

EVANGELISATION SPECIAL

THOURISH

Official Journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

October 2024



Archbishop's challenge to young people page 3



World unites for special Rosary event page 3



Pope says we must all be missionaries page 8

New grants will help more people to discover the faith

NEW outreach campaigns to bring people to faith are being nurtured thanks to the first grants from the Archdiocese's recently established Evangelisation Fund.

The Fund was set up by Archbishop Nolan last year to promote initiatives aimed at reaching out to people who may never have had contact with the Catholic faith.

Now the first batch of grants has been made and the recipients come from across the Archdiocese.

Among the beneficiaries are:

- A new outreach programme aimed at deaf people. The Evangelisation Fund has provided £2,500 for this project to help with training, transport and meeting costs (See page 6).

- A Youth Academy for young people aged 11–18 to help them grow in their relationship with God and develop their gifts and talents in a Catholic context outside of school. The Evangelisation Fund has provided £8,950 to cover half of the costs of the pilot for the year.

- “Called by Name – Fishers of Faith” – a new initiative to equip young people with the opportunity, skills and confidence to evangelise in their homes, schools, parishes and wider society using the *Spiritus* programme sponsored by a cluster of parishes across two high schools. The Evangelisation Fund has provided up to £10,000. Materials will be developed to use in other clusters.

Among the beneficiaries of

the first tranches of funding are parishes including Immaculate Conception Maryhill, St Augustine's Milton, Our Lady and St Helen's Condorrat and Holy Cross, Croy. Organisations

which have benefitted include Firecloud based in Clydebank.

Archbishop Nolan said: “I am glad to see that people have taken up the challenge to find new ways to evangelise. The Evangelisation Fund Committee hopes

these initial awards will inspire other parishes to begin a new initiative in their parish. We look forward to the next round of applications and to many more ideas for evangelisation emerging in the Archdiocese.”

In addition to the grants

listed above the new fund has supported a range of parish initiatives, including pop-up evangelisation events, a mail drop ‘meet your neighbour’ campaign, and a breakfast club for families (A list of awards for these projects is on page 6).

Archbishop Nolan said: “We have focused recently on the need to trim our resources so as to have vibrant parishes. But vibrant parishes don't exist for themselves, but rather to act as a leaven in a local community, reaching out beyond their comfort zones and proposing faith in Jesus Christ to those who may know little or nothing of the Christian faith.

“I would encourage other parishes or church organisations to consider how they can evangelise in new ways and apply for support.”



Grant awarded to new outreach to deaf community

Picture by Paul McSherry

Pilgrims rediscover sacred Glasgow sites

“THE Lord wishes to bless you and accompany you in this chapter. It’s over to you!”

With that challenge, Archbishop Leo Cushley, who heads up the Bishops’ Conference Youth Section, invited young people to make a difference, just like the saints of old.

Over 150 young people gathered, representing every diocese in the country, for a ‘Glasgow pilgrimage’ last month from St Mungo’s Townhead to St Andrew’s Cathedral, stopping at St Mungo’s Cathedral and Barrowland Park on the way.

At Glasgow Cathedral, they were warmly welcomed by the Minister, Rev. Mark Johnstone, and heard about the lives of St Mungo and St Enoch. They were reminded of how important it is to give their daily ‘yes’ to God, inviting God to interrupt their self-made plans, and to embrace the adventure of being a disciple of Jesus.

After renewing their Baptismal Promises at the tomb of St Mungo,

BY MAIRI-CLAIRE O’DONNELL

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

they made their way to Barrowland Park, near where St John Ogilvie was martyred. There they learned about the brave young convert from Keith who became a priest in Paris and returned to Scotland to minister to the few remaining Catholics in the Glasgow area.

They heard about his martyrdom and how he threw his rosary to the crowd as he was being executed. After this, the group moved onto Glasgow Green where they walked and prayed and asked for our Lady’s help on their journey.

Weronika, a pilgrim from Aberdeen, said: “It was great to hear about the history of the faith, especially about St John Ogilvie as he was from my diocese. I also really enjoyed meeting new people and chatting with our bishops and priests.”

After Mass in St Andrew’s Cathedral, the pilgrims returned home to live out their Christian vocation, embrace sainthood and share the Good News.

■ For more opportunities for youth and young adults, check out the RCAG Youth website calendar: www.rcagyouth.co.uk



Bearsden embroiderers get their needles out for Fr Joe

NIGHTS are fair drawing in... and for the dedicated embroiderers from St Andrew’s Parish, Bearsden, that means it’s time to get the needles out to create more lasting pieces of textile art that will be appreciated for generations to come.

Using embroidery techniques that go as far back as the 1600s, the group, which began in 2016, has created a range of spiritually-inspired wall-hangings, lectern falls, altar cloths and ceremonial covers.

And this year they have a special commission – to create a unique leaving gift for former Parish Priest Father Joseph Mackle who recently moved to Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald.

Maura McRobbie, founder and leader of the group explained: “Father Mackle always maintained a close interest in our work and has been a guiding hand over the past eight years, so we are currently working on an embroidered gift to present to him at his farewell celebration in November.”

The inspiration for setting up the group came after Maura saw a painting called “All Things Bright and Beautiful” by the artist Margaret W Tarrant who specialised in paintings of fairy-like children and religious subjects.

Maura said: “I had just retired as a deputy head teacher of a busy primary school. I had been in London and spotted this picture. It reminded me of the very peaceful feeling that comes when working with fidgety children, and suddenly all is calm when you see them fully engaged and absorbed in their work. I always felt that this image would inspire my love of needlework sometime in the future.”

Other works created by the group include a wall hanging to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of St Andrew’s Parish in 2017, featuring a gar-



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAT BUCHANAN



Fr Joe Mackle

den of plants, animals and the words “Let the Children Come Unto Me”.

It is displayed behind the children’s choir area of the church and is dedicated to all those who work with children.

And when the new St Nicholas primary school opened the following year the embroidery group de-

signed and donated a wall-hanging depicting aspects of the saint’s life using appliqué, silk-shading, gold-work and beading (below).

Subsequent pieces created include an altar cloth and lectern fall which are displayed in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at the back of the church.

As well as designing and creating new items, the group restore and repair clerical vestments, funeral palls, and ceremonial robes for special occasions. They have a policy to use recycled and donated threads and fabrics whenever possible.

■ If you are a stitcher of whatever level, and think you would like to join the group, please contact: maura.mcrobbie@me.com or annamariagracias@hotmail.com



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World unites to pray the Rosary

MILLIONS of people from around the world are expected to prepare for the Holy Year by praying the Rosary on the first-ever World Rosary Day scheduled for this month.

And the invitation has gone out for parishioners across the Archdiocese to join together on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary to say the prayer either alone or together with others as part of the global event.

It begins at 7pm on October 7, in New Zealand, at the Marian parish of Saint Mary's, Pukekarakā, in the Maori territory of Ōtaki, Father Phil Cody will recite the Rosary in the Maori language together with his parishioners, and thus launch World Rosary Day, a day of prayer focused on the Holy Rosary to be marked all around the world.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY** The event is a response to the request of Pope Francis' call to "dedicate the year preceding the Jubilee event, 2024, to a great 'symphony' of prayer", with petitions directed "to the Virgin Mary to accompany the Church on the path of preparation for the event of grace of the Jubilee."

Many confraternities, sanctuaries, religious orders and other lay associations with a strong Marian spirituality have already signed up for the global event.

Many Shrines, including the International Shrine of Our Lady of Knock (Ireland), various national shrines, such as Our Lady of the Cape in Canada and Our Lady of Mount Carmel (New York USA), are also participating, as well as many Legion of Mary groups.



In Rome, at 7pm (6pm UK time) the Rosary will be recited in the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major, in the chapel of the Salus Populi Romani, a place of special spiritual significance ahead of the Jubilee.

Students from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome (the Angelicum) will walk in procession to the Basilica.

You can find out more about World Rosary Day at: www.worldrosaryday.com

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If you have good reason to believe God may be calling you to be a monk, write to:

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Or email: nunraw.abbot@yahoo.co.uk
Scottish Charity No SCO22611

'You are the salt of the earth'

Archbishop's words of encouragement as final year school pupils set out on a year of Caritas service



BY **BRIAN SWANSON**
PICTURES BY **PAUL MCSHERRY**

munities and individuals.

Now it is the turn of this year's cohort who almost filled St Mary's – the second oldest church in the Archdiocese and the only one big enough to accommodate the around 800 pupils who will be among those who will be honoured at the annual Caritas Awards Ceremony in the Clyde Auditorium on June 5 next year.

After Archbishop Nolan addressed them and offered prayers for their journey ahead, they stood to make their commissioning promises, responding with the words: "With God as my help, I will".

Individual pupils accompanied by a staff member, then brought their Caritas badges to the sanctuary where they were blessed by the Archbishop.

Earlier pupils placed candles at the foot of the altar and the service ended with the same pupils picking candles from different schools for whom they will pray during the coming months.

FINAL year pupils from every Catholic secondary school in the Archdiocese embarked on their Caritas journey at a magnificent commissioning service in St Mary's, Calton, hearing a simple but inspiring Gospel message from Archbishop Nolan who told them "You are the salt of the earth."

He added: "As salt is used to flavour our food, to enhance it, so too will the acts of love you carry out over the next few months enhance

the world you live in. God is love and by committing yourselves today to these acts of love for others you will be adding more love to the world."

Since Pope Benedict XVI famously urged young people to become 'saints of the 21st century' during his visit to Scotland 14 years ago, almost 15,000 young people from parishes throughout the country have been given awards for work with parishes, churches, school com-

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CENTENARY MASS

2024



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH

You are invited to join with the congregation in celebrating Holy Mass at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Riddrie, Glasgow G33 2EE at 7pm on Wednesday, November 6th 2024, acknowledging 100 years of service in the name of Jesus Christ.

A selection of refreshments will be served afterwards in St. Thomas' Hall.

Vatican's 'amber' light for Medjugorje shrine

THE controversial pilgrimage site of Medjugorje has been given a partial approval by the Vatican after decades of investigation.

A statement (or Note) released last month signed by Cardinal Victor Fernandez, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, with the assent of Pope Francis, grants partial approval for devotion linked to Medjugorje, recognizing the abundant spiritual fruits received at the Sanctuary of the Queen of Peace without making a declaration on the supernatural character of the alleged apparitions.

The Holy See recognizes the positive impact pilgrimages to the shrine have had on countless people, leading to conversions, healings, reconciliations, and the strengthening of faith.

Permission is formally given for individuals to pro-

BY **RONNIE CONVERY** mote the devotion... but Catholics are free to believe the apparitions to be true or not.

The Vatican's carefully-worded note reads: "While this note does not imply a declaration of the supernatural character of the phenomenon in question and recalling that the faithful are not obliged to believe in it, the *nihil obstat* indicates that the faithful can receive a positive encouragement for their Christian life through this spiritual proposal and it authorises public acts of devotion."

The Note clarifies that "the positive assessment that most of the messages of Medjugorje are edifying does not imply a declaration that they have a direct supernatural origin."

Even though there are various opinions "about the authenticity of some facts or



certain aspects of this spiritual experience, the ecclesiastical authorities of the places where it is present are invited to appreciate the pastoral value of this spiritual proposal, and even to promote its spread".

However, adds the Note, each diocesan bishop has the freedom and authority to make prudent decisions regarding "groups or persons who, by misusing this spiritual phenomenon, act in a mistaken way" in his own diocese.

Finally, the Dicastery invites pilgrims who visit Medjugorje to be strongly

advised that by issuing a decree of *nihil obstat* (literally: "nothing stands in the way"), the Holy See "authorises prudent adherence" to the messages of Medjugorje without formally recognizing the reality of the visions.

Despite the appearance of a "green light," the recognition of the supernatural aspect of the apparitions remains the prerogative of the Pope, who has yet to make a definitive judgment.

The messages received by the presumed visionaries of Medjugorje will now be reviewed before publication.

"The upcoming messages will need to be analysed and for now, they should not be considered true," said Cardinal Fernandez. Any messages published in future will need to be accompanied by a note from the Dicastery specifying that the faithful are free to believe or not, added Cardinal Fernandez.



Lourdes pilgrimage breaks with tradition

IN a break with tradition new midweek dates have been announced for next year's Archdiocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage in a move designed to make travelling simpler and cheaper for pilgrims to visit the famous French shrine.

Instead of leaving on Fair Friday in July as has been tradition since the first pilgrimage in 1948, next year's pilgrimage flights will leave on Wednesday 16 July and return on Wednesday July 23.

The midweek option has been chosen because charter flights tend to be cheaper and more flexible midweek.

And by publicising the

BY **BRIAN SWANSON** pilgrimage earlier than in previous years it gives people longer to plan ahead.

Archbishop Nolan led his first Glasgow pilgrimage earlier this year and was suitably impressed at the planning and organisation of the event – so much so that he wants to expand it.

He told *Flourish*: "I would like to see every parish sponsor a pilgrim to go to Lourdes.

"We are looking at bringing the group together into two central hotels to make it easier for the helpers to reach out to the sick pilgrims and promote more activities



for those travelling.

"I was very impressed by the young people from the St Margaret of Scotland Youth Group who came with us and the sick pilgrims were so glad of their company and care."

Meanwhile to express an interest in joining the pilgrimage, or simply to find out more about what is involved, contact the pilgrimage office on 0141 226 5898 or email pilgrimage@rcag.org.uk

Moira is laid to rest



THE sun shone on a silent cemetery as Moira Wilcox was laid to rest by the priest whose discovery of her family bible led to an appeal for her lost relatives in last month's *Flourish*.

Father Okechukwu Paulinus Onyenuru OP, a Dominican priest in Glasgow, was described as parish administrator at St Teresa's Possilpark in last month's *Flourish*. At the time he was entrusted by the Archdiocese with the pastoral care of St Teresa's.

But since the article appeared Father Paulinus, who was ordained six years ago, has been appointed

Parish Administrator at Our Lady and St Helen's, Condorrat.

Fr Paulinus holds a Master's Degree in Cancer Research and Precision Oncology.

He said: "The burial of Moira's ashes occurred at the archdiocesan cemetery in a small yet meaningful ceremony.

"The dedicated staff of Craigbank Home accompanied me as we bid farewell and placed Moira in her final place of rest.

"We are profoundly grateful to Archbishop Nolan for his generous gesture in granting Moira this resting place."

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From stateside to Clydeside

FUELLED by faith and eager to bring the word of God to pupils in our Catholic secondary schools, a committed group of young missionaries from the US-based Net Evangelization Teams (NET) has arrived in the Archdiocese.

The missionary team of 10 lay missionaries plus two supervisors will remain until next June and during that time will again bring the message of Christ's love to thousands of young people. BY **BRIAN SWANSON** John Jackson, director of NET Scotland, said: "NET came to Scotland through the invitation of Canon Jim Duggan of Paisley in the spring of 2013 during the Year of Faith.

"Since then, NET Scotland teams have communicated a message of hope to literally tens of thousands of young Catholics across Scotland. Our aim is to compliment the good work of senior management teams, teachers, and Chaplains in each school we visit.

"We are very grateful for the



Young missionaries can't wait to spread the faith

ongoing encouragement that we receive from the Bishops and priests who, in very practical ways, support our mission to young people. "Our message to the young

people is simple: Jesus is real and he loves you."

NET is based in the city of St Paul, Minnesota, where each year around 180 young Catholics aged between 18

and 28 are accepted as missionaries who, after an initial training period, are sent to work in US cities as well as in other countries.

The NET Missionaries

currently in the Archdiocese are known as a discipleship team – meaning they base themselves in a parish to serve the local community.

During their time in the

Archdiocese the female team members will stay in accommodation at St Peter's in Partick while the males will be housed at St Flannan's in Kirkintilloch.

NET encounter has changed my life

ST Thomas Aquinas will be the first school to be visited by the NET team. They will arrive on October 28 and work with the school for four weeks.

Following last year's NET visits, pupils were asked to give their thoughts about how their approach to faith had changed.

In a moving testimony, 15-year-old Mhirren Rooney (right) from St Thomas Aquinas Secondary school said: "Before the NET team, I always felt doubt towards God and all he is made out to be. When I was little, I went to Mass every Sunday but as I got older, I fell away from it. When I first went up to the Oratory and heard about how God had really changed people's lives for the better, I felt a bit closer to him.

"What really made an impact on me was when I went for private prayer with Bishop and Serena about my friend, who passed away a few years ago. They put their hands on my shoulder and when they began to pray, I felt so peaceful, as if God was standing beside me telling me it was OK. When I left, I felt physically lighter and all doubt I had about God had



BY **BRIAN SWANSON** gone in that moment.

"I now have started attending Mass with my mum and brother every Sunday and it doesn't feel like a chore like it used to. It makes me feel closer to God and I will forever be grateful to the NET team."

RE teacher at St Thomas Aquinas, Erin Curran (above) said: "I always relish the opportunity to welcome the NET team to the school. It is one of the highlights of my year and an aspect of my job that I really love.

"Every year, it is wonderful to hear the pupils' testimonies and experiences they have had as a result of the NET visits.

"I believe that some of our young people have had a real rethink about their faith and are now closer to God than they were before the NET team visited. I am so grateful to them for the care and joy they bring to their ministry every day and I pray for a long and successful partnership with them in the years to come."

■ **To find out more visit: www.netscotland.org**



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FOCUS ON EVANGELISATION

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POPE FRANCIS

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We meet regularly to co-ordinate events and activities. Our deaf members have a strong voice in directing the work of the group. Our group led by Father Paul McAlinden.

We are looking for more members to join our already active group. Deaf members are particularly welcome.



Sharing our faith together



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New Masses for the deaf community will commence this month

REGULAR noon Masses for the deaf community are to be celebrated in St Augustine’s Milton from Sunday 6th October for the first time.

Parish priest Father Paul McAlinden, who learned British Sign Language in his role as a prison chaplain, and who was appointed ambassador to the deaf community in the Archdiocese earlier this year, said: “After Canon Tom White, who celebrated Sunday Masses for the deaf at St Mary’s, Calton, moved to Croy it was decided that Mass for the deaf community would relocate to St Augustine’s.

“I have been working with the deaf community for some time and we are slowly building up a core group of volunteers – including our Deacon James Ward who is also learning to sign for the deaf.

“The plan is that during Mass volunteers will do the



BY BRIAN SWANSON readings, and the rest is down to me – and having celebrated recent Masses for the deaf community I’m very encouraged by the feedback.

Evangelisation

“Our parish is very much looking forward to welcoming the deaf community as part of our worshipping family here in St Augustine’s. While the number of deaf people attending is relatively small, we are continuing our programme

of evangelisation and attempting to reach out to as many as possible.”

Liz O’Hare, a retired social worker and activist for the deaf community welcomed the move and added: “For a number of years the Church in Scotland has had very few priests skilled in the use of sign language, but now Archbishop Nolan has begun to address this shortage and in the past couple of years we now have four priests in Glasgow looking to sign Mass regularly.

“A number of lay people from around the diocese are also currently learning sign language and this, along with opening of St Augustine to our deaf brothers and sisters, will add to the feeling of welcome our deaf Catholics have been missing for so long.”

■ To find out more email Father Paul on staugustine@rcag.org.uk

New evangelisation fund is making a difference

THE new apostolate to the deaf community is just one of many projects funded recently by the Archdiocese’s Evangelisation Fund. Others include:

£500 for Pizza and Pakora nights/supper clubs open to all young people in a local area, offering an opportunity for young people who may not frequent the parish to come to the church hall and meet people from the parish community.

£1565 for parish pop up event kits, providing materials for parishioners to go to local supermarkets, community events and so on, inviting people to come to parish events and offering chances for deeper conversations which can offer opportunities for evangelisation. The grant covers the cost of materials (gazebo, banners, and printed material).

£500 for ‘Meet Your Neighbour’ events to target new housing areas. Via a mail drop, residents were invited to the church hall where hospitality is laid on. The residents are then pro-

vided with information on what is happening in local church(es) and information is provided on other facilities and organisations in and around the local area. It provides an initial contact with believers and non-believers alike and offers the opportunity for relationship building.

£1500 for men’s breakfast clubs. The Evangelisation Fund has provided £1,500 for the cost of the monthly breakfasts for 25 men as part of a wider programme within one parish to build community by providing monthly evangelisation events.

£1150 for a breakfast club for families. This provides a means for the parish to make contact with and build relationships with the primary school parents in advance of the sacraments and may also assist with poverty in some geographical areas. (The Evangelisation Fund would consider applications for a Sunday pre-Mass club for resources and snacks as part of a wider programme for Primary

School parents.)

£800 for bereavement support: Support for training as Seasons for Growth Companions after which regular groups can be run as well as specific support for families.

Now the call has gone out for further ideas for evangelisation with the knowledge that financial support is available.

Key points for applications:

1. Give as much detail as possible. In general, the larger the financial request the greater the detail required.
2. Demonstrate the support that exists in the parish/cluster/organisation to get the project off the ground.
3. Give a breakdown of costs, where possible. Be realistic. If you are not sure, say so. We can deal with estimates.
4. If you are not sure where to start with the application reach out to us on the evangelisation email evangelisationfund@rcag.org.uk

Young boy in an IDP camp in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

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FOCUS ON EVANGELISATION

Southside parishes gear up for new evangelisation challenge

PARISHES in Glasgow's southside are putting into action the call for greater collaboration and sharing of resources as part of the Archdiocesan 'Looking to the Future' initiative.

Fr Martin Kane, who is Dean of the area, and Parish Priest in Pollok commented on the recent 'listing' of parishes published in last month's *Flourish*, which highlighted those which are likely to face amalgamation in future and those which will serve as new larger centres of evangelisation.

Resources

He said: "Our Deanery believes this distribution of parishes offers the optimum use of the resources available and will provide the most satisfactory base for evangelisation and service to the Catholic communities.

"The recommendations take account of the declining predicted number of active priests in the Deanery, currently 19, and likely to be 12 in 5 years' time, and 9 priests in 10 years' time."

An immediate change – following the recent redeployment of clergy – relates to Mass provision in the area.

- At St Albert's, which now has no resident priest, Sunday Mass has been moved from 11am to 10am. There will be no Saturday Vigil Mass and no weekday Masses except for Holydays and funerals which will be arranged by Fr Benneth.
- In Castlemilk, Sunday Mass will be 9:30am in St Margaret Mary's and 11:30am in St Bartholomew's.
- At Blessed John Duns Scotus the 6pm Sunday Mass has been cancelled.

BY **RONNIE CONVERY**

Fr Kane said: "The essential work of the Church is focused on evangelisation. The reason for having strong parishes is that they will be able to be the dynamos for evangelisation.

Kindness

"As we embark on this journey of faith together in the parishes of the South of Glasgow, we are invited to reflect on how we can share the Good News with those around us. Whether it is through simple acts of kindness, a listening ear, or inviting someone to Mass, we can all take part in this mission of love and faith.

"Evangelisation is more than just preaching—it's living out our faith in a way that draws others to Christ. It should not be thought of

as a complex set of activities. Indeed, it is simply how Christ meant us to live our lives and to share that Good News with others.

"It involves personal witness – sharing your story of faith with others; service – acting with love and charity in everyday life and invitation – Inviting others to share in the Church's life, whether through Mass, events, or prayer groups.

Outreach

"Our parishes are committed to fostering a spirit of welcome and outreach, helping people of all walks of life encounter the love of Christ.

"Fr John Carroll will chair a Deanery Committee on Evangelisation and welcomes any contribution. The theme for Jubilee year 2025 is Pilgrims of Hope. We will also aim to develop this theme."



Fr Martin Kane

The start of something
GREAT

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Thursday 7th Nov | 6pm

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FOCUS ON EVANGELISATION

Why Mission Sunday involves YOU!

Dear brothers and sisters!

THE theme I have chosen for this year's World Mission Day is taken from the Gospel parable of the wedding banquet ... After the guests refused his invitation, the king, the main character in the story, tells his servants: "Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find"

Reflecting on this key passage in the context of the parable and of Jesus' own life, we can discern several important aspects of evangelisation. These appear particularly timely for all of us...

In the king's command to his servants we find two words that express the heart of the mission: the verbs "to go out" and "to invite".

I take this opportunity to thank all those missionaries who, in response to Christ's call, have left everything behind to go far from their homeland and bring the Good News to places where people have not yet received it, or received it only recently.

Let us not forget that every Christian is called to take part in this universal mission by offering his or her own witness to the Gospel in every context, so that the whole Church can continually go forth with her Lord and Master to the "crossroads" of today's world.

Today's drama in the Church is that Jesus keeps knocking on the door, but from within, so that we will let him out! Often

we end up being an 'imprisoning' Church which does not let the Lord out, which keeps him as 'its own', whereas the Lord came for mission and wants us to be missionaries.

May all of us, the baptised, be ready to set out anew, each according to our state in life, to inaugurate a new missionary movement, as at the dawn of Christianity!

Commitment

The mission for all requires the commitment of all. In the footsteps of the Second Vatican Council and my Predecessors, I recommend to all dioceses throughout the world the service of the Pontifical Mission Societies ...the collections of World Mission Day in all the local Churches are entirely destined to the universal fund of solidarity that the Pontifical Society of the Propagation of the Faith then distributes in the Pope's name for the needs of all the Church's missions.

Finally, let us lift our gaze to Mary ... with the joy and loving concern of our Mother, with the strength born of tenderness and affection, let us go forth to bring to everyone the invitation of the King, our Saviour. Holy Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us!

■ **Mission Sunday is marked on 20th October 2024.**



Pope's annual appeal reminds Catholics that every baptised person in the world must be a 'missionary who evangelises'



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A fond farewell to Glasgow from the sisters sent to rebuild a post-war city

A CONGREGATION of Religious Sisters whose arrival in Glasgow helped heal a city still reeling from the horrors of the Second World War, are to leave Scotland after almost 80 years of dedicated service.

BY BRIAN SWANSON

Later this month the three remaining sisters who belong to the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM), which has 6000 members worldwide, will leave their house in the grounds of St Philomena's Church, Provamill, which has been their base for the past 25 years.

Two of the sisters will return to their native Ireland while the third will take up residence to the order's London house.

Their departure brings to an end the involvement of the FMM sisters in the local community, as well as other parts of Scotland, which began in early 1945 when Archbishop Donald Campbell invited them to form a mission in the city.

On August 8th of that year, fired by faith and with a missionary zeal to serve, the Sisters arrived and im-

mediately began their mission working at first from temporary premises in Bearsden.

Given that their arrival coincided with the last week of World War II it is safe to assume that it was scarcely noticed at the time but the work that they did was to have a lasting effect on generations of Glaswegians.

Hospitals

Shortly after their arrival they became involved in pastoral work, visiting the sick and elderly, and providing chaplaincy at Stobhill and Yorkhill hospitals.

A year later they moved into a larger premises in Great Western Road and slowly their numbers grew.

An early report of their activities revealed: "Attracted by the missionary zeal of the sisters and by their life of prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, many young Scottish vocations were nurtured."

As the sisters continued to work tirelessly in Glasgow, six others moved further afield to form the first permanent community in Dunoon in 1969 where they ran a school for pre-school children until it closed in 1977.

In 2002 four sisters started a mobile mission in Aberdeenshire at the request of then-Bishop Mario Conti where they reached out to parishes including Kemnay, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Portlethen, and Kincorth offering courses in adult education and catechesis as well as working with inmates in Peterhead prison.

They left Aberdeen earlier this year and in weeks will leave Scotland for good.

Sister Caroline Gaffney, who will return to her native Dublin, told *Flourish*: "It is with great sadness that we have to move from Royston and say goodbye to Bonnie Scotland, where over the years many of our sisters past and present have shared in the life of many parishes, but we will always carry the memories and the people of Scotland in our hearts."



FMM Sisters from left: Sister Caroline, returning to her native Dublin, Sister Jarka, from Slovenia going to Limerick and Sister Wiesia from Poland going to the FMM London house
Picture by Paul McSherry

Fr Ed's Gorbals goodbye



BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURES BY PAUL MCSHERRY

End of an era as Xaverians leave Castlemilk

PARISHIONERS of the St Bartholomew's and St Margaret Mary's have paid warm tributes to a much-loved trio of Xaverian priests as they prepare to leave the Archdiocese after seven years of devoted service to the people of Castlemilk.

Their departure follows a restructuring within the Xaverian order which will see Parish Priest, Father Ian Bathgate, take a two-month sabbatical, Father Willie Hattie moved to a new community in Caldercruix, while veteran assistant priest, Italian-born Father Eugenio Montesi, 86, will relocate to Coatbridge.

Father Paddy Duffy, SX, who was the first priest appointed when the two parishes were entrusted to the care of the order and is now principal of the Xaverians in the UK said: "It's been an incredibly difficult decision to leave the Archdiocese and the people of both parishes but we have been realistic in these changing times."

Rosemary McKell, chair of the parish council for both parishes, said: "It was bit of a shock at first when we heard they were leaving and some of the parishioners were genuinely upset



but it's a new chapter beginning now and we have to accept it.

"They have been great for the parishes over the years, and we will miss them."

And she recalled the reaction when Father Paddy arrived on his first day wearing one of his trademark Hawaiian shirts.

Choir

She said: "I was in the choir that day and we turned to each other and said, 'well that's a bit different' because we were used to priests who looked like priests if you know what I mean.

"But Father Paddy got involved with us and was always very hands-on when things needed doing.

"Not long after he ar-

ived he decided to clear out the hall and the parish house of all the stuff that had gathered over the years and before we knew it he was loading a skip with the rest of us and that showed us the kind of priest he was.

"And Father Bathgate was so devoted – especially during Covid when we couldn't go to Mass and instead he went round the parish on his bike standing in gardens and saying the Rosary to people as they looked out of their windows.

"And Father Montesi is just incredible. He's 86 and although he still has a big family back in Italy he says his work here is not yet finished so he'll be staying in Scotland."

PARISHIONERS past and present from Blessed John Duns Scotus church in the Gorbals have paid a fond farewell to veteran priest Father Ed Highton, 84, at a Mass of thanksgiving to mark his departure to pastures new after 20 years of devoted service in Glasgow.

Surrounded by family, friends and well-wishers Father Ed found himself exactly where he didn't want to be – at the centre of attention!

Known for his self-effacing manner and humil-

ity, Father Ed's imminent departure to a new posting near Bristol saw every seat taken at his final Mass, which ended with a prolonged standing ovation for the much-loved priest.

And Liverpool-born Father Ed, the youngest of eight children, was delighted to greet his sister Anne, brother Jack and nephew Patrick, who travelled north as a surprise to join in the celebrations.

Father Ed's move to the Franciscan parish of the Immaculate Conception

in Clevedon, near Bristol, has triggered a number of changes in the Franciscan community, one of which has already taken place with the appointment of Fr Donal Walsh OFM as parish priest.

He will remain until October next year when Father Caoimhín Ó Laoide OFM, currently working in Australia, will take over.

Meanwhile Brother Niall O'Connell has arrived from Dublin to take over as Guardian of the Franciscan community, which was one of the roles previously held by Father Ed, who spent 28 years in South Africa preaching and ministering the Gospel to the Zulu people before moving to Glasgow in 2005.



Unpacking the 'Synod' word

In a culminating moment of his 10-year effort to reform the Catholic Church and set its 1.3 billion members on a new missionary path, Pope Francis will preside over the second and final session of the Synod on Synodality in Rome this month.

The working document for the event does not touch the most controversial issues that have been debated during months of preparations.

Instead the synod will focus on the idea of 'synodality' itself – listening, dialogue, community discernment, and creation of consensus.

'Synodality', the document stresses, always entails consultation with lay people, at all levels, in the decision-making process of the Church.



A working session at the Vatican Synod



'Synodality' is already happening in Glasgow

RELECTING on the idea of a 'Synodal church' I thought it best to start with my own first experience of the Church in St Bernadette's in Carntyne where I lived, and St Thomas's in Riddrie, where I went to school in the 1970's.



BY SANDRA MCGEACHIE

The priests back then were held in high regard and, it seemed, ran these parishes with little input from parishioners. There were at least two priests in the parishes and the parish priest was in charge of everything!

As a child, I thought priests had a 'direct line' to God; physically being able to converse with Him. So they were high up on a pedestal.

I don't know if there was a parish council in those days. My parents didn't speak of one but they did say the priest was welcomed when visiting our house and was friendly.

When I was eight we moved to St Paul's in Shettleston. I spent 40 years of my life in that parish with numerous priests, including Fr Currie, Fr O'Leary, Fr McPhail, Fr Centra, Fr Carroll; and for 23 years, Fr John Campbell.

From my Confirmation to the sacrament of marriage, to the baptism of my two children and their other sacraments of initiation, to the death of my parents, St Paul's parish family was integral to my life.

In 1990, at 21, I became a reader, joined the band as a singer for the Sunday evening Youth Mass, and joined the 18 plus group. This was also the first year I went to Lourdes as a volunteer, which led to me meeting my husband, Kenny.

Collaboration

In later years, I joined the RCIA as a catechist, joined the Celebrating Christian Marriage group, which organised social nights with a spiritual input, and, with my husband, offered workshops for married couples and later, marriage preparation for engaged couples.

St Paul's was our parish family, celebrating the highs and being there for the lows in peoples' lives together.

There was a parish pastoral council that made you feel the people were working in collaboration with the parish priest. People felt confident and supported to make decisions on the running of the parish. One of Fr Campbell's gifts is to encour-

age and enable people to feel it is their parish and that, should he 'move on', the parish could still run without him.

I didn't know the phrase 'synodal church' then, but in hindsight I can see that this was a great example of it.

In 2013, Fr Campbell did indeed move on to Sacred Heart Cumbernauld, and within a few years became Parish Priest of St Lucy's too (and would later coordinate the Archdiocesan Synod consultation). In 2016, my family moved to this parish, as my husband is a permanent deacon. We have been welcomed by the people of Sacred Heart and St Lucy's and I continue to be a reader and catechist.

It's been amazing to see how two separate parishes have embraced the idea of coming together to be more synodal, with the two parish pastoral councils becoming one at the request of the members themselves. The parishioners now say 'parish family of Sacred Heart and St Lucy's' without skipping a beat!

There have been parish meetings and discussions over the process of amalgamation. The people realise that the ever-reducing number of clergy means we have to come together to support our priests and to develop the way of synodality – collaborating and taking responsibility

as lay people – in every area of parish life.

At the deanery council's suggestion, we also have the new Pastoral Unit of Sacred Heart, St Joseph's and St Lucy's covering South Cumbernauld.

It is a vibrant Christian community made up of social groups, youth clubs and charity organisations; all brought together by prayer and shared worship.

We have creche facilities and a Children's Liturgy (and a warm welcome for families with children and toddlers). Both Parish Pastoral Councils have agreed to meet together throughout the year, sharing information and resources – more evidence of a synodal approach.

Future

The development of the new deanery councils throughout the Archdiocese of Glasgow has inspired a less parochial view of our churches (at least within the deanery councils themselves) and helped us see the bigger picture of the future of the Church in Glasgow.

The aim of the councils is to build relationships beyond our own parishes, to discuss and share evangelisation methods, and consider the viability of our church buildings. In this way we are aiding the Archbishop in his responsibility to shepherd the church in

Glasgow into the future.

Of course there have been, and will be, keenly felt senses of loss of much-loved church buildings. However, this has to be seen as pruning to encourage growth, resource management for sustainability.

Moreover, it is a reminder to us all that, if we want to keep our parishes alive, it shouldn't be the responsibility of clergy alone. We all have to do our bit and engage in a synodal approach, remembering that the church is the people not the building.

The Synod on Synodality has given us a boost in terms of the continuing empowerment of the laity and the naming of issues that are holding the church back from growing and developing, such as clericalism, and the need for open discussion and discernment on 'hot button issues'.

The Synod has begun to plot a way forward for us to be the Church we know we can be and want to be.

The very fact that there is a Synod on Synodality (no matter how it exceeds or disappoints people's expectations) is an affirmation that the church is listening to the people. Going forward: we simply keep talking the synodal talk and walking the synodal walk.

A version of this article first appeared in Open House magazine.

SYNO-D 2024



What to expect from this month's Rome gathering

THE Synod is a time of prayer, "it is not a convention, but rather a time for listening to the Word of God and the Spirit, and an opportunity to implore forgiveness from God for the Church's sins."

With these words, Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod, described the worldwide gathering being held in Rome from October 2 to 27.

Holy Spirit

He recalled that Pope Francis, at the opening of the synodal path on October 9, 2021, emphasized that "the main protagonist of the Synod is the Holy Spirit."

In the synod hall there will be 368 voting members, including 272 bishops (including two from China and Scotland's representative, Bishop Brian McGee) and 96 non-bishops.

There are eight Special invitees, while the number of fraternal delegates has increased from 12 to 16, reflecting the growing ecumenical interest.

Cardinal Grech explained that the Synod is preceded by two days of spiritual retreat at the Vatican, guided by meditations from Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe and Benedictine Mother Ignazia Angelini.

New this year will be a penitential vigil presided over by Pope Francis and open to all, particularly young people. The celebration will feature testimonies from three individuals who have experienced the sins of abuse, war, and indifference to the growing migration crisis.

In particular, sins against peace, creation, indigenous peoples, migrants, women, family, youth; the sin of 'using doctrine as a stone against others', sins against poverty and synodality (such as the failure to listen, or sins compromising communion or the participation of all) will be confessed. The Pope will conclude by asking forgiveness from God

and all humanity on behalf of all. Two 'forums' open to non-members of the synod will take place on October 9, one on "The People of God, Subject of Mission", and the other on "The Role and Authority of the Bishop in a Synodal Church".

Two further 'forums' will be held on October 16. The themes will be "Mutual Relations between the Local and Universal Church" and "The Exercise of Primacy and the Synod of Bishops. These events will be broadcast live online.

Prayer

An ecumenical prayer service will be held on the evening of October 11 in the Vatican at Protopartyrs Square, where tradition holds that St Peter was martyred. This date marks the 62nd anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

Finally, on October 21, there will be another day of spiritual retreat in preparation for discernment on the draft final document.

Keeping body and soul together

One of the great errors people make in the spiritual life is to neglect their physical health, believing it to unimportant when compared to their prayer life.

The ancient Latin phrase 'mens sana in corpore sano'—a healthy mind in a healthy body—puts us right on that one. It speaks to the deep connection between physical and mental wellbeing.

In today's world, it is easy to overlook the importance

ADVERTISING FEATURE Healthtalk

of physical health amid busy lives. However, maintaining our physical wellbeing is essential if we are to work well, live well and love well.

Physical exercise, a balanced diet, regular checkups with medical and dental professionals and sufficient rest contribute to mental clarity, emotional balance, and spirit-

ual receptivity. A healthy body enables us to better engage in work at home and in the family, and endure the trials of daily life with patience and grace.

By nurturing our physical health, we are better equipped to fulfill our vocation, whether it be caring for our families, participating in our communities, or working in a career. A

well-cared-for body enhances our capacity to love and serve others.

Incorporating regular physical activity and mindful self-care into our lives is not a distraction from our faith but a way to live it more fully.

As we seek balance between body and soul, let us embrace the wisdom of 'mens sana in corpore sano', knowing that through physical health, we improve not only our own lives but those of others.



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Glasgow Vincentian charity seeks two trustees

Breaking the cycle of generational poverty

The Louise Project is a Vincentian antipoverty charity and company limited by guarantee.

Our Model for Enablement offers opportunities to families that provide a pathway for those experiencing disadvantage and economic hardship to break the cycle of generational poverty and for them to become self-determining citizens capable of bringing about transformation in their own life and the life of their community.

We are also focused on building a fair and just society by challenging the systemic structures and beliefs that perpetuate poverty.

We began in January 2013, as an initiative of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul Charitable Trust and we are now part of a group of Vincentian charities under the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul Services (DCSVP).

Our Model for Enablement is based on the Vincentian Way, a model of support developed by St. Vincent de Paul and St Louise de Marillac, who worked collaboratively with each other, out of the same deep Christian commitment to serve the very poorest people in war torn 17th century France. Both Louise and Vincent were propelled forward by the steadfast Christian belief that: "Whatever you do to one of the least important of these my brothers and sisters, you do to me" (Matthew 25:40).

We support individuals and families from all faiths and none.

We aim to strengthen our board by recruiting two new Trustees, and we are particularly interested to hear from individuals with a finance and or law background. Trustees are required to attend 4 board meetings each year.

If you are interested and would like to know more about us, please look at our website and email the Chief Executive Officer, Margo Uprichard, at margo@spaceglasgow.org.uk.

To apply, please forward your CV along with a supporting letter and names of two references to Recruitment@dcmillhill.org. The closing date is Thursday 31st October at 12pm.

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Conversations in the Holy Land

Jerusalem Patriarch Pizzaballa
with young Christians



NEVER has it been more obvious than now that the severity of the suffering of the people in The Holy Land is verging on the unbearable.

During a conversation overheard by a teacher, school children in Gaza were contemplating the question “Would it be better to be burned and survive, or die during a bombing?”

Now more than ever, this Gospel passage resonates with the Christian popula-

tion of the Holy Land:

“For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger, and you invited me in, I needed clothes, and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison, and you came to visit me.” (Matthew 25:35–40)

The Holy Land Commission of the Order of The Holy Sepulchre had planned an onsite visit to the Holy Land in early September

2024. Because of the war in Gaza, it was decided that we should have a lengthy series of conversations over a five-day period with significant partners in the Holy Land to gain information about the current situation so that due support might be allocated to the people in greatest need.

What is exceptional about this crisis is that it is the most extended challenge facing the Christians there in the past 100 years – large-

Professor Bart McGettrick tells of the harrowing situation of Christians in the Holy Land



BY PROFESSOR BART MCGETTRICK

PRESIDENT OF THE HOLY LAND COMMISSION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS AT BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY

ly because of their dependency on tourism.

In the West Bank, the unemployment rate among Christians is considered the highest of all time (68–72%

of young Christians are unemployed). Civic society has virtually collapsed in many areas of The Holy Land. The year-long exposure to intense destruction of people, social infrastructure and resources is unprecedented – no sewerage, no water, no electricity.

What is remarkable is the continuing efforts of the Christian communities to maintain normal life – including saying that the greatest need is education – even more important than food!

In the West Bank there is an increasing rate of building settlements; and an increasing number of incidents of “settler violence”. Jenin has been targeted for destruction, especially the refugee camps there.

There is a significant exodus from Gaza and the

West Bank by the more affluent families, especially to Greece, Cyprus, Chile, Canada, etc – leaving around 47,000 Christians in the West Bank and Gaza. Many Christian parents are now having to think of withdrawing their children from universities because they are no longer able to cover the tuition fees.

Pray

People in the West ask, “So what can we do?” The answer is – pray generously to alleviate the suffering of so many people in Gaza and the West Bank.

Then we can say, “They bombed my school, and you helped rebuild it; my job has taken from me and you empowered me so I can now feed my family; I lost my home and you provided my family with shelter...”

Pope’s plea for Lebanon peace

SPEAKING after his visit to Luxembourg and Belgium, Pope Francis appealed to all parties involved in the ongoing war in the Middle East “to cease fire immediately in Lebanon, in Gaza, in the rest of Palestine, and in Israel.”

“Hostages must be released, and humanitarian aid must be allowed,” he said.

The Pope launched his appeal after saying he continues “to follow with pain and great concern the escalation and intensification of the conflict in Lebanon.”

“Lebanon is a message,” he said, addressing the over 30,000 people present at the Mass, “but at this moment, it is a message that is being torn apart.”

The Pope’s reiterated appeal came as Israel’s military

said it struck more Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, killing another top Hezbollah leader, a day after the militant group confirmed the death of Hassan Nasrallah, deepening fears of a wider war.

Hundreds of people have been killed in the strikes and thousands injured. Israel, which has devastated Gaza in 11 months of relentless bombardment, launched an offensive in Lebanon after months of deadly border exchanges following the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October 2023.

“This war, Pope Francis continued, “has devastating effects on the population: Many, too many people continue to die day after day in

the Middle East.”

And asking for prayers for the victims and for their families, and reminding all men and women of goodwill not to forget the suffering Ukraine, he said: “Let us pray for peace.”

The Holy Father also recalled the recent celebration of the 110th World Day of Migrants and Refugees” on the theme “God walks with His people”.

“From this country, Belgium, which has been and still is a destination for many migrants, I renew my appeal to Europe and the international community to consider the phenomenon of migration as an opportunity to grow together in fraternity,” he said.



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MURRAY

Patrick James

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

Rest in peace, Dad.

We love and miss you.
Leo, Paul and Angela



St Nicholas Care Fund

During this year, St Nicholas Care Fund has awarded a total of £28,142 to schools, churches and community groups supporting the most vulnerable in communities throughout the Archdiocese. Applications are invited for our next deadline of 4 Nov. Forms etc. available on our website: www.rcag.org.uk

‘Aim to top the league table of kindness and care’

Archbishop’s challenge to new generation of headteachers

ARCHBISHOP Nolan commissioned new head teachers during the annual Mass for teachers in St Andrew’s Cathedral and told them, “Your challenge as Catholic teachers in our Catholic school is to put the teachings of Jesus into practice so that those in your care learn that they are children of God.”

BY BRIAN SWANSON

PICTURE BY PAUL MCSHERRY

– that everyone learns that they are valued as a child of God no matter what their failings are, no matter their weaknesses.

“Governments of course have league tables when it comes to academic achievement but there are no league tables when it comes to how well you have formed a child’s heart... that only shows itself in later years as they live out their lives – this is the challenge and the ministry with which God has entrusted you.”

The Archbishop was speaking at the annual Mass for teachers and support staff which brings together educators from across the Archdiocese.

He went on: “The academic knowledge that we pass on to our children helps to form their brains, but it doesn’t form their hearts.

“What forms their hearts is seeing how everyone is treated with respect and dignity, how everyone is treated with kindness and how there is a sense of caring and a sense of forgiveness in the school as well for those who fall short.

“That is something we want to achieve in our school



The new head teachers pictured with Archbishop Nolan are: Janice Tracey – St Constantine’s Primary, Glasgow, David O’Neil – St Margaret Mary’s High School, Glasgow, Kevin Herron – St Roch’s Secondary, Glasgow, Patricia McNulty – St Mungo’s Primary School, Glasgow, David Killin – St Ninian’s High School East Dunbartonshire, Catriona Wishart – St Vincent’s Primary School, Glasgow, Sharon McMillan – Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, Glasgow, Mhairi McCart – St Peter the Apostle High School, Clydebank.

Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris will reopen in style



THE world famous Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, which is due to open later this year, has employed a famous French fashion designer to create new vestments for liturgies in the Cathedral.

And the man chosen has opted for ultra-modern designs which have provoked some consternation.

Designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac has previously designed costumes for pop star Madonna, and has incorporated some dramatic imagery into his vestments for Notre Dame.

He will supply 700 sets of vestments for bishops, priests and deacons. There will be no embroidery on the new vestments, and instead his designs will be printed on to the cloth.

He unveiled his liturgical fashion statement at a press conference organised by the Paris Archdiocese to set out its plans to modernise the interior of the 12th-century

cathedral when it reopens in December after the fire that partially destroyed it in 2019.

Mass vestments will display a “spurt of light” during a six-month period after the Cathedral re-opens. After this period, Archbishop Laurent Ulrich, the archbishop of Paris, and other clergy will use the new vestments only for special celebrations.

The designer has previously designed ‘rainbow’ chasubles for 500 bishops and 5,000 priests at World Youth Day in Paris.

The blaze at Notre Dame Cathedral in 2019 destroyed its spire and its roof but spared its medieval towers.

When it reopens it will have a totally renewed interior space including bronze liturgical furnishings, a new altar and a huge cedar wood reliquary casket with bronze thorns.

The cathedral is expected to attract 15 million visitors when it reopens.



FCJ Young Adult Network Upcoming Events

Autumn 2024

The following events are part of the fixed programme of the FCJ Young Adult Network. There are also ongoing volunteering opportunities, courses and workshops. Get involved!

Events



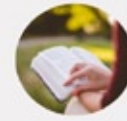
September:

20th International Reading Group
24th Formation in FCJ Spirituality and Prayer



October:

5th Walk in Peak District
15th Discernment Workshop 1
18th-20th Vocation Weekend
29th Discernment Workshop 2



November:

9th Walk - London Area
12th Discernment Workshop 3



December:

1st-6th Advent Retreat
7th Walk in Peak District

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Are we too hurried to be truly happy?

SEVERAL years ago, I went with another priest to visit a mutual friend. Our friend, a successful businessman, was living on the top floor of a very expensive apartment overlooking the river valley in the city of Edmonton, Canada.

At one point during our visit, he took us out on his balcony to show us the view. It was spectacular. You could see for miles, the entire river valley and much of the city.

We were in awe and told him so. Thanking us for the compliments, he shared that, sadly, he seldom came out on the balcony to drink in the view.

Here are some of his words: "You know, I should give this place to some poor family who could enjoy it. I could live in a basement apartment since I never have time to enjoy this. I can't remember when I last came out here to watch a sunset or a sunrise. I'm always too busy, too pressured, too preoccupied. This place is wasted on me. About the only time I come out here is when I have visitors and want to show them the view."

Jesus once said something that might be paraphrased this way: What does it profit you if you gain the whole world and are forever too much in a hurry and too pressured to enjoy it.

When Jesus talks about gaining the whole world and suffering the loss of your own soul, he isn't first of all refer-



Scribblings of the spirit

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

ring to having a bad moral life, dying in sin, and going to hell. That's the more radical warning in his message. We can lose our soul in other ways, even while we are good, dedicated, moral people.

The man whose story I just shared is indeed a very good, dedicated, moral, and kind man. But he is, by his own humble admission, struggling to be a soulful person, to be more inside the richness of his own life because when you live under constant pressure and are perennially forced to hurry, it isn't easy to get up in the morning and say: "This is the day that the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it." We are more likely to say: "Lord, just get me through this day!"

As well, when Jesus tells us that it's difficult for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, he isn't just referring to material riches, money, and affluence, though these are contained in the warning.

The problem can also be a rich agenda, a job or a passion that so consumes us that we rarely take the time (or even think of taking the



time) to enjoy the beauty of a sunset or the fact that we are healthy and have the privilege of having a rich agenda.

Full disclosure, this is one of my struggles. During all my years in ministry, I have always been blessed with a rich agenda, important work, work that I love. But, when I'm honest, I need to admit that during these years I have been too hurried and over pressured to watch many sunsets (unless, like my friend, I was point-

ing out their beauty to a visitor).

I have tried to break out of this by conscripting myself to regular times of quiet prayer, regular walks, retreats, and several weeks of vacation each year. That has helped, no doubt, but I'm still too much of an addict, pressured and hurried almost all the time, longing for space for quiet, for prayer, for sunsets, for a hike in a park, for a glass of wine or scotch, for a contemplative cigar.

And I recognize an irony here: I'm hurrying and tiring myself out in order to carve out time to relax!

I'm no Thomas Merton, but I take consolation in the fact that he, a monk in a monastery, was often too busy and pressured to find solitude. In search of that, he spent the last few years of his life in hermitage, away from the main monastery except for Eucharist and the Office of the Church each day.

Then, when he found solitude, he was surprised at how different it was from the way he had imagined it. Here's how he describes it in his diary:

Today I am in solitude because at this moment "it is enough to be, in an ordinary human mode, with one's hunger and sleep, one's cold and warmth, rising and going to bed. Putting on blankets and taking them off, making coffee and then drinking it. Defrosting the refrigerator, reading, meditating, working, praying. I live as my ancestors lived on this earth, until eventually I die. Amen. There is no need to make an assertion about my life, especially so about it as mine ... I must learn to live so as to forget program and artifice."

And to check out the sunset from my balcony!

When we are rich, busy, pressured, and preoccupied, it's hard to taste one's own coffee.

OASIS

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I confess I'm hopeless at all the Halloween stuff

HALLOWEEN. What's not to love, the more arty among you might say. I beg to differ.

A cold shiver still passes down my spine when I pass the seasonal aisle in the supermarket. Memories of Halloweens past flood over me.

However well I was managing to wing it the rest of the year, come Halloween I was shown up as a sad excuse for a parent.

Dooking for apples and a cake with a scary face, I could provide. The latest Disney character fashioned from redundant cardboard boxes and old tins of paint were way beyond my ability!

In those innocent pre-Amazon times you couldn't order a cheap yet face-saving costume at 11 in the evening for next day delivery. Nor were there YouTube tutorials on how to carve a pumpkin to scare



Mary's musings

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

the living daylights out of the neighbours.

A costume required imagination and inventiveness, both in short supply in this creatively-challenged and permanently frazzled mammy. Fortunately, my guys knew the score and, to their credit, they didn't harbour much in the way of expectation.

Himself was just about able to take the bad look off us, as he was a dab hand at fashioning fairy wings out of wire coat hangers. With three girls that was a skill that saved us more than a few times.

His best effort is remembered fondly. A Breton sweater, a mask, and a black bin liner stuffed full of scrunched up paper was an acceptable look for a burglar. (Just in case it was not immediately obvious, he painted 'swag' on the bin liner!)

Now, though, the baton of 'provider of Halloween costumes' has been passed to the next generation. Our two little schoolboy grandsons don't present much of a problem. Like most of the boys in their classes they are football daft. Family life being what it is, they'll only

be satisfied with the muddy football strip one at the bottom of the laundry basket.

Our daughter who delighted us with a Christmas Eve baby first time around was on course for a Halloween arrival with her second. Being her mother's girl she had a dread of delivering on the 31st and being obliged to host a Halloween party every year for the next couple of decades.

It might have been the anxiety of it but our granddaughter made her way into the world 6 days ahead of the dreaded spectacle of all things spooky.

Halloween is often connected with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain during which bonfires would be lit and costumes worn to ward off ghosts.

In the eighth century Pope Gregory III moved the Feast of All Saints from May the 13th to the 1st of November. It was perhaps then those

traditions aligned with the evening before known as All Hallows Eve and later, Halloween.

Today the Catholic significance of Halloween will be lost on the great majority of seasonal revellers and trick or treaters.

In 2009 lazy journalism saw an item in *L'Osservatore Romano* in which a priest offered cautionary advice on the celebration incorrectly reported in the UK press.

It was falsely presented as a complete denouncement of Halloween by Pope Benedict. A swift clarification from Rome followed and all was well.

So if you've got a 6 year old without any idea what they want to dress up as, and you've got an old sheet you're all good.

Take the easy option and cut out two holes for eyes. No one is going to judge you.

Priests share goodbye thoughts

Last month saw many priests in the Archdiocese leaving much-loved congregations behind as they retired or moved to pastures new. Fond farewells and 'arrivederci' messages were shared across the board. *Flourish* carries here the letters written by two Glasgow priests as they left their congregations behind ... both offer precious insights into the bond between priest and people which is at the heart of parish life.

MONSIGNOR John Hughes penned this moving letter to the people of St Joseph's, Helensburgh on his retiral.



Andrea Bocelli's famous song, Con te Partio in the first verse has the expression: mancan le parole - "I don't have words"... It's difficult to find words, words to do justice to such a range of feelings, of memories, of all that fills one's mind and heart. Sometimes, we find that others have words to say what we feel.

A few years ago, Pope Francis in one of his weekday Masses in the chapel of Santa Marta said: "One of the steps a pastor must take is to prepare himself to bid farewell - in a good way, not to leave half-heartedly. The pastor knows that he is on a journey. I am not going into retirement. I am going elsewhere to serve, always with a heart open to the voice of God. I am not the centre of history... I am not the centre. I am a servant."

All of us as pastors must take our leave and step down, (as St Paul did in Ephesus), with love for Jesus Christ and faith in the Holy Spirit. Pope Benedict, announcing his surprising resignation, said: "I have come to certainty that my strengths, due to advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of ministry." He went on: "I thank you most sincerely for all the love and work which you have supported me in my ministry - and I ask pardon for all my defects."

I can do no better than to try to make these pontiffs' words my own. These past nine years in St Joseph's have been the high point of my priestly ministry.

Maybe so many years in teaching ministries have been a long preparation for such an exalted task - to serve in St Joseph's. From teaching, I succeeded in becoming a learner again. From the remarkable people of St Joseph's, I have learned so much about living our faith. For that, and for so many lessons and experience, I can only offer my profound, prayerful gratitude.

This wonderful parish will always be in my thoughts and memory, but most especially, in my daily prayers. In the fifth century, St John Chrysostom wrote to his people from exile:

"Yet where I am, you are there too. Distance separates us, but love unites us... my soul will live and be mindful of you. You are my light. The sun's light is useful for daily life, but the light of your love fashions a crown for the light to come."

Pope Benedict: "And now let us entrust the Holy Church to the care of our Supreme Pastor, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and implore His Holy Mother Mary so that she may assist us."

Oremus pro invicem - Let us pray for each other. With every Prayer and Blessing, and with great affection,

Monsignor John



So, one more sleep! Unbelievable. Where has the time gone? To have had the chance to return to the parish of my ordination as "pastor" has been an incredible blessing.

But the blessing is larger than that..... to have had the opportunity to be in Castlemilk, serving not one but two parishes is beyond words!

So many committed, generous and optimistic people. Times are hard and challenges are not few, but when a way is found to harness the goodness and creativity, isolate the territoriality and become the church that God knows you can be, Castlemilk will be unrecognizable. And it all depends on YOU.....

St. James (2:14-19) reminds us of how to define a credible faith. I will miss the celebrations, the healthy challenges and even the constructive criticism. Everything else is irrelevant.

I hope that Fr. Joe encounters an unconditional openness, a universal availability to try new things and the enthusiasm to move forward avoiding the temptation to remain in any one historical moment - regardless of how good that was (see transfiguration of Jesus Mt. 17).

You are great. How much greater you become will be judged on your future actions not your past achievements.

God bless. Thanks for your openness, generosity and trust. Until we meet again. Stay strong. Stay positive and keep believing!

Fr. Ian

FR Ian Bathgate wrote this personal and powerful letter to the people of Castlemilk as the Xaverian Order leaves the Archdiocese for other mission challenges.

Sunday readings speak of a new springtime... even when the autumn nights are drawing in!

I'M not sure we all had the warm, sunny summer we would have wanted this year, but as we find ourselves in autumn heading towards the winter, through darker evenings and colder nights, our reading of the Gospel of Mark over these months seems to follow a similar pattern.

From the heights of Peter's declaration of Jesus as the Christ (way up north in Caesarea Philippi) and the glory and light of the mountain of the Transfiguration, he takes us on a southward journey towards Jerusalem and the Cross.

These are days (and our Sunday Gospels mark it) when Jesus prepares his disciples for what's coming. He teaches them that his upcoming death is no defeat, but rather the way he must take in service, sacrifice and self-giving, bringing salvation and turning worldly ways upside-down.

As we make for Jerusalem and the Passion, not everyone will understand or accept Jesus' teachings (some are hardly listening at all,



Fr Tom Kilbride

Rector of the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain

it seems!) but some we will meet along the way will help us glimpse Jesus' meaning.

At the beginning of the Gospel, he told us "The Kingdom is near". Over these weeks, we will find the Kingdom already emerging, despite the shadow of the Cross. There's a winter approaching, but signs of spring are also already appearing!

Twenty-Seventh Sunday B

As he makes for Jerusalem, Jesus' teaching touches on the question of marriage. The Kingdom he came to proclaim and inaugurate is about self-giving, selflessness and service, rather than power or pecking-

orders. Jesus puts marriage into that context: the love of husband and wife should be something where that is most clearly in evidence.

God had planned that our life should reflect his love, and the Kingdom seeks to restore and to perfect that love in us. It looks to go beyond what was given before (through Moses) to bring about something much purer and more divine. The Second Reading (Hebrews) recognises that Jesus came to make us perfect by sharing in our lives in every respect, but most especially through his self-giving embrace of suffering for our sake.

Twenty-Eighth Sunday B

If the Kingdom is not about power or status, neither is it about wealth. It is not about possessing but about giving away. The man in the Gospel is a good man: he has kept the commandments faithfully. In fact, he probably sees his "great wealth" as a sign of blessing from God, a kind of earthly reward for his fidelity.

However, despite all he owns, Jesus points to what he lacks. The Way of Christ is the way of giving, not of having. The First Reading points to Wisdom as the real reward: an outlook which sees earthly possessions and wealth as nothing compared to being in harmony with God and living by his ways. Hebrews (Second Reading) challenges us, meanwhile, to be open to the Word of God, no matter



everything out of love and so finds and brings us peace. We are to give of ourselves in service too, sharing in his cup, and bring his peace to our world.

Thirtieth Sunday B

The story of blind Bartimaeus is wonderful on so many levels. Who can't feel for him, poor and neglected, on the sidelines, unable to see what's going on, scolded to keep quiet, yet persistent in calling out to Jesus for help?

We can almost see the excitement on his face as he jumps up, leaves his cloak behind and goes after Jesus. In fact, Jesus tells him to "Go", but instead he follows Jesus along the road (the road which is taking Jesus to the Cross).

Calling Jesus a king ("Son of David"), he seeks not privilege – like James and John last Sunday – but only mercy and healing. That, for Mark, is what the Kingdom of God means: God's mercy transforming lives and bringing freedom. We need only accept it and put our faith in it, as Bartimaeus does.

His faith saves him, he sees clearly, and he leaves all his security (his cloak, his only possession) behind to follow the Master's path of self-giving and sacrifice. The healing of blind Bartimaeus is the last story Mark tells before Jesus reaches Jerusalem. But it is the story of a true disciple, one who understands what the Kingdom and Jesus are all about – he is blind, but he sees quite clearly in this respect! – and so becomes an example of faith, joy, humility and dedication to the way of Christ, surely a model for all us disciples!

what it might cost us, for it changes us and opens us to new ways of thinking and acting.

The man in the Gospel seemed to think he had heard and acted on God's word by keeping the commandments, but he wasn't able to let it really transform him, to let go.

Twenty-Ninth Sunday B

Just before the text of today's Gospel begins, Jesus has told his disciples for the third time that he is making for Jerusalem where he will suffer, die and rise again. Then, for the third time, we hear how the disciples fail really to grasp what it is all about (this time, it's James

and John). They are still thinking of Jesus in terms of glory and power, and they want a share in that.

Everything we have been hearing about over these past weeks has spoken about service, sacrifice and loss of self, rather than status, power or self-importance. Have they not been listening? Jesus teaches them that, as Christ, he is one who "came to serve and not to be served", and so his followers should do likewise, rejecting thoughts of power or status to follow his example of service. The Servant gives

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Magical memories of my pilgrimages to Lourdes

RECENTLY heard of one of our lay Passionist companions in Dublin being interviewed on a very famous daytime phone-in show on Irish radio.

His interview was with regard to the pilgrimage with the relics of St Bernadette that is taking place throughout Ireland at this time. You may remember that the relics came to Carfin Grotto a couple of years ago as part of a UK pilgrimage.

As I write the relics are at present in Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Limerick. There would be no better person to speak about the visit of these relics to Ireland than this particular Passionist companion who is a dedicated member and leader of the renowned Oblate Lourdes Pilgrimage.

The Oblates were the first group to organise pilgrimages to Lourdes from Britain and Ireland and have been organising pilgrimages to Lourdes since 1883, and this person has been an integral part of those for a very long time.

Of course, it got me to thinking about my own experiences of Lourdes, which roughly divide into two periods, not counting a short three-day visit as an 18-year-old.

After completing my Passionist novitiate and returning to Dublin for Theology studies in 1980, I was



Fr Frank's log

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



approached by a recently formed association for people with disabilities, asking if I would be spiritual director to a group that they were seeking to establish in Mount Argus Parish.

Prior to my novitiate I had been mostly involved in music ministry with the Mount Argus Folk Group, and also in prayer group ministry, both in Mount Argus and further afield. This would be a new challenge and I was happy to take it on.

My involvement with this group was a very formative

time for me, and part of the experience was to be with them on annual pilgrimages to Lourdes. I went for a number of years while still a student, leading prayer and music, but also acting as a carer for one of the pilgrims with a disability.

On these occasions I found myself being more 'cared for' than caring.

My first experience was with an MS sufferer with very little mobility. At the beginning I was quite hopeless at helping him do the things I was meant to be

helping with, and we had such great laughs at my incompetence.

By the end of the pilgrimage, he had guided me into being much more confident and capable in my tasks.

On another occasion I had the care of a lad who was deaf. Again, we laughed at my poor attempts to communicate, but by the end of the pilgrimage he had given me a good grounding in Irish Sign Language, which sadly I have now forgotten.

Caring

Later on, after I was ordained, I became one of the priest-leaders on the pilgrimage. At first, I tried to combine that with a caring role as well, as I found it so enriching, but, in the end, it proved to be too much.

Many years later, returning to Mount Argus as parish priest in 2001, I inherited an annual parish pilgrimage to Lourdes. This was a different experience, in that we didn't have any seriously ill or disabled people with us, just dedicated pilgrims, and those with perhaps less serious illnesses.

There was a wonderful group of organisers for these pilgrimages and my task, together with a small liturgy group, was to lead times of prayer, and celebrate the Masses in the various beautiful locations

that would have been pre-booked for us, connecting us to the story of Bernadette and to the apparitions.

We were a small enough group, and these were always very special and intimate occasions.

Of course, as with my first experiences with the earlier group, we joined in with the Rosary and Blessed Sacrament Processions with the host of other pilgrims from all over the world, and had our regular visits to the baths, and these were precious moments too.

In total, I have probably been to Lourdes around 15 times. My last visit was with

Mount Argus Parish in 2008, the 150th anniversary of the apparitions.

After that, following on from the canonisation of St Charles of Mount Argus in 2007, and because it was becoming more difficult to find pilgrim tour companies to take smaller groups to Lourdes, we began to hold an annual pilgrimage to Munstergeleen, Fr Charles's birthplace in the Netherlands. But the special memories of Lourdes will always remain.

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

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Migrants risk their lives for good reason...

THERE is a clip from a Kevin Bridges show on social media in which the comedian discusses bread, ducks and Hitler.

If you can ignore the fruity language, it makes some very clever points about mental ill health, and it is a Pax Christi Scotland theory that mental ill health and peace are closely linked.

Bridges doesn't say so, but his reasoning follows Archbishop Desmond Tutu's maxim that we can't just fish people out of the river – we must go upstream to find out why they fell in in the first place.

It could well be, as Bridges suggests, that if Hitler's friends had picked up on his disappointment that his art wasn't doing so well, world history might have been very different. Did Hitler fall into the river of hatred and violence because his early years pursuing art went wrong? It is used as comedy nine decades on, but there is a serious point



to be made about cause and effect.

I'm willing to bet that the 12-year-old whose violence during the riots in August attracted very serious charges of rioting fell into his particular river of aggression because of problems at home.

This was the child whose Mum flew to Ibiza on holiday and missed his court appearance. We can only

hope that in the crowded justice situation, professionals find time to address the reasons that a 12-year-old child finds himself, as District Judge Joanne Hirst told the youth court in Manchester, playing "a greater part in the recent disorder than any adult I have seen".

Refugees don't clamber aboard a flimsy boat, having paid out their life savings (or the money cash-

strapped relatives have raised) to the very questionable people running this traffic between France and England, or across the Mediterranean, because they have heard that Europe or the UK are a version of the Promised Land.

Go back upstream and we find the horrendous situations they faced in Eritrea, Sudan, Afghanistan or wherever their particular



Marian Pallister

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

river has its source.

Dictatorships, military rule, mass murders, rape as a weapon of war, famine, modern slavery, religious persecution – so many different reasons for jumping into the river, into the boat, into the possibility of death that seems preferable to continuing in conditions that deny every human right on the statute books.

Our systems are skewed against the mentally ill, the neglected child, the refugee. They are systems that seek first to punish, rather than to nurture. And yes, as any parent knows, nurturing isn't cheap. As chair of a peace organisation, I can't resist mentioning that were we not paying out bil-

lions to maintain a nuclear weapons system, those nurturing systems could be afforded.

If we want a nonviolent society, we must look upstream and then pay out to fix what's broken at the river's source. We must talk and act on the difficulties instead of adopting violent "solutions".

The loss and damage provision for victims of the climate crisis is an example of how we could negotiate our violent world.

As Pope Francis has said recently: "Living, speaking, and acting without violence is not giving up, it is not losing or giving up anything, but rather aspiring to everything."

Bishop Brian tells of people's fear and pain as the harvest fails in Zambia

In spring of this year Aisling Gallacher, SCIAF's Zambia Officer visited the country and found despair and destruction following devastating droughts.

Her findings led us to launch an urgent appeal for the African hunger crisis shortly afterwards.

Six months on, I was privileged to accompany Aisling on her return trip to monitor the situation.

We saw field after field of failed crops. We listened to accounts of people eating mice, boiling shrub roots to drink, while some children died after picking poisonous fruits.

Maize is the staple diet, and I stood at the edge of one large field looking at dead maize stalks and emptiness while trying to fathom what our sisters and brothers felt as they gradually realised that their crops would fail.

The next harvest is not due until May.

BY BISHOP BRIAN MCGEE
BISHOP PRESIDENT OF SCIAF

I could not help but connect it to the horror Irish families felt when they encountered the potato blight, knowing the consequences. I later asked some mothers in Rufusa Village if they would be willing to share with us how they felt.

"I felt fear and then deep pain in my heart," the first answered, while the second replied: "I cry when I can't feed my children." A grandmother shared: "We used to eat three meals a day but now we only eat one small meal. I am old so I understand why we can't eat, but the children don't."

We visited Kabwe, a Diocese only 12 years in existence. Sr Marcela, Director of Caritas Kabwe, explained that when SCIAF approached them regarding a



potential project they were keen to enhance community farming skills. SCIAF sat down with them over several visits, listened and a proposal supporting farmers, women and children

was developed.

Sr Marcela praised SCIAF for their patience, guidance and friendship over seven years through emails, digital meetings and annual visits.

Caritas Kabwe felt they had been taken seriously by SCIAF whose support was not only financial but moral and practical. A genuine partnership was formed and SCIAF remains their only significant partner.

The project didn't just hand out money but concentrated on teaching techniques and sharing experiences learned from SCIAF's work in other places. Seminars were held with field officers frequently travelling into some of the most remote, and challenging parts of the country. Knowledge is better than cash as people can adapt and plan for a sustainable future.

Lakaby Mwape is the headwoman of Rufusa Village. She said: "Thanks to Caritas, what you have taught us will help us to excel. We will never go back to how it was. Our motto is to always move forward."

When I asked local peo-

ple what impact the project had made they shared many answers, including restored dignity for women and children. We were further pleased to hear that, although the drought had brought much suffering, the worst effects had been mitigated.

People's diets were varied and healthier than before. They now possessed self-confidence, resilience and hope. We were also delighted to discover that their learning had led to new innovations and that they had created co-operatives to plan together. They are now training everyone within the community and sharing that new knowledge, as they felt it was so beneficial.

People spoke of their trust in God and that they prayed for rain but also insisted that God works through people too. I thank God for SCIAF – its staff and supporters.

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

- Pope Francis

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