



What's Inside

Prayers offered for
comedian Jimmy

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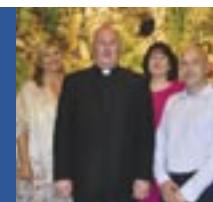


Mission Box
celebrates 90th
birthday
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Congratulations,
Father Albert!

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Mass unsaid reminds us of God's unfinished work

The discovery of a room with vestments laid out ready for a Mass that was never celebrated reminds us that God's work in Yorkshire remains incomplete, Father Phil Cunnah told this year's Postgate Rally.

"Many years after his martyrdom at York on August 7 1679, a young girl was cleaning the outside of a house near Egton Bridge and accidentally punctured the wall," said Father Phil in the homily of the Mass at Ugthorpe.

"On peering in, she found an altar in the thatched roof and priestly vestments laid out in readiness for the celebration of Mass.

"Had Blessed Nicholas intended to visit there to celebrate the sacred mysteries? Was it on his mind as he sat in prison in York and awaited his execution?

"The Mass unsaid is a reminder to us that his work, God's work, in this land still continues. It is unfinished and we are called to undertake it in our own day as the People of God."

Father Phil said that what we know about the life of Blessed Nicholas combines just enough fact that we can know him and just enough mystery that he compels reflection.

He said: "We know that at some point in the 1660s, after long service as a priest in the great houses of the Catholic gentry, where he would have been part of a household, he returned to his native land near Ugthorpe to minister to the local population, in greater solitude and simplicity.

"But what drew him back? Something about this beautiful land spoke to his heart. Indeed, something about it perhaps spoke of God.

"The quality of his work is exemplified by the way almost all people referred to him as 'Father' Postgate. They saw in him a pastor who worked for their good.

"Coming to this place, we can sense the dedication and commitment of this disciple of Christ, unperturbed by the frequent obstacles meant to try us. 'A sower went out to sow.' Jesus loves to use these agricultural images to help us understand God's ways. The seed is the Word of God and it needs to be shared generously, as Blessed Nicholas did.

"However, the seed is also ourselves, who need to 'fall into the ground and die'. In fact,

without being down to earth, the seed cannot take up the good things of the ground and help it to rise up towards the heavens.

"By his ministry and closeness to his community, Blessed Nicholas laid down his life so that he could help others to rise up to God."

Postgate Society chair Monica Ventress said this year's Postgate Rally drew the biggest congregation we had seen for several years.

She said: "It was a great pleasure to welcome so many more people this year, and to see several buses bringing pilgrims from across the diocese.

"In beautiful sunshine we listened to the inspiring homily from Father Phil. It was good for us to be reminded of the difficulties faced by our ancestors when trying to practise their faith and the huge debt we owe to the dedication and heroism of our priests who, like Father Postgate, suffered so much to preserve the faith and pass it on to us."

After Mass and the special blessing with the relic of Blessed Nicholas offered by Abbot Robert Igo OSB, many enjoyed a picnic in the sunshine, while others went on to sample fish and chips in Whitby.

Others renewed friendships over a cup of tea and refreshments in St Anne's Hall.

"As always, we thank the people and parishioners of Ugthorpe for their welcome and hospitality," Monica said.

You can read Father Phil's homily in full at postgatesociety.org/articles.



Abbot Robert Igo OSB blesses Bishop Marcus with the relic of Blessed Nicholas Postgate



The Postgate Rally congregation was the biggest for several years

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT
York's untold story

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NEWS

Synodality – continuing our journey of conversion

You may recall that the late Holy Father, Pope Francis, launched the Church on its synodal journey in October 2021.

He envisaged this would be a huge listening exercise involving every diocese across the world. It was to involve as many people as possible and be open to everyone from priests, laity and religious to the SVP, CAFOD, Caritas and other “apostolic agencies” involved in the action of the Church, locally and nationally.

Pope Francis wanted us to focus on hearing the voices of those often excluded or seldom listened to, such as the unemployed, refugees, disabled, homeless, lonely and sick people and lone parents. He said no one was to be excluded.

The process was taken up with great enthusiasm among many in our diocese, clergy and laypeople alike.

Well over half of our parishes took part in the initial consultation, which led to our diocesan synthesis. This was submitted alongside those from every other diocese to the Catholic Bishops’ Conference. Ultimately, these contributions fed into the synodal gathering of bishops, which has held two sessions and included many lay people. Maybe you remember your parish’s involvement?

At the same time, some were and still are sceptical of the whole process and others feel we have been “doing synodality” since Vatican II. All this apart, we are on a synodal journey, which Pope Leo is keen to continue.

As a result of the Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in Rome in October 2023 and 2024 and after a process of discernment, a Final Document was produced that every bishop was asked to make available to enable his people to engage in the “Implementation Phase”, from June 2025 to December 2026.

Local churches are asked to continue their daily journey with a synodal methodology of consultation and discernment, identifying concrete ways and formation pathways to bring about a tangible synodal conversion in the various contexts. These include parishes, institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, movements of the faithful, dioceses, episcopal conferences and groupings of churches (Final Document para 9).

The Holy Father points out that synodality is not about having another thing to do but about who we are as the People of God!

The Final Document is lengthy and the Holy Father advises it should be read prayerfully and reflected upon to help us discern the way forward. He says the synodal process is ultimately a call to mission and to the conversion of all the baptised. Therefore, we are called to care for the formation of all the People of God, all as synodal missionaries (Final Document para 11).

The document calls us to explore the degree to which the synodal process has taken hold across dioceses. The diocesan bishop is the first person responsible for the implementation phase and he should involve priests and deacons, participatory bodies at diocesan level (addressing their structure and operations) and the diocesan synodal team

(responsibility for animating the process).

We had begun to undertake this process in our diocese under Bishop Terry’s direction. However, at the end of January, proceedings paused with his retirement and the instalment of an Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Marcus, who has been tasked with exploring ways in which the dioceses of Hallam, Leeds and Middlesbrough could work more closely together.

While all this has been going on, we continued to move forward slowly, taking into account the consultation process introduced by Bishop Marcus, of which we await the outcome. So far, our diocesan response to the synod implementation phase has been to:

- Revisit and draw up a list of parishes involved in the initial synodal consultation phase with the aim of establishing their progress.
- Reestablish our diocesan synodal team, adding new members and exploring together the Final Document.
- So far we have held three online meetings, sharing where we feel we are as a diocese and how we might take the implementation phase forward.

We are now seeking to explore ways we can work with our friends from Hallam and Leeds on the synodal process. It’s clear that we can offer each other lots of support, sharing our learning so far. This is not another stage of consultation but calls us to seek to put into practice the many new pathways indicated in the Final Document.

We are offered 11 areas to potentially focus on in our local churches:

- The promotion of a synodal spirituality
- Effective access to positions of responsibility and leadership roles that do not require Holy Orders for men and women who are not ordained, whether lay or consecrated
- Developing forms of service and ministry that respond to pastoral needs in different contexts
- Practice of ecclesial discernment
- Activation of decision-making processes in a synodal way
- Developing appropriate forms of transparency, accountability and evaluation
- To have participatory bodies provided for by law and renewal of their operating methods in a synodal key
- Holding regular local and regional ecclesial assemblies
- Promotion of diocesan synod and eparchial assembly
- Renewal of parishes in a synodal and missionary spirit
- Verifying the synodal character of journeys of Christian initiation and of formative programmes and institutions dedicated to them

It is clear from these that our synodal journey is far from over. We’re just at the beginning of becoming a Church in which we truly journey together.

If you feel the synodal journey of your parish has somewhat stalled, why not visit the



Pope Francis launched the Church on its synodal journey in 2021 © Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

diocesan website and download a copy of our diocesan synthesis and explore with your parish priest and parishioners on how you can kick-start it again? Or maybe pick one or two of the above points and look at how you might begin to tackle them?

There are many resources available to support priests and people in making the synodal process produce concrete outcomes. Our parishes and dioceses should seek to become laboratories of synodal learning.

The School for Synodality website has many helpful and freely downloadable resources along with interesting videos at schoolforsynodality.org.uk.

Why not hold a parish or deanery synod evening or similar event? I am happy to help. You can contact me by emailing chaplaincy@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Deacon David Cross



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Pastoral letter after consultation process

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing to update you on the progress that has been made since my appointment by His Holiness Pope Leo XIV as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Middlesbrough in December 2025, and as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Hallam in March this year.

In the letters appointing me to those roles, Pope Leo asked me to initiate, among the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the dioceses of Leeds, Middlesbrough and Hallam, “a phase of study and discussion” with a view to their “possible future union”.

Over the past eight months, an extensive consultation process has been undertaken across our three dioceses. It has brought together representatives from all of the 193 parishes, including lay women and men, deacons and priests, institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, the leaders of schools and school multi-academy trusts, and a range of Catholic organisations and apostolates.

Engagement in the consultation has enlivened a zeal for mission that is evident in the hearts of those who took part. It demonstrates too, the love and appreciation for the rich heritage of the saints and martyrs, and pride in the Catholic patrimony that exists throughout the whole of the historic County of Yorkshire and other areas of the

territorial jurisdictions which our dioceses encompass.

The consultation has enabled us to consider the challenges we face in the future; it has also opened before us opportunities to strengthen our participation in the mission entrusted by Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to His Church, and to renew our vigour in responding to the work of evangelisation. The guiding principle which has underpinned our consultation has been not about how diocesan structures might change, but how those structures can better support the Church’s mission today and in the future.

The results of this consultation process have now been compiled into a comprehensive report, which I hope to complete and send to the Holy Father, through the Apostolic Nuncio and the Dicastery of Bishops in Rome, by the end of August for his and their consideration.

I will also publish the report before mid-October so that all those who have taken part in the consultation process can see just how valuable their generous participation has been. We will be able to examine the key themes which have emerged and use the report to learn how we can enhance and improve our pastoral care and our proclamation of the Gospel in today’s world.

Whatever decision might be taken by Pope Leo about a possible future union, the strengthening of our ecclesial communion and the collaborative work which has already begun between our three dioceses will be of

mutual benefit to our service of the Church’s continuing mission in the future.

The Holy Father has said, “The mystery of union with Christ lies at the heart of mission¹.”

It is this truth which has been at the heart of my vision for our consultation process, the vision and purpose which Our Lord Himself gave to His Church on the night before His passion and death: “That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me².” And the mission we must pursue is the one given by Our Lord to His Apostles: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age³.”

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to our response to the Holy Father’s request for this period of study and discussion within the three diocesan communities of our one family in the Catholic faith. Trusting in divine providence and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we now commend the outcome of this consultation process to the judgement of the Successor of the Apostles.

Please pray for me and for our priests and deacons, that the Lord Jesus Christ will: bless us with His strength to serve you who are the living stones of His Temple; grant us His



wisdom to lead you who are His Holy People; and, pour out His love upon us to care for you who are His Beloved brothers and sisters.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, pray for us!

Our holy patron St Wilfrid, pray for us!

Holy Martyrs of Yorkshire and Padley, pray for us!

+ Rt Rev Marcus Stock

¹ Message of Pope Leo XIV for the 100th World Day of Mission, January 25 2026

² John 17:21

³ Matthew 28:18-20

Events celebrate education through the decades

St Bede's Catholic Primary School in Marske proudly celebrated its 60th anniversary with a week of special events, reflecting on the school's rich history and strong sense of community.

Throughout the week, an anniversary exhibition showcased photographs, memorabilia and pupils' artwork, celebrating six decades of St Bede's.

The exhibition welcomed former pupils and retired staff, who enjoyed reminiscing and sharing memories of their time at the school.

Pupils also took part in a fun Decades Day, arriving in costumes representing the past six decades. As well as dressing the part, they explored how life at St Bede's, in the local area and around the world has changed over the last 60 years through a range of engaging classroom activities.

The celebrations concluded with a whole-school Mass attended by current pupils and staff. The school choir enhanced the liturgy with a beautiful performance, making it a fitting celebration of St Bede's past, present and future.

The anniversary was a memorable occasion, giving the whole school community the opportunity to celebrate 60 years of faith, learning and achievement.

Lucy Smith
Headteacher



The Decades Day celebrations at St Bede's in Marske

Mass offered for great friend of our pilgrimage

Our Lourdes pilgrimage was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of the wonderful comedian Jimmy Cricket at the age of 80.

Papal Knight Jimmy, whose real name was James Mulgrew, was a truly special friend to our pilgrimage, generously performing in two memorable fundraising shows and was also joined on one occasion by his son, Father Frankie Mulgrew, and on another by his wife, May.

His warmth, gentleness, family-friendly humour and deep personal faith brought immense joy to us all.

We will be offering a Mass for the repose of Jimmy's soul, giving thanks for his life, his kindness and his incredible support.

Please keep May, Father Frankie, and all the Mulgrew family in your prayers during this difficult time. May he rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for him
St Bernadette, pray for him

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

May he rest in peace. Amen.



Jimmy Cricket has died at the age of 80

SCHOOLS

How St Francis can inspire our Catholic schools

Education Sunday is marked this year on September 13 – just after the new academic year starts. The theme for 2026 is drawn from its Gospel reading of Matthew 18:21-35: “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.”

As chair of the Catholic Education Service, Bishop Marcus issued the following message to Catholic schools...

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This year, the Catholic Church in England and Wales will observe Education Sunday on September 13, the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The Gospel reading this year for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time is taken from St Matthew’s Gospel:

At that time, Peter came up and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but 70 times seven (Matthew 18:21-35).

As the new academic year begins in our Catholic schools, colleges and universities, and rejoicing in the overflowing forgiveness of our Heavenly Father, which is revealed to us in the person of his son Jesus Christ, we place before Almighty God in prayer all the pupils and students, staff members and leaders, governors and directors of our educational institutions.

During this special Jubilee Year of St Francis of Assisi, proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the saint’s death, we also pray that we will be inspired to imitate the Poor Man of Assisi to work for peace, live simply, be of service to the poor, and trustworthy stewards of God’s creation.

On Education Sunday, we give thanks to the Lord for the vocations of all who work within the Catholic sector: the teaching and support staff, chaplains, school leaders and governors.

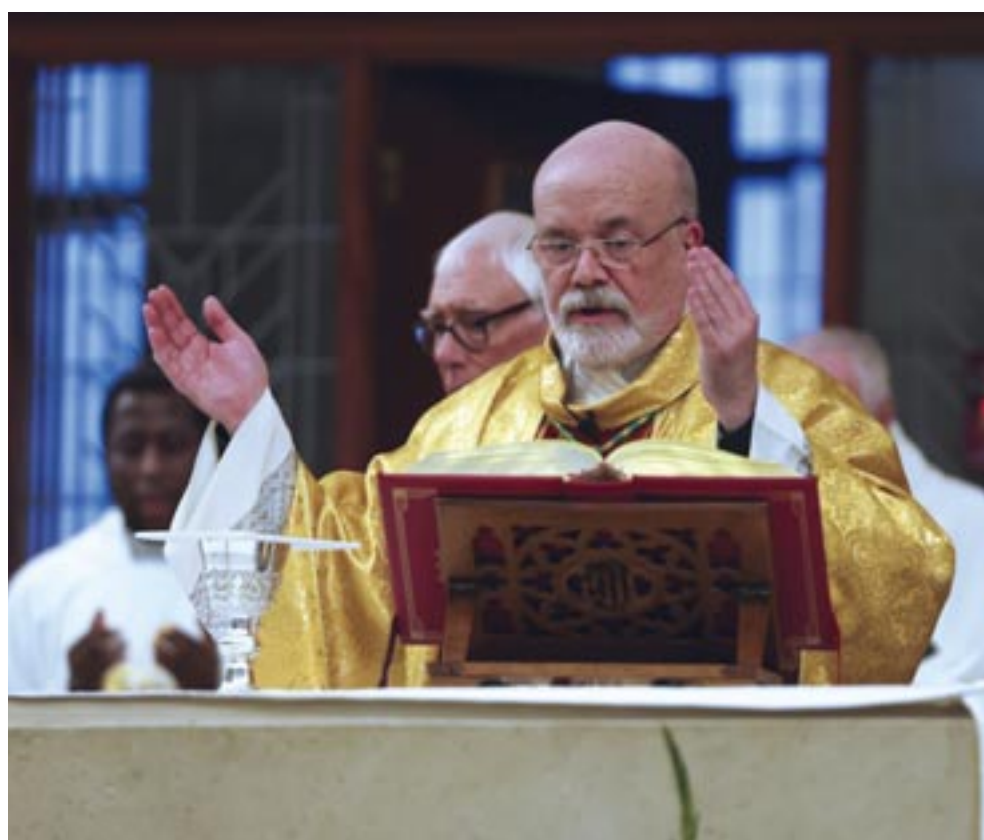
It is through their commitment and hard work that pupils and students in our schools, colleges and universities can thrive and contribute to society, through their formation and education.

In the academic year ahead, let us endeavour to give witness to the message of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace in the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to pray that our Catholic schools, colleges and universities will be beacons of his good news in our communities.

With every blessing, I remain

Rt Rev Marcus Stock

Chairman of the Catholic Education Service



Bishop Marcus has issued a special message to Catholic schools – photo by Chris Booth

Fifty years of faith and community at St George’s

St George’s RC Primary School in Scarborough celebrated the end of its 50th academic year with a spectacular day of festivities.

The golden jubilee brought together current pupils, families and staff past and present to look back on five decades of education and shared memories.



The occasion was made memorable by a special visit from Monsignor Gerard Robinson, who joined the school community for the celebration. The day included an anniversary Mass, where pupils sang with immense joy and thanksgiving with all who attended.

The anniversary also provided a special opportunity to look back at the very beginning of the St George’s story and a very special individual who helped it come into existence.

St George’s roots began in the 1970s, when Canon Pat Harney identified a vital need for the local parish to have its own school to serve the growing Catholic community.

Thanks to his dedication to its founding, the school opened its doors to its first pupils in September 1975.

Reflecting on those early days, a striking parallel connects the school’s origins to the present day. After its autumn opening, St George’s was officially blessed by Bishop John Gerard McClean during the summer term of 1976 – right in the middle of a scorching British heatwave, mirroring the warm weather experienced this June as the school carried out its celebrations.

Canon Harney is now retired and living in York at the remarkable age of 95. Hearing of the school’s milestone, he expressed his joy in

seeing the original vision continue to flourish decades later, saying: “God Bless everyone at St George’s.”

He added how incredibly pleased he is to see that the school is still doing so well 50 years on.

Headteacher Andrew Krlic said: “We would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this special day possible.

“The children really enjoyed the fun outdoor games, bouncing castle and ice-cream van and it was lovely to spend time with the parishioners and staff past and present. I am confident that the school has a bright future ahead.”



Monsignor Gerard Robinson visited St George’s School in Scarborough to join the celebrations



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Praise for 'outstanding' Catholic Life and Mission

Trinity Catholic College & Sixth Form is celebrating after being praised in its latest Catholic Schools Inspection (CSI) report as a place where students feel loved and valued.

Inspectors rated the Middlesbrough school as outstanding in Catholic Life and Mission and good in both Religious Education and Collective Worship

"Leaders and governors plan strategically to ensure that Catholic Social Teaching, and especially the preferential option for those with the greatest need, guides all decisions," the report says.

"Pastoral care is prioritised and resourced to ensure that students in need of support are known, embraced, loved and valued for who they are.

"The school leaders for religious education pursue an inspiring vision of teaching and learning, underpinned by Catholic social teaching, impactful staff training, regular quality assurance and robust standardisation.

"The school chaplain uses her considerable skills and links with others to ensure that collective worship is central to the life of the school. This is highly valued by students, staff, parents and parishes.

"All staff work together to create a sense of belonging, which is strongly expressed by students as being part of a family. Students feel loved and valued as part of the Trinity family.

"All students appreciate that this is a Catholic school because there is regular prayer and an ongoing and generous commitment to helping those in need and welcoming everyone." Headteacher Michael Blair said

the report affirms the commitment, faith and dedication of everyone associated with the school, which was given a "requires improvement" rating after its previous CSI Inspection, in June 2023.

Mr Blair said: "I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our exceptional staff, our supportive parents and carers, our dedicated governors, our colleagues across Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, our parish priests and wider parish community and, most importantly, our wonderful students.

"Throughout the inspection they demonstrated with confidence and authenticity what it means to be part of the Trinity family. Their warmth, respect, compassion and pride in their school shone through in every conversation and encounter.

"Over the past few years, Trinity has been on a significant spiritual journey. Together, we have worked to ensure that our Catholic identity is not simply something we speak about, but something that is lived each and every day.

"Our mission, 'Follow Jesus, Build Families, Fulfil Potential', has become the foundation upon which we make decisions, support one another and nurture every young person entrusted to our care.

"This report is a testament to that shared commitment. It recognises the countless acts of service, prayer, compassion and leadership demonstrated daily across our school community.

"It reflects the dedication of staff who continually go above and beyond for our young people, the unwavering support of



Trinity Catholic College & Sixth Form in Middlesbrough has been rated as outstanding in Catholic Life and Mission

families, the guidance of our governors and trust, the encouragement of our parish community and the enthusiasm and faith of our students."

Mr Blair said the school will not rest on its laurels and is determined to continue striving for excellence in everything it does.

"We remain committed to nurturing the faith of every young person, providing an

outstanding education rooted in Gospel values, and ensuring that every member of our community knows they are loved, valued and called to fulfil their God-given potential," he said.

"Together, we will continue to build upon the strong foundations that have been laid and ensure that Trinity continues to flourish as a beacon of faith, hope and love within our Catholic community."



Matilda called up for county squad

Congratulations to St Joseph's, Scarborough, altar server Matilda, who has been selected to represent North Yorkshire County Schools Under-12s football squad.

Matilda recently left St Peter's VC Academy and starts at St Augustine's Catholic School this month.

Schools unite for special recording

Children from various schools in the Diocesan Schools Singing Programme, part of the National Schools Singing Programme, came together to sing Father Postgate's Hymn on a very special recording.

Although a couple of hundred children sang on the recording, they were never in the same place at the same time!

Each school recorded their own children, mostly with their choral directors as part of the singing programme sessions, before

these recordings were mixed into one whole, with different schools responsible for different parts of the verses before combining for the final verse.

The finished recording is available on the Diocesan Music YouTube channel ([music.youtube.com/@MusicDiocese](https://www.youtube.com/@MusicDiocese)) and has already been widely viewed.

Diocesan director of music Steven Maxson said: "It was truly wonderful to have children from so many schools, from Marske, to

Middlesbrough, to York, singing together, even if virtually, and continuing to keep the legacy of Blessed Nicholas Postgate alive."

The schools involved were Corpus Christi, Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs, St Alphonsus', St Augustine's, St Bede's, St Clare's, St Gabriel's and St Gerard's as well as St Mary's Cathedral Choristers, including some from schools above along with St Edward's and Trinity Catholic College.



Some of the children who came together virtually for a very special recording

NEWS

St Mary’s bids farewell to Father Richard

Students and staff gathered in the chapel at St Mary’s College in Hull for a special Mass to say goodbye to Father Richard Marsden as he took up his new appointment as vice rector of the Venerable English College in Rome.

His final Mass was concelebrated by Father Xavier Santhiyagu and Father Richard’s uncle, Father Michael Marsden.

During his time as parish priest at Holy Cross in Cottingham, Father Richard made a lasting contribution to the life of St Mary’s.

Serving as a member of the board of

directors, he has been a spiritual support for the school, regularly celebrating school Masses, hearing confessions and accompanying students and staff on the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes.

While he will be deeply missed by everyone at St Mary’s, the school offers its prayers and best wishes to Father Richard as he begins this exciting new chapter in Rome. Buon viaggio!

Naomi Bedworth



Father Richard is taking up a new appointment as vice rector of the Venerable English College in Rome.

Building a better world starts here

All are warmly invited to English Martyrs Catholic Church in York for an opportunity to hear about CAFOD’s current work and the difference you can make.

We will be sharing stories of transformation from northern Zimbabwe, where Caritas partners are tackling thirst and hunger and enabling children to stay in school. We are delighted to be joined by Catherine Ogolla, CAFOD’s representative and coordinator in

Kenya, Uganda and Eritrea, who will talk about the impact your support makes in that region.

Building a Better World takes place on Saturday September 12 from 10am to noon, with a light continental breakfast available from 9.30am. Please contact Rachel at rblaylock@cafod.org.uk or 07779804243 if you would like to come.



Kiki (right) and her friend harvest vegetables at their school, where a solar-powered piped water system is helping them grow food for nourishing school meals – photo Cynthia Matonhodze

THE LIVING WORD – Exploring the biblical notion of hope

LUCA SETTIMO, Professor of Theology at the University of Nottingham, continues his series of reflections on the meaning of some key biblical words.

We continue our exploration of biblical words by examining the biblical notion of hope, which is one of the three theological virtues, as described in 1 Corinthians 13:13: “And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”

Another biblical passage in which St Paul intertwines hope with the virtues of love and faith is: “We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

The French poet Charles Péguy wrote a poem entitled The Portal of the Mystery of the Second Virtue, published in 1912. Exploring hope as a theological virtue, Péguy personifies faith, charity and hope, describing faith as a loyal wife, charity as an ardent mother and hope as a tiny yet resilient girl who will endure through eternity.

Hope is the second theological virtue, the younger sister who, with her orientation towards the future, pushes the other two elder sisters (love and faith) forward.

Throughout the Bible, hope is directed towards the messianic future and final fullness (Revelation 22:17,20): “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let everyone who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let everyone who is thirsty come... Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.... The one who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

Invocations of confident hope reach out towards the encounter and definitive

embrace with Christ. Of course, the journey within history often leads to despair and loss of hope, as Job confesses in at least two passages: (i) “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and come to their end without hope” (Job 7:6) and (ii) “Where then is my hope? Who will see my hope?” (Job 17:15).

But the Christian faithful must courageously persist and advance, in view of the eschatological goal of full redemption, ready, as St Peter suggests in his First Letter, “to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you” (3:15).

Paul uses two different Greek words to describe the virtue of hope that has trust at its heart. First there is the term *elpis*, present 53 times, which is associated 31 times with the verb *elpízo* (to hope) in the New Testament.

One example in which Paul uses this word is the following: “Rejoice in hope [*elpis*], be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

Then, there is the term *hypomone* (present 32 times), often translated as “endurance”, which evokes the idea of “remaining under a heavy weight” that needs to be carried with patience and the confidence that eventually this painful situation will end and that, in God’s time, the darkness will give way to light.

It is a hope that advances with perseverance and patience in our often dark and difficult history. Hope, then, is not illusory but emphasises perseverance and patience. We find this term for example in (i) 2 Corinthians 1.6: “If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure

[ύπομονή] the same sufferings that we are also suffering” and (ii) 2 Thessalonians 3.5: “And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience [*hypomone*] of Christ.”

Divine grace sustains us and gives us the strength and patience to endure against the iniquities in the world. Hope, which is a young and vibrant virtue, is combined with waiting and patience.

Significant in this regard is the parable of the wheat and the weeds (Matthew 13:24-30): human history is like a field where the wheat and the weeds, which represent good and evil, grow together.

The temptation to react with anger is strong, bursting in, and thus devastating the wheat with the weeds. Hope, instead, is a calm and measured firmness that knows how to wait for the time when God himself will intervene with his righteous judgment.



Professor Luca Settimo

The faithful do not remain inert, certainly, they do not become discouraged, neither do they react blindly: “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices. ... I hope in your word” (Psalms 37:7; 119:81).

In the end, the great day of hope, which is the Easter of Christ and ours, will arise and full salvation will be sung as in the final part of the book of Revelation (which is the book of hope par excellence).

And then, “May the God of hope [*elpis*] fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope [*elpis*] by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).

And this is why we Christians “boast in our hope [*elpis*] of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance [*hypomone*], and endurance [*hypomone*] produces character, and character produces hope [*elpis*], and hope [*elpis*] does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Romans 5:2-5).

Hope is not passive but persevering; it is grounded in divine grace, not optimism; it lives between suffering and fulfilment, waiting patiently while advancing history toward its eschatological goal.

I wish to acknowledge Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, former president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, for granting me permission to use his material originally published in Italian. A YouTube video entitled “The biblical notion of hope”, which explores this biblical concept in greater detail, is available on my YouTube channel (youtube.com/@LucaSettimo-7).

Top marks for 'friendly and inclusive' school

Ofsted has commended a "friendly and inclusive" West Hull school that is meeting the government's expected standard for schools across all evaluated areas.

In its report, inspectors praised St Thomas More VC Academy, saying pupils "form strong and respectful relationships with their peers and staff".

The report, which reflects the dedication of staff, families and the wider community, says pupils enjoy attending St Thomas More's and show positive attitudes toward their learning.

Key highlights from the report include the way the school has strengthened its culture, establishing clear expectations that help pupils develop "character and confidence".

Academically, pupils generally achieve well, with performance in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 remaining close to national averages.

The school has also established an "open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility".

Inspectors highlighted the "broad range of opportunities" that enrich pupils' time at school, including clubs, performances and educational visits.

The school is "led with integrity", with leaders and staff described as having "pupils'

best interests at heart".

Headteacher Martin Ward said: "I am incredibly proud, not just of the outcome of the inspection, but of our whole school community every single day.

"The report reflects what we call the 'STM Way' – a shared commitment to ensuring every child is supported to flourish each day.

"Our staff work tirelessly for our wonderful pupils, and this is strengthened by the support of a fantastic parental community.

"I'm pleased that the report recognises many of the strengths of our school, and we look forward to continuing our exciting journey to make St Thomas More even better."

Marian Hall, chair of the school's local governance board, added: "Many congratulations to all the staff and students.

"The commitment and dedication to the young is evident here for all to see. This report is a great celebration of all that happens in St Thomas More."

The school warmly welcomes applications for new pupil admissions from both local Catholic families and those with other faiths or no faith at all.

Interested families can call 01482 354093 or email admin@stmhull.org for further details.

School's Mission award

The Pope's Charity, Missio, recently visited St Aelred's School in York after hearing about the work we've been doing.

They presented us with an award that only two other schools in the country have received, with Pope Leo being the only other person.

Headteacher Claire Hughes said: "We were absolutely delighted to be presented with our very own Missio Mouse during a special assembly led by Maria from Mission Together.

"Our school has proudly supported Mission Together for over ten years through both fundraising and raising awareness. From events such as our recent Day of Many Colours to helping children in need around the world, our children and community have embraced Mission Together's message of faith, compassion and action.

"The children were so pleased to hear that we are one of only three schools to have received this special award so far. They were also excited when they found out that Pope Leo had been presented with his very own Missio Mouse!"

Next year, Missio Mouse will become an important part of school life, joining the community for special celebrations and events and helping them continue to raise awareness of Mission Together's work while celebrating the diversity of our global family.

Maria reminded the school of Mission Together's aim to encourage children to pray, share and support young people living in poverty, conflict and hardship around the world.

This message will continue to be a focus of pupils' work throughout the next academic year, helping children to live out the school values of friendship, courage and respect in all that they do.

"To make things even more exciting, Missio Mouse will have his very own suitcase as he travels around the school, taking part in his many missions and adventures with the children," Claire added.

"We cannot wait to follow his journey and see how he helps our pupils learn more about Mission Together and the difference they can make by praying, sharing and caring for others."

Maria Robinson, Mission Coordinator for Children and Young People, said: "I was delighted to present the children of St Aelred's School with their very own Missio Mouse in recognition of the constant support shown to Mission Together over many years.

"I know Missio Mouse is going to be in very safe hands, continuing to carry out small acts of love while on a mission to share God's love with everyone, everywhere."

Ryan Deakin



Staff and pupils celebrate Ofsted success at St Thomas More VC Academy in Hull



Missio Mouse has homes in the Vatican and St Aelred's in York

A Letter From Madonna House – The turbulent life of Madonna House foundress

Her mother said she was born "under the shadow of the cross". Catherine de Hueck Doherty (1896-1985) was the foundress of Friendship Houses in Canada and the USA, and of the international Madonna House Apostolate.

Hers was a turbulent life, including wars, desperate poverty, a failed marriage and then total rejection by those she sought to love and serve.



She came to realise her sufferings identified her with Christ, who was utterly rejected by his contemporaries. She loved the poor because she saw Christ in them, the lonely and the rejected.

God gave her "words" that shaped and guided her. They became the foundation stones of the Madonna House way of life.

One of these is: "Take up my cross, their cross, going to the poor, being poor, being one with them, one with Me."¹

She sought to console the lonely Christ by "love, love, love, never counting the cost."²

I asked her once, "What is the most important thing to pray for?" She banged the table with her fist and shouted, "Faith! Pray for more faith!"

She loved and challenged us, working tirelessly by example and words, inviting us to an "adventure" with God.

She said: "The whole of life is a little thing, which we throw at God's feet and sing and sing, that we give such a small thing. Every little thing should be done exceedingly well, completely connected with God, for

otherwise it ceases to be interesting. You cannot just connect with God 'a little'; you must connect completely."³

Catherine declared that to love God is not abstract, but love of a person: Jesus Christ. She insisted the call to holiness is for everyone, regardless of their circumstances in life.

Her experience of identity with Christ grew over the years, until like St Paul she could say: "I live not, Christ lives in me." (Galatians 2:20)

She wrote: "I cannot visualise a love story with God without a cross. To me, the cross is the thing! I look at the cross as the marriage bed of Christ. I desire union with him at the price of being crucified. But I must lie on the cross he made for me, not the one I am making for myself."⁴

The cause for Catherine's canonisation is underway, and she is officially called "Servant of God".

We are encouraged to ask for her intercession with the Lord, recognising our own poverty and need for God's grace.

There is a prayer asking for her intercession.

Catherine, we come to you for assistance! You always loved the poor and you continue to bring them to God, begging for their needs.

Therefore, being poor and in need of God's help, we bring to you our request.

Please beg the Lord for (here mention your petition).

We entrust our petition to God's holy will through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. May our faith increase.

Amen.

Carol Ann Gieske

Books and prayer cards available from *Madonna House, Robin Hood's Bay.*

¹ *The Little Mandate*

² *The Little Mandate*

³ *Dear Beloved Vol 1: pp 260 and 262*

⁴ *Dear Beloved Vol 1: pp 260 and 262*

WORLD NEWS

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Pope prepares for apostolic journey to France

Pope Leo will visit Paris, Saint-Denis, Lourdes and Metz during a four-day apostolic journey to France from September 25-28. As well as meeting President Emanuel Macron, the Holy Father will deliver a speech at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris and give a homily at Notre-Dame Cathedral and attend a prayer vigil with young people at the Stade de France. The Pope closes his time in Paris with Mass at the Place de la Concorde before flying to Lourdes, where he will celebrate Mass at the Prairie, visit the Accueil Notre Dame and take part in the torchlight procession.

Jordan plans for 2,000th anniversary of Jesus’ baptism

Jordan has begun preparations for the 2,000-year anniversary of Jesus Christ’s baptism in 2030, traditionally believed to have taken place at Al-Maghtas. Prime Minister Jafar Hassan chaired the first meeting of the national committee tasked with overseeing the celebration, which aims to highlight Jordan’s religious heritage and role as a Christian pilgrimage destination. Plans include developing a pilgrims’ village, a museum and infrastructure upgrades.

Pope calls for peace in Angelus message

Pope Leo XIV has expressed deep concern over the worsening situation in Sudan’s el-Obeid, urging authorities to guarantee humanitarian corridors and the international community to support an immediate ceasefire. Highlighting the growing civilian suffering, the Pope appealed for prayers to “convert the hearts of those who sow violence” and grant peace. He also condemned ongoing attacks in Ukraine and Russia, stressing that “war only breeds more war.” The Pope urged respect for international humanitarian law and called for diplomacy to replace conflict.

West Bank Christians ‘forgotten’ amid rising settler violence

Settler attacks increasingly threaten Taybeh, the West Bank’s last all-Christian village, leading Latin parish priest Father Bashar Fawadleh to warn that local families will be forced to abandon their land. Calling on the international Church to pray and act, Father Bashar says residents face intimidation, property seizures and the risk of displacement. Recent incidents include settlers invading homes, occupying lands and setting fire to farmland. Israeli military restrictions aim to curb violence but have not stopped attacks (source: Vatican News).

Man arrested after damage to Medjugorje shrine

The parish of Medjugorje has condemned acts of vandalism that damaged several of its places of prayer, inviting the faithful to respond with “prayer, fasting and forgiveness”. Police were called after the face and hands of the image of Our Lady on Apparition Hill, or Podbrdo, were found covered in black paint and offensive messages were discovered nearby. A fire had been lit at the outdoor altar of St James’ Church and a banner accused six people associated with the alleged apparitions first reported in 1981 of deception. Police arrested a man and the shrine remains open while the affected areas are cleaned and restored.

Gaza's humanitarian crisis ‘beyond disastrous’

Father Gabriel Romanelli, parish priest of Gaza’s Holy Family Church, has issued a desperate plea for urgent international aid amid worsening shortages of fuel, transport and basic necessities in the Gaza Strip. In a video message, Father Romanelli described the crisis as “beyond disastrous”, with most parish vehicles unusable due to lack of spare parts and soaring diesel prices. Highlighting transport’s vital role in accessing hospitals and aid, Father Romanelli called for immediate support to meet the basic needs of Gaza’s civilians.

Iraq bishops consider Christian return plan

Amid growing concern for the survival of Christianity in Iraq, the country’s bishops are set to assess a new scheme helping Christian families who fled jihadist terror to return, Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) reports. Prime Minister Ali Al-Zaidi has called for the return of Christian families as a national priority and pledged government support. Iraq’s Christian population has fallen by at least 80% to below 300,000 since the 2003 US-led invasion and Daesh (ISIS)’s brutal assault on Mosul and the Nineveh Plains.

Rebuilding churches can wait, says archbishop

Support for survivors must take priority over Church buildings, according to the archbishop whose diocese was at the centre of the devastating double earthquake that hit Venezuela a month ago. Speaking to Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), Archbishop Raúl Biorde of Caracas praised priests and other Church workers who have made accompanying survivors their top concern, despite churches lying in ruins. Tens of thousands of Venezuelans face uncertainty after the June 24 disaster. Official estimates place the death toll between 4,000 and 5,000. When the tragedy first struck, ACN pledged £86,000 in immediate support, and more help is on the way. Visit acnuk.org to donate to its appeal.

CATHOLIC HISTORY FOCUS – Japan and the Patron of the Missionaries

SHAWN RAS, a Dutch-born historian and parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel in Hull, continues his series of articles about Church history...

I recently had the opportunity to act in my capacity as a historian and lecture about Japan and her long and diverse history.

Japan is a fascinating place whose history includes some interesting passages regarding Christians. In that light, I should like to take a small foray into Japanese-Christian history by discussing with you this month St Francis Xavier.

The first Portuguese arrived on the island of Tanegashima in 1543, when two merchants accompanied a Chinese vessel which landed on the southernmost island of the Japanese archipelago at that time.

These Westerners were a curious sight to the Japanese and brought different ideas and traditions to the island nation. Three of these I have identified as the most important in my professional opinion.

In no particular order, they are: “modern” firearms, a massive improvement to the existent firearms, as well as the unit-tactics to use them.

Perhaps more importantly than revolutionising black powder warfare and being longer lasting was the Portuguese introduction of tempura frying. The Portuguese had a way of frying fish in a light batter that completely delighted the Japanese (and this historian too, for that matter.)

The final and most relevant introduction was Christianity, a way of thought foreign to the Japanese. In the 16th century, Portugal had risen to become the foremost naval power in the world.

Their black ships travelled the oceans, seizing vital straits, including the currently very relevant Strait of Hormuz, and that of

Malacca. In Malacca in 1547, a Jesuit by the name of Francis Xavier met a Japanese merchant and baptised him into the Catholic Church.

This Japanese man, Anjiro – now Paulo de Santa Fe – was the first ever Japanese Christian and had heard tales of Xavier, who had joined the newly formed Society of Jesus.

At 35, Xavier had set out from Lisbon to India and began converting the natives under the auspices of King Joao III of Portugal. He founded schools and missions in India before travelling to Southeast Asia in 1545.

From Malacca he reached the Maluku Islands, before travelling with his new friend, Paulo, to Japan.

In July 1549, Xavier was allowed to land in the port of Kagoshima, ruled by the Japanese Satsuma Clan at that time. The local Daimyo, or Lord, was interested in this foreign cleric, but when learning of the message of universal salvation that Catholicism brought, he saw the danger it posed to the Japanese status quo, and forbade missionary work under penalty of death, despite the populace’s willingness to convert.

Xavier travelled from the southern island of Kyushu to the main island of Honshu to Kyoto, Japan’s ancient capital, but failed to meet the Japanese Emperor.

He travelled with a painting of the Madonna and Child, using it to educate Japan’s small but growing Christian population. He learned, however, that Japan had a different opinion of priesthood. Where in China and India, humble and impoverished priesthood had been a stark contrast from wealthy Buddhist clergy, in Japan the Shinto monks and priests were equally poor.

So Xavier chose to display the splendour of the Counter-Reformation period, travelling in elaborate cassocks and holding Masses in

rich and fine vestments, with many servants following him to really impress the Japanese.

Many were indeed impressed, but local Buddhist tradition proved to be stronger. Xavier would leave Japan by way of Ming China, and there too would convert many locals on the islands near Guangzhou.

It was here in 1552, on the Chinese coast, that Francis would pass away at the age of 46. He was buried on the beach of the island of Shangchuan for less than a year before he was disinterred and brought to Malacca.

His body was incorrupt and had no smell whatsoever. In Malacca a smell started coming from his body, likened to blossoming gardens and the blood on his burial shroud was still wet, even a year after his death.

He was transported all the way to Goa in 1554 and a following grew around his veneration, with relics taken from his body and spread around both the Portuguese Empire and back to Europe. On October 25 1619, Pope Gregory XV beatified Francis Xavier and proclaimed him the “Patron of all Catholic Missions”.

The Basilica of the Born Jesus in Goa remains the resting place of St Francis Xavier to this day, and its presence there helped spread Catholicism in India.

After Tokugawa Ieyasu’s victory in Japan’s long series of civil wars in 1600 and his consolidation of power in 1603 in the Tokugawa Shogunate, Christianity was outlawed in Japan in 1612, with only few keeping the faith in secret until the Emperor Meiji allowed Christians to practise their faith again in 1873.

During this period, many Catholics – especially Jesuit fathers – were martyred, most famously the 26 martyrs of Japan, an image of which illustrates this article. It is an image I used also in my lecture, for its moving display of the martyrs, with St Francis looking on from Heaven, named as the “Apostle to the Japanese”.

Today, Francis Xavier is a favoured name again in former colonial nations in Asia, with many schools and churches bearing his name.



The Martyrdom of Paul Miki and Companions in Nagasaki (made-c1635)

Let's answer Pope's plea by doubling our giving

This year marks the centenary of the first World Mission Sunday, established by Pope Pius XI at the suggestion of the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

World Mission Sunday falls on October 18 and the theme, chosen by Pope Leo, is "One in Christ, United in Mission".

In his appeal in support of World Mission Sunday, Pope Leo has emphasised that it is a privileged occasion for the entire Church to join in prayer for missionaries and for the

fruitfulness of their apostolic work.

He says: "Let us all commit to contributing to the great mission of evangelisation – which is always a work of love – according to our own vocation and the gifts we have received.

"Your prayers and practical support, particularly on World Mission Day, will be a great help in bringing the Gospel of God's love to everyone, especially the poorest and those most in need. Every gift, no matter how small, becomes a meaningful act of

missionary communion."

God willing, every parish in the diocese will celebrate World Mission Sunday with prayerful enthusiasm for the Mission of the Church.

The collection which takes place goes in its entirety to support churches, hospitals,

schools and vocations where the Church is new, young or poor.

Last year, the diocese raised £12,409. It would be great to see that figure doubled for the centenary year. Sadly, not every parish takes this essential collection.

Canon Michael Loughlin

Holy Father's World Mission Sunday Prayer

Holy Father, make us one in Christ, rooted in his love that unites and renews.

May all members of the Church be united in mission, docile to the Holy Spirit, courageous in bearing witness to the Gospel, proclaiming and daily embodying your faithful love for all creatures.

Bless all missionary men and women, support them in their efforts, and watch over them in hope!

Mary, Queen of Missions, accompany our work of evangelisation in every corner of the earth: make us instruments of peace, and grant that the whole world may recognise in Christ the light that saves. Amen.



Malawi will be one of the countries featured in World Mission Sunday's 'One in Christ, United in Mission' campaign

Talk helps us see the people behind the labels

MAYRA BARRERA gave this inspiring talk at St Mary's Cathedral during Refugee Week, highlighting the human stories behind the headlines. Mayra was a lawyer in her country and has an MSc in Criminology from the University of Teesside...

As I was thinking about what to share with you, I found myself reflecting on many parts of my story.

I could speak about my journey, seeking asylum or the challenges and kindness I have experienced along the way. But underneath all those experiences, there is a deeper question that has stayed with me: How many words does it take to describe a human life?

We live surrounded by labels. They are useful. They help us organise forms, statistics and conversations.

We say "doctor", "student", "mother", "business owner", "foreigner", "refugee". One word, and it seems as if we already know the whole story. But over time, I have learned there is a big difference between identifying someone and truly knowing them.

A word can describe a circumstance but it can never contain a life. For a period of my life, two of the words used to describe me was "asylum seeker".

It was an accurate description. It appeared on official documents. It described my legal status. But it never captured who I was. Because before that label, there was a mother, a friend and a professional who loved her work. There was a life. There was a story.

When we hear a word, our minds fill in the rest. We hear "lawyer", "business owner", "foreigner", "refugee" or "asylum seeker", and we build a complete picture of that person without really knowing them.

But reality is always more complex. A word is never a person. It is only a door. The problem begins when we mistake the door for the house. When we think a definition is a life. Or a circumstance is an identity.

Throughout my journey, I have met people from different cultures, religions and backgrounds. I have discovered that the most interesting people are often those who do not fit the ideas I first had about them. Because all of us are greater than the words used to describe us.

I arrived in this country several years ago. It has not always been easy. But today I do not want to talk about the difficulties. I want to talk about kindness. The people who listened. The people who welcomed me. The people who chose to know me before judging me. Over time, this country stopped being simply the place where I arrived. It became my home.

Today, I love this country. I am deeply grateful for the life I have built here. And I am especially proud to live in Middlesbrough, a community where people from different cultures and traditions enrich one another's lives. Because diversity does not make us less of a community. It reminds us

that strong communities are built when we learn to see the humanity we share.

And perhaps that is why I have this deep conviction: One of the most beautiful forms of love is refusing to reduce a person to a single word.

Looking beyond the accent. Beyond the passport. Beyond the status. And asking a much more important question: Not, "What is this person?" but "Who is this person?" Because every person we meet has a story we do not fully know. A story marked by joys we have not celebrated and wounds we have not seen.

So if I could leave you with one thought, it would be this: Before being a refugee, an immigrant, a foreigner or an asylum seeker, a person is a human being. Created in the image of God. A person with a dignity that no document can give and no circumstance can take away. A person trying to build a life, care for the people they love and sometimes find the strength to start again.

No status can define the value of a human being. No label can contain a life. And perhaps this is the most important truth we can remember: No status can contain who we are as people.



Mayra Barrera gave an inspiring talk at St Mary's Cathedral for Refugee Week



English Martyrs, Sleights, part of the Parish of St Hilda's, Whitby, celebrated Mass with confirmation, with one young man also receiving his First Holy Communion. Our picture shows Fay, Matthew, Father Michael Sellers, Henry and Joseph.

CAFOD

How is God's spirit calling you to help our world?

The Church relies on volunteers – people who freely offer themselves, joyfully putting their time, skills and faith into action to support its mission.

We perhaps don't notice the amount of work volunteers do – handing out hymn books, polishing benches, playing instruments, making drinks, leading children through sacramental preparation and so much more.

We respond to the Spirit of God calling us into service and community. Without volunteers, much of what happens in our parishes would grind to a halt.

In 1960, on the Caribbean island of Dominica, children were starving and the community appealed for support to build a mother-and-baby clinic.

A group of resourceful women heard their appeal and felt called to get involved. Together with others from the National Board of Catholic Women, the Catholic Women's League and the Union of Catholic Mothers, they organised the first Family Fast Day. CAFOD was born.

CAFOD is the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development and is part of the global Caritas network of Catholic relief and development agencies. We work alongside local organisations to help people lift themselves out of poverty.

Do you want to get involved in this work and know that you're making a difference in the lives of countless people throughout the world?



CAFOD needs volunteers. We need people who can help their parishes or local schools build a better world.

Whether you've got a little time or a lot, you can arrange for Family Fast Day or emergency collections to happen or gather your community by putting on some coffee mornings, soup lunches or social events.

Would you be interested in challenging the causes of poverty and calling for a better world? Could you speak at Mass or visit local schools to raise awareness and inspire local children and young people?

A better world needs all of us and volunteering is a wonderful way of putting your faith into action and supporting the work of the Church and bringing the love of God into people's daily lives.

If you're interested in joining CAFOD's community of volunteers, head to cafod.org.uk/volunteer for more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Rachel Blaylock
Community Participation Coordinator



Middlesbrough CAFOD school volunteer training – photo by Sharon Matthews

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Exhibition tells hidden Gunpowder Plot story

The Bar Convent in York is offering the chance to experience a unique retelling of one of the most dramatic events in British history this autumn in the city where it all began.

Set against the turbulent backdrop of post-Reformation York, The Gunpowder Plot: York's Untold Story (September 16 to December 5) takes visitors beyond the legend of Guy Fawkes to explore the events surrounding November 5 1605.

Through rare objects, brand-new interpretations and human storytelling, discover how the plot echoed across the country, left its mark on York and shaped the lives of the courageous women who founded this remarkable house in its wake.

Special collections manager Dr Hannah Thomas said: "Remember, remember, the fifth of November, gunpowder, treason and plot. We all know the rhyme; we have heard of Guy Fawkes and we mark Bonfire Night with fireworks, but how much do you really know about the context, conspiracy and consequences surrounding the Gunpowder Plot?"

"The plot is part of York's rich history and here at the Bar Convent we are in a unique position to host this new exhibition.

"Not only is York the city that many key figures called home, but the Bar Convent was established in the shadows of the plot when the Catholic faith was still illegal.

"We are privileged to have significant objects linked to the plot in our collections, including the Gunpowder Crucifix, which belonged to York priest Edward Oldcorne.

He was hanged drawn and quartered in the aftermath of the plot and incredibly the cross is the only object to have survived the raids on Catholic properties following the plot's discovery.

"Items produced secretly at the time to remember Margaret Clitherow's death in 1585 will be on display, and visitors can also visit her relic, which is housed in the convent's secret chapel.

"Objects in the exhibition that were used to hold secret Catholic Mass also give fascinating insight into the context of the lives of Catholics at the time.

"Visitors can also enhance their visit with a new self-led walking trail to discover the key locations and iconic landmarks that give context to the plot and delve deeper by joining us for a lunchtime talk or our evening event.

"Whether you are a local, visiting York, part of a group or looking for school holiday activities, don't miss the opportunity to discover our exhibition space transformed to tell the story of the Gunpowder Plot like never before."

Sister Ann Stafford added: "This exhibition is a testament to the courageous women who secretly founded this house in the wake of the plot and to the people who came before them.

"With a fascinating exhibition, café, hidden chapel and even a guest house on site, the Bar Convent is the perfect place to discover how the events of 1605 left a mark on our city and shaped our community today."

The Gunpowder Plot: York's Untold Story is

included in admission to the exhibition. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm (last admission to the exhibition is 4pm).

The exhibition will be accompanied by a programme of activities and a city-wide trail. For more information, visit barconvent.co.uk.



Dr Hannah Thomas with Edward Oldcorne's Crucifix – photo by Frank Dwyer, courtesy of the Bar Convent Living Heritage Centre

You're invited to our SVP information sessions

September has traditionally been SVP Awareness Month as it includes the feast day of founder Blessed Frederic Ozanam (September 9) and of St Vincent de Paul (September 27), the inspiration for the way we work.

Voice readers will be aware of the work of the SVP across the diocese, but do you know what your parish SVP group does? Do you know if your parish has an SVP group?

The SVP can sometimes appear to be a secret

society because of the confidential nature of the work members do, but you will have read articles about SVP members organising Christmas parties and days out for the elderly and help for refugees and homeless people, as well as our summer children's camp and the two St Vincent's shops.

St Vincent used to say that "love is inventive to infinity". In other words, love never runs out of ideas. It always finds a way. Sometimes that way is a quiet visit to someone who

hasn't heard a knock on their door in weeks. Sometimes it looks like a bag of groceries brought where it is needed most. Sometimes it's just a listening ear, discovering that hunger isn't really for food but for friendship. That's the SVP way: ordinary people doing ordinary things. Each member uses their unique God-given gifts in a variety of ways to help those in need in their communities, putting Catholic Social Teaching into practice. If you would like to learn more about the work

of the SVP or how to become a member, please join us for a Zoom information session on one of the following dates:

Monday October 12: 11am–noon
Tuesday October 13: 7–8pm
Wednesday October 14: 4–5pm

For a link, email presidentc13@svp.org.uk with your preferred date and time.

Patricia Nobbs
Middlesbrough SVP Central Council President

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Out & About

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

3pm Mass for LGBT+ community, family and friends at the Chapel of the Bar Convent.

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

Busy autumn events programme at St Mary's Cathedral

The most striking celebration will see Dr Emma Morrisson's dedication to life as a Consecrated Virgin. Everyone is welcome to this special celebration at noon on Saturday September 26.

Saturday October 17, 7:30pm: Cleveland Philharmonic Orchestra: First and Last

Friday December 18, 6pm and 8:30pm: The Christmas Orchestra

There's a packed programme of events at St Mary's Cathedral this autumn – photo by Chris Booth

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A festival of faith for all the family

My family and I packed the car with camping gear during the summer holidays and set off for four days at WeBelieve, a Catholic festival held at St Mary's College, Oscott.

With more than ten venues, it has all the hustle and bustle you would expect from a festival yet still offers space for moments of silence.

The high point of each day is the celebration of Holy Mass in the main marquee, St Peter's, with bishops and priests from across England and Wales and thousands of people from every walk of life.

It is a feast of formation, with something for everyone. The three main venues focus on deepening our understanding of beauty, truth and goodness, offering talks and workshops on a wide range of topics, including contemplative prayer, poetry, AI, acedia, evangelisation and building the common good.

There are also music ministries, guided prayer times and even morning movement to start the day. The Market Place was packed with vendors and exhibitors, reflecting the many charisms at work in the Church.

What struck me most was something Bishop-elect Stephen Wang said in his homily on the second day of the festival.

He noted that, for many of us, the festival was radically different from everyday life, yet it offered a glimpse of what normal life in our Catholic communities can be: joyful,



The main marquee at the WeBelieve Catholic festival

prayerful, welcoming and centred on Christ. Personally, it was a poignant reminder of my own mission to help build a culture of discipleship: one where the joy of the Gospel is experienced daily and where the doors of our churches are open wide to those searching for answers to life's big questions.

It was also wonderful to see my children making friends, chatting to religious brothers and sisters and even taking part in Q&A sessions with an archbishop.

If you want to give your faith a boost, learn more or go deeper in your life of prayer, I encourage you to prayerfully consider attending in the future.

The WeBelieve team has committed to running the festival for the next seven years in the lead-up to the Great Jubilee of Jesus' death and resurrection in 2033. Find out more at webelievefestival.com.

Nicola Sweetman
Adult Formation Coordinator

NEWS IN BRIEF

Monsignor Gerard takes up new role as dean

Monsignor Gerard Robinson has been appointed dean of the St Wilfrid's Deanery as he takes up his new ministry at the Parish of St George in York. He will continue in his role as vicar general. Bishop Marcus thanked Father Bill Serplus for his years of service as dean in this area of the diocese.

Father Philip returns to Nigeria

Father Philip Osuagwu HFFBY has returned to his community in Nigeria after several years working in our diocese, most recently in the Coastal Cluster based at Redcar. Bishop Marcus thanked Father Philip for his ministry in the diocese and the parishes in which he has served and asked us to keep him in our prayers.

Adoremus is invitation to renew our faith and love

The National Eucharistic Congress on Saturday October 10 is an invitation to renew our Eucharistic faith and love. There are two strands to the event. In London, a representative gathering of bishops, priests and people will take part in public events including a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Adoremus will also be celebrated in all our parishes, where Masses, Eucharistic Processions and Eucharistic Holy Hours will unite us with this national gathering. Footage from the London event will be made available to enable remote participation. For more information, visit cbcw.org.uk/adoremus-2026.

Mass for Friends of the Lady Chapel

Monsignor Gerard Robinson will celebrate the annual Mass for the Friends of the Lady Chapel at 3pm on Saturday September 5. Everyone is welcome to attend. To find out how you can join the group, whose members contribute towards maintaining our diocesan Marian shrine throughout the year, visit ladychapel.org.uk/friends.

Remembering our deceased clergy

The annual Mass for Deceased Clergy will take place at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, at noon on Wednesday November 4. All are invited to attend this special occasion, when we remember all those priests and bishops who have helped shape our lives.

Bishop presides at Mass for Married Life

Bishop Marcus will preside at a Celebration Mass for Married Life at St Marie's Cathedral, Sheffield, at 12.30pm on Saturday September 19. The Mass is for couples and their families celebrating their wedding anniversary jubilees this calendar year. During the liturgy, there will be an opportunity for couples who wish to do so to renew their marriage vows.

Bishop congratulates Father Albert

Father Albert Schembri celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination when he was joined by family and friends for a special Mass in Malta at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Valletta, Malta.

The following day, Father Albert and his family made a pilgrimage towards the national shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu on the island of Gozo, which gained fame when farmhand Karmni Grima heard a miraculous voice from the painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1883.

Pope Pius XI raised the church to a minor basilica in 1932 and it has been visited by popes including John Paul II (1990), Benedict XVI (2010) and Francis (2022).

A second celebration took place at Father Albert's parish, Our Lady and St Peter's Church, Bridlington.

Bishop Marcus said: "I would like to offer my most sincere congratulations to the Rev Father Albert Schembri as he celebrates his silver jubilee of ordination to the sacred priesthood.

"I wish to thank him for his ministry in the diocese, and I ask that you keep him in your prayers as he celebrates this great milestone in his priestly life."

Father Albert, who was ordained on August 3 2001, thanked everyone who prayed for him, texted and sent messages of congratulations.



Father Albert celebrating his silver jubilee with members of his family

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NEWS



SIR JOHN BATTLE, MP for Leeds West from 1987 to 2010 and a minister in Tony Blair’s government, continues his regular column in the Voice. Sir John, who was made a Knight Commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great by Pope Benedict and was knighted in the 2022 New Year Honours, is chair of the Diocese of Leeds Justice & Peace Commission and has a deep commitment to Catholic Social Teaching.

The World Cup, whose ubiquitous betting coverage was unavoidable, was one of the biggest events for the gambling industry. Betting was a main beneficiary.

Gambling is one of the UK’s most profitable industries and Bet365 is among the world’s most profitable companies. National Lottery tickets, scratch cards and online gambling gift cards are all sold in our supermarkets and corner shops every day.

British adults spend roughly £6-8m every day on scratch cards alone. The UK public

Stop taking a climate change gamble

spend between £2-3bn a year on National Lottery scratch cards, and further £1.3bn on online instant win games as mobile phone-based gambling is taking over.

We are increasingly a nation of gamblers, risking our money on uncertain outcomes in the hope of a boost of a short-term, quick win.

It is not just the sugar rush of expectation that is undermining our rational sensibilities but perhaps, more importantly, the wiping out of addressing the realities of the present and any purposeful action to really shape the future that is doing the damage.

As wildfires rage in Europe and closer to home in Britain and devastating floods hit Afghanistan and Bangladesh this last month, the tragic irony is that campaigns to undermine climate emergency efforts to restrain adding more overall greenhouse gases to the atmosphere are rampant, not least promoted by financially vested interests, including the most profitable oil and gas companies.

The concerted efforts to restrain are now often referred to as “net zero” measures. Net zero does not mean producing zero emissions now but rather taking action to reduce emissions as much as possible such as by using renewable energies, improving energy efficiency planting and restoring forest peat and wetlands and also including reducing waste and recycling.

Universally, scientists agree that to halt further long-term warming, global carbon dioxide emissions need to reach zero. Many countries have set legally binding policy

targets to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, which is the UK target.

In our era of fiercely binary and reductionist politics, net zero has become a touchstone for opposition. Some claim net zero to be the new Brexit, dismissing its purpose and aims and even the scientific consensus on the evidence of a climate emergency, despite the increasing daily news reports of worldwide extreme climatic events.

Meanwhile, the “merchants of doubt” (usually invested financial interests) distort public media perceptions and encourage that gambler’s dismissive shrug of, “It may never happen to me and my family” and often even those sensing a real need to change course fall in with the pressure simply to lay the blame and responsibility on the individual alone calling upon them to reduce their emissions, reduce the use of fuel-guzzling transport and increase energy efficiency and recycling measures.

In other words, it suits the powerful vested interests to encourage the individual to take the blame, shifting the responsibility for pollution on to consumers and society as a whole.

Little wonder that it is then easy to wonder, “Why bother?” doing our little bit here, when China, India, Nigeria and America carry on emitting dangerous gases.

Even those individual gestures, having been blamed, are drowned out in a prophecy of the gambler’s despair.

On the tenth World Day of Prayer for Creation last September, Pope Leo XIV insisted that climate change is both “a scientific reality

and a moral responsibility”.

Building on the anniversary of Pope Francis’s great encyclical *Laudato Si’*, Pope Leo stressed how “environmental degradation disproportionately harms the poor and vulnerable”.

The American writer Gabriel Winslow-Yost refers to climate change as a crime in which we are all implicated: “Our car rides and plane trips, coffees and burgers, heating and cooling and clothing are paid for in blood, contributing every moment to the suffering and destruction global warming brings.”

As Pope Francis insisted in *Laudato Si’*, we have to hold joined together “care for the Earth and care for the poor in our common home”.

Pope Leo now stresses that climate change is “an issue of justice as well as environmental protection”, declaring that: “Environmental justice can no longer be regarded as an abstract concept or a distant goal. It is an urgent need that involves much more than simply protecting the environment and it is part of the Church’s mission to promote human dignity, peace and care for creation.”

In *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis makes the challenge very personal in his detailed appeal for us to each undertake a deeply spiritual “ecological conversion”.

Now Pope Leo invites us to step back from the gambler’s betting shrug and to join together to tackle “the injustice, social, economic and human”, urging us all to “sow the seeds of justice”.

Two new books explore teenage mental health

Two new books aim to open up conversations around mental health by using relatable, fictional stories to reflect the pressures faced by young people today, including social media anxiety and identity struggles.

Designed as a shared toolkit rather than just a reading experience, Versions of Me and Just Evie by Catholic writer, youth worker and psychotherapist John Pearson, encourage young people to discuss mental health with peers.

They also provide parents, teachers and youth workers with prompts and guidance to facilitate supportive conversations.

The books are a collection of 10 fictional stories, each chapter ending with three points to explore and with tips and mentor/teacher notes at the back.

Against the backdrop of rising mental health challenges and increasing number of young people not in education, employment or

training, the book seeks to promote wellbeing through accessible, story-driven dialogue.

John said: “Versions of Me and Just Evie were born out of a simple truth – young people want to talk about their mental health, but they often just don’t know how to start.

“The books are built around relatable, fictional stories that mirror the pressures teens face today, from social media anxiety to identity struggles.

“Young people can read it together, using the stories as an icebreaker to check in on their friends without it feeling awkward. At the same time, it’s a bridge for adults. Parents at the kitchen table, teachers in the classroom and youth workers out in the community can use the included prompts and mentor notes.

“You don’t need to be a qualified therapist to help a young person navigate their feelings; you just need the right conversation starter. And these books give you exactly that.”

Versions of Me refers to the concept that human identity is not a single, fixed state but a collection of different internal parts and external faces. Rather than being counterfeit, having multiple versions of yourself is a natural and healthy way to adapt to different roles and environments.

However, John says that when our versions of self are running wild, tension and stress surface and we will feel and sound rough, like an untuned engine.

“These books are best read together with a peer, parent, teacher or mentor – a trusted friend,” says John. “Through this process, parents get the opportunity to listen to the young person.

“The core message is that you are allowed to be a work in progress. Young people today feel immense pressure to be a perfect version of themselves for their friends, their teachers, and their social media feeds. It is exhausting.

“I want any young person reading this to realise that feeling fragmented is completely normal, but underneath all those different versions, their authentic self is safe, valuable and more than enough.”

Middlesbrough-born John left a career in industry to take up youth work and study psychotherapy, motivated by a passion to help young people in most need. Now living at Brotton, John and his wife attend St

Paulinus at Guisborough. He also works part-time as a wellbeing coach at a GP surgery in the Esk Valley.

The books – Versions of Me (Alex for boys) and Just Evie (Evie for girls) – are available from Amazon in paperback, hardback and Kindle format. Visit versionsofme.co.uk for more details, including a free sample download and free wellbeing resources.

Archbishop welcomes PM’s support for palliative care

Archbishop John Sherrington, lead bishop for life issues for the Catholic Bishops’ Conference, has welcomed Prime Minister Andy Burnham’s call for palliative care services to be properly funded.

Mr Burnham said palliative care and social care funding need to be “fixed” so vulnerable people can have “peace of mind” about the care that they receive towards the end of their life.

Archbishop Sherrington said: “It is highly significant that the Prime Minister has confirmed his position about the need for proper palliative and social care ahead of the Second Reading of the fundamentally flawed Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill in September.

“People who are dying are vulnerable and need compassionate care and spiritual accompaniment until their last breath.

“We have consistently called for meaningful investment in palliative and end-of-life care as an appropriate focus to uphold the dignity of all at the end of life and opposed

a bill seeking to legalise assisted suicide.

“This level of care can be found in many Catholic care homes and hospices, but the sector remains woefully under-funded and there is an existential threat to these places of compassion and care should this legislation be passed.

“I once more urge parliamentarians to vote against this dangerous legislation on September 11 and to work together to ensure that our palliative and social care services can be held up as examples of truly dignified care at the end of life for all.”

Catholics are being urged to write to their MP to ask them to oppose the bill.

Meanwhile, Archbishop Richard Moth, president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference, offered his congratulations to the new Prime Minister on behalf of the Catholic community. “I offer my warm congratulations to Andy Burnham on becoming leader of the Labour Party and now Prime Minister,” he said.



John Pearson, author of Versions of Me and Just Evie

Charities pay tribute to the late Ann Widdecombe

Charities including Aid to the Church in Need (ACN (UK)), Life and Right to Life UK have paid tribute to former MP Ann Widdecombe after her death at the age of 78.

Miss Widdecombe, who became a Catholic in 1993, campaigned tirelessly on pro-life issues and for persecuted Christians around the world.

In recent months she made media appearances opposing the assisted suicide bill, saying: "It is impossible to introduce adequate safeguards to protect the mentally ill, disabled and the frail elderly."

Right To Life UK trustee Chris Whitehouse said: "For 40 years, Ann was to me a personal

and family friend, a political mentor and a remarkable heroine of the pro-life cause.

"To have known her was a pleasure and a privilege, if sometimes a challenge. She was unflinching in her politics, constant in her friendships and steadfast in her defence of the principle of the right to life, both for the unborn and for those approaching the end of their lives."

Friend and former colleague Lord Alton said: "Ann's forthright views – whether you agreed with her or not – were always trenchantly, intelligently and honestly expressed – and never with malice.

"Beyond the well-known public figure, there

was also a less well-known private person, capable of great kindness in responding to people facing personal challenges and tragedy. As they will attest, she was never a fair-weather friend."

In a statement, the charity Life said: "Throughout her career she remained steadfast in her faith and the causes she believed in. To us, Ann will be remembered as a valued supporter and patron. Her encouragement and commitment to Life's work meant a great deal to our charity."

ACN (UK) said Miss Widdecombe was an outspoken campaigner for the plight of suffering Christians and joined the charity at

packed church events across the country to helping to raise awareness.

John Pontifex, ACN (UK)'s head of press and public affairs, said: "Ann Widdecombe was a fearless champion for persecuted Christians, constantly seeking to raise the public profile of their suffering with the media and government. We are thankful for her witness and support over many years."

Miss Widdecombe was awarded a Papal Damehood of the Order of St Gregory the Great by Pope Benedict XVI for services to public and political life.

Children's choir delights at Postgate Rally

It was a delight to welcome members of the Liturgical Choir from St Alphonsus School, North Ormesby, who were joined by some of our cathedral choristers to form the choir for the annual Postgate Rally at Ugthorpe.

The children had learnt the music both in their Diocesan Schools Singing Programme sessions and also separate choir rehearsals before coming together to lead our singing on the day.

The sessions in school had been directed by choral director Andrea Maxson, who also conducted the choir on the day.

As well as singing hymns for 30 minutes before the service, they led our singing in

hymns during Mass, along with the responsorial psalm, gospel acclamation, communion anthem, and settings of the Mass Ordinary.

Their enthusiasm was infectious, with the singing continuing on the coach on the way back to school afterwards.

It was lovely that so many members of the congregation and clergy came over to thank the children for their singing on what was a long and very warm afternoon.

Thanks to the children, their parents and to staff from St Alphonsus, including Mr Terry who joined the children on the coach to and from the rally.



Members of the choir who sang at this year's Postgate Rally



Members of the Diocesan Choir after singing Vespers in St Aelred's Church, York

Diocesan Choir gathers to sing Vespers

Members of the Diocesan Choir gathered in York to sing Vespers (Evening Prayer of the Church) in St Aelred's Church.

The choir meets on the third Sunday of every month to rehearse and for the final such rehearsal of the academic year concluded in worship.

Alongside sung settings of the psalmody for the day, the choir also sang a setting of the Magnificat by contemporary composer Christopher Dalitz.

The service was led by Father Bill Serplus and attended by many from the parish who formed the congregation. Refreshments were served afterwards in St Aelred's Community Centre.

September is an excellent time to join a choir, which is always on the lookout for new members. It is drawn from across the diocese, with members coming from all four deaneries, travelling from Hull, Middlesbrough and York, as well as the North and East Yorkshire coasts.

Rehearsals take place in York on the afternoon of the third Sunday of the month and there are no auditions required to join.

If you would be interested in joining or finding out more, please contact our diocesan director of music, Steven Maxson, at musicdept@rcdmidd.org.uk.

Environment Corner – Immerse ourselves in the Season of Creation

Our biblical text for this year's Season of Creation (September 1 to October 4) is drawn from Ezekiel 47: 1-12, which portrays God's life-giving water flowing from the temple of God.

The river grows deeper, restoring barren land, reviving waters and sustaining flourishing ecosystems. The vision invites human responsibility, recognising ecological damage and embracing interconnectedness.

We are called to immerse ourselves in the water, actively safeguarding and working for the renewal of creation so that environmental healing and human wellbeing may flourish together.

Last November, the National Emergency Briefing brought together leading experts to present the latest evidence on the climate and nature crisis to

politicians and other influential people in Westminster. That evidence is now on the public record.

The People's Emergency Briefing is a 50-minute public information film released



This Season of Creation is an excellent time to arrange a viewing of the film, The People's Emergency Briefing

in April. Presented by Chris Packham, it adapts the expert evidence from the November briefing to help communities understand the scale of the challenge and what action is needed.

With footage from the event plus reactions from the public and some familiar faces, the film presents the national implications of climate and nature breakdown – with credible, positive responses – in an accessible account designed for community screenings.

It is intended that each screening be followed by a discussion to allow people to process what they have heard and find ways to engage positively around solutions in their community.

Bishop John Arnold, lead bishop for the environment, encourages widespread

showings of the film.

He says: "Our faith compels us to speak up on matters of justice and morality and by joining this initiative we can play our part in calling for the government to take the action that is urgently needed.

"We must study the signs of the times and take the action that is needed to repair our relationship with God's creation."

This Season of Creation is an excellent time to arrange a viewing of the film in your parish or community. You can do this by visiting nebriefing.org/the-film.

Guidance supported by the Laudato Si' Movement and CAFOD is a useful addition to the resources for church settings.

Barbara Hungin

NEWS

A week I will always remember – and I’ll be back!

The Faith Summertime Conference has changed me in ways I could never have expected.

At first, I was hesitant and needed a nudge to sign up – I thought it wasn’t something for me. I was wrong.

The week I spent in the beautiful surroundings of Ampleforth Abbey is one I will always remember.

From celebrating the Holy Mass and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation to the fascinating talks on the topic of the conference (Who am I?), each moment was united by one thing – our shared love of Jesus Christ.

This was evident in how strangers came together to pray, laugh, learn and leave as friends.

With each passing day, my understanding of our faith and its roots grew stronger as my love and admiration for the Lord deepened. Being able to attend the Divine Offices with the monks of Ampleforth Abbey was an incredible experience and a true gift.

Along the way, I met many wonderful people from across the country, who I now call friends. Much time was spent discussing and reflecting on the talks, allowing us to explore the topics further, bouncing ideas off each other and debating among ourselves.

The conference prompted me to open my heart to Jesus; it was a time and opportunity to know him more closely while surrounding myself with like-minded individuals of a similar age.

This was my first Faith Summertime Conference but most definitely not the last.

The conference extends an invitation to ask fundamental questions and dive deeper into the wonders of our faith. Difficult ideas are explained and complicated concepts simplified, all while demonstrating how these practices can be applied in daily life.

My eyes were opened to how much I have still to learn, but the truth is, the journey of learning is a lifelong one. I left inspired, encouraged and eager to continue that journey.

Gabriella Kudzinowski



Participants at Faith Summertime, with Gabriella second from the right on the front row

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