for the tap whenever we want – we can bathe, wash our cars and safely cook our food.

In Zambia things aren't quite so simple. Water is life but can never be taken for granted.

As I told you all last month, I was recently visiting a SCIAF project in Zambia and it was great to see the impact of our Church, through SCIAF, on our sisters and brothers overseas – whilst still recognising, of course, the great need that remains.

During my visit, I saw just how precious the gift of water is. It is truly life-giving and brings to light why Jesus compares his 'Living Water' to that of clean water here on earth.

BY BISHOP BRIAN MCGEE
BISHOP PRESIDENT OF SCIAF

Access to clean water is not only helping thousands of people quench their thirst. It provides the ability to grow food, to eat, and to sell items at market. Families are more able to control their futures by sending their children to school, earning more money and putting food on the table.

During the visit I met Jespa who said: "One morning I woke, and the well was dry". Later, I met with a community who now have access to a water pump, supported by SCIAF. They are thriving. Water pumps like this one bring water from deep inside the earth, providing hope even when drought strikes.

It is right that the Catholic Church here in Scotland reaches out to those most in need. And there are lots of ways we can continue to

provide hope and love, especially through the gift of clean water.

Every year, SCIAF sells Real Gifts, giving supporters the chance to buy meaningful Christmas presents for their loved ones. Every 'Real Gift' purchased goes to support those most in need, in communities around the world.

Many worthy requests will come your way at this time of the year, but I ask that you, and maybe your fellow parishioners, consider giving the Real Gift of Water this Advent.

By coming together as a parish, you can provide access to a safe, local water source, bringing hope, health, and happiness for families who previously had to travel long distances or rely on unsafe water.

Please remember the people of Zambia in your prayers this Advent.

Thank you and God Bless.



COME TOGETHER AS A PARISH AND GIVE THE GIFT OF WATER

REAL GIFTS



£300

A WATER WELL

Can provide essential access to a safe, local water source.



£45

EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY

Can provide an emergency water supply for five families for one year.



£1,200

WATER FOR A VILLAGE

Can support an entire village with wells, irrigation systems, and rainwater collectors.

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