

## Bishop's Column

Thinking over the last 50 blest years of priestly ministry, I can only be tremendously grateful; first of all, to Almighty God, who through his providence has guided me and, despite my best efforts otherwise, has kept me on the right path.

All is grace, all is by the gift of God. The path that has led me to this point has wound its way from St Willibrord's, Clayton, St Clare's, Blackly (my home parish and my school), to Durham and Spain (Ushaw College and the Royal English College, Valladolid, seminaries where I studied), through Great Harwood, Higher Broughton, Radcliffe, Kisumu, Patricroft, Whitefield (parishes I served in Salford and in Kenya), back to Spain and Durham again, and finally arriving here in Middlesbrough. It's not a miracle, but a pilgrimage, and you can never go on pilgrimage by yourself. You walk with others who give you example, strength, support and witness.

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Whenever you enter a town say to them, 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you.'"*

A challenging task, a daunting mission, but most of us have been doing it and haven't noticed. Let's keep on asking the Lord of the harvest, keep on encouraging labourers to go out and work; to carry on with our mission like lambs among wolves and remember to preach by our lives that the Kingdom of God has come near.

We are on this pilgrimage together. It hasn't finished yet. It has taken so many thousands of people to get me to this point; people I have had the privilege of serving. I certainly need help, support and encouragement now and in the future.

Let me use the words of St Augustine (sermon 256, 3) to sum up what I would really like to say:

*Let us sing Alleluia here below while we are still anxious so that we may sing it one day there above when we are freed from care. How happy will be our shout of Alleluia there, how carefree, how secure from any adversary, where there is no enemy, where no friend perishes... Here praise is offered to God by people who are anxious, it is offered in hope, it is offered there by people who are enjoying the reality, here it is offered by people who are pilgrims, there by people who have reached their own country. So, brethren, now let us sing Alleluia... Sing as travellers, sing along the road, but keep on walking... go forward in virtue, in true faith and right conduct. Sing up and keep on walking.*

Alleluia! Amen!

*+ Long*

## What's Inside

**Tributes paid to  
Father Jim**

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## Join us for very special jubilee celebration

Guests including Cardinal Arthur Roche and civic leaders will join hundreds of well-wishers from throughout the diocese for a very special joint celebration on Saturday July 26 – and you're invited too!

The event will mark the golden jubilee of priestly ordination for Bishop Terry and the diamond jubilee of our bishop emeritus, Bishop John.

A marquee will be erected in the cathedral grounds for a celebration event immediately after the Mass, which begins at noon.

The Archbishop of Birmingham Bernard Longley, the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia Mark O'Toole, the Abbot of Ampleforth Robert Igo OSB and Bishop of Hamilton, Canada, Douglas Crosby OMI are among the Catholic clergy who will be there.

Also in attendance will be ecumenical guests including the Archbishop of York, the Bishop Emeritus of Whitby and the Synod Moderator of the United Reformed Church.

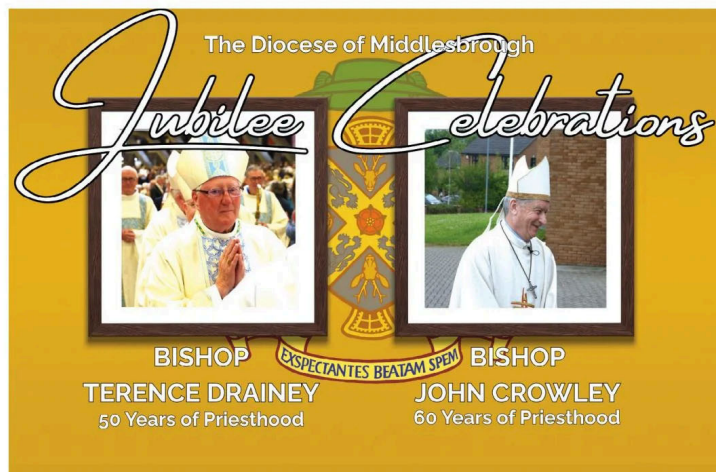
Cardinal Roche, who also celebrates his golden jubilee this year and who took part in the recent conclave that elected Pope Leo, will preach.

This celebration is an opportunity to give thanks to God for his abundant blessings over the years and to pray for the continued flourishing of our diocese.

Extending an invitation to everyone, Bishop Terry said: "Your presence would be a great blessing to us on this joyful occasion. I look forward to celebrating with you and sharing in the joy of these remarkable anniversaries."

The vicar general, Monsignor Gerard Robinson, said the day will be a very special occasion.

"We are honoured to be holding this special Mass to celebrate the jubilees of both our



current bishop and our former bishop," he said.

"This Mass will be a joyful occasion for our diocese to come together in gratitude for their dedicated service, faith and leadership over the years.

"It will be a time to reflect on their contributions to the spiritual growth and unity of our community.

"All members of the diocese and the wider community are warmly invited to join in this celebration, which will highlight the enduring commitment of our bishops to guiding the faithful and fostering a spirit of hope and compassion.

"We look forward to sharing this meaningful

day with everyone as we recognise these important milestones in the lives of our shepherds."

Dean of St Mary's Cathedral Canon Paul Farrer added: "Around 18 bishops from England, Wales, Scotland, and Canada are joining us, along with the Archbishop of York and other ecumenical guests.

"It would be wonderful to see the cathedral full on that day. Both Bishop Terry and Bishop John's family members will be there. It would be good to have the diocesan family together, too."

• Groups travelling by coach are asked to contact Canon Paul well in advance to assist with arrangements.

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## NEWS

# Last chance to book for Jubilee Year pilgrimage

**Time is running out, and we need you to make your reservations!**

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.

Canon Paul Farrer said: "It feels like many have waited before booking for Rome. This year's wonderful Lourdes pilgrimage is only just over, but time is short before we head to Rome in October.

"If you are considering making the pilgrimage to Rome, please make your reservations now." During this Holy Year, millions will come to Rome to visit the Holy Doors and the major basilicas.

The 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@joewalstours.co.uk](mailto:info@joewalstours.co.uk).



Pope Leo XIV at an audience for journalists shortly after his election – Photo © Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

## Thornaby Catholics embrace My Parish, My Mission

The Catholic community in Thornaby has experienced a powerful renewal in faith, unity and stewardship through the My Parish, My Mission initiative.

Welcomed enthusiastically by parishioners of both St Patrick's and Christ the King, the campaign invited them to reflect prayerfully how they support the life and mission of the Church – through prayer, active participation and planned giving.

Under the leadership of parish priest Father Pat O'Neill, the campaign brought both spiritual encouragement and tangible results.

One of the most heartening outcomes was a significant rise in

parishioner involvement in ministry and service.

Across the two parishes, more than 30 people stepped forward to take up new or existing roles, strengthening parish life and deepening the spirit of shared responsibility.

Dan Woodgate, fundraising officer for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, praised the community's response.

He said: "What's happened in Thornaby shows the impact of inviting people to reflect on their role in the Church's mission. The response has been faith-filled and generous – both in parishioner's willingness to serve and in terms of their financial support."

This renewal in participation was accompanied by a notable increase in planned giving. Standing orders – the most effective and consistent way of giving – increased by 223% at St Patrick's and 36% at Christ the King.

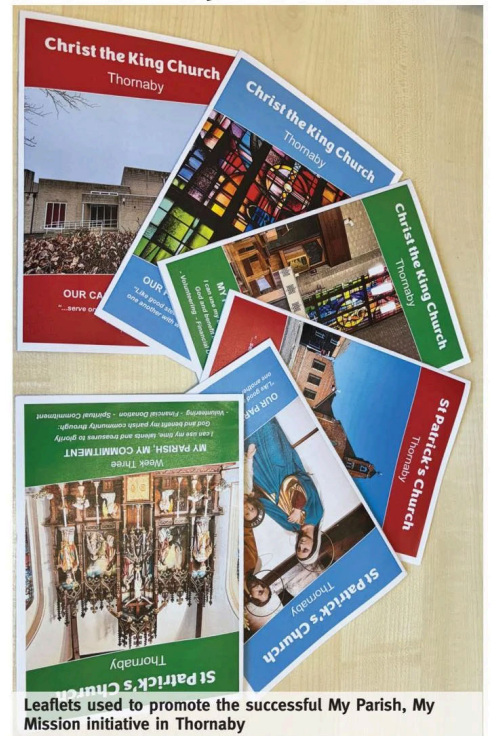
Gift aid sign-ups also rose significantly, with a combined increase of 48%, allowing both parishes to maximise donations through reclaimed tax at no extra cost to the giver. In addition, several parishioners expressed interest in leaving a legacy gift to their parish – a clear sign of long-term commitment to the faith community and its mission for future generations.

One parishioner reflected: "This wasn't just about money. It made us stop and think about what our parish means to us, and how blessed we are to be part of it. I've never felt more connected – or more responsible – for helping it grow."

Thornaby's experience shows the transformational potential of My Parish, My Mission.

When parish communities are invited to renew their commitment with openness, encouragement and trust, they respond with heartfelt generosity.

As the pilot phase continues across the diocese, Thornaby stands as a hopeful and inspiring witness of what can be achieved when faith is renewed, generosity is embraced and the mission of the Church is shared by all.



Leaflets used to promote the successful My Parish, My Mission initiative in Thornaby



## BISHOP TERRY'S JULY ENGAGEMENTS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1-4 Attends meeting of the Valladolid Association at the Royal English College, Valladolid   | Wilfrid's Church, York 9.30 am  |
| 15 Attends a meeting of the Bishop's Council via Zoom 10.30am  | 23 Celebrates confirmations for the Central Deanery at Our Lady's Church, Acomb, York 7pm   |
| 16 Attends the annual general meeting of the Madonna House apostolate community and celebrates Mass to commemorate the community's ruby jubilee at Robin Hood's Bay 10am | 26 Celebrates Mass for his golden jubilee and the diamond jubilee of ordination to the sacred priesthood of Bishop Emeritus, Rt Rev John Crowley, St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough Noon |
| 23 Celebrates Mass for the Aid to the Church in Need pilgrimage at St  |   |

## Parishes come together for Hull confirmations

Bishop Terry visited the Sacred Heart Church in Hull to confirm candidates from across the city.

The service welcomed young people from St Anthony & Our Lady of Mercy; St Mary, Queen of Martyrs; Sacred Heart and St Bede's.

Bishop Terry was assisted by Father Joseph Pinakkattu, Father Peter Mulholland, Father Clifford Gavina and Deacon Bob Shakesby.

Afterwards, everyone celebrated with a buffet supper in the parish hall.

We wish all the candidates good luck as you continue to grow in your faith.

**Bernard France**



Father Clifford, Bishop Terry and Deacon Bob Shakesby with candidates from St Anthony & Our Lady of Mercy Parish – Photo by Mary Broadhead



# Thousands pack cathedral to see tenth Archbishop of Liverpool installed

The Most Reverend John Sherrington has been installed as the tenth Archbishop of Liverpool during a Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

It was announced in April, just a few weeks before his death, that Pope Francis had elected Archbishop Sherrington as the successor of Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, who has retired after 11 years as archbishop.

Thousands of Catholics of all ages from across the archdiocese gathered for the celebration.

Other guests included Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Bishop Terry and bishops and clergy from across England and Wales, as well as civic leaders and representatives from other faiths.

Archbishop Sherrington said: "The Mass of Installation was a joyous occasion.

"It was wonderful to see so many people from across the diocese and beyond gather together in prayer as we continue to preach Christ to the people of our time.

"I give thanks to Archbishop Malcolm, who has served the archdiocese with love and generosity, and I am honoured to succeed him.

"I look forward to serving as a shepherd to this historic and faith-filled archdiocese and to bring the hope and joy of Christ to all people."

Archbishop Sherrington was ordained as a priest for the Diocese of Nottingham on June 13 1987 and has been an auxiliary bishop of Westminster since September 2011.



The Most Reverend John Sherrington after being installed as the tenth Archbishop of Liverpool – Photo © Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

## Remembering Fellowship's friend and guiding light

Two leaders of the Catholic Fellowship, a very special group that ensures people with disabilities across Teesside are given a warm welcome in the Church, have written about the loss of Father Peter Ryan, who played such an important role in the charity over many years.

Throughout his priesthood, Father Peter practiced what he preached, putting his faith into action supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged people both inside and outside the church who had no voice and needed support.

The Catholic Fellowship was privileged to have Father Peter as our chaplain for so many years.

To him, just as disability knows no boundaries, neither did the Fellowship. He was truly inspirational in bringing together people of all faiths and backgrounds into our family.

The way Father Peter helped all in the

Fellowship served as a wonderful example to all helpers new and old of how to live God's love.

Father Peter was a tremendous support to all our members, families and helpers. He was fundamental to every aspect of the Fellowship's family life and was alongside us in the good times and the sad times.

Much of this ministering happened gently behind the scenes, unseen by others.

Father Peter not only carried out his spiritual duties as a priest with great humility, but he did so as a friend, pastor, spiritual leader and support in difficult times.

His door was never closed in life and he was always there to help support others even when at times life had its own challenges for himself.

He was a true servant of the Lord. May he rest in peace.

**Stephen Mulholland and Tony Kirk**



Father Peter, right, with Fellowship members during a summer holiday in Alnwick in 1982

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## SCHOOLS

# Franciscan sisters' visit inspires school community

We were delighted to welcome the Franciscan sisters from St Clare's Convent in Leeds to St Aelred's Catholic Primary School in York.

The children were especially excited in the lead-up to the visit as they regularly see the Franciscan Sisters featured in the Mark 10:10 materials used to support collective worship in school.

The day began with a special Celebration of the Word, setting a reflective tone focused on friendship – the central message of our patron, St Aelred, and a key part of our school values.

The sisters led the children in worship through song, including learning a beautiful piece that was accompanied by Sister Chiara on the guitar.

Afterwards, children participated in class-based workshop sessions, reflecting on their friendship with God, God's friendship with them and how they demonstrate discipleship and stewardship in their daily lives.

At lunchtime, the sisters met the chaplaincy team and Mini Vinnies for prayer, discussion and reflection.

The day finished with a joyful gathering, revisiting the new song taught by the sisters, then a whole-school reflection and final prayer.

We were also joined by our parish priest Father Bill Serplus who took the opportunity to meet the sisters.

Headteacher Claire Hughes said: "It was an absolute privilege to welcome the sisters to St Aelred's. The children gained so much from the day, taking time to reflect on their faith journey and their personal friendship with Jesus.

"The sisters engaged every member of our school community – from our nursery children to our Year 6 pupils. Watching every single

child join in the singing, clapping and music was amazing to see.

"We hope this marks the beginning of a strong and lasting relationship with the Franciscan sisters and look forward to more days like this."

Felicity, from Year 3, said: "I enjoyed praying with the sisters and playing tag with them at lunchtime. I felt special when they were talking to us about how we have been chosen to be Jesus' friend and I know others felt the same."

Isobel in Year 5 added: "I am in the chaplaincy team and a Mini Vinnie too, and it was great to tell them about the charity work we do and how we help with prayer and worship in school."

A huge thank you to the Franciscan sisters and to Nicola Sweetman, programme manager from Life to the Full, who helped organise this special day.

Nicola said: "It was wonderful that the children got to experience the wider church community and witness the joy of religious life. The sisters taught the children a simple and effective way to pray, that we can say sorry, please and thank you to Jesus."

Nicola is also a parent at our school and we are grateful for her continued support.

**Ryan Deakin**  
Deputy Headteacher



St Aelred's pupils and the sisters worshipping in song

## Making the Jubilee Pledge together

**It doesn't seem that long since we celebrated the Jubilee Year Launch Day for schools and colleges back in January.**

A flurry of activity saw pupils and teachers across the nations come together to mark the start of this landmark moment.

Pope Francis called on us to be Pilgrims of Hope, building a better world for everyone and experiencing the joy that comes from acting together when so many experience poverty, injustice and conflict.

As we remember Pope Francis and give thanks for his life, we continue to be inspired by his invitation to renew our hope, which comes from knowing God loves each one of us.

We have seen schools celebrate with many different activities, creating jubilee icons and proudly displaying banners as well as classroom talks and cross-town pilgrimage walks, painting windows and dressing in Jubilee colours.

As part of living out their Jubilee pledge, schools have joined the wider community in asking for debt relief for the world's poorest countries. And now it's time to take the next steps.

"We're delighted with how schools have responded to Pope Francis' call to journey

together with hope in this Jubilee Year," says CAFOD's head of education, Monica Connée. "The creativity and enthusiasm have been inspiring – and we look forward to seeing more of it this summer."

Catholic schools are being invited to make a Jubilee Pledge to live out Catholic Social Teaching, to commit to a sign of hope and to stand in solidarity with communities experiencing poverty, while advancing justice and harmony locally, nationally and globally.

Our new pope, Leo XIV, carries on Pope Francis' work and invites us to build a Church that "seeks peace, seeks charity and wants to be as close as possible to people who suffer".

Building a better world needs all of us and the Jubilee Pledge will be a whole school, long-term commitment to take concrete actions to build a fairer world, putting Catholic Social Teaching into action, just as Pope Francis and Pope Leo have asked us to do.

*The Jubilee Pledge*

*We are pilgrims of hope.*

*We walk in solidarity with our sisters and brothers worldwide, sharing challenges and celebrating joys.*

*We promise to be agents of change, working*

*together for justice, love and peace, locally and globally.*

*We want to build a fairer world, where every person, and the earth, can flourish.*

There are a wide range of resources to support schools in preparing for and celebrating Jubilee Pledge Day, including a guide, a pledge poster, a liturgy and a short, downloadable training session for staff.

To inspire and enthuse pupils, there is a short film that celebrates all that has been achieved so far in this Jubilee Year and looks ahead to making the Jubilee Pledge this summer.

Jubilee Pledge Day will be a day to remember for the whole school community, with celebrations taking place in a variety of ways, including liturgies or assemblies with parents, carers and parishioners invited and celebratory learning and fundraising activities.

To share their commitment, schools will contribute to the online Pledge Map, ensuring their name is plotted and receiving a Jubilee Pledge Certificate as a reminder of their long-term commitment to justice, peace and love.

Visit [jubilee-schools.org.uk](http://jubilee-schools.org.uk) for Jubilee Pledge Day inspiration and resources

**Sharon Matthews**  
CAFOD Community Participation Coordinator



Celebrating our Schools

**Christ the King Primary School**  
A member of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust  
Teddor 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](mailto:enquiries@ctking.npcat.org.uk)

**St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School**  
Part Of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust  
South Mini, Middlesbrough TS6 6TA  
Tel 01642 835370

Headteacher: Miss C McNicholas  
email: [enquiries@smc.npcat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@smc.npcat.org.uk)

If you would like to advertise your school please contact Charlotte Rosbrooke on 01440 730399 or email [charlotter@cathcom.org](mailto:charlotter@cathcom.org)

## Emily's royal invitation to Buckingham Palace party

**St Richard's VC Academy's safeguarding lead Emily Griffin received a once-in-a-lifetime honour when she was invited to the King's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.**

Hosted by King Charles and Queen Camilla, the prestigious event celebrated community champions from across the UK who have made outstanding contributions to their areas.

Emily was nominated by St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust in recognition of her unwavering commitment to the wellbeing of the children and families she serves.

Trust CEO Rachel McEvoy said her dedication has made a lasting impact on the school community.

"Emily goes above and beyond every day to ensure the safety, wellbeing and future of those she serves in Catholic education," said Mrs McEvoy.

"She embodies the trust's mission and what it means to be a true champion for children and families."

Emily, who attended the garden party with her mum, said it was a "fabulous experience".

"To be a part of the pomp and ceremony will be a memory that lasts forever," she said.

The entire trust and St Richard's community is proud of Emily's well-deserved recognition and grateful for her continued service and care.



St Richard's VC Academy's safeguarding lead Emily Griffin with her mum at the Buckingham Palace garden party



# Restructured board announced for schools trust

**A restructured board has been formed for Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT), which is responsible for the education of more than 11,700 children and young people in the northern, central and coastal deaneries of our diocese.**

Made up of four women and four men, the board brings many years of experience in the education sector as well as in fields including business, finance, the NHS, the police, human resources and the Church.

They will be responsible for overseeing governance at NPCAT's 38 schools, which include two sixth forms and the T6 Football Academy, run in an exclusive partnership with Middlesbrough Football Club.

A spokesperson for the diocese said: "These strategic appointments reinforce the diocese's dedication to shaping future generations through high-quality Catholic education, rooted in the values of faith, love and service."

The board of directors announced the resignation of Hugh Hegarty as CEO and accounting officer on June 13 2025. NPCAT assistant CEO Nicky Jamalizadeh has temporarily assumed the role of accounting officer.

The board has engaged a leading recruitment agency to coordinate the search and selection process for a highly qualified interim chief executive officer.

The appointment is expected to be finalised shortly.



**Canon John Loughlin**

Born in Middlesbrough, Canon John was ordained in 1984, has more than 40 years' experience in school chaplaincy and serving on school governing bodies. He is the former chair of St Hilda's Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.



**Andrew McMillan PGDip, BA (Hons)**

A retired senior police officer with 25 years' service in London and the North-East, Andrew brings experience in delivering leadership and crisis management training across government and the broader public sector, with particular expertise in the assessment and management of risk.



**Karen Siedle BEd (Hons) CTC, NPQH**

Now retired after 33 years as teacher, headteacher, diocesan inspector, deputy CEO, Karen was also interim CEO of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust, which runs schools in our southern deanery.



**Jacqueline Gallon BA (Hons), MAAT, ACMA, CGMA**

Jacqueline is a retired chartered management accountant with extensive finance and budgeting experience in chemical, defence and fast-moving consumer goods companies.



**Claire Druery BA (Hons), Chartered FCIPD**

Claire is chief people officer at Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust, a 30-school multi academy trust in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. She is an experienced HR professional with more than 20 years' experience in strategic HR and leadership across public and private sectors.



**Mark J Dias MA, BSc (Hons), Chartered FCIPD**

Mark is a semi-retired HR director who is currently group non-executive director and People Committee chair at University Hospitals Tees. He is in formation for the permanent diaconate. A former Cleveland Police officer, he was commended for standing up for equality and integrity in policing.



**Peter Hawkins**

Business owner Peter has served on primary and secondary school governing bodies for more than 30 years, the last seven as chair for two schools. He is a former board member and chair of the Finance and Resources Committee of St Hilda's Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and a former board member and chair of friendly society Tees Mutual.



**Audrey Kirby MA, BSc (Hons)**

A retired nurse, Audrey's roles included deputy director for nursing at South Tees NHS Foundation Trust and nursing and workforce project leadership at NHS England. She is currently the diocese's care and welfare officer.

## Glory as boys bring home national trophy

**St Patrick's Catholic College in Thornaby is celebrating after its Year 10 boys' football team won the U15 PlayStation Small Schools' Cup with a thrilling 2-1 victory over King Edward's School, Whitely.**

Played in front of a passionate crowd at the Hawthorns, home of Championship side West Bromwich Albion, the final was a culmination of a journey that saw the team travel throughout the country and beat tough opponents, including previous finalists.

The build-up to the big game saw the Thornaby community come together to back the team, led by the parents, whose persistence and determination ensured enough sponsorship money was raised for the boys to travel in first-class transport.

Sponsorship also came from local businesses, who provided kit and supplies for the team and accompanying staff.

The team emerged from the Hawthorns' tunnel on a hot and sunny day to be greeted by a sea of green and white flags from the hundreds of pupils, parents, relatives and staff who had set off early in the morning to cheer on the team.

St Patrick's took the lead just before half-time

thanks to a great strike from Seb W-A, only for King Edward's to fight back and equalise with 20 minutes to go.

The reply was almost instant, with defender Joel E scoring an outrageous free kick to give St Patrick's a deserved lead.

Both teams tired towards the end and when the referee blew his whistle after four minutes of added time, the Thornaby boys celebrated wildly with their fans.

Captain Rhys H said: "It was the best day of my life. I am so proud of everyone involved. We fought hard together to get that win.

"On behalf of my teammates I want to thank everyone who supported us, both at the ground and at school.

"A massive thank you to NPCAT and our headteacher Miss Law for making this all possible, but a special thank you to the local community within Thornaby, who helped make this day so special.

"I know I speak for all my teammates when I say that I feel so proud to be a pupil of St Patrick's Catholic College."

**David Irvine**  
Pupil Engagement Officer



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## NEWS

# Tributes paid to 'wonderful man' Father Jim

**Warm tributes have been paid to Father Jim O'Brien, who died peacefully in Hull's Royal Infirmary on Thursday May 1.**

Father Jim was born in Clydebank, Glasgow, on May 19 1950 and studied for the priesthood with the Columban Fathers in Dalgin Park, Ireland, from 1971 to 1975. He then took a break and returned to complete his studies at Ushaw College, Durham, from 1987 to 1989 and was ordained to the priesthood at Our Holy Redeemer Parish, Clydebank, on June 21 1989.

He arrived in the diocese soon afterwards for his first appointment as assistant priest at Sacred Heart Church, Middlesbrough.

In 1990, he was asked by Bishop John to take on further studies in Rome and at Sheffield University.

On his return in 1992, he served as Professor of Scripture at Ushaw College, Durham until 1996, when he was appointed parish priest of St Mary & St Joseph's, Pocklington, where he served for four years. He was then chaplain for Hull University from 2000 until 2017.

In 2010, alongside his chaplaincy work at the university, he was also appointed parish priest of St Vincent de Paul, Hull, where he served until his retirement in 2024.

Father Jim had suffered health issues in recent years but embraced that cross in a gentle and humble way.

Phillipa Donnelly, headteacher at St Vincent's Voluntary Academy in Hull, said: "Our beloved Father Jim made a profound and lasting contribution to our St Vincent's school community."

"He supported children, families and staff

with unwavering care and compassion, always offering a listening ear and words of comfort."

"His celebration of Mass and feast days brought faith to life for us all and his engaging RE lessons inspired a deep sense of spiritual understanding among our pupils. His presence was a source of strength and peace, nurturing the wellbeing of both staff and pupils."

"He will be dearly missed and fondly remembered for the love and dedication he shared with our school family."

Gabrielle Awre first got to know Father Jim when he was chaplain to Hull University and he later asked her to join him as a lay assistant chaplain.

Paying tribute, she said: "Intelligent, wise and funny, you were all that a priest should

be. Very human and understanding."

"A great linguist, theology lecturer at the university and educator before following your vocation. You had the art of saying a reverent Mass while keeping it concise. You were a great chaplain and a good friend."

Mark Dawson, who knew Father Jim from his time at St Vincent's, said: "Father Jim was a wonderful man and an amazingly positive person who was always bringing a smile to everyone's face. I feel blessed to have met him."

Bishop Terry celebrated Father Jim's Requiem Mass at St Vincent's on Friday May 23. He was cremated privately in Hull and his ashes taken by his family to Scotland, to be buried in the family grave.

Please pray for the repose of Father Jim's soul and for his sister and his family at this time.

## A towering intellect and a dear and loyal friend

Soon after he arrived at St Vincent's, it became obvious Father Jim had many special and endearing qualities – a fierce intellect; a superb knowledge of the Old and New Testament; the ability to speak languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Irish; a genuine love for all his parishioners; a delicious sense of humour and, above all, unflinching modesty.

He loved and knew his classical music too. We drank many a cup of coffee while listening to the works of Mahler and Schubert.

Father Jim was not blessed with good health yet despite several periods of severe illness – how on earth he survived Covid, we'll never know – he would return to his parish duties smiling, unflinching positive and ready to go. Rarely did we ever hear him complain.

Father Jim was also a great friend and supporter of St Vincent's Catholic Primary School and would visit the children and staff frequently.

He was proud of both church and school and was always delighted to spend time with the children in "their church", as he used to say.

All who knew Father Jim have their own special and happy memories. To me, he was a towering intellect, a dear and loyal friend and almost like a big brother. I shall miss him. We shall all miss him.

Rest in peace, Father Jim. You are finally free from pain and suffering.

John Murray



Father Jim O'Brien, who has died after a long illness

## Parishioners gather for healing Mass

**Around 50 parishioners gathered at St George's Church in York to take part in a Mass of the Anointing of the Sick organised by the parish's SVP group.**

Mass was concelebrated by Father Jo Michael and Canon Jerry Twomey, Canon Pat Harney and Canon Michael Ryan.

A social event afterwards at the nearby Phoenix Inn provided a valuable opportunity for relaxation and chat, with music by Steve Cassidy.

As our event coincided with the 80th Anniversary of VE Day, parishioner Brian also led a moving tribute to all the men and women who gave their lives in the Second World War. May they all rest in peace.

Thank you to everyone who attended and especially to Rosa, Marika and Norman for the music, our priests for concelebrating, Phoenix Inn and Julie's Caterers staff and to St George's SVP members for organising the event and making it such a success.

David Harper



Canon Jerry Twomey blesses a parishioner during the Mass of Anointing at St George's in York – Photo by Lars Karlsson

## A Letter From Madonna House – Celebrating 40 years at Robin Hood's Bay

**This year, Madonna House is celebrating its 40th anniversary of foundation in Robin Hood's Bay, North Yorkshire.**

Someone asked me, "Why celebrate 40 years, and not just wait for 50?" So, I looked up the number 40, and rediscovered its rich signification in the Scriptures, in God's plan.

After their exodus from slavery in Egypt, the Israelites wandered 40 years in the desert (Joshua 5,6). In their time of testing and

purification they often stumbled, sinned, repented and had to begin again. This is also true of us during our 40 years here! Our call to Madonna House is both beautiful and demanding. God says to us in our Little Mandate: "Arise, go! Sell all you possess... Follow me..."

This work of purification reminds us that this apostolate is God's work and not ours.

The Biblical number 40 also represents a

generation, completion and fulfilment. The children and young families we knew in 1985 have grown and now have children and grandchildren of their own. Some of our good friends have passed to their eternal reward. We have shared both the pains and joys of many, and we continue to cherish them and the memory of them. New friends and acquaintances continue to come and bless our lives.

How much the world has changed in 40 years! Yet, we can confidently sing the words of the Byzantine hymn: "May the Lord's name be blessed, from generation to generation, for ages and forever... forever!"

Forty also signifies divine intervention and the presence of God. During the 40 years that Israel wandered in the desert, God rained down manna, a heavenly food, to sustain them (Exodus 16, 35). We in Madonna House, who live by God's Providence, have been continually sustained over the years, usually through the beautiful generosity of many friends and benefactors. There are so many stories we could tell! Small miracles? Yes, and sometimes big

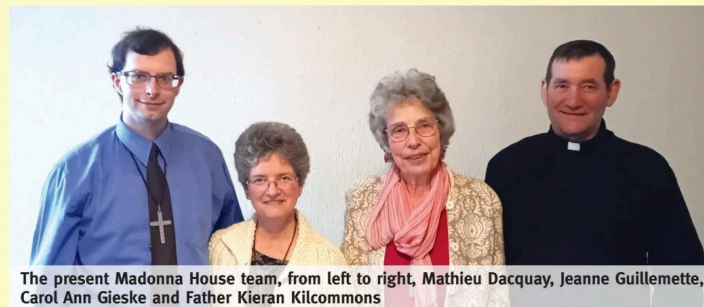
ones. It is so clear that God provides for us.

The number 40 can also mean renewal and new beginnings. Noah and his family spent 40 days and 40 nights in the ark as the rains fell and covered the earth with water (Genesis 7,4).

At the end of the Great Flood, Noah sent out a dove, and it returned to the ark with an olive branch. This was evidence of new growth and a time of beginning again.

We too have seen growth and new beginnings over the years. Every member of Madonna House who comes brings something new. We recently counted 57 staff members who have been assigned here over the years, not to mention all the Madonna House staff who have visited! Each has left their mark.

So yes, dear friends, we are celebrating! There will be a Mass of Thanksgiving for our 40th anniversary at 12.30pm on Wednesday July 16, presided by Bishop Terry. The Mass will take place at St Stephen's Anglican Church in Robin Hood's Bay, with refreshments served at Madonna House afterwards. All are welcome!



The present Madonna House team, from left to right, Mathieu Dacquay, Jeanne Guillemette, Carol Ann Gieske and Father Kieran Kilcommons



# Film helps change perceptions of homelessness

St George's Church in York was proud to host the screening of realistic and well produced documentary *In These Shoes*, made by homeless people in York.

The documentary and screening were organised by local charity Carecent, a breakfast centre for all homeless, unemployed or otherwise socially excluded members of our community. Carecent provides food, clothing and fellowship in a friendly and non-judgemental environment.

*In These Shoes* has been produced and published by Carecent to show the often gritty realities of homelessness and aims to change our perceptions of homelessness and the reasons why ordinary people become homeless.

After watching the documentary in Church,

parishioners then considered practical ways we can all support the work of Carecent and the SVP to turn concern into action in our communities.

St George's SVP and parishioners have proudly supported Carecent for many years, with weekly collections of food, volunteers to deliver food and to cook breakfasts and financial assistance for specific projects.

Thank you to Father Jo Michael for letting us screen the documentary and to the Carecent team for organising.

If you would like to know more about the documentary or how to organise a screening at your church, please email St George's SVP at [svp@stgeorgeschurch-york.org.uk](mailto:svp@stgeorgeschurch-york.org.uk).

David Harper

# Event raises funds for week of fun and memories

Parishioners from St Aelred's Parish in York enjoyed an afternoon tea and bingo session and raffle to raise funds for this year's Vinnie Camp.

The event was organised by Liz Foley with the help of other SVP members.

The five-day camp takes place at Peat Rigg Outdoor Activity Centre, Pickering, in August.

SVP members across the diocese are working to raise £9,000 to allow us to offer the week cost-free to the eight volunteers and 20 children aged between nine and 11 years old.

Transport to and from Peat Rigg will also be provided, as well as help with the necessary clothing or footwear.

Activities will be led by Peat Rigg staff and the SVP volunteers will provide pastoral care.

You can help a child build their confidence, discover their independence, make friends and memories to treasure this summer by...

- Donating in an envelope marked Vinnie Camp to any SVP member
- Emailing [presidentc13@svp.org.uk](mailto:presidentc13@svp.org.uk) requesting bank details for making a donation
- Emailing [Lizf@svp.org.uk](mailto:Lizf@svp.org.uk) to volunteer for the week

Please remember to gift aid your donation. Thank you in anticipation of your generosity.

Patricia Nobbs

Middlesbrough SVP Central Council President

# Branch out and join the SVP!

This is a picture of a tree canopy in New Zealand taken by the treasurer of the Bridlington conference, Abi Blackford. The branches do not touch, and this is called "tree shyness".

The St Vincent de Paul Society in your area does not want you to be shy – we exist on this earth to connect and grow together.

Contact me and I can connect you with your nearest conference so that you can share your talents and meet new people.

Would you like to start a new conference in your parish? We can help you do this too.

What can you offer? An hour or two a week? What do you gain? Friendship, experience and support.

Pick up the phone and call 07554 336984 or email [Teresao@svp.org.uk](mailto:Teresao@svp.org.uk) – take the leap and become a member of the Vincentian family. Don't be shy!

Teresa O'Hagan  
Membership Support Officer



# Retiring Ruth packs her bags after farewell party

SVP members, volunteers and even some shoppers gathered to help Ruth Smith celebrate as she retired from her role as manager of the charity's Middlesbrough shop.

Having reached the age of 66, Ruth decided the time had come to step down, with a mixture of sadness and joy.

"My time as manager of St Vincent's has been one of personal growth and achievement," she said. "I feel I leave the shop in a far more stable position than three years ago.

"I wish to thank all the members of the SVP conferences and parishes who have supported the shop with their many donations and would ask and pray that you keep up your great support.

"Vincent's Shop is a much-needed local resource that also feeds into a national and international need.

"I hope to return as a volunteer and I would encourage anyone who has a few hours a week to spare to do the same."

Ruth, a parishioner and Minister of the Word at St Gabriel's, Ormesby, was presented with a garden chair from staff and volunteers at a farewell party in the shop.

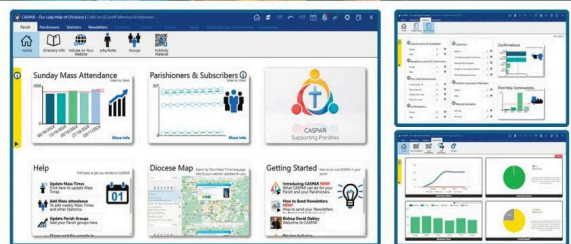
Tony and Margaret Clark



Ruth says goodbye to her role as SVP shop manager as she dons a military police cap and carries a suitcase donated by Joan, a parishioner of St Mary and St Romuald's in Yarm

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## LOURDES

# A week of sunshine and spiritual renewal

**Our 72nd Pilgrimage to Lourdes brought together hundreds of faithful pilgrims from across the diocese for a week of prayer, reflection and community.**

Pilgrims of all ages travel to the renowned Marian shrine in southern France for an experience marked by sunny weather and a deep sense of spiritual renewal.

Lourdes, famous for its healing waters and the apparitions of the Virgin Mary to St Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, remains a beacon of hope and faith for Catholics worldwide.

With Bishop Terry attending the installation of the new Archbishop of Liverpool, he was unable to take part on this year's pilgrimage.

We were led instead by Monsignor Gerard Robinson and were also blessed to be joined by Bishop John, who delighted everyone with his smiling and inspirational presence.

Pilgrims enjoyed a full programme of daily services, including the usual Mass of Anointing, Grotto Mass and Reconciliation

Service, as well as a visit to the baths for the water gesture.

The sunny weather added to the uplifting atmosphere, allowing pilgrims to take in the town's beautiful surroundings.

Many pilgrims shared stories of personal transformation and renewed faith, highlighting the importance of such journeys in strengthening their spiritual lives.

Our supported pilgrims were cared for by our dedicated Hospitalité teams, aided enthusiastically by our young people, including groups from every secondary school in the diocese and their dedicated teaching staff.

As the pilgrimage concluded, Monsignor Robinson expressed his gratitude to everyone involved and encouraged pilgrims to carry the spirit of Lourdes into their daily lives.

Plans are already underway for next year's pilgrimage and another opportunity to experience faith and fellowship in this uniquely peaceful setting.



Lighting up time at the Torchlight Marian Procession – Photo © Alex Wright, Durand, Lourdes



Bishop John gives the Sacrament of the Sick to Michael and June Askins – Photo © Durand



Father Pat Day anoints Damian Rodgers – Photo © Durand



Nicole Hall with one of our youngest pilgrims, baby Louis – Photo © Durand



Fathers Pat Day, Peter Taylor, Richard Marsden, Brian Nicholson and John Bane in the Underground Basilica – Photo by Michael McGeary



Young people with our supported pilgrims – Photo © Durand



One of our young brancardiers – Photo © Durand



Jean Milburn, Bishop John and Marie Oliver – Photo by



# LOURDES



Mass in the St Bernadette Centre – Photo © Durand



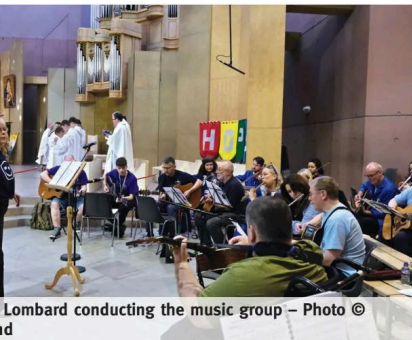
Father Phil Cunah – Photo by Naomi Bedworth



Father Phil Cunah with pilgrimage director Mark Taylor – Photo by Naomi Bedworth



Young people spell out our week's theme, Pilgrims of Hope – Photo by Michael McGeary



Lombard conducting the music group – Photo © Durand



Elaine Mackin – Photo © Durand



The Grotto Mass – Photo by Michael McGeary



Monsignor Gerard Robinson, Bishop John, Father Peter and Monsignor Ricardo Morgan – Photo © Durand



A quiet word – Photo © Durand



A bird's-eye view of the procession – Photo by Naomi Bedworth



Gerry Quinn



Brancardiers carrying the statue of Our Lady – Photo by Michael McGeary



A happy snap – Photo by Michael McGeary



Cesar Antido – Photo by Naomi Bedworth



## NEWS

# When seafarers need a Good Samaritan

**When seafarers and fishers arrive in a port, they are strangers in a foreign land.**

They don't know the locals and often don't know who to turn to when they need help.

Port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors from Stella Maris (the Catholic Church's maritime agency and formerly known as Apostleship of the Sea) are there for them. They are concerned for the welfare of seafarers and fishers.

This year's Gospel for Sea Sunday, which falls on July 13, reminds us about the love and care the Good Samaritan showed to the stranger he found upon the road. For seafarers and fishers, Stella Maris is that Good Samaritan.

## Acts of kindness

Steve Willows, Stella Maris regional port chaplain to Northumberland, North and South Tyneside, was contacted by the captain of a vessel in Sunderland.

One of their cooks, Carlo (name changed to protect his identity) had fallen seriously ill. He had been meant to fly home to the Philippines but instead was admitted to hospital. The ship had to leave, and Carlo faced being left completely alone in a foreign country.

During Carlo's three weeks in hospital, he was visited by Steve and Stella Maris volunteer ship visitor Sister Scholastica.

"On the days I would visit Carlo, he would update me on any procedures or results he had received that day," said Steve.

"His hearing had drastically worsened due to the infection he had. During early conversations, I would reply via typing answers on my phone and show him as he struggled to hear my voice.

"Over time, as his hearing slowly improved, the need to type out my side of our conversations lessened until we were able to chat normally, which was a relief to Carlo."

Steve brought clean clothes, food and a mobile phone SIM card so Carlo could contact his family back home.

"When a seafarer like Carlo is in hospital in a country where he doesn't know anyone, we will probably be the only ones to visit him with consistency," he said.

"Then a seafarer will know who to contact if there is anything they need bringing in or want someone to talk to. We can be with them for the high and lows."

After Carlo returned to the Philippines for treatment for a cancer that had been discovered, Steve kept in touch with him, checking on how his treatments were going and keeping him and his family in his prayers.

These simple acts of kindness by Stella Maris port chaplains and ship visitors mean so much to seafarers who are far from home and



Steve Willows, third from the left, Stella Maris regional port chaplain

feeling isolated.

This Sea Sunday, let us pray for seafarers, fishers and the work of Stella Maris. Readers

wishing to donate toward the work of Stella Maris can visit [stellamaris.org.uk/donate/](http://stellamaris.org.uk/donate/).

Greg Watts

# Presentation highlights vital work of charity

**Parishioners at St Gabriel's in Ormesby, Middlesbrough, have been learning how an ecumenical charity helps people in some of Teesside's most disadvantaged areas.**

Together with Mark Davis, chief officer of Middlesbrough Volunteer Development Agency (MVDA), I visited to deliver a presentation on revised arrangements for Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland (TM&C).

We explained how TM&C is being amalgamated into the MVDA, which will strengthen our vital work.

Bishop Terry and the diocese have supported TM&C since it was established 12 years ago, through generous financial support and the recruitment of Catholic champions to promote TM&C in their parishes and communities.

St Gabriel's parishioners were interested to learn about TM&C's involvement in the Feast of Fun project. By 2020 there were 44 Feast of Fun groups, both Anglican and Catholic, providing activities and healthy food for 11,409 children, young people and their families and 86,676 meals were delivered to those who needed them.

Other projects include intergenerational work, loneliness and isolation and mental health and wellbeing.

Mark Sutcliffe and I will visit St Cuthbert Anglican parish in Ormesby to give a presentation this month (July). Mark Sutcliffe is the Anglican trustee for TM&C.

Father James Benfield at St Gabriel's and Reverend Robert Opala, parish priest at St Cuthbert, hope to work together in true ecumenical spirit.

We have great plans for TM&C to build on the excellent work and projects delivered over the last 12 years and we are grateful for the hard work and commitment of Catholic champions from St Mary's Cathedral and other parishes to support the most vulnerable in some of the poorest wards in the area.

For more information and to find out how you can help, email [jnhinman@gmail.com](mailto:jnhinman@gmail.com).

John Hinman

Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland and Caritas

## Poetry and Prayer: Dialogue with God

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

In 1938, a 29-year-old Jewish philosopher and social activist called Simone Weil spent Holy Week and Easter at the Benedictine monastery of Solesmes.

She was suffering terrible migraines but attended all the services with intense concentration and while she was there met a young English Catholic who introduced her to the English 17th-century metaphysical poets.

Among them is George Herbert, author of a religious lyric called simply "Love". Simone learnt it by heart (I recommend that) and recited it when her headaches were most severe.

"Without my knowing it the recitation had the virtue of a prayer," she wrote. "It was during one of these recitations that, as I told you, Christ himself came down and took possession of me."

In spite of writing profound examples of Catholic theology and spirituality, Simone refused baptism: she wouldn't cut herself off, as she saw it, from all those outside the Church.

She was aged only 34 when she died of tuberculosis in 1943, while working with the French government in exile and has been called the "patron saint of outsiders".

Simone Weil was right about Herbert's poem: it is a prayer, though he presents it as a small dramatic scene in which the poet is invited to a meal, feels undeserving but is eventually persuaded to sit at the table and be waited on by his host.

The poem works beautifully as an allegory (think of the parables) and its dialogue suggests two characters in a play – the impassioned, remorseful guest and the courteous, gentle host.

Like this poem, prayer is an intimate dialogue, though it may be wordless, between the soul and God.

Something a poem can do is engage the imagination and then, in the silence that follows the "rightness" of the end, provide space for our own spiritual reflection.

Herbert's Love is a God of mercy and welcome, who has an answer to each of the guest's worthy declarations of unworthiness! The final image, five words of unadorned simplicity (most words in the poem are one syllable, and the last verse contains only

one word that isn't), opens up all the mystery of the Eucharist, both sacrifice and service.

"Meat" in the 17th century meant food, but here also suggests the flesh of the host, Christ himself.

### Love

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul  
drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.  
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow  
slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning  
If I lack'd any thing.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:  
Love said, you shall be he.

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,  
I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did  
reply,  
Who made the eyes but I?



Jewish philosopher and social activist  
Simone Weil

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them: let  
my shame  
Go where it doth deserve.  
And know you not, says Love, who bore  
the blame?  
My dear, then I will serve.  
You must sit down, says Love, and taste  
my meat:  
So I did sit and eat.



# Help charity bring hope to hungry children

A charity that feeds hungry children all over the world is recruiting volunteer "Hope Givers" to help change the lives of children living in some of the world's poorest communities.

Mary's Meals started in a tin shed in a Scottish village in 2002 after founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow met a 14-year-old boy called Edward in Malawi.

Edward was the eldest of six children, all sitting with their mother, who was dying of AIDS. Magnus asked what he hoped for in life and Edward replied: "I would like to have enough food to eat and to be able to go to school one day."

This interaction sparked the foundation of Mary's Meals and today the charity provides nutritious school meals to more than 2.6m

children every day across 16 countries, including Malawi, Haiti, India and Syria.

The promise of a good meal attracts these hungry children into the classroom, giving them the energy to learn and hope for a brighter future.

The charity's low-cost approach means it costs just £19.15 to feed a child every school day for a year. This is only possible because of the thousands of volunteers who give their time, energy and creativity to support the mission.

From community cooks overseas to those who raise funds and awareness in the UK, each act of kindness helps build a world where every child has enough to eat and access to education.

Mary's Meals is celebrating the incredible

impact of its volunteers and inviting more people to join its family. Among those already sharing Mary's Meals' story of hope is volunteer Tricia and her grandson, William.

Tricia was first inspired by Mary's Meals after attending a talk by longstanding volunteer Roger. Soon after, 10-year-old William received a Mary's Meals money box from Roger and watched the charity's powerful film, *Child 31*. Learning that £19.15 could feed a child for a whole school year, William said: "I already have £20 from my birthday – I want to save a child's life."

At just eight years old, William bravely stood in front of 400 fellow pupils at his school assembly to share the story of Mary's Meals.

Tricia says: "His empathy and enthusiasm are awe-inspiring. His commitment encouraged me to become a volunteer too."

Since then, the pair have raised a remarkable £2,695 by giving talks and presentations together. Tricia explains: "If any talks fall during school holidays, William will come with me. His story lightens the presentation

and inspires my audience. I couldn't be prouder of his understanding and his desire to make a difference."

William adds: "There are millions of starving children in the world, and if we each filled a box, we are all helping to save a child's life. Mary's Meals is the very best charity I've seen – it's feeding over two and a half million children every day!"

You can join Mary's Meals' growing family by signing up to become a volunteer.

You can also support the charity by becoming a speaker and sharing our story with groups or schools, helping organise fundraising events or providing our teams with general admin support.

We are particularly keen to hear from anyone willing to be a Faith Rep volunteer, to help us share the Mary's Meals mission in their own parish community.

Visit [marysmeals.org.uk](http://marysmeals.org.uk) to get started or email [fran.lawson@marysmeals.org](mailto:fran.lawson@marysmeals.org) for more information on volunteering or to request a talk.



Mary's Meals' volunteer Tricia and her grandson, William, who have raised £2,695 by giving talks and presentations together

## Passiontide concert raises food bank funds

A Meditation for Passiontide in Words and Music was held at English Martyrs Church in Sleights, North Yorkshire.

The words were readings from St Matthew's Passion and the music was Michael Haydn's Requiem in C Minor, performed by the Tuesday Singers under the musical direction of Steve Maltby.

The performance was introduced by Father

Michael Sellers, parish priest of English Martyrs and St Hilda's, Whitby, who described it as apt and sombre preparation for the Sacred Triduum.

The concert was attended by parishioners and locals from Whitby and Sleights and raised £103 for the food bank.

John Moran

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**NEWS****Out & About****1 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 terry-doyle@live.co.uk. This takes place every Tuesday.

**2 Wednesday**

**5.30pm** Sung Evening Prayer and Benediction at St Mary's Cathedral. Join us every Wednesday for a time of prayer and quiet reflection before the Blessed Sacrament.

**4 Friday**

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

**5 Saturday**

**11am** Catholic women are invited to share an hour of feminine communion, including meditation, via Zoom. Text Barbara on 07796 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.

**7 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 on first Monday each month at St Bede's Pastoral Centre, Blossom Street, York. For more information, contact Sharon on cdscsmiddlesbrough@gmail.com or 07932 420809.

**8 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.

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

**9 Wednesday**

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

**10 Thursday**

**7.45pm** Middlesbrough Catenian Circle, sharing faith and friendship with kindred spirits throughout Teesside, meet at Middlesbrough Cricket Club, Green Lane, Middlesbrough TS5 7SL. Call Peter Carey on 01642 317772 or Chris Rhodes on 01642 319161.

**13 Sunday**

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

**14 Monday**

**2pm** Music for the Mind dementia-friendly communal singing, an hour of fun and music at St Mary's Cathedral for people living with dementia, their friends and carers, with Trish McLean. All welcome.

**19 Saturday**

**7.30pm** Irish dance with Dermot Hegarty at the Erimus Club, Cumberland Road, Middlesbrough TS5 6JB. Contact John Brown on 07871 958412.

**21 Monday**

**3pm** Catholic Fellowship Mass at St Hedda's, Egton Bridge, with Father Roger Guiver.

**26 Saturday**

**Noon** Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop Terry Draine and Bishop John Crowley, St Mary's Cathedral.

**Noon** LGBT+ social gathering at the Bar Convent, York. 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

## Liberal Jewish Community celebrates festival of Purim at York church hall

The parish hall at English Martyrs in York was the venue for York's Liberal Jewish Community to celebrate Purim.

This festival commemorates the story of Queen Esther, who courageously confronted her husband, the king, and thwarted their enemies' plans to exterminate the Jews.

The celebration has a fun focus, with plenty of participation for children and families.

Rabbi Elisheva chose an Austrian theme and mixed the ancient story with songs and characters from The Sound of Music, with witty rewrites of the lyrics.

Four English Martyrs parishioners became nuns for the evening and sang beautifully – and was that really the Anglican chaplain singing Esther/Maria's role so gloriously?

Rabbi Elisheva is a consummate storyteller and kept the evening moving in a way I have found

typical of Jewish festivals: alternate layers of food and story, feeding minds, hearts and bodies.

York's Liberal Jewish Community has a wide base and is utterly inclusive, attracting visitors from far outside the city. Purim continued the following day with a family walk round York city walls.

F Mary Callan



Rabbi Elisheva (left) with English Martyrs' 'singing nuns' Sally, Louise, Lisa and Linda, parish priest Canon Michael Loughlin and another performer

**Copy Deadline**

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Deadline Friday July 4 for August edition.

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# European companions trace Mary Ward's roots

**A group of pilgrims from Germany, Austria and South Tyrol, Italy, spent ten days walking in the footsteps of Mary Ward in England.**

The women are companions of Mary Ward from the Central European province of the Congregation of Jesus (CJ).

They live their vocations in their different states – single, married, widowed and divorced – but all serve God in whatever ministry they are called to.

"We aren't religious sisters, but we think of ourselves as their companions in the other boat," one said.

She is referring to the passage in Luke 5 where the disciples find their nets at breaking point after Jesus has told them where to fish and ask others in another boat to come and help them.

The group's tour started in Warwickshire and London, but they were especially interested to discover Mary Ward's roots in Yorkshire, where she was born near Ripon in 1585.

Mary was ahead of her time in many ways. God called her to do apostolic work outside convent walls and wherever it was needed, to be a contemplative in action, just like St Ignatius of Loyola encouraged those joining the Society of Jesus to be.

Seeing how the Catholic women around her lived their faith, often at great cost, Mary was very aware of the potential that women had (and still have) to serve God in many ways. Just like the CJ sisters at the Bar Convent in York, the companions see themselves as continuing Mary Ward's legacy.

"We all come from places in Europe where schools founded by Mary Ward and her sisters have had such an important influence on so many people over the years," said another of the companions.

"It is a great privilege now to be visiting the places that taught Mary so much."

The group were particularly impressed with the wide horizons of Holderness and commented on how Mary's spirituality reflected that openness and far-sightedness.

"She's very much a saint of our days, accompanying us on our synodal journey," one companion said.

With this she addressed what is in the hearts of all her companions. Although now considered Venerable, Mary Ward has not yet been canonised.

As Mary herself would say: "Till God will."

One of the highlights of the tour was a Vesper

held in the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Grace at Osmotherley, a place of pilgrimage for them as it had been for Mary Ward when she returned to her native county after many years in Europe shortly before the outbreak of the English Civil war.

The tour ended with an ecumenical service in St Thomas's Church in Osbaldwick, where Mary Ward is buried and where her gravestone encourages everyone to persevere, in love.



Congregation of Jesus companions of the Central European Province visiting the place of Mary Ward's grave in St Thomas's, Osbaldwick, near York

## How award-winner Paul is still helping next generation

**Memories of his apprenticeship in 1965 still help drive Paul Griffiths MBE on to do the best for the young people his company takes on.**

Paul founded leading hydraulic engineering firm IMH in 1983 and, 42 years later, he's still involved as non-executive director and training the next generation of talent while son James runs the business as MD.

Paul's passion and dedication made him a deserved winner of this year's Tees Business Awards' Lifetime Achievement category.

But typically, Paul was keen to heap praise on others rather than himself.

He said: "I'm absolutely gobsmacked to get this – I really didn't think it would come my way. I was amazed to be nominated. And while I've had many highlights in my career, we've always put other people, and our employees, first – and our employees have paid us back."

Paul, a former head brancardier and still a mainstay of our Lourdes Pilgrimage, also

helps as a driver for Middlesbrough Fellowship, among countless other voluntary tasks, often unseen.

Dean of St Mary's Cathedral Canon Paul Farrer helped put the award nomination together and paid a warm tribute to Paul's tireless contribution.

Recalling his 1965 Dorman Long apprenticeship, Paul – awarded the MBE in 2019 for services to engineering skills and apprenticeships – said it was "amazing training – and I got it for free!"

Even at 75, he says he still enjoys training the current crop of IMH youngsters.

He said: "We've always trained apprentices in the traditional way. We're not a large company so we can't train lots of them but each one we train, we give them our best."

More than 350 people attended the third annual Tees Business Awards, which were hosted by Sky Sports presenter Hayley McQueen.



Paul Griffiths MBE with his Tees Business Lifetime Achievement award

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## NEWS

# Bishop calls for immediate Gaza ceasefire

**The lead bishop for the Holy Land for the Bishops' Conference, Bishop Jim Curry, has echoed Pope Leo XIV's call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.**

He said: "This is a humanitarian disaster. Desperately needed aid supplies must be allowed into Gaza to be urgently distributed to civilians.

"The human cost is intolerably high with tens of thousands of weary, regularly displaced people threatened with starvation. We need an immediate ceasefire to end the suffering.

"As Pope Leo said at his first general audience, children, the elderly and the sick are paying a very heavy price, and I would echo the Holy Father's heartfelt appeal for 'dignified' humanitarian aid to be allowed to pass into Gaza – not just an inadequate trickle of food and supplies that has been promised."

Bishop Curry also referenced prime minister Keir Starmer's joint statement with the Canadian and French leaders on the situation in Gaza.

"International humanitarian law has to be respected and a viable pathway to de-escalation and peace sought by Israel and Hamas, supported by the international community," said Bishop Curry.

"The remaining hostages in Gaza, held for 19 months since the Hamas terror attack on October 7, must be released to put an end to their suffering and that of their families.

"I welcome the statement by the prime minister and the leaders of France and Canada, particularly the assertion that the best hope of achieving this and alleviating the pain and hardship facing the civilians in Gaza is to work tirelessly for a long-term political solution.

"It is important not to lose sight of the legitimate right of Palestinians to self-determination. The Church has consistently advocated for a two-state solution to enable Palestinians and Israelis to live side by side in peace."

Bishop Curry said he was also praying for the Christians of Gaza.

"I continue to pray for Father Gabriel Romanelli and the Christian community sheltering in the compound of the Holy Family Church, north of the Wadi.

"It is a humbling inspiration to all of us outside the conflict zone to witness their strength of faith in the Risen Christ, and how they continue to lead a humble sacramental life despite the incredible hardship and distress they are facing."

## Faithful struggling to survive in Gaza

**Due to Israel's blockade, the only Catholic parish in Gaza City has been forced to radically cut back the aid it provides.**

Father Gabriel Romanelli told Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) the Parish of the Holy Family has reduced resources to feed Christians sheltering in the Church and families living nearby because Israeli authorities stopped emergency supplies entering the territory.

He said: "For now we're rationing everything we have, and only after this rationing can we distribute it to the refugees in the compound and to people from outside."

But he said the parish recently managed to distribute water both inside and outside the compound.

The UN estimates around 500 trucks are needed every day to meet basic needs.

Father Romanelli said: "Inside the parish compound, we are doing as well as possible, though we hear a lot of shelling, and sometimes shrapnel reaches our compound."

He said he has seen signs of mental illness, including depression, among the faithful. He said his main challenge is organising life in the parish under war-time conditions.

The Church follows a regular schedule, including silent prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament every morning and Mass in the afternoon.

Children have regular school lessons and other activities, including weekly Bible study groups.

He said: "The most serious thing we see is that no one is talking about the end of the war or the right to stay here, or to rebuild homes, to start over. So we pray, and we ask people to pray and work for peace."

When the current conflict broke out, most of the Christian population took refuge in the Holy Family Catholic parish and in the neighbouring Orthodox compound.

The Israeli military offensive in the Gaza Strip followed the terrorist attacks of October 7 2023 carried out by Hamas and other jihadist groups operating from the territory.

The parish looks after around 500 men, women and children, including a group with disabilities who are being looked after by the Missionaries of Charity.

According to the Hamas-run Ministry of Health, more than 50,000 people in Gaza have died because of the war.

Around 52 members of the city's Christian population – which before the war stood at around 1,000 from both Orthodox and Catholic Churches – have either been killed in military attacks or died due to lack of medical attention.

Filipe d'Avillez and John Newton



Father Gabriel Romanelli ministering Holy Family Church – Photo © ACN

## Environment Corner: A decade on from Laudato Si', calls for climate action grow

**A Celebration of Laudato Si' 10 years on was the occasion of an online event organised by the northern and southern Dioceses Environmental Networks.**

The keynote speaker was Austen Ivereigh, who will be familiar to many of us through his television commentaries on the funeral of Pope Francis and the election of Pope Leo. He has written widely of Pope Francis and co-authored several books with him.

Reflecting on how the encyclical had "captured the imagination of the world", Austen acknowledged the frustration of many that there was too little urgency within governments, who had failed to act as they had promised and within many of our churches where it is seen as "extracurricular", rather than a central concern.

Austen spoke of the see-judge-act model Pope Francis used to discern our role to cooperate with God's plan for our world.

The Laudato Si' Apostolate can be considered as enabling these three tasks by:

- helping people see what is happening to our Earth, to experience grief and the desire to repent

- to enter into understanding and
- to move into concrete actions.

Aligning with the theme of the Jubilee year, hope is what creates the space for God's action.

There are many signs of hope: a growing awareness of our relationship with every creature and proof that "creaturely life can come back in abundance when space is created for them to recover co-agency with humans".

Such a "vision of partnership of humans and non-human creatures that is clearly part of the divine plan".

Hopes over the next 10 years centred on many Laudato Si'-inspired projects worldwide, the coming together of like-minded groups and the sense that "small is beautiful" and every action is worth doing.

These initiatives will continue to grow with a transformation in the direction of sustainable lifestyles.

It will take time for Laudato Si' to enter the mainstream of theology and formation but it has begun and will continue.

Everyone at the celebration was asked to

commit to the July 9 mass lobby of parliament by contacting our MPs to ask them to act on climate, debt and nature.

Thousands are expected to join this event,

organised by the Climate Coalition, to demand global justice on debt and climate.

Barbara Hungen



Cardinal Nichols launches Pope Francis' first Encyclical Laudato Si' at Our Lady & St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Poplar, East London – © Mazur/ catholicnews.org.uk



# Blessed Franz's journey from troublemaker to martyr

Following John Hinman's account in last month's *Voice* of Catholic heroes who stood up to the Nazis, TONY LAWTON, a parishioner at St John the Evangelist at Easingwold, tells the story of another, Blessed Franz Jägerstätter...

In 2007, Franz Jägerstätter (1907-1943) was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI.

True, he was not technically a German citizen, having been born in the small village of Sankt Radegund on the Austrian side of the River Salzach, which forms the frontier with Bavaria. Nevertheless, he was condemned to death and ended his life on the scaffold (by guillotine) at the notorious Brandenburg-Görden Prison in 1943.

A total of 2,743 people are believed to have been executed there under the Nazi regime between August 1940 and April 1945, five of them Catholic priests, together with seven laymen, including Jägerstätter.

His story is remarkable at more than one level. In the entire martyrology of the Church, his must be one of the more surprising entries.

His early life gave no indication of where it would lead him. Born to a single mother, he soon gained a reputation as an adolescent for being a public nuisance and specialising in constant brawling.

One such fight – over girls – even earned him a brief incarceration in the local prison and in 1933 he fathered an illegitimate child.

Taken together, it is somewhat unusual for anyone from such a background to demonstrate heroic sanctity in later life.

Fortunately, the latter experience seems to have prompted a more responsible and conciliatory approach to life's problems. He visited the mother of his child and began to support her financially, leaving the village to work as a miner and earn more money.

When he subsequently returned to the village, he seems to have abandoned his former lifestyle and to have increased his sense of moral and political responsibility. In 1936 he married another woman and settled down.

But political events beyond the small village world were rapidly moving in the wrong direction.

In response to encouragement and pressure from Nazi supporters on both sides of the frontier for union of the two German-speaking countries, the Austrian chancellor promised a plebiscite, which was due to take place on Sunday March 13 1938.

Hitler regarded this as provocation – the will of the people was clear enough. What need had we of a vote?

Over the weekend of March 11 to 13, German troops crossed the frontier into Austria to achieve a de facto annexation, albeit with strong Austrian support.

To provide a veneer of respectability, a plebiscite was held the next month, but by then Austria was under close Nazi supervision



Blessed Franz Jägerstätter, who was put to death for refusing to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler

and threats and coercion were employed to manipulate the vote, which was not secret.

We know Jägerstätter voted against the union, but that did not prevent the St Radegund Village Council from recording a 100% vote in favour – the official majority throughout Austria was claimed to be 99.7% in favour.

By the time of these inauspicious events, Jägerstätter had become sufficiently respectable to be offered the post of bürgermeister (mayor) of St Radegund, but he rejected it.

From the Anschluss (annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany) of March 1938 onwards, a fast and decisive overhaul of Austrian institutions ensued and conscription followed as part of a broader programme aimed at consolidating control over all facets of society in Hitler's newly acquired territory.

Still seemingly anxious not to draw attention to itself and to keep Jägerstätter outside, the village council pussyfooted around and didn't press the conscription issue, allowing him exemption from military conscription, even well after the declaration of war in September 1939.

However, after the disastrous defeat of the Nazi forces at Stalingrad in February 1943, the village could no longer prevent Jägerstätter finally being called up for service in the Wehrmacht – Hitler's "War machine".

He offered to serve as a medical orderly but refused to take the oath of loyalty to Hitler and was immediately arrested, charged with undermining military morale and sentenced to death.

He had previously discussed his anti-Nazi stance with his parish priest and his local bishop but had been disappointed by their absence of support and attempts to convince him it would be better to conform "like everyone else".

He had heard about another Catholic priest, Father Franz Reinisch, who had been executed for refusing to take the oath to Hitler and resolved to do likewise. That sealed his fate. Even a last-minute appeal by his devout wife failed to move him.

He was just not going to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler. St Thomas More, from a very different social background, would have understood perfectly.

More details of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter are available on the internet but his story seems to be relatively unfamiliar to English Catholics.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Father James steps down from parish

Father James Blenkinsopp will retire and step down from pastoral duties at St Mary and St Joseph's Parish, Pocklington, this summer. Father David Standen will take over the pastoral care of the parish.

### New app for Catholics in the military

A new smartphone app has been released to help those serving in the military connect with their faith. Supported by the Catholic Bishops of the Forces, the Catholic Military Connect app, available from the Apple Store and on Google Play for Android phones, is a single point of access for prayer, information and answers, helping users learn and pray wherever they are. The app is an initiative of Apostolat Militaire International and DeoQuest.

### Walking pilgrimage opens for day registration

The Pilgrimage of Hope is a national walking pilgrimage for England and Wales with four main ways converging at the Cathedral of St Barnabas, Nottingham, on Saturday September 13. It is an initiative of the Hearts in Search of God project. The ways start at the Catholic cathedrals in Cardiff, Leeds, Norwich and London and will bless our nations with a sign of the cross. The routes use established hiking routes and are off-road as much as possible. A small group of "perpetual pilgrims" will walk the full distance of each way, with up to 20 day pilgrims joining for day stages. Pilgrims can register for day stages at [pilgrimways.org.uk/become-a-pilgrim-for-a-day](http://pilgrimways.org.uk/become-a-pilgrim-for-a-day).

### Bumper sum raised at Easter event

More than £1,700 was raised at the Easter Eggstravaganza at St Thomas More's, Beechwood, Middlesbrough. There was lots to see and do, including tombolas, a bottle stall and hand-knitted baby clothes. Children enjoyed a colouring competition and the annual Easter Bonnet Parade. There was also time to catch up with friends with tea or coffee or a tasty hot dog. To round up a packed afternoon, the Big Easter Raffle was drawn, the winning tickets announced by Father Dominique Minskip.

Mark Gallagher

### MP publishes poetry inspired by readings

Britain's longest-serving MP, Sir Edward Leigh, a daily Mass attendee, has published a book of poems inspired by the daily readings, called *In Another Country: A Journal Through the Liturgical Year in Sonnet and Haiku* (priced £11.99). Half of the book's proceeds will support Aid to the Church in Need, a charity that helps persecuted Christians.

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## NEWS

# Apollo returns for another night of nostalgia

One of the oldest male voice choirs in the country is returning by popular demand to the Holy Name of Mary Church in Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, for a fourth consecutive year.

The Apollo Male Voice Choir was established in the town 138 years ago in 1887 as a direct response to a fatality in the iron industry.

It has raised funds for charitable and worthy causes ever since, as well as providing an inclusive environment for men to enjoy the gift of friendship and music together.

We are a friendly organisation that strives to excel in entertaining and also encourages others to come and swell our ranks.

The concert will also feature soprano Susan Robertson, baritone Bill Lewis, accompanist Jenny Hesford and guest oboist Jamie Watson, who will be making his debut appearance.

All under the watchful eye and guidance of musical director David Beall, it will include a medley from Les Misérables among other nostalgic pieces.

The concert is on Monday July 7 at 7pm and tickets, priced £10, are on sale after weekend Masses. Money raised will be divided between the choir and the parish.

The Apollo is always interested in supporting new venues to hold concerts for charitable causes.

If you are interested, please contact me on 07885 429204 or 01642 821866 for a friendly chat.

We also have a new website at [teesideapollovchoir.co.uk](http://teesideapollovchoir.co.uk) where you can find more information.

Peter McTiernan



The Apollo Male Voice Choir returns to the Holy Name of Mary Church on Monday July 7

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