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# A day for all to rejoice and be glad

It was a very special occasion for the diocese when Bishop Terry ordained Robert Colombari, Douglas McKittrick, James Nevison and Tom Rolfe to the diaconate at St Mary's Cathedral. Deacon Robert reflects on his experience...

The words of Psalm 118:24 were ringing around in my head as we prostrated ourselves on the floor of the cathedral: "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

For Tom and James for myself, it was the culmination of a four-year period of formation and development, and for Douglas the day marked a huge waypoint on his journey to the Catholic priesthood, having previously tended the Lord's Garden with a distinguished career as a member of the Anglican clergy.

I think we would all say it was an emotional day filled with joy and a sense of awe at where we had arrived.

As I entered the almost empty cathedral earlier in the day to the beautiful sound of the choir and organist making their final preparations for the day, I realised this chapter of our story was coming to an end with a new one just about to begin.

I know we all felt enveloped in joy with the presence of our family and friends, as well as the attendance of the diocesan clergy and congregations from our various parishes. Coaches were arriving outside and the atmosphere was building with an air of celebration and excitement palpable from the distance of the sacristy.

Everyone I spoke to had nothing but praise for the musical and choral accompaniment provided by Steven Maxson, so many thanks to all concerned, and to Father Peter Taylor, who was our guide throughout the day.

Also, thanks must go to the altar servers who were our fellow students, Mark Dias, Mark Good and Jeremy Wynne, who has recently been ordained to the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

Finally, thanks must go to Bishop Terry and all the cathedral clergy, staff and volunteers who made the day happen, and all those who have been our mentors, guides and tutors throughout the entire formative course – there are too many to mention by name.

The support we have received during these years of formation from our wives, families, friends and members of our communities – sometimes a kind word, prayer or shared opinion – has been motivational at a time when most needed, so thank you to you all.

If this has motivated anyone to discuss vocations, please do not hesitate to have that conversation with your parish priest, deacon or religious.

- See page 15 for more photos from the day.
- Bishop Terry's column will return next month.



Deacons Douglas McKittrick, Tom Rolfe, Robert Colombari and James Nevison with Bishop Terry – Photo by Scott Akoz

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## NEWS

# Pilgrims of Hope walk side by side through York

**Bishop Terry joined the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, to lead an ecumenical pilgrimage through the city of York, culminating in a shared service at York Minster to mark the Jubilee Year 2025.**

Pilgrims from every tradition and none came together to walk in the spirit of hope, peace and renewal.

Proclaimed by the late Pope Francis under the theme Pilgrims of Hope, this Jubilee invited Christians everywhere to journey together in faith, bearing witness to the unity we share through our baptism in Christ.

Pilgrims gathered at the Minster's south door to greet Archbishop Stephen and Bishop Terry as they arrived after walking together from the shrine of St Margaret Clitherow, one of York's great witnesses to the Christian faith.

The pilgrimage then entered the Minster for a special ecumenical service celebrating baptism and the shared calling to walk together in hope and unity.

The service included the renewal of baptismal promises and drew on both Anglican and Catholic liturgies.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us, "We are all

one in Christ Jesus. We belong to him through faith, heirs of the promise of the spirit of peace."

Archbishop Stephen said: "When I met with the late Pope Francis, he encouraged us to walk together, work together and pray together. This opportunity to gather in York Minster is doing just that.

"We are all part of the family of God – sisters and brothers on the way. It was a great joy to be present at Pope Leo's Installation Mass, and I was greatly encouraged when he expressed his commitment to seeking the re-establishment of full and visible communion among all those who profess the same faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

"I look forward to this time of prayer, friendship and shared witness as we build stronger bridges across our traditions."

Bishop Terry added: "In this year when we mark the 1,700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, it is especially meaningful to stand alongside one another and profess together: This is our faith; this is the faith of the Church, and we are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus Our Lord. Amen."



Bishop Terry and Archbishop Stephen lead an ecumenical pilgrimage through York – Photo by Ravage Productions

## Mass marks 70 years of Canon Pat's priesthood

**Canon Pat Harney celebrated a remarkable milestone with a special Mass at English Martyrs in York to mark the 70th anniversary of his priestly ordination.**

Bishop Terry and Monsignor Gerard Robinson both concelebrated the Mass as friends from some of the parishes Canon Harney has served turned out in force to wish him well. Earlier, the New Horizons Bridging Trust had presented Canon Harney with an anniversary card and gift.

This little-known diocesan trust was

established over 30 years ago by the late Monsignor Seamus Kilbane with the sole aim of keeping in touch with retired priests by sending a card and small gift each year on the anniversary of their ordination.

Trust secretary Helen presented Canon Harney with his card and gift, while Father Jo Michael and Canon Jerry Twomey presented a commemorative sash.

We thank Canon Pat for his many years of faithful service to the diocese and assure him of our prayers and best wishes.



Canon Pat Harney with parishioners and clergy at his 70th jubilee celebration – Photo by Lars Karlsson

## Honours to St Vincent's after big city derby win

**St Vincent's Parish in Hull took the honours in a Father's Day football match against neighbouring parish Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel.**

There was friendly but fierce play on the St Vincent's School field as dads from our two parishes battled for the coveted trophy.

Father Richard Marsden did a great job of refereeing the game and Father Richard

Nwagwu, who played in the game, received the trophy for St Vincent's from Father William Massie.

The match was followed by a buffet in the school hall and the following Sunday, Bishop Terry invited all who played to the front of church and congratulated them all.

Catherine Holtby



Father Richard Nwagwu receiving the trophy from Father William Massie

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# Sun shines as pilgrims honour Martyr of the Moors

Hundreds of pilgrims from all over the diocese converged on Egton Bridge to celebrate the memory of Blessed Nicholas Postgate and the martyrs of England and Wales.

Three buses from different parishes arrived and many other pilgrims travelled by car. This year we were blessed with ideal weather – warm, dry and some sunshine, but not too hot. Although showers had been forecast, we fortunately missed them.

The altar servers led the clergy procession from the church to the field, where the Vicar General, Monsignor Gerard Robinson, and Abbot Robert Igo of Ampleforth led the concelebrated Mass.

Children from St Hedda's School at Egton Bridge formed the offertory procession, and music was provided by diocesan director of music Steven Maxson and assistant director of music Andrea Maxson.

In his homily, Canon David Grant reminded us of the difficult times in which Blessed Nicholas Postgate lived and of how he served the Catholic community for so many years.

His training for the priesthood began in Douai, France, and then for many years he acted as private chaplain to the Catholic gentry at Burton Constable and Halsham.

He returned to the Hermitage near Ugthorpe when he was around 60 years of age and spent the remainder of his life caring for the spiritual needs of his fellow Catholics over a very wide area, before being executed at York



Canon David Grant preaching

in 1679 at the age of 83.

After Mass the clergy procession left the rally field to the strains of the hymn composed by Father Postgate while he was in prison. Later, dozens of pilgrims queued for a blessing with the martyr's preserved hand, which Abbot Robert had brought from Ampleforth Abbey.

Many remained in the field to enjoy a picnic, while others enjoyed renewed friendships over refreshments provided by the ladies of the parish in the school canteen.

Thanks were expressed to all who had contributed to the organisation of the event. Next year's Postgate Rally will take place at Ugthorpe.

Monica Ventress



Pilgrims at the Postgate Rally



Our clergy process to the sanctuary

## Jubilee pledges promote love, kindness and care

Pupils from All Saints School in York came together to write their pledges for the Year of Jubilee.

The contributions were printed out and used to decorate a table in the Chaplaincy Room for pupils, staff and visitors to read.

Pledges included to be more conscious of our actions, to pray for those around the world suffering due to conflict, to pick up litter and to spread kindness.



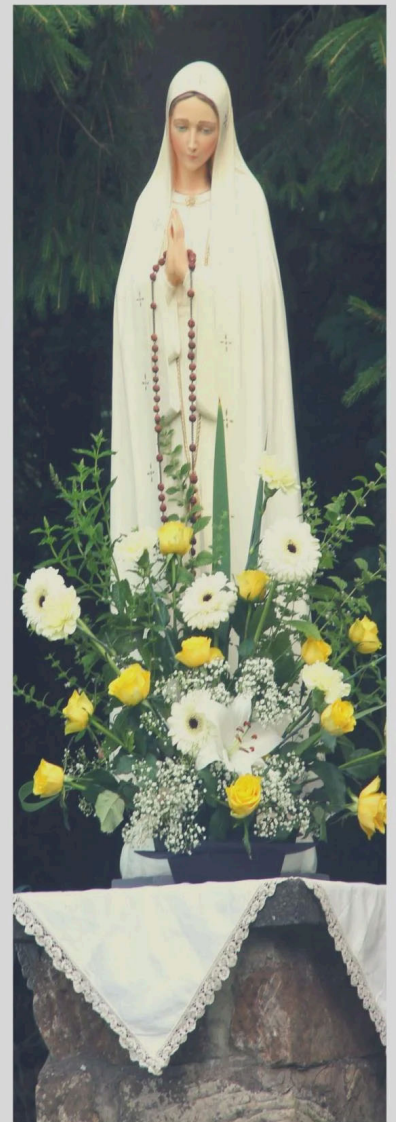
Year 7 pupils Aggs and Beth with the pledges

Sunday August 17  
2025

at the Shrine of Our  
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Osmotherley

PILGRIMAGE TO  
CELEBRATE THE  
FEAST OF THE  
ASSUMPTION  
OF OUR LADY

- 2.30pm Rosary
- 3pm Mass
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## SCHOOLS

# Leaders praise retiring head's 'legacy of dedication'

Past and present colleagues, governors and family gathered for an emotional celebration to honour a dedicated executive headteacher on her retirement.

Julie Sutherland, executive headteacher of St Mary's VC Academy in Market Weighton and St Mary & St Joseph VC Academy in Pocklington, has enjoyed a distinguished 34-year career in education.

After beginning her teaching journey at St John of Beverley Primary School, Julie joined St Mary's in Market Weighton in 2001, becoming headteacher in 2011 and taking on the role of executive headteacher for both schools in 2014.

She has been instrumental in fostering a supportive and nurturing environment for both staff and students in Catholic education.

"It has been a pleasure getting to know Julie and she will be sadly missed," said St Cuthbert's RC Academy Trust CEO Rachel McEvoy.

"The schools have flourished under her guidance and she leaves them in a strong position for continued success. We all wish her the very best in her early retirement.

"Julie's legacy of dedication and leadership will leave a lasting impact on our community."

## Public speaking award for Sarah

President of Province 5 of the Catenian Association Paul Healy visited Middlesbrough's Trinity Catholic College to present Sarah Ugwu with a trophy and certificate for winning her category in its public speaking competition.

The Year 9 pupil captivated her year group with an outstanding and thought-provoking speech to earn this prestigious award.

English teacher James Carroll praised her achievement and encouraged Year 9 pupils to consider taking part in the competition, which next year will be held at Trinity.

A huge well done to Sarah, who is a credit to her school. Of course, Province 5, and especially Middlesbrough Catenians, are very proud of you too.

Martin Lodge



Paul Healy with Sarah and teacher James Carroll



Julie Sutherland, centre, with the four headteachers she served under during her teaching career before taking on headship herself

## Father Bill honoured at Holy Communion Mass

St Aelred's Catholic Primary School community gathered for a Mass to celebrate the children who have made their First Holy Communion this year.

It was a joyful and prayerful occasion, made even more memorable by a heartfelt tribute to Father Bill Serplus to mark the 25th anniversary of his ordination.

During the Mass the children and staff gave thanks for Father Bill's service to St Aelred's Parish and our school family ahead of his move to the Holy Name of Mary Parish in Middlesbrough in September.

At the end of the Mass, the children proudly presented Father Bill with a gift to mark this milestone, a beautifully framed piece of artwork featuring scripture from one of the

school's favourite hymns, Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet.

Father Bill was delighted with the gift and shared his appreciation for the joy the school community continues to bring him. The artwork will hold pride of place in Father Bill's new presbytery.

Headteacher Claire Hughes said: "We are so grateful to Father Bill for his wonderful service to our school. Father Bill always speaks in such a relatable way to the children and is such a cherished and loved member of our school family. We will really miss him."

The school community looks forward to holding a farewell Mass to thank Father Bill and wish him well as he embarks on his next chapter.



Celebrating our Schools

**Christ the King Primary School**  
A member of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust  
Tedder Avenue, Thornaby, Stockton-On-Tees TS17 9JP  
Executive Head Teacher: Mr M Ryan  
Head of School: Miss H Lickess  
Tel: 01642 765639  
Email: enquiries@ctking.npcat.org.uk

**St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School**  
Part Of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust  
South Bank, Middlesbrough TS6 6TA  
Tel 01642 835370  
Headteacher: Miss C McNicholas  
email: enquiries@smc.npcat.org.uk



Father Bill with First Communion children from St Aelred's, York



## Teamwork and determination earn trophy for St Peter's

St Peter's VC Academy from Scarborough Schools were crowned champions as St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust came together for the annual under-11s girls' football tournament.

It was a day that not only celebrated girls' sporting talent this time around but also reflected the Catholic ethos of community and togetherness at the heart of the trust.

In a display of skill, determination and teamwork, St Peter's triumphed after a series of exciting and hard-fought matches. Their performance, and those of all the participating teams, captured the spirit of unity and resilience.

The tournament was a powerful example of how our trust's mission – Encounter, Learn, Grow, Flourish – comes to life.

Throughout the event, the atmosphere was one of community, with plenty of noisy encouragement from the sidelines. Teams supported each other, celebrated each other's successes and played with integrity, living out the values we aim to nurture in all young people.

Sincere thanks go to Mr Arridge, the PE team from St Mary's College, the referees and the many staff and families who came to support and cheer on the players. Their efforts helped make the event such a positive occasion.

As girls' football continues to thrive across our schools, it's clear that opportunities like this are helping to build not just athletes but young people of character, faith and courage.

Naomi Bedworth



The victorious St Peter's girls

## City hall filled with harmony for music spectacular

In an unforgettable celebration of faith, community and creativity, more than 400 pupils and staff from across the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust came together for the second Summer Music Spectacular at Hull City Hall.

The evening was a powerful display of the musical gifts nurtured within our schools – gifts we recognise as blessings from God. From the opening note the concert was a joyful testament to the shared spirit of the trust's community.

The event featured an impressive 80-strong primary orchestra, made up of young musicians from across our schools. Their performance, full of energy and precision, set the tone for an evening of inspiration.

A wide variety of ensembles and musical groups followed, showcasing everything from classical pieces to contemporary arrangements.

The night reached a climax with a massed choral finale, uniting the primary and

secondary schools in a breathtaking performance.

The sight and sound of hundreds of young voices raised in harmony brought the audience to raucous applause and captured the strength and unity of our trust family.

The event was a living example of the St Cuthbert's Trust's mission. Pupils encountered new experiences and friendships, learned through practice and collaboration, grew in confidence and expression and truly flourished in their shared achievements.

Sincere thanks go to the dedicated music leaders from St Mary's College in Hull who coordinated the event and to the families who supported and helped make the evening such a success.

They witnessed not only outstanding musical talent but also the joy and transformation that come when faith, education and the arts come together in celebration.

Naomi Bedworth



Young musicians at the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust Summer Music Spectacular

## Community is the winner as teams come together

Football really was the beautiful game when ABG Graphic from Bridlington and Acorn FC from Hull came together for the first time.

The match was the dream of St Vincent de Paul Society members in Bridlington and Hull, part of a small army of SVP volunteers seeking out those in need of support, helping veterans, the elderly, isolated, families in poverty, prisoners, the homeless and on this occasion, the refugees and asylum seekers of Welcome House in Hull.

Acorn FC won 5-0 but both teams took home trophies for community cohesion and awareness.

Bridlington mayor Angela Walker, who attended with consort Graham Walker, said: "It was a fantastic day – congratulations to all involved."

The day was a victory for building relationships with those who have struggled through war and famine to live in peace in the UK.

The men, women and children who came from Welcome House were so grateful and thanked the SVP and Bridlington residents for the opportunity to show we are all human and share the love of friendship, family and sport.

Two of the Acorn FC players were scouted for Bridlington Rovers, and we wish them all the

best in their trials shortly.

If you would like to make a difference in your community and have ideas but are not sure

how to put them into practice, please consider joining your SVP conference.

Call or text me on 07554 336984. Donations

are also welcome on the Just Giving page "ABG Football Club".

Teresa O'Hagan, Membership Support Officer



Father Albert Schembri with SVP volunteers who organised the big match



## NEWS

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**Organ recitals continue in Hull**

The Parish of St Anthony & Our Lady of Mercy in Hull is holding a series of organ recitals. The music continues with Julian Savory, from St Mary's, Nottingham, on Saturday August 2, and the church's own organist, David Craggs, on Saturday September 27.

Admission is free, with donations to the Church Building Fund welcome. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served after the recitals.

**Invitation to join day of prayer**

People across the country are invited to join the National Week of Prayer (September 6 to 14) or to host a local gathering. Organisers say the tradition of national days of prayer has acted as a beacon of hope at pivotal moments in the UK's history, such as when King George VI proclaimed seven such days during World War II. To find out more visit [nationalweekofprayer.uk](http://nationalweekofprayer.uk).

**Cathedral upgraded to Grade I status**

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has awarded the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in Liverpool Grade I listed status, following advice from Historic England. The cathedral, previously Grade II\* listed, is now nationally recognised as a building of the highest architectural and historical interest. Built between 1962 and 1967, the cathedral represents the greatest Roman Catholic post-war architectural commission in Britain. It was built over an earlier Sir Edwin Lutyens-designed crypt, intended to be part of a grand classical-style Catholic cathedral in Liverpool that began in the 1930s, but construction was halted, largely due to financial constraints and the outbreak of World War II.

**Lent 2026 Passion play open for bookings**

RISE Theatre's 55-minute, one-act Passion Play is now available to book for indoor performances at churches during Lent 2026. It is performed by four professional actors who portray 23 characters, blending physical theatre and a contemporary soundtrack. Each performance costs £800 plus travel expenses, which will be shared between churches during each tour week. Churches are encouraged to recoup costs through ticket sales or donations and Rise Theatre provides posters and digital marketing materials to assist with promotion. For more information email [admin@risetheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@risetheatre.co.uk) or visit [risetheatre.co.uk](http://risetheatre.co.uk).

**Bear's book is a number one seller**

A book the Christian adventurer Bear Grylls launched at this year's Flame youth event has become a Sunday Times Number 1 bestseller. The Greatest Story Ever Told: An Eyewitness Account tells Jesus' life through the eyes of five eyewitnesses, using Jesus' own words from the Bible. The book has sold 9,000 copies so far and was recently published in the US. Churches are encouraged to join the Big Church Read this autumn, reading the book in five sessions with videos and discussion questions. The aim is for 100,000 people in more than 1,000 churches to participate and to gift one million copies across the UK this Christmas. To find out more visit [thebigchurchread.co.uk/the-greatest-story-ever-told](http://thebigchurchread.co.uk/the-greatest-story-ever-told).

# Full marks for school whose faith is lived out through acts of service

**A Middlesbrough school has been praised for living out its faith in the local community as it was handed a perfect report after a recent Catholic Schools Inspection.**

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School in Nunthorpe achieved the best possible score in all 16 categories and was judged to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship.

Headteacher Sarah Brady said she was so proud of everyone who plays a part in making the school such a wonderful place.

She said: "A special thank you to the staff, who are always so committed to our school. The whole team attended our recent First Holy Communion, which is just one example of their passion and dedication."

"We are also blessed to have many people from the parish supporting us in so many ways – our parish priest, Canon John Lumley, our catechists, the SVP and so many more."

"Thank you also to Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust for their invaluable support and to the diocesan team for their ongoing continuous professional development."

The report highlighted weekly visits to a care home, fundraising initiatives, litter-picking, writing to prisoners and contacting their MP about injustices as just a few examples of how the school enriches the community.

Pupils are also taught from an early age to pray a wide variety of ways, including Lectio Divina, examen, guided meditation, breath prayers, Rosary and litany, as well as going on retreats to Osmotherley and Ampleforth. "Pupils know they are loved and they feel a deep sense of belonging," the report says. "Adults know they are highly valued. Leaders are inspirational in their dedication to the pupils in their care. They are highly ambitious for all and are persistent in their pursuit of excellence. Christ is at the centre of decisions they make."

"Standards in religious education are



Pupils at St Bernadette's are taught from an early age to pray a wide variety of way

exceptionally high. The subject knowledge pupils display in lessons is outstanding as a result of highly effective teaching. Work is presented well and with a deep sense of pride.

"Links to the parish are exceptionally strong and this is highly valued by the community."

Pupils enjoy school greatly. They display joyful dispositions during prayer and liturgy and create a culture of mutual respect. They are inspired to grow spiritually."

One parent told inspectors: "Love and kindness is always shown. Our children know this is a safe place to take risks."

Pupils said lessons are "very active because they make learning fun" and "teachers give us challenges which push our thinking on".

Prayer is central, with one pupil commenting: "It makes me feel like the Holy Spirit is with me. It is very special."

Miss Brady added: "We live our school vision of making positive impacts in the world through many acts of service."

"We visit a local care home weekly, we care for our environment with our allotment and chickens, we fundraise for many charities and we also like to raise awareness of social issues that are close to our hearts. One pupil reported, 'I know I can brighten someone's day by my actions.'"

"Our children have exceptional behaviour and this has been noted in both our Ofsted and Section 48 reports. They really shine everyday being the best they can be."

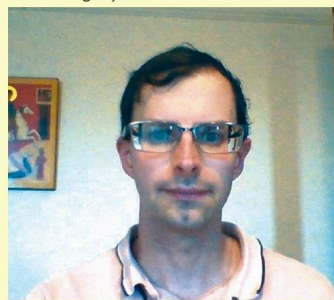
## A Letter From Madonna House – Consecration to Our Lady

**On August 15 2015, I renewed my consecration to Jesus through Mary. This was the first time I would do this on my own, as I had previously done the consecration, albeit with the rest of my family, at about yearly intervals.**

I had chosen to renew my consecration at this particular time in my life for two reasons.

Firstly, I had asked to begin formation to join the community (known within Madonna House as "appliance").

My spiritual director at the time asked me to make the consecration as a step towards committing myself to God's will for me with



the help and intercession of Our Lady.

She gave her yes to God and continues to be an example of self-gift and trust in God. The consecration to Our Lady has had a major part in the history of our apostolate.

Early on, the foundress, Catherine Doherty, and her husband, Eddie, were running an apostolate in Combermere, Canada, but things were still a little nebular in terms of what direction they should take.

A respected priest friend convinced them to consecrate themselves to Our Lady. So on February 2 1951 they made the consecration together and afterwards the community began to flourish.

Subsequently, everyone looking to join our community, as well as the guest who stayed with us long enough, was strongly encouraged to make this consecration to Our Lady, as it is still done today.

Secondly, I chose August 15 as my consecration day since it is celebrated with great festivity at Madonna House. We usually pray an "Akathist to our Lady", an Eastern Christian hymn and prayer service, on the vigil.

We have either a solemn Roman Mass on the day or a Byzantine Divine Liturgy, and festive meals.

It is the day we especially honour the women in our community. The men offer them corsages of flowers before Mass, and there is a word of gratitude from our director general of laymen at the meal.

Part of my reasoning for doing my consecration on this date was to begin making reparation for the wrongs that I had seen and heard about done to women by men. In consecrating myself on the day we honour women, I would be dedicating my life to defending the dignity of women and helping men to do the same.

So at the end of Vespers for the Assumption in 2015, before the community, I made the consecration to Jesus through Mary. I had elected to use a simpler French consecration formula since it was more meaningful to me, being the one my family used when we made the consecration.

This step in my life was the beginning of a journey of gradual day-by-day growth in trust of God's merciful plan for me and letting go of living by my own will.

I highly recommend that anyone interested in the spiritual life to make this consecration. God bless you all these summer days.

**Mathieu Dacquay**



# Father Pat Smith passes away after long illness

**Monsignor Gerard Robinson was the principal celebrant at the Requiem Mass for Father Pat Smith at Sacred Heart Church, Redcar.**

Father Pat died peacefully in Yew Tree Care Home, Kirkleatham, Redcar, on the morning of Thursday June 19.

Born on November 29 1946 in Ardrossan, Scotland, Father Pat studied at All Hallows Seminary in Dublin and was ordained to the sacred priesthood at St Augustine's, Redcar, on May 31 1970.

His first appointment in the Diocese of Middlesbrough was as assistant priest at the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Hull.

In 1972, he was appointed as assistant priest at St Aelred's Parish, Tang Hall, York, where

he served for three years.

He then moved to St Joseph's, Middlesbrough, to serve as assistant priest until 1978, when he was appointed as assistant priest at St Alphonsus Parish, Middlesbrough.

In 1981, he was appointed as assistant priest at St Thomas More, Middlesbrough, where he remained until 1983, when he was asked by the bishop to serve as administrator of the old St Mary's Cathedral.

In 1984, he became parish priest of St Leonard & St Mary's, Malton, where he remained for four years, and then in 1988, he was appointed as parish priest at Sacred Heart, Redcar, where he remained until 1995.

In 1995 he moved to serve as administrator

at St Mary's Cathedral in Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough and in 1996 he was appointed as parish priest of St Paulinus, Guisborough.

In 1997, he moved to Corpus Christi, Middlesbrough as parish priest, staying until 1999, when he was appointed as parish priest of Our Lady's, Acomb, York.

His last post was parish priest of St Bede's, Marske, from 2013 until his retirement in 2017.

We give grateful thanks to Dolores, his friend for many years, who has supported him and looked after him up until the very end.

Please pray for the repose of Father Pat's soul and for his family and friends at this sad time.



Father Pat Smith, who has died after a long illness

# Proud Scot with a gift for listening and inspiring

**Liam Gardiner was a fellow seminarian of Father Pat's at All Hallows College in Dublin for four years. The two renewed their friendship when Father Pat was appointed to St Bede's in Marske, where Liam is now a parishioner. Liam gave us this reflection...**

Father Pat related to people easily, was always interested in what people had to say and he had a wonderful sense of humour.

He also had a beautiful singing voice. My own father used to love his singing of Simon and Garfunkel songs on the Sunday afternoons when he came home with me for a few hours and everyone enjoyed his

singing in the concerts held in All Hallows, where he even appeared on the same stage as Dana.

Father Pat loved to listen to Scottish music and was always proud of his Scottish heritage.

When Father Pat came to St Bede's, his homilies were always inspiring and encouraging us to lead Christian lives whatever challenges we had to face.

Father Pat attempted to lift our spirits with a humorous story included in his homilies when appropriate.

He often spoke about the people he had supported as a chaplain to the prison in York. He never judged people but always tried to support them in the life they now lived and people responded to him because of the way he related to them.

Father Pat had to face many challenges in recent years. After he retired as a parish priest, following an operation on his knee, he unfortunately found it increasingly difficult to walk, eventually being forced to use a wheelchair.

His memory began to deteriorate, eventually leading him to be looked after in a care

home.

It was wonderful to see the people who continued to visit Father Pat as his condition worsened, particularly his housekeeper Dolores, who in the last weeks of Father Pat's life would be present at mealtimes to feed him.

Father Pat celebrated 55 years as a priest on May 31 this year. It was so sad to realise he was not able to recognise or celebrate this jubilee.

May he rest in peace.

# Bernard's lifelong commitment to animals, family and faith

**We were saddened to hear of the death of Bernard Swift, who contributed to the Catholic Voice as a photographer and served on the diocesan communications team for many years.**

Bernard was also a much-loved vet, working at the Haven Veterinary Group's site in Holderness Road, Hull, for more than 35 years.

Born in Wigan on October 16 1943 he moved to Hull in 1969 to Hull to work at what was then Oldham and Wills as an assistant vet, specialising in small animal work.

In 1970 Bernard married Sheila at St Anne's in Freshfield and they were soon joined by Helen, Nick, Rachel and Elizabeth. Rescued dogs, cats and tortoises, and an assortment of hamsters, gerbils, fish and budgerigars completed the family!

When working, Bernard's policy was to always treat every animal brought to him as though it were his own. The many tributes from previous clients and from vets who worked with him attest to that.

Bernard was also an excellent teacher and young vets, including Sheila, learnt a great deal from him and after a few years he became a partner in the practice.

"He was dedicated to both his patients and their owners and would think nothing of going that extra mile to help them out," said a spokesperson for the practice.

"To us he was a supportive colleague and friend, and a knowledgeable mentor to our younger vets. Although he retired more than 20 years ago, many people still ask after him

or recall him looking after their pet."

In retirement he was able to offer his time as secretary of Hull Catenians, of which he was a member for 46 years, and fellow Catenians formed a guard of honour at Bernard's funeral.

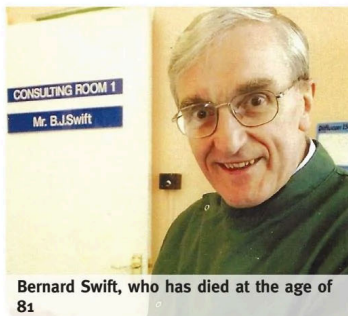
Bernard's Catholic faith was the bedrock of his life. In retirement he attended daily Mass and he was sacristan at St Anthony's until the pandemic.

All who knew him would know he was undressed without his camera round his neck!

In recent years Bernard and Sheila moved to Warrington to be closer to family.

He died peacefully in his sleep on Easter Sunday morning, having received absolution from the hospital chaplain and enjoyed a piece of chocolate tiffin.

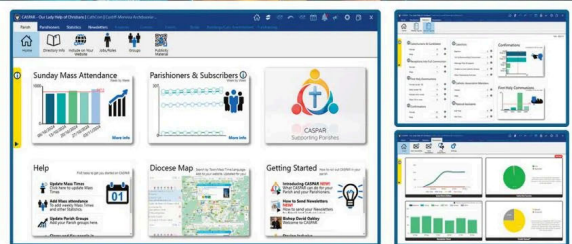
May his gentle soul rest in peace.



Bernard Swift, who has died at the age of 81

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## NEWS

# Papal blessing completes couple's journey of love

The first time Ruth and Patrick Smith went to see the Holy Father they were strangers. The second time they were a newlywed couple receiving the Sposa Novelli blessing in Rome. Ruth tells us more about their heartwarming story...

Our story started back in August 2023, when we both attended World Youth Day in Lisbon.

Despite living in the same diocese we had never met before and had our first proper conversation while waiting for Pope Francis to arrive.

After that, we were inseparable for the rest of the week. We talked and prayed together constantly. During the gruelling 10km walk to the park where we were to spend the night before the final Mass, Patrick shielded Ruth from the 40-degree sun with a large umbrella and despite the huge crowds, we remained by each other's sides for the whole journey!

Just as the sun was going down, Pope Francis arrived for an hour's Eucharistic Adoration. The Blessed Sacrament was projected onto large screens and together with 1.7m young Catholics we knelt and prayed. For both of us this was a special moment.

Six weeks after we'd returned from World Youth Day we attended the March for Life together in London and it was after this that we started dating.

We were engaged on June 22 at the York Oratory. Patrick chose this date because it is the feast day of Saints John Fisher and Thomas More, both of whom were martyred witnessing to the truth of Christian marriage.

After the engagement we prayed at the shrine of St Margaret Clitherow and then visited All Hallows Church at Goodmanham, where the pagan chief Coifi is said to have converted to Christianity back in 625.

We were married on the May 31 at St Vincent's Church in Hull, the church in which Patrick's parents were married and where he received his first Holy Communion.

The Mass was celebrated by Father William Massie, to whom we are enormously grateful for all of his support and advice during our marriage preparation sessions.

It was a beautiful day and one we will remember forever. We only came to hear of the Sposa Novelli blessing by chance when two visiting seminarians from the North American College mentioned it to us last Christmas.

Having heard how we met they said we must try to get a blessing from Pope Francis. Sadly, that wasn't possible, of course, but we feel enormously privileged to have met the new Holy Father, Pope Leo.

After a week's honeymoon in Austria, we travelled to Rome by train to attend the Wednesday General Audience. Despite getting to the Vatican gates at 7.30am there was still a huge queue to get in.

Strictly speaking, couples are advised to provide their marriage certificates as proof of a Catholic marriage, but we had only been married a week and our certificate hadn't yet been processed by the registry office back in England.

Thankfully we had a video of our wedding on our phones and after some cajoling, the Swiss Guard let us in with the other couples.

There was a real sense of excitement and camaraderie, with couples from as far afield as Brazil, India and the US.

Then, in the scorching heat with no shade or water, we waited for the Pope to appear – just as we had when we first met!



Pope Leo with Ruth and Patrick in St Peter's Square

The new Pontiff arrived at around 10am and, after driving through the crowds in St Peter's Square, he delivered his catechesis on the Gospel reading that day, which told the story of Bartimaeus, the blind beggar.

It was translated into various languages but he gave it himself in English, Spanish and Italian. Then came the moment we'd all been waiting for. After greeting some newly ordained priests, Pope Leo made his way over to the newlyweds and to our astonishment started to greet each couple personally.

We'd been expecting a general blessing to be given but he spoke to and blessed all of us

individually.

We were rather star-struck but managed to tell him how we'd met and that he was always in our prayers.

He was extremely gracious and friendly and we were so happy to be able to start our marriage in such a grace-filled way.

We really hope our story will inspire other couples to receive the Sposa Novelli blessing. The only conditions for it are to be in a valid Catholic marriage and to have been married for less than six months.

Please pray for us as we start what we hope to be a long and fruitful marriage.

# Pilgrims gather to honour last Abbot of Jervaulx

Members of Hambleton and other Catenian circles and parishioners from Northallerton and Aiskew gathered in the ruins of Jervaulx to remember the life and death of the abbey's last abbot and to seek solutions to present-day problems.

In 1525 Henry VIII, self-appointed head of the Church, commissioned what is known as the national visitation, a practice actually established in Canon Law, but in Henry's case his ulterior purpose was the dissolution of the monasteries.

The ruins of many of the larger sites are now visitor attractions, owned in the case of Rievaulx by English Heritage and of Fountains by the National Trust.

On a smaller scale, Jervaulx, in Wensleydale, is privately owned, with access to the public via an honesty box.

At the time of the demolition, the rector of St Andrew's Church at Aysgarth, who had close links with the abbey, rescued the rood screen and installed it in his church.

It was refurbished and re-gilded in the 19th century, the cost being met by Trinity College Cambridge, the church's patron.

The last abbot was Adam Sedbar, who was persuaded to join the Pilgrimage of Grace, which aimed to restore the authority of the Catholic Church and marched under the banner of the Five Wounds.

When the rebellion failed, Adam was accused of being a ringleader and charged with treason. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London, where his name is inscribed on one of the walls. He was hanged at Tyburn.

The singing at our service was accompanied by a flautist, which assisted with creating a

prayerful atmosphere.

Brother Robert Moore OH led our service and preached and Father Michael Keogh concelebrated.

Brother president John Gough read from the prophet Joel, Brother Lionel Cartwright-Terry read from the letter to the Romans, including the words "the Spirit comes to help us in our weakness".

In the Gospel of St John, Jesus spoke of the Spirit that those who believed in him would receive.

The intercessions were for all Christian leaders, the peoples of this land, those who suffer for their faith, for a greater awareness of our Christian identity and for our departed brothers and sisters.

The Mass concluded with a solemn blessing, asking the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with the fire of his love and the courage to spread the Good News.

David Jowett



John Gough reading during the Catenians' Mass at Jervaulx

# Join us for Rome Jubilee pilgrimage

The Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Rome, from October 6 to 11, is a significant part of our diocesan Jubilee Year celebrations.

For many, it is a once-in-a-lifetime invitation to make a special pilgrimage.

Rome has prepared the Holy Doors, offering every pilgrim a path to mercy, reconciliation and renewal.

We hope you will join Bishop Terry as he leads the pilgrimage, which is sure to be full of grace and the kind of experiences only Rome and Vatican City can provide.

During this Holy Year, millions will come to Rome to visit the Holy Doors and the major basilicas.

The Diocesan Pilgrimage, based in a hotel close to St Peter's Square, will take in all these and other experiences, ensuring plenty of free time and sightseeing opportunities along the way.

The cost is £1,495 per person, including return flights from Manchester Airport, and there is a full spiritual programme.

For more information or to reserve your place, call Joe Walsh Tours on 0808 1890468 or email info@joewalshstours.co.uk.



# SVP pops in to thank shop volunteers

**St Vincent de Paul Society England & Wales CEO Kate Nightingale visited the charity's York shop after hearing about the wonderful things happening there.**

She made the trip from London to see for herself and to thank shop manager Kevin and some of the volunteers personally.

Like Sue, our new Middlesbrough St Vincent's shop manager, Kevin provides a shopping experience that is about the person as well as the product.

He works in partnership with St Aelred's SVP, the shop's nearest SVP group, to plan events and activities to better serve the local community.

The success of both shops is due to the leadership of our two paid shop managers and the hard-working volunteers, and more volunteers are always welcome.

Volunteer roles are rewarding and the hours are flexible to suit you. No experience is

necessary as each volunteer receives induction and training.

If you'd like to volunteer at the York shop, just call in at 273 Melrosegate, York and have a chat with Kevin or call 01904 923010.

If you live nearer to 430 Marton Road, Middlesbrough, and would like to volunteer there, pop in and have a chat with Sue or call 01642 821816.

They are also the numbers to call to arrange to make any donations.

By joining one of our friendly shop teams, you'll have the opportunity to give back to your local community and gain valuable retail customer service skills, as well as meeting new people.

You'll also be helping to generate funds for the SVP as a share of the shops' profits is returned to the SVP in the Diocese of Middlesbrough to be used to meet local needs.



SVP CEO Kate Nightingale with staff and volunteers from the charity's York shop

# Three centuries of service celebrated in style

**SVP members from the East Cleveland and Middlesbrough districts enjoyed a wonderful celebration of thanksgiving and dedication at St Joseph's, Stokesley.**

Monsignor Gerard Robinson and Father Michael Keogh celebrated Mass for us in the beautiful surroundings of the church.

During the homily, Monsignor Gerard reminded us that in everything we do we are meeting Christ in those we support.

Later in the service we all renewed our promises to the society as we work to turn concern into action.

Central council president Pat Nobbs presented long-service certificates to seven members whose total service amounted to

more than 300 years.

Parishioners and SVP members were joined in the singing by the Angel Choir from the Sacred Heart, Middlesbrough, whose harmonies certainly enhanced our roof-raising hymns.

The festival continued in the hall, where we enjoyed a veritable feast prepared and served by St Joseph's SVP members and parishioners.

The choir entertained us with their joyful music while we ate, chatted and renewed old friendships. It was certainly a wonderful festival.

Frances Gilchrist



Father Michael Keogh and Monsignor Gerard Robinson with SVP members who have a combined service of more than 300 years

# Barney still living life to the full at the age of 90

**Barney Ord, a brother of Middlesbrough Catenian Circle, celebrated his 90th birthday with family and business celebrations and a Mass at St Bernadette's Church, Nunthorpe.**

After the Mass, circle president Gavin Robinson presented Barney with a bottle of malt whisky.

Barney did not have the benefit of a good education and left St Mary's College in Middlesbrough just before he was due to sit his O Levels after the headmaster accused him of doing something he had not done.

He met his wife-to-be, Jessie Lane, at Middlesbrough Cooperative Cycling Club and they married in June 1957 at Sacred Heart Church, Middlesbrough.

He became a marine engineer and went to sea before taking over a machine tools business, which he expanded by buying, refurbishing and selling surplus machine tools and built into a highly successful group of companies.

In the late 1960s, one of Barney's employees was injured at work and he decided to train in first aid and joined the St John Ambulance. After many years of dedicated service, became a member of the Chapter General of the Order (the worldwide governing body of St John) and was made a Knight of the Order of St John.

In 1985, Barney and his great friend Mike McCullagh were approached by Brian McGowan, who told them about the annual Diocese of Middlesbrough Pilgrimage to Lourdes and the essential contribution made by brancardier.



Barney and Julie Ord with well-wishers at his 90th birthday celebration

The next year Barney and Mike volunteered and Barney continued to work as a brancardier until 2023.

In February 2018, Barney, by now widowed, married Julie, who many years before had worked in his accounts department.

Barney has been strengthened throughout his life by his staunch Catholic faith and has been a generous supporter of our diocesan youth service, among other worthwhile causes.

He says he has always remembered his

mother's words to him: "Your business is important but the most important things are your family and having a strong faith."

Chris Rhodes



## NEWS

# Powerful testimonies inspire healing and reconciliation

Following on from the successful Middlesbrough Charismatic Diocesan Service of Communion (CDSC) team days in York and Hull, we had a very successful day of healing and reconciliation at St Paulinus in Guisborough.

Led by Sharon Daniels, the service co-ordinator for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, our theme was "Come as you are – I love you".

We started with worship led by the parish musician Michael and his team, including Matthew of the Madonna House community.

We were blessed to have teaching from Ann and Gerry Connor of the Diocese of Hexham

and Newcastle. These leading figures in the Charismatic Renewal having great experience in teaching at New Dawn, Celebrate and other conferences.

Their teaching centred on love and especially the Father's love for us. Gerry's reflection on the parable of the Prodigal Son brought new insights and revelations on the depth and persistency of the Father's love for each one of us.

This was illustrated by two moving and heart felt testimonies we were privileged to hear during the day.

A special note of thanks goes to the wonderful hospitality team at St Paulinus

who provided us with a wonderful lunch and refreshments throughout the day.

Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation was followed by an opportunity to have the Baptism in the Spirit or being prayed for a new infilling of the Holy Spirit. This was a wonderful, Spirit-filled afternoon resulting in a physical healing and many inner healings.

We had about 100 people present. Our thanks go to Father Philip Cunnah for all his assistance and allowing us to use his beautiful church, to Father Rodrigo and for the wonderful hospitality shown by everyone there. God bless you all.

The CDSC team are offering to run the Gift course in parishes. It is a wonderful experience with much exploration and sharing of faith.

One participant said: "The course was a powerful experience of renewal, a deep realisation that the Spirit is working among us. A call to prayer, to intercession, a call to live in a deeper way. A call to serve, maybe in a new way."

If you would like to know more about the work of the Middlesbrough CDSC team call Sharon on 07932 420809 or email [cdscmiddlesbrough@gmail.com](mailto:cdscmiddlesbrough@gmail.com).

Frances Redmore

## Bishop's chance encounter with 'lovely man' Pope Leo

Bishop Terry concelebrated Mass alongside Father James Benfield to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of St Gabriel's Church in Ormesby, Middlesbrough, by Bishop John Gerard McClean.

"Today is a day to remember all those who have gone before us whose legacy we are now enjoying," Bishop Terry told the packed congregation.

Bishop Terry also revealed he had met Pope Leo at the ordination of Bishop Michael Campbell in Lancaster back in 2009.

Pope Leo was there as the prior general of the Augustinian order, of which Bishop Michael is also a member.

"We had a chat because I was taught by Augustinians in Spain," said Bishop Terry. "He's a really lovely man."



Bishop Terry with Father James Benfield after the anniversary Mass at St Gabriel's



First Holy Communion children from Sacred Heart Parish in Middlesbrough are pictured here with Father Mike Songu OMV and catechists Sandra Cross and Peter Loughlin – photo by Simone Chisena

## Poetry and Prayer: Responding to God in the beauty of nature

St Peter's, Scarborough, parishioner Andrew Carter continues his series of reflections on the close links between poetry and prayer...

There's a saying attributed to the 14th-century friar and mystic, Meister Eckhart: "If humankind could have known God without the world, God would never have created the world."

It's a reminder not to let our spiritual lives get too abstract, and that a conversation with God can begin in response to the smallest example of beauty in the world around us.

*Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower – but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.*

It's a pity Tennyson, the author of the above words, had to pull it out by its roots. But his intense gaze at the flower in his palm led him to some deep musing on the very nature of things.

We cannot "understand" a flower, let alone the meaning of God, but the world can draw us into the divine mystery if we allow it.

This month's poet would never have left that flower unidentified! John Clare lived in

intimate connection to the land, as an agricultural labourer, delighting in the flora, insects, birds, animals and human activities of his locality, what was then (the first half of the 19th century) the fenlands of Northamptonshire.

His poetry is filled with the tangible detail of a living landscape. He rarely mentions God (his religious poems, written for his wealthy patrons, are dead on the ground!) but we can encounter God through his poetry of nature.

This is one of the dozens of sonnets he wrote, immersed in pleasure as he saunters "in a musing pace" through the fields.

Though he doesn't use the word here, a deep, familial love is often his unaffected response to his environment, a quiet joy and gratitude.

The poem is full of accurate observation and sensuous effects in the language: the "wild music" (exactly!) of the solitary blackbird, the humming bees loaded with pollen (and weighted with 'L' sounds in the words he uses to help us see and hear them).

In the Book of Proverbs, Wisdom sings delightedly of how she was with God as he created the world, "ever at play in his presence, at play everywhere on his earth" (RNJB translation).

Clare seems instinctively aware of Wisdom's presence even in the playful freedom of the cows!

And he captures the contemplative wonder of the onlooker who stops, "steps at bay" to drink in the beauty of Creation – sounds, sights and smells – without which, as Eckhart says, we cannot truly know God. Poetry like this points us in the right direction.

### The Beans in Blossom

*The southwest wind – how pleasant in the face it breathes, while, sauntering in a musing pace, I roam these new ploughed fields and by the side*

*Of this old wood where happy birds abide,  
And the rich blackbird through his golden bill  
Utters wild music when the rest are still.  
Now luscious comes the scent of blossomed beans*

*That o'er the path in rich disorder leans,  
'Mid which the bees in busy songs and toils  
Load home luxuriantly their yellow spoils.  
The herd cows toss the molehills in their play,  
And often stand the stranger's steps at bay  
'Mid clover blossoms, red and tawny white,  
Strong scented with the summer's warm delight.*



'The rich blackbird' with his 'golden bill' – Photo by Rainhard Wiesinger, Unsplash



# Catenians salute John's four decades of service

Director of Catenian Association Province 5 John Thompson presented a 40-year scroll to John Shipley on the exact anniversary of John's enrolment into the society in 1985.

Offering his congratulations, John, who is from Durham Circle and a familiar visitor to Middlesbrough Circle, reflected on Brother John's Catenian involvement after he was proposed by his brother-in-law, Bill Morris. John served as circle president in 1997 and later served two terms as provincial councillor.

Born and brought up in the town, John's been a Middlesbrough FC supporter since early childhood. He was schooled locally at St Francis, St Michael's and St Mary's College, before undertaking sports and PE training at St Mary's, Twickenham.

There he was taught by Mick Jagger's father, Joe, a former fitness instructor and probably

partly responsible for his son's athletic prowess on stage!

John returned to his hometown as a PE teacher for six years at his former school, St Michael's, before leaving to run the family building business started by his grandfather in the 1920s.

In July, John and wife Mary celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with their three sons and eight grandchildren.

John has combined his family life and business interests with important roles in the field of education, as chair of governors at two schools and more recently as director of one of the country's largest Catholic multi-academy trusts.

He remains a regular and influential presence at circle and council meetings.

Congratulations and well done, John!

Martin Lodge



Province 5 director John Thompson presenting John Shipley with his 40-year scroll

# Parishioners gather for Corpus Christi procession


Parishioners from York Oratory turned out in numbers for a Corpus Christi Procession through the centre of the city.

The procession, including the Blessed Sacrament carried under a canopy, left the Oratory after the High Mass.

It continued down Blake Street, through St Helen's Square, along Stonegate, crossed High Petergate into Minster Gates, along Deangate and into Duncombe Place before returning to the Oratory.



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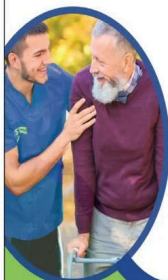
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**NEWS****Out & About****1 Friday**

Events, articles and photographs for the September edition of the Voice are due by this day.

**2 Saturday**

**11am** Catholic women are invited to share an hour of feminine communion, including meditation, via Zoom. Text Barbara on 0796 117704 with your mobile number and email address so she can add you to the WhatsApp group, or email catholicwomenmdl@gmail.com for Zoom link.

**6pm** Mass in Italian in the Father Kelly Room, Our Lady, Acomb, York, followed by refreshments. All welcome.

**4 Monday**

**9.45am-10.25am** Beverley Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from christianmeditation.beverley@gmail.com. This takes place every Monday.

**7pm** Catholic charismatic prayer group meets at St Bede's Pastoral Centre, Blossom Street, York. For more information contact Sharon on cdscsmiddlesbrough@gmail.com or 07932 420809.

**5 Tuesday**

**10am** Coffee at the Cathedral. Tea, coffee and

treats every Tuesday after 9.30am Mass. A warm welcome and friendly atmosphere. Make new friends and enjoy some fellowship. Those who are alone especially welcome.

**10am** Christian Meditation Group meets online. Further information from Terry Doyle at terry-doyle@live.co.uk. This takes place every Tuesday.

**10 Sunday**

**3pm** Mass for LGBT+ community, family and friends at the Chapel of the Bar Convent. Doors open from 2.30pm.

**11 Monday**

**2pm** Music for the Mind, an hour of fun and music for people living with dementia, their friends and carers, with Trish McLean. All welcome. St Mary's Cathedral is a Dementia Friendly venue.

**12 Tuesday**

**12.45pm** Catholic Women's Luncheon Club meets every second Tuesday of the month at the Kingston Theatre Hotel, Kingston Square, Hull. Gather at 12.45pm, lunch at 1pm. All ladies in the Hull and East Riding area welcome. Call 01482 446565 or email jayne.wilson24@gmail.com.

**12 Tuesday**

**7pm** Mass for Knights of St Columba Council 29 at St Mary's Cathedral, followed by meeting.

**13 Wednesday**

**7pm** The Hull Circle of the Catenian Association's monthly meeting at Lazaat Hotel, Cottingham, followed by a buffet-style meal. Contact Charles Cseh at hullcirclesecretary@gmail.com.

**17 Sunday**

**3pm** Assumption Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Grace, Osmotherley.

**30 Saturday**

**Noon** LGBT+ social gathering at the Bar Convent, York. All welcome. Future events

**24 Wednesday September**

**7pm** Mass with Bishop Terry to celebrate centenary of the consecration of St Hilda's Church, Whitby. All welcome.

If you have any events that you would like to include in the Out and About section, please email heidi.cummins@rcdmidd.org.uk.



Twenty-eight young people celebrated their First Holy Communion at Our Lady's Church in York – Photo by Johan Bergström-Allen

**Copy Deadline**

Copy and photographs for inclusion in the *Catholic Voice* should be sent to: The Editor, Middlesbrough Diocesan Catholic Voice, Curial Offices, 50a The Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS5 6QT.

Tel (01642) 850505, email catholicvoice@rcdmidd.org.uk

Deadline Friday August 1 for September edition.

Where possible please send articles in Word and photographs as jpegs. Please confirm when you send in your photographs that those who appear in them have given their permission for publication.



# Cathedral team to run for homeless charity

**Cathedral altar servers Leo, Louis and Jack will join Father Steven Leightell to run the Thirteen Middlesbrough 3K Run for All on August 31.**

They hope to raise £2,000 for the Upper Room Project, which provides a warm welcome, breakfast and a takeaway lunch every Saturday for those who are homeless or destitute in Middlesbrough.

We are heartbroken that so many people in the town are without a home to live in and want to help them.

At least £500 is needed every four weeks for the food and rent to run this service and with your help, running as "Pilgrims of Hope", we aim to raise funds for at least four months.

Online donations can be made using the link

or QR code and cash donations can be left in an envelope.

The web address for donations is [gofund.me/6afd7d8c](https://gofund.me/6afd7d8c).

Christa Kamanga



## Abortion campaigners vow to fight on

**Pro-life campaigners say they will fight an abortion up to birth amendment as it progresses to the House of Lords.**

The vow comes after the government's Crime and Policing Bill was amended to rush through a major change to abortion law after just two hours' debate.

Campaigners say this is the first time this amendment has been debated in the House of Commons and add there has been no public consultation.

The amendment, tabled by Tonia Antoniazzi, would change the law so it would no longer be illegal for women to perform their own abortions for any reason, including sex-selective purposes, and at any point up to and during birth.

Ahead of the vote, more than 1,000 medical professionals called on MPs to oppose the two abortion-up-to-birth amendments.

An amendment tabled by Dr Caroline Johnson that would have reinstated in-person consultations did not pass.

Lord Alton of Liverpool said: "This hasty change will have profound implications for the way that longstanding law in this country will operate.

"We know there are potential real risks for the safety of women in particular who will be

encouraged towards DIY abortions.

"I expect colleagues in the House of Lords will wish to scrutinise its provisions very closely and to amend it as necessary to make it safe."

Right To Life UK spokesperson Catherine Robinson added: "Pro-abortion MPs have hijacked a government bill to rush through this radical and seismic change to our abortion laws after just two hours' debate.

"This law change would likely lead to the lives of many more women being endangered because of the risks involved with self-administered late-term abortions and also tragically lead to an increased number of viable babies' lives being ended well beyond the 24-week abortion time limit and beyond the point at which they would be able to survive outside the womb.

"This change to the law is not backed by the general public nor by women in particular. Polling shows that 89% of the general population and 91% of women agree that gender-selective abortion should be explicitly banned by the law, and only one per cent of women support introducing abortion up to birth.

"We will be fighting this amendment at every stage in the Lords.

## Generous parishioners pay for smiles and meals

**Parishioners from St Joseph's and St Thomas More in Middlesbrough helped two very special causes by donating money for things they went without during Lent.**

A total of £1,280, including a generous donation from bespoke kitchen manufacturer Barker & Co, was split between Operation Smile and Mary's Meals.

Operation Smile is a global medical charity that provides free, safe surgery to children and adults born with cleft conditions that affect breathing, eating, speaking and even smiling.

Life-changing surgery costs as little as £150, meaning the money raised by the two

churches is enough to pay for four operations.

Mary's Meals feeds children at school, helping poorer families manage and at the same time ensuring children are educated and given a brighter future. The money raised for this charity is enough to feed 33 children for a full year.

Thank you to everyone who donated and helped change lives.

For more information on the two charities visit [operationsmile.org.uk](https://operationsmile.org.uk) and [marysmeals.org.uk](https://marysmeals.org.uk).

Luigi Brancati



Father Steven Leightell and St Mary's Cathedral altar servers Leo, Louis and Jack

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## NEWS

# Caritas joins global call for immediate Gaza ceasefire

**Caritas Internationalis has joined more than 160 humanitarian organisations in a unified appeal for the immediate end to the deadly war in Gaza.**

As the conflict continues to escalate, the Catholic Church's humanitarian arm called for attention to the dire conditions that are being faced by civilians and urged international actors to uphold the principles of humanitarian law and human dignity.

Caritas is at the centre of the Church's mission, serving the poor and promoting charity and justice throughout the world.

Palestinians in Gaza have been given an impossible choice of risking death in search of food and water or remaining trapped in conditions of starvation.

More than 500 Palestinians have been killed and nearly 4,000 injured as they came under Israeli attack while attempting to access food distribution.

The destruction in Gaza and the blockade of aid mean civilians are given no choice but to walk for hours in active conflict zones to receive food at militarised distribution sites.

They have no protection and repeated attacks have been perpetrated with no regard to humanitarian law.

According to the Gaza Health Ministry

more than 57,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli strikes and bombings since October 2023, while another 11,000 are missing. An unknown number of babies born since the start of the conflict have died due to conflict, hunger and disease.

Speaking in St Peter's Square, Pope Leo XIV has also renewed his call for an immediate ceasefire, appealing to the consciences of world leaders.

He said: "From the Gaza Strip, rising ever more insistently to the heavens are the cries of mothers and fathers who clutch the lifeless bodies of their children, and who are continually forced to move about in search of a little food and water and safer shelter from bombardments.

"To those responsible, I renew my appeal: stop the fighting."

With more than two million people forcibly displaced, Caritas warns that Gaza's future is dependent on an urgent and ethical international response.

For almost two years, Caritas notes, Palestinians have been enduring endless bombardment, weaponisation of food and water, repeated displacement and systematic dehumanisation.

Janina Eddy, Vatican News



Injured people receiving Holy Communion at Holy Family Church in Gaza, which was damaged in an Israeli strike shortly before we went to press – Photo © Holy Family Church Gaza

## Settlers attack world's oldest Christian community

**Violence by Jewish settlers in Palestine has struck the residents of Taibeh, the only entirely Christian Palestinian village.**

Taibeh is the ancient Ephraim, the location where Jesus took refuge after the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:54) and where the Christian community has extremely ancient roots.

The village is home to three churches – Latin, Greek Orthodox, and Melkite – whose pastors, Fathers Bashar Fawadleh, Jack Nobel Abed and Daoud Khoury, issued an appeal

calling on Israeli authorities to prevent further settler violence, which so far has largely occurred in the presence of passive Israeli soldiers.

Settler terrorism has also targeted other Palestinian villages near illegal settlements, such as Ein Samia and Kufr Malik, where settlers have set fire to homes, vehicles and crops. At the end of June, four young Palestinians trying to resist the violence were brutally killed.

The Christian residents of Taibeh live

peacefully alongside Muslims from neighbouring villages. Their troubles began in 1977 when the Israeli government confiscated dozens of hectares of nearby land and illegally established a settlement called Rimoni.

Large agricultural areas were taken from Taibeh's farmers to build roads connecting various Jewish settlements.

In the days leading up to yesterday's attacks on Christian sites, settlers had already targeted the village outskirts, setting fire to a

house and several cars.

Hundreds more hectares of Palestinian land are at risk of confiscation to further expand settlements.

The greatest concern of Taibeh-Ephraim's Christian residents is that with global attention focused on the immense tragedy in Gaza, the increasingly serious threats to the survival of the world's oldest Christian community may not be fully grasped by the international community.

Roberto Cetera

## Environment Corner: A time for the celebration of creation

**The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion and commitment.**

During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.

Our Biblical text for this year's Season of Creation, which takes place from September 1 to October 4, is Isaiah 32:14-18.

The prophet Isaiah pictured the desolated Creation without peace because of the lack of justice and the broken relationship between God and humankind.

This description of devastated cities and wastelands eloquently stresses the fact that human destructive behaviours have a negative impact on the Earth.

Our hope is that Creation will find peace when justice is restored. There is still hope and the expectation for a peaceful Earth.

To hope in a biblical context does not mean to stand still and be quiet, but to act, pray, change and reconcile with Creation and the Creator in unity, repentance and solidarity. There are many resources available to help us celebrate the Season of Creation at

[seasonofcreation.org](http://seasonofcreation.org).

One particular gem is a daily PowerPoint reflection from the Diocese of Brentwood website at [dioceseofbrentwood.net/laudatosi/seasonofcreation/](http://dioceseofbrentwood.net/laudatosi/seasonofcreation/).

It combines prayer, contemplation and actions to consider following during the month.

Pope Leo recently approved a Mass for the Care of Creation, a new formulary which has been added to the Roman Missal.

The liturgical text is strongly inspired by *Laudato Si'*, taking up some of the

encyclical's main positions and expressing them in the form of prayer within its theological framework.

At the launch, Cardinal Czerny said: "In a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change, deforestation and pollution, care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity."

The Season of Creation would be a real opportunity to celebrate this Mass.

Barbara Hungin



Garden of Peace  
Isaiah 32:14-18

**PEACE  
WITH CREATION**  
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

## Faiths unite to call for climate change action

**People from different faith communities gathered in Parliament Square for the Act Now Change Forever Mass Lobby.**

They were calling on MPs to take bold action on climate change to protect families, communities and future generations from the impacts of climate change on people and nature.

Faith leaders and representatives of leading faith organisations from across the UK's faith communities including Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist and Jewish traditions joined thousands of people from every corner of the country.

CAFOD CEO Christine Allen said: "Today is such a sign of hope. For the Catholic community this is a year of jubilee. We're called to be pilgrims of hope."

"At a time when the political environment, at a time when international cooperation, solidarity and care for the climate seems to have dropped off the political agenda, to see so many people here today who are meeting their MPs is a real sign of that hope."



# A warm welcome to our new deacons



Deacon Tom Rolfe



Deacon Robert Colombari



Deacon James Nevison



Deacon Douglas McKittrick



Bishop Terry addresses the new deacons during the service



Friends, family and parishioners packed the cathedral for the service



The deacons prostrate themselves before the altar



Deacons James Nevison, Tom Rolfe, Douglas McKittrick and Robert Colombari – Photos by Scott Akoz

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Vatican's new Synod's implementation guidance

The Synod of Bishops has released a new document intended to provide an "interpretive key" for understanding the implementation phase of the synodal process. Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod offers local Churches throughout the world a shared framework it hopes will make it easier to walk together. It also promotes dialogue that will lead the whole Church to the Ecclesial Assembly in October 2028, which will mark the culmination of the synodal process begun by Pope Francis in 2020. The full text of Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod can be found on the website of the Synod on Synodality, [synod.va](https://synod.va).

### Cash will support Catholic radio in the Philippines

Radio Maria England has raised more than £15,000 to support the expansion and restoration of Radio Maria in the Philippines. During May, the month of Mary, Radio Maria England joined with sister stations across the world in a global Mariathon – a celebration of prayer, testimony and fundraising to support one of the international Radio Maria stations in their mission. This year's focus was the Philippines, the first Radio Maria station in Asia. Radio Maria England listeners also took part in live Rosaries prayed in Tagalog, joining their voices in prayer with Filipino communities.

### Film's new translation breaks world record

The JESUS film, already the most translated film in history, is now available in its 2,200th language, Bouna, spoken by the Kulango people in Côte d'Ivoire. This new translation is the fulfilment of a 25-year-old prayer by Josh and Holly Newell, who once stood on a West African hillside praying the gospel would one day reach those remote villages. Today, Josh leads Jesus Film Project, and that prayer has become a reality, as the JESUS film is reaching countless more communities.

### Archbishop appointed to Vatican dicasteries

The Holy Father has appointed Archbishop of Birmingham Bernard Longley to two Vatican dicasteries. Archbishop Longley will serve as a member of both the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue and the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity.

### Jubilee Mass for social justice

Join Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) as it hosts the Jubilee of Social Justice in Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral on Saturday September 20. Emeritus Archbishop of Liverpool Malcolm McMahon OP will celebrate Mass at noon, followed by a light lunch and social action exhibition in the Pontifical Hall. The event is for all those involved in Catholic social action. For more information email [bernadette.durcan@csan.org.uk](mailto:bernadette.durcan@csan.org.uk).

### A summer outing to St Mary's

Members and friends of the Cleveland Newman Circle enjoyed a day visit to St Mary's, Lastingham, on the moors. While religious worship on the site dates back to Saxon times, St Mary's is unique in having an ancient Norman crypt beneath the existing church. The weight of centuries of prayers said in faith and hope can be felt in the unique atmosphere of this holy place.



## NEWS

# Day of Gifts showcases life in a Catholic parish

**Many good things happen in Catholic parishes, but are we always aware of the range of what goes on? And if new parishioners want to get involved, how do they discover what's going on, and who to contact?**

English Martyrs in York has come up with a way of highlighting and promoting the range of activities that go on in a city parish.

The idea came out of a conversation a parishioner had with a fellow theology student, a Baptist, in Durham.

It was taken up by a group in the parish that emerged after the diocesan study day in response to the Synod, which was held in English Martyrs hall in March 2024.

At that event, Father Chris Hughes spoke inspiring of the need for everyone to recognise and use the gifts they have received from the Holy Spirit.

The idea that emerged was called a Day of Gifts and celebrated the variety of gifts people use to build up the parish community.

How does it work? Think "freshers' fairs" at universities, where at the start of the first term the numerous student groups set up stalls to promote their activities and attract new members.

In just the same way, those involved with the various parish activities manned stalls around

the hall, where they explained what they do and tried to interest potential new recruits.

It proved to be a jolly event, the atmosphere not unlike a traditional parish fair or garden fete. Groups represented included parish

musicians, the SVP, flower arrangers, drama group, Catenians, social events, Camino group, Newman Association, children's liturgy, prayer group, Cafod, lectio and Charis.

There has been a very positive response to

the day, with many parishioners saying they had been unaware of some of the activities listed above. Perhaps they will be inspired to join in.

Judith Smeaton



One of the stalls at the Day of Gifts at English Martyrs in York



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