

MORE THAN 23 YEARS OF BRINGING THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE TOGETHER



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A Happy and Holy Christmas to all our readers

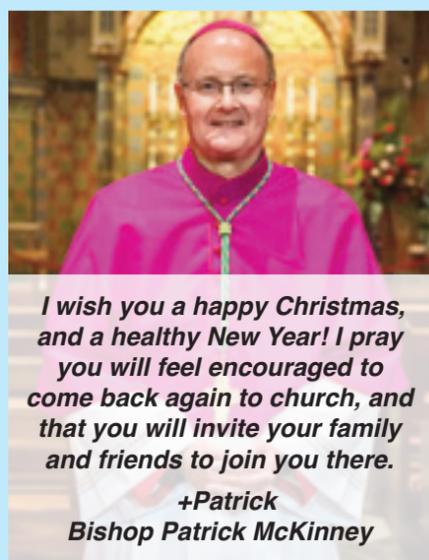


World Peace Day 2022 Education, work and dialogue between generations

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development has released the title of the next World Peace Day Message. In a Communiqué released recently, the Dicastery stated that the 55th World Day of Peace, to be held on 1 January 2022, will be entitled "Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace".



In its communiqué the Dicastery writes that "Pope Francis thus identifies three vast contexts today in full mutation, to propose an innovative reading that responds to the needs of current and future times, inviting everyone 'to read the signs of the times with the eyes of faith', so that the direction of this change awakens new and old questions with which it is right and necessary to be confronted".



I wish you a happy Christmas, and a healthy New Year! I pray you will feel encouraged to come back again to church, and that you will invite your family and friends to join you there.

+Patrick
 Bishop Patrick McKinney

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**MORE THAN 21 YEARS OF
BRINGING THE
NOTTINGHAM DIOCESE
TOGETHER**

The monthly paper for the
Diocese of Nottingham

Catholic News 

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Wanted - Parish Correspondents

The Catholic News is looking for a
Parish Correspondent in your parish
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this newspaper. All items to be
emailed to

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before 10th of the month

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Writing this article on the feast of St Andrew I reflected on some of the sad and often tragic events which had occurred in the closing days of November. Advent started with the news that mandatory face coverings will be imposed in our shops, public transport and that a compulsory 10 day self isolation would be imposed on those those who had come into contact with the new Covid variant. The word "Omicron" was a new description that we all had to get used to.

One Cabinet minister told us to prepare for Christmas "as normal", two days later another minister was "hopeful" about that very special time when we celebrate the Nativity. The revelation about Omicron came at the end of a week which had witnessed the tragic loss of life in the English Channel. This is what many had feared. This also sharply divided opinions about refugees and asylum seekers in very dangerous waters. Perhaps as in many arguments the participants needed to reflect and study the Nationality and Borders Bill published in this newspaper a few weeks ago. We all know that we are facing a world crisis, constant arguing will not solve this matter, let us hope that November 24th will not be repeated.

The political and social problems of the world will continue to escalate in 2022. Despite this our brave Missionary priests

continue to serve many countries not only with practical aid but also the promotion of the Gospel in troubled locations. I have long felt that they do not get the coverage that they richly deserve, do our Catholic MP's speak about them when they should?

During those closing days of November, Parliament debated the Freedom of Religion. The House of Commons had very few members on its green benches on what was the 40th anniversary of the "declaration on the elimination of religious intolerance." The MP's who did attend spoke of the persecution of Christians who of all the victims are the ones who suffer the greatest with women being particularly targeted. Clearly further work will be needed and we must continue to support those Christians who are in danger.

Despite the serious issues in this article we can celebrate this Christmas if only for all those who are striving to make our world a better place. We all know the intense bravery of the Holy Family. If we choose to follow their example then our children will surely benefit.

A peaceful Christmas to all our readers.

Frank Goulding
Holy Trinity Parish
Newark

Friends of St Barnabas Cathedral

Friends of St Barnabas Cathedral launched their initiative on the eve of the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate Conception, Solemn Sung Vespers celebrated by Bishop Patrick and assisted by the Cathedral Choir.

Despite a very cold evening many braced the cold, wrapped up warmly and participated in this very beautiful welcome and address; people came to discover more about being a "friend" and what this all entails.

"People throughout the Diocese of Nottingham are invited to join the Association of Friends and share this special link with the Mother Church" (from Friends of St Barnabas leaflet Sept 2021)

Following a very beautiful and moving vespers in the Cathedral, all were invited to the Cathedral Hall for refreshments and drinks. There were many opportunities to ask questions, mingle and meet with Bishop



Patrick as he extended a very warm welcome to all those present.

Ron Lynch, Chair, spoke about the vision of the Cathedral and how "friends" will be able to help and support in the future. Does being a Friend of St Barnabas appeal to you? Want to know more? If you require further details, please contact Ron via email ron.m.lynnch@outlook.com who will be very happy to assist you with any of your enquiries. A variety of yearly subscriptions are available starting as little as £25 per individual per full year.



We wish to thank all who made this possible, especially Canon Philipp Ziomek, for getting this project off the ground, putting together a team, producing an informative leaflet and encouraging many to join and attend the evening. Another special thank you to Paula

(Paula is Baking Mad) and her catering team for the wonderful food all served with a smile.

So please help if you can and want to become a Friend, we hope to hear from many of you soon.

God bless.

Cheryl Broodryk



SVP – What We Do

Our mission is to tackle poverty in all its forms through the provision of practical assistance to those in need.

The concept of need is broader than financial hardship, so visiting people who are sick, lonely, in prison, or suffering from addiction is also a significant proportion of the SVP's work. The essence of its work is person-to-person contact and spending time with people is its greatest gift. In essence the SVP strives to make a difference.

Volunteer members in the diocese of Nottingham, as well as other dioceses, motivated by their faith, are committed to meaningful and long term befriending. Inspired by the message of the Gospels they seek and find those in need and offer them sincere friendship. They visit them in their homes, in hospital and in care homes on a regular basis and offer additional practical support such as food, furniture or financial help where needed. They also organise trips and events for older and isolated people.

The SVP offers friendship and practical help to all they visit, without regard to faith, ethnicity, status or sexual orientation. As they visit people in their homes they have strict safeguarding policies and procedures and all visiting members must hold a DBS certificate.

The SVP's core friendship service is complemented by additional areas of

activity – community support projects (including community shops, furniture stores and advice centres), youth work, holiday provision and overseas aid.

In summary – the SVP offers the following:

- Visiting the sick
- Welcoming the stranger
- Supporting the homeless
- Visiting prisoners
- Feeding the hungry
- Befriending the lonely
- Comforting the bereaved

During these unprecedented times a greater number of people and families in need have become evident. Many have been moved to help them. If you have offered your support in any way and would like to continue this form of voluntary assistance please consider joining us in the SVP. There may already be a group in your parish or you might like to start up a new group. If this is the case please do get in touch by emailing lancep@svp.org.uk We would love to welcome you.

As you read this article, the run up to Christmas will be in full flow, but those in need are still with us. Can you make a difference?

Blessed Frederic Ozana
St Vincent de Paul

The fear of a generation has been laid bare in a new report compiled by the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) see page 8

The Chapter Corner



Rev Canon
Geoffrey Hunton
KHS STB BA

As I write this short article, I like many of the readers of the Catholic News may well be staring out of the window on to a rather dark, dank, and stormy December afternoon, looking forward to the winter solstice, the return of days with more daylight and warmer temperatures.

The Season of Advent which as I write is coming to its close for 2021 is one of expectation and preparation. Expectation for the Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ and preparation to celebrate once again His Nativity on 25th December, when we rejoice at the wonder of God made man.

These winter days can be a testing time for us all, but they, like the Season of Advent, which we will have journeyed through by the time you read this article, can be a tool to motivate and reinvigorate our faith. Our faith tells us that Our Lord Jesus Christ is the true light of the world; a light that enlightens and guides our whole being, from the beginning of life to the end of life.

Just as the Sun which our Earth circles is integral to our survival here on Earth, so the true light of Christ, is integral to the Christian life we live here on Earth. To be a follower of Christ is to allow ourselves to be guided by His light, of hope, truth, and love.

For almost the last two years the whole world has been at the mercy of the COVID-19 pandemic and that, as many

are aware, has placed a great strain on us as individuals and communities. Perhaps at times we may well have lost sight of the Light of Christ in our lives and parishes, have been blinded by the loss of all that we were accustomed to and have found it difficult to find and discern the Light of Christ in our lives. During this period of the Universal Synod and at this time when we adjust to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the knowledge that Christ who was born on Christmas Day gives us hope for the future.

The Synod challenges us to think about the Church at Universal, Diocesan, and Parish level, and our thoughts and reflections will have been, and will be for some time yet, formed by what we have experienced these past two years. Our parishes have undergone drastic changes. These changes should not be accepted with a feeling of despair, or indeed doubt about our future, be it the Church Universal, Diocesan or at Parish levels. Rather, they should be seen as an invigorating challenge, (as is Advent, Winter, and the Gospel message!), to discern honestly what the Spirit is calling us to face in the light of what we have faced in recent times.

January brings the New Year and like Christmas also brings new hope. During the year of 2022 may we accept the challenges that have been presented to us and may we with faith and hope and with confidence rise to the challenge.

St Mary's Academy Derby receives the Blessed Sacrament



Staff and pupils of St Mary's CV Academy in Derby were delighted and humbled to be granted permission by Bishop Patrick to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in their school chapel. They had been given a Tabernacle by Fr David Cain from St Alban's Parish, and Mr Johnson, the School Catering Manager, restored it and made it lockable.

spent time with Jesus in Adoration. They thought about preparing their hearts and souls to celebrate Jesus' First Coming and also be ready for his Second Coming. Symbolically, the children asked Jesus to wash away their sins by dissolving large tablets in water, and listened to the story of John the Baptist calling us all to repent.

During the first week of Advent, every class

Fran Wickes

Travelling Crib visits many homes



Our much anticipated annual Travelling Crib is making its way through the homes of many parish families. A lot of joy is spread as families visit each other sharing reflections, scripture and carols together. The visiting family leaves with the Crib and invites another family to join them, as they explore the message further. The crib will once again be returned safely to rest on the sanctuary of the church on Christmas Eve, as we celebrate the light of Jesus Christ entering the world. God bless.

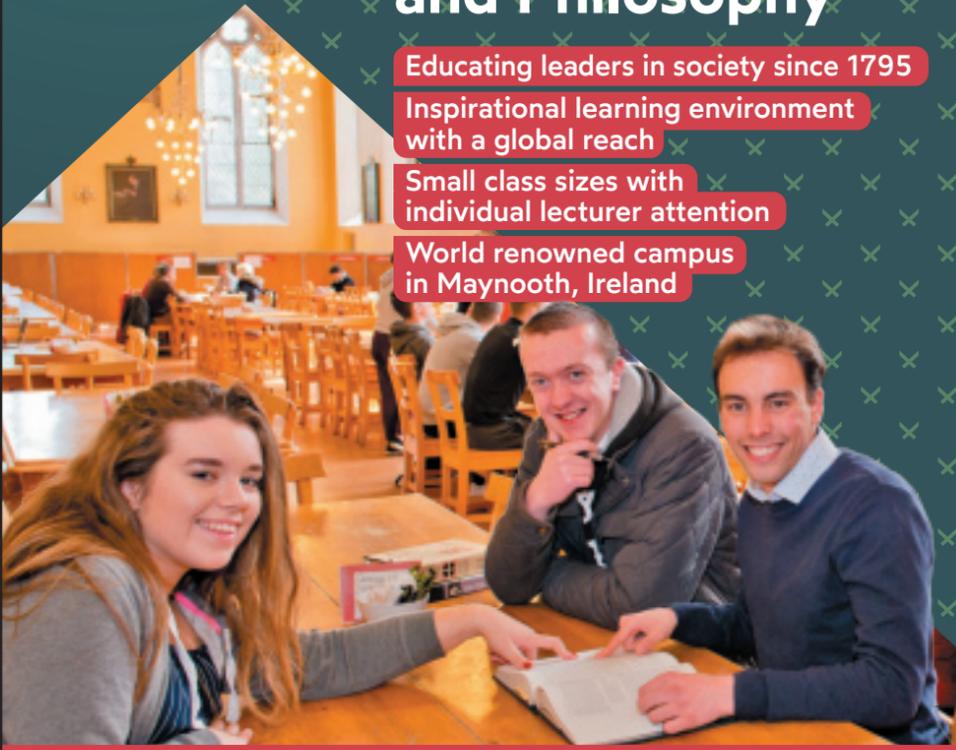
Submitted on behalf of the Good Shepherd Church.



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News from All Saints Catholic School, Mansfield

Food donation for local foodbank

Students and staff have started the Advent season by reflecting on the need of those within our own local community as we fast approach Christmas. The decision was made that our first fundraising action of Advent would be to collect food and other items for our local foodbank – The Sherwood Forest foodbank situated in Mansfield Woodhouse. Throughout the first week of Advent staff and students brought in their donations which we then all gathered together ahead of the foodbank coming in on Friday 3rd December to collect the donations. With almost 50 boxes of food donated the collection team from the foodbank were blown away by the generous giving of the staff and students at All Saints and wanted to make sure very member of our school community knew what a difference our donations would have on the those in need within Mansfield this



Christmas. We had so many boxes that the site team, together with Mr Sheehan and the willing support of the Director of NDCYS Tom Baptist certainly got their daily cardio in moving the boxes from the chapel to the front of school! Thank you again to all the staff, students and parents who supported this wonderful act of Christian charity and giving.

The Synod – Act of Worship

The Synod and the discussion around the three questions began in earnest at All Saints in the last couple of weeks with every year group from Year 7 to Year 11 attending an Act of Worship, lead by Mr Sheehan and members of the Chaplaincy Team. The Chaplaincy Team shared with their peers the enormity of the Synod and the wonderful opportunity it presents to young people to help shape the future of our Church. Jess and Rebecca in year 12 explored the remit of the Synod and explained to the students that the documents of the Synod exist in languages that over 2.5 billion people can read, making their engagement with the questions a truly universal activity. Alistair and Liam explored with the students the 'Road to Emmaus' and how the Disciples only just recognised Jesus in the final moments, before he disappeared from their eyes and encouraged the students to take the opportunity which the Synod offers and ensure they recognise Jesus in their own



lives. All the students present were asked to respond to the questions of the Synod and the nearly 1000 responses have been collected and collated by Mr Sheehan, ahead of a summary document being produced. These Acts of Worship were a wonderful opportunity for the students to see and partake in the Global Church of which they are all members.

Year 7 Retreat Day

On Wednesday 8th December, the whole of Year 7 experienced their first Retreat Day at All Saints. The day started with an introduction to the day by Head of RE and Chaplain Mr Sheehan. He discussed with the students how we can encounter Christ in our lives, with students sharing their own experiences of encountering Christ, through acts of kindness and service. The students then explored the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception and how Mary can be a great role model for how to say yes to God and allow for a meaningful encounter with Christ.



which will later feature as a display in the chapel.

During Period 2, the students were guided through a meditation by their teachers, to give them the time to reflect on the messages and ideas from Period 1. Feeling refreshed the students then engaged in group work discussing and then answering the three questions of the Synod.

In Period 3, the students explored the global nature of the Church and reflected on some of the issues facing people throughout the world through the work of CAFOD. The students then got creative and set about building their own global community through the decorating of their own paper chain people,

In Period 4, the school welcomed back former teacher Ann Neale who delivered an outstanding CAFOD workshop to the students – where they played the game 'life without taps'. Through engaging with this game the students were able to gain first-hand experience of how difficult life is for some people around the world.

To close the Retreat Day, the students celebrated Mass and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with Fr Marc. It was a wonderful celebration of Mass with the students having prepared each part of the Mass.

EU Plan to ban Christmas

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin has strongly condemned the shelved European Union plan to ban the word "Christmas." In an interview with Vatican News the Catholic prelate said the EU plan to replace "Christmas" with "holiday" to stop the use of names like Mary and John as out of touch with reality.

Though the EU plan is shelved it has left a bitter taste in the mouth of most Europeans. The plan was to make Europe more inclusive. but the backlash it generated made EU Equality Commissioner Helena Dalli to backtrack on a number of inclusivity provisions, recommending the expression "Christmas period" be replaced with "festive period," and advised against using names such as Mary and John as examples in publications.

The draft was cancelled as being "not a mature document," with Dalli saying it will be reworked and promising her commission will revisit the issue with an updated version that will cater to different genders, sexual orientations, religions, ethnic backgrounds and cultures in a diverse Europe.

The Cardinal said the EU plan does "not know how to respect even the rightful differences, the tendency to homologate



everything poses a risk of destroying the person. it's right to try to erase all discrimination. The document promoted the cancellation of our roots."

"We must rediscover the capacity to integrate all these realities without ignoring them, without fighting them, without eliminating and marginalizing them." The Cardinal bishop concluded.

by Majemite Jaboro

Pakistan: Bishops condemn lynching of Christian man

Fionn Shiner

All of Pakistan's Catholic bishops have denounced the lynching of a Christian Sri Lankan man by a mob who accused him of blasphemy, tortured him to death and set his body on fire. In a statement seen by Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need, the Pakistan Catholic Bishops Conference (PCBC) and the National (Catholic) Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) expressed outrage at the attack.

Bishop Samson Shukardin of Hyderabad, chairperson of the NCJP, Archbishop Joseph Arshad of Islamabad/Rawalpindi, president of the PCBC, and Father Emmanuel Yousaf 'Mani', national director of NCJP, also issued a joint statement.

They said: "We condemn the killing of the Sri Lankan citizen in Sialkot in a mob attack after he was accused of blasphemy.

"We urge the government to take every measure to bring all the culprits to justice and demand that the government take concrete steps to stop the continuous misuse of the blasphemy laws. Lack of accountability of those who incite violence have added to this inhuman trend that paints the picture of Pakistan as a violent society."

Priyantha Kumara Diyawadana, manager of a garment factory in Sialkot, was killed on Friday (3rd December) after employees accused him of blasphemy for reportedly asking them to remove all stickers from factory machines before a foreign delegation arrived.

There are reports that some of these stickers contained passages from the Qu'ran.

The provincial of the Dominican Order in Pakistan, Father James Channan, OP, spoke out against the killing of Mr Diyawadana.



Bishop Samson Shukardin of Hyderabad ©ACN

He said: "The ghastly murder of an innocent man under a false accusation of blasphemy, and then the lynching of his body in the road, brings shame to Pakistan. All of us are under deep shock. This barbaric killing is a crime against humanity. No religion of the world teaches such kind of killing and disgrace of a human person. This extremism in the name of religion should not be tolerated by the government and law enforcing agencies. Justice must be done and seen."

Mr Diyawadana was dragged out onto the road and tortured to death with kicks, stones and iron rods before his body was set on fire.

Footage of the attack circulated on social media and some of the mob were seen taking selfies with Mr Diyawadana's burning body.

Father Channan said: "We express solidarity and consolation with the family of Priyantha as well as the government of Sri Lanka."

Source: ACN

The Good Shepherd Church hosts its best Christmas Fair to date

On the morning of Saturday 27 November 2021, when the organisers and volunteers of the Good Shepherd Christmas Fair opened their curtains to snow filled scenes, none of them expected that this was going to be the year that set a new fundraising record for its annual Christmas Fair.

In spite of the inclement weather, families arrived in their droves to visit the free Santa's grotto and to explore the working fire engine. They queued patiently and were rewarded with homemade food and cakes, festive crafts and treats, a free Santa's grotto with sweet treat for every child, tombolas and unique gifts.

The fair was open from 10.30am to 2.30pm and raised a whopping £9,159 for charity, the highest amount raised to date.

Since 2017, the fair has been organised by Sarah Benedek, and each year has been an improvement on the previous year's fundraising success. "The volunteers and I are absolutely delighted with what we've been able to achieve. A lot of planning and preparation goes into creating an event like this and so it's a proud moment for the team when it successfully comes together. Given the circumstances of this year's fair, we were all surprised at how well we did and we thank everyone who supported our event."

The Good Shepherd Christmas Fair has been running for over 20 years and was originally hosted in the school hall, prior to the new parish centre being built next to the Good Shepherd Church

*Submitted on behalf of
The Good Shepherd Church, Arnold.*



Secret Santa Children's Party

Our annual Secret Santa Children's Party got underway on the 4 December in the parish centre. The Santa Grotto was ready, donated gifts wrapped and stacked high for collection from Santa (thanks Reg) as the visitors arrived at the centre from 12noon onwards. There were a variety of stalls available to browse and purchase gifts, tombola and lots of choice gifts for all.

Children met their friends, families socialised as they indulged over a tasty food menu with a wide choice of dishes for both adults and children. We are hugely thankful to the chef; it was very obvious a large amount of time had gone into the



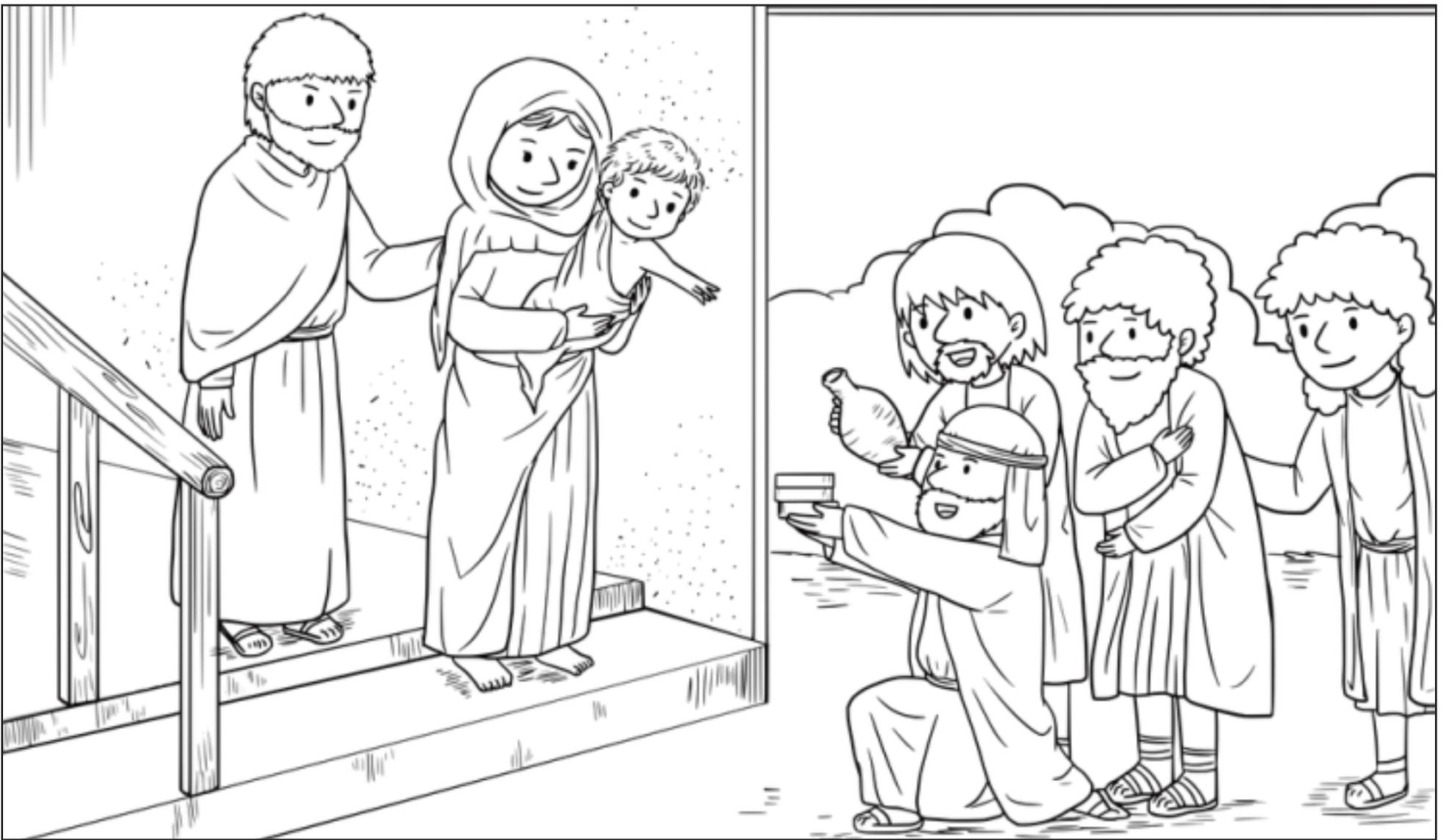
preparation and cooking of the food to make this a very memorable afternoon by all who visited. Compliments to the chef! A special thank you to the kitchen team who warmed the dishes and moved things along nicely. See you next year! As things came to an end, any surplus food was delivered to the Framework charity a short distance from our parish who were extremely thankful for receive this contribution. All funds raised at this event goes towards our parish renovation fund.



*Submitted on behalf of
the Good Shepherd
Church,
Arnold.*

Christmas Story

... in the classroom with Fr John



Whilst the gown-ups are busy in the kitchen, why not put your new crayons, colouring pencils, felt tip pens to good use by colouring in the picture above

The Christmas Story

Joseph's home was in Bethlehem. He travelled north to Galilee, probably for work in the new administrative centre being built by the Romans at Sepphoris, a few miles from Nazareth. He and fellow tradesmen would have found lodgings in the local villages, and we guess Joseph lodged at Nazareth.

He and Mary met. They fell in love and became betrothed. It's a familiar story. People travel for work or studies and meet the one with whom they will share life. It happened to Joseph and Mary. We meet them in the gospel as an engaged couple. God comes into the story. Mary is asked to be the mother of God's son. She accepts. Joseph is overwhelmed. The girl he had hoped to marry has been chosen by God. He, Joseph, must move out of the story. Matthew tells of Joseph's agonising. If he breaks the engagement officially in court, the proper way, everyone will know the child Mary is carrying is not his. No one will believe the child is the son of God. Mary would be condemned as an adulteress, even stoned to death.

Joseph decides to divorce her informally, simply breaking the engagement (as a man had the power to, but not a woman) and leave Nazareth. He would be despised for

deserting Mary and could never return. Matthew tells us that was his decision – as God comes again into the story. Joseph is reassured he may still take Mary as his wife and be father to the child – even to name him. Joseph accepts, as Mary had, and their home is made.

The Romans call a census - not a counting of people but registration of land and property for taxation purposes. Joseph has to return to Bethlehem to ensure his property is not over-taxed or confiscated. He and Mary decide to travel together and the baby will be born in Bethlehem, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Micah – the only prophet who cites Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah.

They travel in good time. It's a long journey, over a hundred miles, and they must walk. Follow their journey on the map at the back of your bible...

South from Nazareth to the border with Samaria, east to the river Jordan (no Jew would travel safely through Samaria), across the Jordan, down the eastern bank as far as opposite Jericho, cross into Judaea and on to Jerusalem and Bethlehem.



No sane man would take his wife on such a journey just before she was to give birth. They made the journey comfortably and in good time. What a welcome would have awaited them, young couple, awaiting the first child. They would have stayed in Joseph's own house – the one on the property that the Romans would be taxing. "Whilst they were there the time came for Mary to have her child," says the gospel according to Luke. There is no panic, there is no stable. The family would have surrounded them with love. Luke mentions the family as they listen to the shepherds tell their story of how and why they have come. The shepherds – who are they? They

symbolise the leaders of God's people – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David – all shepherds. Luke is weaving symbolism into his story of the birth of Jesus. He allows the family of Joseph, who witness the birth, to speak with the shepherds of Israel who longed for the birth. This is gospel, beyond story or history. A family scene of a birth is seen through the fulfilling of the faith of a waiting people.

Joseph and Mary stay for a while in Bethlehem (Circumcision, Presentation in the Temple) and then return home to Nazareth, Joseph probably selling the Bethlehem property.

Sisters open 'house of hospitality' for asylum seekers and refugees

by Ruth Gledhill

The Sisters of St Joseph of Peace have opened their first UK house of hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham, just a few miles from where the congregation was founded in 1884.

St Joseph's House of Hospitality, built within a renovated church and presbytery dating from the late 19th century, will be home to three sisters, as well as short and long-term guests referred by the Nottingham charity Host. The house is also the congregation novitiate.

The house was opened formally yesterday, the anniversary of Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker network of Houses of Hospitality, at an event for sisters and associates in the UK region. The event began with a liturgy of welcome in the converted church hall, followed by a procession and blessing of the rooms and a liturgy of thanksgiving.



Sister Katrina Alton CSJP, who helped discern and steer the project and who is a member of the founding community, speaking after 27 people drowned trying to cross the English Channel, said: "This house feels needed now more than ever, particularly given the failure of COP26. Everyone has the right to migrate, but we're dealing at the moment with people who are forced to migrate – and they're forced to migrate because of British foreign policy and because of the climate emergency.

"But it's not a migrant crisis, it's a crisis of hospitality. We have a sacred duty as Christians to welcome the stranger. In the early Church every home had a 'Christ room', a space to welcome the stranger – if

you were rich enough to have a room, it was a room; if you were poor, it was a mat to sleep on. For me, this house is about returning to that sacred duty of hospitality, and it's about cutting through the narrative that there's a migrant 'crisis'.

"I think it's important that we actually stop talking in some ways about refugees and asylum seekers: these are our brothers and sisters, and somebody's daughter, mother, father, brother and sister. The deaths in the channel are individual tragedies."

Speaking at the event one of St Joseph's community members, Sr Margaret Byrne CSJP, pictured below, said: "When we began work on renovating the house we discovered that the foundation stone had been blessed by our Congregation's co-founder, Oratorian Bishop Edwin Bagshawe of Nottingham, just a year before he co-founded our Congregation. And we are just a short walk from our Congregation's first novitiate. So we are returning to our roots.

We are also returning to the roots of our charism of peace through justice. Bishop Bagshawe saw a kindred spirit in our founder, Margaret Anna Cusack. Like her he was greatly concerned about justice for the poor. The local coal mines and industrial development had brought a huge influx of people to this part of Nottingham; you can imagine the overcrowding, unjust wages, poor treatment and living conditions for the miners in particular."

The congregation discerned the call to open houses of hospitality following a commitment at its 2014 Chapter to practise "radical hospitality". The Sisters have also opened a house of hospitality in New Jersey, USA. "We are called to a deeper and wider living of community for mission in company with poor and marginalised people," that chapter call read.

"Our contemplative discernment pushes us, individually and as a congregation, to action; deeper mutual support enables us to take risks for justice, peace and the integrity of creation."

The sisters expect to start taking guests in 2022.



The Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, founded in 1884 in Nottingham, England by Mother Clare (Margaret Anna Cusack) and Mother Evangelista (Honoria Gaffney), are an international community built on a rich heritage of promoting social justice as a way to peace. Sisters and Associates minister in education, health care, religious

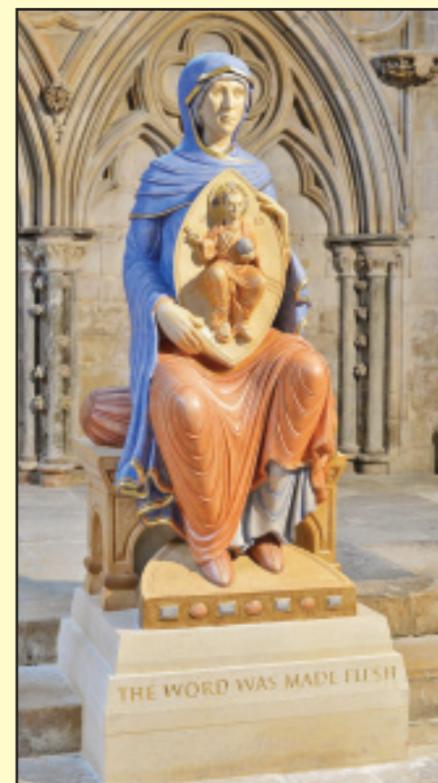
education, parish ministry, social justice, spiritual direction and peace ministry in the US, UK, Haiti, and El Salvador. For more information, visit the Congregation website at www.csjp.org

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For Your Eyes Only

The mission: a Marian pilgrimage for Advent; the pre-arranged rendezvous: 1050 hours, underneath the western arches, seek out the stripy scarf, and so, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, four parishioners of the Lincoln Catholic Churches met to undertake a pilgrimage within the walls of Lincoln Cathedral, also known as the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln. A pilgrimage guidebook provided a route of fourteen stops together with a Scripture reading, prayer, reflection and questions for each stop. The route was disguised so as to conclude with the Marian Chapel and the questions linked to the Immaculata. The day included time for lunch and debriefing in the Cathedral cafe. Successful completion of the mission was marked by a rendition of Immaculate Mary around the Blessed Virgin Mary Sculpture before all disappeared into the evening shadows, for locations unknown.

Mary, through her Immaculate Conception, lived for God alone, the perfect model of the advice given to her ancestors "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deut 6:5) and echoed by her son, Jesus "Jesus declared, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" (Matt 22:37). We are also called to heed these words;



Lord, through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, help us please, that we, too, may live for your eyes only.

With thanks to Fr Eddy Jarosz and Deacon Kevin Pearson, of St Hugh's Parish, for the kindness shown and inspiration given. To God be the glory.

Jo



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In-work poverty 'blights the lives of children and young people'

"I worry that when I grow up, I won't find a good job, and that if I find a job that doesn't give me much money, I will be poor and homeless" ... Boy, 10

The apprehension and fear of a generation has been laid bare in a new report compiled by the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) on the effects of in-work poverty on children and young people.

The report pulls together existing research on in-work poverty and captures the voices of some of the children and young people the volunteering organisation supports through its Mini-Vinnies groups, as well as those of the SVP volunteers, staff and St Vincent's community support centres who help people living in poverty every day.

Stealing futures - In-work poverty and its impact on children and young people shines a light on "one of the most daunting silent issues facing the UK today", with the impact on children and young people often going undetected and ignored.

The report quotes a recent Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) study on the rise of working poverty which suggests the trend has been growing under successive governments since 2004. The IPPR study found that rates of poverty in working households increased to a new high of 17% in the first quarter of 2021, equivalent to more than one in six households.

The SVP report also points to a shift in welfare policy over recent decades to one which focuses on work as the main route out of poverty. However, the SVP suggests this is only possible if "work in today's Britain is adequate, provides a fair wage and sufficient flexibility."

While acknowledging that unemployment levels were lower than expected when the pandemic first hit, and that wages are rising in some sectors, the SVP report highlights that "the reality is that rising housing costs, low wages, unaffordable childcare costs, compounded by growing inflation and the pandemic are leaving a rapidly growing number of working households in poverty."

At the end of 2020, the Trussell Trust reported a spike in the number of people using foodbanks for the first time. This has been corroborated by the SVP's frontline services across the country.

The SVP report also quotes figures from the Office for National Statistics which state that as of April 2019 there were over 4.2 million low-paid jobs in the UK; equivalent to 6% of all jobs. The SVP suggests that "with working-age adults making up approximately 60% of the UK population, addressing in-work poverty should be a priority for policymakers."



Stealing futures - In-work poverty and its impact on children and young people

In Spring 2021, the SVP ran a listening exercise across the country to speak with children and young people, aged between seven and 17, and their teachers to understand their personal experiences of living in, or supporting, households affected by in-work poverty.

"Growing up in a household experiencing in-work poverty has a deep and lasting impact on children," comments SVP National President Helen O'Shea. "The experiences of the children and young people we heard from were striking. Many spoke about the extreme hardship of having to be almost entirely isolated due to Covid restrictions, and how that led to mental health issues, anxiety and a deterioration in their physical health. Many children were also aware of the pressure on families living on low incomes who are struggling to afford food and digital equipment for school."

Helen O'Shea continues: "Of major concern is the fact that many of the young people we spoke with expressed a real fear of not being able to find a 'good job' which would allow them to be financially stable and 'not homeless'."

The report found that children as young as seven were very aware of the importance of achieving good grades to get a 'good job'. The report notes that while this demonstrates ambition, it also reveals the very real anxiety increasingly expressed by younger children in terms of financial stability and employment. It also displays their real concern about ending up in low-paid employment and about their fear of homelessness as a result.

The SVP report points to the much-anticipated Employment Bill as "a good opportunity to put in place measures aimed at tackling in-work poverty." The SVP has set out three policy approaches to tackle the blight of in-work poverty for adults and children alike, including provisions which ensure employees have access to suitable working arrangements such as flexible working from day one, and secure work arrangements which prohibit zero-hour contracts.

The SVP also suggests that high childcare costs are one of the compounding reasons for low-income households falling into poverty, and it calls for an extension to free childcare provision. The SVP is also calling for a stronger social security safety net, including the reinstatement of the £20-per-week increase in Universal Credit. The widespread adoption of a Real Living Wage would also address in-work poverty, suggests the SVP.

Helen O'Shea concludes: "We believe that charity is not the solution to in-work poverty. We need a strong commitment from the Government to tackle this hidden crisis, including policies to tackle insecure work, the high cost of childcare and low wages. These measures will go some way to improving the quality of life and the opportunities for children and young people, and ultimately the health and prosperity of the nation. In the meantime, the SVP will always be on hand to support people in poverty of any kind through kindness and dignity."

James Robert Welton Source: SVP

Following the COP26 pledges and targets announced recently, Fr. Patrick Bassey, Assistant priest at St Hugh of Lincoln Church in the City of Lincoln, proposes 'seven ecological works of mercy' that would provide the religious background and incentive for the proper appreciation of the goals of the conference and Bishop Patrick's eight – point diocesan framework policy on the environment. Below is part two of his three-part article. Part three will follow in our next edition.

Ecological Works of Mercy

By Fr Patrick Bassey
Part Two



As noble and timely as the visions from COP26 may be, they need to be pursued in an integrated manner that brings together the political, economic, cultural, technological, and religious imaginations and creativity of everybody.

The age-long emphasis on the *corporal and spiritual works of Mercy* by the Church provides both the practical and spiritual platforms for the expression of this virtue of mercy. The corporal works of mercy include: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. The *spiritual works of mercy* include: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently with those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead. Pope Francis has also spoken of the *eighth work of mercy*, a work that is both corporal and spiritual; 'the care for creation'. Within the context of the widened covenant community of God, Man and Nature, this eighth work of mercy is ecological in nature, thus the phrase *Ecological Works of Mercy*. 'Care for creation' involves a variety of issues. Given their complex nature, these issues have been treated uniquely though not in isolation from one another nor from the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. They complement each other and make us Christlike and perfect.

Why seven works? The number seven is significant in biblical and Christian numerology. It occurs many times in the bible and its meanings and connotations include perfection, completion, totality,

wholeness, healing, restoration, freedom, mercy, fulfilment of oaths and promises. We are familiar with the fact that God rested on the seventh day after he had finished his work of creation. The Jubilee year, a time of renewal, restoration, forgiveness, and restoration was celebrated after seven cycles of sabbatical years (Lev. 25;1-4, 8-10). The Church also speaks of seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, Seven words of Jesus on the Cross, Seven Sorrows of Mary, Seven deadly sins, seven corporal works and seven spiritual works of mercy. The seven ecological works of mercy covers the broad spectrum of our Christian responsibility towards all of God's creatures.

Our 1st ecological work of Mercy is to **acknowledge the beauty and integrity of creation**. From the very beginning, God saw that all he had made was good (Gen. 1:31). In each creature there is a unique presence and expression of God's infinite wisdom and goodness, and each creature possesses in its own right a latent goodness and perfection. Man must therefore respect the particular goodness and integrity of every creature. Man must also avoid any disordered use of things. Whatever hampers the dignity and integrity of nature should be considered as morally wrong and sinful. Recognising that all creatures are good and beautiful does not deny humans their unique worth, it rather makes it obvious, serious, and commendable. It also gives us a sense of responsibility towards other creatures (LS. 68, 118).

Our 2nd Ecological Work of Mercy is to **acknowledge our relationship with other creatures**. Pope Francis reminds us

that "all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion" (LS.86) The spectacle of their countless diversities and inequalities tells us that no creature is self-sufficient. Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church. Art.340*).

The 3rd Ecological Work of Mercy is to **develop an inner ecological conscience**. Conscience is that moral principle in the human heart. It is what Jesus refers to as the seat of all human actions, both good and bad. A well-formed conscience is the voice of God. It is also inherently and perennially ecological in disposition. It is thus the principle of goodness- justice, equality, charity, mercy, respect for life and care for others. On the contrary, a bad conscience is a heart prone to greed, materialism, exploitation, injustice, inequality and 'compulsive consumerism'. The formation of this type of conscience should be the ultimate aim of education. As a matter of fact, Pope Francis has rightly observed that 'Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society, and our relationship with nature" (LS 215). Our diocesan policy on ecological advocacy would seek to integrate environmental catechesis and education into our traditional faith formation programs, homilies, marriage formation and sacramental preparations.

Disabilities Day

The Church strives to uphold the rights and dignity of all

The International Day for People with Disabilities is celebrated on 3 December. To mark this important day, the Catholic Church promoted a time of universal prayer and issued the following statement:

Day for People with Disabilities

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has long promoted the rights of those of all abilities, calling on Catholics to bear witness to the pain of exclusion and to commit to changing the culture of society so that it values the dignity of all life from conception to natural death. The gifts and talents of people with disabilities should be upheld and celebrated. We must continue in our efforts to ensure all people feel that they can participate fully in the life and mission of the Church. Today, let us turn our attention again towards this issue and highlight the work being done in the Church and beyond. In Pope Francis' recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, he made explicit reference to the importance of disability inclusion: "Many persons with disabilities 'feel that they exist without belonging and without participating'. Much still prevents them



from being fully enfranchised. Our concern should be not only to care for them but to ensure their 'active participation in the civil and ecclesial community. That is a demanding and even tiring process, yet one that will gradually contribute to the formation of consciences capable of acknowledging each individual as a unique and unrepeatable person'. "I think, too, of 'the elderly who, also due to their disability, are sometimes considered a burden'. Yet

each of them is able to offer 'a unique contribution to the common good through their remarkable life stories'. "Let me repeat: we need to have 'the courage to give a voice to those who are discriminated against due to their disability, because sadly, in some countries even today, people find it hard to acknowledge them as persons of equal dignity'"

Source CBCEW

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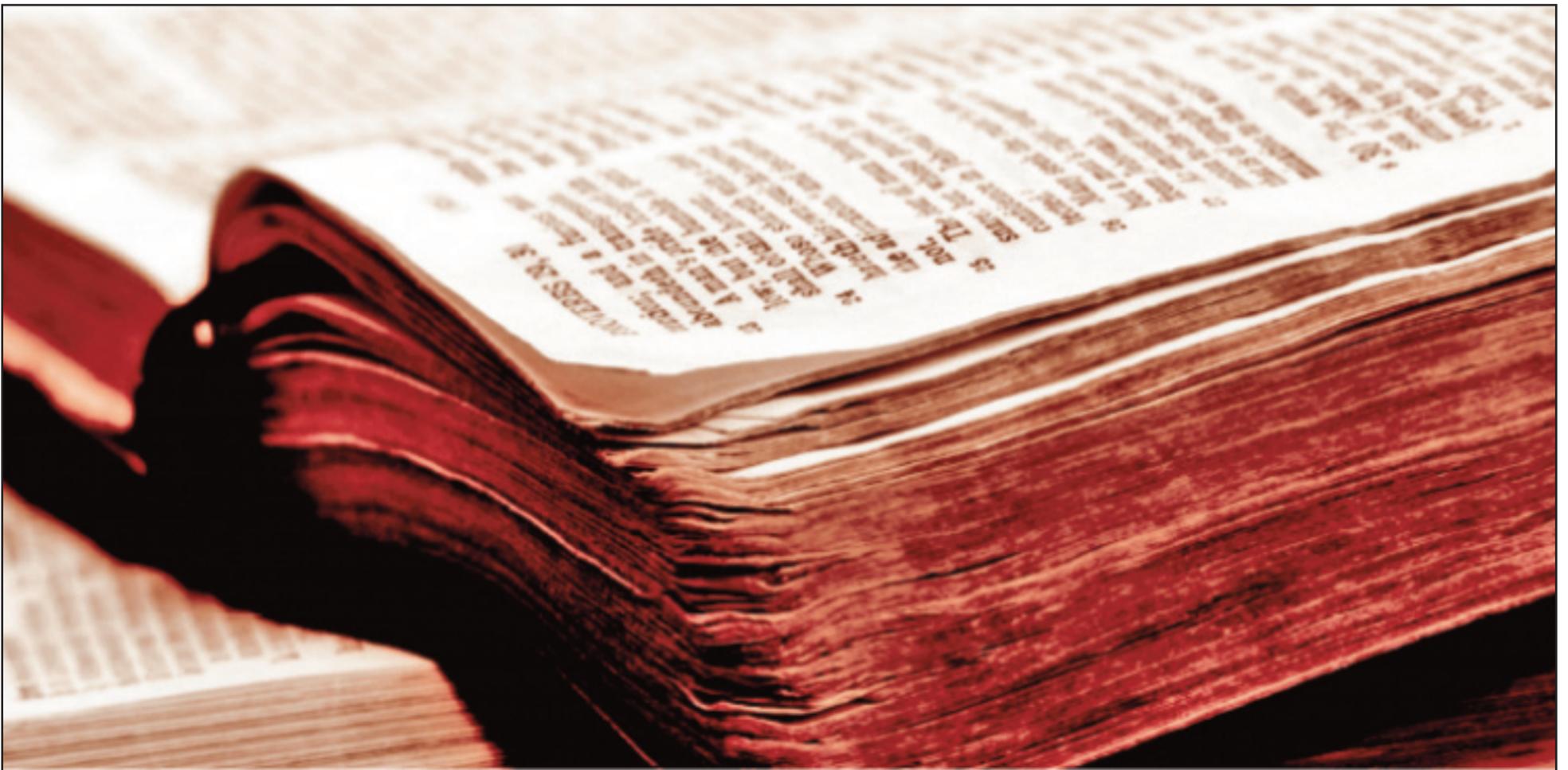
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Gospel Quiz for Students and Teachers, People and Priests

By Fr John Daly

The fascination of searching for answers is not in itself prayerful or spiritual

Everyone who loves the Gospel might enjoy answering these questions. Some of them are straightforward, some require a little thinking and one is almost impossible to answer. The fascination of searching for answers is not in itself prayerful or spiritual – but the new knowledge and understanding gained may become other sources of prayer. Everyone can enjoy the quiz.

A good A Level student should certainly be able to answer most of the questions – but a class working for GCSE could make a good attempt, too. The questions require a fresh look at familiar Gospel texts – but this is the joy of the Gospel and of all Scripture: the discovering of new understanding in familiar texts: “Old things and new from the treasure house,” as Jesus says.

1. Jesus’ body was wrapped in a shroud on the Friday but when the disciples came to the tomb on the Sunday there were linen cloths and a headband. Who took the shroud and when?
2. Nathanael is one of the apostles and is mentioned twice in the Gospel. What was he doing on those two occasions?
3. Jesus was arrested after the Last Supper.

He was crucified about 9.00 am (the third hour) on the Friday morning. Between his arrest and crucifixion he had a long trial before the Sanhedrin (“many witnesses were called”), was brought twice before Pontius Pilate and once before Herod. What night was he arrested?

4. We have three accounts of the calling of a disciple at the Customs house. He has two names – what are they? What was his father’s name?
5. Another of the disciples has the same father as the disciple in question 4. What was the father’s relationship to Jesus?
6. At the wedding feast of Cana water became wine, stone became flesh, six became seven. Please explain.
7. John says that Jesus had a meal at Bethany with Martha and Mary and their brother six days before the Passover. Mark says two days before the Passover. Is one of them mistaken? If both are right – how?
8. Are the centurion’s servant and the nobleman’s son two versions of the same story or two different events? Did the centurion and Jesus actually meet each other?
9. The Law ordained (a) trials should take place during the hours of daylight; (b) if a verdict of death were passed a day should elapse before the sentence be carried out.

Write a convincing timetable of Jesus’ arrest, trial, condemnation and execution – allowing that the process of law was followed. Pontius Pilate and fair-minded members of the Sanhedrin would not have allowed the law to be by-passed.

10. Name the twelve apostles. Which of them were Jesus’ cousins?
11. “Standing near the cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary of Clopas and Mary of Magdala.” Are there three women or four? If there are four, what is the name of the sister?
12. Did Judas receive the Eucharist before he left the Last Supper?
13. How many women came to the tomb on the day of Resurrection? Name them.
14. Two of the Gospel accounts say that the thieves crucified with Jesus joined in mocking him and one Gospel account speaks of the good thief who defended him. Which are the Gospels and who is correct?
15. Name the brother of Martha and Mary. Lazarus is his nickname.
16. There are six Gospel accounts of the feeding of a large crowd. How many people were fed and how many loaves and fishes are there in the different accounts?
17. Twice we read of a miraculous catch of

fish by the apostles. Is it the same story or two separate events? One of the stories says the apostles caught 153 fish – what does that number signify?

18. Jesus’ genealogy (family line) is given by Matthew and Luke. Some of the details differ strangely. The greatest difference is that Matthew mentions four women. Who are they?
19. There is no stable in the Gospel stories of Jesus’ birth. What places are mentioned by Matthew and Luke? Who are the people with Mary and Joseph who are astounded by what the shepherds tell them?
20. How many accounts of the Ascension are there? From where did the Ascension take place?

How well did you do? Judge yourself by exam classification.

A* (17+), A (15+), B (13+), C (11+), D (9+), E (7+), F (5+), U (4 -)

When I was teaching I would enjoy asking a class to read the four accounts of the Resurrection morning and then to write a summary. The protests came quickly “It can’t be done!” “They contradict each other!” and I had brought them to the question: how were the four different accounts of the Gospel written? The Word of God is living and active . . .

How to support seafarers this Christmas

When small children go to bed on Christmas Eve, their minds are full of images of Santa Claus flying through the night sky with reindeers pulling a sleigh piled high with presents. But, of course, it's not Santa who will bring their presents - it's seafarers.

When we are doing our Christmas shopping, we might not be aware that an estimated 90 per cent of all the food and other goods imported into the UK arrive by ship. This includes children's toys, fridges, computers, cars, oranges, and coffee, to name just a few items.

If it wasn't for the seafarers who work on these ships, then many of the shelves in our shops would be empty - and children everywhere would be disappointed when they got up on Christmas morning.

For many seafarers, Christmas won't be a time when they are at home with their families. It will often mean being in the middle of an ocean or in a foreign port, thousands of miles away from home.

In ports up and down Britain this Christmas, it will be business as usual for port chaplains at Catholic charity Stella Maris (formerly known as Apostleship of the Sea). One of the charity's chaplains is Steve Willows, who is based in Immingham, Lincolnshire.

"We will start handing out Christmas gifts from the beginning of December. This is usually to bigger bulk vessels that may have a long voyage and so Immingham would be their final port before Christmas," he said. "If there is any shopping that crew members

might want to do, so that they can celebrate Christmas properly on board, then we will bring it to the ship. In general, we have done more shopping due to seafarers not being able to go ashore still, because of the pandemic."

Throughout Advent, Steve has been leading morning prayer on Facebook for seafarers and supporters of Stella Maris, reading the Gospel of the day and providing a short reflection.

Most seafarers would prefer to be at home celebrating with their families, said Steve: "I met a seafarer at the beginning of November who was about to go home and I asked him when was the last time he spent Christmas with his family and he couldn't even remember."

Stella Maris provides SIM cards so seafarers can contact their families, and, free of charge, WIFI units that its port chaplains leave on board for the duration of a ship's stay in port.

Steve said parishes and schools in Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Immingham, and elsewhere in Nottingham diocese always provide amazing support for seafarers at Christmas. "We give seafarers either shoe boxes or gift bags, which contain items such as knitted hats, gloves, socks, and chocolates."

Typically, seafarers are away at sea for months at a time, often working twelve hours a day for low pay and living in cramped conditions and with little in the way of creature comforts.



Even on the largest container ships, such as the OOCL Hong Kong, which is 400 metres long and can carry 21,000 metal containers, a crew might just consist of a dozen seafarers. Working on such a huge ship with just a few other seafarers can be a lonely experience.

Most seafarers today are from countries in the developing world, such as the Philippines and India, and join a ship to earn enough money to support their family back home. It is estimated that 60% of all seafarers are Catholic.

Bryony Watson, another Stella Maris port chaplain in Immingham, said, "Most years we would expect to help get seafarers to Christmas Masses or arrange a Mass on board, but this looks unlikely this year. Many seafarers are not allowed shore leave

as their company and captains deem it too big a risk.

"The majority of seafarers I've met have, generally, not left their ship for the entirety of their contract. It is getting common to hear that, in nine months, they have only stepped foot ashore to check the distance between the hull and the water line."

If readers would like to find out more about helping a seafarer this Christmas, and the work of Stella Maris, please go to www.stellamaris.org.uk/christmas/

Let us also pray for seafarers and fishers and their families at this special time of the year.

Gregg Watts

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Religious Freedom still not achieved

On Saturday 20th November, Dr Caroline Hull from Aid to the Church in Need gave a talk at St Mary's Parish Centre in Derby organised by the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission. Through personal stories, photos and statistics we heard about the continued persecution in our world of people for their religious beliefs. Despite the aspirations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and the lip service paid to it by the majority of countries, religious believers are still subjected to coercion. Indeed, Christians are subjected to persecution, intimidation and duress more often than those of any other faith.

Two main drivers of persecution are intolerant and militant extremist groups. Communist China remains one of the world's worst countries for imprisoning members of religious groups. Similarly in Eritrea the state has a record of imprisoning Christians. Unregistered House Churches are among the most vulnerable – and although around 30 Evangelical Christians were released last year in an act of

amnesty, hundreds still remain behind bars.

One of the areas where Christians have suffered appallingly in recent years has been the Middle East. Here the intolerance of militant extremist groups has resulted in a massive exodus of Christians as the Church is driven out of its ancient biblical heartland. It isn't just the Christians who suffer. Among the other religious minorities targeted by extremists are members of the Yazidi faith. In Iraq, Yazidi families fled with the Christians.

As in the Middle East, Africa has seen Islamist groups carrying out the religiously motivated ethnic cleansing of Christians and other minorities. Nigeria, in particular, has faced the problem of the extremist group Boko Haram. Although all parts of society suffer from Boko Haram's campaign of terror, the extremists have made no secret of their intention to drive Christians from the region. In 2020 alone, 3,000 Christians were killed in Nigeria by militant



groups. Boko Haram have also kidnapped girls and young women, forcing them to marry their members and convert to Islam.

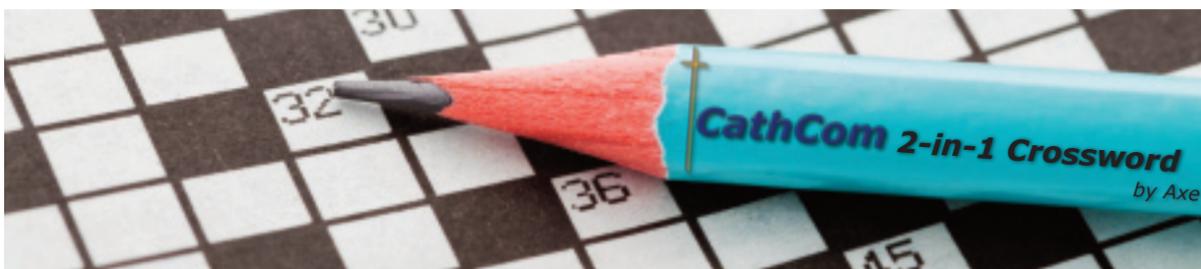


Caroline spoke about what we can do to help combat this huge problem. Prayer, informing ourselves, sharing what we learn with others, and taking action are all vital parts of making a difference. The ACN website www.acnuk.org has a wealth of information.

After listening to the talk we took part in an interactive exercise, each person in the group playing the role of a member of a refugee family having to make life changing decisions about their future.

November 24th was 'Red Wednesday', when ACN encourages us to pray for persecuted Christians and other minorities around the world. St Mary's Academy's Rosary Group prayed the Sorrowful Mysteries in support of those whose lives are blighted by intolerance and hate for their beliefs – the children wore their red ACN glasses to ensure they saw red!

Frances Hazel



You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

CRYPTIC Across

- 1 Cases I select at random for the book (12)
- 8 Concentrated exchange of Russian using little American money? (7)
- 9 Widespread looting at first during search (5)
- 10 Nets second following corner (5)
- 11 Stay in bed to read Punch, perhaps (3,4)
- 12 Obtain a new piano sound, but there's no intro to give one a clue (4,2,7)
- 15 Japanese massage some Muslims, and after time, American's back (7)
- 17 Up to now more than one's being abominable (5)
- 19 Hand needs week to bring on puppy (5)
- 20 Still, it is the road back after stagnation (7)
- 21 Decision at pontoon bridge: maybe it's one too far? (5,2,5)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 What cohesion? Everyone's different (4,2,3,3)
- 2 Georgia's study, majoring in dance (5)
- 3 Money nearly stretches to the Orient in subscription which covers two continents (7)
- 4 Carol's nice dull bijou building (2,5,6)
- 5 Lost cat after a little way, following fish (5)
- 6 See Jeff Endicott's lodging in address out east (7)
- 7 Scanned to get rub, something that's good for blocked pipes (12)
- 13 Virginia, one at home being the most self-important (7)

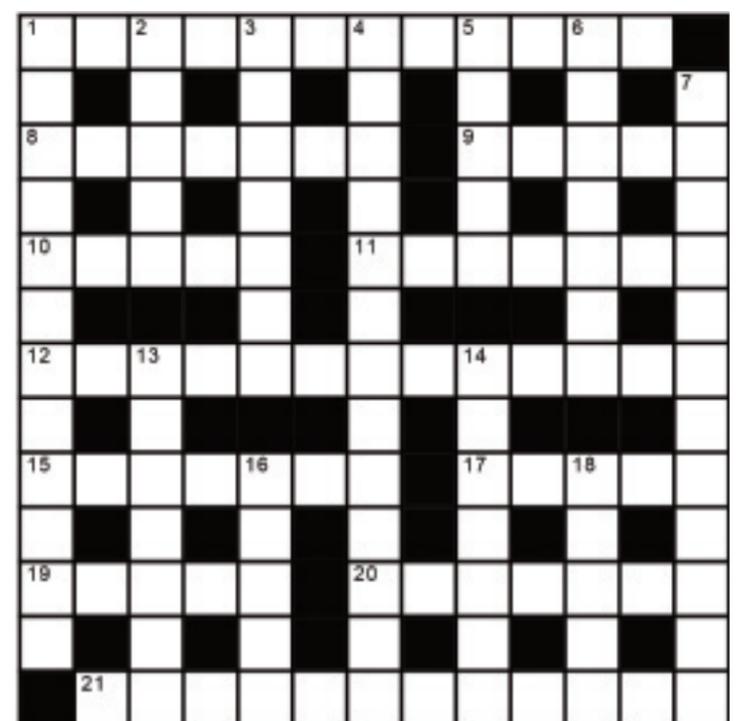
- 14 Critical point for resort in Florida (3,4)
- 16 Subject of river stems from a line on a map (5)
- 18 Sounding impatient but no good leaving when all are playing together (5)

QUICK Across

- 1 One of the OT's Wisdom Books (12)
- 8 Focused (7)
- 9 Weapon (5)
- 10 Ensnares (5)
- 11 Don't get up early from bed (3,4)
- 12 Get wind of something; suspect (4,2,7)
- 15 Japanese form of acupuncture (7)
- 17 Legends of the Himalayas (5)
- 19 Cub; pup (5)
- 20 Sloth; passivity (7)
- 21 Dilemma in pontoon to hold what you have or gamble by taking another card (5,2,5)

QUICK Down

- 1 Saying that everyone has a right to have different preferences (4,2,3,3)
- 2 Latin American dance with dancers in single file (5)
- 3 Unbroken landmass from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific (7)
- 4 Christmas song anglicized as Good Christian Men, Rejoice (2,5,6)
- 5 Alley cat, for example (5)



- 6 Title of respect from the Ottoman Empire (7)
- 7 Chesty cough medicine (12)
- 13 Most conceited (7)
- 14 Resort at the southernmost tip of Florida (3,4)
- 16 Subject matter (5)
- 18 In music, 'to be performed by the entire ensemble' (5)

SOLUTION

Topic, 18 Tutti.
 6 Effendi, 7 Decongestant, 13 Vainest, 14 Key West, 16 his own, 2 Conga, 3 Eurasia, 4 In Dulci Jubilo, 5 Stray, 19 Whelp, 20 Inertia, 21 Stick or twist. Down: 1 Each to Lay into, 12 Have an inkling, 15 Shatusu, 17 Yetis, 19 Ecclesiastes, 8 Centred, 9 Rifle, 10 Traps.